

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

14th December 2023

Application No:	SMD/2023/0512	
Location	Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre Thames Drive, Staffordshire, Biddulph, ST8 7HL	
Proposal	Addition of roof-mounted handrail to provide safe access and maintenance in preparation for solar panel installation	
Applicant	Mr Gareth Knapper – SMDC and HPBC	
Agent	Mr Ashley Davison – Leisure Energy	
Parish/ward	Biddulph	Date registered: 12.10.2023
If you have a question about this report please contact: Rachel Robinson rachel.robinson@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk		

REFERRAL

The application is before the committee because the application site is owned and managed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE with conditions

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The site lies within the development boundary of Biddulph to the north of the Biddulph Town Centre. The Leisure Centre itself is located within a residential area along Thames Drive. The application site comprises of land which slopes away from Thames Drive, and overall sits on a lower ground level. Open green space is located to the north-west, south-west and south-east of the site.

2.2 There are no other constraints on the site.

3. THE APPLICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 This is a full planning application for a new 1.1M high balustrade to be located on the existing roof. the balustrade will run around the perimeter of the south western roof elevation. A smaller section of balustrade will form a walk way on the north eastern elevation. The proposal is to facilitate solar PV panels to be installed on the roof, which are being dealt with under permitted development.

3.2 The balustrade will be of a silver finish, mounted to the existing roof. No other alterations are proposed within this application.

3.4 The application, the details attached to it, including the plans, any comments made by residents and the responses of consultees can be found on the Council's website at:-

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=174827>

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 SMD/2010/0957 - Replacement of the leisure centre's existing "wet side" boilers and flue dilution system with external roof cowl. Cowl to be replaced with two new conventional, room sealed flues. APPLICATION RETURNED

4.2 SMD/2019/0188 - Proposed 1x metal secure container 8 feet x 10 at the rear of leisure centre APPROVED 29/07/2019

4.3 SMD/2023/0461 - Lawful development certificate for proposed construction of a packaged plant room and compound inc concrete bases, to provide a renewable heating source for the Leisure center. PENDING

4.4 SMD/2023/0513 - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for Installation of 123 KWp Solar PV System on the existing roof of Biddulph Leisure Centre. PENDING

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS10 Rural area strategy
- SD2 Renewable/low carbon energy
- SD3 Carbon-saving Measures in Development
- SD4 Pollution
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC 4 Local Green Space

National Planning Policy NPPF

National Planning Policy Guidance

6. CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The material planning matters from all consultation responses received are summarised in this section of the report. Full consultation responses can be viewed on the publicly available planning file.

Neighbour Representations – None Received

Environmental Health – None Received

7. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020) which is considered to be up-to-date.

Principle of Development

7.2 The application site is located within the development boundary of Biddulph. Biddulph is one of the towns recognised in LP Policy SS 2, as areas where future development should be focused. Therefore the principle of development is acceptable.

7.3 However, Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre is also located within an area of Local Green Space as recognised by LP Policy DC 4. This policy aims to protect Local Green spaces from inappropriate development, by running any proposed development against national Green Belt Policy.

Local Green Space

7.4 NPPF para 149 of the NPPF lays out what constitutes as appropriate development within the Green Belt, with anything else falling within the realm of inappropriate development. These criteria must be applied to the application site in line with LP Policy DC 4. the proposed development falls within point C:

c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

7.5 The proposed development will add hand rails to the existing roof of the Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre, to accommodate the installation and maintenance of solar panels being installed under permitted development rights. Such a development is not considered to be an addition over and above the size of the original building.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

7.6 The proposed handrails will be of a simple two rail design, in silver. They will match the character of the existing corrugated roof. The railings will be visible from Moorland Road, but the building itself is a modern functional building and the proposed addition will not detract from the existing visual appearance of the corrugated roof. The handrails will add 1.1M in height to the roof. However, due to their design will not add any significant visual bulk to the existing building.

7.7 The railings will be of minimal visibility from Thames Drive, owing to the proposed location on the south-western elevation.

The impact on residential amenity

7.8 The handrailing will allow for maintenance to the existing roof. They will not allow for public access to the roof. As such it will not create any overlooking concerns to for neighbouring dwellings and any views would be mainly over the surrounding green space and play area.

7.9 The proposed railing will be over 70M from the nearest dwellings on Moorland Road (no.s 08 – 14). This is considered to be a sufficient distance to protect the privacy of these dwellings, when maintenance works are being carried out on the leisure centre roof.

8. CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

8.1 The proposed scheme will not lead to any harm to the visual or residential amenity of the area. The scheme is also considered acceptable when assessed against the requirement of Local Green Space and therefore of Green Belt land. The proposal would therefore comply with the Council's Local Plan and the governments planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

9. RECOMMENDATION

A. That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason:-

To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Town and Country Planning, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

- 2. The development hereby approved, including the building materials specified, shall be carried out in complete accordance with the submitted amended plans and specifications as follows:-**

P008-8000-01 Location Plan

P008-8000-20 Existing & Proposed Roof Plan

P008-8000-21 Existing Proposed North East Elevations

P008-8000-22 Existing Proposed South East Elevations

P008-8000-23 Existing Proposed South West Elevations

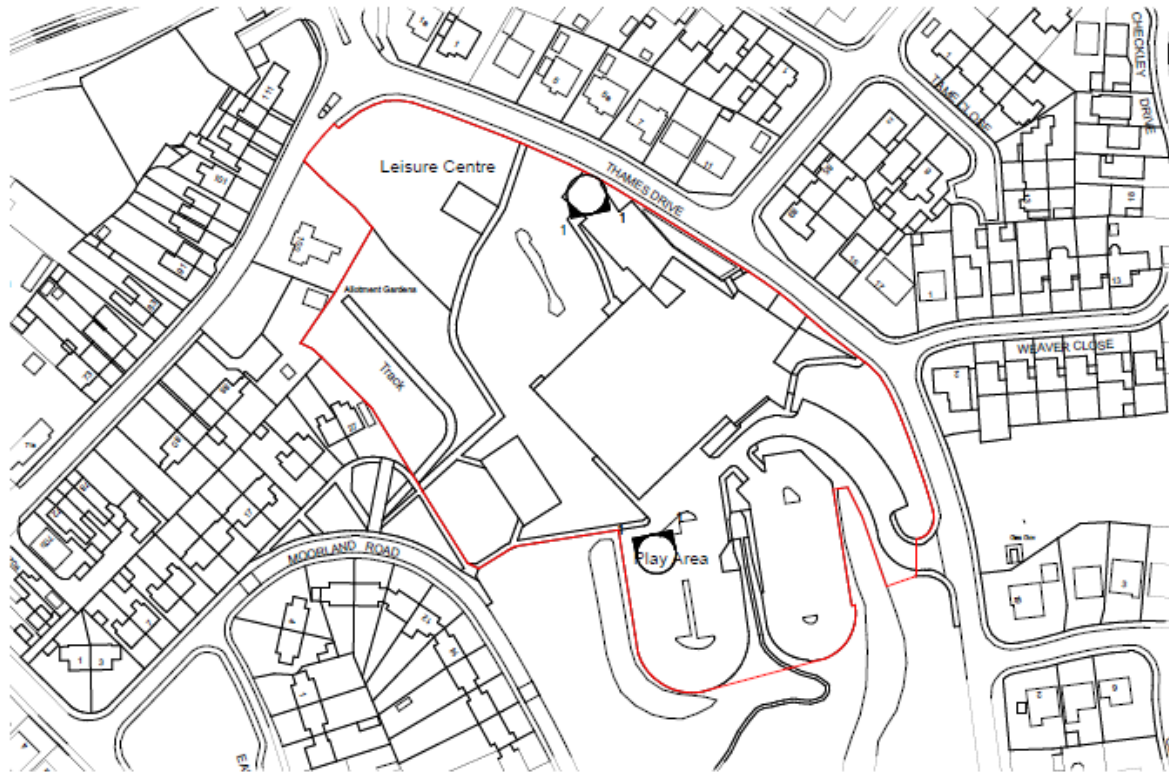
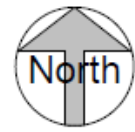
P008-8000-24 Existing Proposed North West Elevations

Site Plan - 1.500



Reason:-

To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for clarity and the avoidance of doubt.

Location Plan



NOTES:
All drawings to be read in conjunction with all other drawings as noted on issue sheet.

-  Extent of ownership indicated thus:
-  Adjoining land in diem's ownership indicated thus (where applicable):

