

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0442
Valid 02/07/2021

DALECRETE
BROOKLANDS WAY
LEEKBROOK
LEEK

ERECTION OF TWO
WAREHOUSE UNITS

**(FULL PLANNING - SMALL-
SCALE MAJOR APPS)**

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of the development
The impact on the character, appearance and amenities of the area.
The impact on highway safety.
The impact on flood risk.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a vacant plot with large yard area where there was a former concrete plant. It is on the north side of the road on Basford Lane Industrial Estate to the east of Leekbrook village. There are existing warehouses to the east side and also on the other side of Brooklands Way to the south. The road bends alongside the west side of the site and a brook runs a short distance to the rear of the site where open land exists and continues past the west side boundary where there is a gap between the site and neighbouring warehouses further to the west.

The industrial estate is not within a "Development Boundary" as shown in the Local Plan and is therefore deemed to be within the countryside of the District but is not in the Green Belt. The site does not fall within a Flood Zone but is identified as having a "medium" risk of localised river flooding.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for two warehouses required for pallet storage for other businesses on the industrial estate and which would be placed side by side against the rear boundary of the site. Building A would have a footprint of 48.8m long x 22m wide giving a resultant floor area of 1,073 sq metres whilst the smaller unit, Unit B would measure 30.5m long x 15m wide providing a unit with 457 sq metres of floor area. The eaves height of both buildings would be 7m whilst building A would have a resultant ridge height of 10m and building B would have a resultant ridge height of 9.3m.

Both of the buildings would comprise of portal frame single span buildings which would be clad in profiled powder coated steel side sheeting (Red Brown RAL 8002) and an Albatross Grey (RAL 240 80 05) steel sheeted roof.

The Design and Access Statement submitted explains the reason for the units:

It is considered that this application will allow sustainable economic growth to continue at the site and provide much needed storage space to serve the existing business units already located on the industrial estate. The existing industrial estate is very well established and well used. There is however a significant shortfall of pallet storage provision within the immediate locality with a number of existing business having to rely on using remote sites in order to meet their needs. This obviously has a very significant and detrimental impact upon their productivity, efficiency and ultimately profitability. It is therefore anticipated that the two units will be used to provide additional storage capacity for existing businesses on the wider industrial estate.

A Flood Risk Assessment has also been submitted with the application.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffs Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
E1 – New Employment Development
E3 – Existing Employment Areas
DC1 – Design Considerations
SD5 – Flood Risk

NPPF (Revised February 2019)

Sections 6 (Economy), 12 (Design) and 17 (Flood risk and climate change).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2017/0837: Industrial unit. Approved but not built.
SMD/2008/1476: Extension to existing industrial unit. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 29.9.21
Neighbour consultation period ends: 29.9.21
Press Advert: 8.9.21 (Major application)

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No objections.

Local Highways Authority

No objection

Environmental Health

No objection subject to standard conditions for new industrial development.

Severn Trent Water

No objection subject to a standard condition.

SCC Flood Team

Standing advice given in relation to major development in Flood Zone 1.

OFFICER COMMENTS

As the site is not within the development boundary, it would be viewed against Policy SS10 which amongst other things seeks to protect the open and rural character and appearance of the countryside. Although it is adjacent to the countryside, it is within the confines of an established industrial estate and therefore new industrial buildings in this location are not unacceptable in principle.

The site is owned Dalecrete who used to have a concrete plant on the site but this has been cleared and the site is now redundant but the concrete base covering the whole site remains. The proposed buildings would be used for storage purposes for the other units on the industrial estate. Although a new business on the site such as a manufacturer would be likely to generate higher levels of new employment than a development for existing businesses at the estate, the proposal still assists with those existing businesses as additional storage space is required. It is therefore connected with the growth of business which in turn would potentially lead to new employment including at the new site itself to assist with the storage operations of the new facility at the site. Furthermore, new employment and industrial floorspace to meet the needs of the District over the Local Plan period is expected to be met via new land allocations in the Local Plan including an eastward extension of the industrial estate. The proposal would therefore not stifle or sterilise new local economic or employment creation opportunities. Overall, the principle of the proposal is acceptable in this location.

With regard to the character and appearance of the area, the site is centrally placed within the industrial estate and although one of the warehouses would be larger and taller than neighbouring warehouses, it would not look out of place on the estate and would be well screened in the wider landscape by existing development on three sides and by woodland on rising land to the north. The form of the buildings and their materials, including the colours, would match the adjacent warehouses to the east. There is woodland to the rear but the larger trees are to the other side of the brook and therefore the woodland would not be significantly affected.

With regard to residential amenity, there are no nearby dwellings and the site is centrally placed within the industrial estate. As the units are intended for storage purposes, there would not be any significant noise creation in relation to other industries on the estate that would affect the nearest residential properties.

With regard to traffic and highway safety, as the units are intended for storage purposes of other occupiers of the estate, the proposal would not affect levels of traffic or highway safety on the wider highway network. The existing access into the site is adequate in accommodating large vehicles safely and there would remain to be sufficient turning and parking space for vehicles on the existing concrete yards (as shown on the site plan) as well as any new staff parking.

With regard to flooding, the site is not in a flood zone but due to the nearby brook, there is deemed to be a medium risk of localised flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted. No objection has been raised by the local flood authority, SCC, who have provided standing advice for developments of this type and scale close to watercourses which aims to minimise flood risk and damage from flooding and includes measures (such as raising the finished floor level) which could be included as a planning condition.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is acceptable in principle and assists the local economic and employment aims of the Council in allowing the sustainable expansion of existing businesses. It would not harm the character and amenities of the area and would not lead to any traffic or highway safety problems or any other form of environmental harm. The proposal would therefore comply with the Local Plan and the government planning guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 1.10.21

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council