



**COMMITTEE DATE**    09/09/2020                      **WARD**            Huthwaite and Brierley

**APP REF**                      V/2020/0504

**APPLICANT**                      Ashfield District Council

**PROPOSAL**                      Alterations, Extension and Improvements to Car Park and Overflow Car Park

**LOCATION**                      Brierley Forest Park, Skegby Road, Huthwaite, Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 2PL

**WEB-LINK**                      <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@53.1311934,-1.2990502,17z>

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**    A & D

App Registered: 31/07/2020                      Expiry Date: 24/09/2020

*Consideration has been given to the Equalities Act 2010 in processing this application.*

*This application has been referred to Planning Committee as Ashfield District Council are the applicants.*

**The Application**

This is an application which seeks planning consent for improvement to the existing car parking facility at Brierley Forest Park in Huthwaite. The improvement works include alterations to the existing parking bays within the small car park to the east of the site to create additional disabled parking facilities, as well as an extension to the existing main car park, to create an overflow car park to the west of the site. At present, the park has the provision of 38 parking spaces, and as part of the proposal, this will be increased to 98 parking spaces.

Other improvement works incorporated as part of the scheme include the widening of the existing service road adjacent to the parking areas, the installation of new vehicle barriers, tree planting and other general landscaping works to improve the overall appearance of the site.

**Consultations**

A site notice has been posted together with individual notification to surrounding residents.

***Nottinghamshire County Council Highways:***

This is an application for the increase and improvement of the parking provision for this Country Park which is at the end of a Cul-de-Sac on Skegby Road. The road itself is subject to standard widths and footways required by the Highway Authority.

The access to the park will be unaffected. The park has been in operation since 2000 and we are unaware of any issues reported. No objections are therefore raised in respect of the proposal.

### **Policy**

Having regard to Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the main policy considerations are as follows:

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019**

Part 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

Part 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

Part 11 – Making Effective Use of Land

Part 12 – Achieving Well Designed Places

Part 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

#### **Ashfield Local Plan Review (ALPR) 2002**

ST1 – Development

ST4 – Remainder of the District

EV2 – Countryside

EV8 – Trees and Woodlands

RC3 – Formal Open Space

### **Relevant Planning History**

#### **V/2006/0746**

Details: Application for the Construction of Car Parks and Removal of Existing Hard Standing Used for Parking

Decision: Conditional Consent

#### **V/1999/0467**

Details: Grasscrete Hard Standing to Form Overspill Car Parking Area

Decision: Conditional Consent

#### **V/1995/0050**

Details: Proposed Car Parking Scheme for 14 Spaces and Associated Landscaping

Decision: Conditional Consent

### **Comment:**

The application site comprises of the existing visitor car parks used in association with Brierley Forest Park. This includes the small tarmacked car park sited to the east of the park entrance, and the larger main car park to the west of the park entrance. An area of land to the west of the main car park is also included within the application site, which comprises of a flat level grassed area through which the existing service road passes through. It is understood that this area has in the past been used informally as an overflow car parking area during busy periods.

The main entrance to Brierley Forest Park and its public car parking facilities are accessed at the end of a cul-de-sac on Skegby Road. This road also serves residential properties which are sited approximately 40m to the south of the application site.

The application site is located in an area identified as countryside. The western portion of the application site is also located within an area designated as formal open space.

The main issues to consider as part of this proposal is the principle of the development, the impact of the proposal on visual and residential amenity, as well as highway safety.

***Principle of development:***

The proposed development site is located outside of the districts main urban areas and named settlements, in an area designated as countryside, as identified by policy ST4 of the ALPR 2002. Under this policy, permission will only be granted for development appropriate in the countryside.

Policy EV2 of the ALPR 2002 stipulates that permission will only be granted for appropriate development in the countryside, and the development must be located and designed so as not to adversely affect the character of the countryside, in particular its openness. The policy also outlines types of appropriate development in the countryside, which amongst other things, includes facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreational and tourism uses.

Originally a former colliery site, Brierley Forest Park was transformed into a Country Park between 1992 and 2000, providing a wildlife haven with nature walks covering over two miles. The Park also provides recreation facilities including a football pitch, a children's play area, a sculpture trail, areas of local historical interest, as well as a visitor centre with café facilities. The facilities provided subsequently attracts a large number of visitors both from within and outside the district, and in recent years the existing formal parking provision has been unable to cope with demand.

The improvement works included as part of the application, will subsequently provide increased parking provision for visitors accessing the recreational facilities, and therefore is deemed to be in accordance with policy EV2 of the ALPR 2002. Further, as the area proposed to be extended is to comprise of the overflow car park, this area will only be occupied by cars at intermittent periods when demand for parking is high, and as such the openness of this part of the park will be largely retained.

As previously mentioned, the western portion of the application site is located within an area designated as formal open space. Under the requirements of policy RC3 of the ALPR 2002, development which leads to the loss of formal open space will only be permitted where, where amongst other things, would be ancillary to the recreational use, and would assist in the retention and enhancement of the recreational use of the site. As the car park will be used in association with the

recreational facilities at Brierley Forest Park and will increase parking capacity to accommodate increased visitor demand, the proposal is considered to comply with this policy.

The principle of the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable provided all other material planning considerations can be appropriately satisfied.

***Visual Amenity:***

The proposed improvements and alteration works to the car parking facility are split into three areas: the small car park to the east of the site entrance, the main car park to the west of the site entrance, and the overspill car park which is sited to the west beyond the main car park.

Works to the small car park are proposed to consist of the reconfiguration of the existing 9 regular and 2 disabled parking bays, into 8 disabled spaces, helping to increase the provision of disabled parking spaces across the site. Further works to this car park include the removal of existing dilapidated and decaying log planters from around the perimeter of the car park, reducing the raised ground level to that of the car park, and delineating the parking area with raised wooden sleeper.

Works proposed to be undertaken to the main car park include removing all the existing timber post and rail fencing, and replacing this primarily with large, concrete boulders. Additional tree planting is also proposed to the south of the existing car parking area. The boulders and trees will continue to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the surrounding grassed areas, whilst reducing the amount of built form, and improving the appearance of the parking area and wider park. The existing field gates are also proposed to be removed and replaced with new vehicle barriers.

The main car park will also be slightly expanded to the south, adjacent to the park entrance, to create a further 13 parking spaces within this area.

Beyond the main car park to the west is an area of flat lying grassland which is understood to occasionally be used as an informal overflow car park at times of high demand. As demand for parking at the park increases, it is deemed necessary to make this area a 'formal' overspill parking area. To do this, the installation of a grasscrete style reinforcing grid is proposed, which is a resistant, heavy duty mesh used to reinforce grassed areas, allowing vehicle traffic/parking without causing damage and rutting to the grassed surface below. The mesh grid will allow grass to continue to grow through it, ensuring that the appearance of the grassed area is not significantly altered, whilst providing suitable space for an equivalent of 56 parking bays. The area around the overspill car park will also be secured with concrete boulders, and new tree planting, in combination with new vehicle barrier gates.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed improvement works will not cause detriment to the appearance of Brierley Forest Park or the surrounding locality, and will retain the existing character of the area.

***Residential Amenity:***

The proposed overspill car park will be sited approximately 40m to the north of the nearest residential properties on Parkside. The area between the proposed car park extension and the neighbouring properties will be retained as open grassland, and the planting of additional trees and the siting of boulders will prevent vehicles from accessing this area of land, causing nuisance to nearby residents.

It is considered that the distance between the proposed parking area and nearby residents, is sufficient to mitigate any noise and disturbance to local residents created by the use of this parcel of land for the occasional parking of vehicles. Furthermore, the applicant has confirmed that the overspill car park will only be utilised when there are staff on site to manage it, further ensuring that any disturbance that could arise from the development, is kept to a minimum.

***Highway Safety:***

As part of the proposal, the existing service road which runs through the park from the site entrance to the main car parking area and beyond, will be increased in width from 3m to 6m. This will allow for cars utilising the overspill car park to benefit from appropriate turning and manoeuvring space.

The Highways Authority have confirmed that Skegby Road, which provides vehicular and pedestrian access to the park, is of sufficient width to accommodate the proposed alterations and improvement works, and subsequently do not raise any objections to the proposed development.

Whilst the Highways Authority state that they are unaware of any issues reported in regards to traffic generation and parking, it is considered that the proposed works will ensure that appropriate off-street parking provision is provided within the park, reducing the necessity for any visitors to park on the surrounding residential roads when visiting.

**Conclusion:**

The alteration, extension and improvement works submitted as part of this application will result in the addition of a further 60 off-street parking spaces at Brierley Forest Park, allowing the visitor demand to be adequately met, reducing incidences of on-street parking within the vicinity of the site.

The proposal is considered to comprise of appropriate development within both a countryside setting and an area of formal open space, without having any significant detriment to the character and appearance of local area, or on the amenity of nearby residents.

In conclusion, it is therefore recommended that this application be approved, subject to the planning conditions listed below:

## **Recommendation: Grant Conditional Consent**

### **CONDITIONS**

- 1. The development hereby approved shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**
- 2. This permission shall be read in accordance with the following plans:**
  - Site Location Plan, Scale 1:750, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Vehicle Barrier, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Clearance Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/CW 1, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Clearance Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/CW 2, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Clearance Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/CW 3, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Hard Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/HW 1, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Hard Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/HW 2, Received 03/08/20;**
  - Hard Works, Drawing No. SP/2020/BFP/CP/HW 3, Received 03/08/20.**

**The development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with these plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

### **REASONS**

- 1. To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.**
- 2. To ensure that the development takes the form envisaged by the Local Planning Authority when determining the application.**

### **INFORMATIVE**

- 1. The applicant/developer is strongly advised to ensure compliance with all planning conditions, if any, attached to the decision. Failure to do so could result in LEGAL action being taken by the Ashfield District Council at an appropriate time, to ensure full compliance. If you require any guidance or clarification with regard to the terms of any planning conditions then do not hesitate to contact the Development & Building Control Section of the Authority on Mansfield (01623 450000).**