

From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2024/0425

Site Address: Crown Garage Leek Road Leekbrook Staffordshire ST13 7DR Leek

Comments by: CPRE Staffordshire

From:

Eastgate House
Eastgate Street
Stafford
Stafford

Submission: Not Object

Comments: 1. Introduction

This planning statement outlines the proposed demolition of an existing garage and the construction of a new workshop building at Crown Garage, Leek Road, Leekbrook, Staffordshire, ST13 7DR. The primary focus of this statement is to highlight the potential social benefits of this development.

Following this introduction, the statement provides a concise overview of the proposed development. It then delves into the relevant planning policies that govern this application. Subsequently, a detailed analysis of the site and its surrounding neighbourhood is presented. Finally, the statement concludes by discussing the anticipated benefits, potential concerns, and recommended course of action for this proposal.

2. Description of the Proposed Development

Leekbrook is a small village situated in the southern part of Leek. It is a diverse community with a mix of residents and businesses. The proposed development site is an irregularly shaped plot with its rear boundary bordering the River Leek Brook.

The site is located on the south side of Leek Road. The existing building on the site, Crown Garage, is currently used for parking and the sale of vehicles. The full planning application seeks permission to demolish this existing building and construct a larger replacement workshop building. This new building will be designed to maximise the potential of the irregularly shaped plot, particularly at the southern end.

3. Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that planning decisions must align with the development plan unless compelling reasons dictate otherwise.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines principles for expeditious planning decisions, emphasizing the need to consider the development plan unless material circumstances warrant a different course. Relevant chapters of the NPPF for this application include:

- o Chapter 2 Achieving sustainable development,
- o Chapter 4 Decision-making,
- o Chapter 6 Building a Strong Competitive Economy,
- o Chapter 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport,
- o Chapter 11 Making Effective Use of Land,
- o Chapter 12 Achieving Well Designed Places, and
- o Chapter 14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

The Staffordshire Moorlands Adopted Local Plan 2020 identifies Leekbrook as a potential area for employment growth, with policies 6.43 and SS5 highlighting opportunities to expand existing employment areas and contribute to Leek's economic development due to its strong transport links. Policy DSR 2 also allocates land east of Brooklands Way for employment purposes, promoting sustainable development. However, the Local Plan acknowledges that Leekbrook is at risk of flooding from both the River Churnet and Leek Brook, falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

4. Benefits of the Development

Given the proposed development's conversion from a garage to a vehicle workshop, and considering Leekbrook's location on a major road connecting Leek to the southern part of the Moorlands, this project has the potential to contribute to increased vehicle services, such as MOT testing and repairs.

5. Potential Concerns

Although the proposed development involves converting the garage into an additional workshop, there are no plans to increase the number of employees. According to the application submitted to the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, the current and proposed workforce will remain at eight full-time equivalent employees. This indicates that there are no future plans for employment growth, potentially limiting the positive impact on the community.

According to the surface water flooding risk map published by the Environment Agency, the proposed development site is situated in an area prone to surface water flooding. Consequently, the design of the development must incorporate appropriate water drainage measures to mitigate this risk.

6. Recommendations

While the planning application is generally supported, it is essential to impose or negotiate conditions to enhance the development's employability and ensure adequate drainage, thereby promoting its long-term sustainability.

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