

Application No: 11/00489/F	Ward: Wroxton	Date Valid: 14 April 2011
Applicant:	Mr Nicholas Turner	
Site Address:	Drayton leisure Golf Centre, Warwick Road, Banbury	

Proposal: Change of use from agriculture to camping field (up to 25 touring caravans, including hard road and hard standing) overflow car parking. Installation of temporary shower and toilet block adjacent to club house. Removal of the existing car park to be re landscaped, levelled and turned into a putting green. Re-landscaping and levelling of the old putting green and surround. Raising and levelling the outside practice tee area to give better practice facility. Extending the golf range 7.5m forward to facilitate wider practice bays and bespoke teaching bay.

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Drayton Leisure Golf Centre is situated to the west of the Warwick Road, on the northern edge of Banbury. It is situated in an area of High Landscape Value and a public footpath and bridleway run across the site.
- 1.2 The Golf Centre consists of a club house, a golf range, a putting area a nine hole golf course and a lake, together with ancillary areas for parking and manoeuvring. The Centre is situated amongst farmland however the built up limits of Banbury are situated to the south. The newer extension to Banbury known as Hanwell Fields is situated to the east and Drayton Village is situated to the south west. Part of Drayton is designated as a conservation area and views of the site can be gained from it.
- 1.3 The proposed works relate to a localised area of the Golf Centre; the golf range and land immediately surrounding it and the mown paddock to the north east. The proposals involve two main elements; one relating to camping and caravanning and one to the golfing facilities.
- 1.4 The camping and caravanning elements include change of use of the paddock area from agriculture for use as a camping field for up to 25 touring caravans, including road and hardstanding, a car parking area to the west of the proposed camping area and the installation of a temporary shower and toilet building adjacent to the club house.
- 1.5 The golfing elements include removal of some of the existing car park to the north of the club house and levelling of that ground to extend an existing grassed area to provide a putting green. Levelling of a further area to the west of the club house to provide a practice tee and alterations and extension to the golf range to provide improved golf range facilities and practice bays.

2. Application Publicity

- 2.1 The application has been advertised by way of a site notice and a press notice. The final date for comment was 02 June 2011.
- 2.2 No letters of representation have been received as a result of this publicity.

3. Consultations

- 3.1 **Banbury Town Council:** no comments (personal and prejudicial interest raised)
- 3.2 **Drayton Parish Council:** raises no objections however makes comments in relation to highway safety, landscaping and the events license relating to the site.
- 3.3 **Local Highway Authority:** raises no objections stating that the existing access arrangements are appropriate and vehicle movements would not significantly increase. No conditions are recommended.
- 3.4 **Local Drainage Authority:** makes reference to the Flood and Water Management Act. Reference to which is made via a planning note below.
- 3.5 **Anti Social Behaviour Manager:** raises no objections, but comments that if the existing lighting is to change as a result of the extension to the golf range, full details must form part of a condition.
- 3.6 **Ecology Officer:** Seeks further clarification and provides advice about the protection of wildlife in connection with the development.
- 3.7 **Landscape Officer:** states that a buffer zone of landscaping is required along the northern boundary of the site to mitigate the visual impact of the caravan site when viewed from Warwick Road and the public footpath.
- 3.8 **County Archaeologist:** raises no objections. Recommends standard planning note.

4. Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

- 4.1 Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment
PPG13: Transport
PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

South East Plan 2009 – Policy C4 and CC6

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 – Policy C13 C28

Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan
R13: Proposals for Golf Courses
T8: Camping and Touring Caravan Sites

5. Appraisal

- 5.1 Main Planning Considerations

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows:

- Planning History
- Principle of Development
- Transport Impact/Highway Safety
- Landscape Impact/Visual Amenity
- Setting of Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Ecology
- Archaeology

Each of these matters will be considered in turn.

5.2 Planning History

- 5.2.1 The golf driving range, putting green and office were established in the early 1990s (ref CHN.239/91) and have subsequently been extended and altered under planning applications 97/00320/F and 99/01269/F.

5.3 Principle of Development

- 5.3.1 National planning policy and the Development Plan generally support proposals for improved recreational facilities and tourism opportunities. New golfing facilities are assessed against Policy R13 of the non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan, in relation to which consideration must be given to landscape impact, highway safety, loss of agricultural land, rights of way and the setting of heritage assets. Whilst this proposal is for the improvement of an existing facility rather than a new one, it is logical to assess the scheme against these policy criteria. Policy T8 supports camping and caravanning proposals on suitable sites free from transport and environmental issues.

- 5.3.2 Generally therefore, the principle of each element of the proposal can be considered acceptable, subject to the policy criteria for each which are addressed under each heading below:

5.4 Transport Impact/Highway Safety

- 5.4.1 The Local Highway Authority raises no objections in relation to the proposal stating that the access and visibility splays are at a standard appropriate for their intended use. It is recognised by both the Local Highway Authority and the neighbouring Parish Council that vehicle speeds are generally above the speed limit adjacent to the access, however given the additional number of vehicular movements, which the Local Highway Authority does not believe would be significant and due to the fact that the specification of the existing access is adequate it is considered that the proposal for a caravanning site and extension and alterations to the golf range would not result in a transport impact and nor would it be a risk to highway safety. The proposal is therefore in accordance with PPG13.

5.5 Landscape Impact/Visual Amenity

- 5.5.1 The proposed caravanning area is situated immediately adjacent to the Warwick Road. It is screened from the south east by mature planting adjacent to the highway boundary. Views can be gained of the site from the Warwick Road

immediately to the east and from the north east across the agricultural fields and hedge field boundary. To the south west longer views are gained from the public footpath and to the west views are gained from the bridleway which joins with the vehicular access to the site.

- 5.5.2 The caravanning element of the scheme does raise some concern due to the visual impact that it would have upon the rural landscape, particularly given the views that can be gained of the site from surrounding areas. Whilst the immediate locality is of a rural/agricultural nature, the area is surrounded over longer distances by residential development to the east, south and south/west. There is also a farm adjacent to the golf centre which includes traditional and modern buildings and Drayton School is situated to the south. The key views of the site are those from the Drayton Conservation Area to the south west and from the Warwick road to the north east. The Council's Landscape officer has also identified the landscape impact of the proposal particularly on these two areas.
- 5.5.3 Both of these vantage points of the site would be unacceptably affected by the proposals in SDPHE's view due to the starkness of a number of caravans positioned on the site, if these units were not mitigated against visually. The Council's Landscape Officer has advised that mitigation could be achieved through appropriate native planting and furthermore, the applicant has advised that it would be possible to allow the field boundary hedge to the north of the site to grow in height and then rather than cut it down to 2m as part of the biannual management of the hedge to cut it to 2.5m in height.
- 5.5.4 With these mitigation measures in place and the landscaping scheme to be secured via planning condition (recommended below) SDPHE is satisfied that the proposed caravanning element of the scheme would not have an unacceptable landscape impact or be unacceptable in visual amenity terms.
- 5.5.5 A shower and toilet block is proposed in the form of a temporary building, to be situated adjacent to the rear elevation of the golf range, is not ideal in terms of its visual impact, however the applicant wishes to provide this facility temporarily before committing to a permanent building. It would be screened from wider views by existing hedge planting and the golf range building itself. A condition is recommended which restricts the permission for this building to three years only. This will allow the applicant enough time to establish whether a permanent building would be financially viable and to apply for planning permission for a permanent building.
- 5.5.6 The relatively minor alterations to the golf range, including an extension to the front of the building which would be viewed from the south and south west, and the changes to the ground levels around the club house and golf range would not be easily detected in wider views and as such are considered to be acceptable in terms of their impact upon visual amenity.
- 5.5.7 Overall, providing that an appropriate landscaping scheme is submitted and approved, the hedgeline to the north allowed to grow in height and the temporary building replaced by a more permanent solution within two years, SDPHE considers that the development would be acceptable in terms of its landscape and visual impact, in accordance with PPS1, Policy C4 of the South East Plan and Policies C13 and C28 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

5.6 Setting of Conservation Area

5.6.1 Wroxton and Drayton Conservation Area covers a wide area and extends into the agricultural fields to the north and west of Drayton, and as referred to above views of the golf centre can be viewed from this Conservation Area. However as these are longer distance views and development already exists on the golf centre site and mitigating measures are to be secured in relation to the visual impact of the caravanning site, SDPHE considers that the proposal would not unduly harm the setting of this heritage asset in accordance with PPS5.

5.7 Residential Amenity

5.7.1 The proposals would have no impact upon residential amenity by way of loss of light, loss of privacy or by being overbearing given the fact that the nearest neighbours are some distance from the site. Noise and disturbance and nuisance by light must also be considered, however again due to the relationship of the site with its neighbours and given the fact that the applicant has confirmed that no changes would be made to the existing flood lighting, SDPHE considers that the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity in accordance with policy C30 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.

5.8 Ecology

5.8.1 The Council's Ecologist does not foresee any major ecological issues in relation to the proposals and the points raised about the nature of the local habitat have been clarified. SDPHE is therefore satisfied that the Council's duty in relation to protected species has been discharged in this case.

5.8.2 Recommendations are made in relation to protecting and enhancing biodiversity before, during and after construction which forms part of the recommended planning notes below. Given the circumstance on site and the nature of the proposals, they satisfy the requirements of PPS9.

5.9 Archaeology

5.9.1 The site is located within an area of some archaeological potential. However the County Archaeologist is satisfied that the proposal would not affect any known archaeological sites. A planning note is recommended which requires the applicant to contact the County Council should archaeological finds be discovered during the development, advice which accords with PPS5.

5.9 Conclusion

5.9.1 Given the above appraisal, it is concluded that the two main elements of the scheme accord with the policy criteria relating to the provision and improvement of tourism and leisure facilities respectively. For these reasons, the proposals are acceptable and approval is recommended for the reasons set out and subject to the conditions as listed below.

6. Recommendation

Approval; subject to the following conditions:

- 1. S.C. 1.4 [Time Limit]**
- 2. Development to be carried out strictly in accordance with approved plans**
- 3. S.C. 3.0 [Submit Landscaping Scheme]**
- 4. S.C. 3.1 [Carry out Landscaping]**
- 5. S.C. 2.6 [Materials to match] (golf range building only)**
- 6. S.C. 3.7aa [Boundary Enclosures] (remove reference to dwellings)**
- 7. S.C. 4.13CD [Parking and Manoeuvring Areas]**
- 8. S.C. 8.20a [Location of Refuse Storage Area]**
- 9. S.C. 7.4a [Touring Caravans: Period of Stay]**
- 10. S.C. 8.18 [Floodlights/Lights]**
- 11. S.C. 6.18a [Temporary Building] ‘three years’ insert ‘temporary shower’ before ‘building’ delete ‘and the land shall be restored to its former condition on or before that date’.**

PLANNING NOTES:

- 1. Biodiversity**
- 2. The applicant is advised that in the interests of biodiversity and protected species all grass on the areas to be developed should be kept short for several weeks prior to the commencement of the development and rubble and building materials should not be allowed to accumulate in order to dissuade shelter or habitation by reptiles**
- 3. The applicant is advised that a buffer of at least 5m and preferably more should be kept adjacent to all hedgerows to retain their value to wildlife.**

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION AND RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

The Council, as local planning authority, has determined this application in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicated otherwise. Incorporating and adhering to the above conditions, the development is acceptable on its planning merits as it is considered to be acceptable in principle, would not result in an unacceptable transport, highway safety or landscape impact and would not be harmful to the setting of the Drayton Conservation Area, residential amenity, ecology or archaeology. As such the proposal is in accordance with PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment, PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, PPG13: Transport, PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, Policies C4, NRM5, BE5, BE6, T1, T4 and CC6 of the South East Plan 2009 and saved policies C13, C28 and C30 of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996. For the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised including third party representations, the Council considers that the application should be approved and planning permission granted subject to appropriate conditions as set out above.

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