

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0513
Valid 06/08/2021

THE CROFT DILHORNE
ROAD
DILHORNE

ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT
STABLE BLOCK AND
FORMATION OF MENAGE

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

Whether or not the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in 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 on the southern edge of the small village of Dilhorne and lies on the east side of Dilhorne Road opposite the junction with Caverswall Road. It comprises a large residential plot with detached house in the east part and a further dwelling in a converted outbuilding on the western edge of the site abutting the road which is occupied by family members of the main residence. The main access is off Dilhorne Road close to the north boundary but there is also a field access further south along Dilhorne Road. Also within the property is a number of brick outbuildings which appear to relate to the private equestrian use of the site and former agricultural uses in the west part of the site and also commercial uses (allegedly the owner's plumbing business). There are also less solid outbuildings close to the main house in the east part of the site including a stables block for three horses. To the south of the converted dwelling is a field or paddock. To the north of the site is two dwellings served by a track connected to the road junction. There is also another neighbouring dwelling on the opposite side of the road from the site. The land to the south and east is open fields. The land generally slopes upwards towards the east from Dilhorne Road. The site is within the Green Belt.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the creation of a 20 x 40 metre horse exercise arena/manege on the field/paddock in the south part of the site and also a new stables block for three horses in place of an outbuilding next to the east boundary of the site close to the main dwelling. This is in connection with the private equestrian use of the site where there are currently two horses stabled. The existing stables would be retained but would be used for hay storage and tack rooms. The new stables would be L-shaped and have a slightly larger footprint than the outbuilding to be replaced and slightly higher height of 4.4 metres. It would have timber side and rear walls and a brick front wall and Juniper Green metal sheeting for the low-pitched roof. It would contain three stables and a tack room. The manege would have a silica sand and rubber "or waxed" surface and cross-sectional drawings have been

submitted to show the extent of cut-and-fill to create a level surface. It would be enclosed by post and rail fencing.

Amended plans have been received which show additional annotation and do not show any changes to the proposed development. The drawings clarify the position of the existing outbuilding to be replaced by the proposed stables block in the same position. The outbuilding is marked as "Existing Stables Block" despite not being used for this purpose (it is in fact a storage building). One of the drawings clarified the siting of the proposed stables block and the existing actual stables block (a short distance to the north of it) to be used for hay storage and tack rooms. One of drawings clarifies the access situation. Access A is the main existing access to the site and would be used for access to the stables. Access B is the field access to the south and would be used for vehicular access to the manage.

The application also includes a Planning, Design and Access Statement.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffs Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

SS9 Small Villages Strategy
SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
DC1 – Design Considerations

NPPF (Revised July 2021)

Sections 12 (Design) and 13 (Green Belts).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

02/00192: Vehicular access. Refused.

02/00618: New field access. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 5/10/21.
Neighbour consultation period ends: 5/10/21.
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

One letter of objection has been received from a local resident and the following points are raised:

-The manege access is in a dangerous position and the proposal would lead to increased use by vehicles and horse boxes

-Overdevelopment in conjunction with other nearby developments run by the owner including a caravan site and pub which create noise affecting the quiet enjoyment of the area.

A letter of support has been received from the occupant of the converted dwelling on site stating that the field access is safer than the main access for the purposes of accessing the manege with vehicles and horse boxes and that as this is for the private use of the site occupants would not lead to any "external" traffic using the access and that the manege would prevent the occupant from having to travel several miles several times a week with the horses to the nearest current facility.

A letter has also been received from a nearby neighbour stating he would support the proposal providing it would not lead to the use of the main entrance for large vehicles and horse boxes as this would be deemed to harm highway safety.

Town / Parish Comments

Objection. *"Dilthorne Parish Council are concerned about the proposed location of the new access road. It's is on a bend with limited visibility."*

Local Highways Authority

No objection to the use of either access if the development is for the private use of the site owners.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to standard conditions for horse-related development e.g. manure storage, restrictions on lighting and amplification etc.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The site is on the edge of a small village but is also outside of the development boundaries of the District (which do not enclose Dilthorne) and the proposal must also therefore be viewed against the strategy for the countryside, Policy SS10. The site is in the Green Belt and the policy requires strict control over inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Section 13 of the NPPF outlines the forms of development in the Green Belt which are no inappropriate and development for outdoor recreation, which can include equestrian uses, is listed. The whole proposal is linked to equestrian usage and therefore is not deemed to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore is not harmful to its openness. The stables building is replacing a slightly smaller building. The manege is a flat surface which is not bound by hardcore or a hardstanding and although some extraction is needed as the field is on a slight uneven slope, engineering operations are not deemed to be inappropriate development.

However, Policy SS10 also seeks to ensure that all development in the countryside does not harm the rural character and appearance of the area and also does not lead to any harms to the amenities of the area or the environment in general and

does not lead to significantly increased traffic. The stables building is replacing an existing building in the same position and has a more appropriate design despite being larger with timber boarding and a form that is akin to stables buildings which are regular features of the countryside. The brick finish on the front elevation would match the other buildings in the site including the existing stables building facing it on the opposite side of a small yard. This building would be used for storage and tack room purposes only. The building would be very well screened from the public realm by nearby trees and buildings and so would have no impact on the landscape and none of the nearby trees would close enough to the proposed building to be harmed.

The manege would also be well screened by trees and hedges alongside the road and also to the south and the only gap is where the existing field access is but the manege being flat and enclosed by post and rail fencing would not be prominent through the gap. The land to the east slopes upwards and there are no nearby road or footpaths to the east so would not be visible from the public realm from this direction. It would also be well screened to the north by the cluster of building in the north part of the site. Only minor extraction would be required and the earthworks would also not be visible from the public realm. The manege would be placed far enough from the row of trees to avoid their harm.

The residential amenities of the area would not be harmed. The proposed manege and stables are for a private existing equestrian use at the site and there is already stabling for three horses in another building close to the house (although there are only two horses at the property according to the agent). The adjacent fields within the same ownership as the site, shown edged blue on the location plan are large enough for the grazing of a maximum of four horses in accordance with the Horse Society standards. There would be no significant intensification of the equestrian use of the site and therefore no additional impact on local residents by way of noise or odours or vehicular noise as the proposal would not lead to any increased numbers of large vehicles using the main access, except perhaps at the construction stage. The stables would be slightly further away from the nearest neighbouring dwellings than the current stables and the manege would be in the furthest part of the site from the nearest dwellings which would be a considerable distance to the north and north-west. Further conditions would be added to prevent the use of the development for events or commercial uses e.g. livery uses.

With regard to highway safety, as there are to be no predicted increase in vehicle movements due to the private use and no increase in the numbers of stables, no objection has been raised by the local highways authority in relation to the use of both the existing accesses and in response to the letters from local residents and the Parish Council concerned about the use of both accesses by large equestrian vehicles, I consider the proposal would not lead to any detriment to highway safety. In fact, as the manege is to be used by horses kept at the site belonging to the occupants of the converted dwelling (family members related to the occupants of the main residence) who currently transport horses several miles to another manege, the new on-site manege would potentially lead to a decline in vehicle usage at the accesses. The field access was approved in 2002 and although it is possible for a large vehicle to gain entrance to the manege through a gate in a gap at the access point, no hardstanding has been provided as was required by a condition attached to the 2002 permission. I therefore consider that those conditions be repeated

requiring works before the manege is first brought into use to maximise the level of safety at the access points along the narrow lane (which is a “D” class road).

With regard to third party concerns about overdevelopment in conjunction with other nearby developments run by the owner including a caravan site and pub which create noise affecting the quiet enjoyment of the area, each proposal must be judged on it's own individual merits in accordance with the relevant planning policies. For the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered to be appropriate development and in accordance with all other policies, including those relating to amenity.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would not harm the character, appearance or amenities of the area and would not lead to any detriment to highway safety with the safeguard of conditions. The proposal would therefore comply with the Council's Local Plan (adopted September 2020) and is in line with the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 04.02.22

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council