

## **PLANNING & REGULATION COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2010**

### **DEMOLITION OF EXISTING YOUTH CENTRE BUILDING AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT BUILDING TO PROVIDE YOUTH CENTRE, CHILDREN'S CENTRE AND ANCILLARY YOUTH SERVICES OFFICE ACCOMMODATION. CREATION OF NEW VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS OFF CLAPCOT WAY; FORMALISATION OF EXISTING PARKING AREA TO PROVIDE 14 DEDICATED PARKING SPACES (INCLUDING 1 DISABLED SPACE); 12 CYCLE PARKING SPACES; NEW BOUNDARY FENCING AND TREATMENTS AND REPLACEMENT/ NEW PLANTING AND LANDSCAPING**

**Location:** Wallingford Youth Centre, Clapcot Way, Wallingford, Oxfordshire,  
OX10 8HS

**Application No:** R3.0181/09

**District Council Area:** South Oxfordshire

#### **Introduction**

1. This application is for the erection of a new part single and part two storey building to provide a replacement Youth Centre, Children's Centre and ancillary youth services office accommodation. The existing single storey youth centre building would be demolished to make way for the new building. The proposal also involves the creation of a new pedestrian and vehicle access off Clapcot Way, new parking arrangements for the site and new boundary treatments and landscaping.

#### **Location (see site plan)**

2. The existing Youth Centre site is located approximately 700 metres (as the crow flies) to the north west of Wallingford town centre. The site is located off Clapcot Way which joins both St Georges Road and St Nicholas Road.

#### **Site and Setting (see site plan)**

3. The site is immediately bounded to the west and east by residential development. To the north (on the opposite side of Clapcot Way) are also residential properties. To the south of the site is a public footpath with an old people's home and further residential properties beyond. The surrounding residential properties are in the majority semi-detached and two storey with the primary material being red brick.
4. The existing youth centre buildings are located towards the north of the site facing Clapcot Way. These buildings are single storey, constructed of brick

and blockwork and can be dated to the 1940's. At the front of the site there are areas of hardstanding (used for parking), grassed areas and the existing vehicle and pedestrian access. To the rear of the site are further grassed areas and a floodlit games court used for sports such as basketball and tennis. The site is bounded by chain link fencing and close board fencing with the majority of the existing landscaping on the site on the Clapcot Way frontage.

## **Background and Details of the Development**

5. The proposed development seeks to provide one new building with replacement Youth Centre accommodation, accommodation for a new Children's Centre and office space for 14 youth services staff currently located in the market place in the centre of the town.
6. The existing youth centre building is of 'Horsa Hut' type construction dating back to the 1940's and is in a poor state of repair. It is not considered fit for purpose and is in need of replacement. The replacement youth centre accommodation would be single storey, with part of this element of the building single and half height to allow greater roof height space for a hall. All of the new building would be flat roofed.
7. A new children's centre is also proposed in the eastern wing of the proposed building. This would be at ground floor level and would act as the focal point at the front of the site. Children's centres are 'service hubs' where children under 5 years old and their families can access childcare services and information. The provision of these centres is part of the national government strategy to ensure that all families with children have access to affordable, flexible, high quality childcare places. Local authorities have been tasked with the strategic responsibility of delivering these centres to cater for the needs of local communities.
8. The application also proposes office space for youth services staff at first floor level over part of the children's centre accommodation. The first floor accommodation would be located to the front of the proposed building on its eastern wing. This would provide 11 workspaces for 14 Youth Services staff.
9. The primary material for the new building would be grey brickwork. Aluminium, timber and other cladding panels would be used on selected elevations of the building. In particular, timber cladding would be used on elements of the two storey accommodation whilst aluminium panels would be used on small sections of the upper half storey youth centre hall. Other panels (such as PVC) are also proposed on sections of the elevations. The application proposes that these could be coloured but a final choice of colour can still be decided.
10. The size of the proposed building is not big enough to require a BREEAM assessment. However, the application includes a number of features intended to improve its environmental performance, these include: natural ventilation,

construction techniques to achieve a high thermal mass, a high standard of insulation and a sustainable drainage system.

11. A dedicated parking area is proposed in the north west corner of the site, this area would accommodate 14 designated spaces (including 1 disabled). 12 cycle parking spaces are also proposed at the front of the site. The proposal retains existing separate vehicle and pedestrian access points at the front of the site but these would be realigned and improved to maintain site safety between vehicle and pedestrian movements.
12. Existing trees and planting across the site would be removed as part of the development. They are proposed to be replaced through a landscaping scheme which would provide new semi-mature trees and other planting, in particular along the boundaries adjacent to residential properties. Planting is also proposed around the car parking area in order to soften its appearance.
13. The existing hard court area to the rear of the proposed building would be retained and re-surfaced; it would also be enclosed with a new 2.4m high ball fence. This area is currently lit with four floodlights which are approximately 4 metres in height. It is proposed to retain these lights in their current position and to the current specification although some upgrading of the existing equipment would take place.

## **Consultations**

14. The consultation period on this application ran from 26 August to 17 September 2009.
15. South Oxfordshire District Council

*(Planning Development Control)* – Support the replacement of the youth services building and the incorporation of a children’s centre onto the site. However, the proposed office use would put pressure upon the capacity of the site such that it would lead to an overdevelopment of the site. It incorporates first floor development which is insensitively designed plus impractical parking arrangements which would be detrimental to the amenities of the area. Support the scheme in principle but encourage the County Council to reconsider the amount of development on this site, to review the design and to include a commitment to a high standard of sustainable design.

*(Environmental Health)* – No objection subject to conditions being added to ensure that the development does not cause noise or lighting problems to neighbours. Conditions should cover hours of use of the development and external lighting.

Wallingford Town Council – No objection.

Environment Agency – No objection.

Sport England – Support application.

County Ecologist – No objection subject to conditions.

County Archaeologist – No objection.

Rights of Way – No comments to make.

County Forester – A tree survey has been provided with the application. The site does not have any trees of great merit and I have no issue with the removal of any of them. The applicant's proposal to remove trees and replace them with semi-mature specimens should result in an almost immediate improvement in the landscape quality of the site. Only concern is to ensure that new planted trees and those in neighbouring properties receive proper protection.

Transport Development Control

*Original Consultation Response* – The level of car parking is considered acceptable (14 spaces). Request that cycle parking should be covered and scooter parking provision should be provided. However, there are highway safety concerns with the proposed layout of the car parking area, in particular the proximity of the spaces to the vehicle access/egress.

*Second Consultation Response* – Withdraw holding objection given that further discussions have dealt with original concerns. An amended plan showing an improved car parking layout and vehicle entrance should be submitted and approved by the Highway Authority prior to the commencement of the development.

**Third Party Representations** (Copies of these letters are available in the Member's Resource Centre)

16. Seven individual members of the public have objected to or expressed concern about the proposals. Whilst there is some support for the redevelopment of solely the youth centre building, the concerns they raise relate to the following:

- Oppose the scale and impact of the development in a residential area;
- The new buildings design and proposed materials are out of character with the surrounding residential area which they should reflect. The design has changed from that shown during pre-application consultation;
- The materials of the building must be finalised now and aluminium cladding should not be used as it is an energy intensive material;
- The flat roof design of the building means there will be health and safety issues as it will be a challenge for youths to climb;
- Two storey element of the building will raise issues of loss of privacy and daylight for neighbours;
- Office space in a residential area is inappropriate and its incorporation in the development has not been made clear;

- Increased traffic visiting the site represents a risk to the safety of children visiting both the site and nearby schools;
- Naïve to think that all people visiting the development will walk as they are likely to travel some distance to the development;
- Will lead to an increase in on-street parking which will lead to highway safety issues;
- Has a traffic impact study been carried out to assess the traffic impacts of the development;
- Assessment of flood risk in the application is wrong as there is no surface water drainage in Clapcot Way, only soakaways. The large section of hardstanding at the front of the site will also pose a flood risk to neighbouring properties;
- There are other deficiencies in the application and information supporting it that mean it should be refused, including the amount and type of floorspace proposed and that a tree survey has not been provided;
- Increased hours of use of the building will have an impact on amenity of neighbours through noise and disturbance;
- There will be an increase in light pollution from increased use of the existing floodlights;
- The open area at the front of the site will cause problems as youths will congregate there;
- The land on the site may be contaminated and this has not been looked at;
- Concerns over who will be using the development, ex-offenders, etc;
- Have other more suitable sites for this development been considered, the building appears to be too small to cope with an increase in population at Wallingford;

17. In addition a petition with 90 signatures has been received objecting to the development. The reasons for objection as set out on the petition are as follows:

- The design and general appearance of the proposed replacement building is totally out of character with the surrounding area. The flat roof design also poses a health and safety issue and security risk. The proposed prolonged opening times are unacceptable. It is likely to give rise to an increased amount of traffic due to office accommodation and extra staff; this is not a suitable location for employment use as this is a residential area.

### **Relevant Planning Policies**

18. The South East Plan Regional Spatial Strategy 2026 (RSS).

CC1 - The principal objective of the Plan is to achieve and to maintain sustainable development in the region.

CC6 – Development should i) respect, and where appropriate enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes; and ii) use

innovative design process to create a high quality built environment which promotes a sense of place.

NRM4 – In considering planning applications local authorities in conjunction with the Environment Agency should require incorporation and management of Sustainable Drainage Systems and other measures to minimise direct surface water run-off.

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP)

G2 – The district's countryside, settlements and environmental resources will be protected from adverse developments.

G6 - Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which are not of a high quality and inclusive design, which fail to protect and reinforce local distinctiveness, or which are of a scale or type that is inappropriate to the site and its surroundings.

CF2 - Proposals that would result in the provision of additional community facilities or services within settlements will be permitted, provided that there are no overriding amenity, environmental or traffic objections to the proposals and that there is no conflict with the other policies in this plan.

E5 - Proposals for business, industry, warehousing and storage will not be permitted which:

- (i) Conflict with the policies in the plan to protect the built environment and to retain essential community facilities and services;
- (ii) Are of a scale and type of development inappropriate to the proposed site and its surroundings;
- (iii) Are not in keeping with the surrounding area in terms of design, layout and materials. Where appropriate, the site must be suitably landscaped,
- (iv) Have inadequate access and manoeuvring facilities and would cause problems on the wider road network;
- (v) Where appropriate, are in locations which are not accessible by public transport;
- (vi) Cause problems as a result of noise, loss of privacy or cause any other environmental problems.

D1 - The principles of good design and the protection and reinforcement of local distinctiveness should be taken into account in all new development through:

- (i) the provision of a clear structure of spaces;
- (ii) providing for a choice of routes and transport modes to the development;
- (iii) providing landscape structure as a framework for new development;
- (iv) respecting the character of the existing landscape;
- (v) respecting distinctive settlement types and their character;
- (vi) providing good quality site and building design and appropriate materials; and

(vii) providing well-designed external areas.

D2 - Planning permission will not be granted for developments that fail to incorporate adequate, safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles. Vehicle parking should be provided in a discreet and sensitive manner.

D8 - All new development should demonstrate high standards in the conservation and efficient use of energy, water and materials through its siting, landscaping, building design, use of materials, layout and orientation of buildings.

C9 – Any development that would cause the loss of landscape features will not be permitted where those features make an important contribution to the local scene.

### **Comments of the Head of Sustainable Development**

19. In my view the main issues to be considered with this application relate to:

- (i) Acceptability of the proposed uses on the site;
- (ii) Scale of development proposed;
- (iii) Design of the proposed building;
- (iv) Impacts on local people;
- (v) Other points raised.

#### (i) Acceptability of the proposed uses on the site

20. The development involves the continued use of the site for a youth centre but in a new building. It also introduces a children's centre and office accommodation for youth service workers as well as a redesign of the existing car parking areas and the provision of new vehicle and pedestrian accesses.
21. Policy CF2 of the SOLP supports, in principle, the provision of additional community facilities or services provided they do not conflict with other planning policies, whilst policy CC1 of the RSS seeks to achieve sustainable communities. Policy E5 of the SOLP is also relevant to the proposal as it seeks to control employment generating development by ensuring that, amongst other things, the scale and type of the development is appropriate to its surroundings.
22. Concerns have been raised from local residents and South Oxfordshire District Council that the introduction of office space into the site is unacceptable in this location and that this element is contributing to an overdevelopment of the site. The District Council considers that the application should be amended to remove the proposed first floor office accommodation which would in their view make the development more acceptable.
23. The main consideration is whether the office space proposed is acceptable in this location. The applicant argues that the work stations are necessary to

house 14 youth services staff. These staff carry out visits around the county but also have direct contact with young people who would use the new youth centre; they are therefore not predominately office based throughout the day. The applicant argues that the office space in the proposed building would not be formal office space used constantly throughout the day to its full capacity. The office space would be used more as drop in space as and when required by staff. The size of the office space proposed in the building would be approximately 41sqm of floor space. This would be a small amount of floor space compared to the overall size of the new building – approximately 460sqm. Due to its limited size the office space would be arranged as 11 work stations rather than individual desks.

24. In my view, and as discussed later in this report, the youth centre accommodation is essentially a like for like use which would maintain a valuable service to young people in this area and the children's centre would provide a community use in a residential area where it would be well located to serve local needs. In terms of the proposed office space policy E5 of the SOLP does not preclude office accommodation within residential areas. Whilst I accept that workers who would use this accommodation do serve the wider area than just Wallingford, there is some synergy with the youth centre activities that currently operate here and this accommodation would be ancillary to this. I also consider that its intended use as drop in office space will not put excessive pressure on the site to accommodate staff coming and going throughout the working day. I therefore see no reason why these uses should not co-locate onto this particular site, providing that other issues (as discussed later in this report) are satisfactory or can be satisfactorily managed and controlled by conditions. In conclusion the proposed uses on the site would seek to maintain and provide additional community facilities and services accords with policy CF2.

(ii) Scale and position of development proposed

25. The proposed building would include elements that are single, one and a half and two stories. The existing building is single storey. Policies G6 and E5 of the SOLP require development such as this to be of a scale that is appropriate to the existing site and surrounding area.
26. Concern has been raised by neighbouring residents that the proposed building would impact on their properties due its positioning and size, particularly the two storey element. The flat roof element of the building has also raised concerns that it would be a health and safety risk as young people may climb on it. There are also concerns that it is not acceptable to remove all the existing trees and planting as this will impact on the character and appearance of the site.
27. The nearest residential property (31 Clapcot Way) to the proposed building is directly to the east with the nearest elevation of this property being approximately 7 metres from the eastern elevation of the proposed building. The nearest elevations of the properties to the west would be approximately 12 metres from the proposed building. The new building would be located no



further forward than the existing building line on the south side of Clapcot Way. It has also been located no further to the east than the footprint of the existing building on the site to maintain a buffer zone between the nearest residential property. In general the footprint of the new building would be constructed over the footprint of the existing building on site, although the new building would provide (approximately) an additional 135sqm of floorspace.

28. The new building is predominately single, or one and a half storey with the two storey element (to accommodate first floor office accommodation) positioned on the eastern wing of the building nearest to 31 Clapcot Way. A number of high level windows have been included in the ground floor eastern elevation of the building that faces 31 Clapcot Way to avoid overlooking and there are no windows proposed in the first floor level accommodation on this elevation. The building has been designed with a flat roof in order to reduce its mass and scale. This has been done to address previous concerns that a pitched roofed building would be overbearing. It is no higher than any of the surrounding residential properties.
29. The applicant has confirmed that the building has been designed in consultation with local crime prevention officers to reduce the risk of people climbing onto its roof. The building has overhangs, flush window frames and climb resistant drainpipes and railings which should prevent people accessing the roof.
30. The application proposes the replacement of existing trees and planting on the site with new specimens, particularly along the site boundaries and around the proposed car parking area in order to provide screening with neighbouring properties. A tree survey was carried out by the County Forester prior to the submission of the application. This was submitted with the application. The County Forester considers that the site does not have any trees of great merit. He raises no objection to their removal and considers that their replacement with semi-mature specimens would result in an improvement in the landscaping of the site.
31. In my view the scale and position of the building is acceptable and there is no conflict with policies G6 and E5 of the SOLP. The general footprint of the building would not be significantly different from the present situation, the car parking area remains in the same general area and the rear hard play area would remain, together with the majority of the outdoor spaces.
32. Although the new building would incorporate an extra 135sqm of floor space I do not consider this unacceptable on a site of this size. A two storey element to the building has been introduced, however, the mass of the building has been kept down with the use of a flat roof. The building would be no higher than the eaves level of the adjacent residential properties. Whilst flat roofs are not always desirable I consider that in this instance a flat roof is acceptable because it will reduce the scale of the building and lessen its impact on the surrounding area. No window openings are proposed at first floor level overlooking the adjacent neighbouring property to the east so there would be no loss of privacy to that house. The ground floor windows on the eastern

elevation should also not impact on the privacy of neighbours due to their height, but to ensure privacy, a condition can be attached to require these to be glazed with obscure glass. Distance has also been maintained between the neighbouring properties and the proposed building by maintaining buffer zones along the western and eastern boundaries. The building has also been positioned to maintain the existing building line on Clapcot Way.

33. I also consider that the landscaping proposals accord with SOLP policies D8 and C9 and would improve the landscape quality of the site internally and provide screening from outside of the site. Planting and a new 1.8 metre high close boarded fence are also proposed along the site boundaries to maintain privacy and security. A condition should be imposed to require that precise species, numbers and size of planting are agreed before the development is started.

(iii) Design of the proposed building

34. The new building would be a modern one that does not reflect the style of the surrounding residential properties in this part of Wallingford. The proposed building aims to be a focal point for the local community by the use of a contemporary and modern design, it does not seek to mimic the surrounding residential styles. Policy CC6 of the RSS requires new development to respect and where appropriate enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements whilst encouraging innovative design to create a high quality environment and sense of place. Policies G6, E5 and D1 of the SOLP also require that new development is of a high quality design and should be in keeping and respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Policy D8 of the SOLP also requires that new development should incorporate high standards of energy efficiency.
35. Comments have been received that the design and appearance of the proposed building is unacceptable in a residential area. Options for a design that reflected the residential appearance of buildings surrounding the site were previously considered by the applicant but as discussed previously in this report the applicant has taken the view that such a design would not be appropriate because of the need to limit the mass and scale of the building.
36. The materials of the building have been selected with the intention to enhance the existing environment and create an exciting centre for the area. The application drawings show elevations using vibrant colours. These have been shown primarily for illustrative purposes and a final colour scheme for these elevations has not been agreed. Concern has also been raised that aluminium cladding on the building is inappropriate as it is an unsustainable material. The use of this material is proposed only on limited areas of the building to create an element of interest in the design of the building.
37. This building would not be located in an area of historic or conservation interest. Policy advice however is that new development should still respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The surrounding area is predominantly made up of brick built, two storey, semi-detached properties

although there is an old peoples home nearby and also a primary and secondary school. In my opinion the use of a modern design different to the surrounding residential styles is acceptable in this instance given that it has been selected to provide a building of interest, distinctiveness and a focal point for the local community. This would be a public building with different uses and functions to those surrounding residential properties. As such I consider that the use of a modern design would not only improve the appearance of the site but also allow it to fulfil its role as a community building with community uses. I do however consider that it is important that the final choice of the colour of materials is agreed through condition to ensure that they are sensitive to their surroundings.

38. Planning policy requires new development to incorporate high standards of sustainable design. The new building would include a number of features which seek to make it as energy efficient as possible. These have however been limited due to the size of the development proposed and limits on funding for additional features.

(iv) Impacts on local people

39. The proposed building would be in a residential area and there may be an impact on local people from the building itself, the proposed uses on the site or other associated issues such as increased traffic. SOLP policies CF2, E5 and D2 require that new development does not impact on amenity or give rise to traffic or highway safety concerns. In particular policy CF2 supports the provision of community facilities provided that there is no overriding amenity, environmental or traffic objections.
40. Objections have been received that the development will impact on local people. These include noise and disturbance from increased hours of use of the new building and floodlights and there will be an increase in traffic on surrounding roads. Concerns have also been raised from Transport Development Control (TDC) officers that the originally proposed parking layout would not be safe.
41. The new youth centre would not increase its hours of use from current levels. At present it operates no later than 9.30pm Monday to Friday and between 1pm-3pm during Saturdays. The times at which the youth centre is open to the public vary during each day of the week. For example, on Mondays it is open 3 times a day to the public (9.30-11am, 4-6pm and 7-9.30pm) whilst on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays the centre is only open one session a day (2-5.30pm, 7-9.30pm and 1-3pm respectively). The centre does not open on a Sunday.
42. The children's centre would be a new use on the site. Activities associated with it would be indoor based and should not generate significant noise levels. The hours of operation would be limited to week days and it would only be open to the public 9am-11.30am Monday to Thursday and 1pm to 3pm Monday and Thursday. The centre would not be open to the public outside of

these times, including Fridays and at the weekends although staff are likely to be on site outside of these times during weekdays.

43. The Youth Services office accommodation would be open for use by staff Monday to Friday 9am-5.30pm.
44. The use of the floodlights on site is not proposed to increase from the current level which is 3 or 4 evenings a week (Monday to Friday) with the latest use of the lights being 9.30pm. The application states that the existing floodlights would be upgraded but their positions and height will not alter. To ensure that the upgrading of these lights does not impact on amenity a condition can be imposed to require their final design and levels of light spill to be submitted and agreed prior to installation. The upgrading of the lights would also involve the installation of time controls which would ensure that the lights automatically switch off by 9.30pm. This could also be required through condition.
45. The Environmental Health Officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions to control the hours of opening of the building. Whilst the proposal would lead to an increase in use of the site during the weekday day time the new uses introduced would not operate earlier than 9am and no later than 5.30pm and would not be significant noise generators. The only use outside of these times would be from the youth centre but these are not proposed to increase from their current times. To ensure that the hours of use of the building are limited to the times set out above, conditions can be attached to any permission to reflect these. In my view there would not be any additional adverse impact on the amenity of residents from retaining the existing use on the site or the new uses proposed and as such I consider that the development complies with policy CF2 and E5 of the SOLP.
46. Transport Development Control (TDC) originally submitted a holding objection to the application as they were concerned with the safety of the car parking layout, in particular the proximity of the car parking spaces to the vehicle entrance. As a result of these concerns discussions have taken place between the applicant and TDC which have sought to agree changes to the car park layout to improve its safety. TDC are now satisfied with these proposed changes and have withdrawn their holding objection. The changes would alter the car parking layout from that shown in the application and a condition could be attached to require a plan of these changes to be submitted and agreed before any development commences.
47. The children's centre would attract visitors which would, in the majority, arrive on foot from the local surrounding residential areas. Visitor numbers to the youth centre would not alter notably from current levels and visitors would be predominantly teenagers who walk to the site from surrounding residential areas. As discussed earlier in this report youth workers based here would use the new building space as drop in office accommodation between visits and meetings rather than regular office accommodation for the duration of regular working hours. Trips to the site by private cars would be staggered throughout the day which would limit the number of vehicles arriving and parking on the

site at any one time. The proposed car parking area is not intended solely for office accommodation workers, staff at the youth centre and children's centre would also share this space.

48. The proposed development would be for community use and I consider that as it is within a residential area it would be well located to serve local needs and allow for people to access it by foot. However, given that this would be the only children's centre in Wallingford and office space is proposed, it is inevitable that there will be some additional trips to the site by private car. TDC have raised no objection to the proposal (and have not requested a Transport Assessment) and consider that, subject to a revised car parking layout plan, the development does not give rise to any highway safety concerns. In light of the above comments it is my view that although the development would result in a limited increase in traffic on surrounding roads the development is acceptable in highway terms and would be consistent with policies CF2, E5 and D2 of the SOLP. A Travel Plan should be developed for the site that takes account of the proposed changes to its operation. This can be required through condition.

(v) Other points raised

49. A number of other comments have been received questioning information contained in the application or seeking further clarification. These are addressed in turn below.
50. Concern has been expressed that the land on which the redevelopment will take place might be contaminated. The applicant has confirmed that a Ground Investigation survey was carried out in September 2009 and the subsequent report concluded that there are no contaminates on the site. A condition can be attached requiring a report to show this prior to the commencement of any works.
51. An objector has expressed concern that the hardstanding at the front of the site would increase the risk of flooding to neighbouring properties. All hardstanding would use permeable paving which would combine with a sustainable drainage system. The Environment Agency have raised no objection to the development and I consider that the proposal is acceptable subject to a condition requiring these sustainable drainage measures being first submitted, approved and then implemented. There has been a comment that the building would use foul sewage drains to dispose of surface water. The applicant has confirmed that surveys have been undertaken before the submission of the application and that the surface water drains serving the site have been identified. I recommend that a condition is attached requiring final details of these surveys to be submitted and agreed before development commences on site.
52. The question has been asked as to whether alternative sites have been considered for the development. The current site has been proposed for the new youth centre as it already operates from this site. An appraisal was undertaken by Officers in the Children, Young People and Families

Directorate to consider whether there were alternative sites for the Children's Centre. The findings of this appraisal were that this site was considered the most appropriate due to its location and proximity to possible users.

### Conclusion

53. In conclusion this proposal would provide the opportunity to enhance the existing appearance of the site and provide an improved community facility for Wallingford. Although concerns have been raised about the intensifying of use of the site and its impact on the local area, its design and scale is acceptable and in my view there are no overriding amenity, environmental or traffic concerns. Conditions can be attached to any consent given to control how the site would operate and mitigate any adverse effects on neighbouring residents. As such I consider that this proposal is acceptable on its planning merits and recommend approval subject to the conditions outlined below.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

54. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to approve Application Number R3.0181/09 for the demolition of existing youth centre building and erection of replacement building to provide youth centre, children's centre and ancillary youth services office accommodation. Creation of new vehicular and pedestrian access off clapcot way; formalisation of existing parking area to provide 14 dedicated parking spaces (including 1 disabled space); 12 cycle parking spaces; new boundary fencing and treatments and replacement/ new planting and landscaping, subject to conditions to be determined by the Head of Sustainable Development to include the following matters:**
- 1. That the development must be carried out strictly in accordance with the particulars contained in the application and the plans accompanying subject to conditions below.**
  - 2. That the development shall commence within 3 years of the date of the permission.**
  - 3. That samples of the external materials proposed to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Sustainable Development prior to the commencement of development.**
  - 4. That no development shall take place until the trees on the site which are to be retained and which are adjacent to or within the development area, have been protected during building operations by means of a protective fence around the edge of the canopy of the trees.**
  - 5. That the site be landscaped and planted with trees (including replacement trees) and shrubs in accordance with a comprehensive planting and landscaping scheme first approved by the Head of Sustainable Development.**
  - 6. That all planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting**

- season following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.
7. That prior to the commencement of the development full details of all boundary treatments (including fencing to the front of the site) should be submitted to and approved by the Head of Sustainable Development.
  8. The hours of operation of the Youth Centre shall be restricted to between 9:30am and 9:30pm Monday to Friday and 1:00pm – 3:00pm Saturdays.
  9. The hours of operation of the Children's Centre for use by the public shall be restricted to between 9:00am and 3:00pm Monday to Thursday.
  10. The hours of use of the Youth Services office accommodation shall be restricted to between 9:00am and 5:30pm Monday to Friday.
  11. There shall be no use of the building or the external play areas on Sundays.
  12. That the windows on the eastern elevation of the proposed building shall be frosted or glazed with obscure glass.
  13. That prior to the commencement of the development full details of the proposed lighting, automatic timing equipment, cowlings and predicted light overspill levels for the existing outdoor pitch shall be submitted to and approved by the Head of Sustainable Development.
  14. The lighting for the existing outdoor pitch shall be used Monday to Friday only and shall not be used after 9.30pm.
  15. That prior to the commencement of the development details of a revised car parking layout and vehicle and pedestrian access points shall be submitted to and approved by the Head of Sustainable Development in consultation with the Local Highway Authority. Any details approved shall be implemented before the development is brought into use.
  16. That prior to the commencement of the development a scheme for the provision of additional adequate, convenient, secure and covered cycle and scooter parking shall be submitted to and approved by the Head of Sustainable Development and any such scheme implemented before the development is occupied.
  17. Within 6 months of the first occupation of the proposed building a Travel Plan for the site shall be prepared and submitted to the Head of Sustainable Development.
  18. That prior to the commencement of the development details of a sustainable drainage scheme for the proposed site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Sustainable Development.
  19. That prior to the commencement of the development details of the surface water drainage system serving the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Sustainable Development.

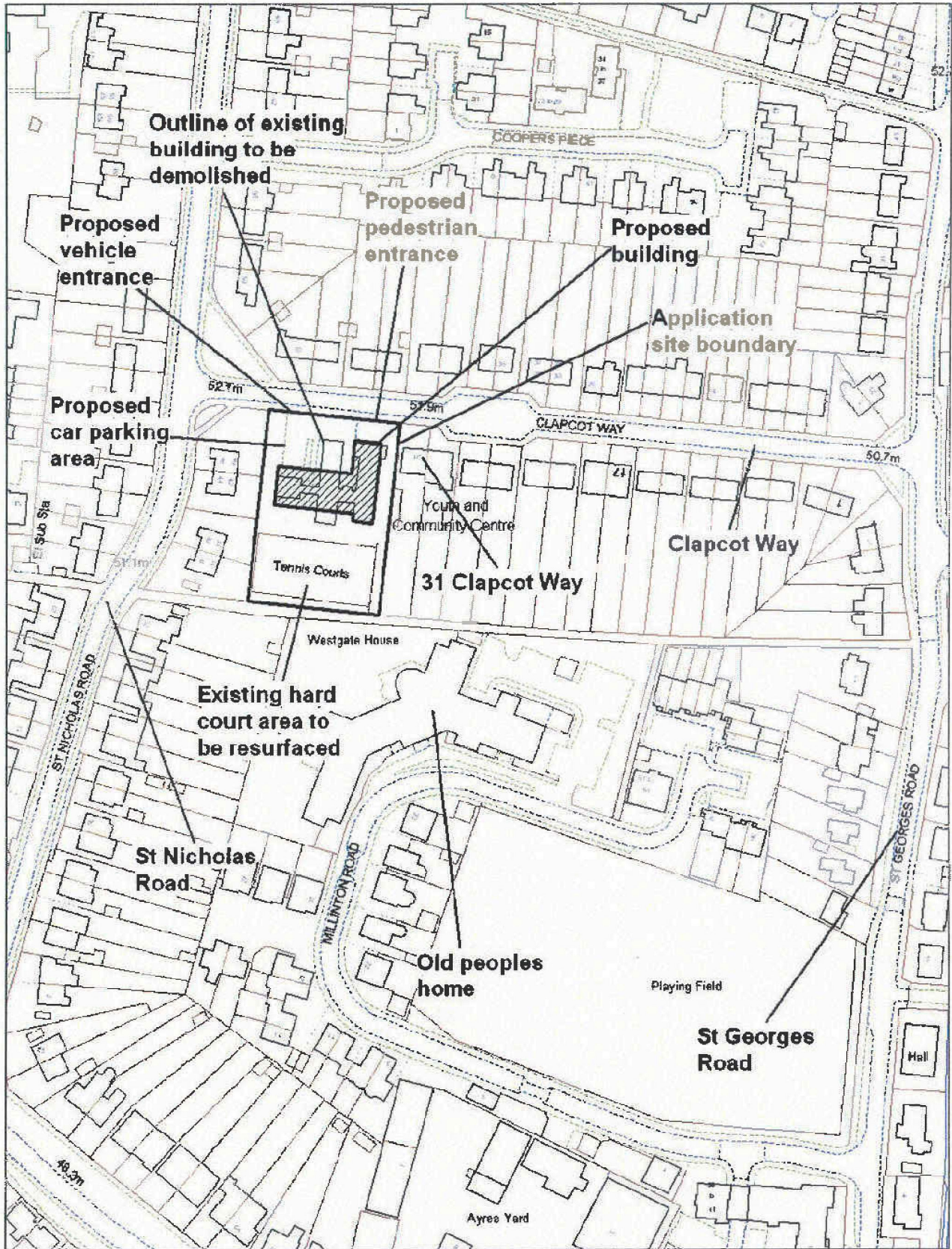
- 20. That prior to the commencement of the development a Ground Investigation Report shall be submitted to and approved by the Head of Sustainable Development.**
- 21. Raised barge boards on the existing building should be carefully lifted and removed by hand in advance of demolition taking place.**
- 22. Vegetation removal should not take place during the bird breeding season, which is March-August inclusive. If any trees and/or bushes need to be removed during this time, they will need to be checked over by an ecological consultant immediately prior to removal to ensure there are no nesting birds present. If nesting birds are present, the vegetation cannot be removed until the birds have fledged.**
- 23. If any protected species not initially surveyed for are found at any point, all work should cease immediately. Work should not recommence until a full survey has been carried out, a mitigation strategy prepared and licence obtained (if necessary) in discussion and agreement with Natural England.**

CHRIS COUSINS  
Head of Sustainable Development  
Environment & Economy

Background Papers            File Ref: R3.0181/09 8.3/6089/30

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Scale: 1500  
Plot Date: 02/12/09  
By: PF

This plan shows only an indication of the proposed development and should not be scaled from