

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
UPLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

Date: 18 October 2021

Report of Additional Representations



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Report of Additional Representations

Application Number	21/02110/FUL
Site Address	Car Park Guildenford Burford Oxfordshire OX18 4SE
Date	6th October 2021
Officer	Joan Desmond
Officer Recommendations	Refuse
Parish	Burford Parish Council
Grid Reference	425399 E 212285 N
Committee Date	18th October 2021

Application Details:

Expansion of the Guildenford car park northwards to accommodate approximately 150 vehicles, to include two new footbridges, one alongside existing road bridge and the second into the churchyard across the millstream

Applicant Details:

Derek Cotterill
Fortey's Close
Guildenford
Burford
Oxfordshire
OX18 4SE

Additional Representations:

OCC Transport:

Recommendation: No objection subject to Planning Conditions as detailed below.

Key points

- Existing car-park has capacity for 166 vehicles and is free to use.
- The main pedestrian route from the car park to the town centre is along Church Lane which has sections with no off-street pedestrian footways.
- West Oxfordshire's 2016 Car Parking Strategy shows that Burford requires further parking and that this car park is the most sensible location, although it requires work.
- Proposal seeks to extend car-park to cater for a further 165 vehicles.
- Proposal also includes 2 new foot bridges, 1 adjacent to existing vehicle bridge into car park which will be converted solely for vehicles and 1 into churchyard. This would offer a safer route for pedestrians.
- Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) surveys have been undertaken across a 7-day week in January which is not the busiest time of the year.

- Evaluating this traffic count shows that the busiest day is Saturday with a total of 819 two-way vehicle trips crossing the ATC tube.
- However, when undertaking a parking accumulation assessment based on these figures it shows that the peak hour is 12pm when there are only 145 vehicles parked. This is below the existing capacity.
- In the summer months when the car park is busier, Church Lane and Guildenford get severely congested with vehicles entering and exiting the car park resulting in pedestrian safety concerns and high emissions.

Comments:

Existing Conditions

The car park currently has 166 spaces which are free to use 24/7. The car park is accessed by vehicle via a narrow bridge which is shared by pedestrians. This currently acts as a bottleneck that restricts the free flow of traffic in busy periods. The 2 roads leading to the car park, Guildenford and Church Lane are both 2-way streets with a number of pinch points and sharp bends. The main pedestrian route is also using Church Lane, this does not have a footway the whole way and therefore requires upgrading if there is going to be an increase in visitors.

No car parking utilisation information has been provided, the applicant states that 100% of the on-street parking is occupied 100% of the time and the car park is 100% occupied at weekends. It is not clear if this is based on actual surveys or if this is just a guess but no data showing this has been provided and seems fairly unlikely. However, West Oxfordshire's Parking Strategy published in 2016 by WYG does state that Burford requires additional parking of around 200 spaces.

When assessing the previous application, I met the councillors on site to discuss the scheme and requested traffic surveys for the surrounding streets and car park to show the level of vehicle activity. This has been provided but does not match up with the statistics stated regarding parking numbers. For example, the applicant has stated the car park is 100% full at weekends but the ATC figures show that in the peak hour of both days the car park only accumulates a maximum of 145 vehicles which is not at capacity. Surveys within the West Oxfordshire Parking Strategy however show a higher percentage forecast across the week but especially at weekends so the surveys may just be low due to time of year which has been taken into consideration.

Proposal

The proposal seeks to extend to car park to the north to create an additional 165 spaces. This will result in an increase in traffic generation to the site, however, as a comprehensive transport statement has not been submitted it is not clear by how much. There is a risk that additional car parking will result in an increase in commuters and residents parking here which defeats the object of the proposal, it is also important to recognise that without additional measures in place traffic generation could rise continuously and will just result in the need for more parking in the future. It is therefore disappointing that the applicants have not explored additional measures such as increasing bus services to make it more attractive and additional covered cycle parking. It is recommended that the car park reduces the times it offers free parking (for example to 6 hours) so not to discourage visitors but so it is not abused by residents and commuters.

The proposal will, however, have some significant benefits. The existing pedestrian network from the car park is inadequate, the bridge to the churchyard significantly improves pedestrian safety as when they exit onto Church Lane there is a continuous footway to the town centre. Removing pedestrians from the existing access bridge also increases pedestrian safety whilst simultaneously improving vehicular movement in/out of the car park. Whilst recognising the benefits of the proposed foot bridges, these should be 2 metres wide to be in line with Oxfordshire County Council's standards for footways.

Whilst recognising the proposal may result in an increase in traffic generation, it should also be stated that the existing issues with getting in/out of the car park and finding a space in busy periods causes delays and congestion along Guildenford and Church Lane leading to a reduction in air quality and pedestrian/cycle safety. It should be stressed however that an increase of vehicle movements without improved pedestrian safety is not acceptable and therefore the bridge into the churchyard is a critical element. It is also important to the acceptability of the planning application that 2 lanes of traffic can adequately pass simultaneously on the bridge, a swept path analysis is therefore required. If this is not possible the existing vehicular bridge will need to be widened.

Given the existing issues with the car park in summer months, the expected future year growth in the area and the recognition within West Oxfordshire's Parking Strategy that additional car parking is required in Burford, Oxfordshire County Council do not object to this application on highway grounds.

Planning Conditions:

In the event that permission is to be given, the following planning conditions should be attached:

Bridges

The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into operation until the proposed footbridge into the churchyard along with the footbridge adjacent to the existing access bridge are constructed and open for pedestrians to use, these should be 2 metres wide. The vehicular bridge should also be amended to fit 2 modern vehicles side by side.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

Swept Path Analysis

Before the development permitted is commenced a swept path analysis shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate 2 modern family vehicles can safely and easily enter and exit the car park simultaneously.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

OCC LLFA:

Recommendation: Objection

Key issues:

As it is a car park which is being proposed, water quality will be affected. Therefore, proposed development needs a water quality assessment and must meet local standards. Furthermore, a detailed surface water management strategy must be submitted.