

Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2025/0133 Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH

We Love Stoke Lodge is a community group comprising around 1,700 members, which has been in existence for over 7 years. We have an active Facebook page and mailing list together with multiple communication channels within the community.

Our community works very hard to protect and maintain the integrity of the estate and to look out for one another and for users of the land. As part of that, we very frequently receive messages about lost property and manage to reconnect items to their owners; we get told when users of the land notice anything untoward happening, such as contractors damaging protected trees. We have on several occasions been informed about valuable pieces of kit left behind by the applicant after PE lessons and have retrieved it, kept it safe and notified the school to restore it to them.

The above examples show that we are well-informed about events on Stoke Lodge Playing Fields. We write in response to the statistics published by the Designing Out Crime Officer. We do not doubt that she has reported accurately the statistics that she has obtained from the system for the area searched, but we believe these are highly misleading in the context of Stoke Lodge Playing Fields.

The officer's report includes the following statistics:

Below I have shown reported incidents for the period of one year (18.11.2024 – 18.11.2025) for an area of 400 metres x 400 metres centred on the site:

Offence Group	Crime Count
Theft	72
Violence Against The Person	20
Arson and Criminal Damage	9
Burglary	8
Vehicle Offences	6
Public Order Offences	5
Robbery	3
Fraud	2
Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	1
Possession of Weapons	1
Sexual Offences	1
Total	128

However, in response to subsequent enquiries it has been confirmed that this data is based on a circle with a radius of 400m centred on the playing fields – something like this:



This is a much larger zone and would include the shops on Trymwood Parade including two supermarkets (Co-op and Tesco). This is the only plausible explanation for the 72 thefts recorded; these are likely to be shoplifting incidents and nothing to do with Stoke Lodge. Similarly, the vehicle offences, fraud and burglaries listed cannot, by their nature, have taken place on a grassed open space.

In fact, in the period November 2024 to November 2025, we have received no reports of any offences taking place actually on the field in the area that would be covered by the proposed cameras. We are aware that there are currently two individual gaps in the fence where single panels have been damaged and removed, but our understanding is that these gaps post-date the application.

The DOCO officer has referred us to the police.uk website for further information and statistics. A careful examination of the statistics and crime mapping available for the period (ending with September 2025 as more recent data is not yet available) reveals **no (0) crimes on the playing field area.**

As such, we want to underline that the data provided may be significantly misleading if taken at face value. The crimes listed in these statistics (or at least the vast majority of them) did not occur on or close to the playing fields and would not be prevented or detected by the use of the proposed cameras. That data is irrelevant and should not be taken into consideration by the Inspector reviewing this application.

In relation to the submission provided by PC James Allford, we do not recognise his comments about community safety or that the community would feel 'reassured' by the installation of blanket CCTV surveillance. We do not doubt that PC Allford is committed to working with community stakeholders but must point out that he has not consulted us or our community on this issue (which, given that We Love Stoke Lodge is a large group concerned specifically with protecting the playing fields, is somewhat surprising) and he has not attended local Ward Forum meetings to engage with or understand community views.

The truth is that our community feels safe on these fields. We feel safe taking our children to play there. We feel safe allowing our teenagers to meet their friends independently there. We feel safe walking across the fields after dark – and would choose to do so in preference to walking on, say, the adjacent Ebenezer Lane which is a narrow, in places enclosed, footpath. We feel safe jogging the perimeter early in the morning. We feel safe going to observe the bats or a meteor shower at night. We feel safe to have space alone, and safe to be in the company of others on the field. In a low crime area, this field is a safe place for all.

The prospect of intrusive 24/7 surveillance is horrifying to many, as is no doubt reflected in the responses you have received from members of our community. Please do not allow your consideration of this application to be influenced by misleading statistics and comments about incidents outside of, and unconnected to, Stoke Lodge and our local community.

Yours sincerely

We Love Stoke Lodge

Helen Powell, Emma Burgess and Kathy Welham