

## **APPLICATION REPORT – 21/00361/FUL**

**Validation Date: 4 May 2021**

**Ward: Coppull**

**Type of Application: Full Planning**

**Proposal: Erection of building to provide nursery and community meeting facilities following demolition of existing Village Hall**

**Location: The Village Hall 47 Chapel Lane Coppull Chorley PR7 4PG**

**Case Officer: Mr Iain Crossland**

**Applicant: Mrs Sue Edwards, Coppull Parish Council**

**Agent: Mr Peter Entwistle, PCE Designs Ltd**

**Consultation expiry: 19 November 2021**

**Decision due by: 29 June 2021**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

2. The application site is located in the settlement area of Coppull and is occupied by a village hall that is used by Coppull Parish Council for meetings and community purposes and is also used as a childrens day care nursery. The site is within an established residential location and sits between semi-detached dwellings on either side, with dwellings to the rear and on the opposite side of Chapel Lane. The building on the site is a single storey structure of simple form with a steep dual pitched roof and gable end facing the highway, resembling a basic form of chapel, and is faced in painted timber with a sheet metal roof. There is a small yard area to the front of the building with railings adjacent to the highway and a larger outdoor area to the rear that provides an outdoor play space for the nursery. There is no dedicated off street parking.

### **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

3. This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a building to provide a childrens day care nursery and community meeting facilities following the demolition of the existing Village Hall. The proposed building would be a two storey structure of simple modern design with the character of a large dwellinghouse. It would be faced in brick with a tiled roof and would have a front gable projecting forward towards the highway and positioned to the north side of the building. There would be some limited parking created to the front of the site that would be accessed from Chapel Lane, whilst outdoor play space would be provided to the rear.
4. It is noted that since the application was originally submitted the height of the building has been reduced and the position of the building altered in relation to residential neighbour amenity concerns and in relation to the impact on the character of the area.

## REPRESENTATIONS

5. Representations have been received from the occupiers of 3no. addresses citing the following grounds of objection:
  - Adverse impact on privacy of occupiers to the rear.
  - Adverse impact on privacy of occupiers to the front.
  - Impact on highway amenity through lack of parking provision.
  - Adverse impact on light and outlook due to the height of the building.
  - Noise generation.
  - Use of obscure glazing should be included.
  - Impact on views of the night sky.
  - Impact on property value.

## CONSULTATIONS

6. Coppull Parish Council: Has a conflict of interest on this application and has not commented.
7. Lancashire County Council Highway Services (LCC Highway Services): Have no objection.
8. United Utilities: Have no objection subject to a condition.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### Principle of the development

9. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) sets out the three dimensions of sustainable development having an economic, social and environmental role, and identifies the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making, that means that the needs of the population are taken into account and for decision taking, where the Local Plan is absent or out of date that any adverse impacts should significantly outweigh the benefits for permission to be refused.
10. Paragraph 93 of the Framework sets out that in order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: *“plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”*  
And  
*“ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.”*
11. The application site is located in the settlement area of Coppull where some growth and investment is encouraged under policy 1(d) of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy. The Chorley Local Plan 2012 - 2026 states that within the settlement areas excluded from the Green Belt, and identified on the Policies Map, there is a presumption in favour of appropriate sustainable development.
12. Policy 25 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that communities have sufficient provision of community facilities, such as community centres and that such facilities adapt and cater for changing needs including the provision of childcare and other services for pre-school children and their carers.
13. Policy HW6 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 builds on this and seeks to protect community uses (including community centres, village and church halls, places of worship, public houses, children’s centres, libraries, cultural facilities and health facilities), and states that planning permission will only be permitted where the particular criteria of the policy are met. In this instance, the proposed development is seeking to replace and upgrade an existing village hall and childcare facility for the same use, which satisfies and complements the policy framework.

#### Impact on character and appearance of the locality

14. Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 states that planning permission will be granted for new development provided that the proposal does not have a significantly detrimental impact on the surrounding area by virtue of its density, siting, layout, building to plot ratio, height, scale and massing, design, orientation and use of materials.
15. The proposed building would be a two storey structure of simple modern design with the character of a large dwellinghouse. It would be faced in brick with a tiled roof and would have a front gable projecting forward towards the highway, and positioned to north side of the building. The character of the area is predominantly that of a suburban residential nature and the application site would sit between two semi-detached houses. The site is relatively prominent in the streetscene along Chapel Lane, although it is screened on approach from the north and south by the buildings either side that extend along the length of Chapel Lane on this side of the road.
16. The proposed building would have a similar eaves height to no.49 Chapel Lane to the south and would have a slightly lower ridge, whilst it would be similar to that property in terms of its design characteristics. The building would be slightly taller than no.45 Chapel Lane to the north, although this would not be particularly discernible. The main front elevation of the building would be in line with that of no.45 Chapel Lane to the north, and would be set back from the frontage of no.49 Chapel Lane. The proposed building would be set further into the site than the existing building, allowing for some parking to the front.
17. The existing building is a single storey structure with a steeply sloping dual pitched roof, faced in painted timber. Its appearance, form and character is at odds with the surrounding development and is not of any particular architectural merit. The proposed development is of a design style, scale and siting more in keeping with the character of Chapel Lane in this location. Although the proposed development would differ significantly from the development that currently exists on the site it would reflect the character of the area.
18. Overall, the appearance, scale and massing would be appropriate in the context of the site and its surroundings. The development is, therefore, considered to be in accordance with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026.

#### Impact on neighbour amenity

19. Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 states that new development must not cause harm to any neighbouring property by virtue of overlooking, overshadowing, or by creating an overbearing impact.
20. The proposed building would be two storey in height and located between dwellings at no.45 and no.49 Chapel Lane. The building would be generally parallel to no.45 Chapel Lane and situated to the south. As such direct light levels would be compromised in relation to the windows in the side elevation of this dwelling, some of which serve habitable rooms. However, it is the case that the current building also blocks light in this position and extends further to the front. As such the impact of the proposed development on outlook and light at this dwelling would not be dissimilar and not unduly greater than the current impacts. There would be windows in the rear elevation of the building, however, any views and resultant impact on privacy would reflect a standard relationship that occurs between adjacent residential dwellings.
21. The building would extend beyond the rear elevation of no.49 Chapel Lane and would be highly visible from the rear garden to this dwelling and the windows in the rear elevation of this property. As such it would have some impact on outlook, however, it would be set in from the shared boundary by between 3m and 5m, which would reduce the impact. There would be no windows in the side elevation and, therefore, no impact on privacy and the building would be positioned to the north and, therefore, no loss of direct light would occur.
22. It is noted that there are dwellings to the rear of the site, with rear gardens separated by an access track. The rear of the proposed building would face the rear elevation of the dwelling at no.56 Longworth Avenue and would have parallel facing windows. The distance between

the windows would be approximately 23m, which exceeds the 21m interface distance applied to new dwellings, whilst the distance of the rear windows to the garden at no.56 Longworth Avenue would be approximately 13m, which exceeds the 10m guideline applied to new dwellings. Although the guideline standard applies to new dwellings it is reasonable to utilise this standard to assess amenity impacts in this instance. On this basis the degree of separation is considered to preserve an adequate degree of outlook, privacy and light such that there would be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers at no.56 Longworth Avenue.

23. The proposed building would not directly face the rear elevation of no.58 Longworth Avenue and the separation distances are such that there would be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers of this property.
24. There is a dwelling directly opposite the site at no.32 Chapel Lane. This is a bungalow and would be situated approximately 27m from the proposed building. This is a significant degree of separation that exceeds the Council's interface guidelines for new dwellings and is a reasonable standard to apply in this instance. As such there would be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers of this property or any others on the west side of Chapel Lane in relation to the proposed building.
25. Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 states that new development must not cause an unacceptable degree of noise disturbance to surrounding land uses.
26. The application site has accommodated a children's nursery and the functions of a parish council without restriction for some considerable time as the lawful uses of the site and building. The proposed development would not alter this mix of uses and would, therefore, reflect the current arrangements, which already include outdoor play space for children. As such it is considered that the proposed development would have no greater impact on the amenity of local residents through the use of the site than the existing situation. Overall it is, therefore, considered that there would not be an unacceptable impact on residential amenity in relation to noise and disturbance.

#### Impact on highway safety

27. To accord with the Council's parking standards specified in policy ST4 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026, the nursery should have a parking space in respect of each of the 6no. full time members of staff, whilst the proposed community meeting halls should be provided with 25no. off-street parking spaces, thus bringing the total to 31no. spaces, which is far in excess of the two or three parking spaces proposed.
28. Chapel Lane is a bus route, but only school services are operated at the two nearby bus stops to the south at its junction with Coppull Hall Lane. The nearest bus stops with public services are New Road to the north of Spendmore Lane / Clancutt Lane, approximately 0.5km walking distance from the site.
29. There are no cycle routes within close proximity of the site and although the section of Chapel Lane to the north of the site has no on-street waiting restrictions, there are several driveways that could be potentially obstructed by inconsiderate parking practices from those utilising the proposed building.
30. The lack of any adequate off-street parking would lead to an increase in on-street parking in the area with adverse impacts on residential amenity, particularly on days when community activities/meetings are held while the nursery is opened. However, LCC Highway Services have confirmed that on-street parking on this section of Chapel Lane is unlikely to raise significant highway safety concerns and they do not seek an objection to the proposal on this ground.
31. The site is long established as a parish hall and nursery without any associated off street parking provision. As a result the impacts from those seeking on street parking already exist, and, therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not affect this to any unacceptable extent. Furthermore, it is noted that the application site is located in an

accessible location, where visitors can feasibly arrive on foot. As a result it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable impacts on residential highway amenity as a result of the proposed development in consideration of the current use and absence of off street parking.

#### Flood risk and drainage

32. The application site is not located in an area that is at risk of flooding from pluvial or fluvial sources, according to Environment Agency mapping data. In accordance with the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way.
33. The NPPG clearly outlines the hierarchy to be investigated by the developer when considering a surface water drainage strategy. As such the developer should consider the following drainage options in the following order of priority:
- into the ground (infiltration);
  - to a surface water body;
  - to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
  - to a combined sewer.
34. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any grant of planning permission requiring the submission of full details of a surface water drainage scheme for the site that has been designed in consideration and in accordance with the surface water drainage hierarchy outlined above.

#### Other matters

35. *Use of obscure glazing should be included:* The degree of separation from parallel facing windows and gardens is such that the imposition of the use of obscure glazing by condition is not considered necessary.
36. *Impact on views of the night sky:* This is not a material planning consideration.
37. *Impact on property value:* This is not a material planning consideration.

### **CONCLUSION**

38. The proposed development would result in the benefit of providing a modern community facility in an area of the borough that has received substantial housing development. The proposal would have no unacceptable detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and would result in no harm to the appearance of the site or character of the area. In addition, there would be no unacceptable impact on highway safety. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be granted

### **RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE**

**Ref:** 82/00415/FUL      **Decision:** PERFPP      **Decision Date:** 17 August 1982  
**Description:** Change of use to Community Centre

**Ref:** 96/00811/FUL      **Decision:** PERFPP      **Decision Date:** 20 January 1997  
**Description:** Erection of storage shed to rear

**Ref:** 10/00731/FUL      **Decision:** PERFPP      **Decision Date:** 8 December 2010  
**Description:** Redevelopment of play area comprising of covered timber decked area, timber planters with trees and plants, fixed timber climbing structure, timber play house and pathway with bark chippings

**RELEVANT POLICIES:** In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consideration of the proposal has had regard to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the development plan. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

Suggested conditions

To follow