

Objection to Application S62A/2025/0133 – CCTV Poles at Stoke Lodge

Alisha C<[REDACTED]>

Section 62A Applications Non Major

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

I am writing to object to Cotham School's application for eight 6-metre CCTV poles at Stoke Lodge.

1. Constant Surveillance of My Home and Lane

I have [REDACTED], and the fields have always been a peaceful, open community space. The proposed cameras would overlook the lane and place my family home under constant surveillance. This would have a real effect on how safe and comfortable I feel in my own house and the area I have known all my life.

2. Public Rights of Way and Community Access

My family and I regularly use the public rights of way across Stoke Lodge. The pole layout ignores these routes and even obstructs one of the claimed paths. People should be able to walk along a recognised public route without being watched by multiple high-resolution, 360-degree cameras. It changes the nature of a space that has always been used by the community, not just the school.

3. No Justification Compared to Other Schools and Fields

My own school uses community fields for PE and sports without any cameras, and safeguarding works perfectly well through teachers and staff supervision. There is no evidence that Stoke Lodge requires industrial-scale surveillance, especially when incidents cited are old, low-level, and not the type of thing CCTV would prevent. This level of monitoring is unnecessary and out of proportion for land that is separate from Cotham's main campus.

4. Wildlife and TPO-Protected Trees

Stoke Lodge is home to a lot of wildlife, including birds, foxes, bats, and insects that rely on the trees and green space. Many of these trees are protected by Tree Preservation

Orders. The CCTV poles require concrete bases and cabling, which risk damaging root protection areas. The area's wildlife and ecology would be harmed by more structures, more lighting, and increased disturbance.

5. A School That Has Already Been Caught Using Hidden Cameras Cannot Be Trusted

Cotham School has already installed hidden cameras at Stoke Lodge without permission. This makes it difficult to trust that any new system will be used responsibly or within the limits they claim. Privacy masking and compliance depend entirely on the operator, and this applicant has already shown they do not always follow the correct process.

6. Impact on the Look, Character and Heritage of the Fields

Stoke Lodge has a unique heritage setting, with mature trees, open views, and a connection to the listed house. I have grown up seeing the fields in their natural state, and they are part of our neighbourhood identity. Adding tall metal poles, cameras, and more surveillance infrastructure will permanently change how the landscape looks and feels, especially on top of the fencing already installed. It damages both the character and the history of the land.

Conclusion

This proposal would place my home and lane under unnecessary surveillance, harm privacy, threaten wildlife and TPO-protected trees, obstruct public rights of way, and change the character of a historic community space. There is no credible safeguarding or crime evidence to justify such intrusive measures, and the applicant's previous unauthorised cameras show the risks of allowing further surveillance infrastructure.

I respectfully ask that the Planning Inspectorate refuse this application.

Yours sincerely

Alisha Chinnock