

Agenda Item 10
Report PC60/17

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	14 September 2017
By	Director of Planning
Local Authority	Lewes District Council
Application Number	SDNP/17/01358/FUL
Applicant	Mrs Michelle Warner on behalf of Ditchling Parish Council
Application	Proposal for 40 space public car park to be constructed on a small agricultural field including provision for cycle stands and partial removal and replanting of hedgerow at Keymer Road Ditchling.
Address	Land at Keymer Road, Ditchling, BN6 6TR

Recommendation:

- 1. That planning permission be granted subject to:**
 - i) the conditions set out in Section 10 of this report.**
 - ii) the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure highways improvements including a financial contribution for the amendments of an existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)**
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application, with appropriate reasons if the S106 Agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been made on the agreement within 3 months of the 14 September Planning Committee meeting.**

Executive Summary

The site comprises a small parcel of agricultural land to the west of Ditchling Village within the strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer. To the north and west are agricultural land and Keymer Road lies adjacent to the southern boundary. A Grade II listed building known as Ditchling Court and the Old Manor House lie adjacent to the east site boundary.

The main issues in the determination of this application relate to the need for car parking facilities in Ditchling, the quality of the design, layout and landscape impact, access and highway safety; ecology; archaeology; impact upon residential amenity and the setting of an adjacent listed building.

The landscape harm resulting from the change of use and associated works is considered to be minor and is outweighed by wider social, environmental and economic benefits. Offsite highway improvements are required but are agreed between the Applicant and the Highway Authority to be subject to a Section 106 agreement.

In conjunction with landscaping enhancements, the development proposal is considered to address an identified need for the provision of visitor parking facilities to support services within Ditchling, thereby fulfilling the second purpose and duty without any significant degree of harm to the first

purpose of the National Park. Subject to conditions and a legal agreement the development is considered to be acceptable in this location.

The application is put before Members of the Planning Committee, as the development has the potential capacity to impact upon the visual amenities and landscape character of South Downs National Park in a sensitive strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer.

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The site is a 0.24 hectare field of semi improved grassland, located on the B2116 Keymer Road, Ditchling and takes access directly from the B2116. The site is located on the western edge of Ditchling and is approximately a 5-minute walk to the centre of the village where there are a number of services and facilities serving local residents and visitors.
- 1.2 Close by is the Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft and the war memorial on the junction into Lodge Hill Lane, which serves a number of residential properties.
- 1.3 A tall coniferous hedge grows along the eastern site boundary, which separates the site from the side/rear garden of the adjacent grade II listed dwelling. The Ditchling conservation area lies approximately 70 metres to the east of the closest boundary of the site.

2. Surrounding Landscape

- 2.1 The site lies adjacent to Keymer Road on the western edge of Ditchling within the Low Weald National Character Area (NCA) and the 'Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes', based on the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (ILCA).
- 2.2 There is a tall hedgerow along the southern boundary with the road and a narrow pavement leading towards the village.
- 2.3 A large field beyond the northern boundary continues towards a public footpath, which follows an ancient Roman road, approximately 130 metres beyond the northern site boundary.

3. Relevant Planning History

- SDNP/13/04089/PRE - proposed use of land for a pay and display car park - Advice given to submit LVIA
- SDNP/16/02322/PRE - proposed car park - Advice given on requirements for submitting a planning application

4. Proposal

- 4.1 The application proposes a new 40 space public car park to include dedicated cycle parking spaces and 3 disabled spaces. A new access and visibility splay would be created and the existing access blocked by new hedgerow planting. Two surface options are presented; one being an interlocking grid paver 'Grasscrete' system with a grass surface; and the other being a compacted buff coloured chipped stone covering.
- 4.2 It is also proposed to provide a scheme of landscaping including native hedgerow and tree planting along the western boundary, cleft chestnut post and rail fencing around the perimeter with further hedge planting. Planting species including Hornbeam, Hazel, Hawthorn and Blackthorn for hedges, and Dogwood, Dog Rose, Holly and Blackthorn for other shrub planting areas.

5. Consultations

5.1 Ditchling Parish Council - Support

- This facility is much needed in this part of the village.
- There is insufficient parking for both residents and visitors to the Ditchling Museum, the Church, The Village Barn & Green, The White Horse Pub and all other local businesses.
- The emerging Ditchling Street & Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan recognizes the importance of supporting the visitor economy (Core policy 5) and encouraging the provision and retention of local shops and community facilities (Core policy 6), protecting and enhancing community infrastructure (Core Policy 7).

- Policy Trans I of the Neighbourhood Plan specifically supports the introduction of a car park in this location.

5.2 **Landscape Officer – No objection subject to conditions**

- The applicant has taken note of the advice given and amendments have been made.
- The use of grid ‘Grasscrete’ system is not recommended as it is only appropriate for overflow car parking – grass will not grow well within a grid system in a within a more heavily used car park.
- No objection to the scheme subject to the approval of the gravel surface option [Landscape Strategy Plan - Gravel Surface Option HBA6 Rev A] rather than Grasscrete option [Landscape Strategy Plan - Proprietary Grass Surface Option HBA7 Rev A].

5.3 **Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions and Section 106**

- The applicant has now addressed all the original highway issues and fully assessed the traffic impact of this proposal. A stage I Road Safety Audit has been carried out on a new access in the south western corner of the site with the existing access being closed off. The applicant has agreed to widen the existing footway along the B2116 and extend the 30mph speed limit to encompass the access and provide a £5,000 Contribution for any necessary alterations to the existing Traffic Regulation Order. I am therefore satisfied that the impact of this development [40 space car park] can be accommodated on the highway network provided the mitigation measures are carried out. Therefore my recommendation for refusal dated 29th June 2017 is withdrawn and I recommend that the application be approved subject to highway conditions and a section 106/278 Agreement to secure the highway works.
- A Section 106 agreement (including provisions for a S278 Highway agreement to cover the physical works detailed below) would be required to include provision of:
 - New dropped kerbs and/or tactile paving on Keymer Road across the access point and at the junctions of Lodge Hill Lane [to be agreed] to the east of the proposed access to the site;
 - widening of existing footway on the northern side of Keymer Road along the whole of the site frontage [details to be agreed] and continuing eastwards up to the start of the boundary flint wall of the property known as “Ditchling Court”;
 - extension of the 30mph westwards along the B2116 to encompass the new site access [details to be agreed];
 - contribution of £5,000 for carrying out consultations, site notices etc. for altering the existing Traffic Regulation Order to extend the existing 30mph past the site;
 - together with associated 4 stage Road Safety Audits.

5.4 **Ecology – No Objection subject to conditions**

5.5 **Archaeology - Objection due to insufficient information**

- Development is within an Archaeological Notification area defining a significant area of Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation and activity, as well as being adjacent to a roman road and in close proximity to the Saxon manorial section of the town of Ditchling. The HER records a significant number of prehistoric flint tools were found in this field in the seventies.
- The applicant has failed to meet the requirements of section 128 of the NPPF and it is not possible to clarify the impact of the proposal on heritage assets or archaeological remains.
- In the light of the potential archaeological interest of this site, the developer should undertake an archaeological field evaluation to clarify the archaeological significance of the site.
- The evaluation should be undertaken before the application for planning permission is decided, so that archaeological issues can be fully considered when the planning decision is made.
- If the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning permission without sufficient understanding of the heritage significance of this site, then it is suggested that the

conditions for a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and associated site and post investigation assessments be required by condition.

5.6 **Environmental Health – Awaiting comments (Members will be updated)**

6. **Representations**

6.1 2 Letters of objection:

- Further erosion of the strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer.
- Loss of green space and agricultural land.
- Location outside of village speed restriction is dangerous.
- Loss in a section of footpath between Ditchling and Downland Secondary School.
- Loss of tranquillity and privacy for adjoining residents.
- May lead to development of surrounding gardens.
- No wish to see cutting back of perimeter hedge.

6.2 8 Letters of Support:

- Much needed parking for visitors.
- Lodge Hill Lane parking is inadequate for visitors to Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft.
- Cars are regularly parked on double lines at bottom of Lodge Hill Lane.
- Lodge Hill Lane verges are impacted by existing parking situation.
- A new car park will improve the situation for disabled users.
- The car park is vital for trade in Ditchling.
- The existing parking problem is highlighted in the neighbourhood plan.
- The site has received widespread support.

6.3 3 letters with neutral comments

- There is a need for further parking in Ditchling.
- This car park will not be convenient for people who live in the centre of the village without parking.
- Visitors currently use Lodge Hill Lane and if the car park is created it should not be a reason to stop parking in Lodge Lane.
- Lodge Lane has always been available for people to park and it is more secure and much closer to the church, the pond and the village.
- Many people in the centre of the village do not have parking and it is unfair they should lose this facility.
- It will be easier for people who have young children or are disabled to access the church, the Green and the museum.
- If the parking is properly organised then the residents of Lodge Lane and Boddingtons Lane would not be inconvenienced.

6.4 Third party Comments

6.5 **Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft - Support**

- Supportive of this car park in order to encourage traffic to stop en-route through the village, to stop the destruction of the lanes and verges by poor parking, and to encourage visitors to the village to use the tea-rooms, pubs, shops and post office which rely on the economic impact of visitors but are of a central community asset for those who live in the village.

6.6 **The Ditchling Society – Neutral**

- The protection of the strategic gap and the need for additional car parking in the village have both been accommodated within the framework of the Neighbourhood Plan. Extensive consultation has taken place in the process of compiling this Plan, which the Ditching Society supports. The results of these consultations should be respected wherever possible and therefore no opinion is expressed on this application.

7. Planning Policy Context

National Park Purposes

- 7.1 The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of their areas;
 - To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.
- 7.2 If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 2010

- 7.3 Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.
- 7.4 The proposal is not considered to be major development, based upon an assessment of whether the proposals would have the potential to have a serious adverse impact on the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of the National Park, by reason of their scale, character or nature and the context of the site. The site covers a small piece of agricultural land that is well contained in the landscape by existing trees and hedgerow. The use would be contained within the field. The proposal is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 7.5 The site lies approximately 50 metres west of a grade II listed building and the western edge of the Ditchling Conservation Area. In accordance with section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. In addition, the South Downs National Park Authority also has a duty to conserve and enhance Listed Buildings in accordance with their cultural heritage value, in line with the first purpose of the National Park.

Statutory Development Plan

- 7.6 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan in this area comprises the **Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy 2016** (referred to in this report as JCS) and saved policies of the **Lewes District Local Plan 2003** (referred to in this report as LDLP). The relevant development plan policies listed below have been assessed and are considered to be compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.7 The following saved policies of the Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy 2016 are relevant to this proposal:
- CP5 - The Visitor Economy
 - CP8 - Green Infrastructure
 - CPI0 - Natural Environment and Landscape
 - CPI2 - Flood Risk, Coastal Erosion and Drainage
 - CPI3 - Sustainable Travel
- 7.8 The saved policies of the Lewes District Local Plan (2003), which are also relevant are:
- CT1 - Planning Boundary and Key Countryside
 - ST3 - Design, Form and Setting of Development
 - ST5 – Access for people with limited mobility

- ST11 – Landscaping of development
- T1 – Travel demand management
- T10 – [Safe and secure pedestrian routes]
- T13 & T14 – [Changes of use - Parking and sustainable access]
- H2 – Listed Buildings
- H5 - Development within or affecting Conservation Areas
- H7 - Traffic in Conservation Areas

South Downs Partnership Management Plan

7.9 The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP) was adopted on 3 December 2013. It sent out a vision and long term Outcomes for the National Park, as well as 5 year Policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework. The SDPMP is a material consideration in planning applications and has some weight pending adoption of the SDNP Local Plan. Relevant policies are:

- Policy 1 aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape and its setting, in ways that allow it to continue to evolve and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and other pressures;
- Policy 3 aims to protect and enhance tranquillity and dark night skies;
- Policy 25 aims to actively promote water efficiency measures and more sustainable patterns of domestic, industrial, farming and leisure water use, to reduce overall water use;
- Policy 28 aims to improve and maintain rights of way and access land, to provide a better connected and accessible network for a range of abilities and users, and to reduce conflict where it occurs;
- Policy 29 aims to enhance the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors by encouraging, supporting and developing the use of the National Park as a place for healthy outdoor activity and relaxation;
- Policy 30 aims to develop ‘access for all’ opportunities, particularly supporting those groups currently underrepresented in the National Park visitor profile;
- Policy 31: Raise awareness and understanding about the National Park with consistent messages that inspire and celebrate a strong sense of place.
- Policies 37 and 39 seek to encourage cycling for commuting and leisure and promotion of a seamless network. Also the management vehicle parking.
- Policy 41 aims to maintain visitor enjoyment and influence visitor behaviour in order to reduce impacts on the special qualities and increase visitor spend in and around the National Park.
- Policy 43: Support the development and maintenance of appropriate recreation and tourism facilities and visitor hubs, in and around the National Park, including a mix of quality accommodation, which responds to market demands and supports a sustainable visitor economy.
- Policy 48 seeks to support the towns and villages in and around the National Park to enhance their vital role as social and economic hubs.

South Downs Local Plan

7.10 The South Downs Local Plan – Pre-Submission was approved for consultation by the National Park Authority on 11 July 2017 under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The next stage in the plan preparation will be the formal publication of the ‘Pre-Submission’ version (the consultation period will formally start in September 2017) and then submission of the Local Plan for independent examination. Until this time, the South Downs Local Plan – Pre-Submission is a modest material consideration in the assessment of this application in accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF, which confirms that weight can be given to policies in emerging plans following publication. Based on the stage of preparation of the policies within the South Downs Local Plan – Pre-Submission, they are currently afforded limited weight and are not relied upon in the consideration of this application.

Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 7.11 The SDNPA has published the submitted Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Development Plan for consultation in accordance with Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The consultation ran from Wednesday 5 July to Monday 28 August 2017. Based on the stage of preparation of the policies within the Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Development Plan, they are currently afforded limited weight and are not relied upon in the consideration of this application.
- 7.12 However, regard is had towards policy TRANS1 of the emerging plan which supports the provision of off-street car parking on Keymer Road and shows the direction of travel in relation to policy for this particular development. The policy states: 'The provision of a new off-street car park on Keymer Road is supported. The design should be location-appropriate, with facilities for all classes of traffic including foot traffic, horse boxes and provision of secure cycle racks. Detailed design of visibility splays into the site entrance will also take account of local rural character, including gates, fencing, bollards and signage'.

8. Planning Assessment

8.1 The main considerations to be determined as part of this application are:

- Principle for car parking facilities;
- Design and impact on the National Park landscape including the Strategic Gap;
- Access, parking and highway safety;
- Residential amenity;
- Archaeology;
- Ecology;
- Impact on the setting of adjacent heritage assets;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Other issues.

Principle for car parking facilities

- 8.2 Ditchling is a popular visitor destination and experiences traffic congestion and parking pressures on limited street parking and capacity of the existing public car park situated at the village hall. Representations have been submitted to advise that there is an ongoing issue regarding on street parking congestion and damage or roadside verges, particularly on Lodge Hill Lane.
- 8.3 Core Policy 13 (Sustainable Travel) seeks to promote new and upgraded infrastructure in order to support sustainable communities. LDLP policies T1 (Travel Demand Management) and T14 (Vehicle Parking) are the main relevant Lewes policies and the proposal is considered to be in accord with these policies for the reasons outlined below.
- 8.4 The Ditchling Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Development Plan has been informed by a Traffic and Transport Paper (2016), which sought to provide an evidence base regarding the level of need for additional parking. This was detailed by results of the household questionnaires and local focus groups. This paper highlighted existing issues relating to congestion, lack of on street parking and impact upon the visitor economy. The paper highlighted an overwhelming choice for more car parking capacity through a new car park in Keymer Road.
- 8.5 Policy TRANS1 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan proposes to allocate this site for car parking to meet an identified need within Ditchling. It is recognised that there is a shortage of parking provision for both visitors and residents, although the proposed scheme would largely benefit visitors to the village. The focus of this assessment relates to Lewes planning policies as set out in the LDLP and JCS, given that the Neighbourhood Plan still carries limited weight.
- 8.6 Visitors will be encouraged to visit the Village and be able to access the surrounding National Park, where previously visitors who wanted to stop in Ditchling were unable to find a parking space. The site is within easy walking distance from the museum, church, village green and village centre. The proposed site is particularly well related to the museum,

which currently relies on on-street visitor parking along Lodge Hill Lane. This is highlighted in several of the representations as a point of contention between visitors and local residents.

- 8.7 The Local Planning Authority recognises strong local support for additional parking in Ditchling, particularly where it supports existing services and facilities. The provision of car parking facilities is considered to be necessary and supported under Parts 3 and 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework, with the potential to enhance the vitality of the Ditchling community in a sustainable location.
- 8.8 Access to public footpaths and bridleways would also be improved by widening the pedestrian footpath running from the site entrance along the approach to the village.
Design and impact on the National Park Landscape, including the Strategic Gap
- 8.9 The Lewes Landscape Capacity Study (LLCS) 2012 places the site within Character Area A: Lodge Hill and identified the main constraint to development around Ditchling as its visual sensitivity.
- 8.10 The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which is considered to be an appropriate assessment of the proposed development and its visual impact upon landscape character.
- 8.11 Policy CT1 seeks to retain the open character of the countryside particularly where it separates settlements and prevents their coalescence. Land to the west of Ditchling is defined as particularly open, gaining uninterrupted views to the Downs. The LLCS states the land has potential for small-scale change but within the context of a strong landscape structure. It goes on to state that 'Land to the west provides a gap between Ditchling and Keymer' and suggest there is very little scope to accommodate change as a result of the open and expansive views. However it also states there may be some potential for change where it is close to the edge of Ditchling.
- 8.12 The provision of a car park in this location is not considered to result in significant harm to local landscape character through encroachment of the strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer. It is acknowledged that there are other developments within this gap including the Ditchling Cricket Pavilion, however there remains a gap of approximately 550 metres between the two settlements.
- 8.13 The site is generally well enclosed and positioned on the edge of an existing residential garden and tennis court. As such, it is not considered that the open and expansive views that are characteristic of this part of the countryside would be significantly affected. It is not considered that the development would diminish the strategic gap between the settlements or significantly erode the openness of the rural area.
- 8.14 The car park design seeks to minimise uncharacteristic urbanised features through the use of timber parking delineation, timber cycle stands, cleft chestnut post and rail fencing with Holly, Dog Rose, Blackthorn and other native planting. The proposed car park is not considered to be an incongruous features within the local landscape, nor widely visible from the surroundings. Additional tree and hedgerow planting is also proposed along the north and western boundaries and therefore it should be noted that views from the public right of way to the north would be reduced by the proposed landscaping scheme.
- 8.15 The applicant has provided two plans for the site, one featuring a grid based 'Grasscrete' surface and the other a hard stone surface, both of which would be laid over a compacted stone sub base. The landscape officer has recommended that a gravel surface is used rather than a grid 'Grasscrete' system, given the planned frequent use of the car park.
- 8.16 Overall, the landscape impact associated with the scheme is considered to be acceptable. Whilst the development represents a new presence in a previously undeveloped countryside location within the strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer, the development is considered to be relatively minor in terms of wider landscape and visual impact. The proposal is considered to comply with JCS Core Policy 10, and LDLP policies CT1, ST3 and ST11.

Access, Parking and highway safety

- 8.17 In terms of access and infrastructure, saved policies T1 and T10 require sustainable locations providing good access to services and provision for people with disabilities, unless the need for less sustainable location is overriding. Designs should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.
- 8.18 Policies T13 and T14 requires safe and secure access to be provided for new development without the loss of existing on street parking provision. The relationship between Ditchling and its accessibility to visitors is an important consideration, having regard to the second purpose of the National Park. It is recognised that provision of a car park onto Keymer Road has the potential to impact highway safety although it would also alleviate the need for on street parking elsewhere. The applicant has submitted a road safety audit and amended plans to provide visibility splays in both directions along Keymer Road.
- 8.19 The proposed scheme includes cycle spaces close to the new shared entrance with upgrading of the existing footpath. The existing Public Rights of Way are not affected by the proposed development.
- 8.20 East Sussex Highway Authority has confirmed that they do not object to the proposal subject to conditions and a Section 106 for highway improvements as agreed with the Parish Council. The agreement would also secure physical works and a contribution of £5,000 to alter the existing Traffic Regulation Order to extend the existing 30mph past the site. Conditions are listed under section 10.
- 8.21 Subject to conditions and a legal agreement to be secured for offsite works, including the widening of the existing pavement to 2 metres (to promote safe pedestrian access) it is considered that the proposal would meet the objectives of Core Policies 7 and 13 of the JCS as well as saved policies T1, T10, T13 and T14 of the LDLP.

Residential amenity

- 8.22 Policy ST30 of the LDLP confirms that 'the Council will need to be satisfied on the following matters: b) that development will have an acceptable impact on the surrounding area in terms of its effect on health, the natural environment, or general amenity, resulting from the releases to water, land or air, or noise, dust, vibration, light or heat'.
- 8.23 Despite concerns from residents of the adjoining residential property, it is considered that the site is generally a good distance from the dwelling and with the conifer hedge along the boundary and extent of garden space available, it is not considered there would be undue noise disturbance or loss of amenity to the existing or future occupants of this dwelling, particularly given the likely times of use. Plan amendments show the new access would not impact on the neighbour's hedge boundary adjacent to the road.

Archaeology

- 8.24 Policy H11 of the LDLP states that on sites of known archaeological significance or interest, the District Council will ensure that the archaeological aspects of development proposals are assessed before planning applications are determined. Planning permission will not normally be granted where there is not an adequate assessment of archaeological implications.
- 8.25 The development lies within an archaeological notification area defining an area of Mesolithic and Neolithic significance. The local Historic Environment Record identifies that a significant number of prehistoric flints were found within the field.
- 8.26 Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets a requirement on the level of detail required to be submitted by applicants to consider the impact on heritage assets. This states that as a minimum 'the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.

- 8.27 The proposal has the potential to affect archaeological features through excavation and construction of the access, and car park. The Archaeologist has objected to the proposed scheme on the basis that the applicant has failed to describe the archaeological significance through a field evaluation including a geophysical survey and targeted trenching and is of the view that such an evaluation should be undertaken before this application is decided. The Archaeologist considers that the lack of an assessment of heritage impact contradicts the requirements of Para 128 of the Framework as well as policy H11 of the LDLP.
- 8.28 The Local Planning Authority has raised this issue with the agent, who has advised that the proposed development would entail minor excavation of no more than 400mm from existing ground level. It is suggested that the field has always been in an agricultural use and has been ploughed to a level of approximately 300-400mm from existing ground level. Therefore the impact on any archaeological significance is stated to be negligible. This is considered to be a material consideration which adds weight to addressing this matter by way of appropriate conditions.
- 8.29 Despite objecting to the proposal, the archaeologist also confirms that if the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning permission without an understanding of heritage significance, conditions for a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation and site and post investigation assessment are recommended to be implemented upon the grant of consent.
- 8.30 At the time of writing this report, the applicant is seeking further engagement with East Sussex Archaeology regarding field survey work. Any further information will be provided on the update sheet. If members are minded to approve the application on the basis of information currently available, it is recommended that conditions for a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and further detailed assessments be carried out during and after works.

Ecology

- 8.31 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- 8.32 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted by Aspect Ecology concludes that the proposed development has sought to minimise ecological impacts. Subject to the implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will result in significant harm to biodiversity. On the contrary, the opportunity exists to provide a net gain for biodiversity as part of the proposals
- 8.33 The Ecologist has not objected to the application on the basis of the survey work undertaken and recommendations for mitigation set out within the ecological appraisal by Aspect Ecology. The Ecologist concludes that the development is acceptable subject to conditions.

Impact on the setting of adjacent heritage assets

- 8.34 The site is located adjacent to the garden of a detached grade II listed building and approximately 40 metres from the edge of the Ditchling Conservation Area. The relationship between these features is remote, and it is not considered that the change of use or proposed works would detract from the setting of these heritage assets, given that the site is well screened from plain view, and additional landscape works are proposed.
- 8.35 The provision of a dedicated car park may alleviate parking issues at Lodge Hill Lane and improve the character, appearance and amenities of the village conservation area in support of policy H7 of the LDLP.

Flood risk and drainage

- 8.36 The submitted Drainage Strategy details that the site comprises well-draining sandstone to which surface water freely drains, and the site lies within flood zone 1 which has the lowest risk of flooding. The proposed use of a gravel surface over a compacted stone sub base is considered to retain the existing well-draining characteristic. Final details can be secured by

the imposition of an appropriate condition to comply with Core Policy 12 of the JCS.

Other issues

- 8.37 Paragraph 125 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that, 'planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.' The South Downs Local Plan also seeks to protect the Park's Dark Skies Designation from unnecessary lighting associated with development.
- 8.38 No external lighting is proposed. Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the tranquillity of the site without illumination. It is considered that a suitable condition to restrict lighting be imposed.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Subject to conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement for highways improvements, including the widening of the existing pedestrian access and relocation of road speed signage, the proposed development is considered to address an existing lack of visitor parking provision within Ditchling. The limited degree of landscape harm caused is considered to be mitigated by the scheme of landscaping proposed and does not outweigh the social and economic benefits to the village with further archaeological and ecological issues being managed through planning conditions. On this basis, the proposal is considered to meet purposes 1 and 2 of the National Park in accordance with Core Policies 5, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 of the Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy, saved policies CT1, ST3, ST5, ST11, T1, T10, T13, T14, H5, H7 and H11 of the Lewes District Local Plan 2003 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 9.2 The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to i) the schedule of conditions listed at Section 10 and ii) within 3 months of the date of the committee the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure a financial contribution for off-site Highway improvements as recommended by the Highways Authority.

10. Recommendation and Conditions

- 10.1 Application SDNP/17/01358/FUL is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out below and the completion of a Section 106 for a financial contribution to secure highways improvements. The recommended conditions are as follows:

General 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 the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)/ To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading 'Plans Referred to in Consideration of these Applications'.

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

Detailed Designs and Landscape

3. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the submitted landscaping plan [Landscape Strategy Plan - Gravel Surface Option HBA6 Rev A] including schedule of plants and materials. No development shall take place until details and a sample of the car park surface material and detail or sample of the material for parking space demarcation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. Further details shall also be provided in a schedule of landscaping works to be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement to include:
 - i) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment);
 - ii) planting methods;

- iii) schedules of plants noting the mix of species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities or seeding where appropriate;
- iv) retained areas of grassland cover, scrub, hedgerow and trees;
- v) manner and treatment of boundaries, watercourses, ditches and banks;
- vi) a schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of 5 years include details of the arrangements for its implementation; and
- vii) a timetable for implementation of the landscaping works

The landscaping works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetable. Any plant which dies, becomes diseased or is removed within the first five years of planting, shall be replaced with another of similar type and size, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the rural character and amenities of the area and to minimise the risk of pollution and impact on biodiversity in accordance with saved policy

Drainage

4. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage works has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such works shall be implemented to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the site for the parking of vehicles.

Reason: To secure a satisfactory standard of development and long term surface water drainage in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity

5. The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the recommendations set out under 'Mitigation Measures and Ecological Enhancements' of the Aspect Ecology Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report dated January 2017.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity, to manage any residual risk and to enhance the ecological value of the site.

Archaeology

6. No development shall take place until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework

7. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved under condition [7] to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework

Light pollution and lighting

8. No external lighting shall be installed on-site without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority and this condition shall apply notwithstanding the provisions of the Town And Country planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, 2015, or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order.

Reason: To protect the character of the countryside, and the designated International Dark Night Reserve, which is part of the special quality of the South Downs National

Park, in accordance with National Park Purposes and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Time restriction for use

9. The approved use of the site for vehicular parking and turning shall be restricted solely to the hours between 07:00 and 22:00. No parking is permitted at any time outside of these hours.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality and nearby residents in accordance with policy ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

10. No development shall take place, including any ground works or works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to in full throughout the entire construction period. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate but not be restricted to the following matters:

- the anticipated number, frequency and types of vehicles used during construction;
- the method of access and egress and routeing of vehicles during construction;
- the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors;
- the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste;
- the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development;
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding;
- the provision and utilisation of wheel washing facilities to be installed and utilised throughout the period of work in order to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders); and
- details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area and having regard to ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan and to comply with guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. No part of the development shall be used until the car parking, vehicle turning area and secure cycle parking spaces have been constructed and provided in accordance with the approved plans. The parking areas and turning space shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles and associated vehicular turning as specified on the approved plans and within the applicant's supporting statement.

Reason: To secure the provision of car and cycle parking spaces in order to meet the identified need, and in the interests of road safety.

12. No part of the development shall be occupied until provision has been made of measures to prevent surface water draining onto the public highway in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and having regard to ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan and to comply with National Policy Guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. No part of the development shall be occupied/brought into use until such time as the existing vehicular access onto Keymer Road [B21 I6] has been physically closed to vehicular traffic in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

14. No part of the development shall be brought into use until visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 120 metres to the west and 75 metres to the east have been provided at the proposed site vehicular access onto Keymer Road [B21 I6] in accordance with the

approved plans. Once provided the splays shall thereafter be maintained and kept free of all obstructions over a height of 600mm.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and having regard to ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan and to comply with National Policy Guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

15. No development shall take place, including any clearance/demolition, on the site until an agreed pre commencement condition survey of the surrounding highway network has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any damage caused to the highway as a direct consequence of the construction traffic shall be rectified at the applicant's expense.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area.

II. Informatives

- This permission is subject to an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to be completed within a period of three months of the date of the September Committee meeting. Planning permission is to be refused if the agreement has not been completed or substantial progress made towards agreeing its completion within this period.
- The applicant is advised that this consent does not override any obligations in respect of protected species under the relevant wildlife legislation. In particular, it is an offence to disturb nesting birds or roosting bats which are protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is a criminal offence to wilfully cause harm to either. If you suspect that the development will disturb any protected species, or protected species are encountered during construction, works must stop immediately and advice sought from Natural England or a professional ecologist before proceeding.
- In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development it should be reported in writing to East Sussex County Council. An investigation and risk assessment should be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme should then be prepared, implemented and verified with copies of all relevant records being provided to East Sussex County Council.
- The applicant will be required to enter into a Section 278 legal agreement with East Sussex County Council, as Highway Authority, for the off-site highway works. The applicant is requested to contact the Transport Development Control Team (01273 482254) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the agreement being in place.
- The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirement for the temporary access to the site [see conditions above]. Whilst there is an existing access which the applicant may wish to use for construction vehicles, this access in its present form may not be adequate and would require alterations/improvements for construction vehicles.
- The applicant will be required to obtain a permit for any highway works in accordance with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act, 2004. The applicant should contact East Sussex Highways (0345 60 80 193) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the permit being in place.
- The applicant is advised of the requirement to enter into discussions with and obtain the necessary licenses from the Highway Authority to cover any temporary construction related works that will obstruct or affect the normal operation of the public highway prior to any works commencing. These temporary works may include, the placing of skips or other materials within the highway, the temporary closure of on-street parking bays, the imposition of temporary parking restrictions requiring a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order, the erection of hoarding or scaffolding within the limits of the highway, the provision of cranes over-sailing the highway. The applicant should contact the Transport Development Control Team (01273 482254).
- The applicant is advised that the erection of temporary directional signage should be agreed with Transport Development Control Team prior to any signage being installed.

The applicant should be aware that a Section 171, Highways Act 1980 license will be required.

- The applicant is advised to contact the Transport Development Control Team (01273 482254) to commence the process associated with the proposed Traffic Regulation Order. The applicant would be responsible for meeting all costs associated with this process which is a minimum of £5000. The applicant should note that the outcome of this process cannot be guaranteed as it is open to public objection.

12. Crime and Disorder Implication

12.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

13. Human Rights Implications

13.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

14. Equality Act 2010

14.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

15. Proactive Working

15.1 In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the NPPF. This has included the provision of pre-application advice from the SDNPA Development Management Officer, the opportunity to provide additional information to overcome technical issues and the opportunity to amend the proposal to add additional value as identified by SDNPA Officers and consultees.

TIM SLANEY

Director of Planning

South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer: Luke Smith

Tel: 01730 819258

email: Luke.Smith@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices
1. Site Location Map
2. Plans List

SDNPA Consultees: Legal Services

Background documents: All Planning Application plans, supporting documents, consultation and third party responses

National Planning Policy Framework, 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance

SDNP Partnership Management Plan

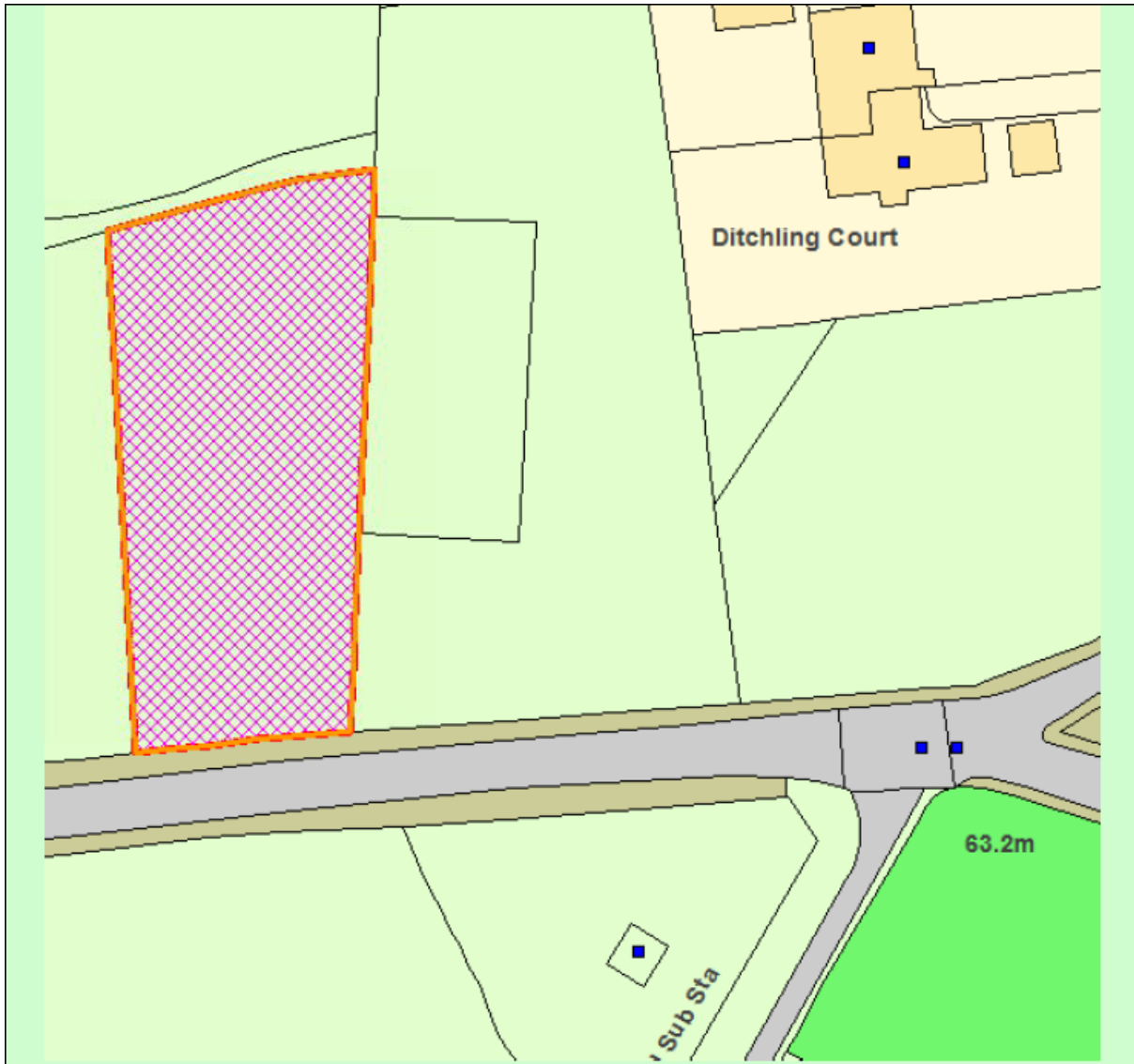
Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy 2016

Lewes District Local Plan (2003)

Lewes District Council Saved Policies

Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan

Site Location Map



This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. South Downs National Park Authority, Licence No. 100050083 (2012) (Not to scale)

Plans Referred to in Consideration of these Applications

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date on Plan	Status
Plans - Block Plan - Proposed Amendments to Car Park Amended	DITCHLING_I 2A	A	22.03.2017	Not Approved
Plans - Location Plan	DITCHLING_I 3		22.03.2017	Approved
Plans - Proposed Amendments to Car Park - Superseded	DITCHLINGI2		14.03.2017	Superseded
Plans - Amended Proposed Access Arrangement including Achievable Visibility	DITCHLING_I 6A		26.07.2017	Not Approved
Plans - Landscape Strategy Plan - Proprietary Grass Surface Option	HBA7	A	29.08.2017	Not Approved
Plans - Landscape Strategy Plan - Gravel Surface Option	HBA6	A	29.08.2017	Approved
Plans - Landscape Strategy Elevation	HBA8		29.08.2017	Approved

