

2024/0520

Ms Emma Tuckey

RSPB, Old Moor Lane, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0YF

Erection of wooden refreshment hut

Site Description

Old Moor is an RSPB reserve located to the southeast of Darfield and Wombwell at the boundary of the borough with Rotherham. The site is a nature reserve with visitor facilities and associated office accommodation. The visitor centre is accessed via a long private road and the traditional stone buildings are screened by surrounding woodland. The buildings are arranged around a central courtyard with tables and chairs associated with the café.

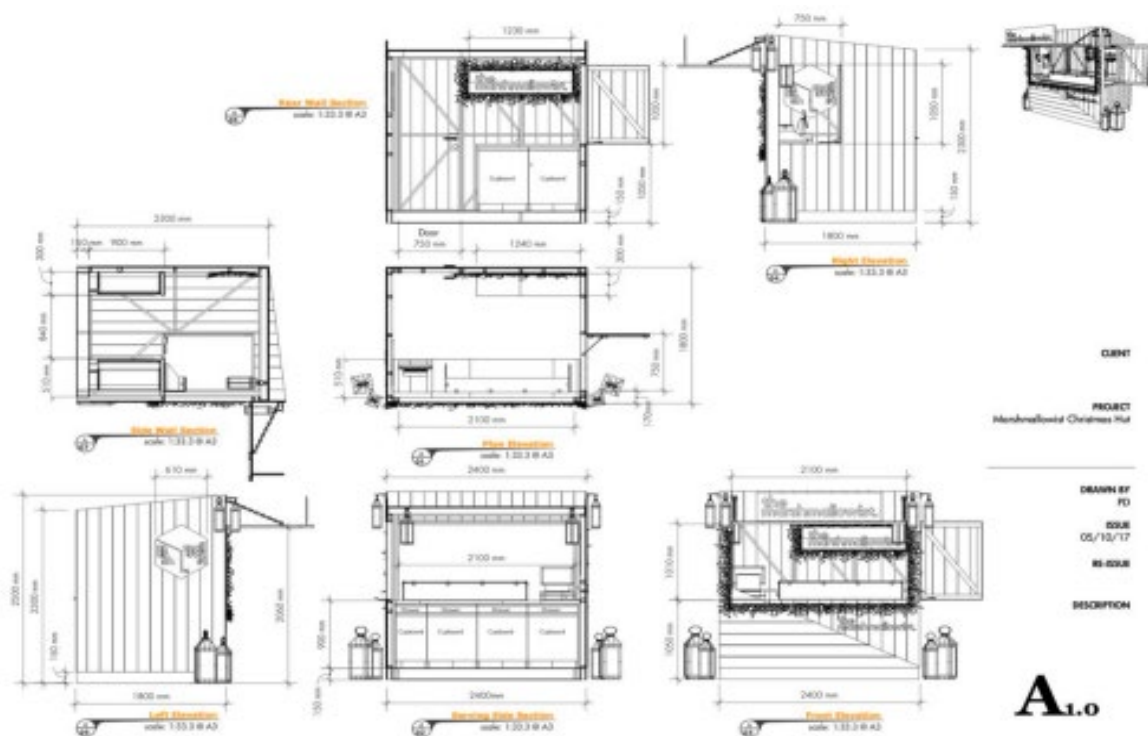
Relevant Planning History

2018/1254 - Installation of solar PV panels across eight different roof slopes of the Visitor Centre and Old Moor House (Approved with Conditions)

2021/0962 - Replacement of existing pre-fabricated biomass fuel store with a new galvanised store in conjunction with a replacement biomass boiler (Retrospective) (Approved with Conditions)

2021/0968 - Erection of wooden hut at entrance to reserve (Approved with Conditions)

Proposed Development



The applicant is seeking approval for the erection of a wooden refreshment hut. The hut has a length of 1.8 metres and a width of 2.4 metres. The hut will feature a sloped flat roof with a total height of 2.5 metres. The materials used will be timber.

Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting on 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

The site is allocated as Green Belt, Biodiversity or Geological Interest Site and Nature Improvement Area, within the Local Plan Proposals Maps and adjacent to Natural England designated Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) therefore the following policies are relevant:

Policy GB1 Protection of Green Belt
Policy BIO1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making
Policy Poll1 Pollution Control and Protection
Policy GD1 General Development
Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 152 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 154 goes on to outline exceptions to paragraph 152. The exceptions include:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- 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;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development;
- or
- not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Consultations

The LPA's Biodiversity Officer was consulted and raised no objections.

Darfield Ward Councillors were consulted and raised no objections.

Highways Development Control (DC) were consulted and raised no objections.

Highways Drainage were consulted and raised no objections.

Pollution Control were consulted and raised no objections.

Yorkshire Water were consulted and raised no objections.

South Yorkshire Police also commented with the below and this was passed onto the applicant.

My advice would be to protect the shed by liberally painting fire retardant paint both inside and outside, the doors/serving hatch would required some additional security measures this could be by way of installing a 'Shed-Bar Security device' on each one. I would also advise that a 'uWatch' Smart Cube Security Alert System be considered to offer some protection to the interior of the 'Shed', it can pre-warn of any attempted entry, and if required can send a photograph of any one gaining entry into the shed to the owner, who can alert the Police or Security Staff.

Representations

A site notice was erected adjacent to the site; no representations have been received.

Assessment

Principle of Development

Development is considered acceptable where it conserves and enhances the biodiversity and geological features of the borough and provides appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land) for outdoor sport and recreation as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

The site is a nature reserve run by the RSPB, with the existing stone buildings on site converted to offices used in association with the nature reserve, with an on-site café, shop and educational facilities. The wooden refreshment hut is considered an appropriate facility in line with the existing uses of the site to enhance the visitor experience.

Visual Amenity

The wooden refreshment hut is to be located to the south of the existing building which houses the café at the visitor entrance to the site. The hut is to be constructed from timber and therefore has an appearance which relates well to the existing buildings and its surroundings. The hut would not be highly visible from public vantage points, only the visitor entrance to which purpose it serves and is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

It is considered that the wooden refreshment hut is located such that it does not give rise to a cluttered or overly commercial appearance, nor does it detract from the character of the wider area or openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, the installation of the wooden refreshment hut is acceptable and in compliance with Local Plan Policies GB1: Protection of Green Belt, D1: High Quality Design and Place Making and GD1: General Development.

Biodiversity

The site is located within a Biodiversity or Geological Interest Site and adjacent to a Natural England designated Dearne Valley Wetlands. The LPA's Biodiversity Officer was consulted and commented that as the site is under 25msq and there are no habitats present within the red line boundary the development is exempt from biodiversity net gain. There is no ecology report provided but as the hut is located on an area of hardstanding negative impacts to habitats and species are not anticipated. No issues have been raised regarding the location of the hut nor its size and massing and it is not considered to impact on the biodiversity of the area or the features for which the SSSI had been notified and as such is in compliance with Local Plan Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Residential Amenity

There are no residential properties within close proximity of the site and therefore would not lead to the proposal having a detrimental impact in terms of residential amenity therefore it does not conflict with Local Plan Policies GD1: General Development and Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection.

Highway Safety

There will be no impact upon highway safety. The proposal does not affect the current public access, parking and turning arrangements of the site or adversely impact upon the highway. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable from a highways point of view.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions