
Case Number	19/02820/FUL
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Formation of car park
Location	Athelstan Primary School Richmond Park Drive Sheffield S13 8HH
Date Received	26/07/2019
Team	City Centre and East
Applicant/Agent	Simon Elliott Associates
Recommendation	Grant Conditionally

Time limit for Commencement of Development

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Approved/Refused Plan(s)

2. The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents:

Location Plan and Existing/Proposed Site Layout Plan published 31st July 2019.

Reason: In order to define the permission.

Pre Commencement Condition(s) – ('true conditions precedent' – see notes for definition)

Other Pre-Commencement, Pre-Occupancy and other Stage of Development Condition(s)

3. The car park shall not be used unless the car park has been constructed with a permeable/porous surface unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Notwithstanding the details submitted by email on the 9th October 2019, prior to the works commencing full details of the construction build up of the car

park and tests to demonstrate whether the ground conditions are suitable for infiltration shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Should the site not be suitable for infiltration alternative drainage details shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the car park is constructed. Thereafter the approved details shall be implemented before the car park is brought into use.

Reason: In order to control surface water run off from the site and mitigate against the risk of flooding.

4. Prior to the car park being constructed details of the surface finish shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The car park shall thereafter be constructed using the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

Other Compliance Conditions

5. The car park shall only be used in connection with use of the sports pitches outside normal school hours and the access gates from Holyoake Avenue shall be locked when the car park is not being used in connection with the sports pitches.

Reason: The use of the car park for other purposes would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework in that the loss of part of the playing field and development of land within the Green Belt is only justified on the basis that the car park is ancillary to the use of the playing field out of school hours and no evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the car parking is required to serve the school and use of the car park for other purposes would have a harmful impact on the amenity of residents of Holyoake Avenue.

6. Prior to the use of the car park commencing the first 5 metres of the full width of the access from Holyoake Avenue shall be surfaced in tarmac.

Reason: In order to prevent loose material migrating on to the highway in the interests of the amenities of the locality and pedestrian safety.

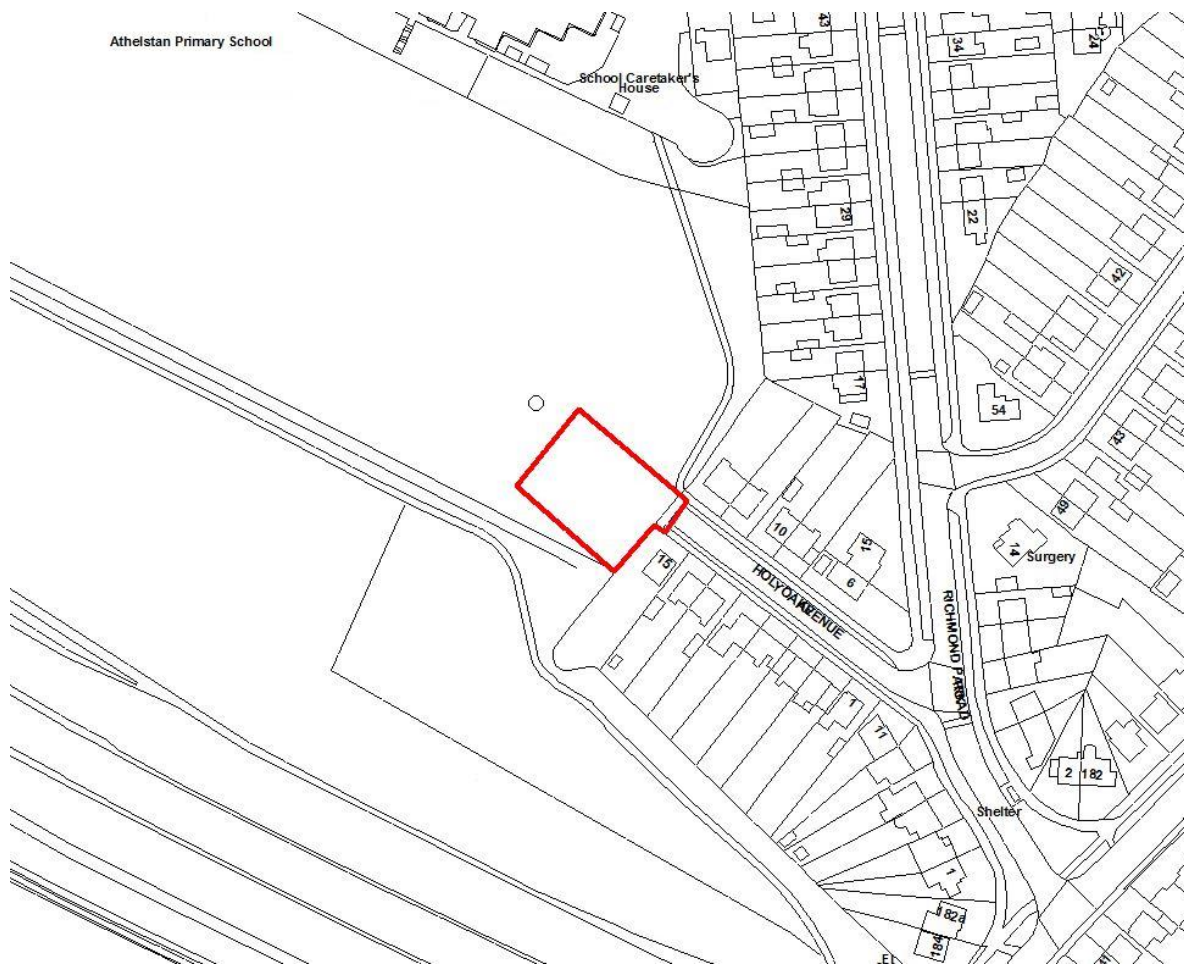
7. Vehicular and pedestrian gradients within the site shall not exceed 1 in 12.

Reason: In the interests of ensure safe and inclusive access

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has dealt with the planning application in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Site Location



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LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

The application site is part of an infant/primary school playing field in the Handsworth area of the city. The site has an area of approximately 1000m² and is located in the south-east corner of the playing field. The site is accessed from Holyoake Avenue a small cul de sac of approximately 15 houses. The site adjoins the side of No 15 Holyoake Avenue with the playing field and school adjoining the site to the west and north. To the south there is a large area of scrub and trees which adjoin the A57 Mosborough Parkway and footpath that runs parallel to the road. The site, playing field and school lie within the Green Belt. It forms part of a swathe of Green Belt that runs between Darnall along the Shirebrook Valley out to the city boundary.

The application is seeking to create a hardcore finished car park of 30 spaces. The car park is intended to serve the New Bohemians FC who use the pitches outside school hours, in the evenings and at weekends. It is understood that the players/parents previously parked on Holyoake Road and Richmond Park Road which caused a nuisance. They currently open the gates at the end of Holyoake Road to park on the site in summer but this churns up the grass in winter hence the proposal to create a formal car park.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Seven neighbours have objected to the scheme. The representations are summarised below:

- The access from Holyoake Avenue is not suitable as the main entrance to the football fields as it is only a minor road and there is not enough room for parking either side. Football traffic enters and leaves the site at high speed, if approved traffic calming should be required. The proposal creates safety issues for children playing in the street and elderly people living on the street. Football club users park inconsiderately, blocking drives, parking on grass verges and are abusive when challenged. 30 spaces is not enough to accommodate the football traffic.
- The school entrance should be used to access the playing fields where there are existing hard surfaces suitable for parking.
- The surface finish is not suitable, hardcore is normally used as a base rather than a finished material - it will create an unsatisfactory outlook for the nearest house, will be an eyesore and result in the loss of green space. There is no information as to how the site drainage will be dealt with and it will affect the lower part of the playing field.
- The proposal will increase fumes and noise which will be damaging to the health of the occupiers of No15
- There has been no prior consultation with residents about this car park
- The proposal will affect property values (this is not a planning issue).
- Intrusive foul language when the adult team uses the site.
- Adjoining gardens are affected by litter as a result of the football club use

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF advises that new buildings are inappropriate in the Green Belt except for provision of appropriate facilities in connection with the use of land for outdoor sport, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

Paragraph 146 says certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These include material changes of use of land (such as change of use for outdoor sport or recreation or for cemeteries and burial grounds).

In this instance the proposal is supporting the beneficial use of the Green Belt by supporting its use for outdoor sport. It is a change of use of land (para 146) and whilst it is not specifically for outdoor sport or recreation it will support a sporting use which local planning authorities should plan positively for. It is therefore concluded that it is not inappropriate development and should be assessed against paragraph 146 in terms of its impact on the openness and purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

The proposal will change the appearance of the site from green to grey and will be occupied by cars during limited periods. However it is already occupied by cars which drive on to the existing grass areas in dry periods. In addition the site is not a naturalistic site in a countryside location but part of a managed playing field space which is seen in the context of the housing area which it abuts and the school buildings as well as the more naturalistic landscape adjoining the Parkway. Given this context it is considered that the proposal will have a minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The purposes of including land within the Green Belt in this location is to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. In this instance car park is supporting an outdoor sporting use which the local planning authority are required to plan for positively in Green Belts. Given this and the character of the site and surroundings it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant harmful impact in terms of encroachment on the countryside. As the development comprises of resurfacing the site which will remain open most of the time (i.e. it will only be used for parking on certain evenings and at weekends during the football season) it is considered that it will not have a significant impact in terms of creating urban sprawl.

It is therefore concluded that whilst the proposal will have a limited harmful impact on the openness of the site and the purposes of including land within the Green Belt this is not significant enough to justify resisting the proposal on Green Belt policy grounds.

Policy CS47 is concerned with safeguarding Open Space. It says that development in open space will not be permitted where it would result in:

- A quantitative shortage of either informal or formal open space in the local area;
- It would result in open space of high quality heritage, landscape or ecological value;
- People in the local area would be denied easy or safe access to a local park or smaller informal open space that is well used or valued by people living or working in the local area;
- It would cause a break in the city's Green Network

In this case the development would not result in the loss of open space of high quality heritage, landscape or ecological value, nor would it cause a break in the Green Network or result in local people being denied access to a local park. Although there is a shortage of formal open space in the area part g of the policy that where development would result in the loss of open space it will only be permitted where the development would be ancillary to the open space and have a minimal impact on the use and character of the open space. In this instance the car park is to facilitate the use of the open space outside of school hours and therefore is ancillary to the open space and given that it will remain open and not affect the pitches it will have a minimal impact on the character and use of the open space. Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with this policy.

Access

Holyoake Avenue is a short cul de sac that serves approximately 15 houses. Most of the houses have at least one off-street parking space but there is still parking on-street when the sports pitches are not in use.

The applicant has been asked explain why the existing parking and hard surfacing within within the school grounds cannot be used for football club parking. They have advised that this was considered and dismissed primarily due to safeguarding issues. If the school car park were to be opened in the evenings and weekends there would be free access to all the school grounds and this raised security issues, there is currently no security presence on site outside of school hours.

Holyoake Avenue and the access into the playing field is considered to be satisfactory to serve the 30 space car park proposed.

Resident's representations show that when the football club traffic parks on street that there is nuisance for residents due to difficulty getting in and out and due to blocked drives. It reduces the carriageway to one way working, and can lead to excessive reversing manoeuvres, to the detriment of the free and safe flow of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the highway. It is likely, therefore, that the proposed development will show improvements in road safety by providing the vehicles which are already present a suitable place to park and ease the situation for the residents. The applicant has provided evidence that at least this many cars park on the site when the surface is dry.

No evidence has been submitted to show that there is a need for additional parking to serve the school. The justification for parking in the Green Belt and on the playing field is that it supports an outdoor use and therefore a condition is proposed restricting the parking to this use.

Overall there are considered to be highway benefits from this proposal and there is no reason to resist the application on highway grounds.

Impact on playing pitch

Sport England has to be consulted on development that affects playing fields. They initially issued a holding objection as insufficient information was submitted with the application.

Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework says that playing fields should not be built on unless it is shown that the open space is surplus to requirements, it would be replaced by equivalent or better quality provision in a suitable location or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clear outweigh the current or former use.

Sport England's policy is that they will oppose development which would lead to the loss or prejudice the use of any part of a playing field unless the development meets one of 5 exceptions. Exception 2 is that the proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principle of the use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

In this case the application is to support the community use of the school playing field out of school hours. The applicant has now provided additional information including a site layout which shows the proposed car park will not affect the pitches as set out. They have also argued that as the land slopes down steeply to the north east of the proposed car park it could not be used as a pitch or part of a pitch. They argue that the development is an essential supplementary development to outdoor sport and recreation leading to the pitches being used more frequently than when they were previously only open during school hours.

Sport England has considered the additional information and advised that the proposal is covered by Playing Field Policy – Exception E2 and therefore they have no objections to the proposal.

Amenity

The use of Holyoake Avenue as the access to the car park will have a negative impact on residents facing on to this street due to additional noise from traffic and the impact of additional movement's on the safety of children using the quiet cul de sac for play.

However were the car park not to be provided the traffic is likely to park on this street anyway impacting on residential amenity but also causing additional nuisance as a result of congestion and inconsiderate parking affecting resident's ability to get to and from their property.

The most affected property is No 15 as the car park runs along the north west side of the property. There is a fence approximately 1.8m to 2m high that separates the plot from the playing field. The main aspect of the house is south west to north east at right angles to the car park. Parking does not currently occur right next to the boundary with No 15 as there is an area of longer grass/herbaceous landscaping which provides a buffer to the existing parking on the grass.

There will therefore be some additional amenity impact on the occupier of No 15 due to car parking taking place close to the garden boundary. However given existing boundary screen and the limited use of the car park it is considered that the amenity impact would not be so great as to justify resisting the application. In order to minimise the impact on the openness of the open space/Green belt it is important the car park is close to existing urban development. An area of scrub adjacent to No 15 could be retained in order to increase the separation of the car parking from the property given that the car park will only be used at limited times and the turnover of spaces will not be high it is considered that the amenity impact of increased noise will be limited.

Drainage

The applicant has been asked to explain how the site will be drained. They have advised that the topsoil will be removed and soil ripped and de-compacted to aid drainage. They say the site will initially be finished in a recycled tarmac finish flat rolled to a permeable finish. In the longer term they intend to surface the car parking in either permeable tarmac or non-permeable tarmac with a drain at the lower end of the slope.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has advised that they are not convinced that the specification proposed will be permeable. Therefore a condition is proposed to require full details of the surface of the car park to be submitted for approval to demonstrate that it will be permeable.

RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

Holyoake Avenue is only 80m long with parking either side. Given this and amount of traffic associated with the car park traffic calming is not considered to be appropriate.

The increase in fumes associated with the car park is not likely to be significant particularly given that it will serve existing traffic already attracted to the Holyoake Avenue.

The concerns about foul language and litter associated with the football field use are not within the remit of this application as the use of the playing field does not require planning permission it is only the car park that requires permission.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed car park is considered to be ancillary to the use of the site for playing fields and helps to facilitate an outdoor use and assist in promoting health and well-being. It reduces that nuisance for local residents whilst delivering traffic safety benefits. Given that it will not harm the use of the site as a playing field it is considered that the benefits of the development outweigh the limited negative impact on appearance and openness of the site. The proposal is therefore considered to be consistent with planning policy and it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

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