

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0415
Valid 20/09/2024

HOMELAND FARM SARVER
LANE
DILHORNE

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO
EXISTING MANUFACTURING
BUILDING TO PROVIDE AN
OFFICE WITH FACILITIES

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Neighbour Amenity
- Impact on Visual Amenity
- Highways

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application relates to the manufacturing business JM Milner Steel Farmed Building. The business provides services from manufacturing agricultural buildings and industrial buildings to renovations of building and steelwork for domestic extensions.

The application site is located in Dilhorne and on Green Belt land.

PROPOSAL

This application is a resubmission for an office and welfare building for ancillary use to the existing manufacturing business. The original submission SMD/2023/0605 was for a detached building of the same use located to the far east of the site. It was refused on Green Belt policy that restricts new buildings that would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is by definition harmful.

Under this application, the applicant proposes a welfare quarter for staff which will sit in the alcove between the punch room and storage building, located to the north of the site. Internally the extension building will provide a meeting/training room, rest area, an office and a kitchen with WC's.

The extension will measure 6m by 12m with a sloping roof with a maximum height of 3.3m and eaves height of 2.7m. The building will have an insulated composite box profile roof, coloured Juniper Green (12B29) to match the existing building and the elevations will be vertical cladding, coloured Juniper Green.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

SS9 Smaller Villages Area Strategy

SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 13

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2023/0605	Proposed office building with welfare facilities ancillary to the existing manufacturing business	Refused
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CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 15/11/24

Neighbour consultation period ends: 11/11/24

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

Neighbours One objection

- Proposed extension is directly opposite a Grade II Listed building (Day House Farm). It will adversely affect its setting. The windows will look straight into the first floor bedrooms of the listed building and shouldn't be overlooked by a newly constructed office. Contrary to DC1.
- The "Agricultural storage yard" on the block plan was a field until recently. There has been considerable "creep" of buildings/hard standing into the Green Belt on this site which has gone unchecked. Further development would be most unwelcome.
- The water running off the property onto Sarver Lane has caused considerable damage to the surface which is affecting access to properties on Sarver Lane.
- Recent changes have meant traffic is now driven closer to Day House Farm and recent changes to the entrance to Sarver Lane means heavy traffic is now moving more quickly onto the site. This has led to more noise and development nearer to Day House Farm could exacerbate this.
- Dairy farm is becoming an industrial estate.

Dilhorne Parish Comments Objection

1. Use of the site. The Planning Statement attached to the application point 1.4 states " This holding, which includes agricultural and light industrial uses" we can find no record, when looking on the planning portal where the planning history on this site goes back to 1991, of any change of use application for part of the agricultural land/buildings to be used for any light industrial industry. We therefore ask that you investigate this to see if change of use has ever been applied for and we would be grateful if you could advise us on this matter.

2. Affect GLB. Point 1.6 of the Planning Statement is totally incorrect. There is a Grade 2 Listed Building, Day House Farm, directly opposite and less than 100m away from the proposed development. Therefore, this should be considered in the decision making process.

3. Inappropriate development. A previous application - SMD/2023/0605 - was refused on grounds of inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Although there

are slight amendments to the old and new plans, we would consider that this new application would still fall into the category of inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

4. Use of the building. Point 2.1 of the Planning Statement refers to approved application SMD/2015/0112 Certificate of Lawfulness for part use of the building as an agricultural workshop, not a light industrial unit. Therefore, if light industrial work is undertaken in this building then it is being used for a purpose other than that which was approved and needs investigating.

5. Highway safety. The access lane to the site is an unadopted road however the applicant has recently undertaken work to widen and resurface the lane as far as the site access to accommodate the numerous very large vehicles that visit the site which will impact on the Highways report. However, the access/egress onto High Street is still, in our opinion, not suitable for large vehicle access. Since this lane has been widened and resurfaced it has caused water to run off onto the part of the lane that has not been resurfaced, which is an issue for properties further down Sarver Lane.

Request that this application is called into the Planning Committee.

In response to the Parish's request, the application can only be called in by a Councillor, if it is a major application or a certain number of objectors have raised concerns. The application is to be considered under delegated powers.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No objections subject to condition to ensure parking is provided as per proposed plan

Waste Services

No objection

Environmental Health

No objection subject to conditions to control works during the construction phase

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is located within Dilhorne which is identified as a smaller village area under policy SS9. It is also in the Green Belt. The policies relevant to this application are SS9 and SS10.

Policy SS9 emphasis that boundaries are not defined for smaller villages, however, some are set within the Green Belt by virtue of the alignment of the Green Belt boundary. Limited development, including infill will be supported subject to this policy and Green Belt policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Policy SS10 reiterates the maintenance of the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions which is set out in the Green Belt Policy under Section 13 of the NPPF.

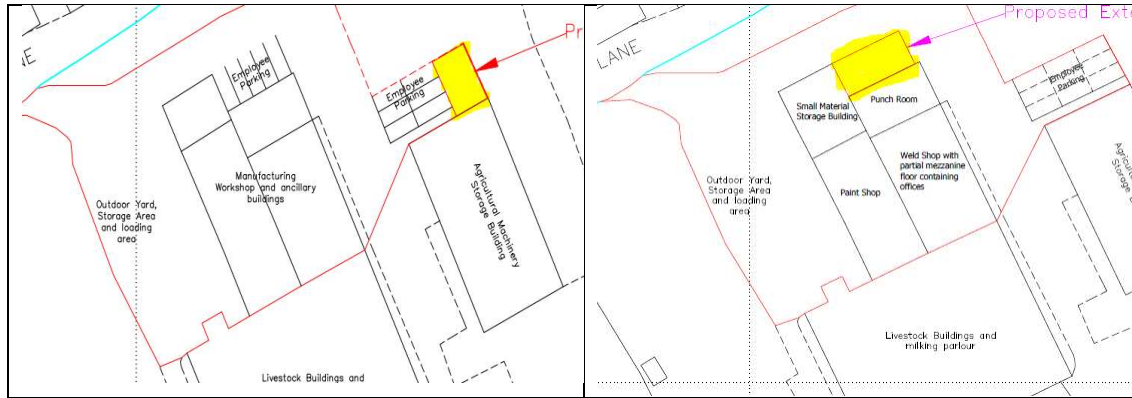
Under Section 13, Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. There are a number of exceptions in which development would be supported set out under Paragraph 154. The exception relevant to this application is criterion g which states:

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

The application proposes an extension to provide an office/welfare area between the alcove of two buildings associated with the manufacturing business on site. The development will sit on hardstanding. The proposal can be considered as being on previously developed land as 'large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed'- taken from the definition in the NPPF.

The proposal is considered to meet the exception under Criterion g as the extension is a modest addition that would use the available space between the amalgamated buildings to the north of the site, essentially 'rounding off' the large complex. The scale of the building, measuring 6m by 12m with a maximum height of 3.3m, would be no higher than the existing buildings and a light structure that would relay on the walls serving the punch room and storage building. The scheme is considered to be logically positioned with the business and as such, cause limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt. It would be in accordance with Green Belt policy and therefore, the 'very special circumstances' test is not required

It is worth noting the previous application as there were concerns raised by the Parish and neighbours. In comparison to the previous application (SMD/2024/0415), the siting and form of the proposed development has changed and therefore, there is a change to how this new proposed development has been assessed. Whilst the use of the building will remain the same, the original scheme was for a detached building disconnected from the light industrial business as opposed to being an extension to the building and considered limited infill- see original and current block plan below. New buildings other than the use for agricultural or forestry are not considered Green Belt exceptions under Paragraph 154. Therefore, the original scheme needed to be assessed on whether there was a 'very special circumstance.' The agent was unable to demonstrate very special circumstances that outweighed harm to the green belt and was refused on these grounds.



Use of the site

The Dilhorne Parish has commented that the site is being unlawfully operating for light industrial use.

Certificate of lawfulness was granted on 03/07/2015 for two building on the site as an industrial workshop (B2) concerned only with steel fabrication for agricultural buildings; this is known on the block plan as the 'punch room' and 'weld shop with partial mezzanine floor containing offices.' However, since this permission, it appears the building to the west of the extension known as the 'small material storage building' has not been established as being part of the light industrial use and the 'paint shop' has been extended at some point without formal consent. Therefore, formal permission would need to be made to rectify these under a separate application. The case officer has informed the agent. In terms of how it would affect this application, the proposal does not contravene Green Belt Policy which has been considered above and the operation of the building would relate to the current use of the site. It is concluded that on balance, the scheme can be supported.

Impact on Visual Amenity

Policy DC1 states that all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD.

The proposed development is located to the north of the site set back from the main road, the High Street. Homeland Farm is accessed via Sarver Lane and this is a vehicular access as well as a PROW (Dilhorne 23, Dilhorne 40 which connects to Dilhorne 3 that travels past the rear of the site. The site is visible from Both Sarver Road and these footpaths. To the north of the site, there is a GII Listed building known as Day House Farmhouse.

The proposed development would sit within the recess of two larger buildings and appear in context with the existing building. The additional car parking to the front of the extension would provide some coverage during work hours beyond the site boundary seen from the north of the site and would not result in an intrusive form of development. The buildings design ensures that it is subservient to the existing buildings in size and proposed materials-using matching materials/ colours and therefore the development would have an acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the area.

In regards to the GII Listed building, the building is on a lower ground level to the site. There are direct views of the first floor windows of the listed building whereas the ground floor is screened by lower boundary hedging. It is considered the setting of the listed building will be no different than what is already as the proposed office will be the same nature and design as the existing buildings therefore, there will be no material additional harm to the setting of this building.

The development would accord with Policy DC1 and DC2 as well as the NPPF policy relating to designated heritage assets. .

Amenity

Policy DC 1 states that all development should protect the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution.

The proposed development is sited adjacent to a number of residential dwellings along Sarver Lane. The proposed windows, serving an office, rest area and meeting room, will directly face a Grade II listed building known as Day Farm House.

Given the site is located within an existing manufacturing business these neighbours would experience some level noise association with this use. The proposed building would however be used as an office/welfare area which would not increase noise levels at the site. Disturbance during construction would be managed by the conditions recommended by the EH team. As such the development would have minimal impact on residential amenity.

In terms of the Listed building, there were concerns raised by the neighbour regarding the outlook of the building on the first floor. According to the Supplementary Design guidance- space about dwellings, the guidance states that the distance required between front elevations of dwellings containing principal windows is at least 22 metres. Notwithstanding the proposal is for office use whereby there is a lesser harm than a dwelling, there is a distance of at least 28 metres. Therefore, the distance would accord with the guidance. It is considered the amenity harm to this neighbour would not be sufficient to warrant a refusal.

Highway Safety

The site benefits from an existing access off Sarver Lane and the development proposes to retain employee parking areas and propose new parking areas. As such the highway authority have no objection subject to a condition requiring the parking be in place before the building is in use.

Staffordshire County Council have been consulted and have raised no objection subject to parking provisions being made prior to occupation of the building.

CONCLUSION

The proposal would meet the exception set out Green Belt policy. It also does not impact on the character, neighbour amenity and highway safety. The development is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Lisa Li

Recommendation Date: 04/02/25

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council