DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0201 **Valid 27/03/2017**	**SCHEME MANAGERS HOUSE** **MOORLANDS COURT** **WELLS CLOSE** **BIDDULPH**	**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE AND ALTERATIONS TO SCHEME MANAGERS HOUSE TO CREATE A MOBILITY SCOOTER STORE AT THE GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND A SELF CONTAINED ONE BEDROOM FLAT AT FIRST FLOOR LEVEL** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Design;
- Amenity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This application relates to Moorlands Court, a sheltered housing complex with manager accommodation located within the Biddulph Town Development Boundary. Wells Close leads south-west of Congleton Road and comprises of a series of bungalows and a two storey apartment block. The unit that is the subject of this application is positioned within the northern corner of the apartment building.

PROPOSAL

Planning approval is sought to reconfigure the existing manager's accommodation in order to incorporate a mobility scooter store to the ground floor. The existing accommodation comprises of kitchen, living/dining room and w.c. to the ground floor and 3 no. bedroom and family bathroom to the first floor. It is proposed to retain the w.c. to the ground floor and convert the kitchen and living/dining room into a mobility store, providing ramped access through double doors that are to be positioned within the north-east facing elevation. The first floor accommodation is to be reconfigured to allow for a 1 no. bedroom self contained flat.

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
DC1 Design Considerations

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 17
Section(s) 7

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1986/0452 Erection of category two sheltered housing, two and three storey storey development comprising thirty single and two-person flats, wardens house and communal facilities
Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 28.04.2017
Neighbour consultation period ends: 20.04.2017
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

1 no. letter of representation has been received. The salient planning related points raised relate to the potential noise generated by the doors closing, the loss of a parking space and the potential loss of privacy if first floor windows were to be increased in size. All other points raised relate to the management of the site.

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council – no objection subject to there being no valid neighbour objections.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

CS policy SS1 states that development should contribute to the social, economic and environmental improvements of the Staffordshire Moorlands. In accordance with policy SS1a, when considering development proposals the Council will make a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.

Design

Core Strategy policy DC1 outlines that development should be of a high quality and add value to the local area. Development should be designed to respect the site and surroundings having regard to matters of scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance in line with the Council's Design SPG.

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF advises that he Government attached great importance to the sign of the built environment. Paragraphs 63 and 64 go on to comment that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally within the area. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area.

This application relates primarily to the internal reconfiguration of the existing accommodation and as such only limited external alterations are proposed which is limited to the insertion of a ramped access via double doors within the north-west facing elevation. All other window openings are to be retained. The alterations proposed are not located within a prominent elevation within the building. Nevertheless, the works have been designed to reflect the character and detailing of the host building. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would detract from the character or appearance of the application site or wider its wider setting.

Amenity

CS policy DC1 requires all development to protect the amenity of the area, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

Consideration has been given to the comments received. It is noted that no alterations are proposed to the size or number of the window opening to the ground and first floor. The windows at first floor level currently serve habitable accommodation. The first floor accommodation is to be retained as residential accommodation and it is therefore unlikely that the proposed development would result in a greater loss of amenity than that currently incurred.

In terms of noise and disturbance generated by the opening and closing of the doors. It is stated on the submitted plans that the doors are to be automatic doors, however no details have been provided as to how the automatic opening is to be triggered ie through a sensor located by the door or through a fob system. Taking account of the spacing distances involved it is unlikely that the opening and closing of the doors would cause undue disturbance, however this is a matter for the management of Moorlands Court and it is considered appropriate to raise this matter to their attention via an informative.

Highway Safety

In accordance with policies DC1 and T1 all new development should provide for safe and satisfactory access and make a contribution to meeting the parking requirements arising from the development. Concern has been raised as to the development resulting in the loss of a parking space. The proposed ramp is to be positioned within an area of footpath that is currently served by a dropped kerb. The area in question is not a designated parking space and accordingly it is not considered that a refusal on such grounds could be substantiated.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

This development is considered to be of an appropriate design that is not considered to detract from the character or appearance of the application site or wider locality. It is not considered that the proposal would result in significant harm to the residential amenity of nearby properties or injury to highway safety. This application therefore adequately accords with the relevant policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Lisa Howard
Recommendation Date: 16.05.2017

X B.J. Haywood

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council