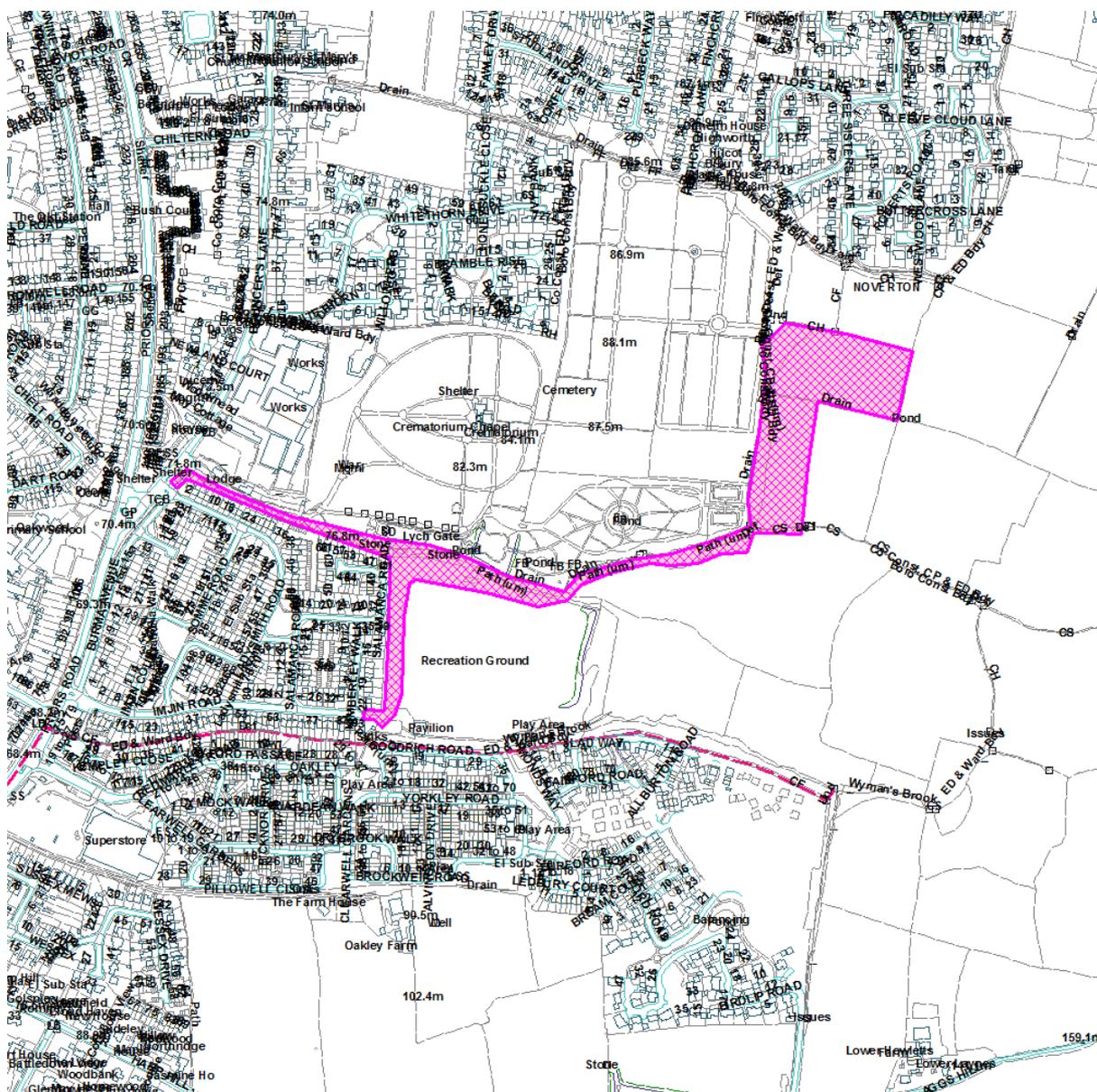


APPLICATION NO: 18/02278/FUL	OFFICER: Mr Joe Seymour
DATE REGISTERED: 8th November 2018	DATE OF EXPIRY: 3rd January 2019
DATE VALIDATED: 8th November 2018	DATE OF SITE VISIT: 16th November 2018
WARD: Oakley Ward	PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Cheltenham Borough Council
AGENT:	
LOCATION:	Cheltenham Cemetery And Crematorium, Bouncers Lane, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Retention of single track roadway to the west of Prior's farm recreation ground, security gated and leading from the recreation ground car park off Imjin Road (retrospective).

RECOMMENDATION: Permit



1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Cheltenham Cemetery and Crematorium is located to the north eastern edge of the town and is accessed via Bouncers Lane. The application site is Prior's Farm which are playing fields adjacent to the Crematorium site.
- 1.2 The application seeks retrospective planning application to retain a temporary vehicular access on a permanent basis. The access was constructed on the Prior's Farm playing fields to allow access to the Crematorium for construction and maintenance vehicles associated with the recently permitted application (ref: 17/00759/FUL) for new crematorium buildings.
- 1.3 The proposal is now to retain this alternative vehicular access permanently, although it would still only be for maintenance vehicles. Visitors to the Crematorium would still use the primary Bouncers Lane access.
- 1.4 The application must be determined by the Planning Committee because the applicant is Cheltenham Borough Council.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Airport Safeguarding over 45m
Airport Safeguarding All Developments
Landfill Sites boundary
Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

15/01859/FUL 18th December 2015 PER

Proposed change of use of an area of land to the east of the cemetery for burial and cremation purposes and the erection of fencing

17/00759/FUL 21st July 2017 PER

Access arrangements for the proposed erection of a new crematorium. (Access road in part within Cheltenham Borough Council with the proposed crematorium and associated works within Tewkesbury Borough Council).

17/01685/DISCON 27th September 2017 DISCHA

Discharge of Conditions 5: Programme of Archaeological Works, Condition 6: Construction management plan, Condition 7: SUDS maintenance plan, Condition 8 Suds management Condition 9: Flow routing plan for 1 in 100 flood event, Condition 10: Detailed badger mitigation plan, Additional Drainage Plans of Planning Permission 17/00759/FUL

18/02485/DISCON PCO

Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 on planning permission 17/00759/FUL - Condition 3: Details of boundary walls, fences or other means of enclosure. Condition 4: Landscaping plans and details.

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Saved Local Plan Policies

CP 4 Safe and sustainable living
GE 1 Public green space
GE 4 Pittville park and bouncers lane cemetery

RC 2 Youth and adult outdoor playing facilities

Adopted Joint Core Strategy Policies

SD6 Landscape

SD8 Historic Environment

SD14 Health and Environmental Quality

INF1 Transport Network

INF4 Social and Community Infrastructure

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4. CONSULTATIONS

GCC Highways Planning Liaison Officer

7th December 2018

I refer to the above planning application received on the 13th November 2018, with Plan ref: 8325/PL/001 to which no Highway objection is raised.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

Number of letters sent	127
Total comments received	2
Number of objections	2
Number of supporting	0
General comment	0

Comments Received

- 5.1 Two objections have been received raising concerns about the potential for increased traffic on Imjin Road and fears that this would become the primary vehicular access to the Crematorium.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

Background and Proposed Development

- 6.1 The application seeks retrospective planning application to retain a temporary vehicular access track on a permanent basis. The access was constructed on the Prior's Farm playing fields ("the playing fields") to allow access to the Crematorium for construction and maintenance vehicles associated with the recently permitted application (ref: 17/00759/FUL) for new crematorium buildings.
- 6.2 The Property and Asset Management team at Cheltenham Borough Council wish to retain the vehicular access to allow maintenance vehicles a separate access, meaning the primary access via Bouncers Lane can be reserved for funeral corteges and visitors to the Crematorium, which is considered to be an important community facility. They have submitted the following statement to clarify the proposal:

"The road will be used solely for access to the playing field to improve access for grounds maintenance. To ensure the road will not be used for any other purpose, the end of the road leading off Prior's Farm Recreation Ground car park will be secured by a locked gate

and the other end will be blocked off with permanently fixed bollards. This makes sure the road is not traversable to the cemetery by vehicles.”

Impact on a Public Green Space

- 6.3** The vehicular access track has been constructed on the western side of the playing fields in a north-south orientation so that it is parallel with the dwellings on Kimberley Walk and Salamanca Road, running behind their rear boundary fences. The access connects the new primary access to the Crematorium (accessed via Bouncers Lane) and the entrance to the playing fields, which is accessed from Imjin Road.
- 6.4** The playing fields are a public green space as defined by policies GE1 and RC2 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan. This policy simply says that development of public green space will not be permitted. However, the vehicular track was deliberately built to the side of the playing fields and not on the actual playing surface of the football pitches. Thus, the existence of the track has not affected the functionality of the playing fields. It is considered that retaining the track on a permanent basis would not have any impact on the use of the playing fields. For this reason, it is considered that the development does not contravene Local Plan Policies GE1 and RC2.
- 6.5** Retaining the secondary access to the Crematorium on a permanent basis would allow a continued alternative access route for Crematorium maintenance vehicles, but with the added benefit of it being available for vehicles that maintain the playing fields, such as grass-cutting vehicles. Retaining the track permanently would mean the Council would not need to construct another one at a later date.

Impact on the Historic Environment

- 6.6** The cemetery is a Grade II listed Registered Park and Gardens and the buildings that comprise the Crematorium site including the two Crematorium Chapels, the main entrance gates, inner entrance gates and cemetery lodge are all Grade II listed buildings. The local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of these heritage assets pursuant to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 6.7** Policy GE4 (Pittville Park and Bouncers Lane Cemetery) says development which would adversely affect the setting or appearance of Pittville Park and Bouncers Lane Cemetery will not be permitted.
- 6.8** There is a strong separation between the playing fields and the cemetery grounds. The two sites are delineated by a dense hedgerow and despite the track that has been constructed to link the two, they remain distinctly separate. The track is not viewed in context with the registered park and gardens or the listed buildings mentioned above.
- 6.9** The vehicular track is development at ground level only and the only structure that would protrude above ground is the proposed gates to enclose the access. These gates would be an extension of an existing fence that is less than one metre in height; therefore planning permission would not be required for this aspect of the development. The low height of the fence means that the views from the playing fields towards the registered park and gardens and the listed buildings at the Crematorium would remain uninterrupted. Thus, the development is considered to have a neutral impact on the setting of the designated heritage assets.
- 6.10** Consequently, the development is considered to be in accordance with the guidance contained within Local Plan policy GE4, in addition to JCS policy SD8 and the NPPF.

Access and highway issues

- 6.11** Gloucestershire County Council is the local highway authority who has been consulted for this application and raised no objection to the development.
- 6.12** Concerns have been raised about the potential for increased vehicle traffic to and from the Crematorium should permanent planning permission be granted for the access. It is acknowledged that maintenance vehicles would now have the option to use this access instead of relying on the Bouncers Lane access.
- 6.13** However, it is considered that vehicle movements would not increase overall and it would simply mean that the access for maintenance vehicles and the access for customers and funeral corteges would remain separate, which would improve the experience for patrons of the Crematorium.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1** The vehicular access track was constructed (on a temporary basis) on the edge of Prior's Farm playing fields to allow access for construction vehicles building the new buildings at the Crematorium. Cheltenham Borough Council now wishes to retain this access permanently to facilitate the continued maintenance of the Crematorium, in addition to allowing an access to maintain the playing fields, both of which are considered to be important community facilities.
- 7.2** The construction of the track has not caused harm to the designated heritage assets at the Crematorium site and it has not disrupted the use of the playing fields. There are no objections from the local highway authority.
- 7.3** With no other issues arising from the construction of the track, it is considered that the benefits of retaining it on a permanent basis outweigh any other concerns that have been raised. The recommendation is therefore to permit the application, subject to the following conditions.

8. CONDITIONS

- 1 The planning permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in Schedule 1 of this decision notice.

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