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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 February 2026 14:44
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

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Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0537 Site Address: LAND BETWEEN RUDYARD ROAD AND HOT LANE Rudyard Road Biddulph Moor Staffordshire Comments by: Andrea Drumm

From:
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Submission: Objection

Comments: Planning Objection: Outline Application for Up to Nine Dwellings ȧ Land Opposite Rudyard Road / Hot Lane, Biddulph Moor

Introduction:

I strongly object to the above application on multiple grounds, including impacts on protected species, landscape and Green Belt openness, flooding, highway safety, and the historic rural character of Biddulph Moor.

The proposed development is inappropriate and contrary to both national and local planning policy.

1. Ecology and Protected Species

Bats:

There is direct evidence of bat activity in the immediate vicinity. A bat was recently found on a doorstep on Hot Lane. These observations demonstrate that bats are actively inhabiting the area.

The site comprises open Green Belt land and boundary features that provide suitable foraging and movement habitat. Despite this, no preliminary ecological appraisal or bat survey has been submitted. Given the confirmed presence of bats locally and the suitability of the site as habitat, there is a reasonable likelihood that protected species could be affected by the proposed development. In the absence of adequate survey information, the local planning authority cannot be satisfied that the proposal would avoid harm to protected species, as required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and national planning policy.

Owls:

The site and surrounding Green Belt support regular owl activity. All owl species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, safeguarding them from disturbance, harm to nests, and loss of habitat. The proposed development would introduce increased lighting, noise, and human activity, which are likely to adversely affect owls and other nocturnal wildlife.

Artificial lighting, in particular, can disrupt hunting behaviour and fragment dark corridors essential for survival. No robust, site-specific survey evidence has been provided to demonstrate that owls are absent or that their habitat would not be harmed. Without adequate ecological assessment and mitigation measures, the proposal fails to demonstrate that protected species would be safeguarded.

2. Green Belt and Landscape Impact

The application site lies within designated Green Belt land, where national policy gives ‘great weight’ to protecting openness and preventing urban sprawl. Residential development of up to nine dwellings would be inappropriate, harmful by definition, and there are no very special circumstances demonstrated to justify approval.

The proposal would result in permanent loss of openness, erode rural character, and undermine the purpose of Green Belt designation. Previous planning applications for development in the area have been refused due to unacceptable landscape impact, demonstrating the sensitivity of the site. Residential development represents a greater and more permanent form of harm than previously refused agricultural buildings. Approval would also set a precedent for incremental development within the Green Belt.

Specific landscape concerns include:

- Loss of openness and visual harm to the countryside.
- Intrusion on long views across the Moor and harm to the rural setting of nearby settlements.
- Potential cumulative impact from future developments.

3. Heritage and Local Character

Biddulph Moor is recognised for its open, elevated moorland landscape, traditional field patterns, historic cottages, stone walls, and farmsteads. These features contribute to local identity, heritage, and visual amenity. Introducing up to nine dwellings would significantly alter the character of the area, eroding the sense of place, and impacting public views from footpaths and recreational areas valued by the local community.

4. Flooding and Drainage

Rudyard Road and the nearby Parklands cul-de-sac already experience regular flooding during heavy rainfall due to insufficient capacity in the existing drainage and sewage system. Additional runoff from the proposed development would exacerbate these problems, increasing the risk of property flooding and placing additional strain on local infrastructure.

5. Highway Safety and Access

The proposed development raises significant highway safety concerns. Access from a single-track section of Hot Lane is close to the village hall and playing fields, which host regular activities including Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, and parent-and-baby groups, weddings, parties and community events. This area has high pedestrian activity, including vulnerable children, and lacks footpaths. Additional traffic would increase the risk of accidents.

The alternative access via Rudyard Road is constrained by existing trees, hedges, and the Parklands cul-de-sac junction. The road is heavily used by vehicles both day and night, school buses, agricultural machinery, and horses, with frequent speeding above the 30 mph limit. The proposed development would increase the likelihood of conflicts between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

7. Development of further housing

There has been a notable increase in the number and variety of properties for sale on Biddulph Moor over the last few years.

Not too long ago there was over 20 properties for sale, some of which were on the market for a considerable length of time. The variety of properties for sale should cover the requirements of anybody wishing to reside in the village without the need to build more. The land in question is green belt and should remain protected.

Conclusion

The proposed development of up to nine dwellings on this Green Belt site would:

- ❧ Harm protected species and their habitat (bats and owls).
- ❧ Result in permanent loss of openness and rural character.
- ❧ Undermine the historic and recreational value of Biddulph Moor.
- ❧ Exacerbate local flooding.
- ❧ Create highway safety risks for residents and visitors.
- ❧ Cause an increase in noise from construction traffic and have ongoing impacts on surrounding residents and their right to enjoy the peace and quiet of their homes.

The application fails to comply with national planning policy, local planning guidance, and wildlife legislation. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application be refused.

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