

Planning Committee: 02 April 2020

Item Number: 2

Application No: [W 20 / 0280](#)

Town/Parish Council: Stoneleigh

Case Officer: Helena Obremski

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Registration Date: 11/02/20

Expiry Date: 07/04/20

Stoneleigh Park, 6th Street, Nr Kenilworth, CV8 2LZ

Continued use of site as camping ground for a period of 5 years, commencing on 17/02/2020, to provide camping for a total of no more than 30 events per year.

Of these 30 events, for up to 20 events per year there shall be up to 60 tents/caravan pitches permitted in a designated area within the showground at any one time (not for members of the general public and not to exceed 7 consecutive days); for up to 10 events per year, 1375 tents/caravan pitches shall be permitted within the showground at any one time (not for the general public and not to exceed 7 consecutive days). FOR Grandstand Stoneleigh Events Ltd

This application is being presented to Committee due to the number of objections received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee is recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions listed at the end of this report.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is proposed for the continued use of the site as a camping ground for a period of 5 years, to provide camping for a total of no more than 30 events per year. Of these 30 events, for up to 20 events per year there shall be up to 60 tents/caravan pitches permitted in a designated area within the showground at any one time; for up to 10 events per year, 1375 tents/caravan pitches shall be permitted within the showground at any one time. This use would not be for the members of the general public to visit (only those visiting the events associated with the showground) and the camping could not to exceed 7 consecutive days for each event.

This is a renewal of the existing use of the site for camping and does not seek to change the number of events. However, the maximum number of camping pitches would be reduced by 372 pitches from the previous permission.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application site relates to Stoneleigh Park which hosts conferences, exhibitions and events. The camping areas are grassland accessed by a grid system of access roads. The site is a historic park and garden set within Green Belt. HS2 is planned to cross part of the site.

PLANNING HISTORY

There are a number of planning applications relating to Stoneleigh Park, the most relevant to this application are:

W/17/0880 - Variation of Condition 1 (time limit) and Condition 4 (limit on number of units and number of events per annum) of planning permission ref: W/14/1159 (To renew and extend existing camping license - W09/0584, to allow up to 1747 tents/caravan pitches within the showground at any one time. (Not for the general public, not to exceed 7 consecutive days for a maximum of 10 events per year. License to be for a period of 5 years commencing 1/10/2014 or until 1st June 2017 where identified on plan) to allow an additional period of operation until 01.10.2019 and the ability to provide an additional 20 events with up to 60 units per annum - Granted 06.07.2017

W/14/1159 - To renew and extend existing camping license - W09/0584, to allow up to 1747 tents/caravan pitches within the showground at any one time. (Not for the general public, not to exceed 7 consecutive days for a maximum of 10 events per year. License to be for a period of 5 years commencing 1/10/2014 or until 1st June 2017 where identified on plan.) - Granted 24.09.2014

W/13/0396 - Extension to camping license to allow 1430 tents and caravan pitches on showground for a temporary period (25th to 29th May 2013) - Granted 24th May 2013.

W/09/0584 - Temporary permission for 600 caravans/tents until 30th September 2014 - Granted 16th September 2009.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- BE1 - Layout and Design
- BE3 - Amenity
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets
- HE1 - Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets
- NE4 - Landscape
- MS2 - Major Sites in the Green Belt
- CT5 - Camping and Caravan Sites
- TR1 - Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR2 - Traffic generation (Warwick Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR3 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- Guidance Documents
- Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Historic England: No objection.

WDC Environmental Protection: No objection, subject to condition.

HS2: No objection, subject to time limit and informative note.

WCC Ecology: No objection, subject to notes.

Gardens Trust: No objection.

Natural England: No objection.

The Woodland Trust: Holding objection, on account of potential impact to two veteran trees, unless the applicant can demonstrate that an appropriate root protection area will be provided.

Public Response: 15 objections have been received on the following grounds:

- events have caused disturbance to local residents, through antisocial behaviour, noise, trespassing, vandalism, littering and odours which will increase;
- noise levels at night and increased traffic have become more disruptive, which causes blockages to residents accessing their properties;
- traffic will increase;
- unmanaged movements on and off the highway present highway safety concerns;
- damage to Grade II listed landscape resulting from drivers turning on grassland;
- it should be considered that the land taken up by HS2 will restrict options for managing the impacts on the local community;
- the applicant should be required to provide a "Green Travel Policy" and commit to incremental reduction in their carbon footprint;
- the site is being used as a racetrack;
- the description of development is unclear;
- concerns regarding sanitation;
- the organisers of events have little regard to nearby residents.

ASSESSMENT

The main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Whether the proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt and, if not, whether there are any very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm identified
- Impact on heritage assets
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Traffic generation and parking
- Ecological impact
- Impact on trees
- Other matters

Principle of the Development

The application site has a well-established use for camping and events. The original approval for temporary permission for camping was granted in 2009 which has been subsequently renewed a number of times, and is an established lawful use. Therefore, the principle of the continued use of the site is considered to be acceptable.

Whether the proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt and, if not, whether there are any very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm identified

As previously identified, the site has an existing established use. The site is also identified as a major developed site within the Green Belt in the adopted Local Plan, which recognises the importance of this site and its contribution towards the local economy and District. Camping is recognised as an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt, being for the purposes of outdoor recreation. The proposed continued use of the site would not intensify the use of the site and would actually reduce the number of pitches which could occupy the site during one of the restricted number of events.

It is therefore considered that the proposed continued use of the site would represent appropriate development and is in accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting when considering whether to grant a planning permission which affects a listed building or its setting.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage assets, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Members of the public have commented that the use of the site has caused damage to the Grade II listed landscape resulting from drivers turning on grassland.

The application site is located within a Registered Park and Garden, but would not increase the impact or harm on the heritage asset as part of the proposal. The site would be continued to be used in the same way as it is currently, albeit with a reduced number of pitches. Historic England have been consulted and have no objection to the proposal. The development is therefore not considered to cause harm to the heritage asset and is considered to be in accordance with the Local Plan and NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

There are residential properties which are located within the wider area of Stoneleigh Park. There have been objections raised from local residents who state that events have caused disturbance to through antisocial behaviour, noise, trespassing, littering and odours.

It must be noted that the proposal is the continuation of an existing lawful use and that the number of proposed pitches would be reduced, thus reducing the impact on neighbouring amenity in comparison to the existing situation. Previous applications have been subject to a condition requiring that a management plan is provided to control noise and smoke from camping activities. The condition also includes a curfew to prevent activities, including music, BBQs, camp fires from taking place after 11pm and a requirement for a security guard to monitor the site.

A document has been provided in support of the application entitled, "Rules, Regulations and Information" which lists such restrictions. Environmental Health Officers have assessed this and note that the information contained within the document is sparse. They therefore recommend that a Management Plan is required by way of a suitably worded planning condition that includes measures to control the impact of noise, smoke, and any other environmental issues likely to have an adverse impact on local amenity from the proposed camping activities.

As these measures can be suitably controlled by condition, the proposal is not considered to cause additional harm to neighbouring residential amenity.

Traffic generation and parking

Members of the public have raised concerns regarding traffic movements to the site and that the proposal would result in increased vehicular trips. Members of the public comment that unmanaged movements on and off the highway present highway safety concerns.

However, the number of events will remain the same as that which the applicant already has planning permission for, which is a material consideration when assessing this application. Furthermore, the proposed camping areas will reduce the maximum number of available camping pitches which is likely to reduce the traffic movements to the site. There are no proposed changes to the parking arrangements.

Ecological impact

WCC Ecology and Natural England have assessed the application. They both have no objection to the proposal which is not considered to have a detrimental ecological impact. WCC Ecology recommend advisory notes relating to reptiles and amphibians and in relation to lighting which affects animals, which have been added.

Impact on trees

The Woodland Trust have submitted a holding objection to the application, stating that the impact of the development on two veteran trees within the site has not be considered. However, the proposal is for the continuation of an existing use, which would reduce the number of pitches which could occupy the site for specific events. There would be no increase in the number of events, nor would there be any built development as part of the proposal.

Therefore, although the Woodland Trust have requested that an Arboricultural Impact Assessment is provided, detailing the protection measures for the veteran trees on site, this is not considered to be reasonable given the context of the existing lawful use of the site.

Other Matters

HS2 have been consulted and have no objection to the proposal, subject to a time limit of 5 years being imposed on the application, which was proposed by the applicant. Given the recent commitment from the Government to deliver HS2, a condition with the suggested time limit is considered reasonable and necessary for the purposes of the development.

Members of the public state that the land which will be required by HS2 will restrict options for managing the impact of the campsite for the local community. However, the permission is for a temporary period, and any impacts as a result of HS2 on future applications would be assessed at that time.

Members of the public have raised concerns regarding the blocking of the accesses to their properties as a result of people visiting the site for camping. However, this is a private matter which cannot be taken into consideration as part of the application.

Members of the public state that the applicant should be required to provide a "Green Travel Policy" and commit to incremental reduction in their carbon footprint. However, as this is a renewal of an existing permission for camping, which did not require the provision of a Green Travel Plan, it would be unreasonable to insist on this for the current application.

Concern has been raised regarding the description of development and lack of clarity regarding the proposal. The original description has been amended by Officers with the agreement of the applicant to more accurately reflect the proposal.

Concern has been raised regarding the nature of the events at the show ground and whether they fall within the original agreed use of the site, stating that the site should only be used for agricultural purposes. Members of the public raise particular concern regarding the use of the site for events for cars, or as a "racetrack". Officers have checked the original permission from 1980 (W/80/0073) and this included permission for events such as the Royal Show, other agricultural events, but also "general purpose shows". Since this time, various events including the Kitcar Show, VW Weekend, International Mini Show and the Land Rover

Owners Event have all taken place at the site and been given permission for associated camping, thus confirming these as appropriate events.

It is recognised that events which involve vehicles may cause more noise and disturbance to nearby residents than agricultural based events, however, the number of events has not increased since the previous permissions where Environmental Health Officers will have assessed the potential impact of such events on neighbours and deemed them to be acceptable.

A member of the public has raised concerns regarding sanitation, however, this is not a material planning consideration.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed use of the site for camping, which is a renewal of an existing permission, with a reduction in the number of pitches and would be for a temporary period of 5 years is acceptable and is therefore recommended for approval.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The permission hereby granted shall be limited to a time period of five years, commencing on the date of this decision. Upon cessation of the use hereby permitted be it on or before the expiration of the specified period, the land shall be restored to the former condition and use.
REASON: The use hereby permitted is one which, in general, is not in accordance with the approved use of this Green Belt site and a permanent consent could therefore prejudice the existing and future use of the site and be contrary to Policy MS2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011 - 2029 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF and to avoid a clash with timing and/or operational requirements of HS2.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawing 051019, and specification contained therein, submitted on 11th February 2020. **REASON :** For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies BE1 and BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 3 Within 3 months of the date of this permission a Management Plan must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Management Plan shall include measures to control the impact of noise and smoke from camping activities and should include details on:
(a) a curfew to prevent activities outside beyond 23:00 hours; (b) no amplified music to be played at any time outside pitches or within the caravans and tents; (c) no barbecues or camp fires at any time; (d) a security guard to patrol the camping site and proactively monitor for noise and smoke issues and respond to complaints and non-compliant guests; (e) how local residents will be notified of the events and how they can contact the organiser or showground to make a complaint and how such complaints would be dealt with. The development shall be

carried out in accordance with the approved details. **REASON:** To ensure that the level of noise or other disturbance emanating from the campsite is confined to levels which would not cause unacceptable disturbance to the detriment of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.

- 4 The site shall be used as a camping ground for a total of no more than 30 events per year. Any such event shall be for purposes related to the promotion of agriculture, equestrianism or countryside activities or as otherwise authorised under a legal agreement. Of these 30 events, for up to 20 events per year there shall be up to 60 tents/caravan pitches permitted in a designated area within the showground at any one time (not for members of the general public and not to exceed 7 consecutive days); for up to 10 events per year, 1375 tents/caravan pitches shall be permitted within the showground at any one time (not for the general public and not to exceed 7 consecutive days). **REASON:** Since any greater, or other, use would be contrary to Policy MS2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011 - 2029 and could result in an over-intensive use of the site contrary to its general approved use and its location in the Green Belt.
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