

Worth Parish Council

Proposed Additional Parking at Bowers Place, Crawley Down

Revised Scheme

Planning Statement

The following documents and organisations were consulted to inform decision making for this application:

West Sussex County Council Highways
West Sussex County Council Parking Survey methodology 2016
UK Power Networks
Openreach
Southern Gas Networks
Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan CDNP02 and CDNP10
Mid Sussex District Plan DP1, DP3, DP21 and DP25
PJC Consultancy Ltd

Why is additional parking required?

The village centre is a compact area containing excellent shopping, leisure and health facilities which include:

Dentist
A COOP general store
Butcher
Nail Parlour
Hair Dresser
Newsagent and Post Office
Restaurant
Professional Podiatrist
Pharmacy.
Health Centre which is linked to the village centre by Bowers Place, a cul-de-sac.

Leading to the village centre are Grange Road from the Turners Hill Road, Burleigh Way from Hophurst Hill, Station Road from the north via Sandy Lane. In addition Old Station Close, Bowers Place and Brick House Lane, all cul-de-sacs, which exit via the village centre. 50 metres to the south, Kiln Road and Sandhill Lane enter the village centre. It can be seen that the village centre is the focal point for considerable traffic movement. Commercial vehicles and public transport buses add to the equation. Metro bus estimate that they have 90 daily movements through the village, most of which are via the centre.

Following the construction of the Millennium Car Park in 2014, the existing off street and on street designated parking has a total capacity of 47 spaces, including two DA. The system has further capacity for 3 motorcycles and 12 bicycles.

The current system is at any time of day or week busy and at certain times overwhelmed, causing illegal and inconsiderate parking which impedes traffic flow through the centre. For the purposes of the traffic survey, attached as *Appendix 1*, illegal parking is defined as **"parking on double yellow lines, parking on Highway verges and public pavements"**, inconsiderate parking is defined as **"parking in a manner which impedes traffic flow and parking in areas which impede sight lines for motorists and pedestrians."**

Inappropriate parking is causing significant damage to verges and pavements throughout the village adding to the costs of highways maintenance, this is especially the case on Bowers Place.

Paragraph 56 of the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan describes a similar scenario and is reproduced below.

- 56 Within the built-up area, on-road parking causes congestion and has a significant impact on the visual appearance of most streets. High levels of car ownership per household are exacerbated by the presence of properties where extensions have taken the place of off-road parking. In the village centre there are often problems of obstruction of service and emergency vehicles. Inconsiderate parking is also a problem, but a culture of ignoring parking restrictions has arisen primarily from insufficient parking for the shops and lack of enforcement action. The Parish Council recognises that parking difficulties can limit passing trade and cause residents to shop elsewhere and is currently investing in increased parking in the village centre.

The Planning Statement for 2013 Permission 13/01024/COU also made the follow comment;

"The proposal will only provide sufficient capacity to meet existing average demands and will not provide sufficient capacity for existing peak demand which normally occurs on week day evenings between 1500 hours and 2000 hours and all day Saturday due to additional demand from non resident shoppers using the village facilities. This additional capacity will not be able to absorb any further potential housing expansion within or local to Crawley Down village."

What has caused this cycle to re-occur?

- Since 2014, Crawley Down has received in excess of 400 additional houses, with more to come and the population has risen from 4800 to about 6000. Village car parking spaces cannot keep pace with this level of development, and needs this review to ensure that lack of parking is not a deterrent to use of facilities.
- Car ownership in Crawley Down as a percentage of the potential car owning population is high and exceeds 70%. The number of cars has grown dramatically with development and has been further increase by well paid young people, in good jobs, staying at home because they can't raise a mortgage deposit but can and do afford a car.
- The new owners of the restaurant Turkish Restaurant will be re-opening the outdoor area this summer, which will attracted more clientele and lead to a raised summer months parking demand.
- Large rambling groups have taken to using the village car parks and can block turnover for periods of 3 to 6 hours on any day of the week. Whilst rambling needs to be encouraged, blocking car park turnover is now a becoming a repeat problem.
- The expansion of terraced housing under permitted development rights, to provide additional accommodation, on streets with no off road parking or houses with inadequate frontage parking or garaging, has led to additional parking demand. This is particularly relevant in the centre of the village and around the Village Green, which is seeing a rapid development of roof spaces. This additional parking need also has to be addressed.

We are therefore faced by the familiar problems of:

Unavailable space for commercial deliveries to the village shops

Delays to bus services due to inconsiderate parking blocking routes

Difficulties for the emergency services, drug delivery vehicles and patients accessing the Health Centre via Bowers Place

Difficulties for other service vehicles such as Waste Disposal Services

A confusing pedestrian and cycling environment.

Car Parking Usage Survey

A survey of the existing car parking facilities was carried out during June, July and August 2021, generally inline with the requirements of the WSCC Survey for Parking 2016. This demonstrated a need for a minimum of 20 additional car parking spaces, to meet the current and some minor additional demand. The survey has been revisited during autumn 2023 to confirm that the data is still relevant. The result is a small upward trend in parking demand, which is to be expected with further housing completions within the village

See Appendix 1 – Crawley Down Village Car Parking Survey.

The proposed solution

The Millennium car park occupied the last remaining site within the village centre to provide sufficient space for a car park. There are no other sites available other than the allotments, which are fully occupied and considered by WPC to offer an excellent social and recreational space that should be retained intact.

WPC have considered the alternative of using, in conjunction with WSCC Highways, the verge and footpath to the east of the Village Green on Bowers Place as an opportunity to provide off road public parking. The ownership of the village green lies with WPC.

The scheme proposed is to create 18 linear parking spaces to the east of the Green on WSCC Highways land, by converting the existing verge to highway construction to provide in combination with the existing path. A short length of path running parallel to the Playground area, will be constructed to provide pedestrian access to the south east corner of the Green. This path on WPC land will be to WSCC Highways standards and but remain unadopted and in the ownership of WPC.

This scheme is in two parts;

1. The parking areas will be constructed by removing the existing kerbs and infilling the existing verge between the highway and existing path with a highways approved construction with the asphalt wearing surface jointed to the highway and path. This will enable vehicles to park off the highway and will provide a clear carriageway path through to the Health Centre. It has been agreed with the Regional Highways Engineer, that the existing path construction is adequate for vehicle parking. *See Appendix 3.*

2. A new pedestrian path will be constructed on WPC land to WSCC Highways standards, alongside the eastern side of the playground to provide access to the south east corner of the Green.

The scheme will provide adequate protection for all existing over ground and underground services by constructing four built out no parking zones, where access to services is required. Services will be further protected by installing bollards to prevent vehicles entering these areas.

There will be no path across the Green running parallel to Bowers Place. Discussions with WSCC Highways Agreements Engineer indicated that the existing path to the east side of Bowers Place has adequate pedestrian capacity to meet demand and that crossing of Bowers Place was satisfactory if a new drop kerb blister pavement crossing was installed north of the proposed works. This will accommodate the access to properties at the north side of the Green and provide access to the centre of the village for those living on the west side of Bowers Place north of the Green.

There is full length access to the Village Green for pedestrians using the Station Road footpath

To the south of the proposed footpath alongside the playground, WSCC Highways have requested that the severely damaged section of kerb and verge be replaced by a new kerb and tarmac area complete with bollards, to prevent parking, which currently restricts the pedestrian sight lines at the pedestrian cross over on Bowers Place to access the playground.

The existing west to east slope on Bowers Place will enable the satisfactory drainage of the scheme to the existing Highways drainage system.

The proposed car parking lies about 100 metres north of the village centre and about 150 metres south of the Health Centre with good pedestrian access to both.

Usage

The 18 spaces proposed are all public village parking and are not exclusively available to the residents of Bowers Place. A previous scheme proposed parking restrictions; however, following discussions with WSCC Highways, the ability to enforce such parking restrictions is not within the capacity of current local enforcement and would not therefore work. They recommended that parking be unrestricted. *See Appendix 2*

Planning Compliance.

The planning references for this application are:

NPPF

Local Plan Policies DP3, DP21 and DP25

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan policies CDNP02 and CDNP10

NPPF

Paragraph 84

Supporting a prosperous rural community.

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

This application is in part to allow existing businesses to retain and expand their customer base by providing easy access to their facilities, which includes adequate local parking.

Local Plan Policies

DP3 Village and Neighbourhood Centre development.

Strategic Objective 9) To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community; and 10) To support a strong and diverse rural economy in the villages and countryside.

This application is in part to help the local economy by ensuring that business is not taken elsewhere due to the rapidly worsening availability of parking during peak usage periods.

DP21 Transport

Decisions on development proposals will take account of whether:

The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages

The scheme will be constructed to WSCC Highways standards and will be the subject of a P38/S278 Legal Agreement.

The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;

Crawley Down has a good bus service which connects with other local centres but does not reach many residents who live in outlying areas. They rely on cars for shopping, school pick up, pharmacy and health care services.

The village sits on the Worth Way and provides cycling connections to East Grinstead and Crawley for commuters and recreational riders. The village provides a purpose built seat and 12 cycle stand places by the Millennium car park, these are well used. Car parking capacity has not kept pace with development; therefore the village centre is significantly under subscribed with parking facilities.

DP25 Community Facilities and Local Services

The Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the community infrastructure required to support future growth in the district, and why this is needed. New community facilities and improvements to existing facilities form an important part of these requirements and Town and Parish Councils have provided this information, supplemented by infrastructure providers and other consultees.

The community facilities and local services referred to in this policy include: • Car parks • Cemeteries and burial grounds • Education facilities • Emergency services • Healthcare facilities • Libraries • Local shops including banks and post offices • Places of worship • Public conveniences • Public houses • Specialist accommodation and care homes • Sports pavilions • Village halls and community centres
DP25: Community Facilities and Local Service

This application is for additional public car parking to support existing facilities and provide for some future growth.

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Policies.

CDNP02 Retention and Enhancement of Recreational and Local Green/Open Spaces

The following areas, and as shown in Figure 6, are designated as local green/open spaces:

1. Allotments

2. King Georges Field
3. Cricket Ground
4. Haven and Sports Fields
5. Village Green
6. The Pond and associated meadowland
7. Burleigh Meadow
8. Hawarden
9. Worth Way West
10. Worth Way East

Proposals for built development on these Local Green/Open Space, or on land registered as an ACV, will not be permitted unless:

- a. the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space; or*
- b. the proposal would result in the development of local community infrastructure.*

WPC are of the view that the use of a narrow 1.4 m strip to the eastern boundary of the Playground will not diminish the role of the Village Green as an open space. The footpath to be provided will increase safety for users by providing a safe surface to Highways standards.

The proposal will result in the development of local community infrastructure.

Whilst there is a minor loss of amenity land, the benefits of the additional parking are considered to out weigh this by offering some relief to the already congested village centre.

Access to the north east corner of the Village Green will continue to be provided by the existing footpath system.

CDNP10 Promoting Sustainable Transport.

c) Identifying and undertaking appropriate measures, such as highway improvements, to address any transport infrastructure inadequacies.

The scheme provides improved access to the Heath Centre and will contribute to easing congestion in the village centre by providing additional parking.

Provision for the Protection of Trees.

PJC Consultancy Ltd supports the project, the Impact Assessment for all trees within the construction area, being satisfactory. They have provided a full Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Electric vehicle parking.

WPC would like to provide vehicle recharging points to this proposed car parking and will discuss this with WSCC and their Partners.

Lighting for the new arrangement.

The existing lighting to Bowers Place is acknowledged to be of average quality but adequate for the delivery of this project. A review of all WPC controlled street lighting is being carried out to provide a plan for replacement and upgrading.

JH June 2024

Edited by PBA Planning 23/09/2025

Appendices :

Appendix 1.

Crawley Down Village Parking Survey - Updated Summer 2023

Appendix 2.

File Note – Meeting with Chris Pratt, Senior Engineer, Highways Agreements on 04/10/2023

Appendix 3.

File Note – Meeting with Adam Denby, WSCC Highways Regional Manager on 19/12/2023