

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0647
Valid 08/10/2021

28 30 TUNSTALL ROAD
BIDDULPH

PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY
REAR/ SIDE EXTENSION
FORMING STORE ROOM

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the character and appearance of the area; highway safety; ground stability resulting from historic coal activities; and impact on residential amenity.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The property is an off license and convenience store, 'Bargain Booze', at the far southern end of Biddulph High Street where the retail and commercial offer becomes infrequent and the residential properties more dominant. The property appears to have been built, or rebuilt, in red brick in the mid to late 20th C, at the end of an Edwardian terrace. The property provides a shop, with shop front glazing, at ground floor and a first floor flat or office. To the rear the property has an outrigger that sits beneath a catslide roof that runs neatly into the slope of the main roof, the outrigger shares the brick corbel and verge decoration with the main building. Tucked into a discrete corner alcove there is a flat roof addition providing cooled storage.

The rear of the property is open to a yard area, enclosed by a dwarf brick wall to the edge of an alleyway access. The yard evidently provides storage space for the bins, including a large commercial skip bin, and the parking of a vehicle (assumed to be that of the resident). The property is at the end of a terraced row and, adjacent, on the other side there is the junction access to the residential cul de sac of Lorena Close that turns and wraps behind the application property.

Where the road access runs to the side of the application property there is a pavement and then a strip of hardstanding running up to the side of the building, providing parking for two customer cars.

PROPOSAL

The applicant seeks to provide a store room addition to the rear of the property that would be built in the open yard area. As originally submitted the store would have been flat roofed, consumed the whole of the yard area, and extended right out the edge of the alleyway, replacing the boundary wall with its rear elevation. A roller shutter door would be positioned against the strip of hardstanding, close to the edge of the pavement. (The development would have been large, bulky, and relate poorly to the existing building in an exposed and prominent location. It would also consume and displace areas used to store the skip bin and park a car, without any alternative provision).

Throughout the application process, in response to criticism, the applicant has with revised plans attempted to change the roof design by adding large bulky hipped roof arrangements (at odds with the vernacular) and reducing the size of the addition.

He has settled on a scheme that has narrowed the depth/width of the store addition so that a skip bin could be kept between the addition and the yard wall. The roof arrangement would introduce hipped 'dummy' verges to the surrounds with a concealed flat roof area within. The addition would still present a roller shutter door to the pavement at the side.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan Development Plan Document (Adopted 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS6 Biddulph Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

88/00816/OLD Change of use and extension of dwellings to form shops with offices over.
92/00750/OLD Change of use of office to first floor flat. Approved.
02/00049/FUL Rear extension to provide storage. Refused.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 10.12.2021
Neighbour consultation period ends: 10.12.2021
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

One anonymous objection has been received – the reason for the objection is not clear

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council: Awaited

Environmental Health

Recommend conditions relative to noise, lighting, construction impacts and unexpected contamination.

Coal Authority

Holding objection addressed with the submission of a Phase 1 Geo Environmental Report and Coal Mining Risk Assessment. Recommend conditions requiring an intrusive investigation before the commencement of development.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The Biddulph Area Strategy SS6 supports development that enhances Biddulph's role as a significant service centre - seeking to strengthen its role as a retail centre and supporting growth of existing business.

The applicant states that the store room would improve their ability to deliver and hold more stock. Provision of such a facility would find support, generally, from the strategy. However, it is also part of the strategy to "improve the image and identity of Biddulph" by upgrading the general environment of the town, improving approaches into town from the south. To that extent, observing the policies of the Local Plan as a whole and the terms of NPPF, this also requires the development to be well designed and to relate well to the character and appearance of the area

Design

All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD.

The SPD guidance says that "Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the building's character (All 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. Setting back the new section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help").

The rear of the property is actually quite well presented. There is a rear outrigger that relates well to the existing dwelling with a mono pitched catslide roof adjoining the main roof of the building and has the same brick decoration to the roof verges. The yard area is enclosed behind a brick dwarf wall. The proposed addition would essentially present a large blocky mass, that would attach to the rear without any relationship or considerate connection. It would appear unsightly, functional and imposing. The dummy hipped roof verges, an effort to hide its flat roof, would result in an odd arrangement that would not relate well, particularly because a hipped roof is not the vernacular of the existing property or the adjacent terraces. It would read as contrived, rather than considered architecture.

The development would be situated to the rear of the dwelling where, particularly since the residential development to the rear of the property has been carried out, the back of the building and its yard has become a very exposed and open area to the shared residential environment. Development here would be exposed and prominent affecting the appearance and quality of this residential area. The development proposed.

In these respects the proposal does not represent good design that is respectful of the character and appearance of the original dwelling or that of the locally distinct area.

The development would conflict with Local Plan policy SS6 and DC1 and the SMDC design guide in those respects.

It is understood that the additional storage space would assist the business with its ability to hold and have stock delivered. However, the applicant has not presented a business case that is so exceptional that it would outweigh the harms identified above and below.

Impact on Amenity

The adjacent, adjoining property is a terraced dwelling. At the rear the dwelling has a principal window that has outlook onto their own yard and is flanked by the applicant's property and the existing flat roof store that sits in the corner alcove. The proposed addition would extend beyond the existing store and the neighbour's window increasing the extent and depth of side elevation that would flank, within close proximity of the boundary, the neighbour's outlook. A 45 degree sight line would be breached within an unreasonably close proximity from the centre of the neighbour's window, resulting in a breach of the Council's 'Space About Dwelling' Standards, harm to their amenity, and conflict with policy DC1 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety

It is notable that the development would consume yard space that is evidently available and used as a parking space for a car, presumably that which belongs to the resident of the first floor flat. Two end to end 'pull in' spaces are available for customers to the side of the shop, but this loss of an off road space is inevitably going to increase the likelihood of roadside parking that will in turn increase the danger to users of the highway. The flat resident is likely to own a car and many customers are likely to travel some distance and/or want to pick up heavy goods. Moreover, if there is any intention of using the store space to garage a car then a car would be unable to park clear of the highway whilst the roller shutter door is opened.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The development would not represent good design, it would relate poorly to the existing building and the surrounding environment, and therefore harm the character and appearance of the area. Moreover, the development would be unreasonably close to the adjacent neighbour's window to the extent that their amenity and outlook would be harmed. This would be contrary to Policy SS6 and DC1 of the Local Plan and the terms of the NPPF. There would also be some harm to highway safety, with the displacement of a parking space and the increased likelihood of cars parking on the roadside.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date: 13/01/2022

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council