

Mrs K King
86 Stallington Road
Blythe Bridge
ST11 9PD

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

6 November 2025

Application Reference: SMD/2025/0385 – Higherland Farm

Site Address: Higherland Farm, Caverswall Common Lane, Caverswall, Stoke-on-Trent, ST11 9EU

Subject: Formal Objection to Proposed Development

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to the above planning application on the following grounds:

1. Highway Safety and Site Access

The proposed development involves lorry access Caverswall Common Lane close to Sandy Lane, a narrow rural lane unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles. This poses a significant risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and other road users. The recent perimeter wall constructed by the applicant has been built higher and wider than the previous boundary wall, obstructing visibility for vehicles exiting Sandy Lane. Our measurements show the wall is approximately 1.4m in height, exceeding the 1m limit before planning permission is required. I have found no evidence of planning consent for this wall. Additionally, the lights installed on this wall cause glare at night, blinding drivers exiting Sandy Lane and increasing the danger at this junction.

My parents reside on Sandy Lane, and due to the height and width of the newly constructed wall, I am unable to obtain a clear view of oncoming traffic when exiting Sandy Lane without pulling into the carriageway, creating a significant safety hazard. Furthermore, this demonstrates a clear disregard for community safety and planning regulations, as the applicant has already undertaken works that compromise visibility and increase risk without appropriate permissions.



Image of new wall at Highlander Farm, extending into the Sandy Lane

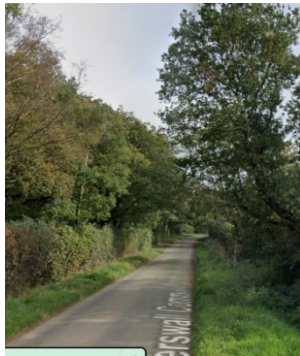
Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy T1 – Development and Sustainable Transport:** Requires safe and suitable access for all users and avoidance of adverse impacts on the transport network.
- **SMDC Policy SS10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy:** Development should maintain rural character and avoid harm to highway safety.
- **NPPF Paragraph 111:** Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

2. Traffic Impact on Narrow Lanes

The proposal will significantly increase traffic on rural lanes that are extremely narrow and feature multiple sharp bends, making them wholly unsuitable for large vehicles or high traffic volumes. These lanes lack adequate passing places and visibility, which will lead to congestion, increased risk of collisions on blind corners, and accelerated deterioration of the road surface. The introduction of heavy goods vehicles on such constrained routes poses a serious hazard to all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and local residents.

Images of access routes



Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy T1:** Development should not result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network.
- **NPPF Paragraph 110:** Requires development to ensure safe and suitable access for all users.

3. Noise and Disturbance

The operation of the site and associated lorry movements will cause unacceptable noise and disturbance to nearby residents, including my elderly parents who live directly behind the proposed site. This will negatively affect their health and quality of life.

Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy SD4 – Pollution and Amenity:** Development must avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise and disturbance.
- **NPPF Paragraph 185:** Planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the effects of pollution (including noise) on health and quality of life.

4. Environmental Impact and Protected Species

Barns adjacent to the proposed site are known nesting sites for barn owls, a protected species, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as a 'Schedule 1'. Development here risks destroying habitat and breaches biodiversity obligations.

Images of the barn that the Barn Owls nest in, in relation to the site



Images of the Barn Owls in the barn



Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy NE1 – Biodiversity and Geological Resources:** Requires conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and avoidance of harm to protected species.
- **SMDC Plan for Nature (2023):** Commits to protecting priority species and achieving biodiversity net gain.
- **NPPF Paragraph 180:** Development should avoid harm to biodiversity and provide net gains where possible.

5. Character of the Area

The proposal introduces industrial activity into a tranquil rural setting, harming the character and landscape of the Full Greenbelt area. This is contrary to the principles of sustainable rural development.

Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy DC1 – Design Considerations:** Development must respect local character, landscape setting, and rural identity.
- **SMDC Policy SS10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy:** Protects the countryside from inappropriate development.
- **NPPF Paragraph 130:** Development should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

6. Loss of Privacy and Light

The proposed development will result in loss of privacy and possibly light for my elderly parents' property, which lies directly behind the site. This will significantly impact their residential amenity.

Relevant Policies:

- **SMDC Policy DC1:** Requires development to protect the amenity of existing residents.
- **NPPF Paragraph 130(f):** Development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

7. Community Safety

My children regularly play in this area, and the increased traffic combined with the applicant's demonstrated disregard for safety through their recent perimeter wall works raises serious concerns for their wellbeing and that of other community members. These rural lanes are not only used by local residents but are also popular routes for horse riders, who require extra space and visibility to remain safe. The introduction of heavy goods vehicles on these narrow, winding lanes significantly heightens the risk of accidents involving vulnerable road users, including children, pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians. This disregard for planning regulations and community safety is unacceptable and further illustrates why this development is inappropriate for this location.

8. Viability and Risk of Future Change of Use

Given the saturation of similar businesses in the wider area (Stone Valley, Caverswall Common; Milton Garden Products in Blythe Bridge; Paving UK, Blythe Bridge; B&Q, Meir Park), it is hard to understand the viability of this proposed business. This would then leave a large parcel of land with a change of use, making it easier for future development.

9. Cumulative Impact and Sustainability

This development, when considered alongside recent changes to the site (including the perimeter wall and lighting), creates a cumulative impact that is harmful to highway safety, residential amenity, and the rural environment. It fails to meet the principles of sustainable development as outlined in NPPF Paragraph 8, which requires a balance of economic, social, and environmental objectives. The proposal does not contribute positively to the local community and undermines long-term sustainability goals.

Conclusion

This proposal conflicts with multiple policies in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. It poses unacceptable risks to highway safety, residential amenity, biodiversity, and the character of the area. I respectfully request that the application be refused.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K King', written in a cursive style.

Kelly King