

Our Ref: CE/CE/8517

14th January 2025
amended 20/01/2025

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Land at and near New Inn, St Owens Cross, Hereford HR2 8LQ:

**Proposed application for variation of condition 2 of planning permission
193728/F & 193729/L (Proposed erection of five dwelling houses together with
associated reordering of the public house car park to facilitate vehicle access)
and subsequent planning permission 210426/F & 210841/L (amendments to
proposed site layout revision to include additional car parking for the New Inn
public house staff members) - Revisions to the approved scheme.**

Design and Access Statement

This application relates to proposals to vary the approved site layout drawing ref 7126.14d and individual house plot types, 7126-6, 7, 8 & 9.

Site Context

The New Inn public house is located adjacent the approved residential development. The Inn underwent comprehensive refurbishment and refitting throughout and has remained open since being re-opened for trading in early Autumn 2020.

The refurbishment of the New Inn required very considerable financial investment by the owners. The primary motivation for seeking planning permission for the residential development on the adjacent land was essentially as 'enabling development' to provide the necessary finance to invest in their pub business.

The site has been marketed as a development site since obtaining approval however has yet to be sold. The applicants for this variation of condition 2 is a potential purchaser for the site however to ensure the viability of the development changes to the individual house plots types are required.

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The cost of construction in the UK has risen in recent years with industry reports suggesting that these costs have risen by approximately 15-20 per cent since 2020, largely due to the rising prices of materials such as steel, timber, and cement. These price increases have been exacerbated by supply chain disruptions caused by the Covid pandemic, as well as ongoing geopolitical tensions affecting global trade.

Labour costs have also escalated, partly due to a shortage of skilled workers. The construction industry has long relied on workers from the European Union, and Brexit has led to a reduction in the availability of this labour pool. The resultant wage inflation has further driven up construction costs.

Recent changes in Building Regulations have also influenced these construction costs. With the UK government's push for greener, more energy-efficient buildings this has led to stricter requirements for insulation, heating systems, and overall building performance. While these regulations aim to reduce carbon emissions and improve sustainability, they have also added to construction costs, as firms need to invest in more advanced materials and technologies to meet the new standards.

Whilst the long-term benefits of these regulations, such as lower energy costs and increased building longevity the additional construction costs cannot simply be added to the end sale value of each property if these are expected to achieve end sales.

Brexit has also had a profound impact on the UK construction industry. The departure from the EU has led to tariffs on imported materials, longer lead times, and increased administrative burdens. These factors have contributed to the overall rise in construction costs. Additionally, the reduced availability of EU labour has intensified the skills shortage, putting further pressure on wages.

The applicant's solution involves seeking permission for minor reordering of the approved site layout and modifications to individual house type to include for the use of solar panels to roofs and air source heat pumps ensuring these properties will meet the new requirements providing a completed development with much needed housing to meet the local authorities targets for the future.

This application site layout drawing 8517-01 details the proposed revised arrangement approved under planning permission 193728 & 210426, together with the variations to the 5 house types shown to drawings 8517-02, 03, 04 & 05.

None of these changes will directly any direct impact on the New Inn and their location will result in only limited variation to the approved visual impact in how these dwellings sit in relation to the New Inn.

The only visual variation to the site as viewed from the highway is to replace the previously approved stone wall fronting plot 1 with a hedge. This location is as per the approved stone wall being set to the rear of the car park however is intended to match the existing hedge which is similarly set to the rear of the main car park as can be seen on the street view images below.



This hedge will provide both screening to plot 1 and a back drop to the car park that will match the current arrangement.

The applicants request that the Council consider this variation application proposal in the wider context of all the material factors involved outlined above and grant permission for the proposed amendments.