

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 26 November 2025 13:23

To: Section 62A Applications Non Major <section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

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

I wish to object to planning application :

S62A/2025/0133

Site Address

Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH

Personal Details

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a resident of the area living at [REDACTED] which is an address [REDACTED] from the site of the proposed development, and where I have lived with my wife since [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

email —> [REDACTED]

mobile —> [REDACTED]

I am interested in speaking at any public inquiry that might arise from this application.

Specific Objections:

- The proposed camera towers are wholly inappropriate to the setting of a Grade II listed property like Stoke Lodge whose grounds include heritage parkland and an arboretum that has been in public ownership since 1947.

- The applicants Cotham School have made no attempt to provide any photo-realistic artwork to indicate how these 8 x 6 metre CCTV towers would actually look once installed. They could very easily have done so, and I believe that they chose not to supply any visualisations because they knew perfectly well these would expose just how appalling and inappropriate these camera towers would be.

- I am one of two local residents who sought to remedy this defect by creating photo impressions of how each camera pole will look in situ. My photo-artwork was created in GIMP 3.06 and is available as a Google Drive PowerPoint presentation:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Privacy issues. Stoke Lodge Field is surrounded by residential properties on all four sides. The south-western aspect also includes a popular play park area extensively used by mothers and their children. One of the proposed CCTV cameras (CCTV #8) is directly adjacent to this play park. Its field of view takes in the entire play park, as well as the upper stories and bedrooms of residential properties on Shirehampton Rd. Virtually all of the other cameras also overlook and peer into the

bedrooms of private properties too. This is a completely unacceptable and unconscionable assault on the privacy and rights of local residents.

- Cotham School has tried to deflect such privacy concerns by publishing a consultancy document [Global MSC Security] which provides a wholly misleading site map of the field of view of each camera along with areas cross-hatched in white stripes to indicate “privacy zones” that would supposedly be excluded from surveillance and recording. The problem here is that each of the CCTV poles would carry 3 panoramic cameras of 5 Megapixel resolution which are thought to be at least twice as powerful as the consultancy documents suggest (they would also have infrared night vision capability as well). There is nothing in the application to explain how these ‘privacy exclusion’ zones would be implemented or policed. By the applicants ? By the CCTV operators ? No one who lives in this area is inclined to trust Cotham School’s word in such a matter.

- Cotham School was previously refused planning permission to install just *one* such CCTV pole on Stoke Lodge in 2020 (in the CCTV #5 position in the current plan). Cotham School then secretly installed 2 covert CCTV cameras hidden in a footway box in the same location which were discovered in 2022 leading to a public scandal about their illegal filming of members of the public. They were reprimanded by the ICO for their lack of signage and transparency, and were also named and shamed in parliamentary proceedings by our local MP Rt. Hon. Darren Jones.

- The site plans and CCTV camera specifications supplied with this application are a bewildering and contradictory mess that precludes any satisfactory evaluation of its proposals. For example, the CCTV specifications say that the cameras used would be static ‘Panoramic’ view cameras, but the product photos supplied are of AW1545/BAS poles fitted with PZT (pan-zoom-tilt) camera units that can be remotely steered and zoomed by a CCTV operator. None of the proposed CCTV pole locations are given in precise coordinates. When creating my own visualisations in GIMP, I had to identify and supply the What3Words locations for all 8 camera locations myself.

Ducting —> The application refers to digging trenches for 240VAC mains electrical power for all 8 cameras taken from DNO supplies. But the trenching and cabling plans make no sense to me whatsoever - and I was a Chief Electrician in a public building for some 30 years of my working life - Specifically Fig. 6 on p.14 of the Rapleys Planning Statement [23-012399] refers to “CCTV duct line - existing” shown on their diagram between CCTV cameras —> #6 #7 #8 and #5 : but no such ducting currently exists there! Likewise the diagram shows non-existent ducting between cameras #1 #2 #3 #4. I was a field watcher who monitored Cotham School’s activities at Stoke Lodge on a daily basis from early 2019 onwards, and I know for a fact that there is only *one* pre-existing line of buried cable ducting, and that runs from the northern corner of the pavilion directly across the narrowest part of the field to the #5 camera by the ALC gate - I watched it being dug in August 2019. The amount of new trenching required is therefore quite enormous, and corresponds to practically everything erroneously marked on that diagram Fig. 6 as “existing”.

Justifications offered by Cotham School in their application for these CCTV camera towers include largely specious claims about ‘safeguarding’. Contrary to what the applicants assert, there is no OFSTED requirement for an academy school to fence off a detached playing field that lies some 3 miles away from their core premises. Nor is there any requirement for a school to provide 24/7 high resolution CCTV coverage of their own pupils during the small number of hours per week when they are actually using the field. It goes without saying, that there is no case either for mounting 24/7 video surveillance on members of the public going about their daily business and using the four Public Rights Of Way that lie directly across Stoke Lodge Field - PROWs that incidentally are not shown on the site maps submitted by the applicant.

The Rapleys Planning Statement [23-012399] alludes to acts of supposed crime and vandalism as a pretext for installing extra CCTV surveillance, but the Bristol 9 district where Stoke Lodge Field is located has one of the lowest crime rates in Bristol. The tabulation of 'incidents' supplied by Rapleys dates back to 2020 and the period of the pandemic lockdown when Cotham School defied government advice and locked Stoke Lodge Field down for the six month duration of that emergency - preventing local residents from taking their daily one hour of exercise in the last open green space remaining in this council ward, and giving the lie to the School's claim that the gates would only be locked when the School was using the site.

The applicants have a long history of making misleading and often quite untrue accusations against the local community. Just after Easter 2019 when their fence was first erected, the school issued a press release implicitly accusing local residents of damaging the fence by drilling out the heads of the panel bolts. In reality it turned out to be a member of their own maintenance staff who was doing so, in order to prevent locals from loosening or removing the bolts.

In early November 2019, the school issued another press release implicitly accusing local residents of "poisoning the grass" at Stoke Lodge by pouring toxic chemicals onto it. In reality, the damage had been caused some weeks earlier by their own groundsmen who had crashed a self-propelled mowing machine into an old sandpit near the pavilion. The ground-staff dragged the crashed mower out with another tractor and tried to carry on using it before realising that it was damaged and was leaking glycol onto the grass. Photographic evidence of the mower crash incident (which occurred on Friday 13 September 2019) was provided to the school, and to the police as a witness statement, but the school never retracted their allegation against the community.

Most recently Cotham School issued press statements claiming that "large sections" had been removed from their recently re-erected fence causing "thousands of pounds worth of damage". In reality just two panels had been removed from the main perimeter fence by persons unknown, at a replacement cost of around £40 per panel - which was covered by their insurance. So in brief, any claims made by the applicants about "criminal behaviour" by local residents should be treated with some scepticism.

- Ecological Impact —> The Ecology Briefing document is deficient in a number of respects, but I will single out two in particular:

i. I met one of the Ecology officers working for CSA by chance on Stoke Lodge field on 18 September 2025, and had a long conversation with them after discovering that we had a shared interest in bats - a species which I study locally with the help of a heterodyne detector. There are three species of bats at Stoke Lodge: Noctules, Pipistrelles and Soprano-Pipistrelles. All of these bats species are protected by law, along with their roosts, but you will find not one word about them in the Ecological Briefing document submitted by the applicants.

ii. When Cotham School erected their first fence in 2019, they refused to install badger gates to allow the local meles meles population to navigate their normal routes. Abnormal numbers of badgers were subsequently found dead on nearby roads before that fence was taken down. Cotham School have now not only re-erected the fence once again without badger gates, but have gone out of their way to install extra spur-line fencing panels perpendicular to the main perimeter which quite deliberately block known badger-runs in the vicinity of Stoke Lodge house. The Ecology Briefing document refers to precautions to be taken when installing CCTV poles near badger setts, but pays no attention to the destructive and lethal impact on the local badger population caused by the fencing itself. This is an utterly shameful omission by supposedly professional ecologists.

It should be noted that Cotham School already possesses at least 6 CCTV security cameras of various types (including 3 panoramic cameras) in situ at Stoke Lodge since 2019 - none of which seem to have addressed any of the problems they apparently feel exist.

The installation of another 8 towering 6 metre CCTV camera poles would represent an Orwellian over-reach of precisely the sort that the National Planning Inspectorate is supposed to prevent - so I hope you will reject this application.

Background

The applicants wish to install 8 CCTV cameras each mounted on 6 metre poles around the perimeter of a heritage parkland site and arboretum called Stoke Lodge Field. The property is the site of a Grade II listed building called Stoke Lodge [List Entry #1202564] which has been owned by Bristol City Council since 1947 and is currently used as an adult learning centre. The applicants, Cotham School, whose main site is located almost 3 miles away in BS6, obtained a lease from the council to use the grounds as a detached playing field in 2011. The 125 year lease agreed by the school contains a special clause 2.1 which states that the school's use of the property is "subject to all existing rights and uses of the property, including use by the community". There also happen to be four well-defined public rights of way across the property that were acknowledged on November 27 2024 by Bristol City Council's Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee, who voted unanimously for a Definitive Map Modification Order - which was then challenged by Cotham School, and is currently awaiting a decision by the relevant secretary of state.

N.B. These PROWs are not shown on the site maps and diagrams supplied by the applicant.

After becoming an Academy school in 2011, the applicants Cotham School launched a campaign to expropriate the land by fencing it in, and locking the local community out. Two local community groups have twice obtained TVG (Town and Village Green) protection for Stoke Lodge Field - once in 2016, and one again in July 2023, but on each occasion, these TVGs have later been struck down by appellate courts (in Judicial Review and Section 14 actions respectively).

Cotham School erected a 1.3 kilometre fence around Stoke Lodge Field in 2019, in spite of the fact this land was widely held to be part of the curtilage of a Grade II listed building up until 2018. They were allowed to do so under 'permitted development rights' in spite of a covenant that forbids the erection of structures on the site - Apparently a 1.3 kilometre x 2 metre high fence is **not considered** a 'structure' in the eyes of our local planning department.

The first perimeter fence erected by Cotham School was removed after Stoke Lodge was registered as a Town or Village Green in July 2023 because its existence was no longer legal under two 19th century laws relating to common land. Cotham School has now reinstated the perimeter fence for a second time after TVG #2 was struck down by a High Court decision in June 2025. This latest application by Cotham School to install an additional 8 x CCTV cameras on 6 metre poles is thus seen by the local community as a resumption of an ongoing war that has been waged against us by this school for over 14 years.

I hope you will agree that the surveillance equipment described in this planning application is inappropriate, unnecessary and excessively intrusive, and that you will reject this application.

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