

BB/5578/01 (7 July 2025) Leek

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Stockwell Street
Leek
ST13 6HQ

7 July 2025



Dear Sir/Madam

**WM MORRISON FOODSTORE, NEWCASTLE ROAD, LEEK, ST13 5QB – FULL PLANNING APPLICATION
WITH ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR THE ERECTION OF A WEBUYANYCAR POD**

Introduction

We have been instructed by our client, WM Morrison Supermarkets Ltd (Morrison's), to prepare and submit an application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council seeking full planning permission and advertisement consent for the following proposed development:

“Erection of WeBuyAnyCar Pod and associated affixed advertising”

This planning application is accompanied by documents submitted via the Planning Portal and should be read in conjunction with this letter:

- Location Plan (250_PL_01);
- Proposed Site Plan (250_PL_02);
- Design & Access Statement (170285); and
- Off Grid Pod (WBACSOgV1).

Site and Surroundings

The proposed location of the pod (hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’) is within the existing car park of Morrison's supermarket, located on land to the east of Newcastle Road, Leek (hereafter referred to as the ‘wider site’).

The wider site includes a Morrisons supermarket and petrol station and an open, uncovered car park comprising of c. 320 spaces, the site is accessed from both Newcastle Road to the west and Junction Road to the east.

The site is not identified as having any heritage, ecological or other land-based designations, nor is it at risk from flooding from any source.

Planning History

The food store was first granted permission in December 1988 (application ref: SMD/1988/0433) before being extended in 2009 (application ref: SMD/2009/0293). The wider site has had no further alterations since.

The Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the addition of one prefabricated modular single-storey pod positioned within 2 existing parking bays, located directly to the north of the store. Moreover, to support business operations, WeBuyAnyCar will require 10 undesignated parking spaces to ensure that space is available for purchased vehicles prior to their collection. The undesignated parking spaces are located outside the usual customer parking area. The cars will stay on site for a maximum of 72 hours; however, this is generally a much shorter period. The purchased cars are removed from the site by individual vehicle collections. Therefore, in total there will be 10 undesignated spaces reserved for use by WeBuyAnyCar customers and the permanent removal of 2 spaces to accommodate the location of the pod structure.

WeBuyAnyCar provides quick, easy sales as an alternative to private car sales. Customers are offered an online quotation for the sale of their vehicle, and if accepted, it can be taken to one of their 140 local purchasing points across the UK. These are located within the car parks of existing Morrisons food stores and other extensive retail offerings. These structures aim to operate a sustainable service coinciding with existing shopping trips.

By introducing a new pod on-site, the business will be able to expand its services and thus increase the current level of employment. WM Morrison Supermarkets Ltd has confirmed that the WeBuyAnyCar service, which is highly valued by Morrisons customers, firmly aligns with their plan to bring more popular and useful services to the communities that they serve. No disruption to their normal operation will be generated.

The prefabricated modular single storey pod is constructed using high quality, environmentally efficient, factory-controlled construction techniques. The pod is sited to the corner of the existing car park to allow space for customers / staff to exit the pod without entering directly into oncoming traffic.



Figure 1: Example image of a WeBuyAnyCar.com Pod in operation

Policy Guidance

In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) all applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with provisions set out in a development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Planning Policy

The development plan for the District currently comprises of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan which was adopted in September 2020. The following policies of the Local Plan are of relevance to the Proposed Development:

- SS1 – Development Principles
- SS5 – Leek Area Strategy
- E1 – New Employment Development
- DC1 – Design Considerations

A summary of these policies is found in Table 1 below.

Policy	Summary
SS1 – Development Principles	The development and use of land should contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the District and make effective use of land and the best use of previously developed land and buildings
SS5 – Leek Area Strategy	Aims to create employment growth and increase the diversity of employment opportunities in Leek through supporting the retention and growth of existing businesses and improving the use of existing employment areas in the Barnfield's area
E1 – New Employment Development	The Council will support the expansion of existing businesses and new businesses in the District. The sustainable redevelopment, intensification or improvement of existing employment sites for new businesses will be supported provided it would not have an unacceptable impact on amenities, character or appearance of the area
DC1 – Design Considerations	All new development should reinforce local distinctiveness, in line with the Design Guide SPD and should be of a high quality that adds value to the area. All developments should be designed to respect its surroundings, incorporate sustainable construction techniques, protect local amenity and provide safe access

Table 1: Summary of relevant planning policies

National Planning Policy

In addition to local planning policy, the following paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework are also of relevance to the proposed development:

Paragraph 116 states that development proposals will only be refused on highways grounds if they have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Paragraph 124 encourages development proposals to make the best use possible of brownfield land.

Paragraph 135 relates to the design of development proposals and encourages the design of proposals to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape.

Paragraph 141 states that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Planning Assessment

Principle of development

In line with the PCPA, development proposals should be assessed against the relevant up to date development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposed development is located on existing hardstanding within the car park of a Morrisons Supermarket. The proposed 'pod' structure will measure 11.04m² in area and 2.8 metres in height that will take the place of 2 existing parking spaces, the operation of the unit will also require the use of a further 10 other parking spaces, located adjacent to the pod, for the purposes of the parking of cars awaiting collection from WeBuAnyCar employees.

The proposed development will therefore make use of brownfield land for a use that is ancillary to the operation of the supermarket. This use has been demonstrated as successful elsewhere outside of the District within Morrisons Supermarket car parks across the country. The loss of parking spaces for use by Morrisons customers will be minimal and will not be significantly below the maximum parking standards.

The proposal will provide an additional service offering within the existing car park of the supermarket and result in 2 new FTE jobs, this will support the continued operation of the supermarket and provide new employment in an existing employment area. The proposed development should therefore be considered acceptable in principle.

Design and Sustainable Construction

The proposed WeBuyAnyCar pod will have a negligible impact in the context of the wider retail site. The elevations are formed from composite panels, displaying vinyl signage in company colours with no illuminated signage. The dimensions of the pods are detailed in the proposed pod and store elevations plans submitted alongside this application (drawing ref: WBACSOgV1).

The proposal is of small scale that will result in a de minimis impact on its surroundings, this is considered appropriate within the existing area of car parking and is in line with Policy DC1 (Design Considerations) of the Local Plan and Paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking

The WeBuyAnyCar pod will be accessed using the same road infrastructure to access the Morrisons food store. No changes are proposed to be made to accommodate the proposed development other than the loss of a maximum of 12 parking spaces overall, within the car park. This loss is considered acceptable and will not result

in issues relating to the safe and effective management of the car park with access to the pod being from within the site, there will be no adverse impacts on highways safety along Newcastle Road or Junction Road. There will also be no significant increase in traffic visiting the site that could result in any level of impact on the safe operation of the surrounding local highway network. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in relation to Paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

Amenity

While the proposed WeBuyAnyCar pod structure is located within c 20 metres of the closest residential dwelling on Junction Road, the existing levels on the site, presence of dense vegetation and scale of the development proposed will prevent any adverse amenity impacts on residents of nearby dwellings. The proposed pod is to be sited in a location nearest the entrance/exist of the car park and away from the supermarket entrance as to prevent any adverse impacts on the amenity of shoppers at the supermarket. The proposed development is therefore considered to result in no adverse amenity impacts.

Summary

This application is for the erection of a WeBuyAnyCar 'pod' for the use of the inspection and valuation of cars before they are collected from the Site by WeBuyAnyCar employees within 72 hours. This use will generate new employment on the site with a permanent employee using the pod during the same hours of operation as the supermarket. The pod is designed to have no impact on amenity and is located within a suitable area of the existing car park and will make use of existing brownfield land. The loss of parking spaces will not have an impact on the continued operation of the supermarket. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in relation to applicable adopted planning policies and there are no other material considerations that indicate why the proposed development should not otherwise be approved.

Should you have any queries regarding this application, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details below.

Yours sincerely

Ben Brown
Peacock and Smith