

**REFERENCE NO: CR/2019/0863/FUL**

**LOCATION:** [TILGATE FOREST GOLF CENTRE, TILGATE DRIVE, TILGATE, CRAWLEY](#)  
**WARD:** Furnace Green  
**PROPOSAL:** ADVENTURE GOLF FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED WORKS & RECONFIGURATION OF OVERFLOW CAR PARK FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING PROVISION

**TARGET DECISION DATE:** 13 February 2020

**CASE OFFICER:** Ms D. Angelopoulou

**APPLICANTS NAME:** c/o Agent  
**AGENTS NAME:** PWA Planning

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**PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED:**

Drawing Number	Revision	Drawing Title
EAD_075_01		Location Plan
EAD_075_02		Existing Site Plan
EAD_075_03	S1	Proposed Site Plan
001	05	Proposed General Arrangement

**CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-**

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| 1. WSCC Highways                       | No objection subject to a condition and informative. |
| 2. Forestry Commission                 | No response received.                                |
| 3. CBC Property Division               | No objection.  |
| 4. CBC Planning Arboricultural Officer | No objection subject to condition.                   |
| 5. Ecology Consultant                  | No objection subject to condition.                   |
| 6. The Woodland Trust                  | No response received.                                |

**NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-**

The application has been advertised by site notices displayed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020.

**RESPONSES RECEIVED:-**

Nine representations have been received. 8 of them object to the proposed development and one of them is in support.

Planning Matters

*Objections*

- The felling of any viable trees.
- Incorrect or misleading information within the Planning Statement. Unconfirmed numbers of trees to be removed noted in the Ecology Report, and Question 9 of the application form refers to a different number of parking spaces to be provided compared to the submitted plans.
- Further information on the proposed water feature is needed if chemicals are to be added.
- Concerns as to whether the car parks become Pay and Display, increasing parking problems.

- More than 3 trees should be planted for mitigation and agreed by a Council Tree Officer with advice on the appropriate species. These 3 trees in the position shown would stop access to the footpath, which is not marked on the plans, and objection is raised on health and safety grounds.
- Not enough independent research has been carried out on the possible effects of the development on trees, wildlife and traffic. The overflow car park should have an Ecology Report due to the large hedgerows and placed Dormice boxes.
- The proposed opening hours would increase traffic flow in the local area, where there is already a considerable flow of traffic. Any increase in pedestrian or bicycle use down Tilgate Drive should be carefully considered.
- Not possible to combine visits as during winter months the Walled Garden and Nature Centre close at 4pm and Go Ape is only open at weekends. Visitors would have less travel options than stated.
- Loss of amenity as the picnic benches are not mentioned as being put elsewhere.
- Questions whether the proposal has already the backing of the Council as it is in Council land, and whether the proposal is designed to attract a different audience as golf is a leisure already in decline in the UK.
- The area should be converted to a further country park to benefit local residents.
- No details on any changes to the access road.
- The loss of the path from this car park behind the high sided vehicle area would push more people onto the access road where cars access the main car park.
- The application should be decided by the Planning Committee.

#### *In support*

- The proposal would provide much needed family entertainment options in Crawley as there is nothing else like this in the surrounding area.

#### Non-planning matters

- The company should lose some space from its golf area to create this new business rather than take up more space.
- Lease maps note the public paths and whether these will change.
- Lease issues regarding waste facilities and collection arrangements.

*Officer's comments: An updated Ecology Report has been received clarifying the discrepancies noted above in relation to the number of trees to be lost; the Ecology report now only refers to one tree as the other supporting information accompanying this planning application.*

#### **REASON FOR REPORTING TO COMMITTEE:-**

Number of objections received with an officer recommendation to permit.

#### **THE APPLICATION SITE:-**

- 1.1 The application site relates to the area at front of the clubhouse building at Tilgate Forest Golf Centre, which is currently used for outdoor seating area and is mainly laid to grass with some trees and shrubs. This area is open, measures approximately 0.1ha in area and changes in level, rising from north to south. The application site also includes a second area of land which is part of the parking area within the main car park for Tilgate Forest Golf Centre and the overflow car park adjacent to Tilgate Drive to the south with its surrounding landscaping which includes several hedges and trees.
- 1.2 Access to the Tilgate Forest Golf Centre is via Tilgate Drive, a private road which has access onto the public highway at Titmus Drive. The site is in Council ownership and is leased to the applicants. It lies outside the built-up area boundary, and is within the Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape Character Area as set out in Policy CH9. The site is also identified as Structural Landscaping in Policy CH7. Policy ENV2 also identifies the site as Biodiversity Opportunity Area.
- 1.3 The immediate surrounding area comprises the clubhouse building, the golf driving range building, several car parks, grass areas of golf courses operated by the applicants, allotments and woodland. Further to the west is the Tilgate Lake and Tilgate Park with a restaurant, a play area and other leisure facilities.

## **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-**

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of an adventure golf facility and associated works along with the reconfiguration of overflow car park to provide additional parking.
- 2.2 Following the removal of the existing outdoor seating area, grass, areas of shrubs and one tree in front of the Golf Centre building, the proposal would provide an 18-hole 'Wild Forest' themed Adventure Golf Facility. This Adventure Golf Facility would be soft green landscaped (white areas on the submitted plan), with putting areas artificially grassed, and the paths would be laid to gravel. It would incorporate several features relating to the 'Wild Forest' theme, such as tree stumps, tree trunks & roots, barrels, mineshaft etc. All these features would be artificial rockwork, namely they would be built using rendered concrete, which would then be carved to make them look 'real' and then would be scenically painted. The golf course would be enclosed by a 1.5m picket fence (the blue line on the submitted plan). The applicants submitted a Concept Document with photos showing the several features and the fence.
- 2.3 Following clarification provided by the applicants, the proposed location of the Adventure golf facility would involve the loss of 4 car parking spaces within the main car park. It is proposed to reconfigure the overflow car park to provide 25 new spaces (21 net additional). Originally, the hedges within the middle of this car park (north and south) were proposed to be wholly removed, but during the course of the application, a revised site plan has been received which shows the retention of most these hedges albeit some cutback to accommodate the revised parking layout, which would also be subject to a landscaping plan (as stated on the revised plan).
- 2.4 It is proposed that the opening hours of the Adventure Golf facility would be 9am to 9pm, seven days a week, subject to seasonal variations. Regarding lighting, the submitted Planning Statement states that: *'Lighting would only be used during the above opening hours and when needed when subject to low levels of natural illumination. It will be designed to provide for pedestrian safety and reduce light spill.'* The proposal would use the existing waste collection arrangements at the clubhouse building.
- 2.5 The following documents have been submitted in support of the application:
  - Planning Statement including Transport Statement
  - Landscape and Visual Assessment
  - Ecology Appraisal
  - Tree Survey Report
  - Tree Protection Method Statement
  - Concept Document

## **PLANNING HISTORY:-**

- 3.1 The relevant planning history comprises an application under reference CR/2018/0603/FUL for *'Adventure golf facility with extension to an existing car park involving the installation of adventure golf play features, interconnecting footpaths and boardwalk, central assembly area and kiosk, perimeter fencing with 3x entrance portals, with the widening of the existing access to Tilgate Drive and minor additions to car park surfacing, and the associated services, facilities and landscaping'*. The application site related to the woodland area, directly adjacent to the overflow car park to the south. This application was withdrawn by the applicant on 16 May 2019.

## **PLANNING POLICY:-**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019 as amended in June 2019)**

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2019 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
  - Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development. This section states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: an economic

objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations, and an environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. This includes making effective use of land and helping to improve biodiversity.

- Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy. Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate; d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.; and f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

#### Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) (adopted December 2015)

4.2 The following Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. In line with the planned approach to Crawley as a new town and the spatial patterns relating to the neighbourhood principles, when considering development proposals the council will take a positive approach to approving development which is sustainable.
- Policy CH2: Principles of Good Urban Design in order to assist in the creation, retention or enhancement of successful places. Development proposals will be required among others to create continuous frontages onto streets and spaces enclosed by development which clearly defines private and public areas, and provide information to demonstrate how the policy principles are achieved through the development.
- Policy CH3: Normal Requirements of All New Development states all proposals for development will be required to make a positive contribution to the area; be of a high quality urban design; provide and retain a good standard of amenity for all nearby and future occupants of land and buildings; be able to meet its own operational requirements necessary for the safe and proper use of the site; retain existing individual or groups of trees; incorporate “Secure by Design” principles and demonstrate how the Building for Life 12 criteria would be delivered. Development proposals must adhere to any relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the council.
- Policy CH7: Structural Landscaping requires that development proposals should protect and/or enhance structural landscaping, which is within the application site. Where limited or weak structural landscaping can be identified as a negative factor in the attractiveness of an area, opportunities will be sought to deliver enhancements as part of development proposals.
- Policy CH9: Development Outside the Built-Up Area. To ensure that Crawley’s compact nature and attractive setting is maintained, development should meet all the criteria set out in this Policy. In particular, for Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe: Proposals within Tilgate Country Park

and Worth Conservation Area/Worth Way SNCI should conserve their high landscape value and potential for improved green infrastructure links to other areas.

- Policy CH11: Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside. Unless it can be clearly shown that a Public Right of Way is unnecessary or not needed, proposals which result in the loss of a public right of way must ensure re-provision of equal or better value.
- Policy EC1: Sustainable Economic Growth. Crawley's role as the key economic driver for the Gatwick Diamond will be protected and enhanced. The council will ensure that all suitable opportunities within the borough are fully explored to enable existing and new businesses to grow and prosper.
- Policy EC7: Retail and Leisure Development outside the Primary Shopping Area. Retail and leisure proposals in Crawley will follow the NPPF 'Town Centre first' principle with development directed to the most sequentially preferable and sustainable locations, firstly within the Primary Shopping Area.
- Policy ENV1: Green Infrastructure. The Policy seeks to conserve and enhance Crawley's multi-functional green infrastructure network.
- Policy ENV2: Biodiversity: All development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity where appropriate, and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within and around the development.
- Policy IN1: Infrastructure Provision. Development will be permitted where it is supported by the necessary infrastructure both on and off site and if mitigation can be provided to avoid any significant cumulative effects on the existing infrastructure services.
- Policy IN3: Development and Requirements for Sustainable Transport. Developments should meet the access needs they generate and not cause an unacceptable impact in terms of increased traffic congestion or highway safety.
- Policy IN4: Car and Cycle Parking Standards. Development will be permitted where the proposals provide the appropriate amount of car and cycle parking to meet its needs when it is assessed against the borough council's car and cycle parking standards. These standards are contained within the Planning Obligations and s106 Agreements Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or any subsequent similar document.

#### Emerging Crawley Borough Local Plan 2020 – 2035 (January 2020)

- 4.3 The Local Plan Review 2020-2035 has been published for Regulation 19 consultation and therefore limited weight should be given to the following applicable policies:
- Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
  - Policy CL2: Making Successful Places: Principles of Good Urban Design.
  - Policy CL6: Structural Landscaping.
  - Policy CL8: Development Outside the Built-Up Area.
  - Policy DD1: Normal Requirements of All New Development.
  - Policy DD5: Tree Replacement Standards.
  - Policy OS3: Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside.
  - Policy IN1: Infrastructure Provision.
  - Policy EC1: Sustainable Economic Growth.
  - Policy GI1: Green Infrastructure.
  - Policy GI2: Biodiversity and Net Gain.
  - Policy ST1: Development and Requirements for Sustainable Transport.
  - Policy ST2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards.

#### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 4.4 The Supplementary Planning Documents are non-statutory documents which supplement the policies of the Local Plan and are applicable to this application. In particular:

##### Urban Design SPD (adopted October 2016)

- 4.5 The Urban Design SPD is a non-statutory document which supplements the policies of the Local Plan and is applicable to this application. It contains guidelines on the standards the Council expects for the public design highlighting in particular the importance of massing and materials, public realm, street design and parking and sustainable design.

- 4.6 It also includes in Annex 1 the Borough's indicative minimum parking standards and for a golf course this is 4 spaces per hole.

Green Infrastructure SPD (adopted October 2016)

- 4.7 This SPD includes guidance on development in relation to trees, biodiversity, and Landscape Character Areas.

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-**

- 5.1 The main planning issues in the determination of this application are:

- Whether the principle of the development in this location would be acceptable
- The impact on the visual amenities of the Structural Landscaping, Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape and trees
- Ecology & Biodiversity
- The impact on neighbouring properties and amenities
- The impact of the proposal on highways, access and parking arrangements
- Other matters

Whether the principle of the development in this location would be acceptable

- 5.1 The proposal would be located next to the existing clubhouse building at Tilgate Forest Golf Centre. The proposed Adventure golf course would provide an ancillary 'golf related' leisure facility for the established Golf Centre. The NPPF identifies leisure facilities as a main town centre use, but the NPPF sequential test does not apply to small scale rural development in a countryside location, and is therefore not required to support this application. It is therefore considered that the proposed Adventure Golf course would be suitable and appropriate ancillary golf facility within the established Tilgate Forest Golf Centre.
- 5.2 The proposed development would generate income and employment and is also expected to enhance local facilities, contributing to a strong, responsive, and competitive economy and healthier community in accordance with Policy EC1, and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF (Sections 6 and 8).
- 5.3 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would provide ancillary leisure facility to those already associated with and established at the Golf Centre, would have positive economic and social benefits and the principle of the development is therefore supported. Whilst the principle of development could be acceptable, the more detailed matters considered below, visual impacts, ecology, parking arrangements and highway safety, would need to be addressed.

The impact on the visual amenities of the Structural Landscaping, Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape and trees

- 5.4 The application site is identified as Structural Landscaping as set out in Policy CH7 which requires proposals to protect and/or enhance the structural landscaping, where appropriate. It is also outside the built-up area, but within the Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape area as identified in Policy CH9 which sets some criteria in order to maintain the Crawley's compact nature and attractive setting.
- 5.5 The proposed Adventure Golf facility would be in an area (approximately 0.1ha) in front of the clubhouse building. It would not be visible from land within the designated Tilgate Historic Park to the west due to the separation distance and woodland area in between. The proposal would also not be visible from the Site of Nature Conservation Importance to the south, due to the existence of mature trees and from the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance to the east and north, due to the existence of the clubhouse and driving range buildings which would screen the proposed development. The applicants have submitted a Landscape and Visual Assessment report which also demonstrates these views.

- 5.6 The proposal would be located on an area which is currently open, mainly grassed and next to the existing clubhouse building at Tilgate Forest Golf Centre. The immediate surrounding area comprises the clubhouse building, the golf driving range building, the two car parks and some trees. The proposal would be mainly soft landscaped (all the white areas on the submitted plan), the putting areas would be artificially grassed (green areas on the plan) and the paths would be laid to gravel. It would be enclosed by a 1.5m picket fence. The proposal would be of a 'Wild Theme', but no precise details have been submitted regarding the height and the design of the features proposed. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure control over their precise appearance. However, it is stated that the largest feature would measure 3m in height next to clubhouse building and its existing brick boundary wall. These features would be of artificial rockwork of reinforced concrete, sculpted and scenically painted to be in keeping with the surrounding area. The indicative sections (A-AA, and B-BB) show that the features would not be disproportionate to the clubhouse building, and the proposal would be a soft landscaped area with retained trees that would not detract from the character or visual amenities of this immediate locality. Subject to the recommended condition, the appearance of the proposal is considered appropriate in this location, and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of the Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape or Structural Landscaping, in accordance with Policies CH7, CH9 and CH3, and the Urban Design SPD.
- 5.7 The submitted information states that the layout would incorporate low level 'feature lighting' within the course of the design, but no further details have been submitted in this regard. This low level lighting is considered acceptable and in accordance with the criterion (iv) of Policy CH9, and it is recommended to be controlled by a condition to provide a detailed scheme of low level lighting.
- 5.8 The proposed development would also involve the reconfiguration of the overflow car park. This would involve some cutback of the hedges within the middle of the car park (north and south). Subject to a condition requiring a detailed landscaping plan to be provided, this reconfiguration is considered acceptable as the cars would still be screened by these hedges from the immediate area, and would not therefore alter the existing visual impact in this car park area.
- 5.9 The application site in front of the Tilgate Forest Golf Centre building has 10 trees and the proposal would involve the removal of one Scots Pine tree. The applicants submitted a Tree Survey report and a Tree Protection Method Statement in support of the application. These documents categorise this tree as C category. It is also stated that this tree is within a single tree group, and the remaining trees within this group would benefit from management and felling to allow the dominant trees to develop into healthy, well-formed specimens. The Council's Arboricultural Officer raised no objection and stated that the loss of the Scots Pine tree would not have a significantly adverse effect on the amenity, provided all works would be in accordance with the Tree Protection Method Statement. This is recommended to be secured by condition.
- 5.10 Policy CH6 requires any trees lost as part of the development to be replaced, the number of replacements is based on the girth of the tree removed. The removal of the Scots Pine tree would require 3 replacement trees and the applicants have shown 3 trees to be provided within the overflow car park. The species have not been specified. Some of the concerns raised in the received representations relate to the position of these trees close to a footpath that is not marked on the plans. A condition is recommended in this regard to ensure the appropriate species and their exact positioning on the plans (detailed landscaping plan). Subject to this condition, the replacement of the trees is considered acceptable and in accordance with the Local Plan Policy CH6 and the Green Infrastructure SPD.
- 5.11 Based on all the above, the proposed development would therefore meet all the criteria specified in the Policy CH9;
- i. it would be grouped with the existing clubhouse building at Tilgate Forest Golf Centre to minimise impact on visual amenity;
  - ii. its location would avoid the loss of important on-site views and off-site views towards important landscape features;
  - iii. it would reflect the local character next to the clubhouse building and the immediate locality by being a landscaped area, not disproportionate to the building;
  - iv. it would minimise the impact of lighting by low level lighting, subject to a detailed condition;

v. following the retention most of the hedges within the overflow car park, it would ensure that the parking areas would not be visually prominent in the landscape;

vi. given that it would provide ancillary leisure facility to those already associated with the Tilgate Forest Golf Centre, it would not generate an unacceptable level and/or frequency of noise in areas relatively undisturbed by noise and valued for their recreational or amenity value;

vii. given the existence of the car park, the adjacent Tilgate Drive, and the leisure facilities in the locality, the proposal would not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate to the rural roads (see also section below regarding highways, access and parking arrangements); and

viii. the Adventure Golf facility as ancillary leisure facility to the Tilgate Forest Golf Centre would not introduce a use which by virtue of its operation would not be compatible with the countryside in this location.

5.12 Overall, the proposal would not be visible from the designated Tilgate Historic Park or the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The proposal would be a soft landscaped area with retained trees that would not detract from the character or visual amenities of the immediate locality. Subject to the recommended condition, the appearance of the proposal is considered appropriate in this location, and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of the Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape, Structural Landscaping or the visual amenity of the surrounding area, and would be in accordance with Policies CH2, CH3, CH7, CH6 and CH9, and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF in this regard.

#### Ecology & Biodiversity

5.13 The applicant submitted an Ecology Appraisal in support of the application and also amended the site plan by retaining most of the hedges, with some cutback, within the overflow car park subject to a detailed landscaping plan. The Council's Ecology Consultant considered this information and raised no objection subject to a condition to ensure that the recommendations stated in this Ecology Appraisal would be implemented.

5.14 The Adventure Golf facility would be soft 'green' landscaped details of which are proposed to be controlled through a landscaping scheme. This is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy ENV2.

5.15 The proposal would also include a water feature. Some of the concerns raised in the representation section above related to this feature and whether chemicals would be added to this that could potentially have impact on the biodiversity. The applicants provided further information on this by stating: *'The water feature will be sealed and filled from the club's own water supply as and when required. It will work on a pump system to keep the water flow moving. No chemicals required.'* This is considered acceptable and is recommended to be controlled by condition.

#### The impact on neighbouring properties and amenities

5.16 The surrounding area comprises woodland and grass links of the golf course. In terms of impact upon neighbouring properties the proposal is sited some 280m to the east of the closest residential properties along Salisbury Road and Constable Road. Given this separation distance, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

#### The impact of the proposal on highways, access and parking arrangements

5.17 The access to the proposed development from Tilgate Drive, a private road, would remain unaltered and there are no proposed changes to the public rights of way or accessibility. Tilgate Forest Golf Centre is served by the main car park in front of the Golf Centre building to the north of Tilgate Drive, and by the overflow car park to the south of Tilgate Drive. During the course of the application, the agent clarified that the proposal would involve the loss of 4 parking spaces within the main car park, but this is not stated in the submitted Planning Statement or within the application form. The reconfiguration of the overflow car park would provide 25 new spaces, resulting in 114 spaces in total within the overflow car park, and a total net increase of 21 spaces. It is also noted that adjacent to the overflow car park to the west, is a Council owned car park with capacity of around 125 spaces with pay and display facilities. Further to the west (some 550m away) is also the



main visitor car park for Tilgate Park (around 280 spaces) with pay and display facilities. The nearest bus stop is located at the Tilgate Park main car park, some 700m along Tilgate Drive, and is served only at weekends.

- 5.18 Annex 1 of the Urban Design SPD contains the Borough's indicative minimum parking standards for a 'standard' golf course as 4 spaces per hole. If applied to the 18-hole Adventure Golf facility, the development would require 72 parking spaces. The submitted Planning Statement states in this regard: *'The proposed Adventure Golf comprises an 18-hole course, providing up to an anticipated maximum of 72 players on the courses at any one-time comprising players of all ages, plus those waiting to start / finish. The Adventure Golf would be staffed by 2 full-time equivalents (FTE). The proposed Adventure Golf is designed as a family-friendly visitor attraction for which all equipment is provided on site. Accordingly, visitors may arrive by a combination of transport means, including private car directly to the Golf Centre or other car parks within Tilgate Park, or by sustainable means such as public transport (bus links as above), cycle and/or on foot. It is anticipated that a notable proportion of visitors would combine their visit with days out to Tilgate Park and other attractions, i.e. Go Ape, Nature Centre etc.). It is estimated that circa 25,000 rounds of golf will be played per year. Of these circa 50% of players are anticipated to be arriving by either sustainable transport modes and/or also visiting other attractions within Tilgate Park, extending their visit.'*
- 5.19 The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been consulted on the above application and raised no objection. They stated that: *'The proposal is for an "adventure" golf facility, clearly designed to provide a fun environment for families and other groups. The authority therefore agrees with the applicant that it is not appropriate to apply the County Council's parking standards for golf courses to the proposed use. The implication is that the applicant has attempted to put in place additional parking to serve the use whilst taking account of the site's constraints. It is the authority's view that the proposed provision is appropriate and adequate for the use.'*
- No changes are proposed to the site access from Tilgate Drive. That road is not maintained by the County Council and we have no issues with the likely modest increase in traffic from the use. It is unlikely that the increased traffic will have a severe impact on the local public road network. Two employees will be associated with the facility with a negligible impact on traffic as a result. The application affects the Titmus Drive footpath and public footpath 3391. There are some rules about building and developing next to a footpath as indicated in Annex 1. Given that Tilgate Drive serves a variety of sites and uses, and that construction vehicles will travel through a residential area, a construction management plan is required.'*
- 5.20 It is acknowledged that the proposal would not meet the Council's adopted parking standards, as only 21 new parking spaces would be provided (25 new within the overflow car park minus 4 lost within the main car park) compared to the required 72 spaces. However, these standards refer to a standard golf course. An Adventure Golf facility would attract a different age and type of visitors (family attraction) to those of the existing golf courses operated by the applicants. Therefore, it is considered that, given WSSC Highway's no objection in relation to the vehicle numbers estimated, the surrounding car parks available to the site along with the proposed net increase of 21 spaces, the nature of the Adventure Golf facility as a family attraction, and the likelihood of some visitors combining their visit with other attractions, that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety and parking arrangements, and would therefore accord with the Local Plan Policies CH3, IN3 and IN4 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
- 5.21 It is noted that some of the representations received note that it would not be possible to combine visits as described by the applicants as during winter months the Walled Garden and Nature Centre close at 4pm and Go Ape is only open at weekends. This is not considered a reason to object to this proposal if the applicants choose to operate different hours. The hours of operation are considered acceptable in this location and are recommended to be controlled by condition.
- 5.22 The Construction Management Plan is recommended to be controlled by condition and the applicant would be advised via an informative regarding the rules about building and developing next to a footpath.

#### Other matters

- 5.23 Some of the representations received relate to the loss of the existing outdoor seating area. The applicants state: *'Last summer new benches were put in place to the rear of the club house with a capacity of around 50. The benches would be removed, and not added to this area, as an improvement has already been made. Furthermore, like the vegetation and removal of tree, this in itself does not constitute development and can take place without planning permission.'* Given this, it is not considered that the loss of these picnic benches could substantiate a reason for refusal.
- 5.24 Other objections related to the existing waste collection at the golf course and reference to the lease of the applicants with the Council. These are not planning matters and have no bearing on the acceptability of the application in planning terms.

### **CONCLUSIONS:-**

- 6.1 The proposal in this location is supported in principle as it would provide an ancillary leisure facility to those already associated with and established at, the Tilgate Forest Golf Centre. The proposal would not be visible from the designated Tilgate Historic Park or the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The proposal would be a soft landscaped area with retained trees and is not considered to detract from the character or visual amenities of the immediate locality. Subject to detailed conditions controlling the golf course features, materials, lighting and tree protection conditions, the appearance of the proposal is considered appropriate in this location, and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of the Tilgate/Worth Forest Rural Fringe Landscape, Structural Landscaping or the visual amenity of the surrounding area.
- 6.2 The proposal is considered acceptable in ecological terms subject to a condition requiring the recommendations stated in the submitted Ecology Appraisal report to be implemented and subject to a landscaping scheme condition. It is also considered that, given WSSC Highway's no objection in relation to the vehicle numbers estimated, the surrounding car parks available to the site along with the proposed net increase of 21 spaces, the nature of the Adventure Golf facility as a family attraction, and the likelihood of visitors combining their visit with other attractions, that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety and parking arrangements. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on neighbours' amenities, at the closest residential properties some 280m away to the west.
- 6.3 For the reasons outlined above, the application would accord with the relevant NPPF policies, the Local Plan policies, the Urban Design SPD and the Green Infrastructure SPD. It is therefore recommended that the proposal is granted planning permission subject to the recommended conditions.

### **RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2019/0863/FUL**

**PERMIT** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans as listed below save as varied by the conditions hereafter:  
(Drawing numbers to be added)  
REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
3. No above ground development shall be carried out unless and until samples of the materials and finishes to be used for the fencing, putting greens, artificial rockwork of the several elements of the proposed development and other adventure golf course features have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policies CH3 and CH9 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.

4. No above ground development shall be carried out unless and until precise elevations of the proposed golf course features have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall proceed in accordance with the details so approved.  
REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policies CH3 and CH9 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
5. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to throughout the entire construction period. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters:
- the anticipated number, frequency and types of vehicles used during construction,
  - the method of access and routing of vehicles during construction,
  - the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors,
  - the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste,
  - the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development,
  - the erection and maintenance of security hoarding,
  - the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon local roads (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders),
  - details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.
- REASON: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area in accordance with Policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
6. Prior to practical completion of and before any use of the adventure golf facility, the following details shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority:
- A statement showing how the recommendations, including enhancements, set out in the preliminary ecological appraisal by Cherry Ecology, dated 9 October 2019 have been implemented.
- REASON: To ensure that the proposals avoid adverse impacts on protected and priority species and contribute to a net gain in biodiversity, in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
7. The water feature of the development hereby approved shall be sealed and filled from the club's own water supply on a pump system with no chemicals added in strict accordance with the submitted details.  
REASON: To ensure that the proposals avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
8. No above ground development shall be carried out unless and until a scheme of low level lighting has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the number of light fittings, design and level of illumination and the hours of use of the lighting elements. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in strict accordance with the agreed details.  
REASON: To ensure that the proposals avoid adverse impacts on the visual amenity of the area and to safeguard biodiversity in accordance with Policies CH9 and ENV2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030 and paragraphs 170 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
9. The Adventure Golf facility hereby permitted shall only be open to customers between the hours 09.00am and 09.00pm.  
REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies CH3 and CH9 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030.
10. The works to implement the development hereby approved shall only be undertaken in accordance with the Tree Survey Report and Tree Protection Method Statement provided by PDP Associates Ltd and dated November 2019.  
REASON: To ensure the retention and maintenance of trees important to the visual amenity / the ecological quality / and for the environment of the development in accordance with Policies CH2 and CH3 of Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
11. No above ground development shall take place unless and until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, hard and soft, for the adventure

golf course and including the areas within the car park where the landscaping will be cut back/thinned. The approved landscaping scheme shall provide for a minimum of three new trees within the car park site.

REASON: In the interests of amenity and of the environment of the development in accordance with Policies CH3 and CH6 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030 and the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document.

12. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.
- REASON: In the interests of amenity and of the environment of the development in the accordance with policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 - 2030.

Informative(s)

1. The development is close to Titmus Drive footpath and public footpath 3391 and the applicant is must note the following guidance and advice provided by West Sussex County Council Highways in relation to building near a right of way:
- All recorded Public Rights of Way are shown on the Definitive Map.
  - Planning permission alone does not allow a Right of Way to be obstructed or moved in any way - this includes construction works, which must not interfere with a Right of Way or pose any risk to path users.
  - If a diversion/extinguishment is necessary to enable a development to take place, an application for diversion should to made to the relevant planning authority well in advance of the start of the work.
  - All Public Rights of Way must remain open and available for public use at all times unless the relevant legal steps have been undertaken.
  - The temporary closure of a Public Right of Way is a legal process, and is done only where it is absolutely necessary and there is a danger to public safety that cannot be designed out.
  - Once any work is completed, the legal, definitive line of the Public Right of Way must be available for use on the ground.

1. NPPF Statement

In determining this planning application, the Local Planning Authority assessed the proposal against all material considerations and has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions where possible and required, by:

- Providing advice in a timely and manner through pre-application discussions/correspondence.
- Liaising with agent and discussing the proposal where considered appropriate and necessary in a timely manner during the course of the determination of the application.
- Seeking amended plans/additional information to address identified issues during the course of the application.

This decision has been taken in accordance with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework, as set out in article 35, of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.



# ArcGIS Web Map



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