

Planning Statement – Proposed Extension to Kinder Mountain Rescue Team Base, Hayfield

Introduction

This document has been prepared by Jane Newman MTCP (Hons) MRTPI in collaboration with Kinder Mountain Rescue Team (KMRT), with advice from Colin Dival Professor Emeritus of Railway Studies at York University.

KMRT's main base is located in the car park behind the George Hotel in Hayfield.

KMRT has been in existence since 1971, and is one of seven mountain rescue teams that operate within the Peak District National Park (Buxton, Derby, Edale, Glossop, Kinder, Oldham and Woodhead), as part of the Peak District Mountain Rescue Organisation (PDMRO).

KMRT is a registered charity. Mountain rescue teams in England & Wales receive no funding from central or local government and so KMRT is funded entirely by fundraising activities, donations and grants. The teams' 50+ members are all unpaid volunteers, on call 24/7, giving up their time to attend call-outs, train and undertake fund-raising. It costs approximately £50,000 a year to run the team, on top of which significant projects have to be funded, for example the expansion of base or the purchase of new vehicles and extensive equipment.

KMRT's primary objective is to support the community, on call 24/7 365 days of the year, providing specialist search and rescue services at the request of the emergency services. This includes searching for and rescuing injured or lost people in remote locations, supporting the police in urban and rural locations searching for missing vulnerable people, the provision of first on scene casualty care to protect life and prevent the casualty deteriorating, assisting the Fire and Rescue Service with water rescues (rivers, lakes, reservoirs and floods) and supporting multi-agency major incident emergency responses, such as the partial collapse of the Whaley Bridge reservoir dam wall in 2019 and moorland fires.

KMRT's operational area includes the plateau and western edge of Kinder Scout, the highest point in the Peak District, and westward through Stockport as far as the M60 motorway, taking in other towns and villages such as Marple, Whaley Bridge and Macclesfield. KMRT often assists other PDRMRO mountain rescue teams, but may be called to assist any other team nationally including Lowland Search and Rescue teams, most often Cheshire Search and Rescue Team.

Mountain rescue teams are called out through the police, via the 999 system, to assist the statutory services —police, fire and ambulance. They also work with the Air Ambulance and

HM Coastguard helicopters as well as the search and rescue dog associations and cave rescue.

Over the last 4 years KMRT has had on average 46 call outs per year. However, the number of call outs each year is increasing for all mountain rescue teams. This year to date, January to early October, KMRT has already had 56 call outs.

As a result of the increasing number of call outs, and because mountain rescue teams now also undertake water rescues, the amount of equipment needed by KMRT continues to grow. This equipment includes, for example, three off road vehicles, two boats, a trailer and water rescue equipment, stretchers, eight sets of the required kit for use by each hill party and in each of the three vehicles including extensive warming and medical equipment and drugs, kit for rope rescues, IT equipment etc.

Team members already store at home their team issued personal rucksack containing clothing and equipment required for call outs and (water team members) their 90 litre holdalls containing personal water rescue kit (dry suit, buoyancy aid, helmet etc). KMRT has built mezzanine storage platforms above both garages, the kitchen and toilet but despite this additional space and home storage KMRT still does not have sufficient storage space.

Site and Surrounding

The site is located In Hayfield in the car park behind the George Hotel in Hayfield. The building is most frequently viewed from the A624 relief road constructed in 1978, and presents at the foreground of the historic centre of Hayfield, with the church behind. The Heritage Statement sets out the wider setting of the building.

The KMRT building is a single storey building constructed of coursed local gritstone. The roof is blue slate. The building has a broadly liner form and presents as two separate connected structures by virtue of the western ends unusual roof form. This has a gable to the west and a hipped roof form to the east at the point where the gable of the eastern part of the building meets it. The eastern part of the building has a gable at the junction and is attached to a further single storey part which is in the ownership of the brewery (and is unavailable to Mountain Rescue).



The building is part of a longer row of buildings of a similar age originally used as stables and carriage houses and now in storage uses by the brewery. KMRT has been unable to secure these other buildings and expand into them, which may have delivered suitable space for their operation.

Proposal

The existing base is increasingly not meeting the needs of KMRT. The current floor space of the building is 85sqm, of which 20sqm is used to store 2 vehicles, leaving only 65sqm usable floor space to deliver the operational support function (private control room) for coordination of incidents, training and meeting space for the team of 50+, recovery space for casualties brought back from incidents, debriefing after incidents, toilet, kitchen, space for drying of wet gear and storage of the significant quantity of equipment necessary for an emergency 999 service to function.

KMRT strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for its casualties. The Hayfield base is a key element in achieving this. The base needs to be of a sufficient size with appropriate facilities and location for the team to operate effectively. The space of KMRT's current base is too small to deliver these uses with operational efficiency: the control room is too small, there is nowhere private for casualties, there is no designated drying space, the meeting room cannot seat the 50+ team members and there is insufficient storage space for all the equipment and three vehicles.

Two new vehicles have recently been purchased to meet the ongoing needs of the team: a second-hand old-style Defender and a new Defender. KMRT's vehicles must have the

capacity to be driven over very difficult terrain, such as the very rough track to Edale Cross on Kinder, carry four passengers or a casualty laid on a stretcher and fit in the garage. Because of the increasing size of modern vehicles, the capacity of the base has restricted the type and model of vehicle available to the team. The base only fits two of KMRT's vehicles and the third vehicle has to be stored in New Mills, separate from the Hayfield base. The two new vehicles are the smallest available that meet the functional requirements of KMRT. Although the new Defender is the smallest of the new style Defenders, it will only just fit into the garages at the base with only a few centimetres clearance at the roof and rear. It is also wider than the old-style Defender, and so KMRT has had to remove crucial tall storage shelves along one side of the garage so the driver can open the door far enough to climb in and out.

Having additional storage space over 2 miles away in New Mills is not ideal operationally as most callouts are run from the base and so involve the additional logistics and time of getting the third vehicle and/or equipment to Hayfield. Further, as KMRT only have a licence in New Mills there is no security of tenure. KMRT would like to be in a position where it can consolidate everything in one base.

KMRT's base is significantly smaller than any other mountain rescue team base in the Peak District.

Buxton, Edale and Oldham MRTs, have significantly larger bases in modern industrial units which vary from 325 to 970 sqm. The construction of Derby's new base of approximately 650 sqm was completed in July 2024 and is currently being fitted out. These bases also incorporate garage space for vehicles. As KMRT's base in Hayfield is so small (85 sqm), the garage space for two vehicles (20 sqm) has a proportionally larger impact, reducing the remaining usable floor space to 65 sqm. In addition to parking space for two vehicles, Edale, Buxton, Derby and Oldham have 305 to 950 sqm of usable floor space.

Woodhead has a much larger combined space than KMRT, operating from three buildings.

Glossop is in a similar position to KMRT. Their base is 94 sqm, with their two vehicles having to be stored a mile way at the ambulance station. Their base is far too small for them and so they have been looking for larger premises for a number of years.

KMRT has considered various options to gain more space and provide long term security for the team, including ;

1) a scheme to build a new joint base with Hayfield Football club adjacent to the pitches on Bank Vale Road, Hayfield. KMRT dropped out of the project due to restrictive conditions on the land (owned by the church) requiring the site to be returned to its current state within 30 years

2) there was a proposal to redevelop fire stations in Derbyshire. KMRT worked with the Fire and Rescue Service in New Mills on a proposal to create a joint base for fire, ambulance and MR. There are currently no plans to redevelop the station due to lack of funding.

3) KMRT have considered buying land in various locations including Birch Vale on which to build a base, but even if a suitable site was found total costs appear beyond our reach

4) KMRT have looked at commercial units we could buy or lease but none were found in a suitable location close to our operational area, and leased property does not offer long term security for the team

5) The Royal pub in Hayfield is currently for sale. This includes a detached building between the pub and cricket club. KMRT worked with the local community group trying to buy the pub on the basis that the team were interest in buying the detached building, which we would have redeveloped. The future and even whether the pub is really for sale is unclear and we have therefore abandoned any hope of buying.

6) KMRT have repeatedly approached the owners of The George pub asking if we could buy either the office attached to our garages and / or the garage at the end of the terrace. The owners are not interested in selling

7) KMRT have repeatedly approached our neighbours and offered to buy the two storey building immediately to the NE of base, but they have plans for the building and aren't interested in selling.

The team currently has around 60 members, who are all invited to base to attend 3 training sessions a month plus a monthly team meeting. Parking is therefore a significant issue. The Sett Valley car park is located on the opposite side of the A624 and currently provides adequate parking for the team but this is difficult to replicate at other locations.

It is proposed that the extension of the existing building is the most viable option to maintain the function of the team in delivering essential services. By expanding the base, the team will be able to deploy more rapidly with all the right equipment in the right place and not experience delays in getting vehicles or kit from one location to another, impacting

the time to get on the hill during a call out. Further space would enable KMRT to run more effective training sessions for all team members. This in turn will benefit the casualties, many of whom come from the local community.

Because the building has only a very small curtilage it is proposed to extend the half of the building to the east into the maximum extent of the curtilage to the front elevation. It is also proposed to raise the ridge height of the eastern half of the building by 1.26m.

Internally this will create sufficient length and ceiling height to accommodate modern vehicles, storage and a small office space above with storage in the eaves.

In the western half it is proposed to amend the roof form to the west to a dual pitch and to raise the height by 1.64m to accommodate a second storey. This will allow the insertion of a staircase and flexible downstairs space for medical treatment and training, a drying room and an accessible toilet. Upstairs there will be a flexible meeting room and training room.

It is proposed that materials externally will match the existing, with the addition of solar PV on the southern roofslope of the smaller part of the building to ensure that the building is as sustainable as possible and that operational costs are reduced.

It is proposed that the fenestration is kept simple with a high degree of solidity. The front elevation is proposed to have small, symmetrical openings, diminishing in size on the first floor, in line with the local building tradition. The gable has a single opening at first floor proposed. The rear elevation is proposed to be blank within the elevation (as it is now) with the addition of rooflights to light the office in the smaller half and over the stairwell. The rooflights are proposed to be horizontal with two subdivisions, to reflect the non-domestic roots of the building.

Care has been taken to ensure that the building does not develop an unduly domestic character which would be inappropriate in the situation and would deviate from the historic evolution of the building which has always had a functional and non-domestic use.

Principle

The site subject to this enquiry lies within the built-up area boundary of Hayfield, identified as a Larger Village within the settlement hierarchy under Local Plan

Local Plan Policy S2 sets out that Larger Village settlements are able to accommodate growth of a modest scale.

Local Plan Policy CF5 seeks to retain or enhance local community services and facilities and relevant policies contained within Chapter 8 of the NPPF that when taken as a whole, aim to promote healthy and sustainable communities.

The principle of development is supported by policy where an application can demonstrate that any proposal will either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the building and wider setting of the Conservation Area, or where the public benefits of a scheme outweigh any harm that is identified.

Heritage

The site of the existing building is within the Hayfield Conservation Area, and while not listed is a building of some age.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) sets out planning policies relating to conserving and enhancing heritage assets and how they should be evaluated. It defines heritage assets (para. 189) as ranging from “...sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’. In relation to this paragraph, the policy states in Footnote 67 “The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making”.

The NPPF states (para. 1190) that: “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should consider:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place”.

A key policy section within the NPPF (Paras. 194-198) states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

The NPPF continues “Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence

and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal".

Of considerable importance to the planning process, para. 197 states that "In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

With regard to impact assessment, para. 199 sets out that "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).

Paragraph 200 goes on to say that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.'

Paragraph 201 deals with proposed development of designated interest and says, development that 'will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

The Hayfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal was adopted 5th October 2011. The Conservation Area covers much of central and southern Hayfield, radiating out from the historic centre of the settlement in both a south easterly direction to the less developed

fringes and in a separate spur to the west incorporating the development along and immediately off New Mills Road

A Heritage Statement accompanies the application which sets out the historic and architectural value of the building and its relationship to the Conservation Area.

This sets out that the architectural and archaeological value of the building is low with negligible aesthetic value.

The Conservation Area has a high historic township value, and the building itself has a limited historic value.

The report concludes that the building *'is of low historical significance due to extensive alterations and remodelling undertaken since the late 1970s.'*

The proposal to enlarge the building will have an impact on the wider historic street and landscape setting of the village, principally the views from the A624 relief road to the west and Walk Mill Road to the north. However, due to the village core being characterised by dense, close-knit development creating short vistas, Kinder Mountain Rescue will remain obscured from the much of the remainder of the village.

The impact is at a level which the NPPF characterises as 'less than significant harm'. The NPPF directs the decision maker to weight the level of harm against the public benefit of the proposal.

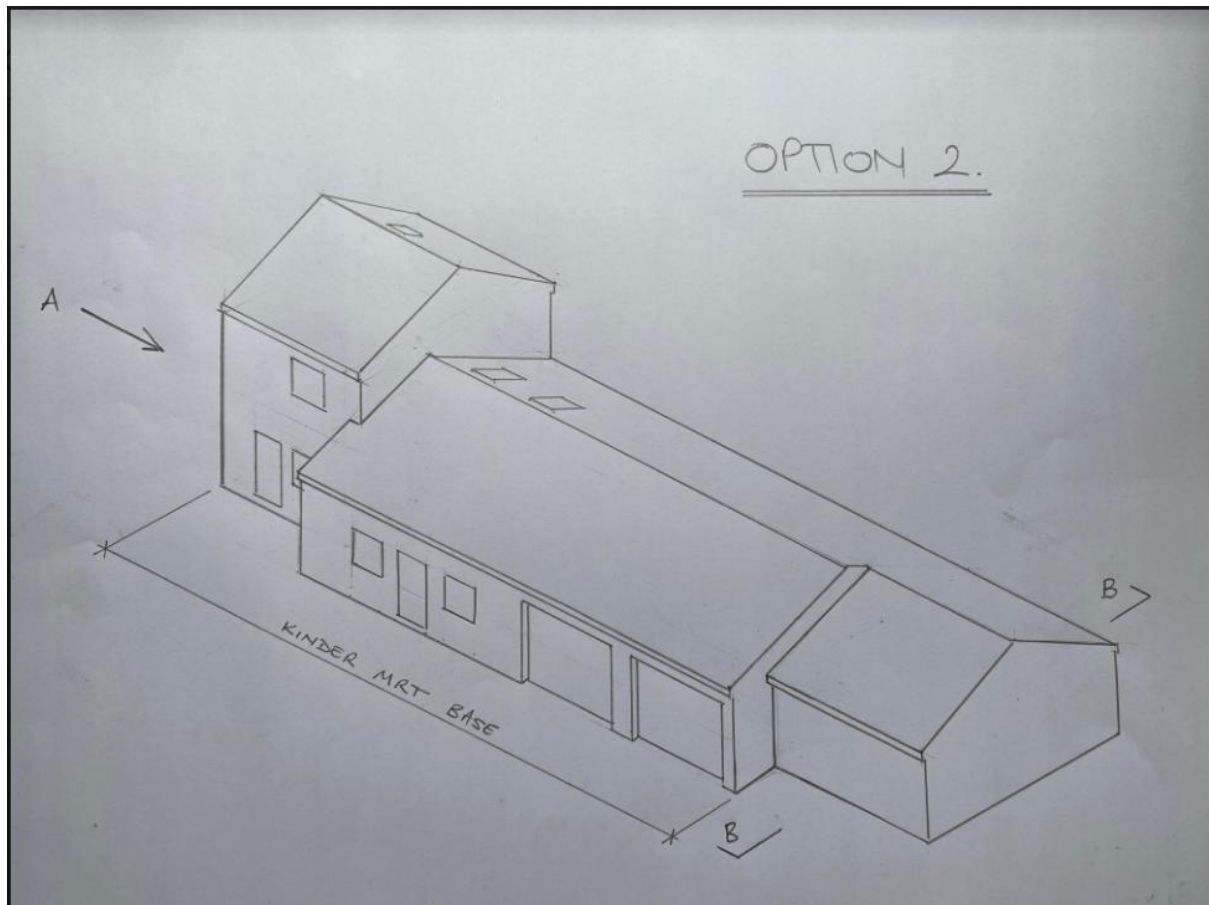
The proposal has been limited to the minimum required additional space required to accommodate a team of the size of KMRT and the number of operational calls and training events that are carried out. Other options and sites have been fully investigated but there are no alternatives available to KMRT within their operational area which meet their needs.

The harm is relatively low, but the public benefit afforded by the operation of the KMRT team is a public benefit which must carry considerable and substantial weight in the planning balance.

Design and Appearance

As set out above, the site lies within a prominent and sensitive location near to the centre of Hayfield, within the Hayfield Conservation Area, and within proximity of a number of Listed Buildings.

Pre application advice was sought on a range of options and the option below was suggested to be the most appropriate of the options presented.



The application is an evolution of the sketch options presented. KMRT has also properly evaluated its needs, and the scale of the proposal is the minimum operational area required. The increase of the two storey element allows more functional space for training and dealing with casualties and emergency services.

The increased ridge height is carefully considered in the design to allow continued views through of the church tower. A townscape visualisation forms part of the submission and this shows, that the scale and massing of the proposal within the wider visual context is not

dominant or inappropriate as the proposed form reflects the local building tradition :



The form maintains the diminishing ridge height of the row of buildings and the inter-relationship between the separate elements of the row. The roof slope reflects that of nearby buildings and the design addresses the current hipped roof arrangement which is incongruous and does not reflect the form of typical buildings in the locality.

It is proposed to deliver the addition with random coursed gritstone from the kinderscout measures, which is used in the host building and the wider Conservation Area. Roof materials will be welsh slate and inset solar PV on the lower section of the roof. The materials proposed reflect the advice given in the

The scale, height, massing and visual appearance, and relationship with the parent building and the wider street scene, and, as a consequence of its design, its impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of nearby Listed Buildings, is in line with Local Plan Policies S1, EQ6, and EQ7.

Ecology

A bat report has been commissioned and included in the application documents. This sets out that there is no impact on bats resulting from the scheme.

The proposal is exempt from BNG requirements because of its scale. In any case, there are no habitats on the site as the very small curtilage is solid bound surface.

Amenity

The use of the site is not proposed to change and there will be no greater amenity impacts arising from the proposal.

The nearest residential properties are on Steeple End Fold and the scheme will not cause any loss of light or overlooking to those residents. The absence of openings in the rear elevation will ensure that privacy for residents is maintained.

Parking

Team members park in the nearby pay and display car park on the Sett Valley Trail if they are unable to walk from their residence. Operational vehicles are parked to the front of the building or inside as shown on the plans.

Flooding

The development is in flood zone 1 and the guidance says that sites that are less than 1 hectare (ha) in Zone 1 only need a flood risk assessment (FRA) where:

- land has been identified as having critical drainage problems
- land is identified in the local planning authority's (LPA) strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA) as being at increased flood risk in future
- it would increase the vulnerability classification and land may be subject to sources of flooding other than rivers or sea

The surface water flooding data suggests that the site is vulnerable to surface water flooding. The guidance on flood vulnerability suggests that emergency service facilities are less vulnerable to flooding.

The proposed use will not have a significant impact on surface water flooding as the volume of sealed surface run off will not change from the current arrangement.

Conclusion

The public benefit arising from the proposal is substantial given the large and significant positive contribution that KMRT delivers to the community and wider public.

It will not be possible for KMRT to continue to meet the demand for their services in future if they continue operating from the current building as it now is.

No other building is available which can meet their needs and the scheme is designed to both, meet that need with the minimum possible massing and limit the harm to the Conservation Area as far as possible. While there is some impact from the proposal on the building itself and the Conservation Area arising from the proposal, this is limited and in the overall balance, the public benefit delivered by KMRT has significant weight which overall in the planning balance is in favour of the scheme.