

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Chris Johnston](#)
Cc: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2025/0167 - Land adjacent to Lakeland lodge, Rudyard Road, Rudyard
Date: 29 May 2025 22:12:19
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Chris

I have the following comments on this application seeking full planning permission for the erection of 9 dwellings and associated works.

Summary: objection, on the grounds of overdevelopment leading to unacceptable loss of existing tree cover, detrimental impact on the character of the site and its surroundings, detrimental and incongruous visual impact from external rural viewpoints, and lack of opportunity within the site layout for effective mitigatory landscaping and substantial screen planting.

The application site lies fully within the Rudyard Conservation Area. It is largely enclosed by on-site trees and a few assorted partial hedges, generally to all four sides. There are also various scattered/grouped trees located more centrally within/across the site, although this is far from total canopy cover across the whole site and there are effectively two main large open areas within the site.

It is noted that there has recently been some vegetation clearance in the middle of the site, including the felling and removal of some trees – whilst these were evidently not large/mature long-term species but mainly self-set Goat Willow (which are likely to have been of lower quality, based on the character of those still remaining) this nonetheless appears to have been unauthorised removal of trees in a Conservation Area without having submitted the required Section 211 Notice or obtained full planning permission for development, possibly seeking to pre-emptively remove perceived constraints to development occurring as it did shortly before submission of the planning application. And this despite the application's AIA report advising clearly that such controls and procedures should be followed.

Notwithstanding this, the few remaining trees separating the two main open areas are genuinely of poor quality and little/no wider significance outside the site and could acceptably be removed (as is proposed/required by the submitted scheme) to enable a more efficiently "developable" larger open central area. Therefore, purely with respect to impact on and relationship with trees the site could acceptably accommodate some amount and some form of residential development. However for reasons set out below the scheme as submitted is not considered acceptable.

A tree survey/arboricultural impact assessment (AIA) report is submitted with the application. The majority of trees have been assessed, either individually or in groups, as lower quality Retention Category C trees. The group (G1) along the north-west boundary are Category A, denoting higher quality and/or greater significance – these are situated above the retaining wall which drops down to Rudyard Road and effectively form the main highway "frontage" of the site. Other than 3 smaller understorey Laburnum here, in notably poor condition and separately denoted as group G2, group G1 would otherwise be retained. In terms of its relationship with this group G1, the dwellings at Plots 1 – 5 would be set well back from these trees, with parking area and access drive shown intervening.

Elsewhere, however, the proposed layout would require removal of a large proportion of existing trees, notably towards/along the north-east and south-east sides of the site adjacent to open countryside where retaining existing dense screening would be critically important if the site was to be developed; also the existing hedge along part of the south-west boundary separating the application site from the existing parking area to the Lakeland Lodge flats is considered

important to retain – with Public Footpath No. 74 (Horton Parish) running immediately adjacent from Rudyard Road to the open countryside beyond. Whilst the majority of those trees indicated for removal to accommodate the proposed scheme are of lower Category C rating (either individually or in their distinct groups) this – perhaps inevitably – rather underplays the combined significance and importance of all such trees to the character of the site, and to the screening of the site (and any development it may subsequently host) in views from external viewpoints. If all/most lower quality trees were to be removed, on the basis that they are all perhaps perceived as “expendable” then the character of the site would be radically altered and any development would be much more readily visible in views from open countryside locations beyond.

Due to the amount of existing peripheral tree cover which would need to be removed to accommodate the proposed layout, and which would be detrimental in itself and lead to detrimental impacts as noted above, I consider that the submitted scheme would be an unacceptable overdevelopment which fails to respect the character of the site and its surroundings, and fails to respect the existing site constraints. Following on from this, the overdevelopment would not provide sufficient spatial capacity to accommodate substantial mitigatory new planting which would provide dense and effective screening of the development in external views.

In terms of the character of the proposed layout itself, this appears very formal/regimented and would be dominated by the buildings, access roadways and long rows of parking/vehicles; this would be out of keeping with the rural village character of the area and would exacerbate the loss of existing tree cover and incongruous visual impact.

Leaving the actual principle of development and other planning issues to others, I do not consider that the proposed form and scale of development is acceptable as it would be overdevelopment leading to significant detrimental impact on the character of the site and its surroundings and therefore of the Conservation Area, and would result in significant adverse/incongruous visual impact.

Steve Massey Arboricultural Officer
Development Services
High Peak Borough Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

www.highpeak.gov.uk | Follow HPBC on [X \(Formerly Twitter\)](#) | [Facebook](#)
www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk | Follow SMDC on [X \(Formerly Twitter\)](#) | [Facebook](#)

A close-up of a logo? Description automatically generated



Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at <https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/YourData>
