

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025

## **Objection to Section 62A Planning Application.**

Address: Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.  
BS9 2BH

Ref: S62A/2025/0133

To whom it may concern,

I wish to object to Cotham School's application to install 8no CCTV masts with cameras.

It is my belief that the installation of 8no 6 metre tall, galvanised steel poles with 3 cameras to each, is entirely inappropriate to the locality of Stoke Lodge. There already exist 6 CCTV cameras on site; being located on the pavilion, and the mower shed on the eastern boundary of the field. Currently, there are also 3 mobile security camera units installed around the field, for which I understand were intended to be temporary fixtures but are still in situ, and do not have planning permission.

I will not go into the history of Stoke Lodge House, its grounds, and the suburb of Stoke Bishop, as Bristol City Council's own conservation team have already done so in detail in their objection to this planning application. Suffice to say that the house and grounds, which includes the wider parkland within its historic boundary, should be regarded as one entity. The installation of 8no 6 metre tall camera masts at various points within this boundary will create a considerable, and detrimental visual impact on the historic parkland and its highly valued open vistas. An area that is also currently designated as Important Open Space. This will also have an impact on the amenity value of the area, the house being Grade II listed, and the parkland as a Non Designated Heritage Asset. The land within the original boundary walls was recognised as being within the curtilage of Stoke Lodge House until recently, when Bristol City Council made the highly contentious decision to remove curtilage status in 2018. (This was to facilitate Cotham School's desire to enclose the land with a 2 metre high fence without the need for planning permission).

There is also the serious issue of construction- not just the unsightly concrete bases and cabinets required for each mast, but the considerable amount of cabling that will criss-cross the field. In some places to areas that have no precedent for such excavations and ground disturbance. This will pose a threat to the root zones of several protected trees (TPOs), and at least one veteran oak tree in the lower half of the field. The applicant has already set a precedent in their disregard for tree protection orders during the construction of both

iterations of their fence. I have no faith to suppose that the works intended in this application will be any different.

There is the issue of privacy, or loss of privacy in this case. The application gives no proper justification for a further 24 cameras, on 8 industrial steel pillars 6 metres tall, in the heart of what is a quiet suburb of Bristol. The overall appearance of Stoke Lodge House and its grounds hark back to a romanticised pastoral ideal in its design as a hunting lodge, surrounded by open parkland. It is one of only a few such examples left in the city, and unusual in that it has not been broken up and developed on. By its nature, as open and uncluttered, it affords good visibility, even in the darkness of a winter's evening. Imposing such starkly out of place structures on this landscape would be the antithesis of its original purpose, irrespective of what colour they may be painted.

Cotham School's lease of Stoke Lodge from Bristol City Council makes clear that its use is '*subject to all existing rights and use of the Property, including use by the community*'. It is the community that make the greatest use of the field. The school's use to date has been a fraction of the time by comparison. It has always been a welcoming space and has been used for generations for all manner of pastimes. I have lived next to Stoke Lodge since childhood and, like so many others, learnt to walk, run, cycle, fly a kite, observe the natural world, draw, meet friends, exercise dogs, relax and find a sense of calm. The proposed cameras will have the capability to view everything and everyone in detail. The knowledge of this will make for an oppressive, even intimidating environment. The psychological effect of being under surveillance will surely be regarded as hostile to the community. The scale of what is proposed, I believe, is intrusive and utterly disproportionate to the setting. The applicant claims it is a 'need', 'statutory' even. It is not. The installations have no place in the grounds of Stoke Lodge, and 24 additional cameras are not a substitution for teaching staff on the ground. There will be no escaping the visual intrusion for residents whose homes and gardens would be overlooked, irrespective of whether the system's operator initiates privacy screening. This is even more concerning in light of the recommendation to install infra-red capabilities. Stoke Bishop is not an inner-city crime hotspot. The applicant's justification for total coverage due to fears of interference from members of the public, child abduction and acts of terrorism, is unwarranted.

In my opinion, the most suitable solution to any perceived risks is surely adequate numbers of teaching staff in attendance with pupils when on site, particularly if children are likely to abscond (despite a 2 metre high fence). It is also unclear why the applicant has failed to consider other any other options, or why there has been no consultation with the community, particularly with residents whose private spaces will be most affected.

Therefore, it is my belief that this application should be refused.

Alexandra S Macara.