

# Planning Committee

Application Address	The Club at Meyrick Park, Central Drive, Bournemouth, BH2 6LH
Proposal	Extension of the Existing Car Park
Application Number	7-2024-9178-BI
Applicant	TCC operations Ltd
Agent	Chapman Lily Planning Ltd
Ward and Ward Member(s)	Talbot & Branksome Woods  Cllr Philip Broadhead Cllr Matthew Gillett Cllr Karen Rampton
Report Status	Public
Meeting Date	10 October 2024
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Grant in accordance with the details set out below for the reasons as set out in the report.</b>
Reason for Referral to Planning Committee	Referred for consideration by the Director of Planning & Transport as BCP Council is the owner of the land.
Case Officer	Steve Davies
Is the proposal EIA Development?	No

## Description of Proposal

- The proposal involves the extension of the existing Car Park which serves the Golf Course and Leisure Centre. It also provides parking for visitors to the park. The application site currently provides about 122 car parking spaces, including 4 disabled spaces but with the growing demand at the club, the current car park is often overcrowded. The proposal was to increase the car park to a total of 177 car parking spaces. However, following initial concerns the number of additional spaces has been reduced and now a total of 163 spaces and 6 disabled would be provided if the proposal were implemented. Echelon parking is now proposed so that the depth of the car park has been reduced. Also, the proposal does not include new lighting, and the surface is to be laid as hogging which is a more natural non-tarmac surface. The additional parking area is seen as an overflow car park. A 3.6m high safety fence is proposed to replace the existing fence to stop golf balls from the second tee going directly into the car park. This would replace the existing fence.

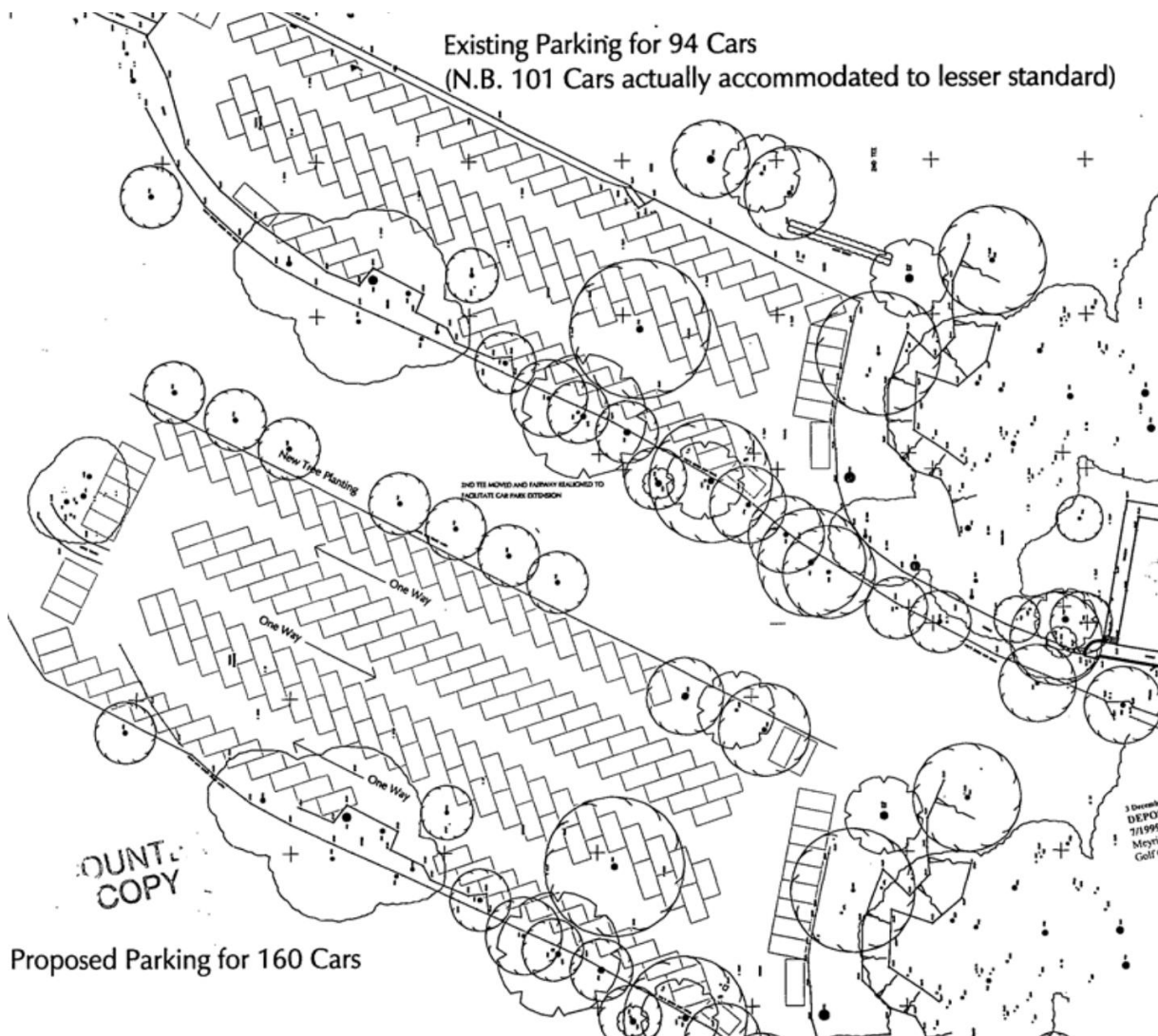
- 2 The proposal also involves the removal of the two small overflow car parks which are located either side of the driveway off Central Drive. These car parks are poorly located and not completely safe for staff to use from the golf course/leisure centre and are often subject to anti-social behaviour issues.

### **Description of Site and Surroundings**

- 3 Existing golf course, leisure club and public park. The application site lies within the park and is accessed off Central Drive. It forms part of the Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area which is an area where there are residential properties surrounding the golf course particularly to the immediate south across the 18<sup>th</sup> fairway.

### **Relevant Planning History:**

- 4 Approval was granted in January 2000 for an extension to the existing clubhouse to form a swimming pool and the formation of fitness suite and the erection of new club building and extension of the car park. The approval included an extension to the car park which was never implemented. See approved plan below.



## **Constraints**

- 5 The following constraints have been identified.

Conservation Area

Tree Preservation Order

Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI); SZ09/048 Meyrick Park, cited for its heathland and acid grassland habitats.

## **Public Sector Equalities Duty**

- 6 In accordance with section 149 Equality Act 2010, in considering this proposal due regard has been had to the need to —
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **Other relevant duties**

- 7 For the purposes of this application, in accordance with section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, due regard has been had to, including the need to do all that can reasonably be done to prevent, (a) crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and (c) re-offending in its area. In this case the site will be subject to normally licencing conditions which would help to control and anti-social behaviour.
- 8 For the purposes of this report regard has been had to the Human Rights Act 1998, the Human Rights Convention and relevant related issues of proportionality.
- 9 For the purposes of section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, in assessing this application, consideration has been given as to any appropriate action to further the “general biodiversity objective”.
- 10 Conservation Area: With respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area – section 72 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## **Consultations**

- 11 Highway Officer – *“The existing development which comprises of a health club, hotel and 18-hole golf course is to remain unaltered in scale, the applicant seeks only to increase the associated onsite car parking provision. The applicant has confirmed that the existing car park is frequently overcrowded thereby displacing parking onto surrounding roads causing increased competition for spaces with local residents and town centre visitors.*

*Owing to the growth of the business and increased demand for onsite facilities, particularly the golf course, additional staff and visitor car parking is required. Given the requirement to take golf equipment to/from the site, sustainable travel modes can be difficult and*

*inconvenient to use for golfers thus reduced levels of car parking are not likely to facilitate modal shift but instead displace parking on-street. Consequently, the provision of sufficient car parking within the site is appropriate and is considered to be a betterment of existing conditions.*

*For context, in accordance with the BCP Parking Standards SPD (2021), the site is actually located within parking zone D and as local community use, offering outdoor leisure/sports, indoor swimming etc, a car parking provision of 4 spaces/100m<sup>2</sup> could be considered appropriate. For a site comprising of 0.74 hectares, this would amount to the provision of circa 280 spaces. Consequently, an increase in parking to 177 spaces is acceptable [now that the number of spaces has been reduced to 163 the site would still be in the range of appropriate parking quantum for this use in this location]*

*Moreover, the provision of an additional two disabled bays and the introduction of electric vehicle charging infrastructure at 15 spaces represents an improvement of existing site conditions and is welcomed.*

*The proposed access, turning and parking arrangements for the extended car park area are acceptable whilst no alterations to existing access arrangements to/from the public highway are required.”*

- 11 Biodiversity Officer/Dorset Wildlife Trust – The application was submitted prior to the requirement to provide Biodiversity net gain. However, the proposal does have an impact on a local nature reserve, so the ecological impact is important. There were initial concerns as the proposals involves the loss of important acid grassland. The biodiversity officer has been in liaison with Dorset Wildlife Trust as their expert input is critical given the local nature reserve status. There were initial objections because of the loss of the grassland. However, the applicant is proposing to reinstate the lower car parks to natural habitat. Also, they have now agreed to carry out significant ecological enhancements to other sites needing upgrade and reinstating important grassland on other parts of the golf course which they manage.
- 12 Heritage Officer – *“the proposed scheme would not be acceptable in heritage terms, as it would result in elements which would be at odds with the open sylvan nature of the golf course which provides a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.*

*Hence, the scheme would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA, which has not been minimised or justified, considering additional parking could be provided elsewhere or alternative, sustainable means of transport could be explored to avoid the need for extending the car park. It is considered the benefits outlined in the Planning, Design and Access Statement (Including Heritage Statement) would be partially private to the club and would therefore be of insufficient public merit to outweigh the identified harm.”*

- 13 Drainage/Flooding – *“The proposed car park extension is outside the area mapped at risk from surface water, however it is proposed in an area which is currently greenfield and therefore poses a risk of increasing surface water. The car park must be designed to ensure no increase in surface water runoff from pre-development. We recommend the applicant considers how areas of proposed planting may be utilised for drainage through the use of tree pits and bioretention in addition to permeable paving materials for hard surfaces.*

*Should you be otherwise minded to grant permission, we recommend the inclusion of a surface water drainage condition prioritising the use of SuDS ‘at surface’ (such as*

bioretention and permeable materials), to ensure no increase in flood risk and protect water quality.”

- 14 Arboricultural Officer – “The area of land proposed for the car park extension is protected by a Woodland Tree Preservation Order and the Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area.

*There are however limited trees to this area and the impact will not be particularly high. The trees have limited visual amenity and transplanting and mitigating planting is feasible. Low quality trees are proposed for removal and young / maturing trees of good quality are proposed for transplanting to areas of land adjacent to the proposed new car park.*

*I consider the trees proposed for transplanting will be feasible and I support this proposal. I raise no objections to the loss of poor quality / low quality trees subject to suitable mitigating tree planting which is feasible. T33 is mentioned in the report as a tree for transplanting but this is not detailed on the plan. I believe this tree can be transplanted and this should be part of the transplanting scheme. Tree pruning proposed is considered to be minor and of no harm. Tree protection proposed is suitable.*

*I support the proposals for improving the growing conditions of retained trees and protecting them from vehicular impacts. I raise no objections to this proposal subject to a condition requiring compliance with the submitted arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan, a condition for a detailed constructional arboricultural method statement in accordance with section 2 page 10 of the arboricultural report, a condition for a detailed soft landscaping scheme that includes full details for tree transplanting, new and mitigating tree planting and maintenance for a five year period.”*

## **Representations**

- 15 Site notices were posted in the vicinity of the application site with an expiry date for consultation of 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024. A press notice expired on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
- 16 A representation has been received from a member of the general public setting out the following concerns.

*“Current parking is ample and never full. In addition there is excess parking down the lane which is never used. A ridiculous proposition to develop on a public park.  
Why not encourage people to travel by other more sustainable means. Rather than driving to a gym. Are they not local?”*

## **Key Issues**

- 17 The main considerations involved with this application are:

- Impact on character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Impact on residential amenity
- Biodiversity issues
- Transport Issues

These points will be discussed as well as other material considerations below.

## **Planning Policy Context**

## 18 Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy (2012)

CS1:	NPPF and Sustainable Development
CS6:	Delivering Sustainable Communities
CS18:	Increasing Opportunities for Cycling and Walking
CS29:	Protecting Tourism and Cultural Facilities
CS30:	Green Infrastructure
CS31:	Recreation, Play and Sports
CS38:	Minimising Pollution
CS39:	Heritage assets
CS41:	Quality Design

## 19 Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (2002)

Policy 4.4 – Development in Conservation Areas  
Policy 7.10 – Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities  
Policy 4.25: Landscaping

## 20 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Including the following relevant paragraphs:  
Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development;

Paragraph 11 –  
“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
  - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole.”

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy;  
Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities;  
Section 12 – Achieving well-designed spaces;  
Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.  
Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

## Planning Assessment

## Principle of development

- 21 A key objective of the Bournemouth Core Strategy through the policies as set out above seek to ensure sustainable communities through good quality development, supporting tourism, recreation and protecting spaces for recreation, walking and general enjoyment. Conserving the Natural and Historic environment is also a key objective.
- 22 Whilst there are concerns with the incursion of the car park into the historic and ecologically rich parkland the leisure use and car park are already established within the park. The proposal is an ancillary element. There are no strict policies such as green belt which would prohibit any development affecting the openness of the park nor any protected species or habitats that cannot be translocated.
- 23 On the basis of the above, and notwithstanding the issues of ecology and the relationship to the heritage assets as discussed below, the proposal is considered generally acceptable in principle and can be agreed in accordance with policy if sufficient weight is given to the benefits of the scheme.

## Impact on character and appearance of the area including the impact on the Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area

- 24 The golf course is set within an historic Victorian park and the course is home to the oldest public golf club in the country.

The Meyrick Park/Talbot Woods Conservation Area Appraisal states:

- *The golf links take up the majority of the area of green space comprising Meyrick Park, however, it is accessible to the public and contributes a great deal to the natural and verdant setting of the conservation area. The clubhouse and associated buildings are not on prominent view but integrate well into the surrounding landscape of the golf course.*

- 25 The impact is a key issue as the larger car park would intrude into the green parkland. At present the car park is somewhat tucked away behind trees when viewed from most directions apart from the North across the fairway. It would now become a more apparent feature from long views from the NW along and approaching the second fairway. However, tree planting and landscaping is proposed to soften the impact on the setting. The original proposal was for a newly tarmacked car park with lighting. This was not considered acceptable, and the proposal is now for a hogging surface without lighting as it is to be seen as an overflow car park. Whilst the car park is needed for peak times for the majority of the time visitors to the club would park in the first part of the existing car park which is closer and more convenient with a better surface.
- 26 Although the applicant has indicated that the enlarged car park is essential to avoid parking congestion anecdotal evidence suggests that for many times during the day the current car park is sufficient. However, currently they also rely on the overflow car parking for staff during busy periods. However, this more remote car park does present safeguarding issues. The proposal is to close this car park and return the land to parkland. This would have benefits to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and can be offset against any harm that the extended park might create.
- 27 The proposal would result in the loss of part of the fairway of the second hole but it would not otherwise affect the layout of the course. Any car park in this setting could be considered an intrusive element especially when full of cars, however, this is already a feature of this part of

the park. The heritage officer has some valid concerns. However, with landscaping and tree planting the impact can be mitigated and overall given that this part of the park is already “developed” it is not considered that the harm to the conservation area is significant or overwhelming. Also, an important factor is that when consent was granted for the leisure centre in 2000 the larger car as now proposed was approved. It is not clear why it was never constructed or the circumstances at the time but when approved the impact on the Conservation Area would have been a consideration.

- 28 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the harm to the Conservation Area is less than substantial and with landscaping would not be significant and not in conflict with policies CS39 and CS41 regarding impact on heritage assets and design in public spaces.

#### Impact on amenity

- 29 The car park extension is further away from the residential properties to the south than the existing car park and as no additional lighting is proposed the impact on residential amenity is considered to be negligible. There is a potential for it to be busier with more cars and activity, but the larger car park would ease congestion, shunting and shuffling of cars during busy periods. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal wouldn't cause harm to amenity and would accord with policies CS38 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Core Strategy.

#### Impact on ecology

- 30 As set out above discussions have taken place between the Councils Biodiversity Officer, Dorset Wildlife Trust and the applicant's Ecologist. The proposal results in the loss of important acid grassland within a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). Although this would be lost the applicant is proposing significant other gains including bat boxes, bird boxes, replacement hedgerow, new and transplanted trees and new landscaping. Also, they have agreed to create a new tract of managed grassland elsewhere in the park. This would result in a mown fairway being reclaimed to its natural grassland state. Overall, there would be significant ecological enhancements to the park and conditions are recommended below to ensure that the new grassland and other ecological benefits are implemented and managed appropriately in the future. On this basis, the proposal would be compliant with planning policy CS30 of the Bournemouth Core Strategy.

#### Transport Issues

- 31 As set out above the Transport Officer supports the proposal. The proposal in itself does not require additional parking or other transport benefits to be implemented. Looking at the parking guidelines the existing use would now require additional car parking numbers and hence the reason for the submission by the applicant. The proposal would give the congested car park more breathing space and the provision of EV charging points is a benefit to the area. On this basis, the proposal would be compliant with planning policies CS16 and CS18 of the Bournemouth Core Strategy.

#### Summary

- 32 In terms of impacts the proposal would inevitably have some impact on the setting and character of the Conservation Area and its parkland setting. There would be some tree loss and loss of acid grassland within the SNCI. However, the provision of additional parking with EV charging points would be of benefit to the operation of this important sport and recreational facility by providing a more convenient parking area. It would also remove the



overflow parking areas which have the potential for anti-social behaviour and provide a safer parking area for staff who currently park there.

### **Planning Balance / Conclusion**

- 33 As set out above it is considered that the proposal is on balance acceptable in terms of impact. The concerns about impact on the setting of the Conservation Area and the SNCI can be mitigated with landscaping and enhanced stewardship of the other areas of grassland elsewhere in the park. Policy CS39 seeks to protect heritage assets from harmful development but for the reasons set out above it is considered that the impact is not significant and there is the opportunity to return car parking areas elsewhere in the park back to their original natural parkland setting. The new parking would be beneficial for sports and recreation reasons and would provide additional parking for members of the general public that use the park for exercise and dog walking. There is unlikely to be any increase nuisance to local residents. Also the NPPF in paragraph 208 affords the opportunity to consider whether identified harm is outweighed by public benefits.
- 34 Many of the core strategy policies and specifically CS6 and CS31 seek to ensure sustainable communities through good quality development, supporting tourism/recreation and protecting spaces for recreation, walking and general enjoyment.
- 38 Therefore, having considered the appropriate development plan policy and other material considerations, including the NPPF, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions attached to this permission, the development would be in accordance with the Development Plan, would not materially harm the character or appearance of the area or the amenities of neighbouring and proposed occupiers and would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience. The Development Plan Policies considered in reaching this decision are set out above.

### **Recommendation**

- 39 **GRANT** permission with the following conditions, which are subject to alteration/addition by the Head of Planning Services provided any alteration/addition does not go to the core of the decision

#### **1. Development to be carried out in accordance with plans as listed**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 0364/001 rev A, location plan 0364/003,

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

#### **2. Drainage**

Any new or replacement hard surfaced area(s) shall either be made of porous materials, or provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the property.

Reason: To provide satisfactory drainage for the development in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012) and in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Local Planning Authority's Planning Guidance Note on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

Note: Further guidance in this regard is contained in the Department for Communities and Local Government publication entitled "Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens" (September 2008).

### **3. Prior agreement on car park surfacing**

Details and/or samples of the proposed car park surfacing and design of all ancillary engineering elements of the proposed development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any superstructure works on site. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the new development and the parkland setting in accordance with Policy CS39 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012).

### **4. Landscaping**

Within 3 months of the date of commencement of the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, full details of soft landscape works in accordance with the strategy submitted with the application shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Soft landscaping details shall include: (a) planting plans; (b) existing trees, hedges and shrubs to be retained; (c) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); (d) schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities; and (e) programme of implementation. The approved soft landscape scheme shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation use of the development commencing and permanently retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development includes a properly designed scheme of landscaping in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy 4.25 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (February 2002) and Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012).

### **5. Landscape Maintenance**

Within 3 months of the date of commencement of the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, full details of a landscape maintenance plan for a minimum period of 5 years shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation. The landscape management plan shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development includes a long-term management plan for the landscaped areas in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy 4.25 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (February 2002) and Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012).

### **6. Arboricultural Method Statement Implementation**

The tree protection measures as detailed in the arboricultural method statement dated 18 January 2024 and prepared by Barrells shall be implemented in full and in accordance with the approved timetable and maintained and supervised until completion of the development.

Reason: To ensure that trees and other vegetation to be retained are not damaged during construction works and to accord with Policy 4.25 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (February 2002).

Landscaping

Management Plan to enhance SNCI

Car park to remain as overflow with hogging surface and no lighting.

Prior closure removal lower overflow car parks and reinstatement to natural environment and measure to prevent future car parking.

Provision of electric charging points

Arboricultural method

Info note re wildlife and countryside act.

### **Statement required by National Planning Policy Framework**

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the revised NPPF the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The Council work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions,

In this instance:

the applicant was not provided with pre-application advice, but the application was dealt with following discussions with the applicant and subsequent amendments.

### **Background Documents:**

Documents uploaded to that part of the Council's website that is publicly accessible and specifically relates to the application the subject of this report including all related consultation responses, representations and documents submitted by the applicant in respect of the application.

Notes.

This excludes all documents which are considered to contain exempt information for the purposes of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972.

Reference to published works is not included.