

5a 3/12/0411/FP – Site improvements involving conversion of 67 existing pitches into hardstanding, standardise 24 "L" shaped hardstandings, resurface existing caravan storage area and resurface existing internal access road at The Camping and Caravan Site, Mangrove Road, Hertford for The Camping and Caravanning Club

Date of Receipt: 19.04.2012

Type: Full – Major

Parish: HERTFORD

Ward: HERTFORD – CASTLE

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T12)
2. Approved Plans (2E10): 'STAND/007/CED, STAND/015/LMM, HER010JS, HER011JS and HER012JS'
3. Prior to the commencement of works in relation to the caravan storage element, detailed plans of the proposed bunding, together with a plan of all existing trees on site with a stem diameter of 100mm or greater, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter implemented in accordance with the approved details. The details to be submitted shall include the following information: a) location, species, girth or stem diameter, accurately plotted crown spread and an assessment of condition. b) existing ground levels at the base of trees where nearby changes in level are proposed c) trees to be removed in conjunction with the proposed development which shall be clearly marked as such on a plan and d) positions and details of fencing or hoardings, prohibited areas and other physical means of protecting trees.

Reason: To ensure that trees and hedges are retained and adequately protected from the development in accordance with Policies ENV2 and ENV11 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

4. Landscape Design Proposals (4P12) '(e), (i), (j), (k) and (l)'
5. Landscape Works implementation (4P13)
6. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment. The surface water run-off generated by the 1 in 100 year critical storm including a

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30% allowance for climate change shall be limited so that it will not exceed the run-off from the existing site and not increase the risk of flooding off site. The mitigation measures as outlined within the Assessment shall be fully implemented prior to use of the pitches.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not increase flood risk on or off site in accordance with Policies ENV19 and ENV21 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

7. Prior to the commencement of work, a scheme to dispose of foul and surface water (Drainage plan) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure surface and foul water is treated appropriately and prevent pollution of groundwater in accordance with Policy ENV20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

8. No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground at this site is permitted other than with the express written consent of the local planning authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to controlled waters. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

Reason: To protect groundwater in accordance with Policy ENV20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

9. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Groundwork Methodology, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with policies BH2 and BH3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Directives:

1. Other legislation (010L)
2. In regards to condition 9, you are advised that if the depth of excavation is in excess of 175mm to contact the Historic Planning Unit (01992 555276) to ascertain whether it is appropriate to make provision to mitigate the impact of the scheme via archaeological monitoring to the groundworks.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and in particular policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV2, ENV11, ENV19, ENV20, ENV21, BH1, BH2, BH3 and LRC10) and the NPPF. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

_____ (041112FP.LP)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is an irregular shape comprising 13.5 hectares and is located 2.3km to the south of Hertford. The site accommodates touring caravans and tented camping and has a total of 225 pitches plus reception and amenity facilities.
- 1.2 Site access is taken off Mangrove Road on the site's western boundary and an internal access road provides access to all pitches within the site. To the north of the site is Balls Park; to the east, south and west is open countryside.
- 1.3 This application proposes the conversion of 67 existing grass pitches to hardstandings; to standardise 24 'L' shaped hardstandings (such that they all result in hardstandings measuring 9m long x 5m wide); resurface the existing caravan storage area; and to resurface the existing internal access roads with tarmac. The hardstandings would be finished in stone/gravel.
- 1.4 The caravan storage area currently accommodates 60 caravans and it is not proposed to change this number. Overall, the applicants states that the improvements would not result in additional pitches on the site or any increase in site visitors.

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 The most recent and relevant planning history is as follows:
 - 3/95/0840/FP - facility improvements. Granted.
 - 3/01/1062/FO - removal of condition 11 from 3/95/0840/FP which states that the use shall be seasonal. Granted.

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3.0 Consultation Responses:

- 3.1 County Highways do not wish to restrict the grant of permission.
- 3.2 County Archaeology comment that subject to the depth of excavation of topsoil being 150mm, the proposal is unlikely to have an impact upon significant heritage assets.
- 3.3 The Environment Agency has raised no objection subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment; that a scheme to dispose of foul and surface water be submitted and approved prior to commencement; and that no filtration of surface water drainage is permitted.
- 3.4 The Council's Engineer has commented that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 with no records of flood incidents. They recommend that new surfacing be pervious bitmac/tarmac.
- 3.5 The Council's Landscape Section states that it is unclear whether the proposed storage area extends up to the existing trees. No objection to the landscape proposals except that the proposed bund and close boarded fence to the storage area will give a poor visual appearance.
- 3.6 No comments have been received from the Garden History Society, Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre, the Planning Obligations Unit or Veolia Water.

4.0 Town Council Representations:

- 4.1 Hertford Town Council raises no objection.

5.0 Other Representations:

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification. No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy:

- 6.1 The relevant saved Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

GBC1 Appropriate Development in the Green Belt
ENV1 Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2 Landscaping

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ENV11 Protection of Existing Hedgerows and Trees
ENV19 Development in Areas Liable to Flood
ENV20 Groundwater Protection
ENV21 Surface Water Drainage
BH1 Archaeology and New Development
BH2 Archaeological Evaluations and Assessments
BH3 Archaeological Conditions and Agreements
LRC10 Tourism

6.2 In addition to the above the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is of relevance.

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The main issues in this case relate to the principle of development in the Green Belt; impact on the character and appearance of the locality; neighbour amenity; trees and landscaping; flooding; archaeology; and highway issues.

Principle of Development

7.2 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt wherein permission will not be given for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness or any other harm. Engineering operations within the Green Belt will be inappropriate unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

7.3 The site has an established use for camping and caravanning and is an appropriate recreational use in the Green Belt. The proposed development to create and standardise hardstandings and to tarmac the existing road would be an engineering operation, but due to the low key nature of the proposal it would, in Officers view, maintain openness in the surrounding area. The proposals do not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt as defined within the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, Officers are satisfied that the proposed development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

7.4 The principle of the development is also supported by Policy LRC10, which states that the District Council will encourage suitable tourism proposals in appropriate locations and give favorable consideration to suitable proposals for visitor accommodation in the District. The proposed site improvements would provide all-weather access to and from the site to ensure the viability of this established use and its

associated economic benefits.

Character and Appearance

- 7.5 Due to the nature of the proposals and as the site is well landscaped with limited views from outside of the site; Officers consider that there would be no unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the locality. The materials proposed are appropriate to the site and will match the existing provision. Whilst the design of the proposed fencing around the storage area is somewhat urban in appearance, it does not require planning permission being below 2.0m in height and, in any event, will have limited visual impact due to the landscaping at the site. A bund of 1000mm high by 1200 wide is proposed around the fencing which will soften the fencing further, but will not alter the character of the locality due to its limited size and prominence. A condition requiring details of the bunding is considered to be necessary and appropriate in order to ensure the protection of the adjacent trees which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Neighbour Impact

- 7.6 Due to the location of the caravan site away from neighbours, and as the proposals are contained within the site, there would be no unacceptable impact upon neighbour amenity,

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.7 There are a number of mature protected trees to the southern boundary of the area proposed for caravan storage, and subject to a further submission of evidence (via condition) to demonstrate the construction method and siting of the bund and fence in relation to trees, will allow for the retention and protection of those trees, no objection is raised. The proposed surfacing works are considered to be non contentious in landscape terms.

Flooding

- 7.8 Although the site lies within Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding, due to the scale of development it was considered that the development may present risk of flooding on site and/or off site, if surface water run-off is not effectively managed. Further evidence has been submitted that demonstrates that surface water run-off can be managed effectively and subject to conditions, the development is considered acceptable in this respect.

Archaeology

- 7.9 The County Council's Archaeologist has commented that the scheme is unlikely to have an impact upon significant heritage assets if the depth of excavation of topsoil will be in the region of 150mm – as stated within Groundworks Methodology. It is recommended however that a condition be imposed to ensure that the works are undertaken in accordance with the Methodology, so that if the depth of the excavations will exceed 175mm further submission of information will be required as it may then be appropriate to make provision to mitigate the impact of the scheme via the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks.

Highways

- 7.10 The scheme proposes alteration and improvements to on-site facilities and not additional pitches that could lead to a potential increase in visitors and traffic generation. The development will improve the condition of the internal access roads and result in improvement to the pitches which will allow parking for larger motor homes and therefore access and parking will be improved. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable from a highway and parking aspect.

8.0 Conclusion:

- 8.1 The proposal would be appropriate development within the Green Belt, wherein no unacceptable impact would result to the character and appearance of the Green Belt. The proposal would have no adverse impact upon neighbour amenity or in regards to highway, parking and access, and subject to conditions the proposal would have no unacceptable impact upon archaeology, flooding and trees and landscaping. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.