

## **SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration**

**Application No :** 18/00871/FULL1

**Ward:**  
**Bromley Common And**  
**Keston**

**Address :** Keston Parish Church Church Road  
Keston

**Objections: NO**

**OS Grid Ref: E: 541840 N: 163002**

**Applicant :** Mr Frank Netscher

### **Description of Development:**

The enlargement of the existing car park for Keston Parish Church and Church Hall.

Key designations:

Areas of Archeological Significance  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
Green Belt  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
Smoke Control SCA 22  
Smoke Control SCA 24

### **Update**

This application was deferred without prejudice by Members of the Plans Sub Committee 1 at the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, in order to seek a road safety audit, further tree planting details and for the item to be moved to list 2.

The applicant has carried out a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit; it concluded that the enlargement of the existing car park and intensification in use of the site access would not warrant any road safety concern being raised. The Audit team also noted that if the car park was not used and parking was carried out in Church Road (given the lack of waiting restrictions) it would reduce the already narrow carriageway from 4.5m to approximately 2.5m running lane and this resultant parking would likely to have an impact on the free flow of traffic. Any on street parking would also be likely to obstruct the inter visibility between drivers and pedestrians that would be crossing Church Road to gain access to the Parish Church grounds. As a consequence, the Audit team is of the opinion that the enlargement of the car park would be beneficial in reducing the likely conflicts that could occur with on street parking along Church Road, which would be less desirable than a slightly intensified use of an existing vehicle access.

The Council's Highway officers have examined the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and are satisfied with its report.

With regards to planting and landscaping, whilst no additional information has been provided, improvements to include the planting of 2 English Oak trees and 10 native Wild Cherry trees as shown on Drawing No. 847/5 REV E were already detailed in the application.

The contents of the original report are repeated below and updated where necessary.

## **Proposal**

The application proposes the extension of the existing car park by 25m x 17m, which will provide 20 bays including two x disabled parking bays plus two motorbikes spaces.

An M.O.T. Type 1 finish is proposed and to mark the bays with small timber posts. The plan is annotated to show that a security light mast with solar powered LED to illuminate the gate is also proposed.

The proposal includes the retention of some of the existing trees and shrubs and the provision of additional native species to enhance the 'buffer zone' to the perimeter and enable these 'buffer zones' to separate the car park from the roads, houses and the Church and providing a visual and sound barrier. The proposal would also include the clearing of rubbish, dead, damaged and diseased trees and undergrowth.

The application was accompanied with a supporting statement and Design and Access Statement which provided a list of events/activities. It states that the church/ hall and the community facility it provides is limited due to the current parking situation.

An arboricultural method statement is provided to support the application states that two trees (both sycamore one Category B and one C) and one compact group of self-seeded sycamores (Category C) are to be removed as part of this proposal.

## **Location and Key Constraints**

The site is a triangular area of mixed woodland located between the A233 to the east, Rectory Road to the west and Church Road to the south-west. An existing car park forms part of the site opposite the Keston Parish Church, a Grade II\* listed building. The existing car park is not marked out but can accommodate up to 24 cars. Access is via an entrance off Church Road, opposite the Church. The existing car park is in an elevated location and is surrounded by mature deciduous trees.

The site is within the designated Metropolitan Green Belt and within an area of Archeological Significance (AAS). The application site is covered by a blanket type Tree Preservation Order (TPO) protecting an area of trees growing on the triangle of land between Rectory Road, Church Road and Westerham Road (A233) (TPO 275a) as together they form an important feature in the landscape.

## **Comments from Local Residents and Groups**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received, which can be summarised as follows:

### Support:

- Existing car park is too small;
- Currently people are forced to park on the road;
- Current situation is a road, pedestrian and cyclist safety hazard;
- The expanded car park will help for the growth of the church and community;

- Older and disabled visitors require a car to get to the church and hall given its location away from the village;
- Road is very busy;
- Proposed car park is well hidden and enhancement will benefit the wildlife habitats in area;
- Whilst site is in Green Belt it is not benefit for the public or wildlife as it's unkempt;
- Land was previously cultivated until WWII and as such many of the trees and foliage on site have only grown up since that time;
- Only central section of land will be converted and the surrounding trees/shrubs will be retained as a screen;
- The new planting will enhance the area;
- Proposal will not disturb local residents;
- Proposal is required to keep the church and hall viable;
- Allows functions to operate without casing road, pedestrian cyclist safety hazards
- There is a business behind the church and cemetery area;
- Area is a wasted piece of land in an unusable location covered in undergrowth;
- Planning red tape getting in the way of a great improvement to the area;
- If permission is refused the Council should invest in this land by enhancing this area for the enjoyment by the public and nature.

### **Comments from Consultees**

Historic England: Having considered the proposals with reference to information held in the Greater London Historic Environment Record and/or made available in connection with this application, I conclude that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets of archaeological interest.

Conservation Officer: I would remain of the view that given the separation afforded by both the road and tree screening, the setting would not be harmed nor any key views of the church obscured. Therefore the proposal would not contravene BE8 or our obligations under the NPPF to have consideration to the settings of heritage assets.

Highways: Officers required measurement of a parking bay is 2.4m x 5m with a clear manoeuvring space of 6m. Conditions are suggested in the event of planning permission being given.

Trees: My previous comments associated with application 16/02096/FULL1 remain valid. The proposed car park extension will require the loss of a number of trees to the west of the existing car park. As the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) indicates, trees here are of limited value, with a number of specimens developing poorly as a result of woodland competition. The presence of Woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 275A, reflects the importance of the woodland here to the locality. Woodland trees often develop poorly as a result of intense competition. It is the cohesion of trees within a woodland setting that award trees amenity value.

The extension of the car park will occupy a large area of the woodland and impact upon surrounding trees. The overall scale of the proposed car park is considered excessive to what would be considered acceptable. Whilst the AMS submitted in support of the application reduces the impact upon retained trees, it is the general arrangement that is considered contrary to Council policy.

The proposals negate the objectives of the TPO. I would recommend that the application be refused as the proposals conflict with policy NE7 of the Bromley Unitary Development Plan (adopted July 2006).

## **Policy Context**

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) sets out that in considering and determining applications for planning permission the local planning authority must have regard to:-

- (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,
- (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- (c) any other material considerations.

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) makes it clear that any determination under the planning acts must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018. According to paragraph 48 of the NPPF decision takers can also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF

The Council is preparing a Local Plan. The submission of the Draft Local Plan was subject to Hearings from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and the Inspectors report is awaited. These documents are a material consideration. The weight attached to the draft policies increases as the Local Plan process advances.

The development plan for Bromley comprises the Bromley UDP (July 2006), the London Plan (March 2016) and the Emerging Local Plan (2016). The NPPF does not change the legal status of the development plan.

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies:

### London Plan Policies (2016):

- 7.4 Local character
- 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
- 7.16 Green Belt

### Unitary Development Plan (2006):

- T3 Parking
- T18 Road safety
- BE1 Design of new development

BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings  
G1 The Green Belt  
C1 Community facilities  
NE7 Development and Trees

Draft Local Plan (2016):

30 Parking  
37 General Design of Development  
38 Statutory Listed Buildings  
49 Green Belt  
73 Development and Trees

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG1 – General Design Principles  
SPG2 – Residential Design Guidance

**Planning History**

- Under planning reference 86/03400 permission was granted for a single storey rear extension.
- Under planning reference 87/03457 permission was refused to fell one ash tree subject to TPO275.
- Under planning reference 89/01172 permission was granted for a part one/two storey extension.
- Under planning reference 91/01802 permission was granted for landscaping details pursuant to 89/01172.
- Under planning reference 16/02096/FULL1 permission was refused for the extension of existing car park to provide an additional 26 bays including two x disabled parking bays plus two motorbikes. This was refused for the following reasons:
  1. ***The site is located within the Green Belt wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development, and the Council sees no very special circumstances in this case which might justify the grant of planning permission as an exception to Policy G1 of the Unitary Development Plan and the requirements of the NPPF.***
  2. ***The proposal would constitute an unsatisfactory intensification of development into the countryside, which would result in a harmful impact on the openness and rural character of the Green Belt, contrary to Policies BE1 and G1 of the Unitary Development Plan and the NPPF.***
  3. ***In the absence of exceptional circumstances to justify a relaxation of established policy, the proposal if permitted would be likely to set a pattern for similar undesirable development in the Green Belt to the detriment of its character and open nature and contrary to Policy G1 of the Unitary Development Plan and the NPPF.***

**4. The proposal would have an undesirable impact on the woodland setting (subject to TPO 275A) which makes a significant contribution to the visual amenities of the area and would therefore be contrary to Policies G1 and NE7 of the Unitary Development Plan.**

**5. It would be harmful to the amenities of the nearby residents by reason of the resultant level of intensified activity, noise and general disturbance which would be generated thereby contrary to Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.**

The application was subsequently dismissed at appeal under reference APP/G5180/W/16/3165929 (06/04/2017). The Inspector concluded that:

“The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In addition, any harm to the Green Belt carries considerable weight and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In this case, I have found harm from inappropriateness as well as a limited loss of openness to the Green Belt and harm to the character and appearance of the area.

I have given moderate weight to the support received and the positive impact of reducing the level of parking on the surrounding roads and limited weight to the other consideration above. However, I consider that the harm to the Green Belt and the harm to the character and appearance of the area are not clearly outweighed either individually or cumulatively by other considerations sufficient to demonstrate the very special circumstances that are necessary to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt”.

## **Considerations**

The main issues to be considered in respect of this application are:

- Resubmission
- Green Belt
- Design
- Highways
- Neighbouring amenity
- Trees
- CIL

### Resubmission:

To address the previous reasons for refusal as set out above the applicant has proposed the following:

- Reduced the number of parking spaces from 26 to 20
- Additional detail has been provided to the extent of the landscape improvements which include the planting of 2 English Oak trees and 10 native Wild Cherry trees;

The supporting statement summarised the key factual aspects of this application as:

- The retention of the existing trees and shrubs to enable these 'buffer zones' to separate the car park from roads, houses and the Church and providing a visual and sound barrier;
- Clearing rubbish, dead, damaged and diseased trees and undergrowth (particularly the 'carpet' of bindweed and ivy) to ensure that the increase in natural lighting (by this opening –up) can enhance and benefit the native trees;
- The provision of additional native species to enhance the 'buffer zone' to the perimeter;
- The reduction in the number of parking bays and the area of the care park extension to the absolute minimum.

### Green Belt:

The proposal seeks a material change of use. Paragraph 146 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out certain other forms of development that are not to be considered inappropriate provided they maintain openness. However a material change of use is not one of the listed exceptions. Paragraph 144 of the NPPF sets out that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. It also makes clear that the Secretary of State attaches substantial weight to the harm to the Green Belt. The Council's Policy G1 also states that the material change of use of land will be inappropriate unless it maintains the openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

Paragraphs 133 - 147 of the NPPF sets out the Government's intention for Green Belt. The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

The Green Belt is intended to serve five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraphs 143 - 147 deal specifically with development proposals in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Bromley Development Plan Policies provide the same level of protection to Green Belt as the NPPF.

The proposal does not fall within any of the exceptions listed in either the NPPF or Policy G1 having regard to the extent of the works proposed.

The proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 143 of the NPPF where a proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

It is proposed to change the use of the site from mixed woodland to the use as an additional car park for 20 vehicles, to facilitate the use, the area is to include, hardstanding and security light set to illuminate the gate for security. It is considered that the proposal does not fall within the criteria of Policy G1 nor the NPPF of appropriate uses within the Green Belt. Therefore, very special circumstances must be provided in order to justify any form of development that does not meet the accepted criteria.

Paragraph 144 of the NPPF advises that LPAs should give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Therefore, the harm in principle to the Green Belt remains even if there is no further harm to openness because of the development.

- *Impact on openness:*

Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt and is different from visual impact. Openness is about freedom from built form. Even if there is absence of harm to openness, there can be harm in principle to the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, as set out in paragraph 133 of the NPPF, is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The construction of a car park measuring approximately 25m x 17m would lead to a perceptible change. Whilst the constructed parts of the car park would be at ground level, the site would have the potential to be occupied by parked cars for considerable lengths of time. Whilst it is acknowledged that the car park would be screened to a certain degree by the existing trees which would surround it, intermittent views of the cars would still be noticeable, particularly in the winter months. Moreover, the car park and parked cars would be highly visible from the existing car park and entrance, its visual prominence exacerbated by the removal of trees particularly along the edge of the woodland. The extension of the car park would appear as visual intrusion into the woodland.

The NPPF indicates that other forms of development such as uses of land and some other forms of development such as this proposal provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed use is not one of those uses indicated within the NPPF. In this instance the proposal fails to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The intensification of the site from what is currently mixed woodland should be maintained in the interests of protecting the Green Belt. The proposed surfacing comprising granular porous finish which would be very different in appearance from that associated with the previous woodland use. In addition it would contrast starkly with the surrounding area and the overall impact would be to introduce a more urban character to this part of the site. Although the site is somewhat screened, a large area of surfacing would be visible from the road which would be an alien element in this rural setting.

The impact of the car park would be further exacerbated by the presence of parked cars when the car park is in use. When occupied by parked vehicles this area would be a visually dominant and intrusive feature and, overall, have an undesirable urbanising effect. It is considered that the car park would appear as an alien feature and not comparable to the previous mixed woodland area. It is therefore considered the development would have a harmful impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

It is considered that the proposed hard surfacing area laid out for a car park would reduce the openness of the area significantly and would result in an urbanising effect. Transforming the Green Belt land into an urban form of development, would lead to encroachment into the countryside having a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the current use. On this basis, the proposal would constitute inappropriate development and would diminish the sense of openness of this part of the Green Belt contrary to Policy G1 of the UDP and the NPPF.

It is acknowledged that given the level of screening and the transient nature of cars, it is considered that the loss of openness would be limited however; the proposal would have both a visual and physical impact on the openness of the Green Belt and thus fail to preserve it.

- *Very special circumstances:*

There has been a claim made of very special circumstances.

The NPPF indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In addition, any harm to the Green Belt carries considerable weight and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The applicant has put forward information in the supporting documents outlining a number of factors in support of the proposal essentially to seek to demonstrate why additional parking is needed at the church. This indicates that the existing level of parking within the existing church car park is not sufficient to provide for all cars currently generated on a daily basis and preventing from offering different voluntary services to be catered for.

Whilst it is acknowledged that additional parking would reduce the level of parking on the surrounding roads and assist in the operation of the church and its functions, it is considered the above does not clearly outweigh the harm arising through inappropriateness and the other harm identified and therefore the very special circumstances necessary to justify development in the Green Belt do not exist.

It is therefore considered that there would be harm from inappropriateness as well as a limited loss of openness to the Green Belt. As such the harm to the character and appearance of the area are not clearly outweighed either individually or cumulatively by other considerations sufficient to demonstrate the very special circumstances that are necessary to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt and in this case there are no material considerations that may amount to or contribute to a case for very special circumstances.

Design:

Design is a key consideration in the planning process. Good design is an important aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF (2018) states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2018) requires Local Planning Authorities to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities). New development shall also establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

London Plan and UDP policies further reinforce the principles of the NPPF setting out a clear rationale for high quality design.

Policy BE1 of the UDP states that development should not detract from the existing street scene and/or landscape and should respect important views, skylines, landmarks or landscape features.

The proposal would require the removal of some trees at the entrance together with the bramble and dead trees in the glade. Whilst the clearing of some trees may allow sunlight to enter glades and encourage flora and fauna, the proposal would be introducing an M.O.T. Type 1 finish with small timber posts to mark the bays. The plan is annotated to show that a security light mast with solar powered LED to illuminate the gate is also proposed.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the car park would be screened to a certain degree by the existing trees which would surround it, intermittent views of the car park and cars would still be noticeable, particularly in the winter months. Moreover, the car park and parked cars would be highly visible from the existing car park and entrance.

It is therefore considered that due to the scale, resulting in a substantial incursion into the woodland the car park would appear as visual intrusion into the woodland given the materials proposed and amount of hard-surfacing laid over to this use.

#### Heritage Impact:

The NPPF sets out in section 16 the tests for considering the impact of a development proposal upon designated and non-designated heritage assets. The test is whether the proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a

designated heritage asset and whether it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits. A range of criteria apply.

Paragraph 196/197 state where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority, in considering development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Given the location of the proposed car park and the separation afforded by both the road and tree screening, the setting of the Listed Building would not be harmed nor any key views of the church obscured. Therefore the proposal would not contravene Policy BE8 of the UDP or any obligations under the NPPF to have consideration to the settings of heritage assets.

#### Highways:

The NPPF recognises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The NPPF clearly states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stage of both plan making and when formulating development proposals and development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

The NPPF states that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

London Plan and UDP Policies encourage sustainable transport modes whilst recognising the need for appropriate parking provision. Car parking standards within the London Plan, UDP and emerging draft Local Plan should be used as a basis for assessment.

The proposal would provide 20 parking bays including two x disabled parking bays plus two motorbikes spaces. No technical highway objections were received subject conditions ensuring the parking bay being 2.4m x 5m with a clear manoeuvring space of 6m.

Whilst it is appreciated that the extension to the car park would reducing the level of parking on the surrounding roads it is considered that the harm to the Green Belt as set out above does not outweigh the harm identified to the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

#### Trees:

Policy NE7 of the UDP states that proposals for new development will be required to take particular account of existing trees on the site and on adjoining land, which in the interests of

visual amenity and/or wildlife habitat, are considered desirable to be retained. Tree preservation orders will be used to protect trees of environmental importance and visual amenity. When trees have to be felled, the Council will seek suitable replanting. This is supported by Policy 73 of the Draft Local Plan.

The Woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 275A, reflects the importance of the woodland here to the locality. Woodland trees often develop poorly as a result of intense competition but considered that it is the cohesion of trees within a woodland setting that award trees amenity value.

It is therefore considered that the extension of the car park would occupy a large area of woodland and impact upon surrounding trees. Whilst it is appreciated that the car park area has been reduced from that originally refused and dismissed at appeal, nevertheless the overall scale of the proposed car park is still considered excessive. Whilst the AMS indicates a reduction in the impact upon retained trees, it is the general arrangement that is considered contrary to Council policy. Therefore it is considered that the proposal negates the objectives of the TPO.

#### Neighbouring amenity:

Policy BE1 of the UDP and 37 of the Draft Local Plan seeks to protect existing residential occupiers from inappropriate development. Issues to consider are the impact of a development proposal upon neighbouring properties by way of overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy and general noise and disturbance. This is supported by Policy 7.6 of the London Plan.

No objections have been raised from local residents with regards to noise and disturbance. The Inspector also considered that whilst the proposed car park extension would lie opposite Glebe House and close to Glebe Lodge due to the distance, the retention of trees between the car park and the properties and the scale of the proposal that there would be no material harm to the occupiers of these properties in terms of noise and disturbance. As such there has been no material change in this respect between the two applications it is considered that development proposed would not materially harm the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and therefore be compliant with the above policies.

#### CIL:

The Mayor of London's CIL is a material consideration. CIL is not payable on this application and the applicant has completed the relevant form.

#### **Conclusion**

The NPPF indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In addition, any harm to the Green Belt carries considerable weight and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In this case, there is harm from inappropriateness as well as a limited loss of openness to the Green Belt and harm to the character and appearance of the area including the loss of trees.

Whilst it is appreciated that the extension to the car park would reduce the level of parking on the surrounding roads, it is considered that the harm to the Green Belt and the harm to the

character and appearance of the area and trees are not clearly outweighed, either individually or cumulatively by other considerations sufficient to demonstrate very special circumstances that are necessary to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt and as such the proposal is recommended for refusal.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the files set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

**Recommendation:**

**as amended by documents received on 27.09.2018 and 11.10.2018**

**PERMISSION BE REFUSED**

**The reasons for refusal are:**

- 1. The site is located within the Green Belt wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development, and the Council sees no very special circumstances in this case which might justify the grant of planning permission as an exception to Policy G1 of the Unitary Development Plan (2006), Policy 49 of the Draft Local Plan (2016) and the requirements of the NPPF (2018).**
- 2. The proposal would constitute an unsatisfactory intensification of development into the countryside, which would result in a harmful impact on the openness and rural character of the Green Belt, contrary to Policies BE1 and G1 of the Unitary Development Plan (2006), Policy 37 and 49 of the Draft Local Plan (2016) and the NPPF (2018).**
- 3. The proposal would have an undesirable impact on the woodland setting (subject to TPO 275A) which makes a significant contribution to the visual amenities of the area and would therefore be contrary to Policies G1 and NE7 of the Unitary Development Plan (2006) and Policies 49 and 73 of the Draft Local Plan (2016).**