



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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Chris Coudriet, County Manager

September 16, 2026

Wade Miller
Copper Builders, LLC
1900 W Morehead St, Suite 102
Charlotte, NC 28208

Subject: Administrative Denial – Hilton Bluffs Subdivision Site Plan

Mr. Wade Miller,

As the chief administrator of county government, I am ultimately responsible for all county departments and offices under the general control of the board of commissioners, including the county departments represented on the Technical Review Committee (TRC).

Accordingly, I have reviewed the updated Hilton Bluffs site plan submitted by Copper Builders on August 3, 2026, the responsive TRC comments which were discussed at the September 2, 2026 TRC meeting, and the subsequent updates from the developer with technical revisions. The most current site plan removes the previously proposed secondary access roads onto Tall Oaks Drive and Dekker Road and includes only one access road to Castle Hayne Road.

This change to a single point of ingress and egress raises significant public safety concerns. Therefore, I am administratively denying the updated plans for the Hilton Bluffs development on public safety grounds. The TRC shall not move forward with any type of further review or determination as it relates to the most recent submitted plan.

Relying on a single point of access for a development of this size (approximately 1,800 residential units) presents unacceptable operational and life safety risks. It would delay emergency response and evacuation, as well as access into or out of the community during traffic incidents, infrastructure failures, or other emergencies. These risks would ultimately be borne by the county, its public safety agencies, and the future residents of the development.

Adverse impacts on emergency response and safety measures are part of TRC's considerations, and that was reflected in the comments provided to the developer related to the single access. The developer was encouraged to consider ways to provide a secondary

means of ingress and egress; and the Fire Marshal's comments also shared concerns regarding fire safety and outlined numerous requirements, to include adequate water supply, enhanced hydrant spacing, and fire sprinkler systems in all dwelling units. However, even the requirement of fire sprinklers does not overcome the public safety concerns associated with one ingress and egress.

County administration has an obligation to consider the broader public safety implications of development, including the ability of all emergency response agencies (e.g., fire, EMS, and law enforcement) to safely and effectively serve future residents. In addition, given the location of this site, having just one ingress and egress point is a concern if there is a significant rain event that causes flooding and impacts to the road. Accessibility for emergency responders and residents could be severely compromised.

The removal of the two previously proposed secondary access points fundamentally changes the public safety and public policy considerations associated with the project. Accordingly, and with all of this taken into consideration, it is the administrative decision of the County Manager's Office that the most recent Hilton Bluffs site plan with a single point of ingress and egress be denied.

This decision does not prevent the applicant from submitting new plans to the TRC that address these public safety concerns, to include not less than one additional point of ingress and egress, or from pursuing any other review processes available under applicable law. Any subsequent, revised plan submitted to the TRC will be reviewed and analyzed as a new application.

Sincerely,



Chris Coudriet

New Hanover County Manager

cc: Technical Review Committee Members