

Report of the Head of Planning & Enforcement Services

Address LAND BETWEEN RUGBY CLUB AND SACRED HEART SCHOOL WEST
END ROAD RUISLIP

Development: Conversion of open land into parking area.

LBH Ref Nos: 68092/APP/2011/2408

Drawing Nos: E/A3 2532/5 (Location Plan)
E/A1 2532/1 (Survey)
E/A1 2532/2 (Tree Survey)
E/A1 2532/3 (Proposed Car Park Levels and Typical Section)
E/A1 2532/4 (Proposed Car Park Landscape)
Design and Access Statement
Specification for Landscape Works
Planning Statement

Date Plans Received: 05/10/2011

Date(s) of Amendment(s):

Date Application Valid: 17/10/2011

1. SUMMARY

This application seeks full planning permission for the provision of a new 48 space car park on Green Belt land between Sacred Heart RC Primary School and Ruislip Rugby Football Club's clubhouse, located off Herlwyn Avenue and West End Road, respectively, in Ruislip.

The aim of the car park is to relieve on-street parking pressures and congestion on surrounding roads during times when Ruislip Rugby Football Club (RRFC) and Sacred Heart RC Primary School are in use. The objective is to expand existing parking facilities at RRFC, for use during evenings and weekends, when the club is well used. Parents of the adjoining Sacred Heart RC Primary School will be allowed to use the car when dropping-off/picking-up their children during the school day.

It is considered that sufficient justification has been provided to demonstrate a case of very special circumstances to allow an exception to Green Belt Policy, in this instance. The proposed development will arguably enhance the character and appearance of this currently disused area, in addition to relieving parking issues and congestion in surrounding streets.

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant UDP and London Plan policies and, accordingly, approval is recommended.

2. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL subject to the following:

1 SP01 Council Application Standard Paragraph

(This authority is given by the issuing of this notice under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 and shall enure only for the benefit of the land).

2 OM1 Development in accordance with Approved Plans

The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in strict accordance with the plans hereby approved unless consent to any variation is first obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

To ensure that the external appearance of the development is satisfactory and complies with Policy BE13 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

3 TL5 Landscaping Scheme - (full apps where details are reserved)

No development shall take place until a landscape scheme providing full details of hard and soft landscaping works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. The scheme shall include: -

- Planting plans (at not less than a scale of 1:100),
- Written specification of planting and cultivation works to be undertaken,
- Schedule of plants giving species, plant sizes, and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate,
- Implementation programme.

The scheme shall also include details of the following: -

- Proposed finishing levels or contours,
- Means of enclosure,
- Car parking layouts,
- Other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas,
- Hard surfacing materials proposed,
- Minor artefacts and structures (such as play equipment, furniture, refuse storage, signs, or lighting),
- Existing and proposed functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power cables or communications equipment, indicating lines, manholes or associated structures),
- Retained historic landscape features and proposals for their restoration where relevant.

REASON

To ensure that the proposed development will preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in compliance with policy BE38 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

4 TL6 Landscaping Scheme - implementation

All hard and soft landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved landscaping scheme and shall be completed within the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development or the occupation of the buildings, whichever is the earlier period. The new planting and landscape operations should comply with the requirements specified in BS 3936 (1992) 'Nursery Stock, Part 1, Specification for Trees and Shrubs' and in BS 4428 (1989) 'Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (Excluding Hard Surfaces)'. Thereafter, the areas of hard and soft landscaping shall be permanently retained.

Any tree, shrub or area of turfing or seeding shown on the approved landscaping scheme which within a period of 5 years from the completion of development dies, is removed or in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the same place or, if planting in the same place would leave the new tree, hedge or shrub susceptible to disease, then the planting should be in a position to be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in the next planting season

with another such tree, shrub or area of turfing or seeding of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority first gives written consent to any variation.

REASON

To ensure that the landscaped areas are laid out and retained in accordance with the approved plans in order to preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in compliance with policy BE38 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

5 TL7 Maintenance of Landscaped Areas

No development shall take place until a schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of 5 years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation. Maintenance shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule.

REASON

To ensure that the approved landscaping is properly maintained in accordance with policy BE38 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (September 2007).

6 NONSC Car park surface

Prior to commencement of development full details of the car park surface and finish, including materials to be used and details of surface level kerbs, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

In the interests of visual amenity and to preserve the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with policies BE13 and OL1 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

7 SUS8 Electric Charging Points

Before development commences, plans and details of 3 electric vehicle charging points, serving the development and capable of charging multiple vehicles simultaneously, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall set out the location of the charging points, the chosen technology and clear presentation of how the bays will be marked. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved plan.

REASON

To provide car parking for electric vehicles to help tackle air quality impacts and meet the climate change challenges in accordance with Policy 6.13 of the London Plan (July 2011).

8 SUS5 Sustainable Urban Drainage

No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of sustainable drainage systems to drain surface water runoff has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall demonstrate that runoff can be attenuated as close to the source as possible in compliance with the London Plan's drainage hierarchy. The scheme should also outline how rainwater can be collected and reused on site further reducing the run-off to drainage bodies. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON

To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with PPS25 and Policy 5.13 of the London Plan (July 2011).

9 DIS3 Parking for Wheelchair Disabled People

Notwithstanding the submitted plans, development shall not commence until details of the provision of 5 parking spaces for wheelchair users and/or Blue Badge holders, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until all the approved details have been implemented and thereafter these facilities shall be permanently retained.

REASON

To ensure that adequate car parking for people in wheelchairs/Blue Badge holders is provided in accordance with Policy AM13 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

Note: wheelchair users are not the only category of people who require a 'disabled' parking space. A Blue Badge parking space can also be used by people who have a mobility impairment (full-time wheelchair users account for only a small percentage of this category) including elderly people, visually impaired people having a sighted driver, children having bulky equipment such as oxygen cylinders that have to be transported with them, etc.

10 NONSC CCTV

Development shall not commence until a scheme for the provision of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) on and/or around the car park has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The car park shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented. Thereafter the approved scheme shall be permanently retained.

REASON

In pursuance of the Council's duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider crime and disorder implications in exercising its planning functions; to promote the well being of the area in pursuance of the Council's powers under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000; to reflect the guidance contained in the Council's SPG on Community Safety By Design and to ensure that the development provides a safe and secure environment in accordance with policy 7.3 of the London Plan (July 2011).

INFORMATIVES

1 I52 Compulsory Informative (1)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

2 I53 Compulsory Informative (2)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all

relevant material considerations, including the London Plan (July 2011) and national guidance.

OL1	Green Belt - acceptable open land uses and restrictions on new development
OL2	Green Belt -landscaping improvements
BE13	New development must harmonise with the existing street scene.
BE19	New development must improve or complement the character of the area.
BE38	Retention of topographical and landscape features and provision of new planting and landscaping in development proposals.
OE1	Protection of the character and amenities of surrounding properties and the local area
OE3	Buildings or uses likely to cause noise annoyance - mitigation measures
R10	Proposals for new meeting halls and buildings for education, social, community and health services
AM2	Development proposals - assessment of traffic generation, impact on congestion and public transport availability and capacity
AM7	Consideration of traffic generated by proposed developments.
AM13	AM13 Increasing the ease of movement for frail and elderly people and people with disabilities in development schemes through (where appropriate): - (i) Dial-a-ride and mobility bus services (ii) Shopmobility schemes (iii) Convenient parking spaces (iv) Design of road, footway, parking and pedestrian and street furniture schemes
AM15	Provision of reserved parking spaces for disabled persons

3 I1 Building to Approved Drawing

You are advised this permission is based on the dimensions provided on the approved drawings as numbered above. The development hereby approved must be constructed precisely in accordance with the approved drawings. Any deviation from these drawings requires the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

4 I3 Building Regulations - Demolition and Building Works

Your attention is drawn to the need to comply with the relevant provisions of the Building Regulations, the Building Acts and other related legislation. These cover such works as - the demolition of existing buildings, the erection of a new building or structure, the extension or alteration to a building, change of use of buildings, installation of services, underpinning works, and fire safety/means of escape works. Notice of intention to demolish existing buildings must be given to the Council's Building Control Service at least 6 weeks before work starts. A completed application form together with detailed plans must be submitted for approval before any building work is commenced. For further information and advice, contact - Planning & Community Services, Building Control, 3N/01 Civic Centre, Uxbridge (Telephone 01895 250804 / 805 / 808).

5 I11 The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994

The development hereby approved may be subject to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994, which govern health and safety through all stages of a construction project. The regulations require clients (ie. those, including developers, who

commision construction projects) to appoint a planning supervisor and principal contractor who are competent and adequately resourced to carry out their health and safety responsibilities. Further information is available from the Health and Safety Executive, Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge Road, London, SE1 9HS (telephone 020 7556 2100).

6 I12 Notification to Building Contractors

The applicant/developer should ensure that the site constructor receives copies of all drawings approved and conditions/informatives attached to this planning permission. During building construction the name, address and telephone number of the contractor (including an emergency telephone number) should be clearly displayed on a hoarding visible from outside the site.

7 I15 Control of Environmental Nuisance from Construction Work

Nuisance from demolition and construction works is subject to control under The Control of Pollution Act 1974, the Clean Air Acts and other related legislation. In particular, you should ensure that the following are complied with: -

A) Demolition and construction works should only be carried out between the hours of 08.00 hours and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and between the hours of 08.00 hours and 13.00 hours on Saturday. No works shall be carried out on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays.

B) All noise generated during such works should be controlled in compliance with British Standard Code of Practice BS 5228: 1984.

C) The elimination of the release of dust or odours that could create a public health nuisance.

D) No bonfires that create dark smoke or nuisance to local residents.

You are advised to consult the Council's Environmental Protection Unit, 3S/02, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW (Tel.01895 277401) or to seek prior approval under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act if you anticipate any difficulty in carrying out construction other than within the normal working hours set out in (A) above, and by means that would minimise disturbance to adjoining premises.

8 I19 Sewerage Connections, Water Pollution etc.

You should contact Thames Water Utilities and the Council's Building Control Service regarding any proposed connection to a public sewer or any other possible impact that the development could have on local foul or surface water sewers, including building over a public sewer. Contact: - The Waste Water Business Manager, Thames Water Utilities plc, Kew Business Centre, Kew Bridge Road, Brentford, Middlesex, TW8 0EE.
Building Control Service - 3N/01, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW (tel. 01895 250804 / 805 / 808).

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site comprises an approximately 0.24 hectare irregularly shaped plot of land located at the south east end of recreation grounds used by RRFC. The parcel of

land in question is currently poorly maintained, comprising an existing area of hardstanding, long grass and brambles. The existence of the hardstanding and the positioning of footpaths around its edges, mean that it is viewed quite separately from the wider playing fields.

It is understood that unofficial parking already takes place here at weekends when the existing Rugby Club car park is full.

The site is bounded to the north by the RRFC clubhouse, a single-storey building with associated parking and ancillary facilities. To the east it is bounded by allotment gardens and to the south by a strip of land comprising a belt of semi-mature trees and vegetation, beyond which are residential properties in Herlwyn Avenue. Sacred Heart RC Primary School is located to the south west and playing fields are located to the west.

The wider playing fields, which cover an extensive area to the west of the application site, comprise four rugby pitches with associated goal posts, floodlighting, etc, in addition to tree planting and open space.

The site is accessed via West End Road to the east.

The entire application site falls within the Green Belt as shown on the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

This application seeks full planning permission for the provision of a 48 space car park (including two disability standard spaces) on open land to the south of RRFC's clubhouse, and north east of Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

The purpose of the car park is to provide additional parking for the Rugby Club at weekends, relieving congestion and pressure for on-street parking in the surrounding residential areas. Additionally, as with the existing Rugby Club car park, this would provide a safe place for parents to drop-off and pick-up children attending Sacred Heart RC Primary School. Notably, the existing RRFC car park has been used in this way since 2006 when it was resurfaced under a safer routes to school initiative.

Existing tree planting around the site would be retained and enhanced through additional planting.

3.3 Relevant Planning History

386/APP/2005/1726 Sacred Heart Rc Primary School Herlwyn Avenue Ruislip
ERECTION OF TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO SCHOOL TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CLASSROOMS, LIBRARY, SCHOOL HALLS AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF PART OF EXISTING SCHOOL). ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING ON-SITE PARKING LAYOUT INCLUDING USE OF RUISLIP RUGBY CLUB CAR PARK FOR PARKING/DROPPING/COLLECTING PUPILS, NEW PATH TO RUGBY CLUB, LANDSCAPING AND WIDENED VEHICULAR ACCESS TO WEST END ROAD. INSTALLATION OF TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS FOR USE DURING BUILDING WORKS (FOR A PERIOD OF 15 MONTHS)

Decision: 18-08-2005 Approved

Comment on Relevant Planning History

There is no planning history specific to this site. However, the application summarised above, which relates in part to the existing RRFC car park and access is of some relevance.

4. Planning Policies and Standards

UDP / LDF Designation and London Plan

The following UDP Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

- PT1.1 To maintain the Green Belt for uses which preserve or enhance the open nature of the area.
- PT1.10 To seek to ensure that development does not adversely affect the amenity and the character of the area.
- PT1.12 To avoid any unacceptable risk of flooding to new development in areas already liable to flood, or increased severity of flooding elsewhere.
- PT1.30 To promote and improve opportunities for everyone in Hillingdon, including in particular women, elderly people, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities.

Part 2 Policies:

- OL1 Green Belt - acceptable open land uses and restrictions on new development
- OL2 Green Belt -landscaping improvements
- BE13 New development must harmonise with the existing street scene.
- BE19 New development must improve or complement the character of the area.
- BE38 Retention of topographical and landscape features and provision of new planting and landscaping in development proposals.
- OE1 Protection of the character and amenities of surrounding properties and the local area
- OE3 Buildings or uses likely to cause noise annoyance - mitigation measures
- R10 Proposals for new meeting halls and buildings for education, social, community and health services
- AM2 Development proposals - assessment of traffic generation, impact on congestion and public transport availability and capacity
- AM7 Consideration of traffic generated by proposed developments.
- AM13 AM13 Increasing the ease of movement for frail and elderly people and people with disabilities in development schemes through (where appropriate): -
(i) Dial-a-ride and mobility bus services
(ii) Shopmobility schemes
(iii) Convenient parking spaces
(iv) Design of road, footway, parking and pedestrian and street furniture schemes
- AM15 Provision of reserved parking spaces for disabled persons

5. Advertisement and Site Notice

5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date:- **8th November 2011**

5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date:- Not applicable

6. Consultations

External Consultees

Consultation letters have been sent to 67 local owner/occupiers and the Ruislip Residents Association. Site notices were also posted. Two responses have been received. One raises the following questions:

- i) Will this be a public fee paying car park?
- ii) Will the car park be an overspill for parents to park morning and evenings when taking children to school and also as an overspill for parking for Ruislip Rugby Club?

The second, a letter of support from Ruislip Rugby Football Club (RRFC), raises the following points:

- i) RRFC whole heartedly endorse this application and applaud the development which would be of great benefit to the rugby club as well as the school.
- ii) RRFC has a large and vibrant "mini" and youth section which offers a great many young people and families sports competition, leisure and recreation throughout the week, but particularly on Sundays. Families come to the club from all over the Borough and this results in parking space being at a premium at busy times. The direct consequence of this is pressure on parking in the local roads. This development would relieve this and in turn increase road safety.
- iii) The application is in keeping with the arrangements the club already have with the Sacred Heart School and the club is very happy for the school to use its car park on weekdays to help with staff and parent parking in line with the school's travel plan.
- iv) The Club and the school are very good neighbours and have worked together to encourage leisure opportunities and to ensure the safety of young people.

CRIME PREVENTION DESIGN ADVISOR

No objection subject to conditions requiring CCTV and appropriate boundary treatment.

Internal Consultees

TREES/LANDSCAPING OFFICER

Landscape Context: The site is an area of open space situated to the south of Ruislip Rugby Club, bounded to the west by a footpath link to Sacred Heart School (with the playing pitches beyond). The land is designated Green Belt, accessible via entrance to the rugby club's existing car park, off West End Road. The area is currently comprised of hardcore and poorly maintained rough grassland with informal trees lining the east boundary of the allotments and the southern boundary with the school. A tree survey has been submitted in support of the proposal. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on, or close to, the site, nor does it fall within a designated Conservation Area.

Proposal: The proposal is to remove the hardcore from the site and provide a surface level car park, which will serve both the rugby members and for a safe drop-off and collection point for the children attending the Sacred Heart School. The submission includes indicative supplementary tree planting around the edges of the site. The drawings indicate that the surfacing of the car park will be tarmac. However, the applicant has confirmed that the proposed surfacing will include resin-bonded amber gravel in the car spaces with black tarmac restricted to the access

road/manoeuvring space. This combination of materials reflects the re-surfacing recently carried out in front of the rugby club. It was also noted that the edge of the car park will be defined/contained by surface level kerbs with no up-stand. It is understood that surface water drainage will fall across the site, to the east and south, where it will drain/be attenuated by the surrounding grass areas and boundary ditches. Pre-application discussion included the possibility of security fencing around the car park. This proposal has not been included as part of the application.

Landscape Considerations: Saved policy BE38 seeks the retention and utilisation of topographical and landscape features of merit and the provision of new planting and landscaping wherever it is appropriate. Development within the Green Belt is normally a constraint on development unless special circumstances apply.

- No trees or other landscape features will be affected by the development and the proposed installation will have little impact on the openness, or views into the site, except when in use.
- The surfacing materials are acceptable provided that total coverage with tarmac is avoided as described. The use of surface level kerbs will be more discrete than introducing raised kerbs. These details should be confirmed by condition.
- Surface water drainage, as described, will comply with SUDS guidance.
- If the issue of security fencing is raised again it should be noted that this will have a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the landscape character of the site. Careful attention to detail and hedge planting will be required.
- In order to reduce the maintenance input required by specimen trees, it would be appropriate to consider the use of blocks of young whips and transplants around the site edges. These would, in time, provide greater landscape and ecological value and be easier to establish.

Recommendations: No objection, subject to the above considerations and conditions TL5, TL6 and TL7.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNIT

Noise impacts: It is noted that there is an area of land including the allotment gardens which will act as a buffer between the residential boundaries on Herlwyn Avenue. A macadam surface is preferable to stone chippings in that it gives rise to less noise from maneuvering vehicles.

Hours of use: It is not necessary to restrict hours of use on this proposal and it is noted that this parking area will not be in constant use during term time, with peak use for school drop offs. The Rugby club holds a premises licence permitting entertainments until 2300hrs, with occasional individually licensed events terminating at a later hour subject to giving notice, up to a maximum of 12 events per year.

Air Quality: EPU has been contacted in the past with concerns about air pollution caused by idling vehicles parked on Herlwyn Avenue waiting to collect children from school, and has liaised with the school to help mitigate potential impacts. This proposal will help to alleviate such concerns.

Conclusion: No objection.

SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

Drainage Comments: No objections are raised to the proposed development subject to the following:

The site is shown to be on the edge of an area recently appraised as being a Critical Drainage Area (CDA) in the emerging Surface Water Management Plan. These are the areas in the Borough most susceptible to surface water flooding. In this instance, the area itself is not a significant risk but puts

pressure on a drainage regime that could result in residential property flooding further down stream. The site currently operates to an almost natural state with run-off attenuated by natural seepage into the ground and long grass. The replacement of these permeable areas with hardstanding will increase the runoff in times of heavy rain putting further risk on the properties already identified as being in a CDA.

The impact on drainage does not prevent the development from going ahead, however it does require careful consideration of the drainage system. The application form states the drainage will go to the existing watercourse which drains into the critical drainage. Further un-attenuated runoff could post problems for the residents. The Council is now a lead local flood authority under the flood and water management act. Any future flooding of the properties downstream would be within the remit of the Council. It is therefore necessary to ensure there is no increase in runoff into the Critical Drainage area. The following condition is therefore necessary:

Condition:

No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of sustainable drainage systems to drain surface water runoff has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall demonstrate that runoff can be attenuated as close to the source as possible in compliance with the London Plan's drainage hierarchy. The scheme should also outline how rainwater can be collected and reused on site further reducing the run-off to drainage bodies. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with PPS25 and Policy 5.13 of the London Plan.

Sustainability Comments: Policy 6.13 of the London Plan requires 1 in 5 parking spaces to be served by an electric charging point. This is an exceptionally challenging target particularly given that the demand for charging points is still relatively low. Whilst we need to help drive demand for electric vehicles and sustainable transportation, the Council must make sure new development is sustainable. This means taking into account the short term and long term economic, social and environmental impacts. In the short term, it is not suitable to ask for 20% of all spaces to be served by electric charging points. In the long term it is not certain that this level of requirement will be suitable.

A more sustainable approach would be to consider 5% of the spaces to be served by electric charging points. The following condition should therefore be applied:

Condition:

Prior to the commencement of development a plan showing provision for electric charging points to serve 3 car parking spaces should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall set out the location of the charging points, the chosen technology and clear presentation of how the bays will be marked. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To provide car parking for electric vehicles to help tackle air quality impacts and meet the climate change challenges in accordance with Policy 6.13 of the London Plan.

HIGHWAY ENGINEER

The proposed car park of 48 spaces is considered to make the drop-off and pick-up times much safer and reduce/remove cars from surrounding roads during peak drop-off and pick up times.

Give way markings should be provided at the access point of the proposed car park off the existing access road.

2 disabled car parking spaces are proposed, which is below the Council's UDP standards that requires 10% of the car parking spaces to be for disabled users. No information has been submitted to justify lower disabled spaces. In the absence of such information, 5 car parking spaces should be provided for disabled users with 1.2 side and rear transfer areas.

Subject to the above two issues being covered through suitable planning conditions, no objection is raised on the highways aspect of the proposals.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.01 The principle of the development

The application seeks to provide improved community facilities, for use by users of Ruislip Rugby Club and Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

Policy R10 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies September 2007 supports the principle of new community facilities, subject to their compliance with other relevant policies. Policy 3.19 of the London Plan also encourages development proposals that increase or enhance the provision of sports and recreation facilities providing they are considered carefully in light of open space and Green Belt policies.

Notwithstanding the above, the site falls within the Green Belt as designated in the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007). Policy OL1 of the UDP states that the Local Planning Authority will not grant planning permission for new buildings or changes of use of existing land and buildings within the Green Belt, other than for predominantly open land uses. London Plan (July 2011) Policy 7.16 confirms that "inappropriate development should be refused, except in very special circumstances." This is reiterated in Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts. As such, it is necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that a case of very special circumstances exists if an exception is to be made to established Green Belt policy.

A significant part of the land in question is already covered in hardstanding/hardcore and the remainder of the plot is relatively unkempt, covered in long grass, brambles and other undergrowth. Additionally, due to its location in a corner of the recreation ground, separated from the main playing fields by a pedestrian pathway and bollards, it is viewed quite separately from the wider playing fields and Green Belt and currently offers little value in terms of visual amenity or usable amenity space. The applicant has argued that the proposed car park, and ancillary landscaping would, in fact, improve the visual amenity of the Green Belt in this location.

The applicant has advised that Ruislip Rugby Club predominantly use the playing fields on Sundays, when 5 to 16 year olds play their matches. The site has four pitches and two games are played on each pitch allowing eight games to be played at any one time. All other parts of the recreational space is used for training and practice. Accordingly, at peak times the playing fields are very well used and there is a high demand for car parking which overflows onto surrounding streets. The objective of the proposed car park is to help alleviate car parking issues in surrounding streets when the club is in full use at weekends. Arguably, this would enhance the desirability and usability of Ruislip Rugby Club and the associated playing fields, encouraging community and recreational use of the site. This, in turn, arguably accords with Green Belt objectives to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas.

In addition to providing car parking for Ruislip Rugby Club, the proposed car park would

be used to provide a safe drop-off/pick-up point for parents of children attending the nearby Sacred Heart Junior School. This would help to alleviate congestion and pressure for on-street parking on surrounding roads during peak times, which is a known issue in this area. Notably the existing Rugby Club car park is already used in this way and the footpath to the north and west of the application site provides direct pedestrian access to Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

Given the existing untidy state of the application site, it is not considered that the proposed car park, which would be in keeping with the existing Ruislip Rugby Club car park, would have a significant detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt in this location. Furthermore, the provision of a car park would enhance Ruislip Rugby Club's existing facilities, encouraging community use of the playing fields, and it would help to alleviate existing traffic and car parking issues in the surrounding area at weekends, when the Rugby Club is in full use, and during peak school pick-up/drop-off times during the week.

The benefits associated with the provision of the proposed car park are considered to amount to a case of very special circumstances sufficient to justify an exception to Green Belt policy in this instance. Accordingly, there is no objection to the principle of the proposed development, providing site specific issues can be satisfactorily addressed.

7.02 Density of the proposed development

Not applicable to this application.

7.03 Impact on archaeology/CAs/LBs or Areas of Special Character

Not applicable to this application as the site does not fall within an Archaeological Priority Area and there are no Conservation Areas, listed buildings or Areas of Special local Character within the vicinity.

7.04 Airport safeguarding

Not applicable to this application.

7.05 Impact on the green belt

This issue has been partly addressed in Section 7.01 of the report.

The application site currently comprises a relatively unkempt area of hardstanding/gravel and undergrowth. The area forms no sporting function and is visually unattractive, out of keeping with the wider Green Belt location. Officers in Green Spaces have advised that the land is not maintained due to the number of stones in place, which damage mowing equipment.

Given the current condition of the land, including the large area of existing hardstanding, it is not considered that the provision of a car park in this location would be less visually desirable. Furthermore, due to the size and irregular shape of the plot of land, it is not capable of forming a sports pitch. The location of a footpath around its north and west boundary, the location of bollards around its north boundary and the location of floodlights just to the north mean that it is very much on the periphery of the wider recreational area and Green Belt, and that visually it is seen more in context with the built up elements of the site, including the club house and existing car park.

The proposed car park would be surfaced to match the existing clubhouse car park, and additional tree planting around its boundaries would enhance its visual amenities. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposal would have such a significant impact on the openness or visual amenities of the Green Belt in this location sufficient to justify refusal.

7.06 Environmental Impact

This is addressed in Sections 7.17 and 7.18 of the report.

7.07 Impact on the character & appearance of the area

As previously discussed, the application site comprises an area of existing hardstanding and overgrown vegetation. Given the location of a footpath and floodlights to the west, and bollards to the north, it is viewed quite separately to the wider playing fields, it serves no real function, and is viewed more in context with the existing clubhouse and associated car park than the wider open Green Belt.

The proposed car park would be surfaced in a resin-bonded amber gravel in the car spaces with black tarmac restricted to the access road/manoeuvring space, in keeping with the existing Ruislip Rugby Club clubhouse car park. Additionally, six new trees would be planted in order to enhance the visual amenities of the site and to compliment existing planting around the site.

It is not considered that the proposed car park, which would be seen in context with the existing clubhouse and car park, would have any significant detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the surrounding area, or Green Belt, sufficient to justify refusal.

7.08 Impact on neighbours

The nearest residential properties are located in West End Road, approximately 40m to the east of the nearest part of the car park, and in Herlwyn Avenue, approximately 40m to the south of the nearest part of the car park. However, due to tree screening around the site boundaries, limited views of the proposed car park would be visible from these properties.

Given the distance between the nearest properties and the application site, and screening provided by surrounding vegetation, it is not considered that the proposed car park would have any significant impact on the residential amenity of the nearest occupants, sufficient to justify refusal.

7.09 Living conditions for future occupiers

Not applicable to this application.

7.10 Traffic impact, car/cycle parking, pedestrian safety

The objective of the proposed car park is to ease demand for car parking and associated congestion on surrounding roads when the RRFC is in full use and during peak school pick-up/drop-off times.

Car parking demand during peak times when RRFC and/or the school are in use is a known issue in this area, and a cause of congestion as parents stop to drop off their children at the Rugby Club or school. Notably, officers in the Council's Environmental Protection Unit have previously received complaints from residents relating to idling cars using Herlwyn Avenue.

It is considered that the proposed car park will assist in easing congestion on surrounding roads and in providing a safe place for parents to drop-off/pick up children attending RRFC and/or Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

7.11 Urban design, access and security

The site will be accessed via the existing Ruislip Rugby Club car park, off West End Road. An existing pedestrian path, which bounds the north and west of the application site provides direct access to Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

Security:

The Metropolitan Police's Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) has advised that CCTV should be provided for security reasons. This will be required by way of condition.

Additionally the CPDA has suggested that 1.6m high park railings are provided around the site boundaries. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the provision of any kind of railings or fencing would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt, particularly when the car park is not in use. The Council's Trees/Landscape Officer has highlighted this as a concern. Notably, there are lockable gates into Ruislip Rugby Club's grounds, off West End Road. Furthermore, the car park is only likely to be used when the rugby club is in use or during daylight hours. Accordingly, on balance, it is not considered that the provision of railings would be appropriate in this instance.

7.12 Disabled access

Two disability standard spaces would be provided towards the south west corner of the site, nearest to the existing pedestrian access into Sacred Heart RC Primary School. The Council's Highway Officer has suggested that five spaces should be provided to comply with the Council's standards. This being the case, a condition requiring this is recommended.

7.13 Provision of affordable & special needs housing

Not applicable to this type of development.

7.14 Trees, Landscaping and Ecology

The proposal, which would be located on an area of open space currently comprising hardcore and poorly maintained rough grassland would not have any impact on existing trees or other landscape features of merit. In addition, it is not considered that the proposals would have any significant impact on the openness, or views into the site, except when in use. The surfacing materials are considered to be appropriate and in keeping with those used on the existing rugby club car park, and additional tree planting would enhance the visual amenities of the site. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with UDP Policy BE38 and the proposed landscape proposals are considered to be appropriate.

7.15 Sustainable waste management

Not applicable to this application.

7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability

London Plan (July 2011) policy 6.13 requires 1 in 5 parking spaces to be served by an electric charging point. However, the Council's Sustainability Officer has advised that this is an exceptionally challenging target, particularly given that the demand for charging points is still relatively low and, that in the long term it is not certain that this level of requirement will be suitable. As such, it is recommended that a more sustainable approach would be to consider 5% of the spaces to be served by electric charging points. This would be required by way of condition should approval be granted.

7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues

Whilst the site does not fall within a flood zone, it does lie on the edge of an area recently appraised as being a Critical Drainage Area (CDA) in the emerging Surface Water Management Plan. Whilst the application site itself is not at significant risk of flooding, the increased area of hardstanding will put pressure on existing drainage, which could have an impact on properties located further down stream. Accordingly, careful consideration will need to be given to use of sustainable urban drainage systems to ensure there is no increase in runoff into the Critical Drainage area. This can be dealt with by way of condition should approval be granted.

7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues

Noise impacts: Given the distance between the application site and the nearest residential properties, it is not considered that the proposal will give rise to such a significant increase in noise levels so as to be detrimental to the residential amenity of the nearest occupants. Notably, the Council's Environmental Protection Unit have raised no objections on noise grounds and have advised that it is not necessary to restrict hours of use of the car park.

Air Quality: The Council's Environmental Protection Unit have advised that they have been contacted in the past with concerns about air pollution caused by idling vehicles parked on Herlwyn Avenue waiting to collect children from school, and that they have liaised with the school to help mitigate potential impacts. It is considered that this proposal will help to alleviate such concerns and, as such, no objections are raised on grounds of air quality.

7.19 Comments on Public Consultations

One consultation response has been received which raised two questions.

Point (i) queries whether the proposal is for a public fee paying car park. The application documents do not indicate that this would be a fee paying car park.

Point (ii) raises questions over the use of the site. These have been addressed in the report.

7.20 Planning Obligations

Not applicable to this application.

7.21 Expediency of enforcement action

Not applicable to this application.

7.22 Other Issues

None.

8. Observations of the Borough Solicitor

When making their decision, Members must have regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies. This will enable them to make an informed decision in respect of an application.

In addition Members should note that the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA 1998) makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights. Decisions by the Committee must take account of the HRA 1998. Therefore, Members need to be aware of the fact that the HRA 1998 makes the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) directly applicable to the actions of public bodies in England and Wales. The specific parts of the Convention relevant to planning matters are Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

Article 6 deals with procedural fairness. If normal committee procedures are followed, it is unlikely that this article will be breached.

Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 are not absolute rights and infringements of these rights protected under these are allowed in certain defined circumstances, for example where required by law. However any infringement must be proportionate, which means it must achieve a fair balance between the public interest and the private interest infringed and must not go beyond what is needed to achieve its objective.

Article 14 states that the rights under the Convention shall be secured without discrimination on grounds of 'sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status'.

9. Observations of the Director of Finance

Not applicable to this application.

10. CONCLUSION

It is considered that sufficient justification has been provided to demonstrate a case of very special circumstances to allow an exception to Green Belt Policy, in this instance. The proposed development will arguably enhance the character and appearance of this currently disused area, in addition to relieving parking issues and congestion in surrounding streets.

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant UDP and London Plan policies and, accordingly, approval is recommended.

11. Reference Documents

Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007)

London Plan (July 2011)

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts

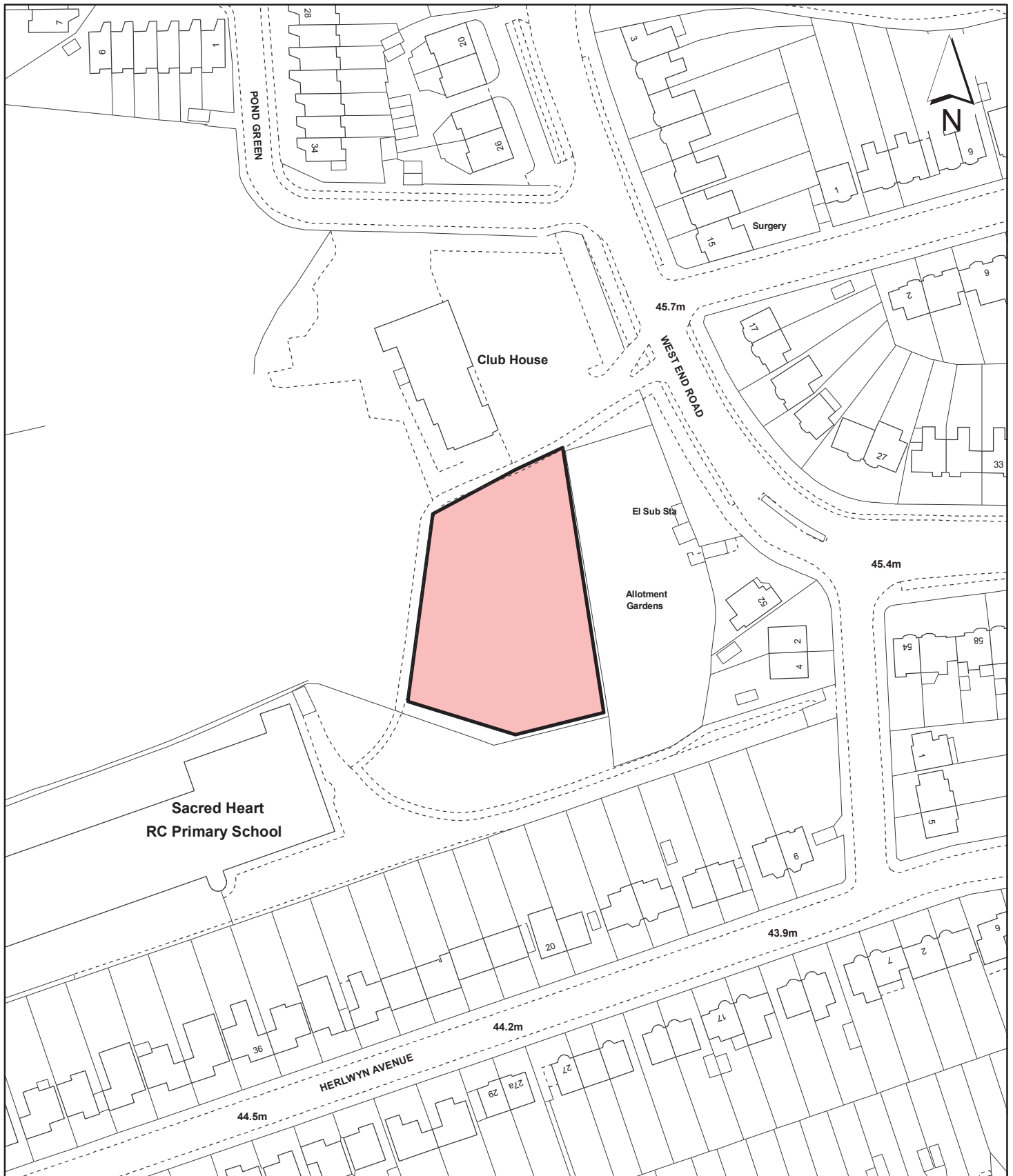
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport

Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document: Accessibility


Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Community Safety by Design

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Notes

 Site boundary

For identification purposes only.

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Site Address	
Land between Rugby Club and Sacred Heart School West End Road, Ruislip	
Planning Application Ref:	Scale
68092/APP/2011/2408	1:1,250
Planning Committee	Date
North	November 2011

LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON
 Planning,
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