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To: Section 62A Applications Non Major

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Subject: S62A/2025/0133 Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH

I am writing regarding the planning application from Cotham School for CCTV towers.

The playing fields have never been the exclusive use of Cotham School - despite their contention that it is 'school property'. The school's lease on Stoke Lodge clearly stated that it is subject to all existing rights including use by the community. Bristol city Council have never enforced this. The lease also says that no new structures can be erected on this land.

The community has always been more than happy to share this site but the school, which incidentally is 3 miles away, has refused all attempts to talk about an amicable sharing. They use the space for just a few hours a week whereas some local people have had their daily walks on the lodge for decades.

Now as well as fencing blocking rights of way the school want to have 24 CCTV cameras covering the area - that's in addition to the ones already there, I'd think that would cover being able to watch every blade of grass grow! I'm wondering if there would be any room left for the children to play games without actually bumping into a pole.

When Cotham School applied to install a single CCTV pole with 1 camera in 2020 it was refused. Now it is asking for 8, each with 3 cameras. The proposed camera poles are 6 meters high that's more than 19 and a half feet, more than 3 of the tallest men I know standing on each other's shoulders. Stoke Lodge playing field is surrounded by housing, my council bungalow being one of them, 360 degree viewing is way outside the area of the playing field and the likely level of intrusion is totally unacceptable to me. There will be no privacy, not only just going for a walk on the field but also around your own home for many, (including me!)

So much of the field would have to be dug up in order to get electricity to these towers, more damage to green space, trees and wildlife habitats. 8 poles, 6 meters high, with camera arrays does not really fit with Open Green space classification and would have a devastating effect on the landscape.

Cotham School have been ramping up their need for surveillance with out and out untruths about vandalism to their fence, when in fact one, or possibly two panels are missing not the thousands of pounds worth of damage that they have been asserting. I am questioning where the vandalism is taking place when the school have damaged trees with tree protection orders on them, purposely blocked paths for wildlife and blocked public rights of way. I'm finding it hard to make any sense of this and the wilful destruction of a beautiful site, that has been designated as important Open Space, just makes me want to cry.

Sue Geary

