

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0197
Valid 19/04/2021

MILL STREET POST OFFICE
162 MILL STREET
LEEK

INSTALLATION OF A
MODULAR SELF-SERVICE
LAUNDERETTE FACILITY AND
ASSOCIATED WORKS
(RETROSPECTIVE)

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse and the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises an area of hardstanding located to the front of a small parade of shops located on Mill Street, within the Development Boundary of Leek. A block of flats is located to the northwest of the application site, whilst flats are located above the shop units. The application site is positioned adjacent to the A523, Mill Lane to the southwest.

PROPOSAL

Retrospective Full planning permission is sought for the installation of a modular self-service launderette facility and associated works.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted Sept 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

Paragraph(s) 1 - 14
Section(s) 4, 12

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 21/05/2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 17/05/2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: Leek Town Council recommended the application for approval.

Severn Trent Water: No objection to the proposals, subject to pre-commencement condition being attached requiring the applicant to submit drainage plans.

Officer comment: The application seeks retrospective consent and therefore the drainage works have already been completed. It is therefore not possible to attach such a condition should the application be approved.

Environmental Health: No objection subject to a condition in respect of plant and machinery noise.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2019) identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental. In accordance with policies SS1 and 1a of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, the Council will expect all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protecting, and where possible, enhancing the environment. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF (2019).

The dwellinghouse is located within the Development Boundary of Leek; a 'town' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS5. Policy SS5 seeks to support 'improvements to the range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town'. The development comprises the provision of a launderette, which will provide a service to those living in the surrounding area. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design

Policy DC1 refers to design and seeks to secure development of a high quality which is designed to add value to the area and to respect the site and its surroundings. New development should promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2019) requires the design of a development to add to the overall quality of an area, by being sympathetic to local character and by being visually attractive as a result of good architecture.

The launderette comes as a pre-fabricated modular unit that measures 3.15 metres x 2.3 metres, with an overall height of 2.21 metres. It is sited on a tarmac forecourt, adjacent to Mill Street Post Office and a small parade of shops. It is positioned along the boundary shared with a three-storey block of flats to the northwest and alongside the gable elevation of this building. A raised bed planted with various shrubs is positioned between the shops and Mill Street.

The structure is small in scale and light grey in colour. Although not an overly attractive structure, it is relatively inconspicuous within the street scene as it is screened by the block of flats when travelling in a southeasterly direction along Mill Street towards Leek town centre and it is screened by the large raised planted bed when travelling in a northwesterly direction along Mill Street. Therefore views of the structure are limited from the immediate surroundings which are not overly attractive. It is therefore not considered that the structure detracts from the character or appearance of the surrounding area. However, it is recommended that a condition is attached that requires its removal once it is no longer in use.

It is for these reasons that the proposed development is considered to comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019).

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DC1 and paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF (2019) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

A block of flats is located to the northwest of the launderette and flats are located above the existing parade of shops to the east; both of which are in close proximity to the facility. No residential windows are affected by the siting of the launderette. The launderette has been in-situ since August 2020 and no comments have been

received from the public regarding any issues regarding noise or disturbance. Environmental Health were consulted on the application. They have no record of complaint against the development to date, nor has Planning Enforcement received a complaint in respect of noise from the development. They do not object to the development, subject to the imposition of a condition that controls noise levels.

It is for these reasons that the proposed development will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019).

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2019). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 14/06/2021

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council