

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/22/94243

Site Address: THE BRIGADIER GERARD, BOTLEY ROAD, HORTON HEATH, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7DQ

Case Officer: Rebecca Altman

Description: Construction of car park extension for the purpose incidental to the existing use of land

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Countryside (pub is within urban edge, but car park in countryside) • Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath Character Area no.26 • SINC and Ancient woodland to east of site		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• F/19/86328 – construction of 4 dwellings – permitted 08/01/2020 • F/16/78980 – enlargement of car park and relocation of existing play area – permitted 27/09/2016 • F/05/55115 – change of use of field to children's play area with seating – permitted 07/12/2005 • Z/14615/005/00 – extension of car park and provision of play area – permitted 09/11/1993 • Z/141615/004/00 – use of paddock for overspill car park – permitted 02/04/1980 Also some previous applications for advertisements.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None received.		
Parish Council:	No objection subject to retention and possible reinforcement of hedgerow to soften view.		
Tree Officer:	No objection subject to ensuring that trees to east of the site are protected.		
Ecologist:	Further comments following review of Ecological Impact Assessment: Precautionary working methods, mitigation, compensation and enhancements recommended in the report are sound and should be implemented. The construction exclusion zone on the eastern edge will serve as a suitable buffer to the SINC; recommend that it is planted as wildflower grassland. Original comments: Ecological Assessment required to determine the potential of the site to contain protected species and any required mitigation.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 08/12/2022 – photographs on file.		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 The most relevant policies are Strategic policy S5; and Development Management policies DM1, DM11 and DM14.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath Character Area Appraisal, No.26. Advises retention of grass islands and tree planting; mitigation of impacts of heavy traffic on Botley Road and ensuring backland development is subordinate to existing.

Assessment:**Site and surroundings**

The application relates to the southern side of the car park for The Brigadier Gerard public house, which lies on the east side of Botley Road at the southern edge of Horton Heath. The land currently comprises grass and scrub but appears to have been used informally by vehicles.

The application seeks permission for an extension to the pub car park to the south, to provide an additional 11 car parking spaces, with a new compacted gravel surface. The proposal includes a new close boarded fence along part of the southern boundary, to match an existing fence to the side of the adjacent dwelling.

Principle of the proposal

Planning permission was previously granted to extend the pub car park to the south in 2016 (ref. F/16/78980). This permission was not implemented and 4 houses have since been permitted and constructed to the south of the car park, taking up some of the land originally proposed for the car park extension. The current proposal seeks a smaller extension to the car park, extending to the boundary with the adjacent houses.

The pub itself lies within the settlement boundary but the car park is within the countryside. Having regard to the previous permission, the principle of the proposal is considered acceptable provided that it would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside, or the amenity of neighbouring residents, as per the objectives of Policy S5 of the Local Plan.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The proposal would represent a relatively small expansion to the car park, and would be surfaced with gravel to provide a softer appearance than tarmac. The gravel would also provide a porous surface to reduce surface water runoff.

The additional parked cars would be predominantly screened from the main road by an existing boundary hedge on the western side and the proposed fence on the southern side. There is also a hedge that has recently been planted on land to the south of the proposed fence, which was a requirement of the planning permission for the adjacent houses. Once this southern hedge establishes, it will provide further screening to the pub car park and soften the appearance of the fence. Overall it is not considered that the proposal would adversely impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Access and parking

There is no proposal to change the access arrangements for the pub car park, and the Highway Authority has confirmed that the proposed parking spaces are of adequate size with sufficient turning space.

Amenity impact

Given that the pub is well established, it is not considered that the proposed extension to the car park would result in a significant increase in noise and disturbance for the adjacent residents. Whilst the proposal would bring parked cars closer to the adjacent house to the south, it would appear that there is already some informal parking that takes place in this area and it is considered that impacts from vehicle noise and headlights would be reduced by the proposed boundary fence and adjacent hedge. It is therefore not considered that the proposal would significantly impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Ecology and trees

There are no trees on the site, but the land to the east is part of a designated SINC and Ancient Woodland. The proposed site plan has been amended to indicate a construction exclusion zone adjacent to the protected area and on this basis the Council's Tree Consultant has raised no objection.

An Ecological Appraisal of the site has been provided, which sets out recommendations for precautionary working methods to protect species such as birds and reptiles, and compensation for lost grass and scrub habitats including planting of a strip of wildflower grassland on the west side of the site. The Council's Ecologist considers the recommendations to be sound and has raised no objection, subject to the recommendations being secured by condition.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The proposed development is not expected to have any significant implications in relation to climate change.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Conclusion: The proposed car park extension would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and would not significantly impact the amenity of neighbouring residents. The parking spaces are of an appropriate size and layout and measures would be implemented to ensure that there would be no adverse ecological impact. The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Local Plan.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

Subject to conditions including:

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations and working methods set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by ECOSA, dated March 2023 (ref. 23.0005.0001.F0), unless any variation is first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure protected species are not harmed by the development and to enhance biodiversity.

The fence shown on the approved plan on the southern side of the site shall be installed prior to first use of the car park and thereafter retained.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents.