

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0492
Valid 27/07/2021

**WHITE OAKS THE
COMMON
DILHORNE**

**APPLICATION FOR
APPROVAL OF RESERVED
MATTERS FOLLOWING
OUTLINE APPROVAL
(SMD/2018/0244) FOR THE
ERECTION OF A SINGLE
DWELLING**

**(RESERVED MATTERS -
MINOR APPS)**

MAIN ISSUES

- The impact on the openness of the Green Belt
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is in the open countryside about half a kilometre to the south-east of Dilhorne village and is also in the Green Belt. It comprises an existing timber yard and pallet manufacturing business with no apparent staff other than the owner who is resident immediately to the north of the site off The Common private cul-de-sac (where there are a number of houses) which adjoins Common Lane to the west. There is another access directly off Common Lane to the south of The Common and which runs to the south-west corner of the site. Within the site itself are four untidy timber buildings, the largest of which is of two-storey height and has a mix of metal sheet, timber and concrete materials. The other buildings are smaller flat-roofed single-storey buildings. There are several pallets stored outdoors and the rest of the site is overgrown and unkempt. The site is very well enclosed by mature trees. The site has an area of 0.15 hectares.

PROPOSAL

This is a Reserved Matters planning application following the grant of outline planning permission for the demolition of all buildings and erection of one dwelling in September 2018, with “all matters reserved” for the future Reserved Matters application i.e. the details of design/appearance, scale, siting, landscaping and access. The submitted drawings show a detached brick and tile 3-bed bungalow with a height of 6.3 metres and a footprint of 9.9 x 14.3 metres (this differs with the original scheme submitted for a 2-bed bungalow with a more square 10.6 x 11.6 footprint and slightly greater height of 6.5 metres). This would be placed close to the west edge of the site next to the current two-storey workshop building to be

demolished, also a revision from the previous siting in a more central position within the plot. The access would be from the main road, "The Common" (also known as "Common Lane"), to the west which is a C classified country lane, as opposed to the private residential cu-de-sac of the same name to the north which is where the existing dwelling within the property lies. The new access would be an improvement of an existing field access (with metal gates) and the drive would comprise gravel paving to supplement the existing rough gravel currently forming the access drive. There have been alterations to the access from those details submitted originally and this included a tarmac surface for the whole length of the driveway. The amended site plan also shows the retention of many of the trees which mainly exist on the site perimeters whereas the original plans showed much tree removal on the north, south and eastern edges of the plot. A Tree Survey Report and Tree Protection Plan were later submitted.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
H1 – New Housing Development
DC1 – Design Considerations
NE2 – Trees, Hedges and Woodland

National Planning Policy Framework (Revised July 2021)

Sections 5 (Housing), 12 (Design) and 13 (Green Belts).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2018/0244: Outline application for one dwelling with all matters reserved.
Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 14.9.21
Neighbour consultation period ends: 14.9.21
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

Local Highways Authority

An objection was initially raised due to concerns over the level of visibility at the proposed access. However this objection was removed on the receipt of the amended site access plans which showed long visibility splays at the access which were also on land within the applicant's control and conditions were recommended. The comments are as follows:

This response is based on revised details received 08/11/2021 (2010/21/05 B) and 12/11/2021 (2010/21/06 B) which address previous highway issues. Visibility splay to the south east (away from Dilhorne) will require cutting back of vegetation on the boundary. Trees will be within the splay but there is no intention that provision of the visibility splay will require removal of trees. Existing trees are to remain. Hedges and vegetation will need to be cut to a maximum height of 900mm above adjacent carriageway level. There are no personal injury collisions on The Common within 215m either side of the access point within the previous 5 years.

Tree Officer

No objection to the removal of existing leylandii trees along the boundaries of the actual plot (as shown on the original submitted plans).

With regard to the proposed landscaping scheme, the officer had the following comments:

"It is not the place of the LPA to dictate or control the layout and treatment of individual private gardens, but some attention to and requirement for suitable boundary treatments can be reasonably relevant to planning issues (eg in order to address visual impact, maintain/enhance wider setting and secure biodiversity benefits) – and would be so in this case. The layout plan includes a somewhat schematic/indicative planting scheme, but strictly not sufficiently detailed/specified to approve as a full development landscaping scheme; it is also rather minimal – mainly open stockproof fencing to boundaries with a few intermittent trees dotted at corners and flower beds behind. Given the site location pushing out into open fields, a mixed native hedgerow to the site boundaries would be the most appropriate treatment (ideally extending along the south-east side of the site access track back to the highway) and incorporating some irregularly spaced native standard trees along the hedgerow. The proposed layout would comfortably accommodate this. Further to the comment above regarding removal of existing boundary trees, if there are any suitable native trees already growing on these boundaries they could be retained in-situ as part of such a new hedgerow, rather than being indiscriminately ripped out at the start of development just for the sake of it, in order to provide ready-made, free, established mature landscape character to the site setting.

A landscaping scheme to be approved as a reserved matter (or subsequently by condition) would need to be comprehensive and fully specified in terms of location/positions, species/species mix, planting numbers/densities/pattern, and initial sizes of planting stock.

Other than these boundaries, garden layout/planting etc within the plot can be left to discretion/choice of occupiers, and need not form part of a submitted development landscaping scheme in this instance."

Environmental Health

No objection providing the conditions recommended at the outline stage are retained.

Waste Collection Service

No issues.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The scale and height of the new dwelling would not be excessive in relation to the two-storey workshop building to be demolished and the siting has been moved towards the existing building to relate better with existing buildings in the area and avoid an unnecessary encroachment into the more open countryside to the east and would also benefit from a slightly improved screening, especially when viewed from the public footpath to the south, by virtue of it being closer to the trees belts to the west and south. The size is also not excessive in relation to the existing houses off The Common to the north. The design quality is acceptable and reflects traditional styles in the immediate area with brick walls and a tiled roof with side gables, along with detailing and features such as quoins, lintels and a chimney. The fenestration shape, size and design also reflects common styles in the area. The new dwelling would remain to be well screened in the landscape with an abundance of perimeter trees which would not be affected by the siting of development and would be retained on the amended plans. The switch in driveway material from tarmac to gravel is also an improvement as it would have less visual impact as well as being more in keeping with the rural area.

The Tree Officer does not have objection to the removal of the boundary trees which are mainly leylandii not in entirely in keeping with a traditional rural area. However, it is felt that the trees provide a useful screen for the development when viewed from the east, west (where the road is located) and from the houses to the north. The south boundary is largely open and allows much of the site to be visible from a public footpath to the south (although there is also boundary screening along the north allowing only intermittent views of the site). However, there are also some trees within the site itself to the south of the proposed footings which would also provide additional screening of development from the south. Despite this, the Tree Officer considers that a native hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site including the access strip would be adequate for a landscaping scheme given the nature of the site and its surroundings and would also compensate for minimal new planting shown elsewhere. There is no real requirement for any planting anywhere else within the site or along any other boundary. I consider the hedge would be necessary for the purposes of acceptable landscaping and that this can be achieved by way of a planning condition. It would also provide additional screening of the site from the south where the site is most open and visible.

Although vegetation is required to be removed along Common Lane to achieve adequate visibility at the site access, this would comprise depleted poor quality

scrubby low bushes or hedges and does not include the road-side trees which do not significantly affect visibility at the access. I do not consider the rural character and appearance of Common Lane would therefore be harmed by the proposed access works.

One of the outline conditions requires that no tree in the application site shall be removed without the written consent of the Council.

With regard to residential amenity, although the rear primary windows would be facing the rear windows of houses off The Common, those properties would be screened by outbuilding and trees in between and in any case, the separation distances would be well in excess of the standards between rear elevations set out in the Council's Space About Dwellings SPG. The light provision and levels of privacy enjoyed by the occupants of those houses would therefore not be affected. The proposed floorspace of the new dwelling would comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards and would provide ample private garden space for the occupants so therefore the residential amenities of future residents would also therefore be acceptable.

Finally, with regard to highway safety, the amended plans demonstrate that adequate visibility can be achieved at the new access into Common Lane, adapted from the current field access and with the safeguard of conditions would ensure that drivers leaving the site would have a clear view of the whole carriageway both to the north and south and therefore highway safety would not be affected. There is also sufficient space within the plot to park in excess of two cars (in compliance with Council's parking standards) with sufficient turning space to avoid any reversing onto the road.

The outline conditions require details of the exact finishing and roofing materials for the development and also details of boundary treatments.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed scale, design and siting of development would not harm the openness of the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the rural area. The amended plans show that all significant trees would be retained and therefore adequate landscaping can be achieved in the interests of visual amenity. There would be no impact on the residential amenities of existing residents and the proposed occupants would also enjoy a decent living conditions in accordance with planning policies and guidance. There would also be no detriment to highway safety arising from the new access. The proposal would therefore comply with the Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained within the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 17.1.22

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council