

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	8/13 Week Date	Proposal, Location and Applicant
(3)	17/03427/COMIND Greenham Parish Council	20 th March 2018.	Newbury Rugby Club, off Monks Lane. Change of use of part of car park to commercial use for West Berkshire Transport operations team. West Berkshire Council.

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=17/03427/COMIND>

Ward Member(s):

Councillor Drummond
Councillor Bartlett

Reason for Committee determination:

The Council is the applicant - the scheme of delegation does not allow the matter to be delegated since it is a major application.

Committee Site Visit:

15th February 2018

Recommendation.

The Head of Development and Planning be authorised to GRANT conditional planning permission.

Contact Officer Details

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1. Site History

07/00534/comind . s73 - Relaxation of condition 1 of permission 152085 - use of land as Rugby club - To allow car boot sales on the site. Permitted June 2007.

2. Publicity of Application

Site notice displayed 21st December 2017. Expiry 11 January 2018.

3. Consultations and Representations

Greenham Parish Council	Objection on access road - too small to take the additional traffic generated. Should be refused.
Newbury Town Council	No objection.
Highways	No objection as vehicles will enter and leave off peak with buses using parking previously used by Ambulance Service
Natural England	No comments to make, but note that a priority habitat [Barn Copse] lies to the south of the application site. This should be protected as appropriate.
Sport England.	On the basis that the application site does not entail any use of an existing playing field, no objections are raised. Exception E3 refers in the National policy guidance.
Woodland Trust	Barn Copse an ancient woodland lies to the south of the application site which needs to be protected – a 10m buffer zone should be applied to the perimeter boundary. No objections raised if so.
Archaeology.	No objections raised.
Environmental Health.	No objections raised.
Public Representations	None received on the application.

4. Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
National Planning Practice Guidance 2014.
West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006 to 2026.

5. Description of development

5.1.1 The application site comprises an area of land 0.39ha in extent lying to the south west of the present Rugby Club Building. It is currently open gravelled land / hoggin surface with some tarmac scrapings. It is proposed to use the site for the Council Transport services vehicles which are used to transport special needs pupils across the District. This facility is presently based at Ampere Road in the London Road Industrial Estate area which is due to be redeveloped over time in the next few years. Accordingly a future relocation is required. The number of vehicles will be approximately 25 mini buses, 3 vans and up to 7 cars at any one time. The number of potential employees will be circa 4 Council staff who will have a small office in the main Rugby Club building, plus 22 passenger drivers - who will also need to park on site. The red line access will incorporate the private access road leading to Monks Lane to the north i.e. the public highway.

5.1.2 To the south of the application site lies Barn Copse an ancient woodland, to the east lies a further informal/overspill parking area, and to the west the David Lloyd leisure centre, recently built. For information Members of the Committee should be aware that a recent permission has been granted under delegated powers under reference 17/01446/comind for a new 61 bed care home on land immediately to the north of the leisure centre. This in time will also derive vehicle access off the private road to Monks Lane.

5.1.3 It is envisaged that the principal times of use of the new facility will be during the day in the week with some use on Saturdays and none on Sundays. During the week the start time would be c6am and the last finish time of c8pm.

6. Consideration of the application

The application will be considered under the following headings.

6.1 - Policy.

6.2 - Highways.

6.1. Policy

6.1.1 The HSADPD as adopted in May of 2017 includes [inter alia] a number of core objectives outlined in Appendix 5. Objective 5 relates to infrastructure needs and clearly the continuing provision of effective Schools Transport is one such service facility. Objective 7 relates to transport and again the relevance to this particular application is clear. In addition in Appendix 6 of this document, the revised and updated settlement boundaries note that the application site now lies within the defined settlement of the town boundary - and it is clearly an existing brown field site. Accordingly it is clear that the use of the land as a car park is consistent with extant policy in the HSADPD.

6.1.2 The Council core strategy as adopted in July of 2012, has a range of policies which would support the application. The first is ADPP2 which corresponds to Newbury. Bullet point 1 under the Accessibility section [for example] notes that the demand for travel will be managed, via improving choice in transport modes. This application clearly involves "public" transport for school children. Next, policy CS5 concerns itself with the need to effectively co- ordinate infrastructure provision: it is clear that since the existing site is to be redeveloped over time it is necessary to provide an alternative site for schools car parking. Next, policy CS13 concerns itself with Transport as a whole and seeks sustainable options for transport. Given that Newbury is the central focus for built development in the District it is appropriate that this central facility continues to be located in the town boundary, i.e. it is the most sustainable option available - within reason.

6.1.3 Policy CS17 in the same Plan seeks to conserve local biodiversity. The Committee will be aware from their site visit that to the south of the application site lies Barn Copse an ancient woodland. Whilst not a SSSI, it is important to protect the biological integrity of the woodland as evidenced by the response of Natural England and the Woodland Trust. Whilst the application red line does not impinge upon the woodland it is necessary to have an offset 10m boundary/margin against the boundary and this will be conditioned as required. Next, policy CS19 considers landscape character: the application site is fortunately very well screened from wider views by virtue of the fact of existing built form, the fact that it lies at lower level than much of the surroundings and the fact that the woodland screening to the south is excellent. Accordingly the visual impact of the additional vehicles parked on the site will be minimal in the officer's view. Accordingly there will be little harm to local landscape character and of course the wider Sandeford housing allocation needs to be borne in mind in this respect.

6.1.4 Officers accordingly conclude that there are no policy objections to the application being approved.

6.2. Highways

6.2.1 The highways officer has carefully examined the proposal and has no objections to the application scheme. There is increasing concern regarding the access onto Monks Lane and how busy it can become. The area is also sensitive traffic wise due to the allocated Strategic Housing site of Sandford Park. The following points are raised.

1 - The large part of the expected traffic movements, generated to and from the site, will be off peak between 06.00 and 08.00 and 18.00 to 20.00. There is also a given fact that an early start is required for many of the traffic flows prior to school opening times to access the pupils in question who will live around the District. Similarly school closure times tend to occur before the evening peak rush hour periods. In addition when the Rugby Club is used the most in the evenings and weekends the school transport service users demand will be at its lowest.

2 - There is some concern that buses will be arriving back on site simultaneously with visitors to the Rugby Club and the Leisure Centre, however this will be off peak after 18.00 when traffic levels on Monks Lane will be lower. Furthermore the number of vehicle movements generated by the 30 vehicles parked will not, over a period of two to three hours, be so significant as to have a "severe" impact on the local road network which is the test to be applied in the advice in para 32 of the NPPF. On this basis, notwithstanding the fact that additional planning commitments such as the new care home will impact upon Monks Lane, in terms of further traffic flows, the application is acceptable.

3 - Highways Officers had concerns regarding car parking levels within the location. However the application site in any event had a de facto use for the Southern Ambulance service who used the site to park their vehicles, but have since relocated to an alternative site in the Hambridge Lane industrial area. It is understood up to 30 vehicles were parked on the site.

6.2.2 In conclusion Highway Officers raise no objection and it is accordingly concluded that the application meets the advice in policy CS13 in the Core Strategy which relates to transport matters.

7. Conclusion

7.1 All planning applications must be determined in accord with the three tenets of sustainability in the NPPF. In economic terms the application is neutral since it involves no new employment but merely the relocation of an existing facility. In social terms, the application is encouraged, since it will continue to support a much needed transport service for special needs pupils. Finally, the potential environmental impacts of landscape, and access have been examined and found to be acceptable - in addition given the lack of any nearby housing there will be minimal if any impact on local amenity by virtue of increased noise from traffic movements.

7.2 In conclusion, given the strong reasons to support the application, a conditional permission is considered to be fully justified.

8. Recommendation

The Head of Development and Planning be authorized to GRANT Conditional Planning Permission.

CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be started within three years from the date of this permission and implemented strictly in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against the advice in the DMPO of 2015, should it not be started within a reasonable time.

2 No development shall commence until a scheme to indicate a physical barrier no more than 0.5m high to be constructed a minimum of 10m distance from the boundary of the woodland to the south of the application site along the south boundary has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. This scheme shall then be implemented prior to the first use of the car park hereby permitted.

Reason: To protect the margins of the woodland to the south in accord with policy CS17 in the WBCS 2006 to 2026.

3 No development shall commence on the site until a scheme to improve the current hard surface of the application site has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA. Before the car park is put to use, the hard surface shall be laid down to the satisfaction of the Council.

Reason: To ensure the parking surface is suitable for vehicle parking in accord with policy CS13 in the WBCS of 2006 to 2026.

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