

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 13th May 2026
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0424
Site Address: Whiston Golf Club, Black Lane, Whiston
Proposal: New building for the storage of vehicles and equipment associated with the management and maintenance of Whiston Golf Course.

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	Churnet Valley Tramroads - Third Tramroad

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would be situated immediately adjacent a former tramroad, which was built c.1804 and designed by Scottish engineer John Rennie. The tramroads in the Churnet Valley were enacted under the same Act of Parliament for Caldon Canal enabling access to the limestone quarries at Caldon Low (which is situated at higher topography, hence the combination of canal and tramroads required).

Many of the earthworks and bridges are still in situ in relation to the tramroads and provide a tangible link to the industrial heritage of the area and the technological advancements in transport links made in the late-18th and early-19th century.

With reference to the Council's 'Local Heritage Register' Selection Criteria, the earthworks and associated bridges would be considered archaeological site of local interest as they are associated with development of limestone quarrying in the area, have visible remaining features, are well documented and are uncommon types of monument in the area.



Fig.1 c.1879-80 OS map [online] (National Library of Scotland)

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve construction of a portal building, approx. 10.4m (H) x 30.7m (L) x 15m (W). The building would have a blockwork base and be clad in corrugated metal with roller shutter doors.

The proposed development would have an overtly industrial character and detract from the current verdant setting of the tramway remains (a non-designated heritage asset). In addition, as shown by the site sections, the height and scale of the proposed development would dominate and overbear the earthworks which would also detract from its heritage significance.

The supporting information outlines that the existing storage facilities are ad-hoc and inadequate for the golf club use and the proposal seeks to rationalise these. However, it is not overly clear why the proposed scale, and in particular the height, of building is essential in this instance. The proposed door for the building would be approx. 4m in height, it is not clear why the ridge of the development needs to be 10m. In addition, it is not clear if the existing footprint represents the collective footprint of these other storage facilities and whether there are any other less visually sensitive locations which a storage unit could be situated.

In addition to the above, it is not overly clear what would be proposed in terms of surfacing and means of enclosure around the development site as this may also have a visual impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Overall, the proposal would result in a moderate degree of harm to the NDHA as it would dominate and overbear the earthworks, be situated in very close proximity and

block views and appreciation of this and diminish the verdant rural character of the current setting of the NDHA.

Legislation and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining applications and a balanced judgement will be required in regard to the scale of harm or loss of significance of the non-designated heritage asset (par.216).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the proposal would result in moderate degree of harm to the setting of the non-designated heritage asset. With reference to par.216 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework, this would not result in total loss of significance of the NDHA but it would be situated in very close proximity, block views of the asset and the proposed scale and height would dominate and overbear the heritage asset. As set out above, it is not overtly clear whether there are other less visually sensitive locations for storage facilities on the site and there is limited justification provided for the proposed scale and height of development. We object to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson