

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2017/0504/FULL
Location: Hertfordshire Constabulary Stanborough Road Welwyn Garden City AL8 6XF
Proposal: Alterations to existing highway junction, internal access road and car park, including replacement parking spaces, and erection of new security fencing and gates.
Officer: Mr R Adenegan

Recommendation: Granted

6/2017/0504/FULL

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The application site is located to the front, west and south west area of the Police Station Headquarters located on Stanborough Road to the south east of the town centre of Welwyn Garden City. Currently, the use of the site and buildings is for Police operational and administrative purposes. The site consists of an area of land within the existing sport ground adjoining a parking area west of the building, immediate road access and internal road and vehicle access. The site is bordered by the railway to the east and Stanborough Road is to the west with Stanborough Park to the south of the site. The site lies within the settlement of Welwyn Garden City and on Urban Open Land as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.</p> <p>The applicant seeks planning permission for the following:</p> <p>Alterations to existing highway junction; Alterations to internal access road and car park to the site entrance area; New parking area to replace the spaces lost in by the proposed alterations; and New security fencing and gates to the site entrance area.</p> <p>The applicant has put the following reasons forward for the proposed alterations in the submitted planning statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address traffic flow issues with the current arrangements. When the existing vehicle barriers are in operation at peak times, queuing occurs on Stanborough Road because there is just a single entrance barrier through which all vehicles must pass; • To improve road safety at the highway junction. Notwithstanding significant white line hatching, the open junction allows U turns and does not prevent vehicles which are exiting the site from making right hand turns; and • To improve site security as necessary in view of the heightened security threat.
Constraints (as	CA - Conservation Area: WGC1;

<p>defined within WHDP 2005)</p>	<p>GB - Greenbelt LCA - Landscape Character Area (Welwyn Fringes) PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) ROW - FOOTPATH (WELWYN GARDEN CITY 067C) UOL - Urban Open Land (Proposal map 2) Wards - Handside CP - Cycle Path (Cycle Facility / Route) FM30 - Flood Zone Surface Water</p>
<p>Relevant planning history</p>	<p>Planning</p> <p>N6/2015/1032/S73B – Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission N6/2014/2149/FP - Proposed enlargement of existing police firearms training range including enlarged replacement bullet catcher and backstop, erection of single storey support building and associated landscaping. Approved</p> <p>N6/2014/2149/FP - Enlargement of existing police firearms training range including enlarged replacement bullet catcher and backstop, erection of single storey support building and associated landscaping – Approved</p> <p>N6/2012/0854/MA - Formation of new firearms training range, replacement bullet catcher and backstop structure with associated landscaping – Approved</p> <p>N6/2011/0952/FP: Replacement bullet proof catcher and backstop structure. Approved.</p> <p>N6/2003/0949/FP: Phased redevelopment of existing police authority headquarters involving partial demolition and construction of up to a total of 20,000 square metres of b1 office floor space, creation of new emergency access, extension and reconfiguration of existing car parking, relocation of existing telecommunications mast and aerials and comprehensive landscaping. Approved.</p> <p>N6/2000/0561/FP: Alterations to elevations. Approved.</p> <p>N6/1994/0724/FP: Change of use of 3 No. hostel blocks to offices for police use, and an additional 57 No. car parking spaces. Approved.</p> <p>N6/1998/0066/FP: Insertion of 5 No. windows in north east elevation of stores building. Approved.</p> <p>N6/1998/0065/FP: Erection of 2.1 metre high weld mesh fence around site perimeter. Approved.</p> <p>N6/1977/0250/CC – Open Firearms Range – 27th June 1977</p>
<p>Consultations</p>	

Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Publicity	Site Notice Display Date: 7 April 2017 Site Notice Expiry Date: 28 April 2017 Press Advert Display Date: 29 March 2017 Press Advert Expiry Date: 12 April 2017		
Summary of neighbour responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 neighbouring properties/occupiers were consulted. No response have been received. 		
Consultees and responses	Hertfordshire Transport Programmes & Strategy - The scheme is unlikely to have a material impact on highway capacity, and actively seeks to improve highway safety, I therefore present no objections. Sport England – No comments		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M14 Others (OS1) Urban Open Land, D8 SDG, Interim Parking Standards 2014			
Main Issues			
Is the development within a conservation area?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Would the significance of the designated heritage asset be conserved or enhanced?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No N/A			
Comment (if applicable):			
Would the development reflect the character of the area?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
<p>Comment (if applicable): It is proposed to alter the highway junction leading to the application site and increase the width of the internal access (Police access road) road by approximately 1m and 43m long from the highway (entrance) junction into the site. The layout includes bollards to the centre of the junction and road to prevent U turns and to maintain security.</p> <p>The proposed internal road (access) alteration around the frontage of the administrative block will result in reduction in the number of parking spaces currently available. The proposal includes a new parking area to offset the loss. The new parking area is within the Urban Open Land area with 34 spaces covering an area of approximately (15m long and 48m wide) 720m². The layout of the proposed extended car park area has been designed to work with the constraints of the existing landscape and contours. However, due to its small scale, location and the proposed Grasscrete surface, its impact is considered to be minimal.</p> <p>According to the planning statement, the alterations to the internal access road / car park have been designed to increase the traffic flow. A dedicated access lane in addition to secondary access routes is to be provided. New security fence and gates are proposed to separate the parking area for visitors from the secured enabling visitors to enter and leave the site without having to pass through a security point, which is considered will further ease the traffic flow at peak time. A fence and gate 2.4m in height covering a distance of approximately 88m will be erected along the north side of the access while another fence and gate covering a distance of approximately 84m is erected south west of the building separating the existing and proposed parking area from members of the public.</p>			

The new fencing and gates are proposed to have a green finish to match the existing fence and to minimise impact. It would be sited within the confines of the existing built form. The Highways Authority is in support of the proposal subject to conditions requiring the submission of details of on-site parking for construction workers.

The Council's Open Space Survey defines this site, UOL127, as part of the green edge to Welwyn Garden City, helping to soften the urban edge at its boundary with the Green Belt. The site is not open or accessible to members of the public for security reasons and solely used by the employees of Hertfordshire Constabulary or associated partners who have authority to do so. Therefore the designation has limited value in terms of creating or preserving recreation space and amenity areas for the public.

Therefore in this instance the Council's primary consideration is the visual impact of the proposed car parking area and fencing on the surrounding area and its designation as an important open area on the edge of Welwyn Garden City.

The proposal will be mainly contained within the site and would be alongside existing built development. It is not considered to substantially increase or cause a detrimental impact on the character of the area to warrant a refusal taking into consideration the screening which exists to the south of the site. Given the location and size of the development, the land would be retained as open and would not be of a scale that compromised the values of the open land. Additionally the land would maintain its function as an essential open area.

In addition, whilst the land is shown on the plans as a grassed sports ground (field), design and access statement states of previous applications and in particular, that of planning reference N6/2014/2149, states that the area has been found to be unsuitable for use as playing fields and receives only occasional use for external training exercises. Whilst the area would be reduced in size a good proportion of this area would remain. Therefore the proposed development would maintain the existing sports field.

It is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the value of the Urban Open Land nor prejudice vehicular and pedestrian flow / safety and the submitted justification outlines that the proposal is necessary and justified within this urban open land. Additionally the proposed alterations to vehicular access and the proposed fencing would be of an appropriate design. Therefore, no objections are raised on this basis.

Would the development reflect the character of the building?

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable):

Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers? (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable):

Would the development provide / retain sufficient parking?

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable): The number of parking space will be maintained with an increase in disability spaces from 3 to 4.

Any other issues

The proposal would not result in the removal / loss of any tree.

The proposal would have limited impact to the Conservation Area.

Conclusion

The proposed road/access realignments, new car parking area and fence is of a size and scale not to detrimentally impact on the character of the area or compromise the value of the Urban Open Land and would not detrimentally impact upon the character of the area. In addition, no concerns are

raised with regard to the impact on neighbouring properties, highway safety and parking provision. The proposal accords with relevant local and national policies. As such, an approval of the proposal is recommended.

Conditions:

1. No development shall commence until a scheme detailing provision for on-site parking for construction workers for the duration of the construction period has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented throughout the construction period.

REASON: To ensure adequate off-street parking during construction in the interests of highway safety to comply with Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

DRAWING NUMBERS

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
A060	A	Existing Site Entrance & Parking Area	14 March 2017
A065	B	Existing Site Plan & Section (SE Corner)	17 March 2017
A070	A	Proposed Site Entrance & Parking Plan	14 March 2017
A071	A	Proposed Elevations (Security Fencing & Gates)	14 March 2017
A075	B	Proposed Site Plan & Section (SE Corner)	17 March 2017
J-M3923.00/01 00/002	R0	Proposed Alterations to Site Access	14 March 2017
J-M3923.00/01 00/005	R0	Vehicle Tracking Plan	14 March 2017
A050	B	Location Plan	17 March 2017

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water interest etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.
2. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
3. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
4. The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Determined By:

Mrs S Smith
1 June 2017