

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/23/0279
Site Address:	Guest Memorial Bowls Club Garden Street Dowlais Merthyr Tydfil CF48 3LJ
Development:	Extend front decking area
Case Officer:	Marlene Ferreira
Site Visit:	30th November 2023
Application Expiry Date:	23rd January 2024
Consultation reply date expired:	20th December 2023

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to the Guest Memorial Bowls Club, located off Garden Street, in the area of Dowlais. The bowls club is served by a club building to the west of the bowling green and an ample parking area to the northwest of the club building, off Garden Street.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to extend the raised deck area at the front of the club building.

The proposed decked extension would measure 8.74 metres wide, 3.15 metres deep and 2.5 metres in height (including railing enclosure above). The extended decking would tie into the stepped pedestrian access to the southern side of the club house, which would be re-graded, and thus, also enable direct access onto the decked area. The proposal would provide approximately an additional 27m² of outside seating area, and would be finished with rendered walls and a 1.1 metre high steel railing enclosure.

CONSULTATION

Ecology Officer	No objection.
Environmental Health Manager	No response.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to nearby occupiers and two site notices

were displayed within the vicinity of the site. No letters of representation have been received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

- Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

National Planning Policies

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021)

Local Planning Policies

- Merthyr Tydfil Replacement local Development Plan 2016-2031

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking

Policy SW13 – Protecting Community Facilities

Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider in the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed development would be acceptable in principle in this location and whether it would be acceptable in respect of its impact upon the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, ecology and highway safety.

Principle of Development

The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary and Primary Growth Area where new development is supported provided it complies with other relevant policies. As such, the proposal would comply with LDP Policy SW4.

The application site is also recognised as a community facility. As such, LDP Policy SW13 is also relevant. This policy seeks to protect and improve local community facilities. It states that *'...the provision of new and enhanced community facilities will be supported subject to satisfying other relevant LDP Policies. The Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's existing community facilities...'* The proposed development, which seeks to provide an extended raised outside seating area to the front of the club building, would be considered to enhance the facilities available at the bowls club. As such, it would comply with LDP Policy SW13.

Character and Appearance

The proposed development, which seeks to provide an enlarged seating area to support the commercial use of the building, has been considered in respect of its impact upon the character and appearance of the area. Whilst the proposed decked extension would amount to a large development, measuring approximately 8.74 metres wide, it would be of the same height and the same depth as the existing decked area, and as such, would

relate sympathetically to the existing building. Furthermore, it would be finished with rendered walls and steel railings which would match the finishes of the existing decked area and its enclosure. Thus, the proposed development, by virtue of its scale, design and appearance, would not be considered to dominate the existing building or detrimentally harm its character or appearance, particularly due to the club house's discrete location, sited away from its site boundaries and well screened by large existing trees. The proposal is therefore considered an acceptable form of development in context with the surrounding built environment and would therefore accord with LDP Policy SW11.

Residential Amenity

The proposed development has been considered with regards to its impact upon the amenities of nearby occupiers. The extension to the raised decked area could accommodate more visitors and members and may therefore encourage the use of the extended decked area more frequently. However, it should also be noted that the existing decked area already provides a reasonably large seating area frequented by members and visitors to the bowls club. In addition, it should also be noted that the existing bowls club is sited away from residential properties, the nearest being over 30 metres away, located to the west, on the other side of Garden Street. As such, any noise or disturbance which could result from the proposed development would not be considered significantly more harmful than that which could currently arise from the site, as existing. Thus, the proposal would therefore not be deemed to have an adverse impact upon the amenities of nearby residential occupiers. Although the All Saints Church is located immediately to the southwest of the club building, the impact of the proposal on this neighbouring premises would also be deemed acceptable. In this respect, it is noted that no objections have been received from nearby residents/occupiers or the Environmental Health Section. The proposal would therefore accord with LDP Policies SW11 and EnW4.

Ecology

In respect of ecology, the Council's Ecologist has considered the proposed development and concluded that survey work would not be required. However, in accordance with the Environmental Wales Act (2016) and the Welsh Government Circular Securing Biodiversity Enhancements (2019), it has been requested that a sparrow nest box (constructed of woodcrete or woodstone) be erected on the western elevation of the club house at a height of at least 2 metres. As such, a suitably worded condition would be added to any planning permission granted.

It is also noted that chapter 6 of the forthcoming Planning Policy Wales (edition 12) requests that applications be supported by Green Infrastructure Statements. However, in this instance, due to the scale and nature of the development, such a request would be deemed disproportionate and unreasonable. It should also be noted that enhancements, in the form of a bird box, would be provided, as mentioned above. This would increase habitats in the local area which would serve protected species and would therefore contribute to the wider green infrastructure objectives. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy EnW1.

Parking and Highway Safety

The application site is served by a large on-site parking area to the northwest of the club house. Furthermore, there is unrestricted parking along the front highway, Garden Street.

The site also lies within walking distance of bus stops along Victoria Street. Therefore, the proposal would accord with LDP Policy SW11.

CONCLUSION

The development, due to the reasons discussed above, is therefore considered acceptable and in compliance with relevant policies and guidance.

Finally, the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Gbowls Deck 01, received: 28th November 2011.
- Gbowls Deck 03, received: 28th November 2011.

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the decked extension shall match those used in the existing building.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. Prior to the use of the extended decked area hereby approved, details of a sparrow nest box (constructed of woodcrete or woodstone) to be sited on the western elevation of the club house at a height of at least 2 metres, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The sparrow nest box shall be erected in accordance with the approved details prior to the use of the extended decked area.

Reason - To protect the natural environment and important habitat in accordance with Policies EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED


Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 18.01.2024

