

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0574
Valid 08/01/2025

**LAND REAR OF THE
ROYAL OAK HIGH STREET
DILHORNE**

**VARIATION OF CONDITION 2
TO BE VARIED TO REPLACE
APPROVED DRAWING 01287
AL(0)01C WITH DRAWING
01287 AL(0)20A. THE
WORDING OF CONDITIONS 3,
7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 18 TO BE
VARIED TO ALLOW THE
DEVELOPMENT TO BE
CARRIED OUT IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE
SUBMITTED DETAILS.
SMD/2023/0326**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The impact on the Green Belt
The impact on the character appearance and amenities of the area
The impact on residential amenity
The impact on highway safety
The impact on ground stability

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is on the edge of the small village of Dilhorne, which is within the North Staffordshire Green Belt. As the village does not have a "Development Boundary" defined in the Council's Local Plan, the site is also deemed to be in the "countryside". It comprises all the land belonging to the Royal Oak Public House to the rear of the pub building. The Royal Oak faces High Street in the middle of the village. The land to the rear of it, to the north-west of the building, includes the pub car park, an adjacent area of grass with picnic tables used as a pub garden and also, adjacent to the rear boundary to the north-west, part of a rough open field. The site also includes the access to the pub car park which is off New Road which runs to the side of the pub. The access also leads to both the car park and a separate driveway which runs through the site to the rear of other properties which lie to the north-east side of the pub. Buildings and houses lie to the south-west, south-east and north-east of the site whilst open land and fields lie to the north-west. The site lies within a "High Risk" former coal mining zone.

PROPOSAL

This is a Variation of Condition full planning application to amend Condition 2 of a full planning permission for a row of five holiday let pods and a facilities building on land to the rear of the pub car park, approved on 20th October 2023 (ref: SMD/2023/0326). The number of pods has been reduced to four via a Non Material Amendment application (NMA/2025/0028). The condition requires the development to be carried out in exact accordance with the submitted plans, which are listed in the condition. The applicant wants to vary the siting of the facilities building due to the discovery of a rising mains drain on the site. The approved siting of the building is within a 3m exclusion for the drain and a new amended plan has been submitted which moves the facilities outside the zone and into the footprint of "Pod 1" in the approved drawings and removing "Pod 5" at the opposite end of the row of pods, resulting in the reduction in holiday let pods from 5 to 4. Condition 2 of the permission therefore needs to be varied to include the new amended plan.

The application also includes other details submitted in order to discharge other conditions attached to the permission, which require further details to be submitted for approval before works commence i.e. pre-commencement conditions. These include the following conditions:

- Condition 3 (details of building materials)
- Condition 7 (details of lighting)
- Condition 8 (survey for ground gases and vapours)
- Condition 11 (surfacing of the access drive)
- Condition 13 (details of the surface water drainage interceptor)
- Condition 16 (details of surface water drainage and foul sewage disposal)
- Condition 18 (details of finished floor levels in relation to ground levels)

The application therefore includes details in relation to the above and as set out in a submitted Planning Statement. A drainage strategy report, a report on ground investigations, a soakaway letter report, drainage drawing and levels drawing have been submitted.

Additional lighting specifications were received in late Feb 2025. Further drainage information was received in April 2025 and an amended drainage strategy received in July 2025. Further drainage interceptor details were received in July 2025 and further amended details of this were received in October 2025.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 2020)

- SS10 Other Rural Areas Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
- SD1 Sustainable Use of Resources

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2025)

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2023/0326: Erection of 5no. holiday lodges and associated facilities building, Relocation of beer garden, Reconfiguration and formalisation of public house car park. Approved 20.10.23.

NMA/2025/0028: Non-material amendment application to amend the Description of Development to refer to 4no holiday pods. Approved 12.12.25.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25.02.25.
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25.02.25
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

Three letters of support have been received.

Town/Parish Council Comments

"No adverse comments."

Local Highways Authority

Comments Feb 2025: No objection subject to conditions. The driveway surfacing details were approved but insufficient details of the drainage interceptor were provided. Further comments were provided as follows:

*Access is now clearly shown to surfaced in a bound material.
The increase in the surfaced area will require surface water drainage interceptor and outfall, to prevent surface water flowing onto the highway. Details have been submitted intending to demonstrate compliance with this condition but they are unclear. The soakaway letter report indicates that a soakaway is unlikely to work due to the mudstone subsoil. The drainage strategy report C vol 1 gives a number of suggestions for drainage including SUDS. Submitted drawing shows an existing drain remote from the highway boundary. It also states permeable tarmac to be used but the soakaway letter report shows this will not work.
Drawing still required showing surface water drainage interceptor and outfall.*

The Highways Authority commented in August 2025 in response to the interceptor details submitted in July 2025 that the amended details of the interceptor were still insufficient.

In response to the further amended interceptor details submitted in October 2025, the Highways Authority on 20.10.25 submitted a consultation response approving of all the details including the driveway surfacing (Cond 11) and the drainage interceptor details (Condition 13).

Environmental Health

March 2025: Details of lighting (Condition 7) approved.

The ground investigation gases report identifies that although the potential for significant ground biogas or mine gas emissions may exist, the actual risk is considered to be low due to the identified land characteristics. This conclusion was supported by gas monitoring standpipes which did not detect any methane and only 1.5 % CO₂, with no detectable gas flows. This is accepted. Details for Condition 8 can be approved.

Severn Trent Water

The comments in Feb 2025 and May 2025 related to a concurrent Discharge of Condition application for a new dwelling on a neighbouring site (also with a "Land Rear of Royal Oak" address) rather than the proposed pod development application.

In response to the amended drainage strategy report and drawing received in July 2025, Severn Trent Water in August 2025 approved the foul and surface water drainage scheme (in relation to Condition 16).

Coal Authority

No objection

SMDC Waste Collection Service

No issues with regard to waste collections.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The 2023 planning permission was for six timber-clad buildings including five holiday let "pod" structures placed in a row alongside the back edge of the car park and also a slightly larger facilities building with dual pitched roof placed at an angle to the row of pods adjacent to it. The amended scheme removes the facilities building from its approved siting to avoid a rising drain easement zone and places it on the footprint of the nearest pod and removes the pod at the end, resulting in four pods and a re-sited facilities building. This would reduce the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the visual and residential amenities of the area, traffic potential and the environment and therefore is not objectionable. It is considered Condition 2 can therefore be varied to refer to the new site plan and amended drawings.

With regard to the other conditions details, Condition 3 requires specific details of the building materials for the five buildings. The conditions document shows the

buildings would be clad with red cedar boarding for the pods and light oak boards for the facilities building along with dark grey tiles for both and anthracite windows and doors for the pods and timber doors for the facilities building. These materials are acceptable and the condition can be varied to require the use of those materials in the development.

The details of lighting are also acceptable both in terms of appearance and intensity and would not harm the visual or residential amenities of the area. Condition 7 can also be varied to require the lighting to be provided in accordance with approved details.

With regard to condition 8, Environmental Health are satisfied that the ground survey identifies minimal ground gases and vapours and which would not affect the users of the development or the amenities of the area. The condition can be discharged.

The bound and solid surfacing of the first ten metres of the driveway would not lead to any surface water run-off into the nearby road to the detriment of highway safety with the approved drainage interceptor in place and therefore conditions 11 and 13 can be varied accordingly to require those works to be undertaken before the development is first brought into use.

Severn Trent Water has approved the amended foul sewage and surface water drainage strategy and therefore Condition 16 can be varied to required the approved drainage scheme to be implemented before the development is first brought into use.

Finally, with regard to proposed ground levels, the drawings show a level surface would be created by raising the back parts of the buildings (towards the open land to the north-west) by up to approx. 1.5m via earth banking, whilst the front parts (towards the pub, car park and built-up part of the village) would only be raised a small amount (approx. 0.3m). This would not lead to any additional harm to the character and appearance of the area in relation to the previous approved scheme. It is considered that the new land banking should be grassed over and landscaped or planted and Condition 19 requires the submission of a landscaping scheme to be approved and implemented before the development is brought into use and this presents the opportunity to carry out such works. Condition 18 can therefore be discharged and the levels drawing included in the varied Condition 2.

CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments to the approved scheme and the conditions information are acceptable and would comply with the Council's Local Plan and the government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The relevant planning conditions attached to the planning permission can therefore be varied accordingly.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 12.12.25

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council