
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 25 July 2025 21:30
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0237 Site Address: Side Farm Cotton Bank Cotton Staffordshire ST10 3DU
Stoke On Trent Comments by: Richard Keeling

From:

Cotton Lane Farm
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Submission: Objection

Comments: I wish to submit a strong objection to Planning application SMD/2025/0237 for the erection of four glamping lodges and infrastructure including four hot tubs, all of which are totally inappropriate for this location.

I have a number of serious concerns including for example, High Risk Groundwater Vulnerability, the proximity to protected sites meaning a clearly unacceptable ecological risk, unsuitable and dangerous access to the site, visual environmental and social harm and I am concerned that all factors may not be fully considered by the Planning Authority, and that all relevant bodies may not have been made aware of this application to give it any consideration. As owner of a section of the private track which must be used for access to the site I have received no notice/communication from Staffordshire Moorlands DC and was made aware by neighbours.

It is my belief that the introduction of four glamping lodges, hot tubs and associated infrastructure in the proposed location poses a real risk to protected habitats and species. I don't believe Natural England has been consulted but believe it should.

The development is proposed within a designated High Risk Groundwater Vulnerability Zone yet no assessment is provided. My concern is that chemically treated hot tub water would regularly drain into the ground and ultimately into the closeby Cotton Dell Nature Park, a Site of Special Scientific Interest

The proposed development appears to be in direct conflict with a number of policies within Staffs Moorlands 2020 Local Plan. The site in question is surrounded by Nature Conservation Sites leading to the SSSI and it is my belief that the development will lead to noise and light pollution to protected and priority species, soil and water pollution, disruption to species migration, and degradation of the network and semi natural habitats.

There will clearly be human and vehicular disturbance in an area previously experiencing minimal traffic.

Outdoor glamping with hot tubs typically involves lighting, and this is harmful to Bats, nocturnal insects, ground nesting birds and small mammals. NPPF para 185c states any development should limit the impact of light pollution on dark landscapes and nature conservation.

According to public health standards, hot tubs must be emptied, cleaned, refilled once a week or whenever new guests arrive. In an area where water pressure is already a serious issue for neighbouring properties the filling, cleaning and also normal use of water by up to 16 guests will create massive water pressure problems based on around 4500/5000 extra litres a month, and then a significant environmental problem as water percolates through to the SSSI, Cotton Dell.

The proposed development is in an area which has already been identified by the Environment Agency as having High Groundwater Vulnerability. I believe that contamination due to shallow water tables and permeable soil types would adversely effect the water supply to local farms and dwellings.

The proposed development would rely on unsuitable and clearly unsafe access "road" for guests via a shared private track. The track itself is just 8 to 9 feet wide, occasionally measuring less than 8 Feet. There are no formal passing places. Pedestrians are unable to walk or even squeeze past a car in one long section and have to climb onto high verges and hold onto the loose stone walls to keep their balance. The photo on the application which is of the very beginning of this private track does not in my opinion represent the reality of the remaining mile or so ie the ACTUAL track, this point is VERY IMPORTANT. Regular use of the private track by paying guests who have no knowledge of the track, plus the narrowness and the blind bends make it dangerous. They could be meeting other vehicles or walkers, dogs and excited children with their parents walking the other way and this could no doubt lead to potential accidents and injury issues. Livestock on other parts of the private track similarly. Emergency access is inadequate. The track was never designed for the type of use proposed with regular guest and service vehicles for this proposed commercial venture. It is interesting that the traffic survey done did not even measure traffic on the private track, it measured traffic on Garston Road for some reason. We have been led to believe it is anticipated "there will not be much more traffic along the track than currently" however I disagree as common sense tells me that 4 glamping pods each for four people will definitely increase the number of vehicles using the private track.

The proposal includes installation for bike shelters which indicates guests may be encouraged to use bikes on the private track. The track is a fully private track from end to end and public rights are limited to pedestrian use. In 2001 a formal decision following evidence collection over a number of years was made to Staffs County Council to change the use of the track to a public bridleway. This was unanimously refused with the following reasons recorded

Lack of safety for pedestrians, poor visibility and narrowness, inability to safely pass oncoming users, not an adopted public highway and no infrastructure in place to safely support shared cycling use. I believe that the exact conditions are still there, nothing has changed. THIS MUST BE CONSIDERED by the planners. Guests vehicles would be meeting not only walkers, dogs, children on foot on the aforementioned blind bends, they will be meeting cyclists. Speeding signs will not in my opinion reduce the danger.

The issue of noise from the guests needs to be considered. Generally groups of holiday makers in hot tubs cause noise, usually late into the evening/night, often enjoying a bottle of wine or two. The peace and tranquility of this beautiful and peaceful place where sound travels down the valley would end. Neighbouring residents would be constantly disturbed.

To conclude I strongly object to this proposal. As owner of part of the private track my disappointment that the planning team did not contact me about the proposal pales into insignificance when the many concerning aspects listed above are considered. Environmental impact, Access and Highway safety, extremely poor water

infrastructure, legal instruments which govern the track, lack of need and oversupply (the application has not even mentioned the close by Moneystone Quarry site which has recently been granted permission for 250 lodges and a leisure complex!!) The development would permanently alter the rural character of the area.

I believe that the development is poorly conceived, unjustified and incompatible with its setting and infrastructure and strongly urge the Local Planning Authority to refuse the application in full.

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