

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

Application No : 11/00799/VAR

Ward:
**Bromley Common And
Keston**

Address : Bromley College Of Further And Higher
Education Rookery Lane Bromley BR2
8HE

OS Grid Ref: E: 541685 N: 167255

Applicant : Bromley College Of Further And Higher Education **Objections :** YES

Description of Development:

Variation of condition 4 of approval ref. 05/02118 granted for extensions and other works at the College, to permit permanent retention of 71 temporary car parking spaces laid out during construction of the extensions

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Former Landfill Site
London City Airport Safeguarding

Proposal

These 71 car parking spaces were approved for a temporary period in 2005 to provide replacement parking while building work was carried out at the College which rendered parking at the front of the site unusable. The College propose to retain these spaces permanently.

It is proposed to lay tarmac on the existing gravel surface in the College's summer holiday if permission is granted. The layout will be changed slightly, 6 spaces at the entrance to the temporary parking will be removed and "relocated" on the 2nd phase area of temporary parking (see below). Shrub and tree planting will be carried out.

The application is accompanied by the following documents –

- Planning Statement
- Parking Assessment, with addendum document
- Updated Travel Plan (original Plan submitted pursuant to permission for the engineering departments building).

The following is a summary of the points made in the supporting documentation –

- the limited period condition was imposed to protect the openness of the Green Belt and prevent a surfeit of parking at the site
- the location of the car parking is at the rear of the site, not visible in public views, as such not conspicuous in the Green Belt
- demand for parking spaces at the site peaks at 489 spaces between 12noon and 1pm
- the usage of the temporary car park (total 178 spaces) peaks between 10am and 4pm, when an average of 108 cars are parked
- permanent retention of 71 of the temporary spaces will allow the remainder of the Green Belt temporary car park to be kept open, whilst catering for the College's current parking demand and contributing to the car use reduction targets in the updated Travel Plan. It will limit overspill of parking onto residential streets near the College.

Further temporary parking was approved at the end of 2007 (101 spaces) – the College propose to retain part of this hardstanding, but not use it for parking for the time being, and it will assess the effect of the merger with Orpington College and likely increases in numbers of adult and higher education students in the next few years on travel patterns, before making a decision on the future use of this additional parking area – an application is expected at the time of drafting this report.

Location

The College is located on the west side of Bromley Common, at its junction with Rookery Lane, which road provides the vehicular accesses to the College.

The site of the temporary car park is at the west end of the College grounds, with access from the permanent car park which adjoins Rookery Lane.

The parking on the front part of the site is laid out as follows –

- 112 spaces in front of the new reception/library building
- 75 spaces around the engineering departments building (plus parking in its yard for cars being worked on in the vehicle engineering department).

The parking at the rear of the College site is as follows –

- 152 permanent spaces
- 71 temporary spaces (proposed to be retained in this application)
- additional temporary spaces to be retained but not used (planning application expected, as mentioned above).

The total number of spaces including this application will be 410.

Comments from Local Residents

One local resident supports the proposal. He comments that roads excluded from the restricted parking zone around Chatterton Road suffer from overspill parking from the College and also associated with the Ambulance Station.

Comments from Consultees

The Council's highways engineer raised queries about provision of parking for visitors and expressed some concerns about the College's stated future growth. In respect of the former, following submission of the addendum document, he was satisfied that adequate visitor parking will be provided.

The addendum to the Parking Assessment states that –

- the number of students aged 16-18 should remain constant at approx. 2000
- significant growth in adult and high education (HE) students in the short to mid terms is expected – existing numbers are 5500. From September the number of part-time and/or vocational courses for business will increase (some of these will be in the evening) leading to an expected 10% increase in adult and HE students. The proposed merger with Orpington College expected in November 2011 will not increase student numbers at the site, but will increase the requirement for staff to travel between the 2 sites.

The College would like to remove the on-street parking in Rookery Lane for safety reasons, but the Council's engineer does not see any scope for this in the short term as the loss of these 25 spaces would be undesirable in view of the College's growth plans.

Planning Considerations

The relevant policies in the Unitary Development Plan are as follows –

- BE1 Design of new development
- C1 Community Facilities
- G1 The Green Belt
- NE2 Development and Nature Conservation Sites
- T3 Parking
- T18 Road Safety

The site is adjacent to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The educational use of the site by the College is "inappropriate" in terms of national policy in PPG2 Green Belts (and UDP Policy), as such it is necessary to demonstrate that "very special circumstances" exist to justify the proposed retention of the temporary car park. The applicants incorrectly quote para. C17 of Annex C of the PPG, as the 1994 UDP was reviewed and updated by the 2006 UDP, thus the proposal cannot be treated as infilling of an HFE establishment and has to be considered as "inappropriate development". The visual impact of the hardstanding and vehicles on it need to be considered too.

Planning History

Temporary car parking has been provided on part of the grass areas on the west side of the College grounds while the following developments were carried out –

- Reception/library extension, and new entrance/parking – ref. 03/03410 (outline) and 05/02118 (details)
- Engineering departments building – ref. 05/04539.

The outline permission included other extensions which are not to be built, as set out in a Section 106 Agreement concerning the permission for the 2005 scheme for the engineering departments building.

The part details approved (ref. 05/02118) for the outline scheme included “phase 1” of the temporary car parking (comprising 71 spaces).

The “phase 2” of the temporary car park (an additional 107 spaces) was permitted in December 2007 (ref. 07/04058).

Conclusions

The 2003 permission provided for an increase in the number of spaces at the College from 297 to 367. The College then decided not to implement part of that scheme, but instead the engineering departments (construction, vehicle and mechanical and electrical) were amalgamated in a new building – the total number of spaces at the College (previously existing and permitted) would have been around 358 spaces (ref. 05/04539, permitted April 2008).

The College now wish to retain 71 of the 178 temporary spaces, to increase the number of spaces to 410 i.e. 40-50 more than envisaged in the 2 permissions for new buildings at the site. Proposals to retain some or all of the remainder of the temporary parking will be put forward in due course depending on the outcome of the College’s growth plans – in the interim it is proposed that this area of hardstanding be retained but not used.

The proposal constitutes “inappropriate development” and the College have set out a case based on educational need and a desire that its demand for on-street parking should not cause undue traffic safety or residential amenity problems. Members should consider whether these constitute “very special circumstances”. The College clearly meets identified educational needs, which are constantly evolving, it has a requirement for on-site parking, and overspill onto local streets has been problematic. The temporary car parking has been encroached onto the open green area in the south-west part of the site, but this is not readily visible from public viewpoints.

On balance it is recommended that permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

1

ACJ20R J20 reason

2 Details of a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority on or before 31.12.11. The approved scheme shall be implemented in the first planting season following this decision. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the substantial completion of the planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species to those originally planted.

ACA04R Reason A04

3 In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan

BE1 Design of new development

C1 Community Facilities

G1 The Green Belt

NE2 Development and Nature Conservation Sites

T3 Parking

T18 Road Safety

Reason for granting permission

1. the character of the development in the surrounding areas
2. the safety of pedestrians and motorists on the adjacent highway
3. accessibility to buildings
4. the green belt and open space policies of the development plan

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