

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0154
Valid 07/04/2021

**BIDDUPLH YOUTH &
COMMUNITY CENTRE
CHURCH ROAD
BIDDULPH**

**RETROSPECTIVE
APPLICATION FOR
EXTENSION TO EXISTING
BLOCK TO STORE
EQUIPMENT AND OTHER
ITEMS. 1 NEW FIRE DOORS
TO BE ADDED TO THE SOUTH
ELEVATION. 4NO. UPVC
OPENING WINDOWS TO
PROVIDE LIGHT AND
VENTILATION INTO
PROPOSED MULTI PURPOSE
SPACE**

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Impact of previous coal mining activity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises the Biddulph Youth & Community Centre. It is a large detached building comprising both single storey and two-storey elements with a mixture of pitched and flat roofs. The building is constructed partly of brick and party of render and is sited on the western side of Church Road, within the Development Boundary of Biddulph.

A church is located to the north of the application site, a public house to the south, open space to the west and residential dwellings are located on the opposite side of Church Road to the east.

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of an extension to the rear of the existing building and the insertion of 1no. fire door and 4no. high level windows within the southern elevation.

Work has commenced on the erection of the extension, however the windows and doors were not in-situ at the time of the site visit. This application therefore seeks retrospective consent.

Revised drawing were requested following the Planning Officer's site visit as the drawings did not reflect the existing building or what was being built on site. Revised drawings were duly submitted that rectified these issues.

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
SS6 Biddulph Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport
SD1 Sustainable Use of Resources

National Planning Policy Framework

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

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1985/0739 New social club
Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 14/05/2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 11/05/2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments: None

Town / Parish Comments: Biddulph Town Council: All Councillors agreed no adverse comments.

Severn Trent Water: No objection to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

The Coal Authority: Do not object to this planning application but recommend that an Informative is attached should planning permission be granted.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision makers 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 (2021) 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 (2021).

The application site is located within the Development Boundary of Biddulph; a 'town' as identified by Local Plan policies SS2 and SS6. Extensions and alterations to existing buildings used for community and leisure pursuits within towns is considered acceptable in principle as it will meet Biddulph's Area Strategy to *'increase the provision of educational, health and community facilities'*.

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 130 of the NPPF (2021) 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 Council's Design Guide SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing. In terms of alterations, it states that *'alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building...The aim is to revitalise the building without altering its fundamental character'*.

The single storey extension is attached to the rear of the existing building. It measures 5 metres by 4 metres and has a flat roof with an overall height of 2.2 metres. It is constructed of render to match the rear wall of the existing building. Due to the land to the side and rear of the extension sloping upwards, the ground around the extension has been excavated and a retaining wall has been erected. Steps have been inserted that provide access to the land to the rear.

The extension is small in scale and subordinate to the existing building. It is sited to the rear of the existing building and is therefore not visible from Church Road. The retaining wall and higher surrounding ground help to screen the building from the south and west. Whilst flat roofs are not a traditional feature within Staffordshire Moorlands, the extension is attached to a 1980s building that currently has a number of flat roofs. The use of a flat roof will therefore complement the character of the existing building.

Within the southern side elevation of the existing building it is proposed to insert 1 no. fire door and 4 no. high level windows. The alterations to the southern elevation are minor and will not adversely affect the character of the existing building. They will also not be visible from the street scene.

It is for these reasons that the development is considered to have an acceptable design and will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Amenity

Policy DC1 and paragraph 130(f) of the NPPF (2021) seek to secure development that protects amenity, including residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and soft landscaping.

To the south of the application site is The Barley Mow public house that is raised above the ground level of the youth and community centre. The proposed windows and fire doors will therefore directly face an existing grassed bank with no issues in respect of overlooking. Equally the rear extension will be sited below the height of the grassed bank and therefore will not adversely affect the amenity of the public house. To the rear of the site is an area of open space. It is for these reasons that the proposed development will not adversely affect neighbouring amenity and will comply with policy DC1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

Coal Mining

Policy SD1 (3) of the Local Plan (2020) states that the re-use of sites affected by mining activity will be supported, provided that any mining legacy is appropriately addressed and it can be demonstrated that the site is safe and stable for the development proposed.

The Coal Authority were consulted as part of the application process as the site is located within the defined 'Development High Risk Area'. Where development is proposed within this area it is usual for the Coal Authority to recommend that the applicant submits a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to support the application.

However, when considering the nature of this particular development, the store extension is flat roofed and relatively small scale. It is assumed that a structure of this type will not require substantial foundations or earthworks. On this basis, the Coal Authority do not consider that a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development and do not object to the planning application, subject to an Informative being attached, should permission be granted.

On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed development will be adversely affected by the coal mining legacy and it will comply with policy SD1 of the Local Plan (2020) and the NPPF (2021).

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 (2021). As such the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE subject to Conditions

Case Officer: Ailsa Berry

Recommendation Date: 30/07/2021

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council