
From: planningcomments@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
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To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2024/0429 Site Address: Townsend Farm Bond House Lane Horton Staffordshire ST13 8PJ Leek Comments by: Lindsay BromageN/A

From:
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Submission: Objection

Comments: I'm 62yrs old, having lived and worked as a Police Officer in the Staffordshire Moorlands for most of my adult life. I worked as a Traffic Officer for 10 years, investigating numerous fatal collisions. I moved out of the area two years ago, but continue to visit the area, and this site in particular, on a regular basis. I am familiar with the site subject to this Planning Application, having known the Applicant Ms Jennifer Ball, and the resident of the adjacent property, Mr Andrew Machin for well over 10 years now. I am very familiar with all the locations and buildings identified in the application.

In respect of the application to move the existing entrance to the site from the public highway, I object on the grounds of the proposal being to the detriment of the safety of any persons accessing onto, or egressing from the site, as well as members of the public passing the site along the public road.

I have personally used that entrance and exit many, many times over the years, driving a variety of vehicles, and towing different types of large trailers. I have never had any issues turning into or out of the site, even with trailers.

As can clearly be seen from aerial view of the current exit from the site, occupants of vehicles leaving the site have a good view in all three directions at once, and can wait, on level ground, for any vehicles to clear the area before emerging safely onto the public road. As the historical maps provided in the application show, this has been the situation for many generations of occupants living on, and visiting the site.

The application is to move the entrance/exit location further down Lea Laughton Lane. I use the word 'down' deliberately, as Lea Laughton Lane drops down steeply immediately after the current entrance. This also means that the proposed new entrance/exit would, of necessity, approach the public road at a steep decline. (This is clearly illustrated by the close contour lines on the topographical plan included in the application).

The application states that the first section would be tarmaced, but vehicles and pedestrians would have to try and traverse a very steep slippery driveway on entering and leaving the site in times of frost, snow or even any significant rain (see below re water drainage). A very real danger to traffic on the public road would be vehicles, with or without trailers, at risk of being unable to avoid sliding out into the carriageway, without warning, in such conditions. Moving the entrance/exit thus unnecessarily creates risk to the public and site users, where such risk does not currently exist.

The aerial photograph of the junction area also clearly illustrates that the view for drivers trying to emerge from the proposed exit would be greatly reduced, as compared to the current exit, as there would be no view at all into Tollgate Road, and a greatly reduced view up into Dairy House Lane. On the aerial photograph, that lane can be clearly seen to bend away to the left above the current exit. I fail to see how such a significantly reduced range of views can do anything other than reduce the safety of traffic travelling in the vicinity.

I am also concerned in respect of the risk posed by the rain water that would inevitably have to drain from the land (which is significantly elevated above the public road) down the proposed new sloping drive, and out onto the said public road. Currently that water run-off naturally drains down the field to the pond at the bottom of the field. As only the bottom section of the drive is described as being tarmaced, the water will inevitably also carry a element of soil & general land debris out onto the public road as well.

Finally, having read it several times, it appears that on page 6, the section titled 'Pedestrian and vehicle access, roads and rights of way' - the application is wrong and misleading.

Q2 - Is a new or altered pedestrian access proposed to and from the public highway? - Yes/No - has been answered 'No'.

If, as the application states, the existing access would be 'closed off' and planted with matching hedge, then pedestrians would have no option but to go down Lea Laughton Lane, and back up the proposed new driveway, in order to access either property on the site. There is no street lighting on that section of Lea Laughton Lane.

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