

OFFICERS REPORT

Application No: Y17/0242/SH

Location: Saga Group Offices Enbrook Park Sandgate High Street Sandgate
Folkestone Kent CT20 3SE

Proposal Construction of 49 additional car parking spaces.

ASSESSMENT

Performance data:-

Date application valid: 07.06.2017

Applicable 8/13/16 week target date: 02.08.2017

Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) or Planning Extension Agreement (PEA) Yes

If Yes, revised 8/13/16 week target date: 25.08.2017

Is the application being determined after 26 weeks without a PPA or a PEA? No.

APPLICANT: Saga Group Ltd

AGENT: P Kegos - Martello Building Consultancy

SITE LOCATION

The application site is Enbrook Park within the coastal village of Sandgate. Enbrook Park is where the Saga Group company has offices. This is a large landscaped park set upon a hillside which comprises of a large contemporary and modern office building and ancillary pavilion building which the company Saga own, manage and operate from. The site also has a large area of open space and woodland available for use by the public.

The site is located within the settlement boundary and is also within the Sandgate Conservation area. The site is partly within an area of land instability and an area of archaeological interest. Trees upon the site are protected by a woodland Tree Preservation Order No. 7 of 1975. The site has a spacious landscaped leafy character and makes a valuable visual contribution to the area. Saga is also a very large company and a big local employer.

SITE VISIT

A site visit was carried out on the 30.06.2017 where the site was viewed from inside the saga grounds.

PLANNING HISTORY

The most recent history is set out below,

Y12/0536/SH - 50% reduction of two limbs of an Ash tree subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 7 of 1975.

Y08/0575/SH - Erection of a detached garage/workshop (within Enbrook Park, the grounds of Saga)

Y05/0669/SH - Erection of a new atrium roof together with overcladding of existing exposed structural steelwork.

Y03/0485/SH - Provision of new roof fascia and over cladding of existing exposed structural steelwork.

Y01/0687/SH - Formation of a 200 space car park.

Y00/1222/SH - Implementation of a woodland management scheme over a 5 year period in respect of trees the subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 7 of 1975.

Y00/1129/SH - Crown reduction of an Acer tree, the subject of Tree Preservation Order No.7 of 1995

Y00/0548/SH - Construction of new fixed fabric awnings to creche and soft play area, provision of new additional opening windows to creche and new 3.6 metre louvred bay to west elevation.

Y00/0250/SH - Felling of 2 Holm Oak trees and 1 Sycamore tree, and removal of limbs from 2 Holm Oak trees and 1 Sycamore tree the subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 7 of 1975.

THE PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for the construction of 49 car parking spaces within the Enbrook Park grounds. The parking would be positioned upon the north and south sides of the approach road leading up to the main office building.

The car parking bays would provide additional on site parking for staff based at Enbrook Park. The bays would be constructed into the hillside and grass embankments positioned in a parallel and herringbone layout. The bays would have a bonded gravel surface material.

CONSULTATIONS

Sandgate Parish Council - Support.

We would welcome a further application for more parking spaces. We would also suggest that it would be beneficial for saga to improve access to the site in agreement with KCC and hope that there would be appropriate soft landscaping planting/screening.

Kent Highway Services - No objection

From the information submitted I understand that the number of staff on site is not increasing. I understand that the possible changes to the Controlled Parking Zones within the vicinity may affect employees parking on the surrounding highway. I would suggest that the applicant seeks to encourage employees to use sustainable modes of transport. Measures and targets should be put in place to develop a travel plan by the applicant.

For example the applicant should encourage sustainable travel by promoting a car share scheme; introduce a cycle to work scheme if not already in place; promote the regular bus services serving the site and liaising with the bus operator to do so. I am unaware that the applicant has a current travel plan in place. I would suggest that the applicant registers the travel plan with KCC Jambusters website (www.jambusterstpms.co.uk)

If permission is granted the following should be secured by condition:

- o Provision of construction vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction.
- o Provision of parking facilities for site personnel and visitors prior to commencement of work on site and for the duration of construction.
- o Provision of wheel washing facilities prior to commencement of work on site and for the

duration of construction.

o Prior to the commencement of the development the applicant shall submit a Travel Plan and register the plan with KCC Jambusters website (www.jambusterstpms.co.uk).

Arboricultural Manager - No objection.

I can confirm that I am happy with the amended plan and would like to reiterate that there are no tree related constraints.

Building Control Structural Engineer - No objection.

The latchgate condition is not required.

Environment Agency - No comments

We have no comments to make as it falls outside our remit as a statutory planning consultee.

PUBLICITY

Neighbours notified by letter - Expiry 15.08.2017

Site Notice - Expiry 11.07.2017

Press Notice - Expiry date 20.07.2017

REPRESENTATIONS

- Two representations of support

- One representation of objection on the following grounds,
Noise

Increased traffic in a nature conservation area

Loss of privacy as houses overlook the saga land

Extra disturbance.

RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

Shepway District Local Plan Review:

Policies SD1, BE1, BE4, BE16, BE17, BE19, TR12, U15.

The Shepway District Council Core Strategy:

Policies DSD, SS1, SS3.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (The NPPF).

The Sandgate Village Design Statement (SPD)

Policies SDS1, SDS2, SDS4, SDS5, SDS9.

APPRAISAL

MAIN PRINCIPLES

The principle issues to be considered in the determination of this application are the need for the parking, the visual impact upon the Enbrook Park and wider conservation area, highways issues, impact upon residential amenities, trees and landscaping and ecology.

NEED

There is a clear need for the proposal, the application being proposed owing to the lack of sufficient on site parking and the problem of congested on street parking within the local area that this is creating. The parking is required to serve Saga which is a well established local business that provides economic benefits to the local area. The existing on site car park is no longer big enough where Staff are having to park within the local roads of Enbrook Road, Military Road and Sandgate Road which is creating a local congestion problem. Whilst this development will not solve this problem it will make significant steps towards resolving it which is positive and supported subject to all other material planning considerations being acceptable.

VISUAL IMPACT

The site is located within the landscaped grounds of Enbrook Park which falls within the Sandgate Conservation Area. In this regard there is a statutory requirement for developments to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Enbrook Park can be described as a leafy, green area of woodland and open space with footpaths throughout with the two buildings sited centrally within the park. The park has a sylvan character where there are many trees which are the subject of Tree Preservation Order Number 7 of 1975.

In scale and number of spaces, 49 are proposed, which is not considered excessive or overintensive to the detriment of the character of the area. The bays are low to the ground not unduly tall and they are proposed to be sited in four different areas which will also break up the visual impact and prevent a large expanse of visually incongruous car parking in one area.

Some parking would be upon the south side of the road where cars already park on the road side where it is considered that there would be little difference in the visual impact and visual harm. The remainder of the parking would be cut into the grass embankments and result in some additional visual impact to the appearance of the park. However this is considered would be minimal where there would be no loss of important landscaping or trees where a significant amount of open space and landscaping would still be retained to preserve the green sylvan character. The four individual areas are considered to be small in size where the impact would not be overly dominant upon the site.

The type of parking is also mixed where parallel parking and herringbone parking is proposed that would prevent a uniform bland appearance and add interest to the layout. A high quality surface material being resin bonded gravel has also been proposed which would have a good high quality finish and be in keeping with the landscaped woodland character. Soft landscaping is also proposed to soften the impact and help it interrelate with the surrounding landscaping. Lighting can also be controlled to prevent significant flood lighting to the detriment of the area. In this regard, the surface material, landscaping and lighting is recommended to be conditioned to ensure a high quality finish.

As such the development is considered to be of a good design that would have minimal visual impact and conserve the character and appearance of the wider conservation area in accordance with saved Local Plan Review policies SD1, BE1 and BE4.

TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION

The development seeks to reduce on street parking within the local public roads where congestion has developed which this development will seek to reduce and improve matters. The development will not increase staff levels and does not propose to alter the access arrangements of the site where the access off Sandgate Road would not change. A small change in part of the footpath would occur inside the site but this is considered minimal and acceptable.

Kent Highway and Transportation Services have been consulted and raised no objection subject to some basic conditions as well as a condition for a travel plan to further try and reduce the on street parking. This, however, is not considered to be reasonable as this application only relates to the provision of extra parking, no new buildings or additional staff. As such the development is considered acceptable in accordance with saved Local Plan Review policy TR12.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES

The site is a good distance away from the nearest residential properties upon Sandgate Road which are also screened by mature trees and landscaping, where it is considered there would be no significant impact. In this regard the houses are considered far enough away to avoid any significant impact from engine fumes and noise, headlights and door slamming etc. The site already has significant traffic movement with staff arriving and leaving each day where this development does not seek to change. In fact the development should improve the amenities of the local area by helping to reduce on street parking congestion.

TREES and LANDSCAPING

The development would not result in the removal of any trees or affect trees in a detrimental way. As such there would be no impact upon the Woodland Tree Preservation Order. There would also be no loss of important landscaping and the development would also introduce soft landscaping to contribute to the visual amenity of the area and soften the development. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted and raised no objection and therefore the development is considered acceptable in this regard in accordance with saved Local Plan Review policies BE16 and BE17.

ECOLOGY

The application has been accompanied by an ecology survey which confirms that there would be no loss of protected species or habitats and in this regard is not constrained by ecology.

RECOMMENDATION

Given the on street parking problems of the local area there is a clear need for such additional parking. It is considered the proposal is a sustainable development that complies with development plan policy and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Assessment section above and the Recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

Case Officer:

Report and draft decision notice completed and passed to senior officer.

Name: JM LING Position: Senior Planning Officer Date: 16.08.2017

Report and draft decision notice amended (if appropriate)

Name: Position: Date:

Senior Officer

Report not agreed. Details of further work required as follows:

Name: Position: Date:

Report and draft decision notice agreed and file passed to admin to issue decision.

Name: C Dethier Position: DM Team Leader Date: 25th August 2017