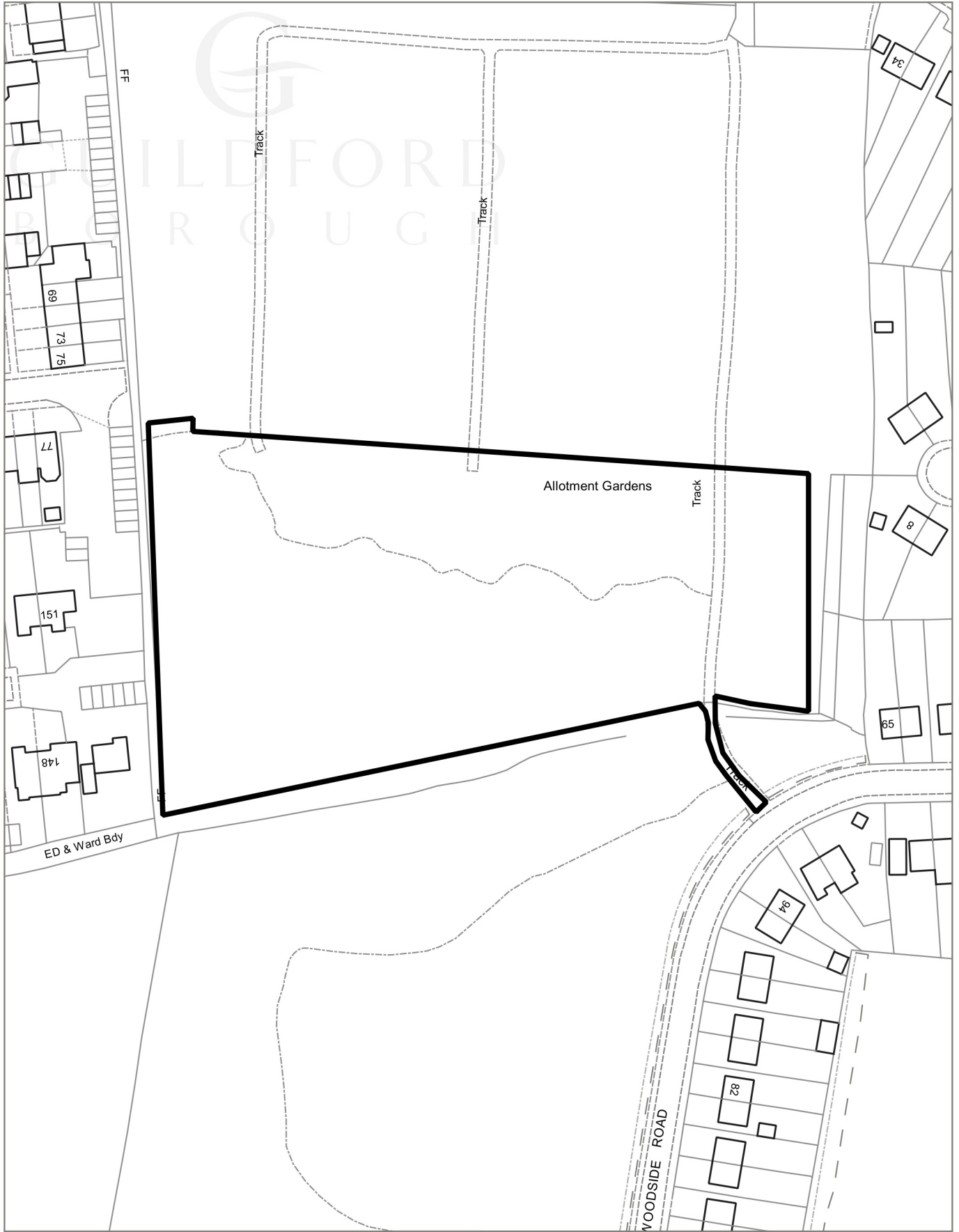


20/P/00478 - Aldershot Road Allotment Site, Woodside Road



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Print Date: 04/05/2020

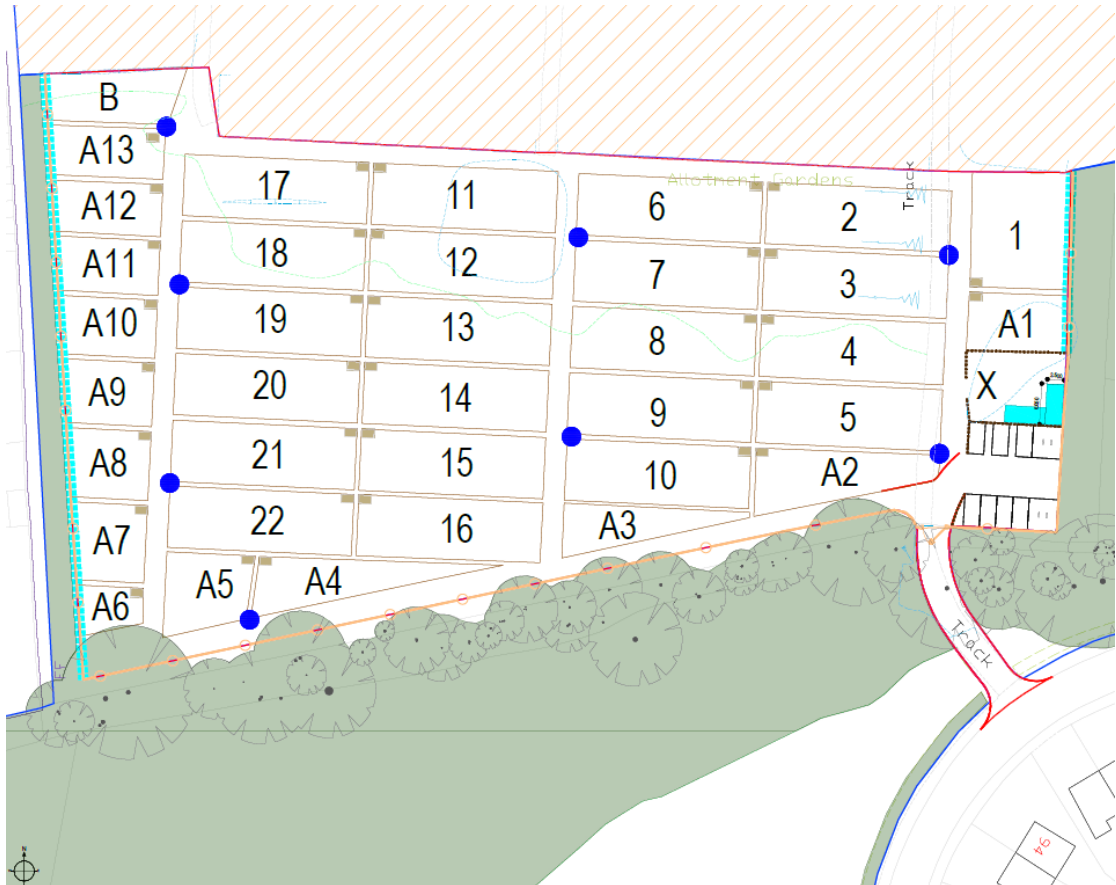


Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

20/P/00478– Aldershot Road Allotment Site, Woodside Road, Guildford



Not to scale

App No: 20/P/00478
Appn Type: Full Application
Case Officer: Paul Sherman

8 Wk Deadline: 13/05/2020

Parish: Westborough
Agent : Mr. Jim Beavan
Savills
2 Charlotte Place
Southampton
SO14 0TB

Ward: Westborough
Applicant: Mr. Leigh Edwards
Guildford Borough Council c/o
Agent

Location: Aldershot Road Allotment Site, Woodside Road, Guildford
Proposal: Proposed change of use of land to provide an extension to the existing Aldershot Road Allotments site to provide 35 new allotment plots (287 Rods), landscaping and associated cycle storage and car parking.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

The application has been referred to the Planning Committee as the Council is the applicant and, in the opinion of the Planning Development Manager, the proposal is not 'minor' development.

Key information

The application site comprises approximately 0.95ha of land directly to the south of the Aldershot Road allotment site. The site currently comprises grassland, scrub and broadleaf woodland however it was previously used as allotments as part of the Aldershot Road site.

The application seeks the change of use of the land to allotments which would provide an additional 35 plots (287 Rods) with associated vehicle and cycle parking and new landscaping. Each of the plots would include a 6x4ft shed and a water-butt.

Summary of considerations and constraints

The site is located within the urban area of Guildford, is a Protected Open Space and is allocated for allotment use by Policy A21 of the Local Plan which applies to the application site and the existing Aldershot Road allotment site. The woodland on site is identified as a Priority Habitat.

The development would result in the loss of a number of trees and the early mature woodland but this can be mitigated by suitable replacement planting which would be secured by condition. The development would not adversely impact on biodiversity and planning conditions are capable of securing biodiversity net gains. The development would not materially impact on the character of the area, residential amenity or highway safety.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve - subject to the following condition(s) and reason(s) :-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004./ In pursuance of Section 196D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

<u>Drawing Title</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Drawing</u>
---------------------------------------	----------------

Site Location Plan 42287/3125/002 Rev A Proposed Car Park Access 19319-MA-XX-XX-DR-C-0001 P01, and P03 Landscape Proposals 42287/3125/003 Rev B Landscape Proposals Planting Schedule 42287/3125/003a Supplementary Proposed Fencing Plan 42287/3125/003b Rev A Supplementary Landscape and Ecological Mitigation GA 42287/3125/003c Rev B 2.44m High Securimesh Fence Detail	J6/04030
Tree Constraints Plan 200309-1.1-ARAG-TCP-Site Design B-NC	

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No development shall take place until an Arboricultural Method Statement (detailing all aspects of construction and staging of works) and a Tree Protection Plan in accordance with British Standard 5837:2005 (or any later revised standard) and in general accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Ref: 200317-1.3-ARAG-AIA-LF) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed method statement and no equipment, machinery or materials shall be brought onto the site for the purposes of the development until fencing has been erected in accordance with the Tree Protection Plan. Within any area fenced in accordance with this condition, nothing shall be stored, placed or disposed of above or below ground, the ground level shall not be altered, no excavations shall be made, nor shall any fires be lit, without the prior written consent of the local planning authority. The fencing shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details, until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been moved from the site.

Reason: To protect the trees on site which are to be retained in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality. This is required to be a pre-commencement condition to ensure that tree protection is installed before work commences.

4. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Landscape Proposals. There shall be no variation from the approved details and the landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented before the allotments hereby approved are first brought in to use. Any of the proposed trees, shrubs or plants that die, become damaged or diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced by replacement of a similar size and species to those that are to be removed.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of an appropriate landscape scheme in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending those Orders with or without modification), no buildings, structures, fences or hard surfaces shall be erected or created on the site other than those shown on the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to control further development within the site.

6. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation measures detailed in the Ecological Assessment Report (dated March 202) and the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (dated May 2020) and there shall be no variation from the approved details unless first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Following the completion of the development the site and the proposed replacement landscaping areas shall continue to be managed in accordance with the recommendations of these documents.

Reason: To mitigate against the loss of existing biodiversity and natural habitats

Informatives:

1. This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Guildford Borough Council seek to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - Offering a pre application advice service
 - Where pre-application advice has been sought and that advice has been followed we will advise applicants/agents of any further issues arising during the course of the application
 - Where possible officers will seek minor amendments to overcome issues identified at an early stage in the application process

Pre-application advice was not sought prior to submission and the application was acceptable as submitted.

2. The applicant is advised that the details required by condition 3 should include details of any trees to be retained on the western boundary and the method for protection of these trees during construction.
3. The applicant is advised to explore the possibility of providing one or more electric vehicle charging points on the site to support the use of electric vehicles and sustainable modes of transport.

Officer's Report

Site description

The application site comprises approximately 0.95ha of land directly to the south of the Aldershot Road allotment site. The site currently comprises grassland, scrub and broadleaf woodland however it was previously used as allotments as part of the Aldershot Road site. Access to the site is from a narrow track from Woodside Road.

The site is located within the urban area of Guildford, is a Protected Open Space and is allocated for allotment use by Policy A21 of the Local Plan which applies to the application site and the existing Aldershot Road allotment site. The woodland on site is identified as a Priority Habitat.

Proposal

The application seeks the change of use of the land to allotments which would extend the existing Aldershot Road allotment site. The proposal would provide an additional 35 plots (287 Rods) with associated vehicle and cycle parking and new landscaping. Each of the plots would include a 6x4ft shed and a water-butt. Water for the plots would also be available from standpipes distributed throughout the application site.

Access to the site would be from Woodside Road which would lead to a small car park for 7 vehicles and approximately 6 bicycles. North of the car park would be a small compound with a shipping container and compost storage area.

Relevant planning history

There is no planning history relevant to the current proposal.

Consultations

Statutory consultees

County Highway Authority: No objection subject to conditions

Environment Agency: No comments to make on proposal

Internal consultees

Head of Environmental Health and Licensing: No objection

Arboricultural Officer: No objection subject to replacement planting and suitable future management

Non-statutory consultees

Surrey Wildlife Trust: The applicant should be expected to demonstrate measurable biodiversity net gains which should be secured for the lifetime of the development

Parish Council

Worplesdon Parish Council: Support subject to conditions to secure a Road Safety Audit, details of the proposed gate and the provision of a Construction Management Plan (Officer Note: see planning considerations section below)

Amenity groups / Residents associations

Westborough & Broadacres Residents Association: Supports the restoration of allotments to this part of the Aldershot Road site

Westborough Allotments Self Help Association: Supports the application

Third party comments:

There have been 11 letters of support received containing the following comments:

- Would restore former allotments previously lost
- Allotments have public health and social / community benefits
- Enables local food production

No letters of objection have been received however the following further observations have been made:

- Allotments must be secure / proposed fencing inadequate

Planning policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Chapter 8. Promoting healthy communities

Chapter 10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Guildford Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2015-2034)

Policy S1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy D1: Place shaping

Policy D2: Climate change, sustainable design, construction and energy

Policy ID4: Green and blue infrastructure

Policy A21: Aldershot Road allotments

Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction 24 September 2007):

Policy NE4: Species Protection

Policy NE5: Development Affecting Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

Supplementary planning documents

Sustainable Design & Construction SPD 2011 (updated 2015)
Vehicle Parking Standards SPD 2006

Planning considerations

The main planning considerations in this case are:

- the principle of development
- the impact on the character of the area
- the impact on trees, vegetation and the character of the area
- the impact on protected species and biodiversity
- the level of parking and the impact on highway safety

The principle of development

The application site is located in the urban area of Guildford and forms part of an Area of Protected Open Space. Policy ID4 of the LPSS seeks to protect all open spaces within urban areas and notes the positive contribution open spaces make to our health and social interaction. The application site forms part the site allocated for allotments by Policy A21 which includes the provision of additional plots on this site.

The proposal seeks to establish new plots on the southern part of the Aldershot Road allotment site and accords with the allocation in Policy A21 of the adopted local plan. This part of the site is currently somewhat overgrown and contains a number of trees which would need to be removed and this is necessary to deliver the objective of the allocation. While this would change the character of this part of the open space to a more formal arrangement it would support the function of this the site for its designated use. It is also noted that this part of the site has historically been used as allotments.

The principle of development is therefore acceptable and is supported by Policy ID4 and Policy A21 of the Local Plan.

The impact on trees, vegetation and the character of the area

The application site currently includes an area of broadleaf deciduous woodland as well as areas of scrub and grassland. The woodland primarily contains Ash, Oak and Sycamore with an understory of Goat Willow, Hawthorn and Blackthorn. The applicants Arboricultural Impact Assessment concludes that the woodland has most likely naturally generated over the past 20-30 years. This area of woodland will need to be removed to enable the allotment plots to be created. Several other trees located around the boundary of the site are also proposed to be removed although these are predominantly lower grade specimens.

The woodland to be removed is generally in good physiological condition and is considered to be 'Early Mature', meaning it has the potential to contribute in arboricultural terms for many years to come. Although the removal of the woodland is necessary to deliver the development proposed, this should only be permitted where suitable replacement planting can be secured. The opportunities for significant re-planting on the application site are limited given the proposed allotments and associated works take up most of the area of the application site however some new tree planting is possible on the boundaries of the site.

The applicant has proposed replacement tree and landscape planting on the land to the south of the site which is within the same ownership. While this falls outside of the application site it is within the ownership of applicant and landscaping works can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition. It is considered that the proposed replacement planting is suitable to mitigate the impact on the woodland and other trees to be lost. The new planting also has the potential to be sustainably managed as a woodland which would, in time, increase its amenity and biodiversity value. This should also be secured by a planning condition. The Councils Arboricultural Officer has visited the site and advises that the provision of the allotments would result in little opportunity for replanting on the application site but considered that the replacement planting on the adjoining site and the woodland management proposed would mitigate the loss of the trees on the site.

The removal of the woodland would have limited impact on the character of the area given it is generally set behind other woodland and landscaping when viewed from public areas. The development would however result in the loss of most of the trees that adjoin the garage courts at the western end of Broadacres and Oakfields. While this tree loss is regrettable it would not have a significant adverse impact on the character of these streets. A suitable replacement boundary treatment and landscaping can be secured by condition.

It is therefore considered that while the extent of tree and landscaping loss is regrettable it is necessary to accommodate the development and suitable replacement tree and landscaping planting can be secured by condition. This should also include a management program and requirements to replant any trees lost for in the first 10 years of the development.

The impact on protected species and biodiversity

The application site includes areas of potential habitat for protected species which includes the broadleaf woodland, scrub and grassland. The woodland on the site is Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland which is also a habitat of principle importance to the conservation of biodiversity. While none of the trees have the potential to support bat roosting, bats are likely to use the woodland and woodland edge for foraging. The site has the potential to support reptiles and is likely to be most suitable for slow worms with good areas for foraging, shelter and basking. The site also includes suitable habitat for stag beetles, badgers and nesting birds.

The applicant has submitted an Ecological Assessment Report and a Landscape Management that have considered the impact of the proposed development and identify a scheme of mitigation that would be implemented alongside the development. This includes the provision of new woodland and scrub planting, the creation of a woodland ride and a glade, the creation of shelter/hibernation features for reptiles and the provision of artificial nest/roost boxes for bats and birds. The applicants assessment concludes there would be a net gain in biodiversity of over 10% based on the relevant technical guidance.

Surrey Wildlife Trust has considered the proposal and has advised that the documents submitted are sufficient to inform the consideration of the application. It recommends that any planning permission granted should secure the proposed scheme of mitigation and measures to ensure protected species are not harmed by the proposed development during the construction phase. It also recommends that this proposal should be required to secure the biodiversity net gains and that the replacement planting and habitat is managed for the lifetime of the development for its biodiversity value. This can be controlled by planning conditions and accordingly the application is considered acceptable in biodiversity terms.

The level of parking and the impact on highway safety

The proposal includes the provision of a small car park, accessed from Woodside Road, which would provide 7 car parking spaces. There is no parking standard for allotments however the site is located within a relatively dense urban area and it is likely that many of the future plot holders would be local to the site. While trips to the site by plot holders would be regular, they are also likely to be spaced throughout the day and of varying durations.

It is therefore considered that the level of parking is appropriate to serve the proposed use. The County Highway Authority have considered the proposal and have raised no objection to parking provision provided.

The access to the site would be from Woodside Road via a small private track. The access is located on the inside of a bend and therefore has good visibility in both directions and vehicle speeds are likely to be low on this quiet residential street. The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposed access arrangements, and it is considered that the access proposed is suitable to serve the intended use. In reality, as this will form an extension to the existing site, access is likely to be split between the Woodside Road access and the existing access on Westway where there is also a small car park. No concerns arise in respect of any potential additional movements on this access.

Surrey County Council has requested that one of the proposed car parking spaces be provided with an electric vehicle charging point. While such facilities should be provided wherever possible, any requirement must be reasonable in the context of the proposal. In this instance the development seeks the change of use of the land to create an extension to the existing allotment site. The Council does not have an adopted standard for parking spaces or charge points in respect of such uses. Given the scale of the development it is not considered necessary to include a condition to secure this as a requirement of the grant of planning permission. The applicant would be able to install one or more charging points this within the development should they decide to do so.

Worplesdon Parish Council have requested a Road Safety Audit be undertaken however as no changes to the public highway are proposed this is not required. The Parish Council have also requested a condition requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan however the proposed development includes relatively little physical development and it is not considered that a CMP is required in this instance.

The development would therefore not give rise to condition prejudicial to highway safety, would not inconvenience existing users or the highway and would provide a suitable quantity of off-street car parking.

Conclusion

The application site forms part of a protected Open Green Space which is allocated in the Local Plan for allotments, including the creation of additional plots. The proposed development would deliver 35 new plots, this would be a significant benefit to the local community and would support local and national objectives for healthy and active lifestyles.

The development results in the loss of a number of trees and an early mature woodland but this can be mitigated by suitable replacement planting which would be secured by condition. The development would not adversely impact on biodiversity and planning conditions are capable of securing biodiversity net gains. The development would not materially impact on the character of the area, residential amenity or highway safety.

For these reasons it is considered that the application should be approved.