

4th September, 2026

Dear Planning Officer,

We would like to register our objections in reference to the following planning application
Ref: SMD/2026/0370 at 137, Willow Drive, ST13 7FG, pertaining to a change of use from a double garage into ancillary accommodation.

As per our previous letter of 16th June 2026 relating to the original planning application for this property (**Ref: SMD/2026/0216**), much of the content of those original comments still holds true. These properties (nos. 135, 137, 72 and 74) on Willow Drive sit around a block paved turning area designed solely for the use of these specific properties. We are situated at the head of the cul de sac therefore with no through traffic. One of the benefits of living at this end of Willow Drive is that we enjoy a less congested parking situation in comparison to much of the rest of Willow Drive. Moreover, we bought our house for the very reason of its position, so that we could enjoy less passing traffic and associated car parking congestion. Our houses are nicely situated affording us all our privacy and peace.

In this context then we have these specific concerns relating to this planning application:

1. **Planning Strategy:** There remains a question of how this 'ancillary' dwelling would be managed in the future. Under the wording of the planning application, it is proposed that this unit be used for friends and family who may visit. A 'visit' would naturally suggest a short and limited visit of maybe a number of days. What steps are in place though, to ensure that this conversion doesn't end up being rented out to paying guests? Or indeed as a holiday let, as intended on the previous application? Whatever the intentions for the dwelling at the point of application, what happens if or when the property is sold? We would presume that once a planning application is passed, there will be limited recourse to prevent this conversion being used for financial gain in any number of ways, which then reverts us back to previous comments and concerns about noise, parking, social disruption and management of the turning area bordering our properties. If SMDC approves planning for an 'ancillary annexe' you will be aware that you run the risk of it being converted into a separate dwelling later down the line. As such, a relevant planning condition would need to be attached to the approval detailing that the dwelling must not:
 - a. be used as a holiday let
 - b. be let on a short or long term basis
 - c. be occupied as an independent dwelling separate to the main property

There are pretty clear indicators here that this planning application reflects signs of it becoming a separate dwelling as opposed to an ancillary accommodation. These are:

- Plans which detail a fully equipped kitchen designed for autonomous household meal preparation
- It has its own dedicated entrance, a separate front door visible from the road
- Physically subdivided parking
- The back garden area is divided by a fence to provide a private, independent garden area.
- The plans reflect the ability for it to be completely self-contained which poses the possibility of it being rented out to private tenants, used as a commercial Airbnb/holiday let, or sold independently. Given the previous application, is this a reasonable assumption?

2. **Traffic:** Ancillary accommodation of this sort will inevitably bring with it increased traffic. Despite proposed plans showing a one bedroom conversion, it is quite conceivable that more than one vehicle could attend the property thereby increasing congestion at this end of Willow Drive. Related to this are concerns over safety aspects for young children who regularly play at this end of Willow Drive. Visitors unfamiliar with this road layout may inadvertently present a danger to children playing. We are not suggesting that people shouldn't receive visitors, that would be a ridiculous assumption. What we are questioning is whether visitors will really only be temporary and infrequent, rather than staying for a sustained period. This is a reasonable assertion given our comments in the previous paragraph.

3. **Parking, Noise and Disruption :**

Despite the proposed provision of extra parking on the submitted plans, the potential for an increased number of cars in the future (should the property ever be sold) could exceed what is appropriate for this small turning area serving 4 properties. It is not inconceivable for a property of the size of no. 137 to have 4 cars on the drive (perhaps 2 adults and 2 older children who also drive). Additional cars for an ancillary property could mean up to 6 cars in total, a quantity of vehicles for which the planning application does not accommodate. There remains insufficient parking for a property of this size and we have concerns over whether parking could in future spill over into the turning area, resulting in cars being parked (albeit temporarily) in front of our houses and causing obstructions in the turning space. Moreover, significant parts of the turning area are not owned by no. 137 and we would object strongly to cars being left in front of our own property and in areas which are not part of the public highway, but owned by us and fellow neighbours. In addition the prospect of squeezing another independent dwelling between

nos. 135 and 137 seems inappropriate given we chose our houses based on their spacious plot size and disconnect from neighbouring properties.

In the previous application the council detailed concerns over 'over-intensification of uses in this purely residential area'. We would again urge SMDC to think about the issue of over-development of this site, the very reason for which permitted development rights were removed in the original planning for St. Edward's Park. The subsequent extra noise and disruption associated with this dwelling could be unacceptable both in terms of cars accessing the property but also in terms of outdoor noise and general increased activity across the whole site.

In summary, we believe that this planning application does not fully take into account nor sufficiently overcome the parking issues at this end of the development. In addition it does not address concerns over the eventual and permanent intended use of the space, as detailed above. It clearly presents challenges for the permanent residents at this end of Willow Drive and has the potential to create traffic congestion and social disruption. We would also ask that SMDC reflects carefully on the reasons given for refusal of the previous application (SMD/2026/0216) in the context of decision making for this present decision. We would request therefore that this planning application is refused. Should planning be approved however, it is imperative that conditions are attached and enforced to ensure this annex remains an ancillary accommodation only and not a separate and independent dwelling for present and any future use or sale of the property.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments in relation to this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Alastair and Nicky Tapley
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