

East Area Planning Committee

2nd October 2013

Application Number: 13/01940/CT3

Decision Due by: 25th October 2013

Proposal: Demolition of existing sports pavilion. Erection of 2 storey community centre involving replacement sports pavilion, car and cycle parking, entrance square, multi-use games area and children's play area.

Site Address: Rose Hill Sports Ground, Ashhurst Way (**site plan: appendix 1**)

Ward: Rose Hill And Iffley

Agent: ADP

Applicant: Oxford City Council

Recommendation:

APPLICATION BE APPROVED

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposed community centre would make an efficient use of land, and provide enhanced multi-functional community facilities for the Rose Hill Neighbourhood Area to meet the strategic regeneration aims within the Oxford Core Strategy 2026. The development is sited in a manner that would maintain and enhance the quality of the existing open-air sports facility and surrounding public realm without causing any undue harm and disturbance to local residents surrounding the site that could not be successfully mitigated by appropriately worded conditions. The size, scale, and design of the community centre would be well integrated into its setting and surrounding area. The proposed development would not have a significant impact upon the local highway network and would provide adequate car parking and cycle parking for users of the facility. The development would be energy efficient, and would not have a significant impact upon biodiversity; drainage; or noise impact and any such impact relating to these matters could be successfully mitigated by appropriate measures secured by condition. The proposal would accord with the overall aims of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.

- 2 In considering the application, officers have had specific regard to the comments of third parties and statutory bodies in relation to the application. However officers consider that these comments have not raised any material considerations that would warrant refusal of the applications, and any harm identified could be successfully mitigated by appropriately worded conditions.

- 3 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 exterior materials
- 4 Development to adopt Secure by Design Principles
- 5 Management Plan
- 6 Hours of operation
- 7 Details of external lighting
- 8 Provision of refuse storage
- 9 Provision of cycle storage
- 10 Landscape Plan
- 11 Landscape carried out on completion
- 12 Details of access road and parking area
- 13 Details of mechanical plant and ventilation
- 14 Scheme for treatment of cooking odours
- 15 Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme
- 16 Provision of NRIA recommendations
- 17 Provision of Biodiversity Report recommendations

Principal Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1** - Development Proposals
- CP5** - Mixed-Use Developments
- 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
- CP14** - Public Art
- CP18** - Natural Resource Impact Analysis
- CP19** - Nuisance
- CP20** - Lighting
- CP21** - Noise
- CP22** - Contaminated Land
- TR1** - Transport Assessment

TR2 - Travel Plans
TR3 - Car Parking Standards
TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
SR2 - Protection of Open Air Sports Facilities
HH2 - Primary Health Care Facilities - Non Residential buildings & New HC Facilities

Core Strategy

CS2_ - Previously developed and greenfield land
CS3_ - Regeneration areas
CS9_ - Energy and natural resources
CS11_ - Flooding
CS12_ - Biodiversity
CS13_ - Supporting access to new development
CS15_ - Primary healthcare
CS17_ - Infrastructure and developer contributions
CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic environment
CS19_ - Community safety
CS20_ - Cultural and community development
CS21_ - Green spaces, leisure and sport

Other Planning Documents

National Planning Policy Framework

Relevant Planning History

73/00197/A H - Rose Hill Playing Fields Rose Hill, and erection of sports pavilion:
Approved

06/02026/CT4 - Erection of 6 x 12.5 metre floodlight columns: Approved.

07/01617/CT4 - Erection of 2x 10m floodlight columns: Approved

Public Consultation

Statutory Consultees

Oxfordshire County Council

- Highways Authority: No objection, subject to conditions requiring the prior approval of the access road and footway widths, details of the access manoeuvres for large refuse collections, and provision of covered cycle storage
- Drainage: No objection, ground investigations required including soakage tests for sustainable drainage scheme

Thames Water Utilities Limited: No objection

Third Parties

No comments received from third parties

Community Engagement

The design and access statement sets out the community engagement that has been undertaken prior to the submission of the application. The consultation consisted of an initial public consultation and exhibition that took place on the 12th November 2012. This was advertised through the local press and a direct mail newsletter. The consultation showed two proposals which residents were asked to vote on, with the results showing residents preferred a new community centre.

A further round of community engagements took place following this consultation in order to develop the scheme. The scheme was then revised to take into consideration the comments received. These alterations included alterations to the appearance of the building, revisions to the layout to make a more efficient use of space, more public space and a new civic square provided, the provision of the health centre in the building, and a social club located at ground floor level.

Officers Assessment:

Site Location and Description

1. The site is located on the northern side of Ashurst Way and is bordered by the Rose Hill Primary School to the west, and residential properties of Dashwood Road to the east, and Abberbury Avenue, Hunsdon Road, and Courtland Road to the north (**site plan: appendix 1**)
2. The site comprises the Rose Hill Sports Ground which is designated within the Oxford Core Strategy as a designated open-air sports facility. The sports ground currently has sports pavilion and changing block, multi-use games area, and children's play area. The playing fields have one floodlit grass training area, one adult-sized football pitch, and junior sized pitch in the playing fields to the northern end of the site.
3. The sports ground is accessed from Ashurst Way and has an area of hard surfacing to the south of the existing multi-use games area which provides parking to the site.

Proposal

4. Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing single-storey sports pavilion on the site and the erection of a two-storey community centre and replacement sports pavilion.
5. The community centre will include a community 'gathering' space, health centre, multi-purpose activity hall and store, social club, advice centre, community gym and changing rooms, youth centre, training kitchen and café-style servery, large meeting room, and sports changing facilities.
6. The proposed development will also include external works to the area to the front of the centre to create an entrance square with car and cycle parking, and a relocated multi-use games area and children's play area.

7. Officers consider that the main determining issues would be as follows:
- Principle of development
 - Impact upon open-air sports facility
 - Community facilities
 - Site layout and built form
 - Impact upon adjoining properties
 - Transport
 - Landscaping
 - Sustainability
 - Drainage
 - Biodiversity
 - Other Matters

Principle of Development

8. The Oxford Core Strategy 2026 recognises that community facilities provide benefits to the wider community by encouraging social inclusion and a high quality of life. This is consistent with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework. The site is located within Rose Hill, which the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 has identified as one of five priority areas for regeneration in the city under Policy CS3. It identifies the need to enhance or add to local community facilities as a key requirement for each of the priority areas but that in particular the provision of multi-functional community facilities are a required in Rose Hill.
9. The proposed development would seek to relocate a number of the existing community facilities within the area within a single building, while also providing additional resources. As such, officers consider that the general principle of providing a new community facility within Rose Hill would be consistent with the strategic aims for the regeneration of this area set out within the Oxford Core Strategy 2026.

Impact upon open-air sports facility

10. The new community centre would be located on the southern boundary of the sports ground which is designated as a protected open air-sports facility. Oxford Local Plan Policy SR2 makes clear that permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of an open-air sports facility and Core Strategy Policy CS21 seeks to maintain publically accessible green space.
11. The community centre would be sited in the previously developed areas of the sports field which currently includes the children's play area, multi-use games arena, children's nursery, scout hut, and advice centre. Its position within the site would be considered the most logical in terms of maintaining the existing open-space within the sports ground while also enhancing the space by providing a focal point at the entrance and a link between the surrounding buildings (i.e. children's nursery, primary school) and sports pitches. The children's play area and multi-use games arena would then be relocated to where the existing sports pavilion is sited which again prevents any loss of the open space.

Community Facilities

12. Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS20 states that the Council will seek to protect and enhance existing community facilities and will not grant permission for developments that result in the loss of such facilities unless equivalent new or improved facilities, where foreseeable need justifies this, can be provided at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling, and public transport.
13. The new community centre will have a gross floor area of 1950.9m² which would be split across the two floors of the building. The building would include a community 'gathering space', health centre, multi-purpose activity hall, training kitchen and café, social club including bar and games room, sports changing facilities, advice centre, community gym and changing rooms, large meeting room, and youth centre. In terms of meeting the aims of Policy CS20, the new centre will provide additional community facilities in terms of a new health centre, multi-purpose activity hall, training kitchen and café. It will also replace the existing community centre and social club which is located on the eastern side of The Oval, and the Advice Centre and Sports Pavilion which are located within Ashurst Way and the Sports Ground.
14. Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS19 states that new developments are expected to promote safe and attractive environments which reduce the opportunity for crime and fear of crime. In doing so, developments should meet the principles of 'secured by design' including providing for well-designed public spaces, and access routes, which are integrated into the surroundings and responds to the needs of the community, maximises natural surveillance, and provides for appropriate lighting of public spaces and access routes. The development has sought to provide a layout which encourages natural surveillance of the main public areas and provides clear routes through the site to the surrounding areas. It would be recommended that a condition be attached which requires the scheme to demonstrate that it has been designed to secured by design principles and to achieve accreditation for this.
15. The application form states that the intended hours of use of the community facility will generally be between 09.00-23.00 hours Monday – Sunday. However, it is anticipated that the peak times of the individual uses within the building will not overlap or operate continually between these times throughout the week. The health centre for instance will operate primarily between 09.00-18.00 hours Monday-Friday with occasional Saturday opening at these hours. Having regards to the location of the building, the anticipated opening hours would not create any specific concerns in terms of potential for disturbance and would enable sufficient activity within the building to encourage natural surveillance of this area. It would be beneficial to secure these hours of operation by condition, and also secure the provision of an overall management plan for the facility to set out how the centre will be managed to prevent any adverse disturbance on the surrounding area.

Site Layout and Built Form

16. Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS18 requires development to demonstrate high-quality urban design that responds appropriately to the site and its surroundings;

create a strong sense of place; attractive public realm; and high quality architecture. The Oxford Local Plan requires development to enhance the quality of the environment, with Policy CP1 central to this purpose. Policy CP6 emphasises the need to make an efficient use of land, in a manner where the built form and site layout suits the sites capacity and surrounding area. Policy CP8 states that the siting, massing, and design of new development should create an appropriate visual relationship with the built form of the surrounding area.

17. The community centre has been sited to the end of the main access from Ashurst Way, with its main entrance and visible functions (health centre, social club) facing onto a new square formed to the frontage. The children's play area, car park, and multi-use games area are all arranged around this public space, while the changing facilities for the sports fields and multi-use games areas are located to the rear where there is direct access onto the sports pitches. In terms of size, and scale, the community centre would be a two-storey building which has a modern form and appearance. The building has been designed to appear as a landmark building at the end of the existing access, and while sizeable it would sit comfortably within its setting and in wider views throughout the area. The use of glazing to punctuate the elevations helps to reduce the sense of scale and provides visual interest to the detailing of the elevations. The material choices would be a key element in terms of ensuring a high quality finish for the building, and so a condition should be attached seeking prior approval of the materials.
18. Officers consider that the siting of the centre would provide an accessible and legible public entrance to the facility that encourages natural surveillance of these spaces and appropriate links to the playing fields at the rear, whilst the overall size, scale, and design would be appropriate for the site and its wider context within the residential suburb.

Impact upon Adjoining Properties

19. Policy CP10 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to be sited in a manner which meets functional need, and also safeguards the amenities of residential properties surrounding the development.
20. The residential properties which stand to be most affected by the development are those on the eastern side of Dashwood Road. The rear gardens of these properties back onto the site and are separated from the park by a mature screen of trees and hedgerows. The existing children's nursery and adventure playground currently lie directly adjacent to the boundary with these properties, and so the nature of the sports ground would already have some impact upon these properties. The proposal would introduce a sizeable structure into the sports ground, but it has been positioned as far as possible from the boundaries of the Dashwood Road properties so as to prevent any impact upon light, outlook, or privacy to the rear of these properties. The multi-use games arena is to be located closer to the boundary with these properties than is currently the case, but this would not result in any material noise and disturbance over and above the current situation within the sports ground. There is potential for any external lighting of the public spaces to the front of the community centre and multi-use

games area to have an impact upon the properties. A lighting scheme has been provided which shows the positions of all external lighting, however a condition should be attached requiring a scheme which includes details of all lighting spillage in order to ensure that this minimises any impact upon these properties.

21. In terms of the other residential properties of Ashurst Way, Abberbury Avenue, Hunsdon Road, and Courtland Road, which also surround the sports ground, officers consider that there is sufficient separation distance to ensure that the new community centre will not have an impact upon these properties in terms of loss of light, privacy, outlook, or noise and disturbance.

Transport

22. A Transport Statement has been submitted with the application. The statement identifies that the development will consist of a range of uses that will have overlapping peaks of parking demand. In terms of traffic generation it establishes that the maximum demand would occur when the main uses are operating together at its peak demand, but that it would not generate significant amounts of traffic (32 two-way trips in the AM peak period and 45 in the PM peak period). The Local Highways Authority has raised no objection to the traffic generation from the centre. The existing community centre and advice centre is located within Ashurst Way and The Oval and so already results in a level of traffic on the highway network which will be unchanged. It is also recognised that the facility will serve the local community and so is accessible by other forms of transport such as walking, cycling, and public transport.
23. The site will be accessed via Ashurst Way, with the proposed site plan showing the existing access road to be 4.1m in width. The Local Highways Authority have recommended that the access width should be a minimum of 4.8m to allow a car and large vehicles to access the site with a footway width of between 2.4m - 1.8m. There is sufficient space to provide access arrangements to these dimensions according to the proposed site plan (L900A) and as such a condition should be attached which requires details of the access arrangements to be submitted. The proposed plan shows the tracking details for servicing vehicles (i.e. refuse) entering and exiting the site. The plan shows there is sufficient space for vehicles to enter and leave the site in forward gear, and also to access the refuse storage area sited alongside the multi-use games arena.
24. The proposal will provide a total of 25 car parking spaces (including two disabled bays) along with two spaces for motorcycles. The level of parking would be acceptable given the overlapping peaks of parking demand for the facility and the spaces would be of an acceptable size. The development also provides a total of eight cycle stands to provide public cycle parking for 16 cycles and there is additional secure and covered cycle storage available for staff. The parking and cycle storage should be secured by way of condition.

Landscaping

25. In terms of landscaping, the proposed site plan L900A shows the landscaping that will be carried out around the building and includes a mixture of hard and soft landscaping. Officers consider that the indicative plans would enhance the overall quality of the space to the frontage and provide a clear distinction between public space and the main access road.
26. The mature screening on the boundary with the Dashwood Road properties will be retained, and although a tree is to be removed from this space it would not have an impact upon public amenity. The screen will be reinforced with additional planting and trees around the Multi-Use Games Arena and the boundary. The landscaping strategy should be secured by condition

Sustainability

27. An NRIA and Energy Statement has been submitted with the application which reflects the need to achieve 20% of the development's regulated and unregulated energy requirements from renewable sources and is therefore considered to be acceptable. The proposed building has adopted a low carbon design approach. The energy use of the building will be minimised by the built form which achieves compliance with the carbon emission targets of Part L2a 2010 of the building regulations through passive means such as natural light and ventilation and the use of efficient technologies. It will utilise low and zero carbon technologies to further reduce emissions, through for example the choice of materials. The design will use photovoltaic tiles to offset the energy requirements and proposes an area of 370m². Overall, the NRIA would achieve a score of 8/11 which would represent a good solid performance and exceeds the 6/11 requirement to comply with the policy. A condition should be attached to any permission to ensure the details are included within the development.

Drainage

28. In terms of drainage, a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been submitted with the application. Having regards to the nature of the site, it will be important to ensure that drainage from the building and associated hard surfacing does not alter the existing surface water drainage situation on site or increase surface water drainage through the nearby Rivermead Nature Park and Site Local Importance for Nature Conservation.
29. The drainage scheme has been designed to ensure that the surface water drainage from the hard surfacing within the site does not increase the peak flow of surface water from the site. It has not included details of the likely rain run-off from the existing building or pollution controls from the parking area run-off. The Oxfordshire County Council Drainage Authority has raised no objection to the proposed scheme. Officers consider that a condition should be attached which requires a sustainable urban drainage scheme to be developed for the whole development.

Biodiversity

30. An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Bat Inspection have been submitted with the application. The proposal will not have an adverse impact upon any priority habitat. The survey identified that the building has limited potential for nesting birds. It goes on to state that there would be low potential for roosting bats, but recommends that a further survey is carried out to ensure that this is the case. The survey has also identified potential biodiversity enhancements such as the provision of bat and bird boxes.
31. Officers consider that it is unlikely that the building is used for more than a temporary roost, and therefore unlikely that an offence under the habitat regulations would take place if the development went ahead. Nevertheless the applicant is preparing to carry out this survey, but a condition should be attached to secure one should this not be completed by the by the end of September which is the end of the active period for bats. A condition should also be attached to ensure that if demolition of the existing pavilion takes place within the active period for bats (May-Sept) then a method statement is agreed before work starts and is implemented.

Other Matters

32. The nature of the proposed uses will require details of plant and machinery for the ventilation of the facility, and also any flue associated with the café and training kitchen. A condition should be attached which requires details of all plant, including a scheme for the ventilation of cooking odours to be provided.

Conclusion:

33. 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 the 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

Extension: 2228

Date: 23rd September 2013

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