

Planning Report February 2022

Application Reference – 22/00088/FUL

Address of Proposal - The Galleries Shop, Freshford Lane, Freshford, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 7UR

Proposal - Erection of extension to Galleries to provide shop storage, staff facilities and an extended cafe and community hub. External covered walkways and a sun shade in the form of a timber pergola.

Type of Application - Full Application

Planning Constraints - Agric Land Class 3b,4,5, Housing Development Boundary, LLFA - Flood Risk Management, MOD Safeguarded Areas, Neighbourhood Plan, Policy CP8 Green Belt, Policy CP9 Affordable Housing Zones, Policy NE1 Green Infrastructure Network, Policy NE2 AONB, Policy NE5 Ecological Networks, SSSI - Impact Risk Zones

Key Points

- The application has received 10 comments of support, 2 objections, and 1 comment.
- The objection was largely on the grounds of the car park not being fit for purpose. However, the applicants argue 'The Placemaking Plan states that the approach of the Local Development Framework is to continue the longstanding theme of reducing car dependency and working towards making walking, cycling and use of public transport, the more attractive options for travel'.
- The applicants state the proposal has 100% support from the community and Parish Council. This hasn't though in fact been established.
- The Galleries has already had an extension in 2012 equalling 28% additional volume. This proposal is for a further 28% bring the total to 56%.
- A pre application was submitted in October 2021 and the applicants were advised that the proposal was likely to be considered under 'Very Special Circumstances' (VSC).

Comments

- NPPF Policy Guidance 13, states that development must be either "appropriate" in scale with the original host structure, or must be for "very special circumstances" only. We believe, given the considerable value of The Galleries to the community and strong argument provided for the need for an extension to better serve the community, this proposal should be considered as 'Very Special Circumstances'. As such the additional volume is considered acceptable.
- Encouraging the reduction in car dependency and more walking, cycling, and use of public transport is very much aligned with the Parish Councils aim to help tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies.
- We have one concern regarding the design quality. We feel the curved grey powder coated fascia to the large extension element appears an inappropriate addition. As it may counter the good work of the green roof that softens the extension and seeks to reflect the immediate surroundings.

From the Neighbourhood Plan Design Statement:

'Design: The design, contemporary or traditional, must be a positive addition to the rural environment reflecting the character of its setting and acknowledging the local built heritage. It must sit well in the landscape and not dominate it.

Detailing: The detailing of new development and changes to existing buildings must reflect the quality of craftsmanship and materials both of the area and of the specific location. Where possible, local and durable materials should be used which improve appearance with age.'

- We suggest that the treatment as the covered walk way to the west elevation might be repeated for this prominent rural elevation.

Recommendation

Support.