

East Area Planning Committee

7th August 2013

Application Number: 13/01397/CT3

Decision Due by: 31st July 2013

Proposal: Erection of single storey extension to accommodate additional change room facilities to the north elevation

Site Address: Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road (**site plan: appendix 1**)

Ward: Blackbird Leys

Agent: B3 Architects

Applicant: Oxford City Council

Recommendation:

The East Area Planning Committee is recommended to APPROVE planning permission for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed single storey extension to create a sports pavilion would represent a wholly appropriate use within the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and providing more modern changing facilities that will support the long term needs and sustainability of two local community football clubs. The extension to the existing leisure centre would represent an efficient use of previously developed land, while also enhancing this existing indoor sports facility by providing a focal point between the indoor and outdoor sports facilities within Blackbird Leys Park. The size, scale, siting, and design of the pavilion would be well integrated with the existing centre and surrounding area, while safeguarding the residential amenities of the surrounding properties within Pegasus Road and Evenlode Tower. The proposal would not have a significant impact upon the local highway network given the football clubs already use the existing leisure centre and there would be adequate car parking and cycle parking for all users of the leisure centre. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon flood risk or sustainability matters. The proposed development would therefore accord with the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, and the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. No third party objections have received.
- 2 The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation

and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.

Conditions:

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Samples of materials
- 4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme
- 5 Details of sustainability measures

Main Local Plan Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

CP1 - Development Proposals

CP6 - Efficient Use of Land & Density

CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context

CP9 - Creating Successful New Places

CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

CP11 - Landscape Design

CP13 - Accessibility

CP19 - Nuisance

CP20 - Lighting

CP21 - Noise

TR2 - Travel Plans

TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities

NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows

HE2 - Archaeology

SR2 - Protection of Open Air Sports Facilities

Core Strategy

CS1_ - Hierarchy of centres

CS3_ - Regeneration areas

CS9_ - Energy and natural resources

CS11_ - Flooding

CS13_ - Supporting access to new development

CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic environment

CS19_ - Community safety

CS21_ - Green spaces, leisure and sport

Sites and Housing Plan

SP5_ - Blackbird Leys Central Area

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework

Relevant Site History:

68/21021/A_H - Erection of a sports hall for educational and public use at Redefield School: Approved

83/00036/NF - Extension to existing building to form training hall: Approved

81/00514/GF - Adjacent to Redefield Sports Hall Pegasus Road - Change of use of part of school playing field to adventure playground and erection of building to serve as an indoor facility: Withdrawn

81/00713/GF - Change of use of part of school playing field to adventure playground and erection of building to serve as an indoor facility (revised): Withdrawn

87/00010/GF - Demolition of single storey ancillary buildings to sports hall and erection of two storey extension: Deemed Consent

04/01888/CT3 - Extension to Leisure Centre: Deemed Consent

05/02245/CT3 - Extension and alterations to leisure centre, external condensers (x10). (Variation to permission 04/01888/CT3): Approved

10/00325/CT3 - Refurbishment of existing main entrance including the re-modelling of the entrance doors. Insertion of 5 opening roof lights in the entrance/reception area to replace 5 existing non-opening roof lights: Approved

11/00242/CT3 - Extension to existing Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre to provide 25m swimming pool, learner and fun pools and ancillary facilities. Alterations to existing leisure centre including new entrance, plus external works including landscaping and alterations to existing car parking to provide 121 spaces and 50 cycle spaces. (Additional Information): Approved

Representations Received:

None

Statutory Consultees:

Blackbird Leys Parish Council: No objection

Environment Agency Thames Region: The development is deemed to have a low environmental risk.

Oxfordshire County Council Drainage Team: The proposed extension does increase the surface water discharge to a soak away with a high level overflow to the existing system would be one option to reduce that out fall.

Officers Assessment:

Site Location and Description:

1. The site is located on the northern side of Pegasus Road, and is bordered by the Oxford and Cherwell Valley College to the north-west, playing fields and Blackbird Leys Park to the north and east, and Evenlode Tower to the west. The site is within a predominately residential area, with properties on the southern side of Pegasus Road facing the site (**site plan: appendix 1**).

2. The site comprises the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre which includes a multi-use sports hall, gym, exercise studios, spin studio, crèche, and café. The centre has undergone various refurbishment works in recent years and has an extant planning permission in place for the provision of a new 25m swimming pool, learner and fun pools and ancillary facilities.
3. The site is accessed via the Pegasus Road with a car park located to the west of the multi-use sports hall which has 89 spaces including a small area for disabled parking. There is also cycle parking of 30 spaces and pedestrian access to the facility along the frontage.

Proposal

4. The proposed development forms part of the Oxford City Councils Pavilion Modernisation Project and is seeking permission for the erection of a single storey extension to the rear of the existing leisure centre to provide a sports pavilion as a direct replacement for the existing pavilion which is currently located in the north-eastern side of the park.
5. The pavilion will provide two 16 person changing rooms, with WC's and showers, officials changing room with WC and shower, accessible WC, external store, kitchen / shop with external window, and gas meter.
6. The Oxford City Councils Pavilion Modernisation Project involves the investment of £2.7m over the next 3 years (supplemented by grant funding from sporting bodies such as Sport England and the Football Foundation making a total of £3.14m) to improve pavilions in the city's parks which provide central bases and facilities for many sports clubs in the city. The aim of the project is to provide outstanding facilities which meet modern day standards of the respective sporting bodies and to meet the Councils policies to encourage participation in sport.
7. Officers consider that the principle determining issues for this application are the principle of development; improvements to the sports facility; form and appearance; impact upon adjoining properties; highway matters, and flood risk.

Principle of Development

8. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the effective use of land and by reusing land that has been previously developed provided that it is not of a high environmental value. This is supported by Policy CS2 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026
9. The general principle of reusing the existing previously developed land within the park to provide the replacement facilities would be supported by the above-mentioned policies. The proposed extension would not impinge on any of the protected open-air sports facility.

Improvements to the sports facilities

10. The existing sports pavilion is located in the north eastern corner of Blackbird Leys Park and was used by two local football clubs (Oxford Boys and Girls FC, and Greater Leys FC) who have over 500 members. The building has been unusable for several years, as it did not meet modern standards and has been condemned due to the amount of asbestos within the building. This has had an impact upon the sustainability of the clubs, who in the interim have had to use two existing changing rooms in the leisure centre, as it does not meet the clubs needs and hinders club development and participation.
11. The proposed development is therefore seeking to provide a direct replacement for the pavilion by extending the existing leisure centre. The pavilion will primarily be used by the two football clubs, but will be available to other users who may wish to use it. The pavilion will provide changing facilities for players and officials which comply with current Sport England and Football Foundation requirements. The design will encourage participation by all groups, particularly women, children and disabled through the provision of privacy screens to the changing rooms, ensuite changing rooms, accessible unisex toilets, and changing rooms (including hinged shower seats).
12. The relocation of the pavilion to the existing leisure centre would be entirely appropriate as it would connect the outdoor team activities to the main leisure centre and provide a focal point for leisure activities within the park. At the same time it would reduce the pressure on the existing changing room facilities within the existing leisure centre. This would be entirely consistent with the aims of Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS21 which encourages improvements to indoor and outdoor sports facilities across the city.

Form and Appearance

13. The Oxford Core Strategy 2026, through Policy CS18 encourages development to demonstrate high-quality urban design by responding to the site and its surroundings; creating a strong sense of place; contributing to an attractive public realm and providing high quality architecture. The Local Plan supports these aims through Policy CP1 which requires new development to enhance the overall quality of the environment, and CP8 which states that the siting, size, scale, and massing of development should be integrated with the built form and grain of the area in which it is sited.
14. The extension to the centre has been located on the northern elevation of the building, to allow it to connect to the existing access to the sports pitches. The extension is single storey and relatively modest in size and scale, when viewed against the existing leisure centre and indeed within the context of the swimming pool extension which has yet to be implemented. The location of the pavilion to the north of the leisure centre will help provide some activity to this part of the leisure centre by providing a focal point which currently does not exist and therefore allowing the leisure centre to have an active frontage onto the outdoor pitches. The design will be relatively simple and contemporary in appearance, using materials consistent with the existing centre and the proposed swimming

pool. The materials to be used include aluminium standing seam cladding, signage, and curtain walling. A dark grey brick plinth and feature bricks between windows will be used, while the smooth grey bricks will be used on the main elevation to break up the expanse of cladding.

15. The proposed extension would create an appropriate visual relationship with the built form of the existing leisure centre and as part of the resultant building once the swimming pool extension has been added and would therefore accord with the overall aims of Policy CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, and Policies CP1 and CP8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

Impact upon adjoining properties

16. Policy CP10 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to be sited in a manner which meets functional need, but also in a manner that safeguards the amenities of other properties. This is supported by Policy HS19 which states that development proposals should not increase the potential for overlooking into habitable rooms, noise intrusion, overbearing impact, or loss of sunlight or daylight.
17. The proposed extension would not have any impact upon any of the adjoining residential properties in Pegasus Road or the nearby Evenlode Tower that would conflict with the aims of this policy.

Highway Matters

18. The proposed extension would not result in the loss of any of the existing parking for the leisure centre, or alter any of the parking arrangements approved as part of the swimming pool extension. The proposal does not include any additional parking at the centre over that already approved as part of the expansion works to the car park approved under the swimming pool extension. The peak use of the changing room will be weekends and the car park adjacent to the current pavilion will still be utilised by members of the football club. Similarly the proposed extension only seeks to maintain the existing situation whereby users of the football clubs are currently using the leisure centre for changing facilities and as such there is no change to the existing situation.

Flood Risk

19. The proposed extension would be sited within Flood Zone 1 (less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year). A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) by Curtins Consulting has been included with the application. The Environment Agency has identified the scheme as having low risk in terms of flooding. The Flood Risk Assessment has indicated that the proposed development would not generate an increase in permeable area and therefore the existing drainage on site should be able to deal with any additional surface water. A condition should be attached which requires details of a sustainable urban drainage system for the proposed development.

Conclusion:

20. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, and the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and therefore officer's recommendation is to approve the development.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Contact Officer: Andrew Murdoch

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Date: 26th July 2013

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