DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2016/0456	**455 NEW STREET**	**PROPOSED USE OF CURTILAGE LAND FOR SITING ONE RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN WITH SHARED USE OF EXISTING SITE ACCESS**
Valid 16/08/2016	**BIDDULPH MOOR**	
		(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Would the provision of a single pitch caravan site in the centre of a 'Larger Village' comply with the Council's Spatial Strategy Policies i.e. would it contribute positively to the social and environmental improvement of the District in terms of providing a quality home?
- Would the site relate well to the character, arrangement and appearance of the village settlement and the surrounding development?
- Would the site provide suitable levels of amenity for future occupiers?
- Would the site provide adequate parking, turning and access arrangements?

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is sliced from the curtilage to the side of the old police house in the centre of Biddulph Moor, a semi rural location made up of small stone cottages, 1930's detached dwellings and 70s and 80s developments. The Old Police House is a large detached dwelling that sits centrally within a proportionate curtilage. The site is located on the main cross roads where traffic to and from Biddulph, Leek and Lask Edge converge in the middle of the village, sometimes stopping to visit 'Moor Stores' and Post Office that is directly opposite the site. In this hub of the village there is a pub, other convenience store, primary school and churches just metres from the site adjacent the site there is a communal area of village open space.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a material change of use on land to the side of the existing dwelling taking a strip of its curtilage to create a new single pitch caravan site. The change of use would split the existing planning unit and create two individual standalone units with physically and functionally separate uses.

The applicant, who is currently the occupant of the existing dwelling, wishes to move out of his house into the caravan, 'downsizing' in his retirement, and then separately dispose of the remainder of his property. The applicant was discharged from the police after 19 years of service, after sustaining injuries.

The site would be 8 metres wide and 28 metres long following the demolition of a flat roof garage. The site would provide a 4m by 11m 'holiday park' style static caravan that would sit between the side of the existing dwelling and a high wall and fence on the other. The front and rear of the caravan would be not much more than 2 metres from the boundary on either side. The submitted drawings show that the caravan would sit on the prop stands with steps running up to provide access; provide one bedroom, a small shower room and open plan kitchen/lounge area. At the south end of the site two car parking spaces would be provided at right angles to the road there would be no turning space within the site and vehicles could only turn by sharing land with the adjacent property. The existing wide access would essentially be split in half to provide a shared drive arrangement.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS6a Larger Villages
H3 Housing Sites for Gypsy Travellers
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Section(s)
Core Planning Principles
7. Requiring good design
8. Promoting healthy communities

Paragraph(s) 17; 56- 68; 69 - 78

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 16/09/16
Neighbour consultation period ends: 10/09/16
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None Received

Town / Parish Comments

Object - inappropriate design, appearance and materials

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development: Would the provision of a single pitch caravan site in the centre of a 'Larger Village' comply with the Council's Spatial Strategy Policies i.e. would it contribute positively to the social and environmental improvement of the District in terms of providing a quality home?

Spatial Strategy Policy SS1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy expects the use of land to contribute positively to the social and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, inter alia: 'quality' affordable homes to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future communities; and a safe, healthy environment.

Currently the site forms part of a proportionate curtilage to one of the largest houses in Biddulph Moor village, it provides a buffer strip between the house and the communal village space to the side –to that extent it contributes to the character, arrangement and environment of the settlement.

The provision of the single pitch caravan site would compromise that arrangement without delivering 'quality' residential accommodation or a safe and healthy environment. A caravan and particularly a small caravan, the caravan's size is dictated by the limited proportions of the site, is a relatively poor quality form of residential accommodation reserved generally for summer holidays and gypsy travellers, who often supplement that accommodation with brick utility buildings and second vans.

The caravan has raised access reached by steps or steep ramp, limited floor space and is difficult to heat in the winter. Decent thermal insulation would further reduce the internal space and ventilation of such a small space would run counter to heat retention.

Design, Character and Appearance - Would the site relate well to the character, arrangement and appearance of the village settlement and the surrounding development?

Spatial Strategy Policies SS1 and SS6a; and Design Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy requires development or the use of land to deliver attractive and well maintained environments; maintain, enhance, positively contribute to and compliment the local distinctiveness and special character of villages and their settings.

However, the proposed use would not respect the proportions of the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, layout, siting, character and appearance. The proposed site is long and narrow and would result in a very cramped layout where a 'holiday park' style static caravan would be squeezed between a large detached dwelling on one side and an area of communal public open space on the other. In terms of its proportions, layout and relationship with adjacent plots and buildings the site would not relate well to the scale, arrangement, character and appearance of the surrounding development.

Amenity - Would the site provide suitable levels of amenity for future occupiers?

Spatial Strategy Policy SS1 and Design Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy require 'quality' accommodation and the residential amenity of future occupiers to be protected.

There is just one policy in the core strategy relevant to the provision of caravan sites, but it is specific to sites for gypsies and travellers. The applicant is not a gypsy or a traveller. However, the policy does set out considerations that should surely, in all reasonableness, apply to the provision of any caravan site e.g. safe access, on site facility for parking, storage, play and residential amenity; and adequate levels of privacy and resi amenity for occupiers.

The 'holiday park' style static caravan would have very restricted front and rear out look that is no more than 2.5 metres to the boundary walls on each side, while remaining land within the site for personnel circulation, play , amenity and storage would be very limited in terms of its size and ability to function as useable space.

Highway Safety - Would the site provide adequate parking, turning and access arrangements?

The layout plan shows two side by side parking spaces which would consume a large portion of the remaining site space. These vehicles would not be able to turn within the confines of the site and would rely on a shared arrangement with the adjacent property.

Essentially the site would not provide adequate parking and turning space that would enable a car to enter and leave the site in a forward gear. This would introduce a new danger to users of New Street which is a C classified road in a busy village centre location and compromise a healthy, safe and well maintained environment. As

such, the proposed use of land would be contrary to Spatial Strategy Policy SS1; Housing Policy H3; and Design Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Planning permission should be refused because it does not comply with the sated policies of the Core Strategy or the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst
Recommendation Date: 12/10/2016

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Haywood, Ben

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council