
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 January 2026 10:32
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Application Reference No. : SMD/2026/0006 Site Address: 37 Red Lion Cheadle Road Cheddleton Staffordshire ST13 7HN
Leek Comments by: Richard Sheppard

From:
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Railway Cottages
Cosall Forge
Wetley Rocks

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Submission: Objection
Comments: Red Lion, Cheddleton ST13 7HN

SMD/2026/0006

I object to this application for the following reasons:

1.0 The proposed development would cause harm to the conservation area.

1.1 The SMD/2026/0006 application site is within the Cheddleton Conservation Area, located at its eastern boundary.

It is also close to the adjoining Caldon Canal Conservation Area.

1.2 The land to the rear of the Red Lion, including that part of the SMD/2026/0006 application site where a new dwelling is proposed, was identified as 'visual open space' in SMDC's Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study 2016 (31: Land South of Caldon Canal, Section A).

The Stage 2 Green Infrastructure Assessment notes that 31 Section A 'contribute(s) to the character of the surrounding neighbourhood/settlement' ('Setting of canal'), has 'amenity value to the public while not requiring public access to the space itself', 'allow(s) the public to enjoy significant views from surrounding area into the site', 'allow(s) the public to enjoy significant views within the site' (from the footpath), 'form(s) a significant break between development within a settlement' and has 'local ecology value' (land adjacent to canal and mature trees).

Table 9.2 of the assessment summarises 31 Section A as 'a large open space that rises up from the canal. Visually prominent and provides a gap in development. Some ecological value within land adjacent to the canal.'

1.3 The last of the six Stage 2 Green Infrastructure Assessment criteria - 'Does the site have significant, proven local cultural or historical association?' - is recorded as not satisfied.

Nevertheless, the Staffordshire CC Historic Environment Character Assessment 'Staffordshire Moorlands 2010 (CWWHECZ 6: Cheddleton historic core and Shaffalong Lane) records the area around the application site as being 'pre 1880s settlement' and identifies the Grade 2 listed Red Lion (Appendix 5 and Map 7). The Red Lion is described as 'early 19th century', 'probably constructed as an inn to serve traffic along the toll road', the road having been created in the 18th century to by-pass circuitous ways around and through Cheddleton.

CWWHECZ 6 further explains that 'as a result of the new road a secondary settlement developed and non-designated historic properties survive to the north and south of the Red Lion public house'.

There is obviously historical association with the village.

1.4 Peripheral 'open spaces' are included in the Cheddleton Conservation Area; in fact, the major proportion of the CA is undeveloped land (see CA map). This must be deliberate 'the boundary could have been drawn to exclude them' and must be because open spaces are considered to be beneficial, and to contribute to the character of the CA.

1.5 Although not ultimately designated as a Policy DC4 'Local Green Space', 31 Section A gives such benefit, as acknowledged and evinced by the assessments outlined in 1.2 and 1.3 above. The assessments are not recent, but the area has not changed significantly.

To convert the 31 Section A land into a domestic garden, including paths and driveways (Building Regulation B5 requires fire appliance access to the new house), as SMD/2026/0006 proposes, would transform its character and be detrimental within the local context as well as destructive of the intentions of the CA.

The intrusion of a new dwelling, however well designed, onto the land could only compound that destruction.

1.6 Additionally, the extant townscape in the vicinity of the SMD/2026/0006 site (both the pub car park and 31 Section A parts) is defined by frontage facing, historic linear development along Cheadle Road.

As the Historic Environment Character Assessment confirms (1.3), some of these buildings are of similar age to the Red Lion. All, with their environs, are part of the 'character of the built and historic environment' of Cheddleton.

1.7 The proposal (as described in the application 'Design, Access and Planning Statement') is for an inappropriate back land development that is atypical locally and within the wider CA.

2.0 The proposed development would be detrimental to the setting of the listed Red Lion.

2.1 It is incorrect to imply, as in the application 'Heritage Statement', that the back of the Red Lion (a Grade 2 listed 'heritage asset') is of reduced importance. Whilst the road frontage is of greater architectural interest, the whole of the property is listed, not one façade. The setting envelops the building.

2.2 At the back, the setting of the pub is defined by the 31 Section A open space 'this has always been the case as can be seen from the historical maps in the application 'Heritage Statement'. It is the open space that gives the pub its setting; it is immaterial that a new house on the land may only be seen from upstairs windows of the pub (as is claimed). It is similarly immaterial that screen planting might be conditioned (as is suggested) 'the setting extends beyond the fence line.

2.3 The harm that would be caused to the conservation area is also harm to the setting of the listed pub, as well as to the setting of the buildings that continue the built line and frontage to the north, up to the former post office and the adjoining house.

3.0 Inadequate access

3.1 The 'Design, Access and Planning Statement' explains the intention to take access into the 31 Section A part of the site (where it is suggested the proposed new dwelling be built) from the end of the existing Red Lion car park, which is to remain in use.

3.2 Access to a new dwelling through a large pub car park is unsuitable and potentially unsafe, particularly for pedestrians and at night. The proposed dwelling has two bedrooms, so it could house one or more children.

3.3 Visitors, delivery and service vehicles, emergency access and refuse collection need to be considered. In respect of the last, it would be a 'long push' for residents to place their wheelie bins by the kerbside on Cheadle Road.

(Please also see 6.1 below.)

4.0 Policy contraventions

4.1 Even though presented with scant information, it is evident that the SMD/2026/0006 proposal would be contrary to policies as set down in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020):

SS1 (it does not 'maintain the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings',

SS8 (it does not 'Ensure that new development reflects and enhances each village's special character and heritage' by 'Protecting and enhancing the setting of individual settlements' or by 'Protecting and enhancing the historic character of the village, including heritage assets'),

H1(4)(a) (it does not comply with 'the Spatial Strategy and wider Local Plan policies'),

DC1(1), DC1(2) (it will not (1) 'add value to the local area' nor is it (2) 'designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping character and appearance'),

DC1(7) (it does not provide 'safe and satisfactory access'), and

DC2(1), DC2(2) (it does not allow the Council to (1) 'preserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting ...' nor will it 'contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment' or (2) protect 'designated heritage assets and their settings').

5.0 Adequacy of the application

5.1 The writer considers that there is a case for planning applications in conservation areas, and certainly those for sites proximate listed buildings, to be 'detailed'.

5.2 Even should the principle of development be accepted (and the writer considers that it should not be) the SMD/2026/0006 outline application, with all matters reserved, gives insufficient information to allow any qualitative assessment beyond that given above.

In fact, it is arguable that the application, as presented, barely meets the requirements of Part 3, Provision 7(1)(c)(ii) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and SMDC Policy DC2(3).

5.3 If minded to accept an outline application, the Council should apply the powers allowed by Part 3, Provision 5(2) of the Order and require that, as necessary, 'reserved matters' become 'unreserved'. (Please also see 6.1 below.)

6.0 Status of the Red Lion car park

6.1 Although access is intended across the Red Lion car park it is stated that the car park will remain in use for the pub.

Be that as it may, its inclusion, in its entirety, within the 'red lined' application site means that as the application stands the car park could gain de jure 'change of use' from sui generis (the pub) to Class C3 (dwellinghouses). (Ref. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).)

Again, if minded to accept an outline application, the Council should require that 'means of access' not be a reserved matter and by some means (whether by condition or by Section 106 legal agreement) protect the continuing function of the car park.

The Red Lion is a country pub and the car park will be important for its commercial viability.

7.0 Self-build?

7.1 The SMD/2026/0006 application form declares the proposed housing category as 'Market Housing', the alternative option of 'Self-build and Custom Housing' being ignored.

However, elsewhere on the form, the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations that would otherwise (currently) attach to the application are claimed to be avoided because the proposal is for 'Self build and custom build development' and that the building will meet the definition thereof 'as set out in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom housebuilding Act 2015'. As the required justification of BNG exemption, it is simply stated 'Self build single dwelling'.

The 'Design, Access and Planning Statement' also states that the 'application is specifically for a self build dwelling' for the applicant.

7.2 Provisions A1 and A2 of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 make it clear that the Act applies to the construction of owner occupied dwellings, not 'Market Housing', speculative or otherwise.

There is an anomaly in the application that needs to be clarified.

7.3 If minded to grant permission, the Council should consider ensuring a commitment to compliant 'self-build' development by some means (whether by condition or by Section 106 legal agreement).

Although SMDC does not apply CIL, a minimum three year owner occupancy requirement, as would be necessary for CIL exemption to be claimed, might be seen as appropriate.

END

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The writer is a chartered architect with experience of public and private housing, work in conservation areas and involving listed buildings. The writer's practice acted for Pubmaster Ltd, former owners of the Red Lion, across the company's property portfolio.

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