

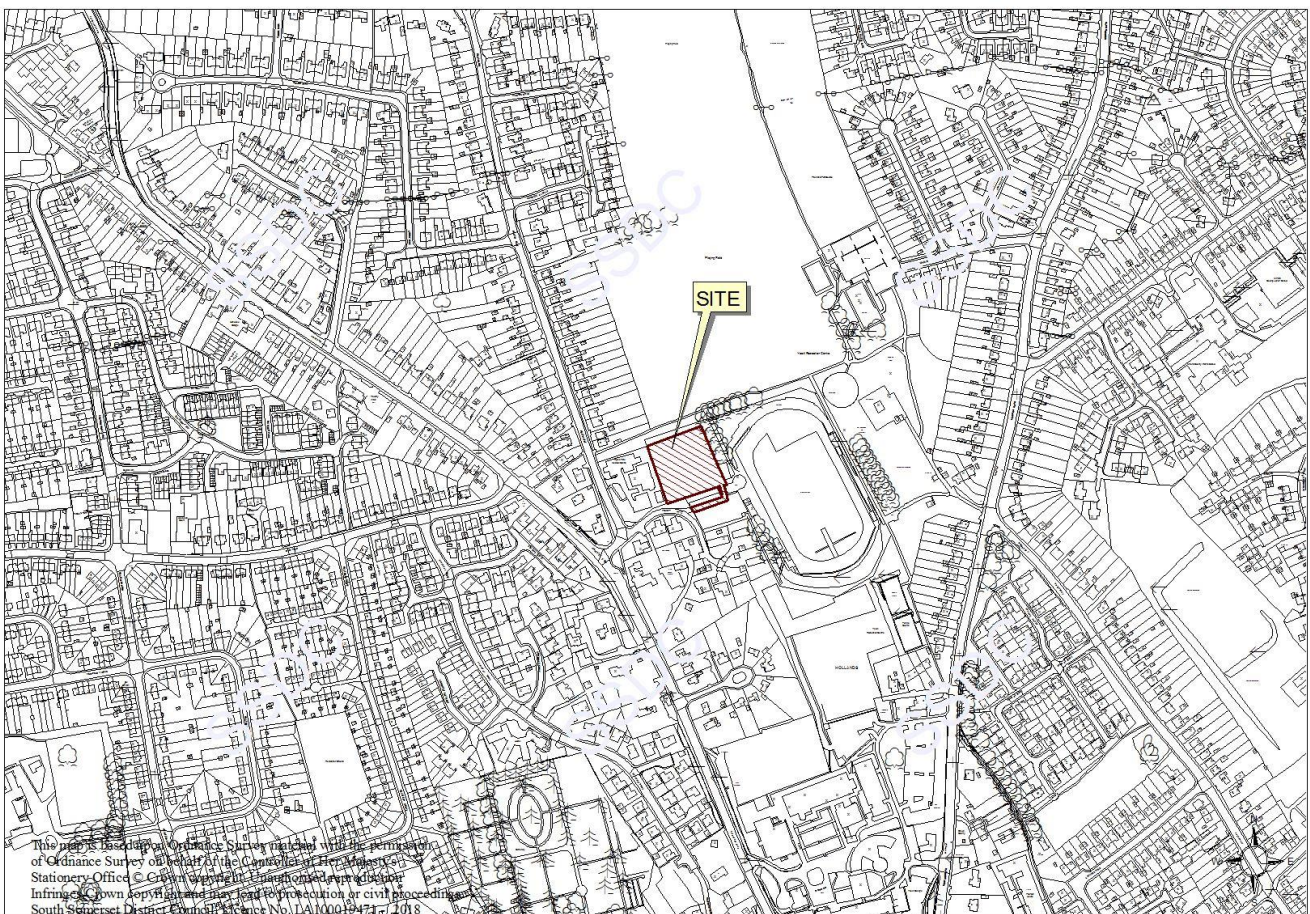
Officer Report On Planning Application: 18/01765/R3D

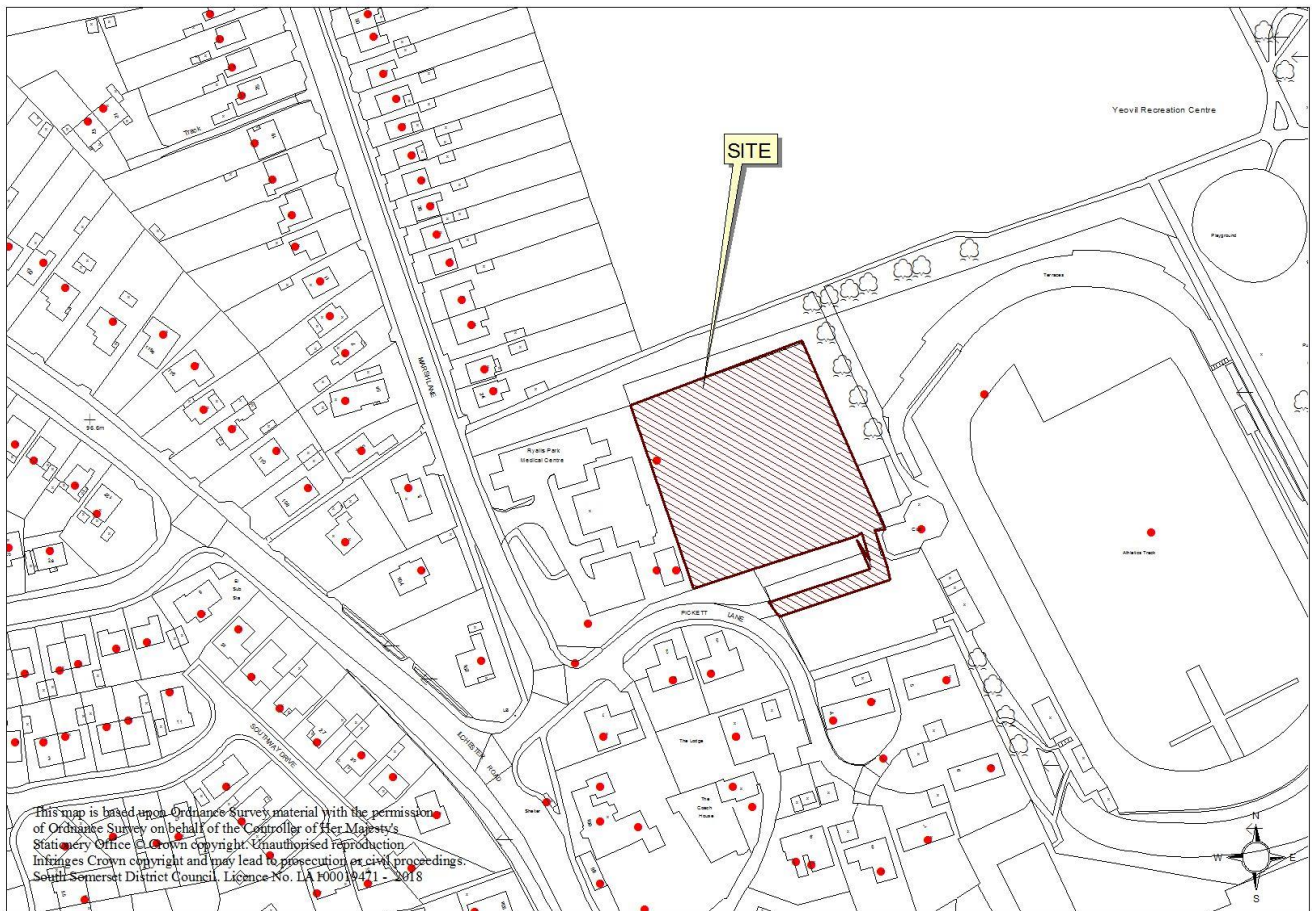
Proposal :	Application to formalise the use of existing overflow car park to allow use by Yeovil College including 3 No. 5m high lighting columns(with double lamps) and 2.4m high fencing.
Site Address:	Land At Yeovil Recreation Centre Pickett Lane Yeovil
Parish:	Yeovil
Yeovil (West) Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr J Clark Cllr W Read Cllr A Smith
Recommending Officer:	Linda Hayden Tel: 01935 462534 Email: linda.hayden@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	27th July 2018
Applicant :	South Somerset District Council
Agent: (no agent if blank)	
Application Type :	Minor Other less than 1,000 sq.m or 1ha

Reason for Referral to Committee

This application is referred to Area South Committee due to the nature of the proposals and at the discretion of the Lead Specialist for Planning due to SSDC being the applicant.

Site Description and Proposal





The application site comprises the overflow car park that is used in association with Yeovil Athletics track. The site was previously used as a hockey pitch/tennis court but the land has been used for parking in association with the athletics track for at least 10 years and is therefore lawful.

The application proposes the use of the car park by Yeovil College along with the erection of 3 double lamp columns (5m high) and a 2.5m high fence. The area would also remain available for parking in association with the athletics track. It is anticipated that the college would use the car park mainly between the hours of 8.45 am and 6.15pm but there will continue to be evening use in association with the athletics track as well as the college. The car park will be shut overnight as is the existing situation.

HISTORY

Planning history at the Recreation Ground/Athletics track dates back to the 1950s but there is no specific application or applications that refer to this part of the site. Permission was granted for floodlighting on the athletics track in 2001 which allows illumination until 10pm (01/01010/R3D).

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The policies of most relevance to the proposal are:

South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028):

SD1 - Sustainable Development

SS1 - Settlement Strategy

TA5 - Traffic Impacts of New Development

TA6 - Parking Standards

EQ2 - General Development

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012):

4. Promoting sustainable transport

7. Requiring good design

Planning Practice Guidance

o Design

CONSULTATIONS

Yeovil Town Council :

Recommend refusal on the grounds of highways safety.

County Highway Authority

Advise that Standing Advice is applicable in this instance.

Highways Consultant (SSDC):

Requested additional information to justify the need for the parking and to show visibility splays.

Upon receipt of the additional information the Highways Consultant has provided the following comments:

'There are two main transportation and highways issues to consider in this case - (a) the principle of the scheme (i.e. the justification) and (b) the highways technical issues.

With regards to the principle of the development, the applicant has provided a document which sets out the background to the application and why the additional parking provision is required for the college. When assessed against the Somerset Parking Strategy (SPS) optimum standards, it would appear that the current premises already accommodates in excess of the number of spaces prescribed within the SPS. I note that the current level of parking will be reducing in the future in order to address health and safety issues at the main college site, yet the resultant level would still exceed the SPS levels. However, I am fully aware that on-road parking on Mudford Road and the surrounding highway network can be quite prolific which would provide an element of justification for the additional parking area. I note that the college already promotes sustainable transport initiatives and I believe this should continue and be enhanced as a consequence of this scheme, and with this in mind either the college should prepare a detailed Travel Plan for this purpose (if a Travel Plan does not exist at present) or if one does exist, the Travel Plan should be updated and expanded upon to encourage students and staff to travel by sustainable modes of transport. Such a requirement can be conditioned with the Travel Plan being submitted to the County Council for review and approval.

On the basis that the planning use of the land is already as a car park (albeit for a less frequent use), I believe it would be unreasonable to raise an objection in principle to the scheme but I am of the opinion that the use of the car park could be minimised through the implementation of a successful and robust Travel Plan.

With regards to the latter issue, now that I have visited the site, I can confirm that the extent of the

visibility splays from the site onto Pickett Lane are acceptable. The width of Pickett lane (at a minimum of 5m) is sufficient, and the extent of visibility splays at the junction of Pickett Lane with the A37 are acceptable. I anticipate that the volume of traffic requiring to access the site in the morning peak hour could lead to some queuing and delay on the A37 for northbound traffic, as vehicles seeking to turn right into Pickett Lane look for gaps in the southbound traffic flow to make the manoeuvre, and with this in mind the provision of a formal right turn lane could be considered. However, the A37 is a very wide highway at the Pickett Lane junction with the northbound lane alone measuring 4.6m. On the basis that a width of 4.1m is generally accepted as being wide enough for two cars to pass each other, it is likely to be possible for a car to pass on the inside of another car waiting to turn right. Such a right turning demand is only likely to occur in the morning (given the anticipated nature of the travel patterns) and therefore in this urban area, I am not sure a full right turn lane facility could be warranted. In addition, I am mindful that the southbound traffic flow would be interrupted by the traffic signals located further to the north on the A37 at the Stiby Road junction. Therefore, overall, I believe the technical aspects of the scheme are acceptable.

To maximise the use of the car park and to ensure that it is used as efficiently as possible, the individual spaces should be marked out in accordance with appropriate standards with each space measuring a minimum of 4.8m x 2.4m and the aisle widths being a minimum of 6m as indicated on the submitted plan.'

Environmental Protection Unit:

No comments.

REPRESENTATIONS

Six letters of representation/objection have been received making the following comments (summarised):

- o Brought property on the basis that the car park for the athletics arena would only be used when events took place and locked at all other times
- o Can be congestion when events take place, this will worsen if the car park is used by the college
- o There can be conflicts between cars/pedestrians/cyclists using Pickett Lane and those leaving the car park/Marsh Lane
- o Pickett Lane is not suitable for another 160 cars and their passengers
- o Concerned about anti-social behaviour if gates are not locked until 10pm
- o Properties in area will be devalued by extra traffic and noise that will be created
- o Council should look at other solutions for the college such as promoting cycling, walking, public transport and car sharing
- o Difficult to turn right onto Ilchester Road
- o Query if entrance gates will be locked overnight and what time the car park will open/close
- o Lighting standards should be located in way that they do not impact on properties in Pickett Lane
- o Yellow lines may need to be extended throughout Pickett Lane to prevent parking and disrupting traffic flow
- o Query how the parking will be controlled to restrict use to Yeovil College staff/students and prevent use by the general public
- o Would expect to see a highways assessment

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

The site is currently in use as a car park so there is no objection in principle to its continued use for

that purpose.

Need for additional parking for Yeovil College

Additional information has been supplied to support the application which states:

- o Only 600 of the 3000 students are under 17 and a considerable number of students use cars rather than public transport.
- o The proposal intends to encourage staff to use the proposed car park instead of the campus to free up parking space and relieve some of the demand for on street parking which causes complaints.
- o The college site has 374 spaces but this will be reduced to 323 from September in order to address health and safety issues caused by 'over' parking.
- o The college fully supports the cycle to work scheme and promotes it by providing on-site facilities but this is not suitable for all due to the catchment area of the college.
- o The college will be introducing improved management of its existing parking by introducing a permit system which will also be implemented on the application site.
- o The college offers subsidised bus travel to encourage the use of public transport but there are issues with bus travel as some routes have been affected by budget cuts
- o Timetabling includes parking as a consideration in an attempt to even out peaks
- o The provision of the parking will not dampen the enthusiasm for sustainable transport solutions and this will continue to be pursued with vigour.

As described by the Highways Consultant, the college is technically already over provided with car parking which is in excess of the amount required by the relevant parking standards. However, as noted by the Highways Consultant, there is an issue with on-road parking on Mudford Road and the surrounding highway network which can be quite prolific. He is therefore content that there is justification for the provision of additional parking spaces as this will help to alleviate highways issues associated with parked cars in the vicinity of the college site. In addition, it is recommended that the college be required to update or prepare a Travel Plan to encourage staff and students to travel by sustainable modes of transport, this can be required through the imposition of a condition.

Overall, whilst it is recognised that the college is overprovided with parking, it is accepted that there is still a problem with on-road parking within the vicinity of the college that this application seeks to resolve. Provided the applicant submits the relevant Travel Plan to show how sustainable modes of transport will be encouraged it is felt that the need has been justified.

Highway Safety

The Highways Consultant has visited the site and confirmed that the visibility splays are acceptable and that the width of Picketts Lane is sufficient. Whilst recognising that the proposal may lead to some queueing and delay on the A37 during the morning peak hour he does not consider that this presents a highway safety issue considering the width of the A37 at the junction which allows two cars to pass on the northbound lane. In the circumstances, he does not consider that the creation of a full right turn lane facility is warranted. With regard to south bound traffic on the A37 it is noted that this is interrupted by the traffic signals at the Stiby Road junction. In light of these facts, the highways consultant believes that the technical aspects of the scheme are acceptable.

In terms of pedestrian safety, there is a pavement from the site to the college which is short walk from the site. Given the pavement provision and low traffic speeds within the vicinity, it is not considered that the proposal could be refused on the basis of the impact upon pedestrian safety.

Therefore, the proposal complies with policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

In terms of residential amenity, the car park will mainly be used during the normal working day for the college with occasional use during the evening. It has been confirmed that the car park will be closed overnight as is the existing situation. In the circumstances, it is not considered that the proposal will result in acceptable levels of noise or disturbance to residents within the vicinity.

In terms of the proposed lighting this has been amended from the six columns that were to be placed around the boundary of the site to three double lamp columns to be sited in the centre of the site. The lighting will be of a design that seeks to reduce light spillage and the lighting can be switched off when the gates are closed in the evenings. As such, it is not considered that the lighting proposals are unacceptable given the distance to local residents and the presence of street lighting within Picketts Lane.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

Other matters

The detailed concerns of local residents have been carefully considered and the main issues are dealt with in the report above. However, the following additional points can be addressed:

- o Anti-social behaviour

The site is well contained by fencing and will be locked overnight, in addition there will now be floodlighting. Given the area is already a car park; it is not considered that the application could reasonably be refused on the basis that it may lead to anti-social behaviour.

- o Devaluation

This is not a matter that can be accorded weight in the consideration of a planning application.

- o Highways Assessment

The application has been thoroughly assessed by the council's highways consultant who required the submission of additional details (justification and details of visibility splay) before commenting upon the application.

Summary

This is an existing car park and as such the principle is established. It is recognised that the proposed use by the college would lead to additional movements at the site but there is no objection to the proposal on highway safety grounds given the existing highways infrastructure. It is not considered that the three double lighting columns will result in unacceptable light pollution to neighbouring properties.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant planning permission for the following reason:

01. The proposed development, due to its location, scale and nature, is not considered to result in any demonstrable harm to the highway safety or residential amenity and therefore accords with the aims and objectives of TA5 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans; Drawing No.'s AS-115-1, AS-115-3, AS-115-2B; and details of lighting received 5/6/2018.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The floodlights hereby approved shall only be operated when the car park is open and will be switched off when the car park is closed. No other means of illumination shall be installed unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the area and to protect residential amenity to accord with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

04. Prior to the first use of the car park, a travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should include measures to promote sustainable travel along with a timetable for the implementation of the measures. The development shall not be used unless the agreed measures are being implemented in accordance with the agreed timetable. The measures should then continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is used.

Reasons: In order to promote alternative means of travel in the interests of sustainability.