

Planning Committee: 23 July 2013

Item Number: 10

Application No: W 13 / 0827

Town/Parish Council: Leamington Spa
Case Officer: Liam D'Onofrio

Registration Date: 17/06/13

Expiry Date: 12/08/13

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Victoria Park, Archery Road, Leamington Spa

Erection of low profile storage buildings and associated landscaping screen of mixed native shrubs. FOR Warwick District Council

This application is being presented to Committee because Warwick District Council is the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission, subject to conditions.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for the erection of storage buildings to the southeast corner of the park on an existing hardstanding area. The two buildings will be linked into an L-shape measuring 10m by 8.5m by 2.6m high.

The supporting statement advises that increased event management demands and the establishment of Bowls England Headquarters with Leamington Spa have all led to a need for more storage. The proposal is to install two pre-cast concrete garages, painted dark green with green roofs at the southern end of the area with an "L" shaped footprint. These will be used for the dry storage of items associated with supporting events, for example Seats, barriers. The use of the dark colours will also repeat the appearance of the new tennis pavilion within the park, and also aid its screening from the roadside. The buildings themselves will in turn screen the view of parked cars.

The supporting statement notes that there are a number of self set trees that have established along the southern fence line, but the view from the road overlooks the entire length of the application site. It is proposed that boundary screening will be improved by establishing a 3 metre deep area of native shrubs.

As part of the works it is also proposed to improve the existing hardstanding area, which is used for informal parking. The supporting information notes that prior to 1994 the hardstanding area comprised of three in-line tennis courts with an access area, however the hardsurface had started to deteriorate for competitive play. The Council successfully secured funds to construct 10 new courts within the park which subsequently have had floodlighting added and are very popular.

The old three courts subsequently became established as an informal car parking, which is frequently but ineffectively used for parking as it is not formally marked out. The scheme includes a new parking layout, however this is indicative only.

Unlike the proposed storage buildings, which will be used by Bowls England, the laying of new hardstanding and formal marking out of the parking area will not require planning permission and may be carried out under Schedule 2, Part 12 (Development by Local Authorities) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. The re-surfacing/marketing out element has therefore been removed from the proposal description.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application site relates to Victoria Park, a Registered Historic Park situated within the Royal Leamington Spa Conservation Area. Victoria Park together with The Pump Room Gardens and Jephson Gardens to the east forms a green wedge which runs through the heart of Royal Leamington Spa. The park is located on the southern bank of the River Leam. The application site is a linear strip of hardstanding located to the eastern edge of the park and adjoining properties on Archery Road, Victoria Road and Avenue Road. The access into this area is from Archery Road to the north.

PLANNING HISTORY

Various historic applications for park buildings/shelters, flood lighting and bowls pitches, the most recent being:

W/13/0478 Temporary change of use of land for the installation of marquees, gazebos and shelters for use by sponsors, traders, officers, competitors and visitors to the annual Bowls England National Championships; and for the siting of up to 30 touring caravans for the accommodation of officials and competitors; all for a temporary period of not more than 36 days each year between the third week of July and the first week of September: Granted May 2013

RELEVANT POLICIES

- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP3 - Natural and Historic Environment and Landscape (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP6 - Access (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP7 - Traffic Generation (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DAP8 - Protection of Conservation Areas (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DAP11 - Protecting Historic Parks and Gardens (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- National Planning Policy Framework

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Royal Leamington Spa Town Council - No objection

WCC Highways - Comments awaited

WCC Ecology - No objection

ASSESSMENT

The main consideration in assessing this application are as follows:

- Design/Impact upon visual amenity;
- Impact upon neighbour's amenity;
- Other Matters.

Siting/design

Steel storage containers were initially considered to be located behind fence screening and planting, however it was felt that although the containers would nestle in an unobtrusive corner of the park, a more sympathetic solution should be found. The scheme therefore proposes buildings of a utilitarian design with simple pebble dash walls painted green with a green corrugated steel roof over, which are considered to be more appropriate to the park land setting. The buildings are set on a slightly lower land level to Avenue Road and with the addition of screen planting will assimilate well within the park. The scheme is not therefore considered to have any significant impact upon visual amenity or the character or setting of the conservation area.

Neighbours amenity

The adjoining apartment building No.52 Avenue Road has side facing windows looking onto the site, however these are secondary to the south facing windows in the property frontage. The proposed low-rise storage building will be set some 4.5m off the common boundary, which is formed by mature screening and the scheme is not therefore considered to raise any significant impact upon the amenities of these or other surrounding neighbours.

Other matters

The Ecologist has raised no objection to the scheme and agrees with the supporting statement that native species should be used for new landscaping, ideally of local provenance. These matters can be controlled by condition.

Given the nature of the proposed buildings, which will not have strip foundations, it is unlikely that the scheme will result in any detrimental impact upon the health or vitality of adjoining trees.

The application site is not in flood zone.

Summary/Conclusion

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the nature of the development would not cause unacceptable harm to neighbours' amenity, the character or setting of the Conservation Area or the Historic Park and Garden status of Victoria Park. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the policies listed.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 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 strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawing(s) HPS/VRT/02 and HPS/VRT/03, and specification contained therein, submitted on 17th June 2013. **REASON :** For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DP1 and DP2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- 3 The development hereby permitted shall only be undertaken in strict accordance with details of soft landscaping works which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation. Any tree(s) or shrub(s) which within a period of five years from the completion of the development dies, is removed or becomes in the opinion of the local planning authority seriously damaged, defective or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with another of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation. All hedging, tree(s) and shrub(s) shall be planted in accordance with British Standard BS4043 – Transplanting Root-balled Trees and BS4428 – Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. **REASON:** To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DP1, DP2 and DP3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.





