

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 10 February 2010

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APPLICATION REF. NO:	09/00823/DC
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	15 February 2010
WARD/PARISH:	HEIGHINGTON AND CONISCLIFFE
LOCATION:	The Village Hall, East Green, Heighington
DESCRIPTION:	Level and resurface existing car park, upgrade existing disabled access ramp to rear door, extension of boundary wall including double gates, single gate and fencing to form bin store.
APPLICANT:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This is a full application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. Approval is sought for works to the existing car park located at the southern end of the village hall, to level and resurface it with tarmac. It is also proposed to provide a disabled access ramp to the rear of the village hall and to extend the existing stone boundary along the southern boundary of the car park and to incorporate a set of double gates. A bin store will also be created at the rear of the existing toilets by demolishing a short section of existing stone wall and replacing it with a 1.8 metre timber fence. The application advises that the proposed work is being commissioned jointly by Heighington Parish Council and Darlington Borough Council's Children's Services Department, to enable the local play group to utilise the hall and the outdoor area as a play area.

Heighington Village Hall is located centrally within Heighington Village to the western side of St Michael's Church. The main village hall building is a Grade II listed building. A more modern extension is attached to its southern side, which is also listed by virtue of being attached to the original listed building. The village hall car park is located to the south of the hall, with access gained off East Green. Public conveniences are located in the car park. The application site also lies within the Heighington Conservation Area.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted with the application. An associated application for listed building consent has also been submitted (09/00824/LBC) and is also on the agenda for consideration.

PLANNING HISTORY

74/00109/DM – The construction of a vehicular access to the village hall. GRANTED 5 JUNE 1974

87/00084/LBC – Consent to demolish and rebuild wall. GRANTED 8 APRIL 1987

98/00634/LBC – Listed building consent for internal and external alterations. GRANTED 24 NOVEMBER 1998

01/00824/LBC – Addition of five hay mangers to front elevation to be used as planters. GRANTED 7 FEBRUARY 2002

08/00297/LBC – Listed building consent for installation of air extract grill in existing window on north elevation. 22 MAY 2008

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

The following policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 are considered relevant:

E2 – Development Limits

E29 – The Setting of New Development

R1 – Designing for All

R2 – Access for People with Disabilities

R25 – Provision of Community Facilities and Services

R29 – Village Community Halls

Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning and The Historic Environment

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Highway Engineer

Would raise no highway objection to the proposal. Works will be required within the public highway however the works will be carried out by the Community Services Section. Therefore liaison between Richard Emmerson and Alan Ward in relation to the programming of the works would be required.

Conservation Officer

Whilst the principle of these works is supported there are some details missing from the applications, so I suggest that conditions are attached relating to the materials for the access ramp, the design and materials for the new gates and fencing to the bin store and the stone, mortar and coursing for the extension to the boundary wall

Heighington Parish Council

Recommends that the application be approved.

PLANNING ISSUES

Local Plan Policy R25 (Provision of Community Facilities and Services) is supportive of proposals to provide community facilities, having regard to the need to safeguard residential amenity, the character and appearance of the surroundings and highway safety. Policy R29 (Village Community Halls) is similarly supportive of proposals to improve existing village halls provided that the proposal respects the scale and character of its surroundings, does not adversely affect the amenity of the area and incorporates satisfactory access and parking provision.

PPG 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' requires that in accordance with Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the desirability of preserving or enhancing a conservation area should be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application for development within such areas. PPG 15 also places a requirement on local planning authorities when considering applications for planning permission for works, which affect a listed building to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the building.

The main issues for consideration are therefore whether the proposed alterations are acceptable in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the Heighington Conservation Area, the setting of the village hall, a Grade II listed building together with their impact on residential amenity and highway safety.

The proposed disabled access ramp would adjoin the rear of the modern addition to the hall, which is listed by virtue of its attachment to the Grade II listed village hall. The proposed ramp will be constructed of stone to match the extension to the hall, with railings on top. It is considered acceptable in terms of its design and materials in the context of the extension to the hall. It will be seen in conjunction with the extension to the hall rather than the original hall and as such is not considered to have an adverse impact either on the character and appearance of the village Conservation Area or on the setting of this Grade II listed building.

Similarly, the small extension to the stone wall along the southern boundary of the car park in matching stone, the installation of a set of gates within the wall, the resurfacing of the car park with tarmac and the formation of a bin store to the rear of the public conveniences are not considered to adversely impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area or the setting of the listed building. The Council's Conservation Officer is agreeable with the principle of the proposed development subject to a condition requiring the submission and approval of details of all external materials for approval prior to the commencement of development.

The village hall is located centrally within the village, adjacent to St Michael's Church. The nearest residential properties are located approximately 35 metres away to the south-east on East Green. It is not considered that the proposed alterations to the village hall will have any adverse impact on the amenities of these properties. Similarly the Highway Engineer has raised no highway objection to the proposal. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies R25 (Provision of Community Facilities and Services), R29 (Village Community Halls) and Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning and The Historic Environment.

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 issue of crime and anti-social behaviour relating to the application site has been raised during the consultation process. Although it is acknowledged that the application site has a history of anti-social behaviour, it would be difficult to argue that this would be aggravated as a consequence of the proposed development and the refusal of the planning application on this basis cannot be justified. If crime or anti-social behaviour does occur at the site as a consequence of the proposed development then the appropriate agency, either the Police or Uniformed Wardens, should respond to these matters.

CONCLUSION

The proposal involves the provision of improved community facilities in such a location as to be accessible by local residents. The proposal does not raise any issues in respect of highway safety or visual or residential amenity and is not considered to have any adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the Heighington Conservation Area or the setting of the Grade II listed Heighington Village Hall. The proposed development is considered to comply with Policies R25 (Provision of Community Facilities and Services) and R29 (Village Community Halls) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 and Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning and The Historic Environment.

RECOMMENDATION

PROVIDED NO OBJECTIONS ARE RECEIVED ONCE THE PUBLICITY EXERCISE HAS EXPIRED ON 19 FEBRUARY 2010, PURSUANT TO REGULATION 3 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS 1992 PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. A3 (Standard Time Limit)
2. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted full details of the following, including samples, shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - (i) External materials to be used for the construction and surfacing of the disabled access ramp and details of handrails and gate;
 - (ii) Stone, mortar and coursing to be used for the extension of the boundary wall and details of the access gate to be installed; and
 - (iii) Details of timber fencing to be used in the construction of the bin store.Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and be so maintained.
REASON - In the interest of the visual amenity of the area.
3. B5 (Approved Plans)

SUGGESTED REASONS FOR GRANTING OF PLANNING PERMISSION

The proposal involves the provision of improved community facilities in such a location as to be accessible by local residents. The proposal does not raise any issues in respect of highway safety or visual or residential amenity and is not considered to have any adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the Heighington Conservation Area or the setting of the Grade II listed Heighington Village Hall. The proposed development is considered to comply with Policies R25 (Provision of Community Facilities and Services) and R29 (Village Community Halls) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 and Planning Policy Guidance 15 – Planning and The Historic Environment.