

Mr Keith Clement
Hilltop Cottage,
Caverswall Common,
Caverswall,
S-O-T,
Staffordshire,
ST11 9EU

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9th November, 2025

Higherland Farm, SMD/2025/0385

Dear Sir,

I very strongly object to this planning application. My house is attached to Higherland Farm and I am the applicant's immediate neighbour. I also own the field that is adjacent to the field where the development is proposed. I am very disappointed that an application of this type has even been considered by my neighbours. It shows no consideration for the wellbeing of people living close by or further afield and I can only see it as being for their own personal gain.

I am shocked that I only heard about this planning application through word of mouth by locals. I thought that planning laws stated that immediate neighbours had to be informed of any planning application that could impact them. I have seen no public posting of the application anywhere near me and I have received no letter from planning authorities about the matter. The applicants did not let me know about the application until it was live. They did not seek my opinions on it before sending the application in.

I was raised in Hilltop Cottage as a child and my family have owned that and Higherland Farm and the fields around for generations. I can tell you that it has not been a working cattle farm in over 40 years but the application says it is a currently working cattle farm. That is not the case.

With me living so close I would feel the most impact of this proposed development. It would greatly affect my physical and mental health if it was passed. I cannot bear the thought of the huge increase in noise from a working stone merchants only a few metres away from me. The constant beeping from reversing signalling on forklifts, lorries etc. and the banter from workers and the bang and crash from loading operations. There will far more diesel fumes off the wagons and a lot of dust kicked up from normal working. The lanes outside would be covered in dust and debris. I would see lots of heavy vehicles greatly affecting my views of the beautiful countryside. There would be vehicles queuing on Caverswall Common which is a narrow lane without enough room for two big lorries to pass each other.

That field has always been green belt. It's always had lots of wildlife on it just like my field does which neighbours it. I have English Blue Bells and wild Orchids on my ground just like they do. I know that Barn Owls nest in the grounds of Rose Cottage a stone's throw from that field. It's a thoroughfare for all types of animals including [REDACTED] foxes, rabbits, voles, moles and hares. I see white and blue herons landing not far from the site in a neighbour's garden because he has a pond and they take frogs from it. I don't know who did the environmental report but shouldn't they have spoken to people locally about the wildlife?

I think that the amount of traffic that this development would attract would mean that people walking or people in cars and on horses would be put in a lot more danger. All of the lanes approaching here are very narrow and we have lots of very dangerous blind bends. The junction

outside my house between Caverswall Common and Sandy Lane is very hard to get out from because of the blind spot from Higherland Farm's wall. It's an accident waiting to happen especially if you have large trucks hurtling up and down the Common.

When my business partner Mark Jones (the previous owner of Higherland Farm) lived there we used the large, green shed for storing and maintaining agricultural machinery. We used the existing gateway for accessing both the sheds and the field where hard standing is being proposed. There was no need for another gateway. The field was maintained by accessing through that existing gate. The site already contains enough hard standing and storage for the applicant's purposes. It makes me think that the applicant's motives for getting this planning improved aren't what they say they are. Would it make it easier to get houses built on there if it became a brownfields site? That would explain the need for such a wide new gate further up from their existing one. Would granting this application open the flood gates for similar applications around here?

This is a rural residential area much loved by the locals. In the country you expect farming and horticulture but you don't expect to see a builder's merchants plonked in your backyard. It's green belt. It shouldn't be allowed. It's not in keeping with the area.

Please refuse this application for the sake of all residents.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

K. Clement

A small black rectangular redaction box covering contact information.