
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 19 April 2025 13:36
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0063 Site Address: 99 Woodhouse Lane Biddulph Staffordshire ST8 7RN
Biddulph Comments by: Paul Armitt

From:

97

Woodhouse Lane
Biddulph Moor
Biddulph Moor
Staffordshire
ST8 7RN

Phone:

Email:

Submission: Objection

Comments: To: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council & Planning Department

Re: Planning Application SMD/2025/0063

Proposal: Construction of a 40m x 20m equestrian ménage

Location: Land to the rear of 97 Woodhouse Lane, Biddulph Moor

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as the owner and long-term resident of 97 Woodhouse Lane, which shares a boundary with the land proposed for the above development. With support from my architect, I would like to register my strong objection to this application due to its impact on my home, privacy, and the surrounding Green Belt landscape.

In addition to points 1 to 4 below I must stress that the drawings provided by the applicants architect are INCORRECT and misleading as follows.

Location plan - when printed off and checked with a scale rule the shorter arena length (20m) measures at 19m, however the longer arena length (40m) measures at 32 metres.

This is clearly misleading giving an under representation of some 20 %.

Using the same references points the Site plan shows shows the same obvious error.

Proposed Ground section - there are no dimensions or datums given as to the "existing ground level" no FFL / cover levels to reference the ground reduction from.

I understand the proposal was to reduce the ground level by 1.5 metres however the planning officers comments are that as little ground as possible is to be removed.

Most notably NONE of the drawings show my house number / location on the plan - when drawn to the correct scale the proposed arena would COMPLETELY run along my rear boundary which extends behind number 99 Woodhouse Lane

Siting - the proposed siting could not be more intrusive / overbearing and does not sit or fit within the context of the landscape.

There is no reason why the proposed arena could not be turned through 90 degrees and run alongside the existing stone wall, or at the bottom of the field where practice currently takes place

1. Loss of privacy and residential amenity

The proposed ménage would be positioned just one metre from my garden boundary, on land that rises above the level of my home. This means that riders on horseback would be at or above the level of my lounge windows & my principal living space & with a direct line of sight into my house and garden.

There is no existing screening between my property and the proposed development, and no buffer zone has been proposed. This is a highly intrusive siting that would significantly reduce my privacy and enjoyment of my home.

In addition to overlooking, I have serious concerns about:

& Noise pollution: Raised voices during training, as well as the likely regular use of a quad bike or similar machinery to maintain the surface, would disrupt the peace of my garden and living areas.

& Light pollution: Although no lighting is included in this application, the applicants have indicated that lighting may be added separately. This would have a major impact on visual amenity and would further disrupt the character of the area, particularly in winter months.

This level of intrusion is not appropriate next to a long-established private dwelling, and conflicts with Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, which requires development to protect residential amenity.

2. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The site is within the Green Belt, and the proposal introduces a large, engineered surface measuring 800 square metres. The NPPF (Paragraph 150) allows for outdoor recreation in the Green Belt only where it preserves openness and does not conflict with the purposes of Green Belt designation.

This proposal fails both tests:

¿ The ménage would clearly compromise the openness of the landscape, replacing natural ground with surfacing and earthworks.

¿ It would lead to encroachment into undeveloped land ¿ precisely the kind of incremental harm the Green Belt is intended to prevent.

Policy SS10 of the Local Plan reinforces this, requiring development in rural areas and the Green Belt to be sensitive to landscape character and not harm the countryside.

3. Concerns over future commercial use

The applicants claim the ménage is for private use, but given the scale and cost of such a facility, I am concerned it may be used commercially in future for training, lessons, or hire.

They have suggested there are no nearby equestrian facilities, which is untrue. There are several in close proximity, including:

¿ Butterlands Equestrian Centre, Biddulph Moor

¿ Somerford Park Farm, approximately 8 miles away

The suggestion of need is therefore misleading, and I am worried about increased traffic, activity and further planning creep if this application is approved.

If the Council is minded to approve the application, it must be subject to strict conditions:

¿ Restricting use to private/personal equestrian activity

¿ Prohibiting commercial use of any kind

¿ Refusing or tightly controlling any future application for external lighting

¿ Requiring a landscaping and screening plan to protect neighbour amenity

4. Incomplete and misleading application

Finally, I must point out that my house, 97 Woodhouse Lane, is not shown on the submitted plans, nor is the boundary that would be most directly affected. This omission makes it difficult for officers and consultees to properly assess the true impact of the scheme. The application should not have been validated without a complete and accurate site context.

In summary

This application would result in:

¿ An unacceptable loss of privacy

¿ Noise and light intrusion

¿ Encroachment into the Green Belt

¿ An un-neighbourly relationship with my home

I ask that the Council refuse this application. If, however, officers are minded to approve, I request that the conditions outlined above be imposed to protect the amenity of neighbouring residents and the character of the local area.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Armitt

Owner, 97 Woodhouse Lane, Biddulph Moor

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