

MC/23/1739

Date Received: 4 July 2023
Location: Hempstead Village Hall and All Saints Church, 169 Hempstead Road, Hempstead, Gillingham, ME7 3QG
Proposal: Extension to existing car parking area.
Applicant: Mr Jim Gilbourne
Agent: Mr Gary Remmington
Ward: Hempstead & Wigmore
Case Officer: Jacky Olsen
Contact Number: 01634 333056

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on Wednesday 27 September 2023.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

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

Received 7 August 2023

2099/100 Rev A - Location Plan
2099/102 Rev B - Proposed Block Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 All materials used externally shall match those set out on drawing 2099/102 Rev B, received 7 August 2023.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 The proposed parking area shall not be brought into use until the surface water drainage system within the site and indicated on drawing 2099/102 Rev B received on 7 August 2023, has been provided to ensure there is no surface water runoff from the site onto the public highway. The drainage arrangements shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To manage surface water in accordance with Paragraph 167 of the NPPF.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

This application is for planning permission for an extension to the existing car park at Hempstead Village Hall and All Saints Church following a disability access audit in July 2023 which noted that the two existing disabled spaces are under sized and should be adjusted accordingly to afford more adequate parking for any disabled visitors to the site.

The proposal is for additional car parking to be provided to the south of the site on the amenity land and would provide 6 No. new spaces, including 1 No. disabled space, with landscaping to the rear between the new spaces and the boundary of 171 Hempstead Road. Additionally, the existing spaces to the north would be reconfigured to remove 1 No. existing disabled space to allow an increase in width of the remaining disabled space to the correct size.

The existing triangular shaped seasonal planting beds to the main entrance area of the Church will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate the new parking layout and will allow improved access to the disabled parking spaces. A drainage channel is also proposed to cater for surface water run-off discharging to a new soakaway which will be located below the new parking area.

The total number of parking spaces will increase from 8 No. (including 2 No. disabled bays) to 14 No. (including 2 No. disabled bays).

Relevant Planning History

MC/20/0731	Construction of a single storey extension and new glazed entrance doors. Decision: Approval with conditions Decided: 17 July 2020
MC/18/1399	Construction of porch to front. Decision: Approval with conditions Decided: 12 June 2018
MC/03/2061	Construction of single storey side extension, Decision: Approval with conditions Decided: 14 November 2003

Representations

The application has been advertised on site and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Two objections have been received raising concerns over the loss of amenity/green space in favour of car parking and whether the car parking is necessary.

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan). The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Design

Hempstead Village Hall and All Saints Church is located on Hempstead Road which is a predominantly residential street of large, detached bungalows and 2 storey dwellings. The building is set back from the roadway with car parking to the north of the land to the front with amenity land to the south separated by a driveway.

Policy BNE1 of the Local Plan sets out that the design of development should be appropriate in character, appearance and functioning of the built and natural environment. The proposal to extend and alter the car parking provision to accommodate the disabled bays and provide additional car parking would reduce the amount of amenity space to the front of the building. However, this is acceptable considering the need to provide disabled car parking and additional parking on site that will reduce pressure for on street parking.

The additional spaces provided are deemed to be acceptable considering the use of the building as a pre-school, as well as a church and community facility. There needs to be sufficient parking to therefore meet the needs of the users. It is understood that there are demands on car parking at the site which currently means cars are parked on the roadway which causes congestion at peak hours. The new car parking spaces will help to ameliorate this issue.

Although some amenity space will be lost, the amenity land to the front of the site would be maintained and planted flower beds are proposed behind the car parking spaces on either side boundary and outside the church front door. This landscaping ensures that the green character of the front area is still appropriate within the scheme.

Therefore, the proposal would not detract from the overall character and appearance of the host property and wider street scene. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 126 and 130 of the NPPF.

Amenity

The proposal will have no unacceptable impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight, overshadowing, outlook, and privacy.

The additional car parking is to deal with an existing need arising from uses on site and will not result in the intensification of any uses on site. Indeed, by ameliorating current on street parking issues, the proposal will improve amenity for neighbouring residents.

Therefore, it is considered to be acceptable with regard to Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan (2003).

Highways

Policy T13 of the Local Plan (2003) sets out that applicants will be expected to make vehicle parking provision in accordance with the adopted standard. Furthermore, Policy T22 sets out that development open to the public should provide adequacy signed and appropriate access for people with disabilities. The proposed car parking alterations would ensure the provision of two disabled parking bays that meet the Council's minimum size standards. Further, the car parking forecourt provides sufficient room to allow a driver to enter, manoeuvre into a parking bay and exit the site in a forward manner. Therefore, the parking layout meets Policy T13 of the Local Plan (2003) and the Council's parking standards.

Additionally, the car parking spaces would mean that cars can park off the main road when visiting the application site which would reduce the amount of congestion on Hempstead Road. This is considered to have a positive impact on highways safety and parking provision.

Therefore, the proposal would be in accordance with Policies T1 and T13 of the Local Plan and paragraph 111 of the NPPF 2021.

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

The proposed scheme would not be detrimental to the character of the area or the street scene. It would not impact residential amenity and would make a positive contribution to the existing parking provision and highways safety. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with Policies BNE1, BNE2, T1 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraphs 111, 126, 130 and 130f of the NPPF 2021.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred to Planning Committee for determination due to the applicant being a Councillor.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>