

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2025/0476
Valid 28/11/2025

BRIDGE HOUSE
ASHBOURNE ROAD
WINKHILL

GLAMPING CABINS
(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of the development
- Landscape character and appearance
- public footpath rights of way
- implications for neighbours

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

1. The site comprises a mixture of rough grassland, scattered scrub and partial hedgerows and some trees in an area of former field land. The location is on rising ground that constitutes a promontory or bluff of land visible from the main Leek to Ashbourne Road when approaching from the north. A public footpath right of way (no.113 Waterhouses) runs west to east along the outside edge of the site's north boundary line. This joins with a further footpath (no.31 Waterhouses) just east of the site.

2. Land beyond to the north or northwest of the site falls away abruptly into an excavated area that is currently out of use but has previously received planning consents in connection with business / industrial use, including most recently a temporary permission granted in 2020 for temporary parking for a period of five years (SMD/2019/0339).

3. Bridge House (home to the applicant) is set down to the west of the application site and overlooks the main Ashbourne Road (A523). On a similar level to the application site (approximately the 255m contour) an unrelated bungalow dwelling known as Mosslings stands in a moderately large plot some 24m southeast from the site and has its rear garden coming to within 10m of the site boundary.

4. Proposed access to the site would share an existing track which connects with the public road, known as Bromleyhedge Lane, at a point alongside the westerly boundary of Mosslings. The track serves as the access for Bridge House. A detached large garage or storage shed (understood also to be un-connected with the application ownership) stands on the opposite side of the track entrance from the boundary of the front garden of Mosslings.

5. The location is in the Gritstone Highland Fringe landscape character type. In a Staffordshire county-wide context this is regarded here as being an area of high quality landscape (level 4 on a 5 point scale where 5 is highest). Additionally at this location the area is regarded as having the highest sensitivity to new development and

landscape change. On a line generally parallel to the line of the Ashbourne Road the boundary of the Peak District National Park follows the ridge line of the higher ground north east from the site at a distance of about 500m away.

PROPOSAL

6. Amended plans (3666-01C and 3666-02B) have been received at the Council's behest in order for errors in the initial site location and extent to be addressed.

7. As in the description, the scheme is for two 'glamping cabins'. These are shown in drawing 3666-02B. They combine an octagonal rotunda element with two projecting gabled outriggers. Annotations on the drawing show the finishes to be timber log-lap tongue and groove horizontal boarding for the walls and a form of shingle roofing.

8. The rotunda element has a 5.3m radius with a roof apex height of 3.8 metres. The outrigger elements create overall lengths for each building of 7.48m x 6.2m. The roof ridge height for the outrigger sections are 3.35m and 2.87m.

9. The scheme layout shows parking for four vehicles (5.0m x 10.9m) along with turning space.

11. For drainage the plans show a 'bio-disc' treatment plant and soakaway.

12. The plans recognise and show indicatively that amounts of cut-and-fill would be required to form level areas for the two cabins and for the parking. OS maps and the submitted 1:200 site plan on drawing 3666-02B suggest that the site climbs through c.3.0 to 5.0m from the entrance point in the south west corner to the northerly edge. Lengths of gabion basket retaining edging is shown in places around the north east side of the parking and to the east of the lower, more north westerly of the two cabins.

Biodiversity Net Gain

13. The proposal is subject to the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements (BNG) and the scheme is submitted with: an ecological assessment report by a professional ecologist together with Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric (V.4.0).

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
- SS10 Other Rural Areas Area Strategy
- SS11 Churnet Valley Area Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting
- NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Resources
- NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024)

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities; 9 – Promoting sustainable transport; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None directly relevant in the planning history for this site.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 26.12.2025

Neighbour consultation period ends: 22.06.2026

Press Advert: 31.12.2025

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

Waterhouses Parish Council – does not object

Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

We note that the Public Rights of Way Waterhouses 32 and 113 may be directly affected by this proposal.

We could not find any mention or recognition of these ROWs in the documents, and the application form states that there is no requirement for any diversions /extinguishments and/or creation of rights of way.

Should a temporary or permanent obstruction be unavoidable, then no development should take place until a Diversion Order has been confirmed, and the diversion route, with a satisfactory surface and adequate width and marking, is available for public use.

The use of any PROWs, and the safety of users must not be affected by the development, nor during the work taking place.

Environmental Health

Noise: There are only 2 glamping cabins proposed and with good on-site management this development should not adversely impact neighbourhood amenity. But we would recommend a plant and machinery noise condition is placed on this permission to ensure any generators etc. are suitably attenuated so as not adversely impact noise levels in the surrounding area especially at night. Noise from occupiers should be controlled through good on-site management which we note is resident on site, but we would also recommend a condition is placed on the permission requiring control of noise from onsite music/radio etc.

Caravan/Camping Licensing – There would be a requirement that the use would be subject to the Local Authority's licence requirements. The use should be specifically restricted to that hereby permitted. Tents and other mobile residential units should be clearly prohibited. There should be a close down break when no use should be allowed (approx. 2 months) and permanent residential stays should be prohibited. If permission is granted, then there will be a requirement that the use would be subject to the Local Authority's licence requirements and conditions. The developer should contact Environmental Health if permission is granted and the site should not be used until a licence is approved.

Lighting: Condition

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Accept subject to conditions.

1. Before the proposed development is brought into use, the access shall be widened in accordance with submitted plan 3666-01 B. The widened access shall thereafter be retained for the life of the development.
2. Before the proposed development is brought into use, the access drive shall be surfaced in a bound material for a minimum distance of 5m rear of the carriageway edge in accordance with details to be first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The access drive bound surfacing shall thereafter be retained and maintained for the life of the development.

Reasons – all: to comply with NPPF Paragraph 115, 116; to comply with SMDC Local Plan Policy DC1; in the interests of highway safety.

Notes to Planning Officer:

Site is in a field. Access is existing off C96 Bromley Edge Lane. Visibility at the access is restricted. However, access is close to a junction and on a slope. Vehicles will be slowing for the junction or accelerating up the bank having just turned into Bromley Edge Lane. Speeds will likely be low as will volumes. Access is existing and in current use.

Access is partially surfaced. Surfacing appears to have broken out in one part of the access adjacent to the carriageway. Condition above is recommended to provide bound surfacing over the whole access for minimum of 5m rear of the carriageway edge.

Site is not in a particularly sustainable location. There are bus stops on A523 but service is infrequent, approximately 2 hourly. There are no footways, though there are public footpaths close by. SCC Rights of Way should be consulted.

There are no facilities in Winkhill.

Visitors to the proposal are likely to travel by private vehicle. A private vehicle will also be necessary to visit other parts of the region. This is likely to be the case for most tourist accommodation in Staffordshire Moorlands and wider Peak Park.

Current records show that there were no Personal Injury Collisions on Bromley Edge Lane within 215m to the north and as far as the junction with A523 to the south in the previous five years. Similarly, there were no Personal Injury Collisions on A523 within 120m of the junction of Bromley Edge Lane in the previous five years.

Severn Trent Water

Severn Trent requests that any approval be conditioned as follows:

- The development hereby permitted should not commence until drainage plans for the disposal of foul and surface water flows have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and
- The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use.

Planning Practice Guidance and section H of the Building Regulations 2010 detail surface water disposal hierarchy. The disposal of surface water by means of soakaways should be considered as the primary method. If this is not practical and there is no watercourse available as an alternative, other sustainable methods should also be explored. If these are found unsuitable satisfactory evidence will need to be submitted before a discharge to the public sewerage system is considered. No surface water to enter the foul or combined water systems by any means.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage as well as reduce the risk of creating or exacerbating a flooding problem and to minimise the risk of pollution.

IMPORTANT NOTE: With regard to network capacity, this response only relates to the public waste water network and does not include representation from other areas of

Severn Trent Water, such as the provision of water supply or the protection of drinking water quality.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

General approach

14. In its general approach, in accordance with policy SS1, the Council expects the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This means that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan shall be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

15. The Development Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council consists of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Document (September 2020) with regard also being given to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance documents: 'Space About Dwellings' and 'Design Principles'; the adopted Design Guide (2018) a Supplementary Planning Document and the Council's Local Plan Supporting Evidence Document: Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008).

Principle

16. There is no previous development at this land and its baseline planning status is therefore taken to be agricultural in planning terms.

17. The policy starting point here is SS10 and more specifically relevant might be SS10(2) which is to "Sustain the rural economy by: (inter alia) Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified" but see SS10(5) below.

18. SS10(3) is expressly to "Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by (inter alia): Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape [first point]; and, Limiting uses which generate a substantial number of regular trips in areas that are not well served by public transport [second point].

19. SS10(5) makes provision to "Enhance tourist opportunities by: Supporting sustainable tourism developments and measures in the Churnet Valley in accordance with Policy SS11 and the Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD; Allowing for small-scale tourism developments in other areas (in accordance with policy E4); Establishing strong linkages between recreational and tourist resources; Recognising and developing the close linkages to the Peak District National Park.

20. This site is within the Churnet Valley Masterplan Area and SS11 is that “development should be in accordance with the Masterplan”.

21. Policy SS11 is that: “Any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area. Strong sustainable development and environmental management principles should also be demonstrated. The consideration of landscape character will be paramount in all development proposals in order to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities and sense of place and to maximise opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features. Complementary and sensitive highway improvements to access routes and/or measures to support other alternative means of access will be required to serve any developments which generate significant additional demand for travel.”

22. This site lies somewhat generally within the ‘Peak District fringe’ (southern area) as identified in the Masterplan. It is not though within or especially close to the Waterhouses ‘hub’ which would represent the main focal point for new projects in this zone. The underlying tenets of the masterplan are to focus tourism development such as accommodation provision to identified locations and avoid a general or random dispersal of new development. This location is not within one of those identified in the Masterplan and the development proposed would be random in that sense.

23. The Masterplan does not override the Local Plan policy E4 for Tourism and Cultural development which is that: “New tourism and cultural development which complements the distinctive character and quality of the District will be supported having regard to the Area Strategies in Policies SS5 to SS10 and Churnet Valley Strategy Policy SS11.”

24. E4(1) is that: “New tourist, visitor and cultural accommodation, attractions and facilities should be developed in locations that offer, or are capable of offering either:

A) good connectivity with other tourist destinations and amenities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling; or

B) in locations in or close to settlements where local services, facilities and public transport are available; or

C) in areas specifically identified for tourism development in the Churnet Valley Masterplan or other relevant documents.

25. In ‘*other*’ locations (ie. not compliant under E4(1)) new accommodation, attractions and facilities should:

A) support the provision and expansion of tourist, visitor and cultural facilities in the rural areas where needs are not met by existing facilities; and

B) all development shall be of an appropriate quality, scale and character compatible with the local area, protect the residential amenity of the area, enhance the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area and shall not harm interests of acknowledged importance.

26. It is not readily apparent or demonstrated that the site has good connectivity with public transport, walking and cycling and therefore E4 (1) A is not found to apply. Notably the comments of the County Council in the Highways response tend to add support to this view. Although 'attractions' in the area can be identified, such as the Blackbrook Zoo and the Waterhouses, this connection is not especially sustainable and visitors would inevitably use private vehicles to reach it. The location is not close to settlement so E4 (1) B cannot apply. As this site is not in an area identified in the Churnet Valley Masterplan it does not gain support from SS11 and indeed would be somewhat contrary to it.

27. Turning to E4(2), as referenced at paragraph (25) above, there is nothing in the submission to show that this scheme would be supplying or catering for a need that is not already met by existing facilities.

28. Finally – and further discussed below under design – although limited to two units the buildings proposed are substantial structures and not limited in that sense.

29. It is noted from the application form that paid-for pre-application advice was received under reference PAD/2025/0005 and at the time this gave weight to proximity to Blackbrook and the Waterhouses hub. That opinion though is an informal officer level view and not binding and on fuller examination (above) it is found that the development should not be supported in principle.

Design

30. The scheme raises a number of concerns. The development would lie directly alongside a public footpath from where it would be encountered prominently. The sloping site would necessitate significant ground works to achieve necessary levels and therefore overall the impacts would not be confined to the buildings themselves. The site plan indicates that gabion basket retaining structures would be required. Also a large parking area stoned with MOT and EV charging equipment is proposed which along with other inevitable paraphernalia such as tables and chairs for outdoor seating and dining would all result in an urbanising impact within this rural location. The scale and form of the cabins raises particular concern. They are relatively large and in material finishes and design shape bear no relationship to the local rural building tradition of the Staffordshire Moorlands district. They would appear odd and incongruous in this rural semi-naturalised location. In the scheme as first submitted the develop who was likely to be prominent from the Ashbourne Rd in approaches from the north. With the re-location involved with the revised scheme, it is likely that particular impact will have been reduced, though cannot be it fully ruled out on the information submitted.

Amenity

31. In the event of granting planning consent it would be crucial to require a guest management plan to be submitted for written approval of the Council by condition. Although the applicant is currently a neighbour, the project could in future transfer to

a new and 'absentee' manager / owner. The development is also somewhat closer to and likely to be more impactful for occupiers of Mosslings.

32. Also, in the event of approval it would be important to define and limit the scheme by attaching conditions limiting the tourism use of the land specifically to the buildings involved. It is important to be mindful that whilst proposed as two person units there are four car spaces. The capacity of the buildings appears likely to be greater and the overall site could accommodate more people by camping. Consultees and neighbours will presumably have judged the site on the plans as submitted and may not have considered the potential for a greater number of site users.

Highway Safety

33. Subject to conditions, based on the advice received, the scheme can be made acceptable in highways terms.

BNG

34. An appropriately competent ecological assessment has been provided and balancing the amount of development with the available land and taking into account the professional details submitted there is every prospect that the required net gain could be delivered on the site.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

35. As carefully set out in the report (above) it is concluded on balance that this location does not qualify for in-principle support for this development due to its poor connectivity to local services, public transport and other tourist attractions in the area.

36. The physical nature and eccentric design appearance of the development itself would be incongruous in this rural location, at odds with the Moorlands design tradition and out of place in this quiet field position where it is likely to be encountered by rural walkers using the adjacent public footpath. The sloping site would necessitate significant ground works to achieve necessary levels and when coupled with the necessary hardstanding, access, parking area, EV charging and other infrastructure the impacts would not be confined to the buildings themselves. Overall the development would have an urbanising effect and would appear incongruous in this rural field location.

37. On balance therefore the proposal is found to be contrary to the policies of the adopted local plan and is recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Refuse

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 26.06.2026

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council