

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	Katie Ingram
Application No.	20/00700/COU
Date Valid	1st October 2020
Expiry date of consultations	28th October 2020
Proposal	Continued siting of a portable cabin and change of use from cafe to day centre and enclosing area of public open space 12m x 15.5m to be used by the Parkside Centre
Address	<b>Parkside Centre 57 Guildford Road Aldershot Hampshire GU12 4BP</b>
Ward	Aldershot Park
Applicant	Chris Harris
Recommendation	<b>REFUSE</b>

### Description

The Parkside Centre is a day centre providing services for children and adults with learning disabilities. The entire site lies within the designated open space of Aldershot Park. The site contains a single storey building with a garden area at the rear bounded to the south east by a beech hedge and the north east by reed fencing and Cypressa trees. Beyond the rear fenced boundary is an area 15m wide 12m deep which forms part of the Parkside Centre's lease with the Council. To the east and north east of the application site is the children's playground and the duck pond and a lightly wooded area. Land which adjoins the site to the north east and a stand of beech trees along the north western boundary of the site is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The application site and the Park are designated as the Countryside outside the built-up area boundary and as Public Open Space by Policies NE5 and DE6 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019) respectively.

In July 2010 planning permission 10/00298/FUL was granted for the erection of a portable building on the land to the rear of the fenced boundary, a pathway and wooden seating and tables to be used as a café and to provide a training experience for service users. The building was given permission for a period of three years due to its temporary nature and was conditioned to be painted dark green. In October 2013 planning permission 13/00307/EXT was granted to allow the continued siting of the portable building for use as a cafe for a further 5 years. This has now expired.

This planning application seeks permission to enclose the area of land on which the portable building is sited, and which forms the boundary line of the applicant's lease agreement with the Council. The area of land measures 15.5m wide x 12m deep and the fencing proposed is 2m high green palisade fencing. The application also seeks to change the use of the portable building from a café to an activity room / day centre use. The applicant writes that more secure space is required to meet social distancing requirements.

### **Consultee Responses**

Parks Development Officer      Raises an objection due to the loss of public open space and impact on visual amenities of the Park

Arboricultural Officer            No objection subject to condition protecting tree roots

### **Neighbours notified and comments**

Two site notices were posted and 41 letters of notification were sent to adjoining properties. No letters of representation have been received.

### **Policy and determining issues**

The site is located in the Countryside outside the urban area boundary and designated as Public Open Space. Policies SS2 (Spatial Strategy), DE1 (Design in the Built Environment) DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), IN1 (Infrastructure and Community Facilities), IN2 (Transport), NE2 (Green Infrastructure), NE3 (Trees and Landscaping), NE4 (Biodiversity) and NE5 (Countryside) are relevant to the determination of the application as well as the Rushmoor Car and Cycle Parking Standards SPD (2017).

The main determining issues are the principle of development, impact on the character and appearance of the area, impact on neighbouring amenity, highways and parking considerations and impact on trees and biodiversity.

### **Commentary**

#### **Principle of the development –**

The site is designated as being public open space by Policy DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) which states that '*development will not be permitted on areas of open space used for recreation or outdoor sport, or having visual amenity - unless the development is for sport and recreation provision, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss, or, an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements in meeting needs in Rushmoor over the plan period*'.

Enclosing the land and changing its use for use by the Parkside Centre would result in the loss of public open space. The use is not for alternative recreation provision and therefore the proposal is contrary to provisions of Policy DE6. The Rushmoor Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2014), which informed the Local Plan (2019), highlights that there is limited opportunity to create new open space in the Borough and the policy approach should be to protect against the loss of existing open space and enhance facilities. The erection of the portable building was granted permission in 2010 because it was for a café that was located within the Park boundaries which enhanced existing recreational provision for park users. The

principle of the proposed development therefore conflicts with the provisions and objectives of Policy DE6 and is unacceptable. The recommendation is that the application should be refused.

### **Impact on character of the site and surrounding area –**

The Park in this location is characterised by the duck pond, an adventure playground, a lightly wooded area and a large oak tree. Policy NE5 (Countryside) states that development will be permitted, among other things, where it preserves the character and appearance of the countryside. The proposed 2m high green palisade steel fencing would have an industrial and utilitarian appearance which would be out of keeping with the more natural green character of the Park. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy NE5 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019).

### **Impact on neighbouring amenity –**

The north western boundary of the application site is against the rear boundaries of properties on Whyte Avenue. It is considered that the incorporation of the public open space into the curtilage of the Centre would not lead to a material increase of activity levels above existing that would have a materially detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity. The application would comply Policy DE1 of the Local Plan (2019) in this regard.

### **Highways considerations –**

There is an area of hardstanding at the front of the site for staff and visitor parking. The proposal would not result in additional staff so there no requirement under the Rushmoor Car and Cycle Parking Standards (2017) to provide for additional parking spaces. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on highway safety and comply with Policy IN2 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019).

### **Impact on trees and nature conservation -**

The Arboricultural Officer raised no objection to the application provided that, in the event of permission, post holes for fences are hand dug with no severance of tree roots in excess of 25mm diameter and lined with plastic to prevent leaching of phytotoxic chemicals.

The beech trees along the north western boundary of the site and the area adjoining the site to the north east including the duck pond are designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Biodiversity enhancements were proposed and installed as part of the original application 10/00298/FUL. Enclosing the rear part of the site would not result in any adverse effects to biodiversity and the application would comply with Policies NE3 (Trees and Landscaping) and NE4 (Biodiversity) of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019).

### **Conclusions**

The site is designated as being in Public Open Space and in the Countryside. Changing the use of the portable building and the land it is located on for the use now proposed by the Parkside Centre is contrary to the provision of the open space Policy DE6 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019). The proposed fencing is unsympathetic with the natural character of Aldershot Park. Although there are trees in the vicinity of the application site and the land adjoining the site the north east is designated as being located as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation if a fence were erected the health of the trees could be protected by a

condition. The application fails to comply with the provisions of Policies DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and NE5 (Countryside) of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019) so the principle of development and impact on visual amenities are unacceptable and the application should be refused.

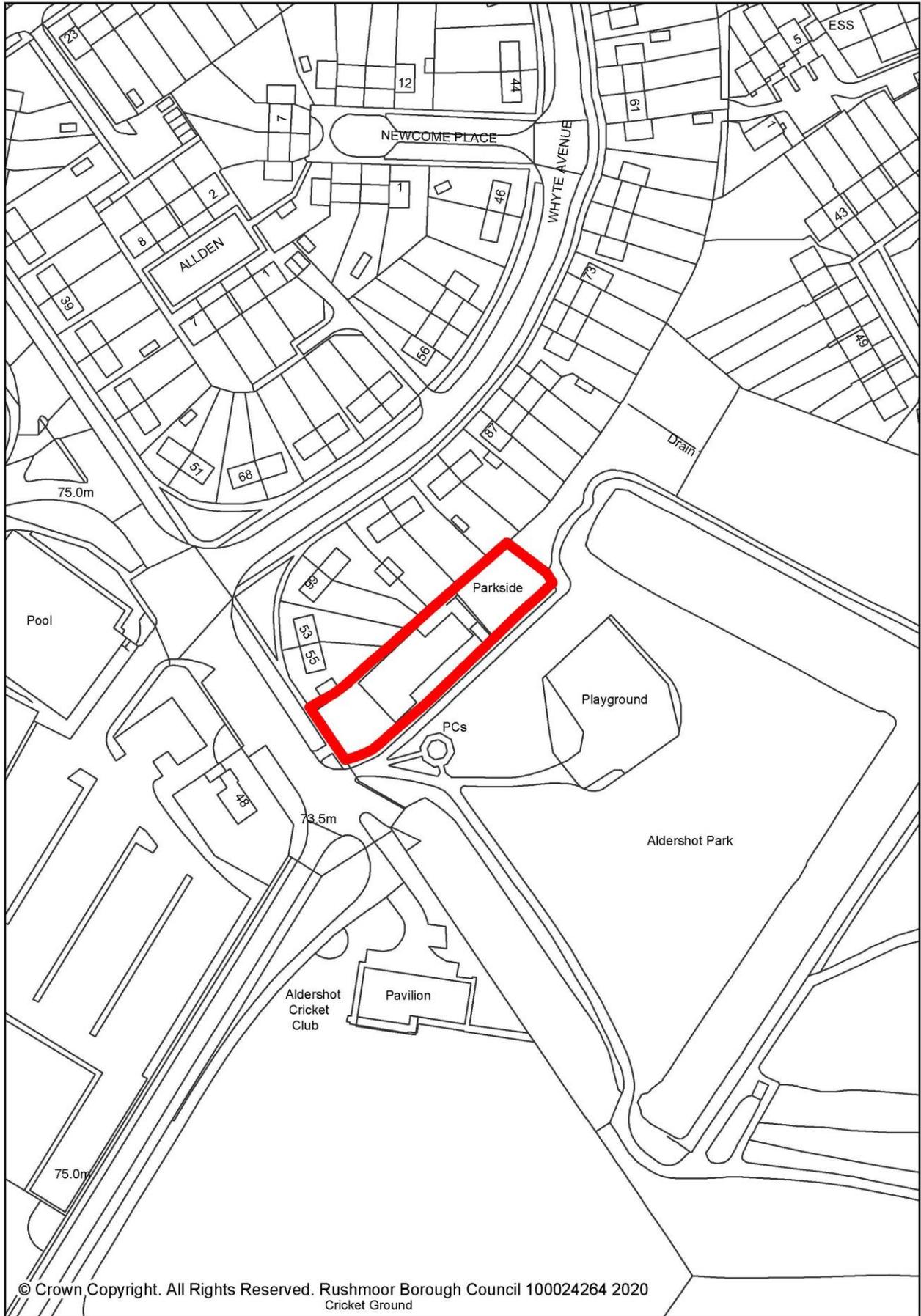
### **Full Recommendation**

It is recommended that permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed development results in the loss of an area of public open space used for recreation and is not for sports and recreation provision accessible to the public, and therefore conflicts with the provisions of Policy DE6 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019).
- 2 The proposed fencing, by way of its design and appearance, creates an incongruous form of development contrary to the green and natural character of Aldershot Park in this location and therefore fails to preserve the character and appearance of the Countryside, and conflicts with the provisions of Policy NE5 of the Rushmoor Local Plan (2019).

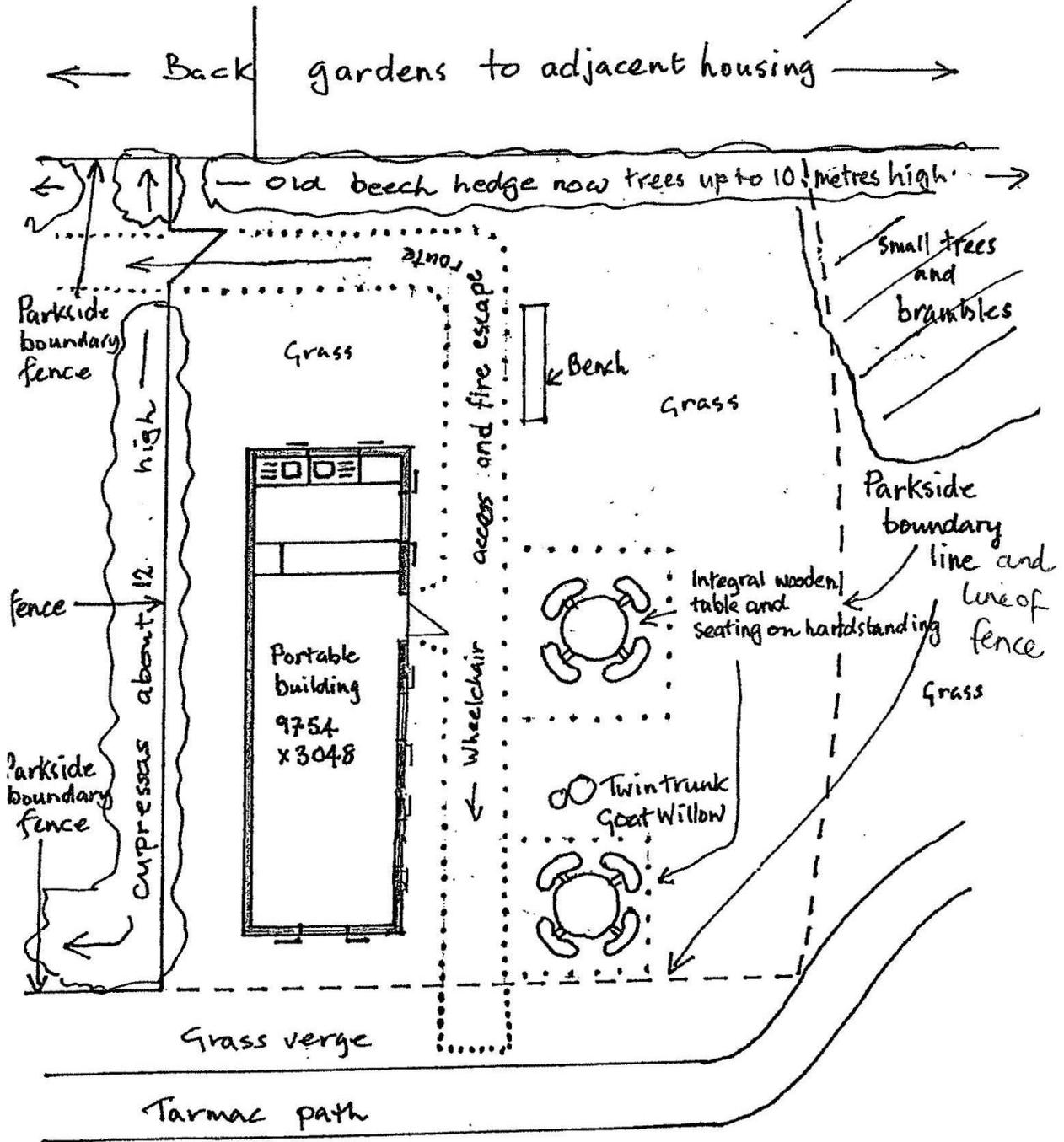
### **INFORMATIVES**

- 1 **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.





Portakabin floor plan showing external layout



Public Park

Site Plan Scale 1:100

# Proposed fencing

**PALISADE - steel palisade high-security fencing**

System type	Steel palisade systems
Product accreditation	BS 1722-12
Overall height	1.2 - 3.0m
Wire / bar / pale size	5 pale options, 2 - 4mm thickness
Post centres	2.75m

**Ask Barkers Fencing about**  
Palisade - GP and security grade steel palisade fencing

General enquiry

Your question

**SEND ENQUIRY**

**COPY SPEC**