

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer	David Stevens
Application No.	26/00333/RBCRG3
Date Valid	24th June 2026
Expiry date of consultations	23 rd July 2026
Proposal	Retention of 58-space hard surfaced pay & display car park operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Address	Kings Moat Car Park Westmead Farnborough
Ward	Empress
Applicant	Rushmoor Borough Council
Agent	-
Recommendation	Planning permission be Granted .

Description

The Council-owned Kings Moat pay-and-display car park is located within Farnborough Town Centre. It contains 58 parking spaces including 3 disabled bays and operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The vehicular entrance and exit is off the public highway at Westmead, opposite the Asda Supermarket service yard. The car park is situated adjacent to the Dukes Court flats to the north-west, the site of the former Farnborough Leisure Centre to the west, Farnborough Library to the south, and the Iceland Food Store to the east.

A succession of temporary permissions have been granted for the use of the site as a car park between 2007 (07/00737/RBC3PP) and 2023 (23/00186/FULPP). The 2023 permission allowed the use of the car park for a further 3 years, terminating on the 27 April 2026. However, overall, the land has been used continuously as a pay & display car now for 19 years.

The current proposal seeks permission for the permanent retention of the pay and display car park on a 24-hour basis; or until such time as the land is re-developed as part of the Farnborough Civic Quarter re-development.

Consultee Responses

RBC Regen. Team No comments received.

Neighbours notified

In addition to posting a site notice and press advertisement, 30 individual letters of notification were sent to all flats in Dukes Court, Farnborough Library and 96, 96A, 98 & 98a Queensmead, being the adjoining properties to the site and its access. The neighbour notification period in this respect expires on 16 July 2026; i.e. the day after the Committee meeting.

Neighbour comments

At the time of writing this report no comments have been received. An update will be provided at the meeting.

Policy and determining issues

The site is located within Farnborough Town Centre just outside the shopping core; and situated within an area allocated in the Local Plan for redevelopment. As such policies SS1 (The Spatial Strategy), SP2 (Farnborough town centre), SP2.3 (Farnborough Civic Quarter), IN2 (Transport), DE1 (Design in the Built Environment), DE6 (Open Space, Recreation and Leisure) of the adopted Local Plan 2014-2032 are relevant. The Council's Car and Cycle Parking Standards SPD, Farnborough Town Centre SPD, Civic Quarter SPD, and National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance are also relevant in the determination of this application.

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) : s149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires all public authorities to “*have due regard to*” (a) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (b) advance equality of opportunity; and (c) foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those without as an essential element of their decision-making, which includes the consideration and determination of Planning Applications. ‘Protected characteristics’ are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation. In the context of the current planning application it is considered that the primary PSED consideration that is identified is the need to have due regard to access for people with disabilities within the proposed development. In this respect, the car park provides 3 dedicated mobility parking spaces and is generally situated in a position providing convenient parking for the library and to the town centre without the need for roads to be crossed.

The main determining issues are considered to be:- 1. Principle; 2. Visual Impact; 3. Impact on neighbours; and 4. Highway considerations.

Commentary

Principle –

The application site is land allocated by Local Plan Policy SP2.3 for the development of the ‘Farnborough Civic Quarter’, for which the Council’s Development Management Committee resolved to grant outline planning permission subject to a s106 agreement and conditions at their 22 February 2023 meeting; 22/00193/OUTPP refers. In this respect, along with the Iceland building, the car park is identified as being Plot C within the proposed re-development.

The Kings Moat Car Park continues to be very popular with town centre shoppers and visitors to the library, and is particularly popular for customers that have mobility issues, as they do

not need to cross busy highways to gain access to the town centre. Even though the land forms part of the proposed Civic Quarter re-development it therefore makes no sense to cease the car parking use until the land is needed for the implementation of the relevant part of the proposed Civic Quarter re-development. Whilst it is now proposed to continue the use of the application site as a car park on a permanent basis, thereby avoiding the necessity for triennial renewals of temporary permission, it is considered that this is appropriate and that doing so would not prejudice the delivery of the wider Civic Quarter scheme and future redevelopment of the site when required. In this respect, the site is owned by the Council and prejudice to future development proposals usually arises when land is built on. However the application site in this case remains an open use of land. In the meantime, the retention of the car park continues to make the best use of the land and, indeed, to provide useful public parking adjacent to the Town Centre at a time when the nearby Queensmead Car Park has recently been taken out of use to be re-developed as the new Farnborough Pools & Fitness Centre.

On this basis it is considered that the proposed retention of the car park use on a permanent basis is compatible with the objectives of, and accords with, Local Plan Policy SP2.3 and the Farnborough Civic Quarter SPD. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

2. Visual Impact -

The application land was previously used as public amenity land, albeit largely comprising a hard-surfaced concrete slab paved thoroughfare. The car parking use of this land necessitated the replacement of the concrete slabs with tarmac and the formation of the vehicular access, provision of signage and ticket machines etc. Nevertheless, this and the use of the land for parking purposes is not considered to have resulted in material harm to the visual character and appearance of the town centre area. Indeed, use of land in the vicinity of the town centre for parking is not considered to be at all unusual or unexpected. Whilst it is usual for temporary planning permissions to require reinstatement of the land once the use ceases, it has not been considered necessary to require the reinstatement of the land to its former condition in the circumstances of this particular case. It is considered that the same consideration applies in respect of the current proposed permanent retention until such time as the Council wishes to proceed with the Civic Quarter proposals in that event the land would simply be re-developed in any event.

3. Impact on neighbours -

The closest residents are on the upper floors of Dukes Court, located some 5 metres to the north of the site at the nearest point. The proposal seeks to continue the use of the car park on a 24 hour basis, 7 days a week. The car park has operated in such way since 2014 (i.e. a period of 12 years) without complaint. As a result, it is considered that the continued use of the car park in such way would not result in undue harm to the adjoining residential occupiers, in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Local Plan.

4. Highway considerations –

The access and egress arrangements for the car park remain as previously approved and have not given rise to any undue impacts on the safety and convenience of highway users. As a result, the proposal is considered acceptable in highways terms.

Conclusions –

The Kings Moat car park continues to be is an acceptable use of the land serving visitors to the town centre in advance of the re-development as part of the Civic Quarter scheme. The granting of a permanent planning permission at this juncture is not considered to conflict with the Council's long-term objectives for this part of Farnborough town centre, and does not have a harmful visual impact upon the character of the area, upon residential amenity, or highway safety. Therefore, the proposals are considered acceptable having regard to Policies SP2, SP2.3, IN2 and DE1 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2014-2032) and the Council's adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards SPD.

Full Recommendation

It is recommended that **SUBJECT** to no new and substantial objections being received before the expiry of the period of neighbour notification expiring on 16 July 2026 that the Executive Head of Property & Growth, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the following condition and informatives:-

1. The permission hereby granted shall remain in accordance with the following approved drawing – PARKING LAYOUT DWG KMoatCP_17.

Reason - To ensure the development continues in accordance with the permission granted.

Informatives:

1. **INFORMATIVE - REASONS FOR APPROVAL** - The Council has granted permission because the development is considered to be an acceptable short-term measure to provide car parking to serve the town centre in advance of the redevelopment of the site and is not considered to conflict with the Council's long-term objectives for this part of Farnborough town centre. Therefore, the proposals are considered acceptable having regard to Policies SP2, SP2.3, IN2 and DE1 of the adopted Rushmoor Local Plan (2014-2032) and the Council's adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards SPD.

It is therefore considered that subject to compliance with the attached conditions, and taking into account all other material planning considerations, including the provisions of the development plan, that the proposal would be acceptable. This also includes a consideration of whether the decision to grant permission is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

2. **INFORMATIVE** – The Local Planning Authority's commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of pre-application discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.



