

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 November 2025 11:31
To: Section 62A Applications Non Major <section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: S62A/2025/0133 Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH

Re Application S62A/2025/0133 Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH by Cotham School for invasive cameras S62A/2025/0133 Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH

I am Judith Brant of [REDACTED].

I wholeheartedly object to the erection of any cameras on or around the heritage parkland.

I live [REDACTED] of this historic parkland and Cotham School are trying to misrepresent Stoke Lodge's status this application.

It should be noted that the lease does not permit the tenant Cotham School to erect any structures. Presumably attempting to circumvent this restriction by applying directly to the planning inspectorate?

First let me address some irregularities in the application which may be grounds for its immediate rejection.

The applicant acknowledges at Q6 that there are several claimed rights of way 'adjacent to the site' but has failed to include any reference to, or consideration of, the impact of the proposal on these rights of way within the scope of the application. Let me be clear the four rights of way are all ON the site, not adjacent to it, and have been approved by the Council as landowner in a unanimous decision and are currently awaiting consideration by the Planning Inspectorate (ROW/3363939). At least one of the proposed CCTV poles would obstruct a right of way.

One would have to question why they have chosen to omit the public rights of way. Indeed [REDACTED] of Cotham school has said that the public rights of way "do not exist in my mind" a comment that the council have repeatedly reminded her that they do exist and did before a football was ever kicked on the land.

The school's lease of the site is expressly (a special clause was added to the standard academy lease) 'subject to all existing rights and use of the Property, including use by the community'. Community amenity use of this designated important open space is ongoing by myself and others as is our right. In the event that the council's unanimous vote in favour of the public rights of way the fence would become immaterial and would no doubt be removed making the location of poles in relation to a non existent fence a bit premature to say the least.

There are already 6 or more cameras looking onto the playing field. Why is this ridiculous invasive application even needed? Does the school really need to know where the children under their constant human supervision were when they lost them or a child was injured? Rather too late wouldn't you say? Rather negates the "need". Safeguarding is not what the school says it means.

Impact on heritage/visual impact

These cameras are wholly unsympathetic to the heritage parkland surroundings. Cotham School are trying very hard to undermine the status of Stoke Lodge. possibly for future development which the Planning Inspectorate already rejected.

Some proposed cameras will be particularly intrusive as they are not positioned at the edge of the land but in more open space and are three times the height of the existing fence! Certainly a structure that should not be permitted under their lease and again why the school seeks to skip the normal council process..

Camera 4 is close to Stoke Lodge's famous 'Tree of Life', a sculpture that preserves a formerly majestic Cedar of Lebanon - a 6 metre high metal pole and camera within metres of that feature could hardly be described as unobtrusive. It is clearly detrimental to the amenity value of the parkland and close to a precious focal point.

Stoke Lodge playing fields are parkland no matter how the school attempts to recharacterise it. The proposed installations as a whole will harm the character and appearance of the area with a huge detriment to well-being.

To quote a high court judge's recent comments this year in relation to Stoke Lodge: "Overall, the land looks like exactly what it is, namely, the former grounds of a large country house, now surrounded by modern urban development. For those who can see into it (whether from the roadway or from adjacent houses) it represents an attractive prospect of *rus in urbe*. It is easy to see why this land is important to local residents."

Cotham School seek to undermine this.

Note well that the council previously rejected a single camera on a pole because of the impact on heritage value. The officers who refused Cotham School's previous application for just one CCTV pole, partly due to its detrimental impact to a non-designated heritage asset. The applicant appears to have fallen into a basic error in assuming that where historic field lines are marked on Ordnance Survey maps, this necessarily means that those areas were in active use as separate agricultural fields. This is not the case: parcel numbers were included on 20th-century Ordnance Survey (OS) maps to identify land via Books of Reference for administrative and legal purposes such as tax/valuation and cross-references in property deeds. In particular, the records of land ownership and size were relevant to the calculation of tithe payments to the parish, subsequently replaced by tithe rent charges. These were not abolished until 1936.

Cotham School pay a peppercorn rent. They most assuredly should not be permitted to destroy a vital green space with their proposed Stasi quality surveillance. In my opinion there are already too many cameras overlooking the sight and not one more is even needed and therefore no more should be permitted.

Privacy

One should be able to take a walk along any of the public rights of way, in what is a very safe area, without being watched and recorded every step of the way. I fear for users of the local playpark and the houses of the intrusion of privacy.

There is a clear agenda here by Cotham school to make walking on the public rights of way uncomfortable for the current users which does not include the school. I am just over 5 foot tall. How do you think I might feel with a 6m pole towering over my head, obstructing the lovely panorama over to the ridge in the distance or walking by to classes at Stoke Lodge House not being able to see the house for cameras? I certainly won't feel more secure but rather intimidated.

I respectfully request that the application be refused outright. If, notwithstanding the above, the Inspectorate is minded to grant permission to an application (that is filled with irregularities, incorrect information, inconsistencies and contradictions), it should only do so on a temporary and time-limited basis and subject to stringent conditions including the absolute prohibition of illumination or additional equipment without separate consent.

In the event of any hearing I would very much like to make oral representation.

Kind regards

Judith Brant