

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/23/95161

Site Address: The Ageas Bowl, Boundary Lakes Golf Course, Botley Road, Southampton, SO30 3XH

Case Officer: Summer Sharpe

Description: Installation of an engineered berm and associated landscaping on the 5th hole to create visual and acoustic screening from the major roads running parallel to the site.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
- Countryside - Settlement Gap (Area C West End, Hedge End, Southampton (C8)) - Minerals Safeguarding - Solent Mitigation & Disturbance Zone - Surface Water Flooding - Pipeline (10 inch)		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
There have been numerous planning applications relating to the development and improvements to the application site.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	<u>1no. Comment:</u> Why is it necessary to remove 3 mature trees on the edge of the 5 th green. Why are there no replacement trees being planted.		
Parish Council:	None received.		
EBC Arboriculturalist:	<u>Comments 21 September 2023:</u> The BNG report appears to state 6 new trees are to be planted. This is in response to the calculated loss through BNG and not through the traditional direct tree-for-tree replacement. There is unlikely to be anything wrong with the proposal from a BNG perspective, but the number falls short of our own Tree Replacement Policy. There are a total of 16 individual trees being removed – 2 are U category, requiring no replacement; 12 are C category, requiring a one-for-one replacement; and 2 are B category, which require replacements based on their stem diameter. Then there are 11 trees from within 3 groups, all category C. Even if we ignore the individual trees within the groups, taking just the figure of 3 (groups) at C category, we would be requiring 15no. trees to replace the C category losses and 8no. trees to replace the B category trees. <u>Comments 4 July 2023:</u> The application contains no arboricultural information, as per British Standard 5837. The Ecological information states that mature trees are to be removed, but they have not been individually identified or categorised. We will need appropriate information to be submitted before we can make a recommendation and so, as such, we currently raise a holding objection. Despite the lack of information, we are unlikely to support mature tree loss, as per our Trees and Development SPD, but will wait for arboricultural information prior to assessing.		

EBC Contaminated Land:	<u>Comments 17 October 2023:</u> I have reviewed the 'Ageas Bowl - Construction Environment Management Plan' produced by IRUK Ltd, dated September 2023. I can confirm that information presented within the report is satisfactory in terms of pollution control and have no further comments on this aspect. I would only like to mention that Section 3.1.3 states that import material will be agreed in advance with EA/ LPA, which cross references with my previous comments made on DoWCoP. Section 3.2.1 Pre-authorisation, indicates that as part of the DoWCoP, supporting evidence should be provided to ensure soils to be imported are suitable for the proposed use (including site investigation reports, testing certificates, visits to the donor site to inspect material, waste carrier, etc.), which are yet to be provided. <u>Comments 29 June 2023:</u> The development is likely to require the importation of soils to make up the landscaping features proposed. On this basis we would recommend that a condition is applied.
EBC Ecologist:	<u>Comments 11 September 2023 (following the receipt of additional information):</u> The CEMP includes precautionary working measures (paragraphs 2.1.4-2.1.12 of Part 2: Construction Site Management plan). The precautionary working measures are satisfactory; however, reptiles must be assumed to be present due to suitable habitat and historic records nearby. A specific reptile receptor area must be identified before the start of works, shown on a plan and checked regularly by the ecological clerk of works to ensure that suitable conditions are maintained throughout the construction phase. Fuel storage and refuelling is addressed 2.3.3 and silt protection is addressed 2.1.13. Some additional information was requested with regard to planting areas, and biodiversity enhancement. <u>Comments 6 July 2023:</u> <u>Ecology:</u> The proposal will require shaping and importation of soils, removal of vegetation, most existing trees will be retained. It would remediate the gap created in the perimeter vegetation. This would provide potentially connectivity for dormice which have been recorded in a localised area of the wider Ageas Bowl. There is potential habitat for bats, nesting birds, reptiles and hedgehogs in the area. Trees are scattered scrub which would be affected by this proposal were assessed as having negligible bat roost potential but would have nesting and foraging opportunities for birds. Reptiles are assumed present due to suitable habitat and historic records nearby, as well as badgers. No further surveys will be required, however precautionary working methods to protect any protected species which could possibly be affected by the construction phase (badgers, bats, dormice, nesting birds, common reptiles, common amphibians and hedgehogs) must be followed. The non-licensable Method Statement for reptiles, precautions for

	nesting birds, badgers, and hedgehogs outlined in section 4 of the PEA report are satisfactory and can be conditioned. Biodiversity matters can also be conditioned, as can a CEMP (which should include the precautionary working methods). Drainage: The drainage report states that drainage from this site would be to the northeast, towards the culverted section of the watercourse that drains from Telegraph Woods and eventually under the culverted section that passes under the M27. This is designated EA Main River and eventually runs into the River Hamble. The soil type is assumed to be loamy and clayey with impeded drainage but the appraisal notes that infiltration testing has not been completed in this area. The creation of the bund is not expected to have any adverse drainage impacts or cut off any existing flow routes. The bund will be fully vegetated. The area of the proposed traditional golf bunker is proposed to have drainage trenches, a soakaway and perforated drainage pipes surrounded by aggregate, the covered with the geotextile and sand. The result of the infiltration testing will be required to determine whether a soakaway is feasible in this area. As the proposal would not create any additional surface water drainage due to impervious surfaces or any sources of pollution, I don't have any concerns for the operational phase at this time. During the construction phase there is the potential for sediment from the importation of soil and reprofiling work to drain into either the watercourse to the northeast or the surface water flow path on the south-eastern site boundary. Fuel spillages could also occur during re-fuelling of equipment. Details of protective measures to prevent sediment and fuel pollution during construction must be included in the CEMP which can be conditioned.
EBC Environmental Health:	Works in this location have a low potential to impact upon amenity and property. The earthworks if undertaken in dry weather are a potential cause of mobile, windblown dust. Therefore, we ask for a proportionate CEMP with contingency measures in the case of unusually dry periods.
EBC Landscape:	<u>Comments 24 October 2023:</u> The principle of creating a bund here for screening purposes is acceptable. However, there will be some landscape harm to the view from the slip road. Also, the landforms have not been designed in a way which is naturalistic. Because of this there is also harm caused to the landscape of the golf course itself. The following is requested: 1. That the landform design is refined so that it appears natural. 2. That a planting plan is produced which will generally improve the appearance of the bund and mitigate harm to the view from the slip road.
HCC Highways:	<u>Comments 16 October 2023 (following the receipt of additional information):</u> The updated CEMP has been reviewed and found to be acceptable.

	As such, there is no objection to the proposals from a highway perspective providing the CEMP is conditioned. In terms of frequencies of movement and routes to and from site, as outlined in the CEMP it is anticipated that at most there will be 50 two-way HGV movements per day, and that this will be for an anticipated period of 6months. Given the surrounding vehicle flow levels on the local highway network, this would be acceptable, when (a) reduced down to an hourly rate and (b) when compared to existing levels of vehicle flows, of which this application will increase flows by minimal percentage rate uplift. Routes to and from the site are also outlined in the CEMP, being a replication of the recent works on site, whereby HGV movements will largely arrive from the M27 direction, head down Charles Watts Way, then u-turn at the Kanes Hill Roundabout, heading eastwards back on Charles Watts Way, with a left turn only movement made into site. When exiting site, vehicles will exit onto Moorhill Road before turning left onto Charles Watts Way and heading towards the M27. Those restrictions will need to have appropriate signage erected to inform vehicles accessing the site, and a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order will need to be in place prior to the start of work. Methodology for keeping the highway clear of mud and debris from the work is also outlined in the CEMP, with on-site hard surfacing for the internal routes reducing contact with mud, and then wheel washers provided at the egress point onto Moorhill Road. Onwards a commitment is made that mechanical road sweepers will be utilised to clear the highway should on-site wheel washers fail. <u>Comments 29 June 2023:</u> No objection in principle, however additional information is required. No details of how the berm is to be constructed has been provided. if the works and materials are to be internally sourced from the site, this would be acceptable, however if materials are going to be delivered to the site, the a Construction Site Management Plan (CSMP) would be required to outline elements (such as: delivery routes in and out of the site, frequency and number of vehicle movements and over what time period, and mitigation measures to ensure dirt/ mud is not transferred onto the highway.
HCC Flood:	<u>Comments 7 July 2023:</u> The amendments proposed are entirely soft landscaping and although will exacerbate the current slopes, are not considered to significantly amend the current surface water drainage regime. Please note that there would be an existing surface water flow route at the base of the embankments which needs to be retained and construction methodology considered to ensure the routing (and any existing drainage) is not compromised.
HCC Waste & Minerals:	None received.
Policy:	

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036

Policies: S1 (Delivering sustainable development), S5 (Development within the countryside), S6 (Protection of settlement gaps), DM1 (General development), DM3 (Adaption to climate change), DM6 (Sustainable drainage), DM8 (Pollution), DM11 (Nature Conservation), DM13 (Transport), DM14 (Parking) and WE4 (Land at Ageas Bowl and Tennis Centre, Botley Road, West End).

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Quality Places; Biodiversity; and Trees and Development.

Site Visit	Yes ☒	No ☐
18 May 2023.		

Assessment:

Site & Surroundings

The application site comprises part of the Ageas Bowl, Boundary Lakes Golf Course. The proposals specifically relate to 'Hole 5' of the golf course which is situated to the south-eastern portion of the site, due north and west of junction 7 of the M27. The site and surroundings fall within the designated countryside and settlement gap. The settlement gap study provides the following description of the site: *Boundary Lakes Golf Club is aligned to the Ageas Bowl Cricket Complex and wraps around the boundary of the M27 and Charles Watts Way, rising from low ground in the north to higher ground along the A27 Moorhill Road. The retained natural woodland features, combined with the openness of the golf course, provides a clear sense of separation between Hedge End and West End/Southampton settlement edge.*

Proposal

The application proposes the installation of an engineered berm and associated landscaping on the 5th hole to create visual and acoustic screening from the major roads running parallel to the site.

Principle

Policy WE4 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) sets out that development will be supported where it facilitates the site's important role in meeting sporting needs in the Borough and wider area; complements the high-quality design and open setting of the site; and protects the settlement gap. This is also supported by other criteria which development should adhere to.

The application proposes the installation of a berm to screen part of the golf course from the adjacent M27, whereby in accordance with the abovementioned policy the proposals are considered to be acceptable in principle. The development will be assessed below against other material considerations to conclude whether the proposals fully accord with the policy ensuring that no harm arises in terms of impact upon the intrinsic character of the countryside and settlement gap.

Design & Landscape

Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that all new development should respect the character and appearance of areas, take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character, appearance and land uses of the locality or neighbouring, and be compatible in terms of mass, scale, layout density, design and siting.

From the site visit, it was noted that Boundary Lakes Golf Course (to the eastern boundary) is screened from the M27, predominantly by mature vegetation. There is, however, a break in the vegetation, whereby this application seeks to install a berm.

The Council's Landscape Officer has been consulted, whereby they have raised some concern with regard to the proposed design, noting that this not naturalistic in terms of its form, and further landscaping would be required. Whilst it is acknowledged that manmade bunds can be made to appear more natural, given the sites location this is not considered fundamental to the proposals acceptability.

The application site is located to the south-eastern portion of the Ageas Bowl. To the immediate south and east is the large roundabout serving junction 7 of the M27. The roundabout and slip road for vehicles joining the M27 (travelling west) are the main public vantage points, whereby glimpses of the application site and proposals could be obtained. However, road users in this area will be fast moving, and where users are joining the motorway their attention would be on merging (looking right onto oncoming vehicles), as opposed to left (the application site). Therefore the glimpses that could potentially be obtained will be fleeting.

Therefore, and whilst noting that the bund is not naturalistic, this is not considered to be harmful from a design perspective. It is noted that comments were also made with regard to landscaping. It is recommended that a landscaping condition be imposed to ensure that there is sufficient planting which would aid with; softening the appearance of the bund, as well as biodiversity enhancements. It is therefore considered that this condition is likely to mitigate any harm arising from the unnaturalistic bund.

Overall and to conclude, the proposed bund is considered to be a functional element for the users of the golf course, and would provide screening to the M27 and roundabout, where there was previous vegetative screening in place. Whilst not returning back to the former state of screening, which would have been the preference, the applicant advised that the land in which the trees were previously sited was highways land. The proposals have therefore sought to address the lack of screening, creating a bund within the curtilage of the site, which is set in from the previous screening. As such, and subject to planting and landscaping, recommended to be secured via condition, the proposals are not considered to result in an adverse visual impact, nor are they considered to have an adverse impact upon the wider surrounding countryside and settlement gap.

Impact upon Neighbouring Amenities

Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) amongst other matters, stipulates that all new development should not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenities of both new and existing residents.

Due to the location and siting of the proposals within the south-eastern portion of the site, falling within the countryside and settlement gap, there are no immediate nearby neighbouring amenities which would be adversely impacted upon. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has, however, been consulted, whereby they have requested a CEMP be secured via condition. The updated CEMP includes deliveries of materials and time periods. Therefore any harm arising is likely to be mitigated either by virtue of distance to amenities from the site, or the control measures the CEMP secures.

Highway Safety & Parking

Policy DM13 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) requires that development is or could be well served by public transport, cycling and walking and it includes measures which minimise its impact on the existing highway network. Policy DM14 of the Plan requires that an appropriate level of car parking be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The policy provisions are consistent with the requirements of the NPPF and in particular those of paragraphs 107 and 108.

Due to the nature of the proposed development, the Local Highways Authority (LHA) were consulted. They raised no objection in principle, however requested additional information in terms of the construction phase/ deliveries. An updated CEMP has been submitted, whereby the LHA have raised no objection. Subject to this being secured via condition, the proposals would be acceptable in this regard.

Ecology & Trees

Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that the Borough Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers to; protect, conserve and enhance areas subject to international, national and local nature conservation designations, and promote the net gain of biodiversity on all sites through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing provisions and new habitats and features compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough.

Due to the nature of development, the Council's Arboriculturalist and Ecologist have been consulted.

The Council's Arboriculturalist noted that the replacement tree planting falls short of the Council's Trees and Development SPD. To address this, a landscaping plan will be requested and additional tree planting shall be required as part of this recommended condition.

The Council's Ecologist was agreeable to the precautionary working measures set out within the CEMP, however requested biodiversity enhancements and additional information in terms of reptile receptors. Subject to conditions the proposals would be acceptable in this regard.

Drainage

Policies DM3 and DM6 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulate that new development must provide sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) wherever feasible, naturalised filtration should also be included.

The LLFA and Council's Ecologist provided comments upon the drainage matters relating to the proposals. It is acknowledged that the proposals are unlikely to adversely impact the existing drainage network. It was noted that the proposals would exacerbate the existing slopes, but this would not significantly amend the existing surface water drainage regime. Therefore, and to ensure that the proposals would not have an adverse impact upon the existing situation, protective measures to prevent sediment and fuel during the construction phase have been included within the CEMP.

Contaminated Land

Policy DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that development will not be permitted if it is likely to cause loss of amenity of impact upon public health or other unacceptable environmental impacts; including land contamination.

Due to the nature of the proposals, the Council's Contaminated Land Officer has been consulted. It was noted that the proposed development would require the importation of

soils. A CEMP was submitted (and updated) and information in relation to soils was provided. 3.2.1 of the CEMP sets out that pre-authorisation of materials shall be provided. in accordance with this, a condition is recommended to be imposed securing this information is submitted and agreed in writing by the LPA prior to its importation and use on site.

Equalities Act:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2021 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 prohibit 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.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other this, 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 Councils 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 and development plan 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 Local Plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and Policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF and Policies, S1, DM2, and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Conclusion:

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐