

## Unrestricted Report

### ITEM NO: 8

Application No.

**23/00016/3**

Site Address:

Ward:

Crowthorne

Date Registered:

24 January 2023

Target Decision Date:

21 March 2023

## **SANG At Bucklers Park Woodcote Green Crowthorne Berkshire**

Proposal:

**Resurfacing of existing SANG car park with tarmac including installation of additional drainage to discharge surface water into existing SuDS.**

Applicant:

Mr Chris Swatridge

Agent:

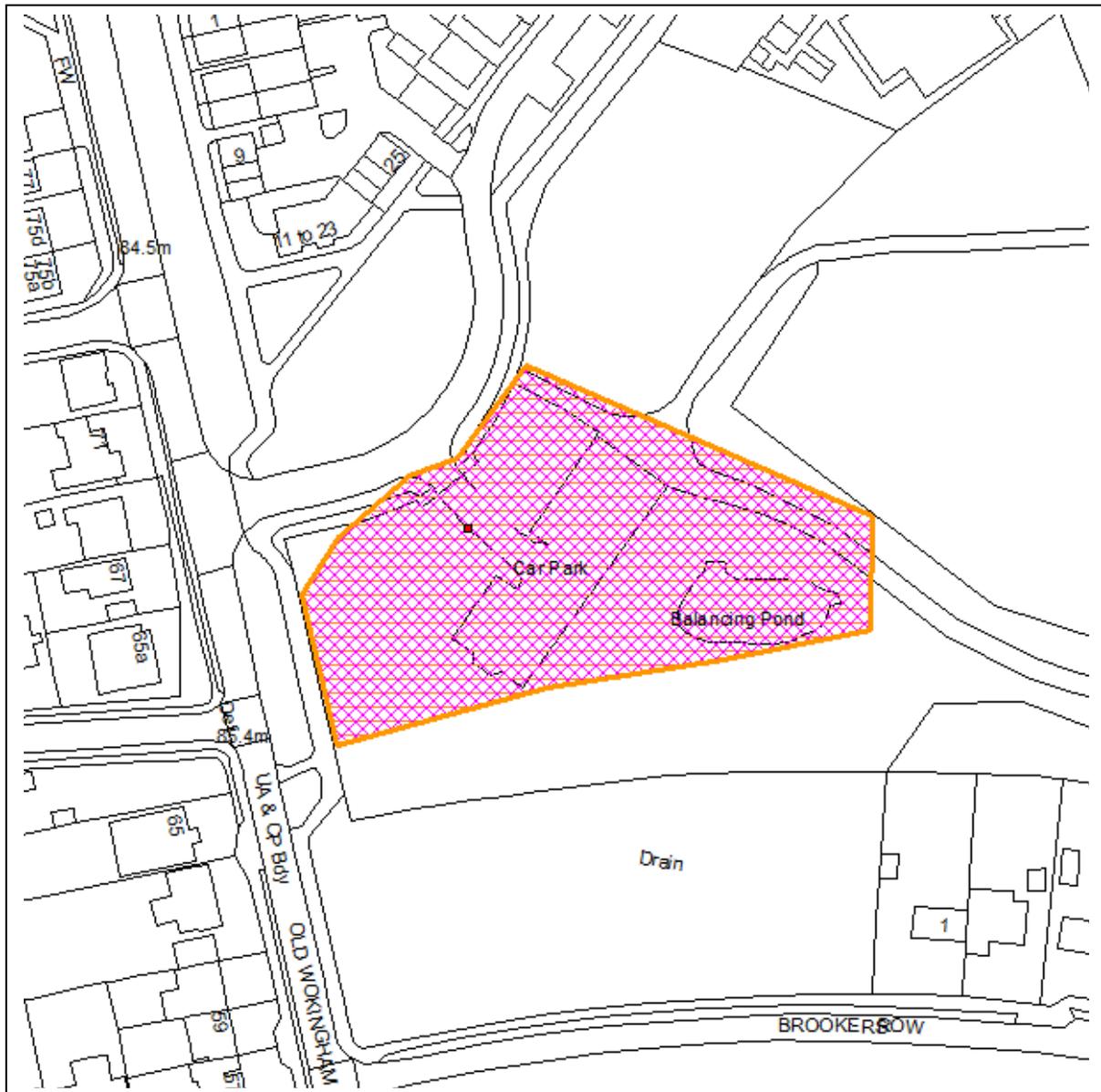
(There is no agent for this application)

Case Officer:

Jo Male, 01344 352000

[Development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

### **Site Location Plan** (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



## **OFFICER REPORT**

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the re-surfacing of the existing SANG car-park at Bucklers Park with tarmac including installation of additional drainage to discharge surface water into the existing SuDS pond.
- 1.2 The proposed re-surfacing of the car park is considered to be consistent with Natural England's Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). It is not considered that the development would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside or the amenity of adjacent dwellings and appropriate drainage is provided.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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Planning permission be granted subject to conditions set out in Section 11 of this report.
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### **2. REASONS FOR REPORTING THE APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- 2.1 The application is being reported to the Planning Committee as it is a scheme which the Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration is responsible for promoting.

### **3. PLANNING STATUS AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

<b>Planning Status</b>
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Outside Defined Settlement
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SANG
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- 3.1 The site comprises the existing car park to the Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) which serves the Bucklers Park development. The car park is currently surfaced in crushed aggregates with timber markers to individual bays.
- 3.2 The site lies within the strategic allocation SA5 Land at Transport Research Laboratory as identified within the Site Allocations Local Plan (2013). However it is situated beyond the identified settlement boundary for this allocation within land identified as countryside on the Policies Map (2013).

### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 Planning permission 13/00575/OUT granted outline permission for the comprehensive redevelopment of the former Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), comprising demolition of existing buildings, the erection of up to 1000 dwellings, a neighbourhood centre, retail units, primary school and associated playing fields, community centre, care home, and municipal depot, together with public open space, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), and associated works.
- 4.2 A reserved matters application (ref: 16/01075/REM) approved the details of the scale, layout, appearance, access and landscaping of the SANG pursuant to this outline permission.

- 4.3 Conditions of this reserved matters approval required the submission and approval of further details relating to the surfacing and drainage of the car park (Condition 02), and the construction of the raised berm to the drainage feature (Condition 03).
- 4.4 These were subsequently submitted and approved under applications 17/00271/COND (Condition 02 SANG Car Park) and 17/00195/COND (Condition 03 Berm Construction).

## **5. THE PROPOSAL**

- 5.1 The proposed development comprises the resurfacing of the existing car park which serves the SANG at Bucklers Park.
- 5.2 The car park is well used and the existing surfacing is unable to withstand the level of usage resulting in the creation of potholes and uneven surfacing.
- 5.3 The proposed works involve excavating the existing ground to a depth of 300mm and laying 150mm of Type 1 sub-base, then 120mm of AC20 binder course asphalt and then 40mm of AC10 surface course black asphalt. The individual spaces would be marked out using paint on the top surface. Two new drainage connections would be provided to discharge surface water into the existing drainage ponds.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

- Crowthorne Parish Council
- 6.1 Recommends approval.
- 6.2 No other representations have been received.

## **7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

### **Highway Authority**

No objection

### **SPA Officer**

The Council has consulted Natural England about this proposal, and they agree to the use of asphalt in order to improve the durability of the surface of the car park.

### **LLFA**

No objection. Recommends conditions.

### **Biodiversity**

Requests consideration of impact of any polluted run-off on newts.

## **8. MAIN POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION**

- 8.1 Development plan policies relevant to the consideration of the application are contained within the Core Strategy (CSDPD) (2008), the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) (2013), the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan 'as saved' (BFBLP) (2002)

and the Crowthorne Neighbourhood Plan (2021). The key policies and guidance applying to the site are:

	<b>Development Plan</b>	<b>NPPF</b>
Land at Transport Research Laboratory	SA5 of SALP and CR8 of Crowthorne Neighbourhood Plan	Consistent
Sustainable Development	CS1 of the CSDPD and CP1 of the SALP	Consistent (CS1) and mainly consistent (CP1)
Design	Saved policy EN20 of BFBLP, CS7 of the CSDPD, CR1 and CR8 of Crowthorne Neighbourhood Plan	Consistent
Countryside	Saved policy EN8 of BFBLP and CS9 of the CSDPD	Partially Consistent
Residential amenity	Saved policy EN20 of the BFBLP	Consistent
Recreation	Saved policy R7 of BFBLP, CS8 of the CSDPD	
Nature Conservation	Saved policy EN3 of BFBLP and CS14 of CSDPD	
Highway Safety	'Saved' policy M9 of the BFBLP CS23 of the CSDPD	Consistent
<b>Other publications</b>		
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (CIL) Natural England's Guidelines for the creation of Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (2021) Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area SPD (2018)		

- 8.2 The Council's emerging Local Plan is progressing towards adoption. The Examination Hearings were concluded in October 2022 and the Inspectors' letter was received in January 2023. This identifies a list of proposed main modifications which are required for the plan to be found sound and indicates that there is no expectation that further hearings will be required. Subject to the identified Main Modifications, the Inspectors support the Council's Spatial Strategy which continues to show the application site being located within the SA5 allocation and the countryside.
- 8.3 The weight to be afforded policies within this plan in the decision-making process will increase as the plan progresses towards adoption in accordance with para. 48 of the NPPF.

## **9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **i. Principle of the development**

- 9.1 The proposed development comprises the re-surfacing of the SANG car park with associated drainage works. Given that the proposed development will not change the character or usage of the car park, it is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to an assessment of its impact upon the character and amenities of the area.

## **ii. Impact on Character and Appearance of the area**

- 9.2 The purpose of SANGs is to provide alternative greenspace to divert visitors away from visiting the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA) and their provision forms part of a strategy devised in conjunction with Natural England to mitigate the impact of new residential development on the SPA.
- 9.3 Natural England has produced Guidelines for the Quality of SANG which indicates that 'SANG must be perceived as semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks'.
- 9.4 In permitting the original car park surfacing under the terms of 17/00271/COND, significant efforts were made to ensure that the surface to the car park was as informal as possible using an unbound surface and timber markings. However, due to the level of usage, the surface has not proved sufficiently resilient and has led to the need for it to be replaced by a bonded material.
- 9.5 Natural England was consulted prior to the submission of the current application and confirmed that it has no objection to the proposed re-surfacing works and that it would not wish to be consulted on any future planning application. Its view is that the car park has to be useable to encourage people to visit the SANG in preference to the SPA and therefore works that would improve the visitor experience to the site would be consistent with its guidelines which state:

*'The amount and nature of parking provision should reflect the anticipated use of the site by visitors and the catchment size of the SANG. It should provide an attractive alternative to parking by the part of SPA for which it is mitigation. Car parks should be clearly signposted and easily accessed'.*

- 9.6 Whilst the use of asphalt is functional rather than aesthetic it has been chosen for durability and will be viewed within the context of the access to the site from Woodcote Green. As a result, it is not considered to be unduly out of character with surrounding development so as to conflict with policies CS7, EN20 or CR1.
- 9.7 Although located within the countryside, the re-surfacing of the car park and associated drainage works would have a limited visual impact beyond the boundaries of the site and would not materially adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the countryside.
- 9.8 By re-surfacing the car park, it will improve its useability and access to the SANG as a recreational facility. The works would not impact upon the essential character of the TRL Character Area identified within the Neighbourhood Plan and accordingly it is considered that the proposed development would be consistent with Policies CS8, CS9, EN8, R7, M10, CR1 and CR8 of the development plan.

## **iii. Impact on Amenity**

- 9.9 The closest neighbouring residential dwellings are located a minimum of 42 metres to the north of the car park on the other side of Woodcote Green. Due to this degree of separation, the re-surfacing works would not cause any loss of amenity to these dwellings consistent with the requirements of EN20 of the BFBLP.

#### **iv. Transport and Highway Considerations**

- 9.10 The Council's Highway Officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to the inclusion of conditions requiring works to be carried out in accordance with the submitted drainage and surfacing details. He also confirms that the signage for the disabled parking spaces is acceptable.

#### **v. Surface Water Drainage**

- 9.11 The Council's Drainage Officer has confirmed that new surface water drainage has been proposed, which includes gullies and underground pipes connecting into existing ponds. The proposal does not alter the current drainage arrangement, such that it can be concluded that the flood risk will not be increased as a result of the proposal.
- 9.12 Pollution control measures in the form of gully guards have been incorporated into the drainage network to improve the quality of runoff into the pond. No objection to the proposal is raised subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring the implementation of the proposed drainage works.

#### **vi. Biodiversity**

- 9.12 It is not considered that the existing car park provides a suitable habitat for biodiversity. However, the proposed works include the creation of additional connections into existing drainage ponds and it is noted that the site lies within a high risk area for Great Crested Newts.
- 9.13 Comments from NatureSpace suggests the any new drainage connection should include some standard environmental protection to prevent pollution/run-off of chemicals from the car park into the ponds.
- 9.14 The Council's Drainage Officer has confirmed that the proposed scheme shows the use of trapped gully pots which provide protection for car parks that are too small to justify the installation of a separator. Given the sensitivity of the pond with respect to newts, she also recommended that gully guards be installed in the gullies to remove oils and hydrocarbons. Revised plans indicating the use of gully guards have been submitted and their implementation and maintenance will be secured by the recommended drainage condition.
- 9.15 Both NatureSpace and the Biodiversity Officer have confirmed that they have no objection to the proposed development subject to the inclusion of this condition.

### **10. CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed re-surfacing of the car park is considered to be consistent with Natural England's Guidelines for SANG by improving the accessibility of this space as a recreational feature. It is not considered that the development would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside or the amenity of adjacent dwellings and the submitted scheme shows appropriate drainage for the car park including measures which will mitigate any pollution impact on nature conservation interests.

## 11. RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans and other submitted details:  
Site Plan dated 24.01.2023  
PAV\_XX\_Ex\_DR\_D\_500\_S3 Rev P04 received 28.02.2023  
Gully Guard Specification received 28.02.2023  
Specification of Surfacing received 06.02.2023  
Confirmation about line marking in email from C.Swatridge dated 06.02.2023
03. The surface water drainage of the site shall be implemented and maintained in full accordance with details contained within Proposed Storm Drainage layout reference PAV\_XX\_Ex\_DR\_D\_500\_S3 Rev P04 received 28.02.2023.  
REASON: To ensure that the site is properly drained and does not increase the risk of flooding in accordance with policy CS1 of the Core Strategy.
04. Prior to the re-surfaced car park being brought into use, it shall be marked out with line markings and the disabled bays identified by appropriate signage in accordance with the approved plans.  
REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking in the interests of highway safety.

### Informatives

01. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.
02. The applicant is advised that no further details are required to be submitted in relation to the following conditions, however they are required to be complied with:
  1. Commencement
  2. Approved Plans
  3. Drainage
  4. Marking out of spaces