

Parish: West Itchenor	Ward: West Wittering
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**WI/18/02187/FUL**

**Proposal** Extension of hall to north. Remove main entrance from north east to north west side. Old entrance changed to single opening. Alter the layout of the hall. Re-turf the existing car park. Change of use of land and alterations to form new car park to northwest of the hall.

**Site** Itchenor Memorial Hall Itchenor Road West Itchenor PO20 7DL

**Map Ref** (E) 479848 (N) 100673

**Applicant** The Trustees

**RECOMMENDATION TO REFUSE**



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## **1.0 Reason for Committee Referral**

1.1 Red Card: Cllr Barrett - Exceptional level of public interest.

## **2.0 The Site and Surroundings**

2.1 The application site is a triangular shaped site located within the designated countryside in Itchenor. The application site comprises the Itchenor Memorial Hall with its existing gravel parking area, which currently accommodates 35 parking spaces, and lawn areas plus a portion of arable farmland to the northwest of the memorial hall. The arable farmland is currently separated from the memorial hall site by a ditch, footpath and cycle path, mature trees and vegetation.

2.2 The existing hall is a single storey building with facing brick elevations and a cedar shingle roof. The hall lies in a rural setting with a flat open landscape to the south and west, and several dwellings to the east and north.

## **3.0 The Proposal**

3.1 The application seeks planning permission for an extension to the existing hall to form a new entrance and toilets. The layout would be altered internally so that the main entrance would face west and a larger kitchen would be provided as part of the works to the hall.

3.2 Planning permission is also sought for the change of use of agricultural land to a car park and the laying of a hard surface to facilitate this. The proposal would result in 36 proposed parking spaces including 3 disabled parking bays, a net increase of 1 parking bay available to users of the hall. In addition, a new cycle way would be provided, the existing public footpath would be retained, a new path between the hall and the car park would be provided, and a van barrier would be installed on the access road adjacent to the hall.

3.3 The plans also indicate an existing drain to the west of the village hall would be culverted under the access road and path. The existing gravel car park would be removed to provide a green space to the south west of the hall.

## **4.0 History**

97/01959/FUL      PER      Alterations and extensions.

98/02307/FUL      PER      Alterations and extension.

## 5.0 Constraints

Listed Building	No
Conservation Area	No
Countryside	Yes
AONB	Yes
Strategic Gap	No
Tree Preservation Order	No
EA Flood Zone	
- Flood Zone 2	Yes
- Flood Zone 3	Yes
Historic Parks and Gardens	No

## 6.0 Representations and Consultations

### 6.1 Parish Council

No objection.

West Itchenor Parish Council supports this application as being beneficial to the village of Itchenor. It would however, like to see the following conditions added to any permission that may be given; It is recommended, in the interest of neighbour amenity and public safety, that the applicant should ensure that all materials, machinery, equipment and vehicles associated with the approved development should be contained within the application site at all times. Measures to minimise dust should be implemented throughout the construction process.

### 6.2 WSSC Highways

14/12/2018

We use the attached WSSC Parking Standards for commercial uses. These are maximum standards. Please refer to the table on page 7 - for general D2 use, the WSSC maximum standard is 1 parking space per 22sqm, so for this development (total 164sqm) we would expect 7.5 parking spaces. Given the location of the hall and lack of footway along the surrounding roads which would potentially deter pedestrians, I would anticipate that more than 7.5 spaces would be required for a hall in this location, and the proposal of 36 spaces (incl. 3 disabled bays) is sufficient for the proposed use.

18/10/2018

This proposal is for the extension and altered layout of the existing hall and repositioning of car park to the north west of the hall. The site is located on Itchenor Park which in this location is publically maintained highway. Immediately to the west of the existing access, Itchenor Park becomes privately maintained. Itchenor Park meets the junction with Itchenor Road to the immediate east of the site, a C-classified road subject to a speed limit of 30mph. No alterations to the existing access arrangement are proposed. Visibility at the existing access onto Itchenor Park appears sufficient for the anticipated road speeds.

Visibility at the junction with Itchenor Road also appears sufficient for the road speeds. Due to the road geometry in this location, vehicles are not anticipated to be exceeding the posted speed limit. An inspection of data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the past five years reveals that there have been no recorded injury accidents within the vicinity of the junction and therefore there is no evidence to suggest that the existing arrangements have been operating unsafely, or that the repositioning of the car park would exacerbate an existing safety concern. The proposals will result in the repositioning of the existing car park; the current car park would be re-vegetated to provide outside green space for the use of the community hall. The site currently accommodates 35 parking spaces and the proposal will result in 36 proposed parking spaces including 3 disabled parking bays. The proposed extension of the hall and repositioning of the car park is not anticipated to result in a material increase in vehicle movements to or from the site over the existing arrangement. Each parking space meets the minimum specifications as set out in Manual for Streets (MfS) of 2.4 x 4.8m with extra space provided for the disabled bays. Sufficient space is provided for vehicles to turn on site and exit onto the publically maintained highway in a forward gear.

The Public Rights of Way team have been consulted separately regarding the public footpath which will be affected by the proposals. Cycling is a viable method of transport to and from the site, and a cycle path will be redirected as result of these proposals. The Design and Access Statement proposes to relocate the 8 existing bike stands although this does not appear to have been demonstrated on the proposed plans. Cycle storage should be secure and preferably covered, to encourage sustainable methods of transport. Details of this can be secured via condition.

In conclusion the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have 'severe' impact on the operation of the Highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 109), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal. If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following conditions should be secured:

#### Conditions

##### Vehicle parking and turning

No part of the development shall be first occupied until the vehicle parking and turning spaces have been constructed in accordance with the approved plan. These spaces shall thereafter be retained for their designated use.

Reason: To provide adequate on-site car parking and turning space for the development.

##### Cycle parking

No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

### 6.3 Environment Agency

We have no objection to the proposed development as submitted. We recommend that consideration be given to use of flood proofing measures to reduce the impact of flooding when it occurs. Flood proofing measures include barriers on ground floor doors, windows and access points and bringing in electrical services into the building at a high level so that plugs are located above possible flood levels. Consultation with your building control department is recommended when determining if flood proofing measures are effective. Additional guidance can be found in our Floodline Publication 'Damage Limitation'. A free copy of this is available by telephoning 0845 988 1188 or can be found on our website [communities@twoten.com](mailto:communities@twoten.com) [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) click on 'flood' in subjects to find out about, and then 'floodline'. Reference should also be made to the Department for communities and local Government publication 'Preparing for Floods' please email:

### 6.4 WSCC Public Rights Of Way (PROW)

The proposed extension will not affect the right of way known as FP2817. However, both the new access road and footpath to the new car parking area, cross the legally recorded line of FP2817. Consent must be sought from PROW for any works that affect the surface of the footpath. Before consent can be given, we would need to have sight of and approve a specification for the works. It will be necessary for the applicant to provide additional signage for users of the car park, making them aware that pedestrian traffic using the footpath takes precedence over vehicular traffic and on FP2817 making users aware they are approaching a crossing point to the new car park.

We also note the proposal to reroute the Salterns Way Cycleway, this is a matter for CHC [*Chichester Harbour Conservancy*] as they developed and manage the route. That said it will cross the legally recorded line in 2 places. Consent must be sought from PROW for any works that affect the surface of the footpath. Before consent can be given we would need to have sight of and approve a specification for the works. It may also be necessary for additional advisory signage be provided at the crossing points.

For the applicants information I have listed below PROW general planning information The applicant is advised that a public access right has precedence over a private access right. Where a PROW runs along a route also used for private access purposes, usually for private vehicle access, this shared use has the potential for accident or injury - the applicant must consider how access is managed so the public is not endangered or inconvenienced.

### 6.5 Chichester Harbour Conservancy

No Objection

In reaching its decision, the Planning Consultative Committee made the following points -

1. The Committee expressed concern that there was a conflict between the public footpath, the Salterns Way cycle path (a permissive route), and the proposed access road into the car park forming part of the application. The proposed plans are viewed as making the use of the hall more complicated for users. The necessary works are considered to have a landscape impact.

2. The Committee expressed concern that the relocation of the car park would result in a landscape impact and that the details of the additional land and its treatment and the planting plans required more detail and consideration.

3. The Committee expressed their wish that the car park would be open for use and available for users of the Salterns Way cycle route.

In discussion with the applicants following the committee it was understood that the Itchenor Memorial Hall Committee agreed that there should be a safe route if the Salterns Way is to cross over the IMH land. The plans show chicanes where cyclists would have to dismount either side of the footpath.

The relocation of the car park retains mature hedgerows and would involve additional hedgerow planting. This would be in keeping with English Woodlands advice, as referred to in the submitted Design and Access Statement. The hedgerow mix would be 50% Hawthorne and 50% mix of Wild Cherry, Field Maple, Dog Rose, and Blackthorn, at a density of 5 plants per linear metre. The field corner identified for the car park has not been used for arable farming for 2-3 years.

The IMH car park is for hall users, who have booked the hall for their activity. The car park is signposted as such. Use by none hall users would limit the users of the hall parking and the ability for the hall to be used. There is a public pay-and-display car park in the village which can be used by Salterns Way users and dog walkers to park in.

The proposed car park would provide three disabled driver parking bays which is an improvement for hall users.

Should the LPA be mindful to grant planning permission, the Conservancy hereby recommends the following stipulations are applied:

1. For the Memorial Hall part of the development proposal:

- (i) The external construction materials for the extension and the remedial changes to the existing memorial hall match that of the host building;
- (ii) That the existing car parking area of tarmac/concrete with a gravel to top is removed and revegetated with grass and planted with some flowering native shrubs, to form a green space area;
- (iii) That the roof design of the hall extension shall include bat tiles to assist wildlife;
- (iv) That details of landscaping to the site shall be provided and implemented within the first planting season following the start of works on site;

2. For the proposed car parking area part of the development to serve the hall:

- (v) That the proposed new car-parking area is to be surfaced with a permeable ground surface material;
- (vi) That the proposed Salterns Way diversion route shall not adversely affect the root system or canopy spread of any existing trees and/or hedgerow;
- (vii) That details of landscaping to the car parking site shall include native species hedgerows and be implemented within the first planting season following the start of works on site;
- (viii) That spoon drains on and across the new access road/footpath will be installed to feed into the existing ditch system as an overflow back up

## 6.6 CDC Environment Officer

Bats - The lighting scheme for the site will need to take into consideration the presence of bats in the local area and the scheme should minimise potential impacts to any bats using the trees, hedgerows and buildings by avoiding unnecessary artificial light spill through the use of directional light sources and shielding.

Reptiles - We are satisfied with the precautionary approach recommended for reptiles within the Ecology Survey (September 2018) paragraph 6.4 and for this to be conditioned.

Nesting Birds - Any works to the trees or vegetation clearance on the site should only be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season which takes place between 1st March 1st October. If works are required within this time an ecologist will need to check the site before any works take place (with 24 hours of any work).

Enhancements - There are a number of enhancements proposed which we would like to see incorporated into the scheme which include;

- Any trees removed should be replaced at a ratio of 2:1
- Native wildflower area
- Filling any gaps in tree lines or hedgerows with native species
- Bat and bird boxes installed on the site

## 6.7 CDC Land and Coastal Drainage Officer

Flood risk - the north and east of the site lies within flood zone 2 and 3. The proposed increase in building footprint is outside of the flood zones, therefore it looks unlikely that the development will increase flood risk elsewhere. Proposed finished floor levels are greater than 600mm above flood levels reported in the FRA. Therefore, we have no objection to the scale or location of the development on flood risk grounds.

Surface water drainage-the application form states that surface water is to be disposed of to existing watercourse. Infiltration should first be fully investigated. If it is found that infiltration is not viable then discharge to watercourse at a controlled rate will be required. The applicant will need to obtain Ordinary Watercourse Land Drainage Consent to discharge to an ordinary watercourse, any proposals to alter the watercourse i.e. diversion, culverting etc. will also need consent.

If you are minded to approve the application I would recommend that the following conditions are applied to ensure that the development is satisfactorily drained:  
"Development shall not commence until full details of the proposed surface water drainage scheme have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The design should follow the hierarchy of preference for different types of surface water drainage disposal systems, as set out in Approved Document H of the Building Regulations and the SuDS Manual produced by CIRIA. Winter groundwater monitoring, to establish the highest annual ground water levels, and Percolation testing to BRE 365, or a similar approved method, will be required to support the design of any infiltration drainage. No building shall be occupied until the complete surface water drainage system serving the property has been implemented in accordance with the agreed details." and "The development shall not proceed until formal consent has been approved in writing from the Lead Local Flood Authority (WSSC) or its agent (CDC) for the discharge of any flows to watercourses, or the

culverting, diversion, infilling or obstruction of any watercourse on the site. Any discharge to a watercourse must be at a rate no greater than the pre-development run off values." and "The development layout shall not be agreed until such time that arrangements for the future access and maintenance of any watercourse or culvert (piped watercourse) crossing or abutting the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No construction is permitted, which will restrict current and future land owners from undertaking their riparian maintenance responsibilities of any watercourse on or adjacent to the site."

26 letters of support (from 21 households) Third Party letters of support have been received concerning:

- a) Changes will improve the hall.
- b) Enhancement of the appearance a facilities of the hall
- c) Essential hall for local events
- d) Would significantly improve the amenities of the hall
- e) Maintain and improve a valuable asset for the community
- f) Will conserve and enhance the AONB
- g) Car park will be screened and provide better and safer parking

8 Third Party letters of objection (from 6 households) have been received concerning:

- a) Objection unless any approval carries conditions that protect the close neighbours against noise.
- b) Quiet enjoyment of properties must be protected.
- c) Increased use of the hall and resultant noise would be harmful to neighbouring amenities.
- d) Noise curfew should be considered.
- e) Development could facilitate significant increase in the level of activity.
- f) Outdoor parties would have an impact on the neighbours.
- g) Hours of use and noise limitations should be restricted.
- h) Removal of car park will increase the space available outside the hall for functions with the potential to increase noise disturbance.
- i) Number of functions and marquees should be restricted.
- j) No sound amplification equipment should be allowed.
- k) With the removal of the car park from the Memorial Hall site there will be increased space available for functions outside the hall. This will create a new larger area for larger outside events and marquees with potential for more noise disturbance to local residents.
- l) Safety of road users will be impacted.
- m) Pedestrians and cyclists will be decrease in the village as a result.
- n) The change of use of the agricultural land could lead to precedent for the transfer of agricultural land for development or the extension of domestic curtilage which, in the context of preserving a village perimeter, is exceedingly dangerous.
- o) Marquees and External Events would cause harm to neighbouring amenities.

8 third party other letters of comment (from 5 households) have been received concerning;

- a) Would like to support but object unless approval carries conditions protecting the close neighbours against noise that is essential to the quiet enjoyment of properties
- b) Noise problems.
- c) Support extension but concerns regarding resultant intensified use of the building

#### 6.8 Applicant/Agent's Additional Information

Regarding the proposed car parking, we note your reference to the relevant planning policies and we consider the implications of these issues are warranted in relation to the community benefit this proposal brings to the village. I would like to draw your attention to CLP policy 22 - which supports our proposal to help the community by adding this car park:

'...The Council will prepare plans, strategies, projects and other measures, in partnership with other organisations and local communities, to ensure that the Manhood Peninsula is planned for in a coordinated and integrated manner, whilst recognising the individual needs of the communities within the area. Proposals and initiatives will be supported that promote the following general objectives:

1. Facilitate the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area...'

We would draw your attention to your reference to Policy 43 'Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)', which does not seem to take in to account the letter to you from Dr R Austin of Chichester Harbour Conservancy dated 29th. October 2018, which was only posted on the website on 12th November, 13 days after its publication. Your email to us was written 9 days after the publication of Dr Austin's letter.

The Chichester Harbour Conservancy's role is to manage the Chichester Harbour AONB and in their letter, the Planning Consultative Committee have 'no objection' to the proposals.

Regarding the Public Right of Way, we should point out that our proposal does not 'divert' the PROW. Pedestrians already cross the access road to the hall to get to the footpath. This new plan is the same, but they do it twice. The realigned Salterns Way Cycle Path has dismount chicanes in place to stop cyclists from riding across the footpath and road. The Applicants would be happy to provide whatever other infrastructure deemed appropriate, such as gates and/or signage so that pedestrian's attention is drawn to the crossings.

The proposal is to divert the permissive Salterns Way Cycle Path to make it safer at the car park access road crossing and to move its alignment 8 metres westward away from the hall and grounds. Please note this is not a right of way. The current route of the cycle path is adjacent the hall's boundary fence which runs immediately adjacent to the hall and this land is needed for the new path way to the front entrance. The fence has been breached in places and cyclists often cut through the existing hall car park, which is dangerous to the hall users and the cyclists.

By moving the cycle path away from the hall there will be a large landscape margin between the path and the hall creating better privacy for hall users and removing the

opportunity for cyclists to take short cuts through the hall site, making this a safer option for all.

## **7.0 Planning Policy**

### The Development Plan

- 7.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029 and all made neighbourhood plans. There is no made neighbourhood plan for Itchenor at this time.
- 7.2 The principal planning policies relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

### Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
Policy 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy  
Policy 3: The Economy and Employment Provision  
Policy 8: Transport and Accessibility  
Policy 38: Local and Community Facilities  
Policy 39: Transport, Accessibility and Parking  
Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction  
Policy 42: Flood Risk and Water Management  
Policy 43: Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)  
Policy 45: Development in the Countryside  
Policy 46: Alterations, Change of Use and/or Re-use of Existing Buildings in the Countryside  
Policy 47: Heritage and design  
Policy 48: Natural Environment  
Policy 49: Biodiversity

### National Policy and Guidance

- 7.3 Government planning policy now comprises the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 11 of which states:  
At the heart of the NPPF is 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<sup>7</sup>, 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<sup>6</sup>; or  
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

7.4 Consideration should also be given to Sections 4 (Decision-Making), 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport), 12 (Achieving well-designed places), 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change), 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) generally.

#### Other Local Policy and Guidance

7.5 The following documents are material to the determination of this planning application:

- West Itchenor Village Design Statement
- The Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2014-2019)

The aims and objectives of the Chichester in Partnership Community Strategy 2016-2029 which are relevant and material to the determination of this planning application are:

- Influence local policies in order to conserve and enhance the qualities and distinctiveness of our area

### **8.0 Planning Comments**

The main considerations are:

- i) Principle of the development
- ii) Impacts on visual amenities and character and quality of site and surroundings and AONB
- iii) Impact on neighbouring amenities
- iv) Highway safety
- v) Impact on Public Right Of Way (PROW)
- vi) Drainage and environmental considerations

#### **i) Principle of the development**

8.1 The application site is located in the rural area outside of any settlement boundary. In accordance with policies 2 and 45 of the Chichester Local Plan (CLP) development in the countryside is limited to that which requires a countryside location and would meet a small scale local need. The proposed single storey extension to the existing hall would be contained within the curtilage of the existing hall, it would be a modest extension which would not encroach into the open countryside, and it would allow the facilities within the hall to be improved which would benefit the local community. The proposal would therefore meet the requirements of policies 2 and 45 of the CLP, and in principle would be acceptable.

8.2 The agricultural land on which the car park is proposed is designated grade II (Very good) agricultural land. Policy 48 of the CLP states that development of poorer quality agricultural land should be fully considered in preference to best and most versatile land, which would include grade I and grade II agricultural land. The agricultural land the subject of this application has not been actively farmed for two to three years. However, the land remains highly valuable agricultural land in its classification, and it appears that the dormancy of the land is due to preference rather than a physical degradation of the land; there is no evidence provided with the application to indicate otherwise. It is recognised that there would be improvements to the parking provision associated with the hall, such

as a bound surface and 3 disabled parking spaces, however there is no demonstrable need for the proposed encroachment into the rural landscape and loss of valuable agricultural land nor is the development small scale, connected to existing buildings and/or essential for agriculture, as referenced within policy 45 of the CLP.

- 8.3 The proposed extension would not impact upon the existing parking spaces and improvements to the hall and the existing car park could be accommodated within the existing site without encroaching into the countryside in the manner currently proposed. The amount of parking proposed exceeds the WSCC parking standards for a D2 use, which recommends 7.5 spaces for a hall of this size. It is accepted that additional spaces may benefit the operation of the hall, particularly given its more remote location, however the 36 spaces would represent a provision 4 times the recommended amount and the existing car park (accommodating 35 spaces) would appear to provide a sufficient level of parking without harm to the landscape, due to its position to the rear of the hall.
- 8.4 The applicant has advised that it is not the intention of this application to intensify or change the use of the existing facility and therefore it is considered that the hall could function within its own boundaries without the need for a new car park and the resultant encroachment into the countryside and loss of agricultural land. The proposed change of use of the agricultural farm land to form a car park does not meet the requirements of policy 45 and therefore would be contrary to the development plan and would constitute an unjustified form of development in the rural area.
- 8.5 Within the submitted additional information the applicant has made the case that the car park would support a community facility and therefore policy 22 of the CLP applies. Policy 22 concerns integrated coastal management for the Manhood Peninsula and requires the council to prepare plans, strategies and projects and other measures to ensure that the Manhood Peninsula is planned for in a coordinated manner, whilst recognising the individual needs of the communities within the area. The policy states that proposals should promote 6 objectives, one of which involves facilitating the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area. The improvements to the hall and accessible parking are considered to be beneficial to the community and therefore social well-being; however there is no evidence as to why this could not be accommodated on the existing site rather than the current proposals, which would result in the loss of valuable agricultural land and encroach into the countryside in a manner that would be detrimental to the environment.. Therefore the social benefits do not outweigh the harm identified.
- 8.6 On balance; the proposal would result in a loss of arable farmland and a significant intrusion in to the open landscape, to the detriment of the rural character and its general amenity for which there is no overriding identified benefit which could not be provided within the existing confines of the Memorial Hall site. Therefore the principle of this development would be contrary to CLP policies 1, 2 and 45.

ii) Design and Impact upon Visual Amenity/Character of Area and AONB

- 8.7 The principle of the proposed extension to form the washroom facilities is considered to be of a size and appearance that would be visually sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing hall and its surroundings. However the siting of the proposed car park beyond the site boundary would result in a significant encroachment into the countryside beyond the defined boundary of the memorial hall. At present the car park to the hall is located behind (south of) and to the side (east of) the existing building and the hall's rear elevation backs onto the footpath and cycle path. There are currently clear and defined physical and natural features between the hall and the farmland including the public right of way, a ditch and mature trees and vegetation. It is appreciated that opportunities would be taken to screen the car park via landscaping and a soft approach to the surface of the car park and boundary treatments are proposed. However, due to the size of the proposed car park and the extent of operational development required to facilitate the parking area, including the new cycleway, pathways and other associated works such as the van barrier, it is considered that the mitigation proposed would not be sufficient to overcome the impact of the proposal upon the rural character and appearance of the locality. It is considered that the visual appearance of the proposed car park, and the movements and appearance of up to 35 vehicles within the rural landscape would be at odds with the natural, verdant and rural appearance of surroundings.
- 8.8 Policy 43 of the CLP concerns development in the Chichester Harbour AONB and requires development within this area to meet several criteria. They include; conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the AONB, reinforcing and responding to, rather than detracting from, the distinctive character and special qualities of the AONB, preventing actual or perceived coalescence of settlements, to protect the integrity or predominantly open and undeveloped, rural character of the AONB and its setting, and development should be appropriate to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area (where this is consistent with the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty). The policy also states that the aims of the Harbour AONB Management Plan should be met. In addition, Policy 48 of the CLP concerns the natural environment and states that development proposals will be permitted provided certain criteria are met which includes there being no adverse impact upon the openness of the views in and around the coast, designated environmental areas, the tranquil and rural character of the area, or the distinctiveness of local landscape character, among others. In this case the proposed car park by way of its size and encroachment into the rural landscape and associated paraphernalia would undermine the integrity and predominantly open and undeveloped rural character of the AONB. Therefore the proposal would not conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB, it would not reinforce the distinctive character of the area, and instead the proposal would be harmful in these respects. The proposal would therefore not comply with policies 43 or 48 of the CLP, nor would it comply with the requirements of the NPPF to protect designated landscapes and the intrinsic value of the countryside.
- 8.9 Given the foregoing it is considered that the proposed car park by reason of the amount of encroachment into the countryside, the visual appearance of up to 36 cars parked and associated paraphernalia in this rural and natural setting would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site and surroundings and would not conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. Therefore, it is considered that the development would be contrary to 2018 NPPF paragraphs 170 and 172 and CLP policies 1, 2, 43 and 48.

iii) Impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties

8.10 The NPPF states in paragraph 127 that planning should ensure a good quality of amenity for existing and future users (of places). The proposed extensions and alterations to the hall would be sufficiently distanced and of a scale such that they would not impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties. A number of objections have been received concerning the resultant intensification of the site and noise disturbance from such and hours of use. The current application does not propose a change of use of the hall building itself, it does however propose relocating the 35 existing parking spaces into the arable farmland which would allow for more external space within the original site and the extension would facilitate a larger kitchen and more toilets. Occasional events would be acceptable in connection with the use of the hall, any change to an alternative use would likely require planning permission and any impacts of an alternative use would be considered at the time of an application.

8.11 Due to the historic nature of this use and the small scale alterations to the building it is considered that the proposal would safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties and therefore the proposal would comply with paragraph 127 of the 2018 NPPF.

iv) Highway Safety

8.12 The submitted application form states that the existing site includes 35 parking spaces and 36 spaces are proposed within the new car park. The proposed extension of the hall and repositioning of the car park is not anticipated to result in a material increase in vehicle movements to or from the site over the existing arrangement. Each parking space meets the minimum specifications as set out in Manual for Streets (MfS) of 2.4 x 4.8m with extra space provided for the disabled bays. Sufficient space would be provided for vehicles to turn on site and exit onto the publically maintained highway in a forward gear. WSCC Highways have been consulted and have not raised an objection on highway safety grounds.

8.13 In this case it is considered that the proposal would accord with policy 39 of the CLP which seeks to ensure that new development has acceptable parking levels and access and egress to the highway.

v) Impact upon Public Right of Way

8.14 The agent has confirmed that the PROW would not be diverted as a result of this development; it would however have two new crossovers one for pedestrians and one for vehicles using the hall and its proposed car park. The cycle path is not a designated PROW and is managed by the Harbour Conservancy; it would be diverted and would also be provided with two new crossovers plus a culvert over the existing ditch.

8.15 WSCC PROW have been consulted and no objection has been raised, although they have advised that a licence would be required for the proposed works. Guidance for the applicant has also been provided. There would be a greater degree of interaction between motorists, pedestrians and cyclists by way of the new car park and crossovers, over the foot and cycle paths and reoriented main entrance to the hall. Signage would be necessary to ensure that drivers are made aware of the priority of the users of the foot and

cycle paths. Subject to the guidance being adhered to there would not be any adverse impact upon the public right of way.

vi) Drainage and environmental considerations

8.16 The north and east of the site lies within flood zone 2 and 3, however the proposed increase in building footprint is outside of these areas and the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which shows that the proposed finished floor levels are greater than 600mm above flood levels. Neither the Council's drainage engineer nor the Environment Agency has raised any objections to the proposal.

8.17 Due to the flood zones nearby and the presence of a drainage ditch within the site, surface water would require management in line with the requirements of the Coastal and Land Drainage Officers consultation response which recommends that suitable conditions are imposed in the event that permission is granted. Subject to the imposition of the proposed conditions the proposal would not increase the risk of flooding and would manage water appropriately in accordance with policy 42 of the CLP.

vii) Ecological considerations

8.18 The proposed new crossovers/culverts would be in close proximity to nearby mature trees and mitigation would be necessary to ensure the health of these trees are not harmed by the development. The application is accompanied by an Ecological Survey and the Council's Environment Officer has not raised any objection subject to suitable conditions in accordance with the submitted Ecology Survey (September 2018). Plan number 17-057-PL106 identifies the trees to be retained and protected during site works. The application has not been accompanied by an Arboricultural report, however full details of a mitigation strategy to protect the roots and health of the trees during construction could be the subject of a planning condition. It is therefore considered that subject to conditions to ensure appropriate mitigation, the proposal would not result in any adverse impact to wildlife or the trees within the site.

Conclusion

8.19 Based on the above it is considered the proposal would be contrary to development plan policies 1, 2, 43 and 48 due to the harm caused to the rural landscape and character as a result of the proposed car park. There are no material considerations that would outweigh the harm identified and therefore the application is recommended for refusal.

Human Rights

8.20 In reaching this conclusion the Human Rights of the applicants and nearby occupiers have been taken into account when reaching this recommendation and it is concluded that the recommendation to refuse is justified and proportionate.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE for the following reasons:-

1) The proposed car park does not require a countryside location or meet a small scale local need and by reason of its siting, encroachment into the rural area and loss of valuable grade II agricultural land it would constitute an unjustified form of development in the countryside. The proposed car park and associated development and paraphernalia by reason of its prominent siting, scale and size would impact adversely upon the visual amenities, rural character and local distinctiveness of the rural landscape and it would fail to conserve and enhance the character and appearance the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The social benefits of improving the hall and the parking provision would not outweigh the harm identified. As such the proposal would be contrary to paragraphs; 170 and 172 of the 2018 NPPF and Chichester Local Plan 2014-2029 policies 1, 2, 43, 45 and 48.

2) This decision relates to the following plans and documents; 17-057-PL101, PL102, PL104, PL103 A, PL105 B and PL107 REV. D and Ecosupport Ltd Ecological Surveys by Tristanna Boxall (September 2018).

For further information on this application please contact Maria Tomlinson on 01243 534734

To view the application use the following link - <https://publicaccess.chichester.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=PDX5SIERIT200>