
2024/0678

Applicant: Barnsley MBC

Description: Formation of Car Park

Site: Welfare Park, Goldthorpe Green, Rotherham, S63 9EH

Description

Welfare Park comprises of open green space, a former bowling green and a disused overgrown tarmac area. The site is allocated as Green Space within the Local Plan proposals maps and is situated between Goldthorpe Road and Washington Road, Goldthorpe. There are a number of community uses set in and around the park, including Dearne Playhouse, set to the north of the park, and the and the I Know I Can Youth Centre and Dearne and District Football Club set to the west. The Goldthorpe Lift Centre and car park are set to the south of the park. Residential properties border the park on the north, east and western boundaries.

The land which is the subject of this application has been derelict for approximately 30 years and last known to be used as a tennis court in the 1990s. It is stated within the Design and Access Statement that it 'was used as a car park for the former public house that was on the site that was demolished in 1998 and has remained unused and unkept since.'

Welfare Park is held in trust by BMBC for the people of Goldthorpe and any change or development on the land needs to conform to the guiding principles of CISWO (the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation). Their mission statement is to 'improve the lives of former coal miners and their families.' The application submission describes the site as being "in a busy hub of community facilities with a high traffic on evenings, weekends and in school holidays. The Dearne Playhouse, a community theatre with a capacity of 360 guests is located to the north of the site. To the west of the site is the Dearne and District Football Club and to the south is the BMBC I Know I Can Youth Centre and Lift Centre. During peak times there will be up to 1000 people using the site when both the Dearne Playhouse and Dearne and District Football Club facilities are in use resulting in approximately 200 vehicles on site. Vehicles are often abandoned on grass verges causing damage to curb and grassed areas"

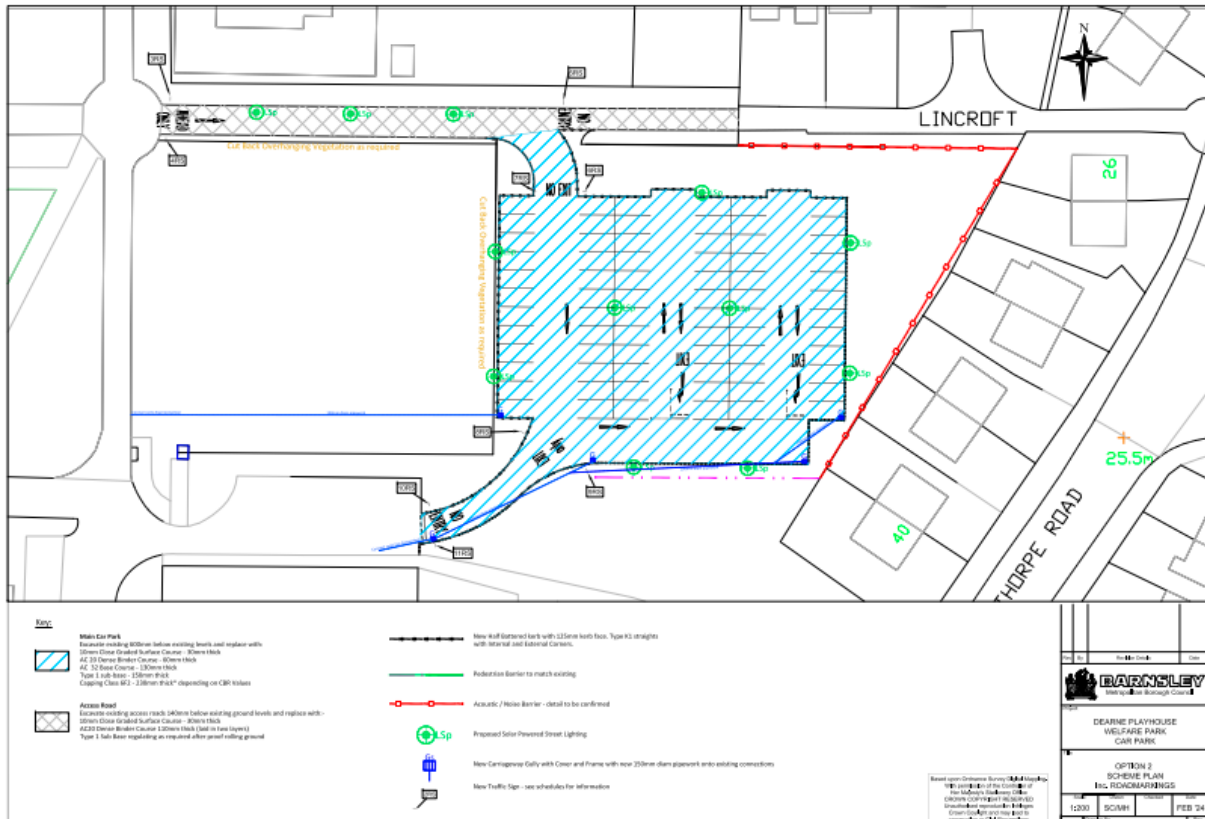
The applicant's Design and Access statement describes the current parking provision as consisting of the following of:-

"the Lift Centre has approximately 70 car parking spaces with an additional 29 spaces in Welfare Park. The Dearne Playhouse has only 3 designated parking spaces which are all accessible spaces. Dearne and District Football Club have no designated car parking. The IKIC centre has 2 parking spaces 1 of which is designated as accessible parking. Total: 103 spaces (7 accessible)."

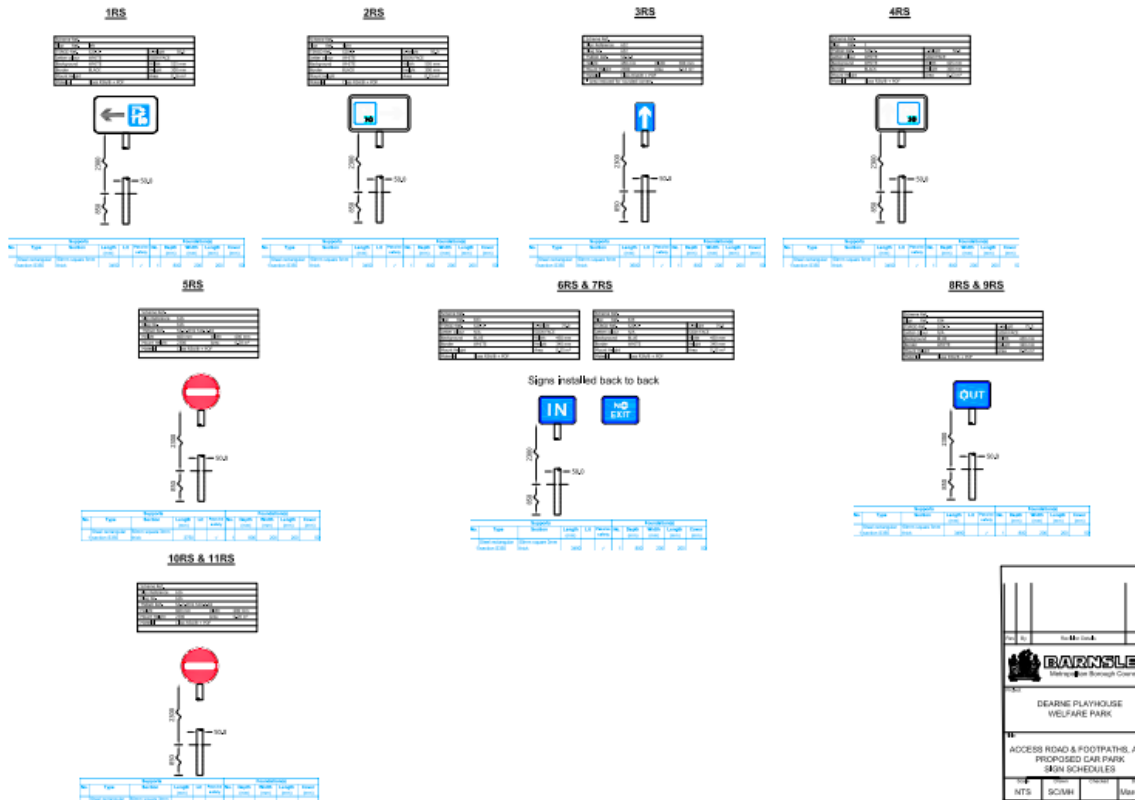
Proposed Development

The proposed works are to resurface the derelict site to create 72 car parking spaces with a separate entrance and exit to the car park. The entrance would be from Goldthorpe Green via Welfare Park and exiting to the south of the car park heading towards the Lift Centre then onto Goldthorpe Green. The car park will be lit using solar powered street lighting. Acoustic fencing would be installed to the north and east boundaries. A pedestrian barrier would also be installed to the south of the proposed car park to match existing barriers. Appropriate signage and road markings would be installed

The Welfare Park site including land leased to Dearne and District FC is 60,400m² and the area proposed for change of use to as car parking is 1600sqm equating to 2.7% of the site.



SIGN SCHEDULES



Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances require it.

In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

GD1: General development – Proposals for general development will be approved providing there is no significant adverse effect on residential amenity, highway safety, the current or future use of nearby land and it upholds good quality design in accordance with local plan policy D1.

GS1: Green Space - We will work with partners to improve existing green space to meet the standards in our Green Space Strategy. Green Spaces are green open areas which are valuable for amenity, recreation, wildlife or biodiversity and include types such as village greens, local open spaces, country parks, formal gardens, cemeteries, allotments, woodlands, recreation grounds, sports pitches and parks.

Proposals that result in the loss of green space, or land that was last used as green space, will not normally be allowed unless:

- An assessment shows that there is too much of that particular type of green space in the area which it serves and its loss would not affect the existing and potential green space needs of the borough; or
- The proposal is for small scale facilities needed to support or improve the proper function of the green space; or
- An appropriate replacement green space of equivalent or improved quality, quantity and accessibility is provided which would outweigh the loss.

D1: High quality design and place making – This policy sets the overarching design principles for the borough. Development is expected to be of high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features of the local area.

T4: New development and highway improvement - New development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection - Development will be expected to demonstrate that it is not likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in air, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution which would unacceptably affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people.

We will not allow development of new housing or other environmentally sensitive development where existing air pollution, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution levels are unacceptable and there is no reasonable prospect that these can be mitigated against.

Developers will be expected to minimise the effects of any possible pollution and provide mitigation measures where appropriate.

NPPF:

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para 103 - Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use

Supplementary Planning Document

Parking
Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Consultations

Ward Members – Cllr Pearson ‘No objections’

Drainage – No objections details to be checked by Building Control

Ecology Officer – No objections subject to conditions

Yorkshire Water – No objections subject to conditions

Highways – No objections

Pollution Control – This development is unlikely to have an adverse impact on health and the quality of life of those living and/or working in the locality, therefore there are no objections or conditions recommended

Natural England – No objections

Representations

Neighbour letters have been sent to adjacent properties and a site notice was posted at the site. 2 comments have been received which raise the following:-

- Concerns regarding car meets and antisocial behaviour, would a barrier be possible to prevent this?
- Additional lighting should be provided on Lincroft
- There is already a tarmac parking area next to the football club that often has empty spaces when the club is in use with cars instead being parked on the grass verge. Additionally, the surgery car park is available to use during club hours when the surgery is closed, however, people still park in the grass area. Therefore, it appears unlikely that club users will travel further away to park their car when there is existing nearby parking which is unused.
- No details of lighting or acoustic fencing
- Concerns regarding possible loss of hedgerow and it should be retained for the purposes of Biodiversity Net Gain

Assessment

Principle of development

The site falls within Green Space as allocated within the Barnsley Local Plan. Policy GS1, Green Space is therefore of relevance to this application. Policy GS1 states that:-

'Proposals that result in the loss of green space, or land that was last used as green space, will not normally be allowed unless:

- An assessment shows that there is too much of that particular type of green space in the area which it serves and its loss would not affect the existing and potential green space needs of the borough; or
- The proposal is for small scale facilities needed to support or improve the proper function of the green space; or
- An appropriate replacement green space of equivalent or improved quality, quantity and accessibility is provided which would outweigh the loss.'

The proposal is for small scale facilities needed to support or improve the proper function of the green space. The proposal would allow for further car parking in order to support the existing uses at the Green Space and for the surrounding community uses and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Given the previous sport use at the site, Sport England have been consulted on the application and state:- 'The proposed development does not fall within either our statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306) and, therefore, Sport England has not provided a detailed response in this case, but would wish to give the following advice to aid the assessment of this application. If the proposal involves the loss of any sports facility, then full consideration should be given to whether the proposal meets Par. 103 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is in accordance with local policies to protect social infrastructure and meets any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.'

In terms of the loss of the tennis court, this use was abandoned in the 1990's some 30 years ago, therefore it is clear that the redevelopment of this site would not impact a current sports facility or pitch. The use of this abandoned site for additional car parking is considered to be an appropriate facility to support the existing outdoor sports and community uses within the Green Space and surrounding the site and is therefore acceptable in principle in compliance with policy GS1, subject to the other material considerations assessed below.

Visual Amenity

In terms of visual amenity, the proposed car park will be a significant improvement visually as the site is a mix of poor quality hardstanding which is in part overgrown and unused. The proposed resurfacing works would improve the visual amenity of the site and the proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making and is acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

Residential Amenity

The proposed car park is set close to existing dwellings to the east, therefore any impact in terms of noise/disturbance to existing residents is an important consideration. In terms of activity at the site, the proposed plans do not intend to increase the number of vehicles on the site, it is providing a solution to the curb side and grass verge car parking that is currently taking place. It is not considered that this would be significantly detrimental to the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings. The car park will be lit using solar powered street lighting and acoustic fencing would be installed to the north and east boundaries to further protect residential amenity. The site is currently used for recreational purposes, and the times in which

the use will be operating, mainly during the day or early evenings, should not cause any undue disturbance to these adjacent dwellings.

Concerns have been raised with regard to potential anti social behaviour at the site. The applicant has been consulted in terms of the public comments received and states that 'CCTV units have been installed as part of the wider programme to deter ASB across the site. The cameras feed directly to South Yorkshire Police and are monitored and the suggestion of barriers will be taken into consideration.'

The Pollution Control Officer has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal subject to a condition limiting construction hours as standard. Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity, in accordance with policy POLL1 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety

The Highways Officer has been consulted and has no objections to the proposal. The Highways Officer states that: 'It is evident that the introduction of the carpark is to provide some structured parking and prevent the overspill parking within the site and on grass verges. With clear signage it should relieve the haphazard parking that is happening currently and as such, also improve the situation for pedestrians by stopping the obstructive parking that happens.'

Given that the car park will be well within the site as such, it is considered that the proposals do not affect the current access of the site or adversely impact upon the highway and are therefore acceptable from a highways point of view in accordance with policy T4 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity

Concerns have been raised with regard to the potential loss of an existing hedgerow to the north and east boundaries, however the agent has confirmed that the acoustic fencing will go in front of the retained hedgerow.

The Ecology Officer has been consulted as part of the application and confirms that

'the site was surveyed in July 24, within the acceptable survey period. There is a pond located within 250 m of the site (220 m south). However, this pond is known as Bolton Ponds Fisheries and as such is likely to be heavily stocked with coarse fish, reducing the suitability of the pond for GCN. As such, the presence of GCN on site is considered to be highly unlikely.

I would suggest that the condition of the hedgerow be improved to good post development by management of adjacent vegetation, this will help to achieve a 10% BNG in hedgerow units. The Statutory Metric User Guide indicates that all trees require a separate condition assessment unless they are found within an urban line, urban block or urban group. In this instance I do consider the trees to be within an urban line and can accept one condition assessment for all."

The Ecology Officer has also noted that as the trees and hedgerow are not to be impacted, negative impacts to species from the development are considered to be highly unlikely.

The site is located within an Impact Risk Zone. The nature of the proposed works have the potential to impact upon the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI, as such the LPA are required to

consult Natural England on the proposal. Natural England have been consulted and confirmed that they have no objection to the proposal.

Overall, the Council's Ecology Officer is satisfied with the scheme and the information submitted and has raised no objections, Subject to the submission of a suitable biodiversity plan and habitat management plan, which can be conditioned, there should not be any significant impact upon Biodiversity in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.

Conclusion

The proposal would allow for further car parking in order to support the existing uses at the Green Space and for the surrounding community uses and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Overall the proposal is acceptable and justified and will not harm visual amenity, residential amenity or highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policies GD1, D1, T4 and GS1 of the Local Plan.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions