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

Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0297 Site Address: Land off Alwoodley Edge Lane Endon Staffordshire ST9 9DG Stoke On Trent Comments by: Dr M J Majekodunmi

From:

Gateways
Stoney Lane
Endon
Endon

Phone:

Email:

Submission: Objection

Comments: I have set out my most significant comments against the individual documents forming the application below.

The Application Form has a section entitled 'Assessment of Flood Risk'. The tick box states that surface water will be disposed of by way of a soakaway. This is no more than a natural hollow, it is not a constructed soakaway. As known to the Applicant, the soakaway is insufficient as surface water regularly enters into the back garden/patio area of our property. The Applicant has refused to take any measures to alleviate the current position. The application is not supported by any engineering or flood assessment but the compaction of a very large area in close proximity to our property and the creation of a further downhill slope can only aggravate the present unsatisfactory position.

Paragraph 4.3 of the Conclusions Section of the Final Ecological Impact Assessment report dated the 9th June 2025 under the sub-heading 'Bats' details the lighting considerations for the lighting to be installed as part of the Works. This is in serious contradiction to the assurance relied upon by the Applicant set out in paragraph 5.31 of the Planning DAS Final report of June 2025 which states 'no floodlighting is required or proposed as part of the application'. The introduction of lighting would be completely out of character with the rural/agricultural landscape which would rightly justify rejection of the application.

I disagree with a number of the statements made within Planning DAS Final Report. I have set out my comments in the order found in the report.

2. Site Description

'The application site is bounded by open fields on all sides.' This is not correct. The site is part of a larger field owned by the Applicant and used for agricultural purposes. Edge Lane and residential property runs along one side and the gardens of the referred to properties off Stoney Lane then form the surrounding area including our own property. It is misleading to suggest that there are open fields all around the site. The size of the site is said to be 1,500 sq m. The size of the proposed arena is 800 sq. m meaning it will occupy over half of the site and will dominate the locality.

3. Proposal

'Due to the sloping and undulating ground levels a small degree of cut and fill will be required in order to facilitate the proposed development' The site has a significant fall from Edge Lane down to the rear of two of the properties

(including our own) hence the problem with water coming off the site. The Applicant does own a parcel of flat land next to his own property which would be a more appropriate location for a riding arena.

“The proposed riding arena would be utilised in conjunction with the adjacent stables and used solely by the applicant for personal and private use.” This point is repeated on numerous occasions throughout the application including in Section 7, “Design & Access Statement” under the sub-heading “Use” which repeats that the arena is “for the personal and private use of the applicant”. The Applicant is a gentleman in his eighties. I would suggest that the actual users will be the applicant’s extensive local family (as is the case with the stable) and friends of the family.

5. Assessment

The site falls within the North Staffordshire Green Belt with tighter controls on what form of development can be permitted.

The Assessment does not address the significant change of use proposed within this application. The site is in a rural and agricultural area. The larger parcel of land is still used by the applicant for agricultural use. The site has and is used for agricultural use including the grazing of sheep. This is historic farming land with numerous farms and rolling countryside in the vicinity. The proposed arena will be completely out of keeping to the surrounding landscape and, due to its relative size in the site, will stand out in an obtrusive way. Paragraph 5.3 of the Assessment records that the “Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and outlines those forms of development which are exceptionally not considered to be inappropriate and harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.” An arena in this location is inappropriate and harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The Assessment refers to its use as outdoor recreation but according to the application it is solely for the applicant’s private use. An arena for the limited enjoyment of the applicant does not amount to providing outdoor recreation as envisaged by the NPFF.

Local Plan policy DC1 states that all development shall “reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area”. This application runs completely contrary to that policy. It amounts to the opposite, destroying the special character and heritage of the area. The policy supports schemes which would “promote a positive sense of place”; again, these works run contrary to developing and enhancing the sense of place in this environment.

Local Plan Policy DC3 which deals with landscape and settlement setting which states that developments which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement will be resisted. This policy position sums up the precise impact this arena would have on the local countryside.

Paragraph 5.3 states that “The proposed riding arena has been positioned adjacent to the existing stable block in the least obtrusive and most practical location on the applicant’s landholding.” As stated above, this is not the case, the applicant’s landholding contains a parcel of flat land (not requiring the significant cut and fill proposed) next to premises which would provide “cover” for such an arena.

Paragraph 5.31 glibly states that the architects consider the few properties “to be sufficiently divorced from the proposed development so as not to result in any adverse impact.” Our property will be adversely affected by way of additional surface water runoff and having a riding arena as a view instead of rolling countryside from your garden in the green belt (Local Plan Policy DC3 expressly states that views into the works is a ground for resisting the application). The assessment only reaches its stated view on the express basis that the arena is solely “for the applicants personal and private use only in conjunction with their dwelling” (see paragraph 5.33 of the assessment). As stated above that will not be the case. The assessment is, therefore, fundamentally flawed and undermined. indeed, the only conclusion which can be drawn is that the assessment would not have supported the application if the true extent of the intended use was recorded.

6. Conclusion

Paragraph 6.1 sets out the NPFF’s demand that development foster the delivery of sustainable development. This is not sustainable, once the applicant does not wish to use the arena then it will fall into disrepair and re-wilding will take place and become an unsightly area instead of being part of the rural agricultural scene it currently is.

I totally disagree with the conclusions in paragraph 6.2 for the reasons set out in my comments.

7. Design and Access Statement

Under the sub-heading of Use and Amount, reference is repeated to it being for the private use of the applicant. I do not believe this to be the true intention.

Under the heading 'Access' it is stated that the 'proposed development would not result in any intensification in the use of the site and is proposed solely for private and personal use.' Again, this is not accepted as the intention, it is understood that the extended family and friends would be using the arena which would significantly increase the intensification of the use of the site.

I would invite the LPA to refuse to grant planning permission.

I wonder whether it was a Freudian slip in paragraph 5.31 where the assessment states 'it is considered that the proposed development would be prejudicial to the reasonable enjoyment of the surrounding residential dwellings' a statement with which I concur.

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