

Planning Department
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Moorlands House
Stockwell Street
Leek
Staffordshire ST13 6HQ

By Email: planningcomments@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

Date: 7th August 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Objection to Planning Application SMD/2025/0305 – Proposed Erection of 9 Bungalows at Kingsley Playing Fields, Holt Lane, Kingsley

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application on several grounds outlined below:

Inappropriate Development on Green Belt Land

The proposed site lies within designated Green Belt, which serves to prevent urban sprawl, safeguard countryside, and preserve rural community character such as that of Kingsley. Both national and local policies strictly limit Green Belt development to exceptional cases, which this application does not meet. Approving this would set a harmful precedent, accelerating the irreversible loss of protected green space and damaging the village's landscape, identity, and ecology.

Misuse of Age-Restricted Housing

The original approval for the existing four bungalows included an age restriction for occupants over 55. However, it is apparent these bungalows are now occupied by younger individuals, undermining the justification for their initial approval and raising concerns about enforcement and reliability of age restrictions to support further expansion.

Increased Flood Risk

This area is prone to surface water flooding, and the development's increase in impermeable surfaces will exacerbate drainage issues. The application lacks credible sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to mitigate flood risk effectively.

Traffic, Road Safety, and Parking Concerns

Holt Lane and the surrounding road network are narrow, winding, and lack adequate pedestrian pathways, making them unsuitable for increased traffic volumes. The addition of nine new bungalows will significantly increase vehicle movements in and out of the village, especially during peak hours. This will exacerbate existing congestion problems, creating delays and frustration for residents.

The narrow roads, combined with tight bends and limited visibility, pose serious safety risks for both drivers and pedestrians, including children and elderly residents. There are no dedicated cycle lanes or safe crossing points, increasing the danger for vulnerable road users. Moreover, the proximity of local schools means traffic congestion already causes hazardous parking and drop-off situations. The development offers no effective strategy to mitigate these impacts, such as improved road infrastructure or traffic calming measures.

Currently, demand for parking spaces forces residents and visitors to park in unsafe locations, further compromising road safety and community accessibility.

Impact on Wildlife and Habitat

The playing fields and adjacent green spaces serve as habitats for local wildlife, including birds, bats, hedgehogs, and pollinators. Development would cause habitat fragmentation, reducing biodiversity and removing valuable wildlife corridors.

Environmental Impact and Carbon Emissions

Construction and increased vehicle use will raise local CO₂ emissions. The removal of trees and green spaces eliminates natural carbon sinks, directly opposing the goals of climate-resilient planning and UK Net Zero commitments.

Conflict with Staffordshire's Net Zero and Sustainability Commitments

The Staffordshire Sustainability Board's 2022 commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 or sooner is contradicted by this proposal, which lacks low-carbon transport options, SuDS, renewable energy features, and harms biodiversity.

Strain on Local Services

Existing healthcare, education, and utility services are already under pressure in Kingsley. This development will increase demand without corresponding infrastructure investment.

Loss of Community Space and Long-Term Disruption

The site was previously occupied by a derelict youth club and changing rooms, as well as a football field that was actively used by the community. Rather than allowing continued decline, investment could have been made to restore these facilities as valuable communal spaces for the village. Instead, the ongoing replacement of this land with private housing reduces shared community amenities and will harm village cohesion.

Community Opposition

Strong opposition from residents reflects concerns about unsustainable development that ignores Kingsley's rural character and capacity. Repeated objections by residents to previous applications on this site have not been meaningfully acknowledged, leading to a growing mistrust in local planning decisions.

Misleading Flooding Justification

The application's suggestion that it addresses flooding is misleading. The housing-led plans (Drawings 6060-020 and 6060-021) focus solely on dwellings with no meaningful flood mitigation.

Review of Submitted Plans

- The diversion of Kingsley Footpath 3 along the hedge line, and its altered connection to Footpaths 1 and 2, will disrupt established and well-used pedestrian routes. Footpaths 1 and 2 are integral to local connectivity and community access to green space. Diverting and fragmenting these paths reduces accessibility and convenience for residents, especially those who rely on walking for local travel or recreation.
- Proposed landscaping features (native planting and pond) do not compensate for increased impermeable surfaces and habitat loss.

- Bungalow designs reflect suburban styles inconsistent with Kingsley's rural architecture, contributing to unwanted urbanisation.

Conclusion

This proposal is inappropriate, unsustainable, and conflicts with national Green Belt policy and Staffordshire's climate commitments. I urge the Planning Department to reject this application to protect Kingsley's environment, character, infrastructure, and long-term wellbeing.

Please confirm receipt of this objection and keep me informed of the decision.

Yours faithfully,

Claire Harrison

4 Hastehill, Avenue Kingsley, ST10 2BB
