

Objection to Planning Application: Installation of 8 CCTV Camera Poles at Stoke Lodge Playing Fields

I wish to register my objection in the strongest terms to the proposed installation of 6-metre, triple-sensor surveillance columns at Stoke Lodge Playing Fields. One of the proposed camera poles has a direct and unobstructed sightline into my bathroom window, which has never required frosted glass due to the privacy afforded by the natural topography. The proposed equipment - which consists not of 8 cameras but 24 high-resolution 5-megapixel sensors (three per pole) - would fundamentally undermine that privacy.

1. Breach of Article 8 – Right to Private and Family Life

The European Convention on Human Rights (via the Human Rights Act 1998) requires public bodies to avoid disproportionate interference with private life. A camera pole with 360-degree coverage and face-recognition-capability resolution directed toward habitable rooms is a serious and unjustified interference. This alone is sufficient to reject the proposal.

2. Failure to satisfy UK GDPR: necessity and proportionality

Under data protection law, any surveillance must be:

- Necessary,
- Proportionate,
- The least intrusive option, and
- Supported by a clearly evidenced problem.

No evidence has been provided to justify high-resolution, 24-camera, 360-degree surveillance in a residential setting, nor has there been any explanation of why less intrusive methods would not suffice. There are already cameras on either end of the pavilion at the midpoint of the field and one high on the red brick tower behind the pavilion, along with cameras at either end of the storage building on the east end of the land and another which looks west along the Parkland. The school claims that the fence was previously vandalised in 2023 yet to my knowledge, not a single person has been held responsible for this despite the high-quality surveillance equipment, clearly this is not a suitable solution to the alleged problem. The school's previous installation and operation of covert and unlawful CCTV in 2021 further undermines confidence in its role as a competent or responsible data controller.

3. Severe Amenity Harm (BCS21, DM29, NPPF §130)

My property currently enjoys an outlook of open grassland and mature trees. A 6-metre industrial surveillance column is visually intrusive and entirely out of character with the landscape.

This represents:

- Visual harm,
- Loss of residential amenity, and
- Degradation of the character of the area,
contrary to both local policy and the NPPF requirement that development is sympathetic to local character.

4. Misrepresentation in the application

The application repeatedly refers to “8 cameras”.

In fact, each unit houses three independent camera modules, giving a total of 24 cameras and 24 separate recordings. The fields of view extend far outside the school's lease boundary and directly over private residential land. The line of the fence is represented differently on different documents giving rise to doubt about the placement of one of the cameras and it is not made clear whether the "Moss green" colour will be used, nor whether the infrared modules will be included. There are four lawful public footpath crossing Stoke Lodge currently the subject of challenge by the school, these are conveniently left out of the application. It would be procedurally incorrect to make a decision on this application before a decision has been made.

Conclusion

The proposal is intrusive, disproportionate, and harmful. It breaches Article 8, fails GDPR necessity tests, causes significant amenity harm, and cannot be justified by the evidence provided. It must be refused.