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To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Planning application 6/2019/0857/MAJ - Stanborough Park
Date: 20 June 2019 10:39:07

Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

District ref: 6/2019/0857/MAJ
HCC ref: WH/98/2019 (Amended)
HCC received: 10/06/2019
Area manager: Nick Gough
Case officer: Alan Story

Location

Stanborough Park
Stanborough Road
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6DF

Application type

Full application

Proposal

Removal of existing children's playground and reinstatement of ground as parkland; Construction of new playground including splash pad with associated changing room facility; kiosk; fencing around compound; outdoor gym equipment; drainage, earthworks and landscaping

Amendment

Amended drainage information, Contamination report and Transport Assessment

Decision

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the proposed cycle parking shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use. Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 2) Notwithstanding the details indicated on the submitted drawings no on-site works above slab level shall commence until a detailed scheme for the provision of appropriate footway links between the site and the Stanborough Road junction, and improvements to pedestrian facilities across the Stanborough Road access have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and that the highway improvement works are designed to an appropriate

standard in the interest of highway safety and amenity and in accordance with Policy 5, 13 and 21 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

HCC as Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Note (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980. AN1) 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 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) 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 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN4) Construction standards for works within the highway: All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, by an approved contractor, and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's publication "Roads in Hertfordshire – Highway Design Guide 126 (2011)". 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 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Comments:

It is recognised that the Highway Authority were consulted and responded to a planning application (N6/2010/3120/DC3, Splashlands, Stanborough Park – our comments dated 9/1/13 refer). At such time the application represented the redevelopment of site to provide a wet play area, adventure play areas, an educational play area, high ropes attraction, changing huts, education room, cafe and toilet facilities. It was recognised within this application that the implementation would be phased. The first Phase was to be the High Ropes adventure course and the second Phase would be the Wet Play Facility. The first phase (high ropes) has been implemented.

Development proposals for this earlier phase 2 included the "Wet Play Facility" (D2 Use-

Class) and construction of the pavilion building which includes changing huts, an education room, a café (A3 Use-Class) and the toilet block refurbishment. The proposed education room within the pavilion building was envisaged as a major facility that will serve the park and the cafe but also allows for private access direct from the coach drop-off.

The Highway Authority are acceptant that the previous consent represented a destination activity in its' own right, with entrance to the Wet Play facility subject to separate charging structure. All trip generation within the supporting Transport Assessment (Savell Bird and Axon, Dec 2012) had regard to the expected attendance at the park identified within the supporting feasibility study. The scale of the application now presented is significantly reduced to that previously considered. It is understood that the wet play facility now proposed is ancillary to enjoyment of Stanborough Park. There is no proposal to erect a pavilion structure, nor charge for the activity. The area of the wet play facility is significantly reduced to that originally proposed as part of the earlier application.

Stanborough Park, covers an area of 126 acres, on the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City, with 2 lakes, water sports facility, café / restaurant, high ropes facility (chargeable entry). The park is to the south of WGC town centre. The Park has two Car Parking areas. The North Side Car Park is accessed by way of left in / left out access onto Stanborough Road, a Principle road, as the A6129 and serving a Main Distributor function within the road hierarchy. The South Side Car Park is located via a left in / left out access onto Stanborough Road. The two car parks are described as providing circa 400 parking spaces, and confirmed via the parking management company website (Apcoa). It is noted that in 2012 parking was assessed as providing 280 ordinary spaces, 10 disabled spaces and 3 for larger vehicles/mini buses, totalling 293. The southern car parks together have 197 ordinary spaces and 5 disabled spaces totalling 202. I am unable to clarify the discrepancy, unaware of any planning decision that has resulted in a loss of parking.

The current application is supported by a Transport Assessment prepared by Mayer Brown, June 2019, and I can confirm that the Highway Authority has been involved in scoping discussions in advance of its' submission.

Trip Generation

Previous applications considered the creation of the wet play facility as a destination in its' own right, however the scale and nature of the proposals are now significantly changed to that previously considered and are accepted by the Highway Authority as being an additional feature within the Stanborough Park and whilst it may make the site more attractive for longer visits, is not considered that it would result in significant unique, new trips to the park.

To establish existing levels of trips to the site the TA has utilised parking beat surveys of usage of the car parks. The previous application presented that the peak parking occupation in the car parks combined was between 15:30-15:45 on a Saturday (August 2012) with 110 of the spaces being occupied and 15:00- 15:15 on a weekday with 211 of the spaces being occupied. The use of August figures would represent school holiday usage.

The Transport Assessment in support of the current application utilises car parking data from the car park, and utilises 2018 parking figures.

The use of monthly data removes ability to appreciate weekday / weekend variance, but I have no reason to doubt the data presented, and basic calculation would suggest that level of use between 2012 and 2018 has not significantly changed.

The previous application utilised the expected level of yearly attendance that formed part of the feasibility report for the Splashpark. This was predicated upon 40,000 child visits per year or 80,000 including accompanying adults. Daily attendance was then calculated on the basis of seasonal change in car park usage, and established a peak day attendance rate of 1057 visitors, and further extrapolated this represented 264 arrival/departure vehicle trips in a peak hour.

The current Transport Assessment is predicated upon the wet play providing an improved visitor experience for those already attending the site. Such a presumption is acceptable to the Highway Authority, with similar facilities within Hertfordshire considered to operate in a similar fashion.

Development proposals are therefore not considered shall have a material impact on the existing levels of trips (vehicular) on the local network.

Access

The Park has two Car Parking areas. The North Side Car Park is accessed by way of left in / left out access with central reserve onto Stanborough Road, a Principle road, as the A6129 and serving a Main Distributor function within the road hierarchy. The South Side Car Park is located via a left in / left out staggered access onto Stanborough Road. Both points of access are not affected by development proposals and I am satisfied that they are suitable in width and alignment and there are no obstruction to visibility from either access.

Sustainability

The County Council has, since being a consultee to the earlier application, adopted Local Transport Plan 4. Previous versions of the Local Transport Plan considered the capacity impacts of development, whereas the County Councils approach is to encourage and facilitate non-car based modes of travel.

The leisure facilities provided by the Park (existing, and proposed) shall provide for the local community, however, is recognised as offering a pleasant environment to Hertfordshire residents (and beyond) and as levels of car park usage demonstrate the site is accessed by car based trips. As above, the Highway Authority are satisfied that development proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact in terms of new trips to the site.

I recognise that the earlier consent included a number of off-site highway works including the need to provide a toucan crossing across Stanborough Road. It is, however, recognised within this response that the scale of the development is unlikely to result in a significant level of unique trip attraction, thereby rendering the ability of the Highway Authority to demonstrate that a requirement to provide such infrastructure would sufficiently meet the 3 tests.

Crossing of Stanborough Road between the north side and the south side may be accomplished by way of existing uncontrolled crossings (with tactile paving) at Stanborough Roundabout, or through the use of subway beneath Stanborough Road however it is noted that this does not provide barriers and suffers height restrictions.

As evidenced by review of accident history there is no evidence that crossing of A6128 represents an unacceptable hazard for pedestrians. The creation of the wet play facility may result in a slight additional attraction for visitors to the southern side of the Park to the north, but it is recognised that activities for families (play area, boating lakes and Vertigo

Adventures) are in the northern area, adjacent to the proposed wet play facility.

The Transport Assessment has undertaken assessment of the sustainability credentials of the site.

The Highway Authority are satisfied with the conclusions drawn.

The Transport Assessment identifies that there are opportunities to improve pedestrian facilities across the site access to the Northern Car Park (dropped kerbs with tactile) and also that pedestrian accessibility into the park at this point is limited in terms of width and is shared with vehicles entering the site. The TA sets forward that there exist opportunities to improve such conditions, through the provision of footway / cycle way along the northern edge of the car park access road from the footway along Stanborough Road to the car parks height restriction. Beyond this point all routes feature traffic calming (speed cushions) and the interaction of pedestrians and vehicles would be considered to be at lower speeds.

It would be reasonable, by condition, to require such works be delivered prior to use of the water park, improving conditions for pedestrians to access the site. The TA describes cycleway however, noting that Stanborough Road on the north side does not feature off-road cycle facilities, to provide for a cycle route would require cyclists to dismount. It is recommended the route be restricted to pedestrians only.

Development proposals include the provision of 12 secure parking spaces (Sheffield stands) and this is supported by the Highway Authority as it shall enable the secure parking of bicycles and encourage this as an alternate mode of travel.

Local bus stops benefit from shelter and full DDA kerbing provision

Alan Story

Date 20/06/2019

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