

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2026/0346
Valid 21/07/2026

CRODA CHEMICALS
EUROPE LTD BARNFIELD
ROAD
LEEK

APPLICATION FOR CONSENT
TO DISPLAY A NON-
ILLUMINATED
ADVERTISEMENT

(ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT)

MAIN ISSUES

- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity
- Public Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site extends to approximately 7988 sqm and it is located on the Barnfields Industrial estate on Barnfield Road in Leek, adjacent to the junction with Sunnyhills Road. It is a brownfield site formerly in industrial use and is relatively level. To the North, South and West the site adjoins the industrial estate. To the East and on slightly higher ground is the line of the former railway line and footpath. The site is located in the Leek South Ward and within the Leek development boundary, where positive development is encouraged to be concentrated.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises of a new entrance sign to assist visitors approaching the site from Barnfield Road. The signage would have a width of approximately 2.5 metres, a depth of 0.25 metres and a maximum height of approximately 4.6 metres. The sign would be white/green aluminium composite with black and green vinyl lettering, attached to grey powder-coated aluminium posts. The new signage will be predominantly white, with green text and a logo to suit the applicant's branding and colour scheme. One of the sections of the new sign will be the opposite, with a green background and white text to contrast.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles

1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS2 Settlement Hierarchy

SS5 Leek Area Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Sections:

3 - Decision-making policies

14 - Achieving well-designed places

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 6 – Shop Fronts

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2014/0048 – Demolition of former industrial buildings and re-development of site comprising: residential (Use class C3 up to 175 dwellings) with associated open space, play areas and cycle links; Employment (use class B1c and B2 up to 1195 gross sqm), tourism and... Refused.

SMD/2014/0750 – Demolition of former industrial buildings and redevelopment of site comprising: residential (Use class C3 up to 175 dwellings) with associated open space, play areas and cycle links; live/work units (2000 sqm), employment (use class B1c and B2 up to 1847 gross sqm including mezzanine); tourism and leisure uses including a marina / basin and associated boating facilities (up to 20 berths), railway station with associated heritage / railway activities building including tourist / local needs retail unit (use class D2/A1 up to 394 gross sqm); public house / restaurant (use class A3 / A4 up to 340 sqm) and associated car parking and serving; reserve land for future highway including associated landscaping. Approved.

SMD/2020/0552 – Application to vary a S106 relating to SMD/2014/0750. Pending.

SMD/2021/0536 – Reserved matters application for approval of appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale to provide: 141 residential dwellings (Class C3) providing a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses, and two bedroom apartments; 2 x live / work units (Sui Generis). 1 x public house / restaurant / café (Sui Generis / Class E(b)); a marina / basin and associated boating facilities with 13 berths; associated works including internal road network, associated highway works, drainage infrastructure, landscaping, open space, play area, pedestrian, and cyclist links; land reserved for future railway station with associated heritage / railway activities building/s and car parking; and land reserved for future link road including associated landscaping. The application is submitted pursuant to outline planning permission SMD/2014/0750. Approved.

SMD/2021/0537 – Variation of conditions 4, 10, 13 and 19 of planning permission SMD/2014/0750. Approved.

SMD/2022/0498 – Hybrid planning application seeking 1) Full permission (part retrospective) for an office building and its associated car parking and 2) Outline

permission seeking approval of access all other matters reserved, for a laboratory building and its associated areas; reservation of land for future link road. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 15/08/2026
Neighbour consultation period ends: 14/08/2026
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

No comments have been received from Leek Town Council.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

The application seeks advertisement consent for the display of a new entrance sign at Croda Chemicals Europe, Barnfield Road, Leek.

The proposed non-illuminated advertisement will measure 2.5 metres in width by 2.5 metres in height and will be installed with a minimum mounting height of 2.1 metres.

The sign is to be located on private land to the rear of the site boundary fence within the Croda Chemicals car park, as shown on submitted Drawing Ref. 2605-CTD-S1-XX-DR-A-008-P01. The proposal will not adversely affect the existing provision of parking spaces on the site.

The advertisement will be mounted at the height, size and specification detailed within the application form and on submitted Drawing Ref. 2605-CTD-S1-XX-DR-A-010-P02 and 2605-CTD-S1-XX-DR-A-008-P01.

The installation of the display will not have a detrimental impact on highway users or the operation of the highway network. Therefore, I have no objection to this proposal subject to the following condition.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

According to the Planning Practice Guidance: Regulation 3 requires that local planning authorities control the display of advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors.

Visual Amenity

The PPG continues: *“Amenity” is not defined exhaustively in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. It includes aural and visual amenity (regulation 2(1)) and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest (regulation 3(2)(a)).*

It is, however, a matter of interpretation by the local planning authority (and the Secretary of State) as it applies in any particular case. In practice, “amenity” is usually understood to mean the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement.

So, in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features.

This might mean that a large poster-hoarding would be refused where it would dominate a group of listed buildings, but would be permitted in an industrial or commercial area of a major city (where there are large buildings and main highways) where the advertisement would not adversely affect the visual amenity of the neighbourhood of the site.

With regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place. The Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD states that for Shopfronts and Signs, signage should complement the frontage and be well proportioned and illumination of signs should be discreet.

The proposed development consists of a new entrance sign to assist visitors approaching the site from Barnfield Road. The signage would have a width of approximately 2.5 metres, a depth of 0.25 metres and a maximum height of approximately 4.6 metres. The sign would be white/green aluminium composite with black and green vinyl lettering, attached to grey powder-coated aluminium posts.

The area is industrial in nature, lending support for large scale signage. The PPG acknowledges that large advertisements can be acceptable in industrial or commercial areas of major cities where there are large buildings and main highways. As such, it would not be excessive in scale within the wider industrial park, sitting proportionately within the site that it serves. The proposed sign would sit comfortably in the backdrop of the site; the associated building would be substantially larger in height than the sign. Its scale would not be out of keeping with its surroundings and would have a neutral impact on the character and context of its immediate area.

The site covers an expansive area; there has been a lot of new development in the area where the new sign would be located. Thus, the addition of the proposed

signage is necessary to help with the business. There is no existing signage within this vicinity, therefore the proposed sign would not create visual clutter.

Residential Amenity

Policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF (2026) seek to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. NPPF Policy L2 states that development should maintain safe access and egress for occupiers and users, and acceptable living standards for residents and neighbours in terms of access to daylight, sunlight, privacy and external amenity space.

Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

There are no immediate dwellings that could be impacted by the development. As the signage would not be illuminated, there would be no light pollution impact on neighbour amenity.

Public Safety

Chapter 15 of the NPPF (2026) contains the relevant national planning policies relating to highway safety impacts. NPPF Policy TR6 states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network, or an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Policy T1 of the Local Plan (2020) seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking.

In the absence of any objection from the highway authority no highway safety implications are envisaged. SCC Highways have advised that the proposal will not adversely affect the existing provision of parking spaces on the site and the installation of the display will not have a detrimental impact on highway users or the operation of the highway network.

Thus, the proposed development would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

There are no other public safety considerations in this instance.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. The proposed signage would not be considered to create visual clutter at the site and would be proportionate in size and scale to the site which it serves, thus it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Therefore, the application is recommended for approval, subject to all relevant conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 18/09/2026

X *B.J. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council