

4.3 - 17/03105/CONVAR Revised expiry date 15 December 2017

Proposal: Variation of condition 3 of 14/02458/FUL for levelling and extension of the existing reinforced grass track to provide overspill car parking; with amendment to allow use of the overspill car parking to accommodate displaced season ticket holders during the development of the multi storey car park, between 1st January 2018 and 30th June 2019, Monday to Friday 6am to 6.30pm.

Location: Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club, Plymouth Drive, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3RP

Ward(s): Sevenoaks Town & St Johns

ITEM FOR DECISION

This application is referred to the Development Control Committee for the reason that the District Council is the applicant for the submitted scheme.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

1) The additional car park hereby permitted shall only be used at times when sports events take place on the playing field (as shown within the blue line on the site location plan submitted with the application) and the use by season ticket holders from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2019, Monday to Friday from 0600hrs to 1830hrs.

To restrict the function and use of the car park for purposes connected to outdoor sport and the temporary use as an overspill car park to maintain the functioning and openness of the green belt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Note to applicant

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. SDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner, by;

- Offering a duty officer service to provide initial planning advice,
- Providing a pre-application advice service,
- When appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any small scale issues that may arise in the processing of their application,
- Where possible and appropriate suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- Allowing applicants to keep up to date with their application and viewing all consultees comments on line
(www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_services_online/65)

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- By providing a regular forum for planning agents,
- Working in line with the NPPF to encourage developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area,
- Providing easy on line access to planning policies and guidance, and
- Encouraging them to seek professional advice whenever appropriate.

In this instance the applicant/agent:

- 1) Was updated of small scale issues which arose during the process of the application and was given time to address it.

Description of site

- 1 Sevenoaks Rugby Club is located adjacent to playing fields in close proximity to the town centre. The club house is sited within the built confines of Sevenoaks but the playing fields immediately next to the club house are within the Green Belt.
- 2 A large car parking area is available to the club, although it is shared with the tennis club to the west of the site.
- 3 Access to the club and car park is via Plymouth Drive, a residential road.
- 4 An area of land subject to this application was granted planning permission for use as an overspill parking area during sporting events. This car park is sited between two playing fields. A grasscrete style surfacing covers the parking area and provides vehicular access route between the car park and the Town Council pavilion building which is sited in a central position on the playing fields to the southwest of the site.

Description of proposal

- 5 This is an application made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to allow the variation or removal of a condition of a specific planning permission to facilitate the temporary use of the overspill car park to accommodate displaced season ticket holders during the development of a multi storey car park within Sevenoaks Town centre. It is proposed that season ticket holders will use this car park Monday to Friday, 0600hrs to 1830hrs only.
- 6 Currently condition three of planning permission 14/02458/FUL that states:

“The additional car park hereby permitted shall only be used at times when sports events take place on the playing field (as shown within the blue line on the site location plan submitted with the application). Measures to restrict access and use of the car park at all other times shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council and the approved measures shall

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be installed on site prior to first use of the car park, and operated to restrict access thereafter.

Reason: To restrict the function and use of the car park for purposes connected to outdoor sport, to maintain the functioning and openness of the green belt, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.”

Constraints

- 7 Metropolitan Green Belt
- 8 Area of Archaeological Potential

Policies

Sevenoaks Core Strategy:

- 9 Policies:
 - LO8 - The Countryside and the Rural Economy
 - SP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

ADMP:

- 10 Policies
 - EN1 - Design Principles,
 - EN2 - Amenity Protection
 - T2 - Vehicle Parking

Other

- 11 National Planning Policy Framework
- 12 National Planning Policy Guidance

Relevant planning history

- 13 14/02458/FUL - Levelling and extension of the existing reinforced grass track to provide overspill car parking; extension of clubhouse balcony to provide additional viewing space and improved disabled access - GRANTED

Consultations

Sevenoaks Town Council

- 14 Declined to comment

Sports England

- 15 No objection.

KCC Highways

- 16 No objection is raised providing the additional parking hours proposed is used by season ticket holders only.

Representations

- 17 1 representation of support
- 18 7 representations received objecting on the following grounds:
- Increased congestion;
 - Compromise road safety;
 - Deteriorate road surfacing;
 - Increase noise and air pollution.

Chief Planning Officer's appraisal

Background

- 19 Planning permission SE/14/02458/FUL allowed for the creation of a car park and to provide covered and uncovered facilities for spectators.
- 20 The proposed alterations to the clubhouse and creation of an overspill car park have been completed in accordance with the planning permission. The justification for the need of the development was to overcome on-street parking issues within the locality that arose on match days at the weekend.

Principle Issues

- 21 This report will discuss relevant material considerations that apply to the proposed variation.
- 22 The main issues with regard to this application are as follows:
- Impact upon the Green Belt and visual amenities of the area
 - Impact upon the residential amenity
 - Highway issues.

Impact upon the Green Belt and visual amenities of the area

- 23 Current Government advice, in the form of the NPPF, supports the protection of the Green Belt and seeks to restrict development. Paragraph 79 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The advice states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Such development should not be approved, except in

very special circumstances. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

- 24 The NPPF states that certain other forms of development are not inappropriate development provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt.
- 25 With regard to the car park, no further operational development is required. Therefore, an assessment needs to be made in relation to its intensification of use.
- 26 It is acknowledged that this site is within the Green Belt. The car parking area provides 44 parking spaces within a very small recessed area between playing fields and provides access to the existing Town Council amenity building. The car park provides a facility for users of the playing fields in the form of additional parking to cater for the significant levels of participants and spectators at weekends. The use is in connection with outdoor sport, which is acceptable within the National Planning Policy Framework in Green Belts.
- 27 The impact of the existing car park on the openness of the Green Belt is minimal, due to its small size in relation to the playing fields. The use of a grasscrete surface maintains an appropriate appearance. However, the greatest impact on openness is at times when the car park is used. This is at weekends when demand for parking in relation to the sports activities is at its greatest.
- 28 By allowing further use of the car park for displaced season ticket holders, it is acknowledged that further harm would be caused to the openness of the Green Belt through the intensification of its use. However, this is a transient one by virtue of limited time period proposed of this specific and additional parking. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the use of this area for parking has been accepted by the original 2014 permission. The justification advanced for the additional need to supply further car parking provision nearby to Sevenoaks Town Centre is due to the displacement of existing season ticket holders during the 'Buckhurst 2' development permitted by planning reference 17/02149/FUL.
- 29 It is acknowledged that the proposed use by virtue of the variation of the condition is a temporary one and that once the 18-month time period lapses, the use of the site will return to its current state. As such, whilst harm to the openness of the Green Belt has been identified, by allowing the variation, it assists the economic functioning of Sevenoaks Town Centre. This is a significant material consideration that is in the public interest and outweighs the temporary harm to the Green Belt in this instance.

Highways

- 30 Policy T2 of the ADMP states that parking provision for non-residential developments should be made in accordance with advice from Kent Highways. However, notwithstanding this, we may take account of specific

local circumstances taking into account matters such as local parking problems.

- 31 The proposed temporary car park use would provide parking for some of those vehicles displaced from the Buckhurst 2 car park during the course of the site's redevelopment.
- 32 The benefit of using this existing car park is that it provides relief when 285 car parking spaces are temporarily lost, when the Buckhurst car park is under construction. The 44 additional spaces provided would contribute to the continued parking for permit holders displaced from the town centre. The site is within approximately. 11 minutes walking distance to the Town Centre.
- 33 The additional 44 spaces, on this site allows for a combined total (includes Morewood Close, The Vine 'waste' site) of 177 spaces available for displaced season ticket holders. The Council's Parking Team would control parking within the site. Any parking that takes place outside of the application site area would be subject to the existing controls that apply to the area.
- 34 With additional 44 spaces being made available, the existing road network would experience approximately an additional 88 vehicle movements per day. KCC Highways has considered this application and has raised no objection to this proposal and its effect on the road network. Concerns raised by third parties have been considered including the intensification of use coinciding with other road users dropping off/collecting school children at Lady Boswell's Primary School, but this would be limited to specific times of the day between 0830-0900hrs and 1515-1545hrs during school term time only. Upon considering this, the additional increase of 44 movements (as a maximum) within the locality of Plymouth Drive is not so significant to justify a reason to object especially when no objection has been raised by KCC Highways.

Residential amenity

- 35 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking. One of these principles is that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy EN2 of the ADMP requires that any proposed development should not have an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbours and ensures a satisfactory environment for future occupants.
- 36 The temporary car park would continue to be at ground level only and so no overlooking, visual intrusion or unacceptable loss of privacy would occur.
- 37 The intensification of use of the car park would take place well away from surrounding properties - the nearest property would be plot 4 of a new development that is under construction at present. This uncompleted residential unit is located approximately 35m to the north west of the car park and is sited at a lower ground level. This unit is expected to be completed during the temporary operation of the car park.

- 38 Additional traffic/vehicle movement generated by displaced season ticket holders, would be via the existing car park serving the Rugby Football Club and Tennis Club. This car park is self-regulated; however, there is no control to stop vehicles moving around in this area at any time, that causes noise. This is an existing situation. The variation of the condition would not allow the car park to be used as a public car park, whereby the movement of vehicular traffic is at a higher frequency as opposed to this parking area used for a specific purpose and is controlled. As such, it's not considered that the existing residential amenity of nearby residential properties would be unduly impacted by this proposal. The proposal complies with Policy EN2 of the ADMP.

Other Issues

- 39 The site is within an Area of Archaeological Potential, Policy EN4 of the ADMP states that proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.
- 40 The proposed temporary car park requires no intervention into the ground and therefore the proposal would have no impact on the Area of Archaeological Potential in accordance with policy EN4 of the ADMP.

Conclusion

- 41 It is recommended that condition three should be varied.
- 42 The public interest/benefit in supporting the economic development of the Town Centre by the allowing this proposal is a material consideration and significantly outweighs the limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt. No other harm can be identified to justify a reason to refuse this application, which is compliant with Development Plan policies.

Recommendation

- 43 That planning permission is granted

Background papers

Site and block plan

Contact Officer(s): Sean Mitchell Extension: 7349

Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

Link to application details:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=OX1SXYBK0LO00>

Link to associated documents:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OX1SXYBK0LO00>

