

Agenda Item No. 3.3

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULATORY – PLANNING COMMITTEE**

2 December 2019

Report of the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**3 PROVISION OF FIVE ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING SPACES AT
HIGHFIELD HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, HIGHFIELD LANE,
CHESTERFIELD
APPLICANT: DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CODE NO: CD2/0919/47**

2.711.7

Introductory Summary This is an application for the creation of a new parking area within the grounds of Highfield Hall Primary School, Highfield Lane, Chesterfield. The main school building, Highfield Hall, is a grade II listed building. The proposal would create five additional staff car parking spaces. I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the significance of the listed building. The proposal accords with development policies and it is therefore recommended for approval.

(1) **Purpose of Report** To enable the Committee to determine the application.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Site and Surroundings

The school site is located within the residential area of Newbold to the north-east of Chesterfield town centre. The main school building, Highfield Hall, is Grade II listed. The school has two pedestrian accesses; off Highfield Lane (northern boundary) and Lucas Road (western boundary), and a vehicle access off Gloucester Road (southern boundary). The school site is bounded by residential properties along its north and western boundaries. Highfield Park is positioned along the eastern boundary. Residential properties and the access road are positioned off the southern boundary.

The Proposal

This application proposes the provision of five parking spaces by installing ground reinforcing plastic pavers over a grassed area adjacent to the school's access road.

The proposed car parking spaces would be located within the south-east section of the school site over a grassed area adjacent to the western side of

the school driveway. The proposed car parking spaces would be constructed using a plastic porous paving grids coloured green with concrete kerb edging to form a parking area for five vehicles. Following installation of the grids, they would be filled with topsoil and seeded with a high wear tolerant grass seed mix.

The proposed car parking spaces would each measure 4.8 metres (m) by 2.4m with the whole parking area measuring 12m by 4.8m with access off the existing access drive.

Consultations

Local Member

Councillor Wall (Loundsley Green and Newbold) has been notified.

Chesterfield Borough Council

Object to the proposed development. It considers that the development would be contrary to Policy CS20: Influencing the Demand for Travel (which promotes sustainable transport measures) of the Chesterfield Borough Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 (CBLP:CS) and Appendix G (Parking Standards).

It considers that there would be insufficient turning space for three of the five proposed car parking spaces and that the access road is not of sufficient width to provide sufficient manoeuvring space. It notes that standard parking spaces have 6m of manoeuvring space but some of the proposed spaces would only have 3.6m-5m of manoeuvring space. The reduced manoeuvring space would result in difficult turning movements that could cause trail backs which could impact on the access and public highway.

It also notes that the application does not provide for the charging of electrical vehicles as is required by Policy CS20.

The Coal Authority

Raised no objection.

Highway Authority

Raised no objection.

Sport England

Raised no objection.

Publicity

The application has been advertised by site notices and press notice with a request for observations by 31 October 2019. No representations have been received.

Planning Considerations

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. In relation to this application, the relevant policies of the development plan are contained in the adopted CBLP:CS. The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) is a material consideration.

The principal planning policies relevant to this proposal are:

Chesterfield Borough Local Plan: Core Strategy Policies:

CS9: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.

CS18: Design.

CS19: Historic Environment.

CS20: Influencing the Demand for Travel.

National Planning Policy Framework

The most relevant paragraphs from the NPPF are:

11: The presumption in favour of sustainable development.

124 -127: Achieving well-designed places.

170: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

189 -202: Proposals affecting heritage assets.

The key planning considerations for this application are:

- Need for the development.
- Design and visual impact of the development.
- Heritage impact.

Need for the Development

The application states that there is currently an undersupply of parking spaces at this school site. The school site currently has 23 marked out parking spaces on site. The school has 14 classrooms and the minimum requirement for parking spaces on site, based on two spaces per classroom, would be 28 parking spaces, which gives an undersupply of five spaces.

The proposed provision of five additional car parking spaces by installing grass pavers adjacent to the access road would improve the parking situation at the school site and enable the school to provide sufficient parking to comply with parking standards.

The application demonstrates that there is a need for these additional car parking spaces that would bring the school parking provision up to the required level and meet the schools requirements. Therefore, I am satisfied that there is a justified need for the proposed development.

Design and Visual Impact

The proposed car parking spaces would be set back from the main frontage of the school site and positioned to limit their impact on views of the listed main school building from outside the school site. The parking spaces would be screened from views outside of the school site by existing boundary walls, fencing, trees and hedgerows.

The design and colour of the proposed parking spaces which would allow through growth of grass, which would further blend them in with the adjoining grassed areas, is considered appropriate for the setting and purpose. The parking spaces are considered to respect the character of the locality in terms of their scale, layout and materials.

I do not consider that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area or on the character of the school building. On the basis of the above, I am satisfied that the proposed development would accord with the requirements of CS19 of the CBLP:CS and the NPPF.

Heritage Impact

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in the determination of this application '*special regard*' is had to '*the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*'.

The Government policy concerning heritage assets and this statutory requirement is contained in the 2019 NPPF at paragraphs 189 -202. Paragraph 190 of the NPPF expects local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal. Policy CS19: Historic Environment of the adopted CBLP:CS is also relevant to this proposal.

The proposed development would be located in the curtilage of the Grade II listed Highfields Hall. Highfield Hall is an example of an historic 18th/19th century two storey Georgian mansion. The building was constructed with coursed stone rubble with stone eaves corning and a pitched slate tiled roof. The front of the building incorporates a large canted bay with five windows and to the west side is a stone porch with segmental hood four stone columns and round arched door with fanlight. The building was converted to be used as a school, which was officially opened in 1930. Following conversion the main building was expanded by the construction of an east wing, kitchen and nursery block. The building was registered as Grade II listed in 1977.

The grassed area over which the proposed car parking spaces would be positioned is adjacent to the school's access track, close to the school's main entrance off Highfield Road. This is some distance from the Grade II listed

Highfield Hall building located in the north-east corner of the school site and is partially screened from the listed building by existing trees.

I consider that the location of the parking spaces has been carefully considered to minimise the impact on the setting of listed school building, while providing the appropriate level of car parking provision and accessibility.

The design and colour (green) of the ground reinforced paving grids, which would allow the through growth of grass, would ensure that the parking spaces are as visually recessive as possible and would be located on a section of the school site that is as discreet as is possible, whilst still being accessible. I am satisfied that the development would not harm the significance of the listed building.

On the basis of the above, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the significance of the heritage asset as a result of the development and that the development would accord with Policy CS19 of the CBLP:CS and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Highways/Parking Issues

Policy CS20 of the CBLP:CS encourages more sustainable travel choices and indicates that mitigation measures should be set out in development proposals including within travel plans when required, and secures through conditions and or legal requirements. It refers to several potential mitigation measures including “(e) Provision of opportunities for charging electric vehicles where appropriate”.

Travel plans promote walking, cycling, public transport use for example, and the schools own travel plan is subject to periodic review. However, this is more relevant to another application which is to be reported to Committee in a separate report, for a modular classroom (planning application code number CD2/0419/7).

Whilst the concerns of the Borough Council are noted, there is already a need to provide car parking spaces within the school site.

The Borough Council has stated that three of the five spaces would fall short of the parking standards of the Borough Council. The County Council, as Highway Authority, nevertheless does not object to the proposal and considers that it has no potential to impact adversely upon highway safety.

The proposal is not for public parking and is not on the public highway. Whilst the manoeuvring space falls short of that indicated in the Borough Council design guide, the site is constrained due to tree planting and is in the setting/ curtilage of the Grade II listed Highfield Hall.

Turning would still be possible, but with a lesser amount of space to the front of the bays as indicated in the parking standard. I consider this on balance to be acceptable, particularly given the physical constraints of the site, and the lack of an objection from the County Council, as Highway Authority.

The proposal is for 'grass-crete' style parking, due to the sensitive constraints of the site. Any additional infrastructure (additional hard surfacing for example) would not be considered appropriate. This also applies to the comment of the Borough Council with regard to no provision for the charging of electric vehicles. Policy CS20 (e) only expects this "where appropriate". I consider that the constraints of the site, as identified, would not make this area of the school site appropriate for electrical charging points.

I consider that the proposal does not depart from Policy CS20 (promotion of sustainable transport measures), especially given that alternative travel methods are promoted under the travel plan for the school which is subject to periodic review.

Conclusion

The proposed car parking spaces are of an appropriate design and scale, and would be positioned so as not harm the significance of the listed main school building. The development would improve the car parking provision to address the school under provision of parking spaces. I do not consider that this development would have an adverse impact on residential amenity, the character of the locality or on the wider landscape in visual terms. I am satisfied that the development would comply with the requirements of the policies of the adopted CBLP:CS and the NPPF. The development is therefore recommended for approval.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The correct fee of £234 has been received.

(4) **Legal Considerations** This is an application submitted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for development which the Authority itself proposes to carry out.

I do not consider that there would be any disproportionate impacts on anyone's human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights as a result of this permission being granted subject to the conditions referred to in the Officer's Recommendation.

(5) **Environmental and Health Considerations** As indicated in the report.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, property, social value and transport considerations.

(6) **Background Papers** File No. 2.711.7

Application documents from the Director of Property dated 16 September 2019. Correspondence from Sport England dated 30 September 2019, The Coal Authority dated 7 October 2019 and Highways Area Management Division dated 23 October 2019.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That the Committee resolves that planning permission is **granted** subject to the following conditions:

Commencement

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: The condition is imposed in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990.

- 2) Notice of the commencement of the development shall be provided to the County Planning Authority at least seven days prior to the start of works on site.

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to monitor the development in the interests of the amenity of the area.

Approved Details

- 3) The development shall take place in accordance with the details in the 1APP form dated 16 September 2019, Design and Access Statement, Tree Survey Report and the following drawings:

Site Location Plan – Drawing no. 1700636/X/100

Car Parking Spaces Layout – Drawing no. 1700636/X/101

Additional Car Parking Proposal and Tree Protection Plan – Drawing no. 1700636/X/200.

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to monitor the development in the interests of the amenity of the area.

Statement of Compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

The Authority worked with the applicant in a positive and pro-active manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in the processing of planning applications in full accordance with this Article. The applicant had engaged in

pre-application discussions with the Authority prior to the submission of the application. The applicant was given clear advice as to what information would be required.

Footnote

- 1) The proposed development lies within an area that has been defined by the Coal Authority as containing potential hazards arising from former coal mining activity. These hazards can include: mine entries (shafts and adits); shallow coal workings; geological features (fissures and break lines); mine gas and previous surface mining sites. Although such hazards are seldom readily visible, they can often be present and problems can occur in the future, particularly as a result of development taking place.

Any intrusive activities which disturb or enter any coal seams, coal mine workings or coal mine entries (shafts and adits) requires a Coal Authority Permit. Such activities could include site investigation boreholes, digging of foundations, piling activities, other ground works and any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings and coal mine entries for ground stability purposes. Failure to obtain a Coal Authority Permit for such activities is trespass, with the potential for court action.

Property specific summary information on past, current and future coal mining activity can be obtained from: www.groundstability.com or a similar service provider.

If any coal mining feature is unexpectedly encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Coal Authority on 0345 762 6848. Further information is available on the Coal Authority website at: www.gov.uk/coalauthority

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Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

Committee Plan CD2/0919/47

