

REPORT SUMMARY

REFERENCE NO - 16/506782/FULL		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Extension of existing car parking facility including additional disabled parking. Creation of new parking area adjacent to existing offices and creation of new wheel chair access. Creation of a single storey building housing a pet cremation facility. Removal of existing wheelchair access ramp.		
ADDRESS Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Kent, ME14 5LG		
RECOMMENDATION – Permission		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/REASONS FOR REFUSAL The proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not result in any amenity or highways safety harm. The proposal would comply with the Development Plan and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal.		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Maidstone Borough Council application.		
WARD Boxley	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Boxley	APPLICANT Mr Tom Hayes AGENT Mr Tom Hayes
DECISION DUE DATE 29/11/16	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 01/11/16	OFFICER SITE VISIT DATE 10/10/16
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites): 16/505779/FULL - Extension of existing overflow car park, create 2 smaller car parks, construct single storey building to house a new pet crematorium – Withdrawn 14/506527/ADV - Advertisement consent for the installation of 2 brushed stainless signs mounted on the existing ragstone walls (non-illuminated) – Permitted 14/0337 - Advertisement consent for the erection of 300mm high built up stainless steel letters with up lighting illumination – Refused 13/1223 - An application to alter main entrance to mitigate use as a turning circle, unauthorised parking and additional parking for staff and users - Permitted 11/0076 - Covered wheelchair access extension to Book of Remembrance Hall – Permitted 09/0375 - Erection of covered walkway extension to cloisters and alterations to crematorium building including installation of air blast cooler, condenser unit and alterations to fenestration including insertion of access door to roof void – Permitted 98/0728 A full planning application for new building works consisting of an extension to the existing overflow car park, alterations to the front gates and the construction of new footpaths – Permitted 81/1214 - Extension of treatment rooms, new staff room and w.c. replacing mobile cabin – Permitted 94/1718 - Provision of a disabled ramp and access door on the west side of the building – Permitted		

MAIN REPORT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.1 The application site relates to Vinters Park Crematorium located on the south side of Bearsted Road. The site is located within the urban area of Maidstone and is designated an Area of Local Landscape Importance. A number of trees on the site are covered by group TPOs. An area of ancient woodland is located to the west of the site and Vinters Park nature reserve is located to the south.
- 1.2 Vehicle access is afforded from Bearsted Road. The main crematorium building is located on the southern part of the site with a parking area to the east of the building. Further parking is provided in the northeast part of the site. A building in the northwest corner adjacent Bearsted Road contains the site office.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Extension of the existing car parking area in the northeast part of the site from 44 spaces to 70 spaces including disabled parking. The additional parking would include an extension of 14 spaces to the east of the existing car park and a further 18 spaces to the north which would require cutting into the existing bank and installing a low level retaining wall.
- 2.2 Creation of a new parking area for 10 cars to the side and rear of the office building, including 3 disabled parking spaces.
- 2.3 Creation of new wheel chair access to the office building.
- 2.4 Erection of a single storey building housing a pet cremation facility. The building would be located to the rear / south of the existing office building. The proposed building would be timber clad on a low level brick plinth with timber fenestration and a standing seam metal sheet roof. The building would measure some 4m from ground level to the top of the pitched roof and have a floor area of some 105m².

3.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
Development Plan: ENV6, ENV35, T13
Emerging Local Plan (submission version) May 2016: SP1, DM1, DM3, DM20, DM27

4.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 Cllr Harwood recommends the use of porous tarmac or wildlife friendly gullies.
- 4.2 **Boxley Parish Council:** Wish to see the application approved.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **KCC Archaeology:** Recommends a watching brief
- 5.2 **MBC Landscape:** No objections
- 5.3 **Forestry Commission:** Recommends following Natural England standing advice.

6.0 APPRAISAL

6.1 Principle of Development

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework supports sustainable economic growth and the expansion of existing businesses. Key aims and objectives of the emerging Local Plan (submission version) May 2016 include the delivery of sustainable growth and regeneration whilst protecting the boroughs natural and built assets. Best use will be made of available sites in the urban area.

6.3 The whole of the site and the existing crematorium is located within a designated Area of Local Landscape Importance as defined in the Local Plan Policy ENV35. Policy ENV35 advises these areas provide local distinctiveness which is unique to Maidstone's identity. In these areas particular attention will be given to the maintenance of the open space and the character of the landscape. This designation does not prohibit the proposed development, however, any future buildings would need to be sensitively designed and sited to preserve the character of the area.

6.4 Overall there are no land use objections to the expansion of the Vinters Park Crematorium to include a pet crematorium and extended car park. The site is located within the urban area in a sustainable location and is well served by local transport connections. In my view key issues would be the impact on the Area of Local Landscape Importance, impact on trees and biodiversity and highways safety.

6.5 Visual Impact

6.6 The proposed crematorium building would be a low level single storey structure and discreetly located to the rear of the existing office building. The proposed building would also be appropriately located adjacent the existing office building to limit the impact on the open character of the Area of Local Landscape Importance. Given the appropriate location and overall height the building is not considered to have a harmful impact on the character of the surrounding area and Area of Local Landscape Importance.

6.7 The proposed extension to the existing car park is not considered to result in a harmful visual impact due to the proposed location directly adjacent the existing park. In addition, landscaping and banking around the car park would help to screen the development. The new parking spaces adjacent the office building would be located in close proximity to the rear and side of the building and would be screened by additional planting.

6.8 Overall the proposed development is considered to have an acceptable visual impact on the character of the surrounding area and Area of Local Landscape Importance.

6.9 Amenity

6.10 The proposed development would be located a sufficient distance from any residential properties.

6.11 Highways

6.12 The existing vehicle access onto Bearsted Road would be utilised and is deemed to be safe with acceptable visibility splays. The new building / use is not considered to result in a significant increase in vehicle movements. The parking layout would be functional with sufficient turning areas and the size of the proposed parking spaces would meet KCC parking standards. The additional parking spaces would facilitate

additional vehicle movements to and from the site, however, given the number of spaces proposed the increase in traffic generation is not considered to be significant and it is considered that the surrounding road network would be able to accommodate any increase in vehicle movements.

6.13 **Trees and ecology**

6.14 The application is supported by a tree survey which indicates that a number of trees would need to be removed to facilitate the new pet crematorium building. The car park extension would not require the removal of any trees. The Council's arborist has reviewed the tree survey and agrees with the recommendations of the survey and does not object to the removal of the trees highlighted within the report. In accordance with policy ENV6 the proposal includes additional tree and landscape planting to mitigate for the loss of the trees on the site. A landscaping condition is attached to ensure appropriate tree and planting species are utilised in this sensitive location. The proposed development would be located a sufficient distance from the ancient woodland to the west of the site and appropriate tree protection barriers would safeguard the retained trees within and adjacent the site.

6.15 The extension to the car park and the proposed pet crematorium building would be located on managed grassed areas such that there would be limited ecological impacts.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not result in any amenity or highways safety harm. The proposal would comply with the Development Plan and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION** – GRANT Subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

(1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

(2) The development shall not commence until, written details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of any buildings and hard surfaces have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Details shall include swift and / or bat boxes / bricks. The new hardstanding shall be formed of porous tarmac. If this approach is not appropriate wildlife friendly gullies shall be incorporated in to the development.

The development shall be constructed using the approved materials;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.

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- (3) The development, including site clearance, shall be undertaken in accordance with the tree Survey dated September 2016 and the amended tree protection plan (ref: 2458/16/B/12); dated 14.11.2016.

Reason: For tree protection and to ensure a satisfactory external appearance to the development.

- (4) The development shall not commence until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, using indigenous species which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development and long term management. The landscape scheme shall be designed using the principles established in the Council's adopted Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Guidelines

Reason: To ensure a high quality design, appearance and setting to the development and in the interest of biodiversity.

- (5) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory external appearance to the development.

- (6) No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.

- (7) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

P01 A, P02 A, P03 A, P04 A, P05 A, P06 A, P07 A; received on 08.11.2016 and 13632/10.A; received on 09.11.2016 and amended tree protection plan received on

Reason: To ensure the quality of the development is maintained and to prevent harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

INFORMATIVES

The Council's approach to this application:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals

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focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

Offering pre-application advice.

Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.

As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance:

The application was approved in a timely manner.

The applicant/agent was advised of minor changes required to the application and these were agreed.

The applicant/agent was provided formal pre-application advice.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

Case Officer: Andrew Jolly

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.