

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

15th August 2024

Application No:	DET/2024/2024	
Location	Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre, Thames Drive, Biddulph	
Proposal	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed a Free standing GRP Substation with a 4Way LV cabinet and a GRP metering enclosure	
Applicant	UK Power Solutions	
Agent	UK Power Solutions	
Parish/ward	Biddulph North	Date registered: 25.06.2024
If you have a question about this report please Contact: Rachel Robinson TEL: 07581044968 Rachel.robinson@staffs Moorlands.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

APPROVAL

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 notification application under Schedule 2, Part 15, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (GPOD 2015) to ascertain whether design and external appearance is acceptable for a proposed freestanding substation and customer meter enclosure.

3.2 It is proposed to erect a substation to the north of the existing building, adjacent to Thames Drive. The substation will be 2.7m by 2.4m in footprint and 2.57m in height at the ridgeline. Next to this a meter enclosure box of 1.45m by 1.5m and 2.35m in height. Both will be finished in a green stainless steel. The customer

metering enclosure will be 0.5M by 0.38M and 1.17m in height. This will be finished in a green steel with green composite door.

3.3 The application files including the drawings, reports and other details of the proposal together with consultation and notification responses can be viewed on the Council website at:

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=179307>

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. CERT GRANTED 06/12/2023

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. CER GRANTED 15/12/2024

4.5 SMD/2023/0512 - Addition of roof-mounted handrail to provide safe access and maintenance in preparation for solar panel installation. APPROVED 15/12/2024

4.6 SMD/2023/0641 - 123kW Solar PV system installed on existing roof of Biddulph LC sports hall APPROVED 29/01/2024

5. PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

5.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

6. CONSULTATIONS

6.1 As a notification application under the GPDO, neighbour and statutory consultee notification is not required.

7. OFFICER COMMENT AND PLANNING BALANCE

7.1 This application is to be assessed against the criteria laid out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO), Schedule 2, Part 15, Class B, as follows:

7.2 Class B – electricity undertakings

Permitted development

B. Development by statutory undertakers for the generation, transmission, distribution or supply of electricity for the purposes of their undertaking consisting of—

- (a) the installation or replacement in, on, over or under land of an electric line and the construction of shafts and tunnels and the installation or replacement of feeder or service pillars or transforming or switching stations or chambers reasonably necessary in connection with an electric line;
- (b) the installation or replacement of any electronic communications line which connects any part of an electric line to any electrical plant or building, and the installation or replacement of any support for any such line;
- (c) the sinking of boreholes to ascertain the nature of the subsoil and the installation of any plant or machinery reasonably necessary in connection with such boreholes;
- (d) the extension or alteration of buildings on operational land;
- (e) the erection on operational land of the undertaking of a building solely for the protection of plant or machinery;
- (f) any other development carried out in, on, over, or under the operational land of the undertaking.

7.3 The proposed works are being undertaken by an electricity undertaker for the transmission, distribution and/or supply of electricity to the Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre. The works relate to the construction of buildings solely for the protection of plant. This therefore this application is to be determined under Class B (e).

7.4 Development is not permitted under B1. (e) if:

In the case of any Class B (e) development, the building would exceed 15m in height.

The development would not exceed 15m, but under paragraph B.2 of the GPDO this is subject to the approval of the design and external appearance of the buildings being obtained from the District Council.

7.5 This application therefore seeks the approval of the design and external appearance of the buildings and approval is requested from Staffordshire Moorland District Council as the district planning authority for the application site.

7.6 The proposed plant buildings will be located on a portion of utilities land in association with Biddulph Valley Leisure centre. The buildings will be finished in a 'racing' green typical of many utilities installations. The plant building will be located adjacent to a currently under construction air source heat pump (SMD/2023/0461). A green space/park area, with regularly spaced trees along the road frontage is located to the west of the proposed location. The chosen green colour will allow the plant material to appear recessive when set against the surrounding greenery. Moreover, the heights of the buildings whilst noticeable in the street scene will reflect the changing character of this part of the leisure centre. The proposed design and

external appearance is considered to be in keeping with that of a utilities area.

7.7 Accordingly it is considered that the proposed design and external appearance is acceptable and should be approved.

8. CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

8.1 Whilst the proposal is considered to meet the criteria laid out in Schedule 2, Part 15, Class B of the GPDO, this is subject to the approval of the design and external appearance of the development.

8.2 The submitted design and appearance are considered in keeping with the typical design and external appearance of utility buildings and will be located within a utility area in relation to Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre. The visual impact on the development due its siting would be minimised due to the colour and relatively minimal heights of the buildings and would not harm the visual character of the street scene.

8.3 It is therefore recommended that the application be approved.

8. RECOMMENDATION

A. That APPROVAL be granted for the design and external appearance of the free standing GRP Substation with a 4Way LV cabinet and a GRP metering enclosure in accordance with the details submitted.

Location Plan

