
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 11 June 2024 13:48
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2024/0240 Site Address: Land Adjoining New House Farm Luzlow Lane Bagnall
Staffordshire ST9 9JZ Stoke-On-Trent Comments by: David Connor

From:

New House Farm
Luzlow Lane
Bagnall
Bagnall

ST9 9JZ

Submission: Objection

Comments: I am formally objecting to this Screening Opinion application.

I live at New House Farm, and the application is directly neighbouring my house and land. The site will be directly overlooked and clearly visible. I have received no communication about this application prior and if passed, it will impact directly on my family's quality of life, our right to enjoy our home and our local community.

Firstly, the batteries will create a large risk to fires and explosions. There is yet no research into the long-term suitability of these batteries and with me living next to the site it poses a huge risk to me, my family, my home and my future. As it borders Wetley Moor Common, which historically over the years, has had many fires which are a challenge to extinguish due to the location so a field next door to the common will have the same issues. I have an electricity pylon in my field with the overhead cables running through mine and the proposed site, posing another huge risk if a fire was to break out. There is also a mains gas pipe extremely close to the site which if disrupted could cause an even bigger catastrophe. An explosion would immensely damage my home and everything I own. The risks of the toxic fumes emitted from batteries are yet to be known and so it is putting my household to another great threat. Within this application, there have been no fire regulations or procedures put into place for the safeguard of people. I worry if the worst was to happen the suitability of the containers are not up to standard, each container through recent guidance should be 6m apart to allow full 360 degrees access to extinguish fires and so there isn't a knock-on effect to each container as they are also self-igniting. The proposal is to have batteries 3m apart and the insulating capacity of the containers means fires could last weeks. Again, posing fire risks to my home and the neighbouring greenbelt. My concerns are high around the safety of the battery storage and the long-term health damages I may occur because of this change of use to the area.

We live in a rural community that is quiet and peaceful. The noise levels and disruption this will bring to the community is immense, increasing the noise pollution. From the application, lighting, cameras and fencing will be erected around the perimeter causing light pollution and disturbance to mine and neighbouring homes around the area. I have in recent years renovated my home from a run-down small house into a loving home suitable for me and my family which I am now proud to own. I have spent money investing into making my property better and to suit its environment. Having a battery site next door will immensely devalue my house (up to 50%) which I have put so much time, money and effort into making because of the unknown risks to health, safety longevity and also the visual and noise polluting affects it will have.

The roads currently around the area are not suitable for large heavy wagons and traffic. At the moment they cannot cope so they will not be able to withstand the increasing levels.

Our area which is classed as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' because of Welty Moor Common, is home to an abundance of wildlife, from owls, red kites, to linnets, skylarks, grasshopper warblers and whitethroat. All these animals live in this area among many many others. I have seen those in my land also, so there is all the chance they would cross the fence into the field where the proposed developments are situated. When I have been applying for planning permission on my property, I have had an ecology report done which concluded that there are long eared brown bats at my property, and I have measures in place to protect them. The battery site will pose a huge risk to the bats; disruption, light pollution at night, and the noise pollution will upset the bats at nesting time and for the duration of their life causing distress. On top of this the site also lies within the National Landscape Character 64 Potteries and Churnet Valley. Altogether the application will lead to significant threats to the environment.

Planning policy states that Green Belt should only be used in exceptional special circumstances. Government policy also states that good quality farmland / Green Belt should be protected. A butcher owns the proposed site, who farms his own animals and does not live within the local community or area. People who are not part of the community are destroying and financially benefiting from these applications with no consideration to the local community. Meanwhile the site will cause devaluation to local residents' properties due to the immediate health and safety concerns, risks and the devastation on the visual impact of the area.

The land currently is mowed each year for hay by the owner of the land, proving the farmland is useful and proven good quality. I myself mow my land for hay/silage to which I know the land is of good quality. There are also, four flourishing nurseries in the local area, again, showing us the land is of good quality. It is situated in a green belt area and area of scientific interest. I have had many stipulations in planning permissions because of this.

Government policy states that the accumulative effect needs to be considered on the local area when considering planning for such sites. There are already numerous applications in place within the immediate area with two sites that have already been passed in 2022 which went under the local radar. If further sites are passed this will turn the area into an industrial area therefore going against both local and Government policy. Once this use of this land is changed it will not be able to revert back to Green Belt and it will be lost forever.

The application represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt. My reasons for objection are drawn from the NPPF and from Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Adopted 2020.

As follows, the application does not sit well with the following:

National Planning Policy Framework - section 15, paragraph 174 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. It is recognised by leading environmental organisations that development of this kind should be first and foremost on brownfield land. Recycling brownfield sites is the most sustainable option and is especially suitable for developments of an industrial nature such as this. NPPF section 15 para 174(b) states that 'planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services'.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Adopted 2020

6.63 The development of renewable energy sources will also often be in rural areas but such development will almost always have an environmental cost as well as benefits. Such proposals must be weighed against the continuing commitment to protect the environment. The scale and design of such schemes will therefore be of paramount importance and should accord with Policy SD 2.

6.67 The Green Belt serves a number of purposes which are derived from Government policy in the NPPF and the former Staffordshire Structure Plan. The Green Belt keeps land open and free from development over a long period, which extends beyond the plan period, in order to give assurance that its boundaries will endure. National policy on Green Belts is set out in the NPPF and will apply to the whole of the Green Belt. The Green Belt Review assessed the Green Belt in the District against the five purposes of the Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary (as revised) is identified on the Policies Maps.

Other Rural Areas Strategy Policy SS10

The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages. These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

3. Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by: Ensuring renewable energy schemes are of an appropriate scale, type and location.

6. Maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

I strongly believe the policy's and points put across to you in this letter should be acknowledged and put into consideration regarding this application. From the points made and the effect the application will have on not only me, but hundreds of other people in the community and surrounding area, this application should be refused.

Many thanks,

David Connor

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