Expiry Date - 07/05/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0340/24 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: David Lloyd Leisure Romany Road Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Retrospective application for 31 additional car parking spaces in car park

Date of site visit: 24.04.2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to the tarmac car park associated with the David Lloyd Leisure Centre located within an outer suburb of the town and accessed from Romany Road. The car park sits behind a wide landscaped margin fronting Romany Road and Yeoman Road (and the roundabout junction of these roads). The leisure centre building lies to the West of the car park.

On the opposite (north) side of Romany Road is a residential housing estate dating from the 1990s. The housing estate also sits behind a landscaped margin fronting Romany Road.

A new residential estate adjoins the site to the west side of the leisure centre building.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no TPO trees on the site.

Proposal

Permission is sought retrospectively for 31no additional car parking spaces formed in the existing car park. The additional car parking spaces have been created either by infilling former manoeuvring space between existing car parking rows or by removing former landscaped pockets between the parking spaces.

The current application arises following an enforcement investigation under AWEN/0171/23.

A covering letter submitted with the application states the additional spaces have been provided in order to meet the Club Member's needs for additional parking and is consistent with supporting local business growth.

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Relevant Planning History:

Planning permission was granted in June 2003 for the 'erection of a tennis, health and fitness club including creche for members children, illuminated outdoor tennis courts, outdoor swimming pool, car parking and access' (ref: 03/00687/FULL). As part of this approval, the Club included a car parking area which contained a total of 255 parking spaces including 9 disabled bays and 7 parent & child bays.

Consultations:

WSCC: The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection, commenting:-

"West Sussex County Council (WSCC), in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on the above full planning application (AWDM/0340/24), with regards to any highway safety or capacity concerns. The application is supported by way of a covering letter.

The application site is David Lloyd Leisure car park accessed from Romany Road, Worthing. The current application is retrospective for the minor reconfiguration of the car park to provide additional 31 car parking spaces. There are no changes to the existing access arrangements. An inspection of data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the past five years reveals that there have been no recorded injury accidents within the vicinity of the site access, caused by the road layout. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest that the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 110 - 113, as revised 20th July 2021. Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist this proposal."

WSP: The Council's Drainage Consultant has no objection.

Adur and Worthing Councils

EHO (Public Health & Regulation): No adverse comments.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, SP2, DM5, DM15, DM19
National Planning Policy Framework (DLUHC 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

Policy DM15 requires new development to provide for an appropriate level of car parking that takes into consideration the impact of development upon on-street parking, residential amenity, highway safety and has regard to West Sussex County Council standards/guidance.

Whilst the provision of additional parking is not related to ‘new’ development at the leisure centre, it is clear from Google satellite imagery that within the last couple of years double yellow lines have been installed along (both sides) of Romany Road preventing on-street parking which previously took place on either side of the site entrance into David Lloyd Leisure Centre.

The site is located within an outer residential suburb of the town. Although there are bus routes along Romany Road and Yeoman Road connecting the site to Durrington and the Town Centre, the provision of additional car parking spaces on-site has met an existing demand.

The key considerations are the effects on visual and residential amenity and on highway safety.

Visual Amenity

The additional spaces are all contained within the original car park, but make more efficient use of the space. This has involved the loss of some former small pockets of landscaping throughout the car park, and part of a grassed verge to the southwestern perimeter. The submitted application forms indicate that no trees were removed, although Google satellite imagery indicates otherwise. None were subject to a TPO in any event. It was clear from the officer site visit that soft landscaping had also recently been removed from some of the small dividing ‘islands’ separating the parking spaces. The current proposals present an opportunity to reinstate some soft planting/trees on these ‘islands’ and remaining verges, which would help to break up the current expanse of hard-surfacing. Replacement planting would also comply with the Council's objective for mitigating the effects of climate change by maximising opportunities for carbon sequestration (policy SP2), and taking opportunities for incorporating elements of green infrastructure within development schemes (policy DM19).

The Applicant is willing to accept a condition requiring a soft planting scheme to be submitted within 2 months of the date of a permission with a view to an agreed scheme (including some trees) within the first available planting season.

Residential Amenity

The nearest residential properties are well separated from the car park and the provision of additional parking spaces has had no adverse effect on residential amenity.

Highway Safety

The Local Highway Authority has not raised any objection to the additional car parking spaces on highway safety or capacity grounds.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Within 2 months of the date of this decision a scheme of soft landscaping, to include new trees and shrubs, to be planted on the remaining 'islands' and verges within the existing car park, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Thereafter, the approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented within the next planting season following this decision.

Informative

Pro-Active Amendment

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 30.04.2024

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 30 April 2024