

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE DATE: 10 February 2010**

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<b>APPLICATION REF. NO:</b>	<b>09/00815/FUL</b>
<b>STATUTORY DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>5 February 2010</b>
<b>WARD/PARISH:</b>	<b>PARK WEST</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>All Saints Church, Ravensdale Road</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>Erection of single storey extension at side to form store room</b>
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	<b>ALL SAINTS MILLENNIUM TRUST</b>

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**APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

This application relates to the erection of a single storey extension to the side of the Millennium Centre to form a storeroom and secondary escape route. The proposed extension would be located to the north side of the building and would measure approximately 6.7 metres by 4 metres and would be constructed of matching brick. The existing tiled, pitched roof would continue over the proposed extension, which would measure 2.5 metres at eaves level.

The Millennium Centre adjoins the recently built All Saints Church on Ravensdale Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character. The Millennium Centre is bounded by residential properties on Glenfield Road along its northern boundary, by open space associated with the church to the east and by the church and its car park to the south. Ravensdale Road forms the western boundary of the application site. A Mature Birch tree on the Ravensdale Road frontage of the site, which is protected by Tree Preservation Order 1997, No. 1, will be unaffected by the proposed development.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted with the application.

**PLANNING HISTORY**

The most recent and relevant planning history is:

96/00098/MISC – Construction of new church hall/community centre to replace existing building. GRANTED 3 JUNE 1996

97/00037/FUL – Construction of link between the proposed new community hall (ref No 8/96/048/DM) and the existing church, internal reorientation of the church with related amendments to elevations. GRANTED 26 MARCH 1997

97/00041/CONDIT – Variation to existing planning permission ref no 8/96/098/DM dated 3.6.96 to incorporate revised car parking/external works layout. GRANTED 26 MARCH 1997

97/00253/FUL – Construction of a temporary construction access from Blackwell Lane.  
GRANTED 6 JUNE 1997

07/01198/FUL – Demolition of existing building and replacement erection of church (amended plans received 18 January 2008) GRANTED 7 MARCH 2008

## **PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

The following policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 are relevant to consideration of the application:

- E2 – Development Limits
- E3 – Protection of Open Land
- E29 – The Setting of New Development
- R25 – Provision of Community Facilities and Services

## **RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY**

One letter of objection has been received from a resident of Glenfield Road, which raises the following issues:

- *The new position of the fire exit door will be very close to the boundary of other properties. Can a restriction be placed on the use of the door so that it is only used as a fire exit door and for no other purpose.*
- *The boundary line in the area of the proposed changes has a hawthorn hedge and in recent months the church removed some self-seeded trees from the hedge and have left large gaps in the hedge. The hedge, and trees, have helped to soften the large expanse of brick wall and roof of the hall and I would ask if some 'greenery' can be reinstated to help soften the impact of the dominating building.*
- *We have great problem with noise coming from the hall when music is played so much so that we can sit in our living room with the windows closed and the TV on and still clearly listen to the beat of the music. The church does not really want to know when the matter is raised. My request is that suitable sound insulation is included in the construction, including the roof area.*

## **PLANNING ISSUES**

The main planning issues are considered to be whether the proposed extension is acceptable in terms of its impact on the visual and residential amenities of the area.

Local Plan Policy E29 (The Setting of New Development) states that new development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings will be required to respect the character of its setting in terms of its siting, design, materials, landscaping and the protection of existing townscape features. The proposed extension is considered to be modest in size, providing just 24 square metres of additional floor area for storage purposes, infilling an existing gap in the northern side of the building. The extension is to be built of matching materials and the main roof over the centre will continue over the proposed extension. This part of the north elevation is not prominent in view from Ravensdale Road, the nearest public vantage point, and as such

the proposed extension is not considered to have any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the wider streetscene.

The application site is also identified at Open Land and Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) allows development provided that the network, as a whole, in the urban area is not adversely affected. In this instance, the proposed extension to the building, is not considered to have a significant adverse impact upon the character or appearance of open land.

The nearest residential properties to the northern side of the Millennium Centre and the proposed extension are location on Glenfield Road, approximately 12 metres away from the site's northern boundary. The properties and their rear gardens occupy a slightly elevated position above the centre. It is not considered that the proposed extension will have any adverse impact upon the amenities of these residential properties to the north in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearing impact given its modest size, infilling a gap in the northern side of the building.

Concerns have been raised by a resident of Glenfield Road regarding the impact of the proposed extension on the amenities of his property arising from the proposed fire door, the applicants' recent removal of some of the landscaping along the northern boundary and noise nuisance arising from the use of the building.

The proposed escape door would open out onto a paved area to the northern side of the building from which access would then be gained, via a narrow paved area, to the front or rear of the building. The site of the proposed extension is currently used as a small, informal outdoor toddlers play area, which the agent has confirmed will be relocated to the opposite side of the building away from houses, thereby improving the existing situation for nearby residents. The limited width of the remaining paved area that runs along the northern side of the building would make it difficult for it to be used on a regular basis for this, or any other similar purpose. The agent has also confirmed that the door will be used principally as a secondary means of escape but will also provide access to the bin store as the existing door, that the extension will be built over, did. At a distance of approximately 3.5 metres away from the common boundary between the hall and the nearest property on Glenfield Road, it is not considered that this means of escape will have an adverse impact on the amenities of the residents of these properties.

The landscaping scheme approved when permission was granted for the erection of the Millennium Centre in 1996 shows that the boundary hedge along the north elevation was to be retained and supplemented with low level shrub planting on land immediately to the north of the proposed extension. Although it would appear that some thinning of the hedge has taken place, it remains substantially in tact, in accordance with the approved landscaping details. It would be difficult to argue that the proposed extension would, in its own right, warrant further landscaping to limit its visual impact on the properties on Glenfield Road. Similarly, the insulation of the roof and walls of the proposed storeroom extension would be a disproportionate response to concerns regarding noise nuisance arising from the wider use of the hall. The use of the proposed storeroom in itself is considered unlikely to generate significant noise levels so as to adversely impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties. Concern regarding noise disturbance arising from the hall is a matter for the Council's Environmental Protection department.

#### **SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

The proposed development has been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on,

and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. The proposed development does not give rise to crime and disorder issues.

### **CONCLUSION**

The proposed extension does not raise any adverse impacts in terms of visual amenity, residential amenity or highway safety matters. The proposed development would accord with the following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

E2 – Development Limits  
E3 – Protection of Open Land  
E29 – The Setting of New Development  
R25 – Provision of Community Facilities and Services

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. A3 (Implementation Limit – Three Years)
2. B4 (Details of Materials)
3. B5 (Development in Accordance with Approved Plans)

### **SUGGESTED REASONS FOR GRANTING OF PLANNING PERMISSION**

The proposed extension does not raise any adverse impacts in terms of visual amenity, residential amenity or highway safety matters. The proposed development would accord with the following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

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