

Design & Access Statement

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON A
COMMERICLA YARD OFF AKESMOOR LANE, BIDDULPH, ST8 6RT**



Photo courtesy of Google Maps

April 2025

Introduction/Context

This statement is produced to support an outline planning application for a new residential development on land at a redundant commercial yard off Akemoor Lane, Biddulph.

The yard was previously operated as a commercial skip yard and waste material sorting site. It was the subject of objections towards a new residential development on the adjacent stables site. A refusal was overturned at appeal granting permission for a single residential dwelling on that site, being an improvement to previously developed land. Officers were made aware that this site's commercial use had ceased with the recent passing of its previous owner and the land was soon to be transferred into the same ownership as the stables site, so it would not be possible for the yard to have a detrimental effect on a new residential development.

The redevelopment of this yard will provide much needed new homes to the area and will see a great improvement to the site, removing what was a harmful use to the surrounding greenbelt, with a more appropriate residential use, like the adjacent stables site will now have also.

Proposal

The outline application for a new residential development has all matters reserved; however, the indicative proposed site plan shows the existing buildings removed and replaced with four detached dwellings. The existing site entrance is improved for visibility purposes and boundary treatments are revised/enhanced.

Layout

The internal layout of the new dwellings, as well as the overall design, would be reserved for a subsequent application. The indicative layouts displayed on the site plans provided display a typical 4-bedroom, two storeys, detached dwelling footprint.

The layout on site positions the new dwellings in an appropriate position to adhere to space about dwelling guidance, as well as demonstrating adequate space for dedicated parking and private amenity space. Recreational land has been retained to include biodiversity enhancement features and the small, wooded area to the North and West area of the site is retained and protected.



Use

The current use of the site is commercial. Although no formal permission or change of use was granted for the commercial use of the site, it had operated unchallenged for a sustained period to inherit the lawful use. The local authority has previously confirmed the site's commercial use status during previously submitted applications that have been submitted for the stables site.

The new use of the site will be for private residential dwellings, in line with the approved residential dwelling on the adjacent site. This would be redevelopment of previously developed land within the greenbelt and the overall improvement of the area would not amount to any harm being caused to the openness of the greenbelt.

Scale

Although all matters are reserved, the scale of the proposed development shown on the indicative proposed site plan is conducive to an acceptable scale of development within the site.

Appearance

The design and overall appearance of the dwellings would be subject to a subsequent reserved matters application, although local design styles and features will be considered where appropriate.

Landscaping

The landscaping design and overall appearance of the site would be subject to a subsequent reserved matters application; however, the site does not need any major re-landscaping to be undertaken to make a residential development feasible.

The final landscaping design will see the use of permeable materials where possible and include a sustainable urban drainage system to deal with storm water.

Access

A new shared access driveway would be provided from Akesmoor Lane. This would be positioned in line with the current access point to the yard, however it would be improved for visibility purposes.

Sustainability

Mode 3 compliant electric vehicle charging points shall be provided, adjacent to the off-road parking areas, to provide charging facilities for electric vehicles. Secured bicycle storage can be facilitated in a domestic outbuilding. Renewable energy sources will be considered to power/heat the new dwelling in line with government guidance. Recyclables and other waste will be collected in accordance with existing councils' weekly collections, covered in local council tax fees paid from the new dwellings.

Trees

There are several semi-mature deciduous trees and other scrub plants around the periphery of the site. A record of the trees has been provided in the application documents. No mature trees will be lost by consequence of the proposed development, and a scheme put forward in a reserved matters application will accommodate root protection areas and include details of relevant protection measures to ensure their continued contribution to the local amenity.

Ecology

Given the sites commercial use, there is no irreplaceable habitat on or within the site. The site mainly consisted of areas of hard standing with three considerable buildings present across the west boundary road frontage and centrally in the site. There are other spoil piles across the site. The North and East boundary are enclosed by a semi-mature wooded area and the other boundaries include established hedgerows and fencing.

A preliminary ecology appraisal would be provided in a reserved matters application to fully assess ecological impacts on the site and how new measures can be introduced to improve habitat for future wildlife use.



Coal Mining

A coal mining report was obtained for the adjacent site and contains the relevant information about this site's mining history. The mining report identified the presence of a mine entry (Ref: 387357 – 008) located within the site boundary.

The CA have confirmed that they hold records of coal mining activity having taken place in up to seven (7 No.) seams of coal at shallow to 230m depth which were last worked in 1907.

The Coal Authority report has also indicated the presence of a mine entry (Ref: 387357 – 008) present.

The location of the shaft in relation to the current site features are shown in Figure 1.



The mine entry date sheet notes the location of the shaft at E: 387672 N:357950. The position of the shaft is taken from OS mapping and abandonment plans. No further information in relation to its depth, dimensions and treatment are provided. Therefore, it is assumed that the mine entry has not undergone any remedial treatment. Figure 2 shows the location of the shaft on 1885 – 1887 OS mapping (1/2500 scale). The reported location of the shaft may be present in an 5m departure surrounding the provided co-ordinates based upon OS plans.

Based upon the information available, it is considered likely that the site is underlain by the Magpie Coal and Holly Lane Coal present at thicknesses varying between 1.2 – 1.5m with minimal superficial deposits. A review of the historical OS maps indicates ground workings within the locality of the site so it is considered that that the Magpie Coal may have been removed by opencast methods. It is also considered that the Holly Lane Coal may have also been worked in the past using pillar and stall methods.

Based upon the currently available information it is likely that workings within both seams could have

an impact upon the longer-term surface stability and should such instability occur it may result in subsidence to surface structures. The presence of shallow coal mine workings lying below the development area of this site is therefore considered to represent a **HIGH RISK** and further intrusive investigations are considered essential.

The photo to the side indicates the general location on site where the mineshaft entry is recorded.



Based upon the information available to us it is possible that the site may be underlain by very shallow coal mine workings. It will therefore be necessary to undertake a program of further intrusive investigations around the proposed structure to determine the potential presence of any shallow coal or possible workings.

In terms of further investigatory works which should be undertaken at this site, such works will be required only once outline planning consent has been granted and it is anticipated that further investigations for the possible presence of coal mine workings will be incorporated into the planning consent as a condition to be applied before any development takes place. These precautions are required to ensure that the Coal Authority are not served with future damage notices resulting from buildings where appropriate precautions may not have been adopted. Such precautions are also specifically required under the current Building Regulations and are intended to ensure the long-term structural stability of any buildings within the site.

It is our recommendation that upon the granting of planning consent, a program of intrusive investigations should be undertaken by the drilling of a minimum of 3 no. rotary boreholes to a depth of at least 35.0m below existing ground level. These boreholes must be undertaken by a suitably experienced drilling contractor who can offer the necessary standards of workmanship required in such an undertaking. The works should be monitored and supervised by an experienced engineer who can determine the geological sequence and potential for coal mining activity.

All drilling works must be undertaken strictly in accordance with the requirements of the Coal Authority and in conjunction with the recommendations of the Health & Safety Executive and British Drilling Association.

Mine entry 387357-008 is currently located in the South West corner of the site. The source information of the shaft location indicates the potential for a 5m departure around its reported location. Superficial deposits are likely to be at extremely shallow below the site as indicated from a nearby shaft record, so it is considered that the potential zone of influence around the shaft is likely to be minimal. It is important to note that should the initial investigations prove the presence of viable coal lying at a shallow depth then it may be necessary to undertake further intrusive investigations to determine the extent and orientation of any workings present. Where workings which may impact the surface stability is identified then a scheme of stabilisation works by a process of drilling and grouting of any workings which may lie within influencing distance of the site and the proposed building will be necessary. These works will involve the drilling of a series of closely spaced boreholes to intercept the coal seam and any workings which are present.

There will be a requirement to take remedial action to eliminate any potential disturbances caused by the collapse of the shaft. It is important to note that the Coal Authority must also provide specific written consent for the investigation of possible shallow coal mine workings, along with any subsequent treatment works deemed necessary, prior to any drilling works being commenced. Where coal mining activity is identified as potentially representing a surface stability hazard, then further stabilisation works may be required as outlined above. During the works it will also be necessary to monitor the drilling operations to determine the possible generation or migration of explosive and toxic gases which may be associated with coal mine workings. Reference should be made to jointly published publication "Guidance on Managing the Risk of Hazardous Gases when Drilling or Piling Near Coal" for further guidance in this respect.

Upon completion of the intrusive investigations a factual and interpretative report should be prepared confirming the findings of the intrusive investigations and providing recommendations in terms of all ground stabilisation and ground gas precaution which may be required. The report may then be utilised to discharge the appropriate planning condition and confirm compliance with Building Regulation requirements.

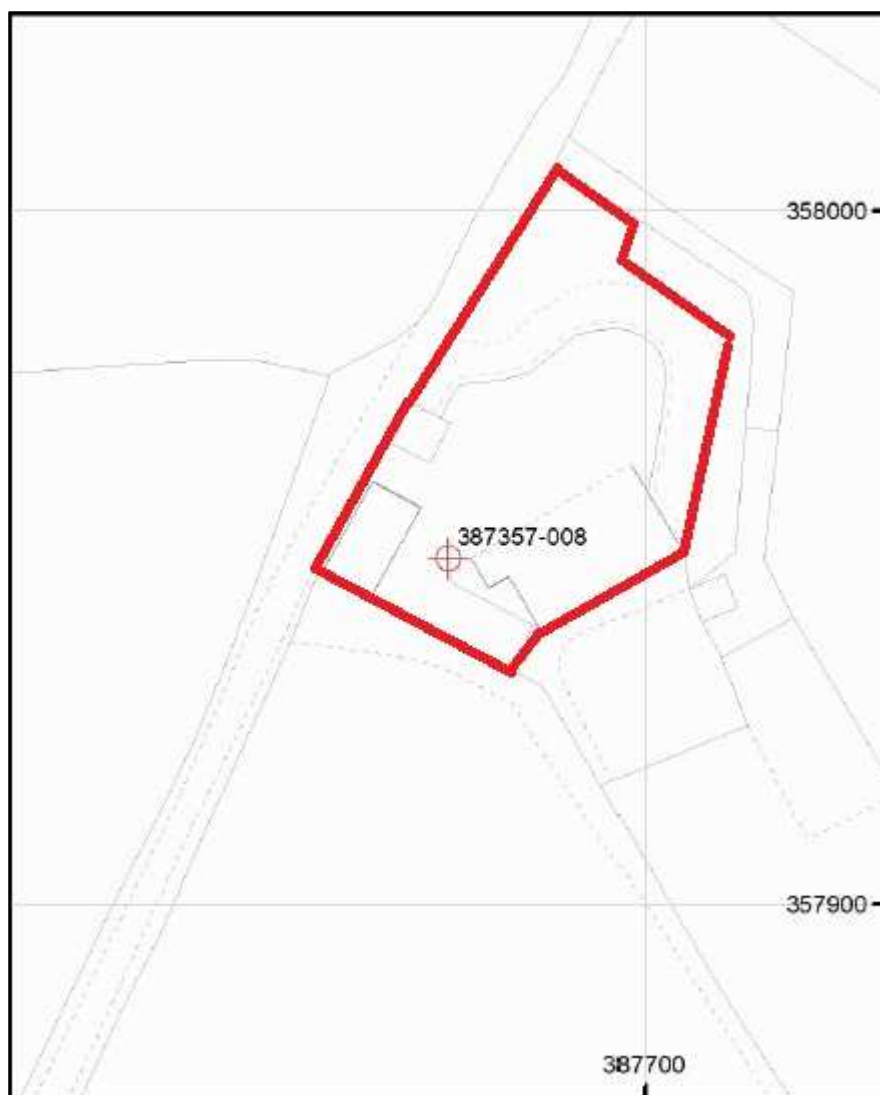


Figure 1



Figure 2