

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0375
Site Address: Land off Broad Street Leek Staffordshire
Comments by: Grace Myint

From:
15
Southbank Street
Leek
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Phone: [REDACTED]
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Submission: Objection
Comments:

Leek is an historic market town which prides itself on an array of independent business, including coffee shops. In fact, there are over a dozen coffee shops and cafes in Leek town centre, with additional establishments on the outskirts, including McDonald's which offers a drive-thru option for those wishing to purchase coffee in this manner.

A Starbucks with Drive-Thru would contribute very little to the town and, in reality, produce multiple detrimental impacts to the town, including:

- Adding another US-based multinational chain to the town, detracting business from locally-owned and run businesses that are not universally known to tourists visiting the town. Such tourists are likely to see Starbucks as they enter the town and purchase coffee there before they've even reached the town centre and seen what local businesses have to offer. This impact has the potential to be detrimental to those independent businesses, not to mention supporting a company which paid no UK corporation tax in 2024.
- Detracting from the aesthetic of the town, which is home to various listed buildings, article 4 direction properties, and conservation areas owing to its exemplary Victorian architecture. The modern and mass-produced design and aesthetics of Starbucks, with its bright lights into the evening, is at complete odds with this architecture and not only damages the overall look of the town, but additionally is off-putting to see for tourists visiting Leek for its charm and residents living nearby. An example would be the stark contrast with nearby business, The Gallery, which is a beautiful example of a historic building with ample charm which would exist in close proximity to what is arguably a garish sight.
- Contributing to what is already a significant traffic issue on Broad Street. There is frequently heavy traffic and standstill traffic on Broad Street for a large part of the day, with vehicles queuing for long distances at the Compton/ Broad/ Brook/ St. Edward St junction in all directions. It is nonsensical, on the basis of noise and air pollution and wait times, to permit the development of a business which will promote more vehicle traffic in this area, with a dedicated drive-thru feeding directly into this issue.

Whilst the plot location has been disused for a significant amount of time, its impact as such is markedly less negative than the proposed Starbucks development. It is for more in the town's interest to encourage and wait for a different business investment than what has been proposed and I strongly object to planning permission being granted.

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