

Contact: Ms Nicky Chiswick, Clerk & RFO
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Nutfield Parish Council
Parish Office
Nutfield Village Hall
63 Mid Street
South Nutfield
Surrey, RH1 4JJ

Ms G Betts
Principal Planning Officer
Tandridge District Council
8 Station Road East
Oxted, Surrey
RH8 0BT

By Email
19th August 2021

Dear Ms Betts

TA2021/1040 – NUTFIELD GREEN PARK

The Parish Council is writing to object to the above application in its capacity as the owner of Nutfield Cemetery, and as Custodian Trustees of the Charles Maw Trust who own the Memorial Field (the recreation ground in Nutfield) and the adjoining woodland on its northern boundary that slopes down to Gore Meadow. Both of these Parish amenities would be adversely affected by the above application.

Nutfield Cemetery

The Parish Council has owned this Cemetery since 1896. In addition to operating as a traditional cemetery, there is also a Woodland and Meadow burial area at its northern end. Like most cemeteries it has a very tranquil and peaceful environment which is enhanced by its large number of mature trees and shrubs.

In the Parish Council's opinion this proposal would have an adverse impact upon the Cemetery for the following reasons:

- Loss of woodland on its eastern boundary - At present there is a well-established bluebell wood adjacent to Pimlico Cottages which extends almost to the Cemetery's northern boundary, as shown below in an extract from the 1971 aerial photograph of the site (planning portal document 24708968).

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This woodland enhances the additional tree and shrub planting that has taken place in the Cemetery since the 1970s, and very much contributes to the Cemetery's rural setting.

It appears from the illustrative masterplan (planning portal document 24709718) that a significant portion of this woodland would be felled to accommodate the car parking for the proposed Wellbeing Centre, possibly the Centre itself, and the children's play area. A lesser area of this woodland would be felled to accommodate the staff accommodation and car parking for the rehabilitation and respite facility (The Grange).

- Adverse impact upon the Cemetery's tranquillity and peaceful environment - The loss of this woodland buffer and its replacement with buildings and associated infrastructure operating either on a 24/7 basis or 7 days a week will inevitably increase the levels of noise and disturbance within the Cemetery due to their closeness to the Cemetery's eastern boundary. The distance between this infrastructure and the eastern boundary is approximately 75m at the nearest point and little more than 100m at the furthest.
- No consideration of its current environment or surroundings – This application fails to make any attempt to preserve or harmonise its proposals with the Cemetery's current setting. As such, it does not show any respect for those buried there or the relatives and friends visiting their graves or memorials.

Memorial Field

The Parish Council was bequeathed this land in 1905 as a recreation ground for the Parish. As the Custodian Trustee of the Charles Maw Trust, the Parish Council is responsible for its management and maintenance. This Trust also includes the woodland on the northern boundary of the recreation ground that slopes down to Gore Meadow which is also managed and maintained by the Parish Council. Set out below are its concerns about this application's impact upon these two areas.

The Woodland

The Parish Council is concerned about the adverse impacts arising from the isolation of this woodland and the increased pressure of human activities upon it. At present it is currently part of a tree and shrub corridor that stretches across the ridge as shown in the picture below.

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With the exception of this area this application seeks to build upon all of the other existing woodland in the above picture which will have the following consequences:

- The biodiversity within this woodland will be significantly diminished - It will be surrounded on its west and eastern boundaries by high density housing in “Streeters Meadow”, the lower density homes in Church Hill Green, and by the access road to the north. This will effectively limit the movement of any woodland animals making them potentially vulnerable and unviable due to the lack of connectivity with nearby wooded areas;
- A threat from non-native plants - Without a buffer zone between the woodland and the above two housing areas, there is real possibility of invasive plant species migrating from the adjoining gardens into this woodland;
- Human activity - At present the woodland is relatively hard to access, and there are few signs of any adverse impacts arising from those walking on the two footpaths that border it. However, its closeness to the proposed residential areas will mean that it will be at a greater risk of becoming degraded.

Recreation Ground

The Parish Council is concerned that more intensive use of the recreation ground will have adverse impacts both for adjoining neighbours and its existing users:

- Impact upon neighbouring properties – Increased use will result in greater noise disturbance for the neighbouring properties, particularly the homes in the former Doods Brow School, whose rear gardens adjoin the recreation ground’s southern boundary;
- Impact upon existing users - The recreation ground is currently used for dog walking, and the Parish Council regularly receives complaints from its users about those exercising their dogs not cleaning up after them. This is clearly a health hazard for the children, residents and sport teams using it for recreational purposes. This proposed development will result in a significant loss of open space for Nutfield residents exercising dogs, and together with the village’s increase in population, the Parish Council envisages that the recreation ground will be use more intensively for dog walking. This will compound the existing health hazard for its recreational users.

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Although the Parish Council has written this letter in its capacity as the owner and Custodian Trustees of the Cemetery and Memorial Field with its adjoining woodland, it should be considered as part of its statutory response to the above application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicky Chiswick".

Nicky Chiswick

Clerk and RFO to Nutfield Parish Council