

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P19/V0696/FUL</a>
<b>SITE</b>	Louie Memorial Pavilion Arnolds Way Botley Oxford, OX2 9JD
<b>PARISH</b>	NORTH HINKSEY
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of replacement 'Louie Memorial Pavilion' with associated car park and other external works. (Revised proposed building and surroundings plan 404.p17 received 28/6/2019)
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Debby Hallett Emily Smith Alison Jenner Judy Roberts
<b>APPLICANT</b>	North Hinksey Parish Council
<b>OFFICER</b>	Susannah Mangion

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1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1.2 **Standard**

1. Commencement within three years
2. Approved plans

**Prior to commencement**

3. Surface water drainage
4. Foul drainage
5. Wildlife protection
6. Visibility splays
7. Tree protection
8. Landscaping Scheme - submission

**Prior to occupation**

9. Landscaping Scheme – implementation
10. Materials
11. Lighting strategy
12. Car parking
13. Cycle parking
14. Bin store provision
15. Bin store detail

**Informatives**  
**Works within Highway**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application comes to committee at the request of the Planning Manager in agreement with the Chairman.
- 1.2 The application site area extends to approximately 0.206ha and is located on Arnolds Way in Botley, on the edge of North Hinksey parish where it adjoins Cumnor parish. The application site occupies part of the south area of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields which extends to a total of 2.82ha. The Playing Fields were given to the Parish in 1939 for the recreational use of parishioners and are managed by North Hinksey Parish Council.
- 1.3 The south side of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields includes the existing pavilion building, the existing Scout building, a football pitch area, fitness equipment, play equipment and a fenced multi-use games area (MUGA). The south side of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields also include areas used for informal recreation.
- 1.4 The north side of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields slopes steeply away to the north, affording panoramic long views. The area includes a car-park and play area close to the road. There is also a local wildlife site comprising alkaline fen and woodland and Hutchcombe's Copse.
- 1.5 There are a number of trees on the site and an area of overgrown scrub to the west of the site.
- 1.6 The site is within the Oxford Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary ends at the highway (Arnolds Way). The north side of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields is not within the Green Belt. North Hinksey bridleway 4 runs to the south of the application site. The site is well-served by public transport, being on a number of bus routes. Arnolds Way is also part of an established cycle route. The highway outside the site does not benefit from on-road parking restrictions but there are traffic calming measures in place on the road.
- 1.7 There are currently no parking spaces provided on the application site although there is a parking area on the north side of Louie Memorial Playing Fields which is unmarked but allows for approximately 12 vehicles to park.
- 1.8 A site location plan is included overleaf:



- 1.9 North Hinksey Parish Council is seeking to replace the existing buildings on site. The proposal follows a public consultation exercise and a feasibility study that concluded in 2018.
- 1.10 Planning permission is sought for the removal of the existing pavilion building and Scout building and the erection of a replacement building comprising: a main hall with external access, storage and wcs, a smaller hall with storage, further wcs, a kitchen area and a small group meeting room. A linked, but separate block benefits from its own external access and would comprise the sports changing facilities with showers, two referee's changing areas and separate wcs. The complex also includes an externally accessible wc and a 'space to change' assisted wc/changing area.
- 1.11 The proposed building would be single-storey with a mono-pitched roof (with roof pitches of approximately 12.5 degrees) facing southwards to benefit from the installation of pv panels. The maximum height of the building (north elevation) would be 5.9m above ground level, allowing for a maximum internal height of 5m. The external walls are proposed to be timber clad above brickwork plinths. The roof is to be predominately sedum 'green roof' and will incorporate roof lights. Windows are proposed to be powder coat paint finish aluminium frames. The building would have externally mounted security and safety lighting.
- 1.12 Additional storage would be within four shipping containers which are to be over-clad in timber boarding to match the main building with a shallow mono-pitch roof over. A linked secure area is proposed to be provided for drying Scout

tents between the shipping container area and the changing room element of the building. Externally this area would comprise metal railings to front and rear with a flat roof over.

- 1.13 It is proposed to retain existing trees on site. The scrub land to the west of the site is proposed to be replaced with wildlife friendly planting. To supplement existing car parking available on the north side of the Louie Memorial Field, new car parking spaces would be provided: 2 designated disabled spaces and 5 standard parking spaces. Cycle parking provision is also proposed. The car parking area is proposed to be in 'green' porous material and to accord with sustainable drainage principles. The parking area and access will use the existing (emergency) access which lies opposite the access to the parking area on the north side of the Louie Memorial Field. No separate lighting is proposed to the car park area.
- 1.14 The proposal also includes a paved 'outdoor room' between the replacement building and MUGA which will have direct access to the playing fields. There will be a garden area for hall users at the front of the site which will be enclosed by low level fencing.
- 1.15 Amended plans have been submitted to address the comments from Sport England and the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Liaison Officer. Extracts from the plans are **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

2.1 A summary of the consultations and representations received in response to the application is provided below. The full comments are available on the council's website.

2.2	<b>North Hinksey Parish Council</b>	Applicant
	<b>Countryside Officer (Vale)</b>	No objection:  Low value vegetation, or already built-on land. Bat emergence survey is recommended – to be required by condition and if roosting sites are present, there is scope for suitable mitigation. A European Protected Species Licence would be required. Proposal unlikely to impact on badgers.
	<b>Sport England</b>	No objection:  Development is for ancillary facilities supporting use of site as playing field - does not adversely affect the use of the playing pitches.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Committee Report – 31 July 2019

	Comments regarding suggested alterations to design of the changing block, partially taken on board within amended plans giving satisfactory arrangements.
<b>Leisure Department (Vale)</b>	No objection:  Agree with recommendations of Sport England.
<b>Drainage - (Vale)</b>	No objection:  Pre-commencement conditions for surface water and foul water drainage.
<b>Vale - Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)</b>	No objection:  Suggested conditions to control: access arrangements including vision splays; closure of existing access and opening of new entrance to OCC standards; car parking provision to be to standard; cycle parking provision to standard .
<b>Environmental Protection Team (Vale)</b>	No objections.
<b>Matthew Arnold School</b>	No observations.
<b>SGN Plant Protection Team</b>	No objections:  Advisory information regarding location of gas pipes.
<b>Forestry Team (Vale)</b>	No objections:  There are a number of trees within the site, mostly within the existing woodland area. To ensure trees are not harmed during construction, a tree protection plan should be submitted.  Comments re revised plans: retention of pedestrian access onto Arnolds Way will reduce landscaping but only minimally.
<b>Waste Management Officer (Vale)</b>	No objections:

	<p>Give consideration to size of bins required and their location to enable ease of manoeuvring. Waste collection would not be provided by the District Council.</p>
<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scout Group</b></p>	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unnecessary to demolish existing Scout building – would like to retain existing.</li> <li>• Concerns about affordability of use of new provision and accessibility in conjunction with competing needs of other community groups</li> <li>• Concern about scale or accommodation, particularly storage provision, especially with respect to tent drying and storage.</li> <li>• Concern about limited wcs, and no dedicated break-out room.</li> <li>• Lack of security of long-term rights of use of building.</li> <li>• Proposal is not equivalent or better – is less functionally suited.</li> <li>• Currently largest user with 86 members, 10 leaders and large waiting list.</li> <li>• Building proposals prevent expansion</li> <li>• Unable to update current building due to lease restrictions and uncertainty over future.</li> <li>• Parish Council acting unlawfully with regard to lease and is a breach of duty of care and breach of trust.</li> <li>• Do not benefit from long-term security</li> <li>• Inadequate pre-application consultation process</li> <li>• Not a like-for-like replacement</li> </ul> <p>Contrary to policies: i.e.  Local plan policies: L7, L8, CP1, CP13, DP8, DP34 ; and  Strategic objectives SO2 and SO3; and  North Hinksey Neighbourhood Plan SI1; and  Paragraphs 8 ,97 , 144, 145 NPPF</p> <p>Response to amendment:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No substantial alterations which do not respond to Scout original concerns</li> <li>• Parish Council has not considered Scout group's proposals</li> <li>• Additional Beaver session starting in September which will lead to further demand for additional Cub and Scout sessions</li> <li>• No explanation of need for demolition of Scout Hut. A 2018 consultation proposed renovating Scout Hut.</li> </ul>
<p><b>North Hinksey Youth Club</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporter:</li> <li>• Main hall in existing pavilion too small for current numbers so will allow Youth Club activities to develop</li> <li>• Facility especially valuable as adjacent to playing field</li> <li>• Current buildings in a poor state</li> </ul> <p>Response to amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support amendment following Sport England and Highways advice</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oxfordshire Badger Group</b></p>	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will harm wildlife corridor due to light pollution and disturbance</li> <li>• Hedgerows should be retained to protect wildlife corridor</li> <li>• Lack of proof of biodiversity gain, due to increased footprint of building</li> <li>• Concerned ecological report dated 11/2018, and therefore data, out of date and not undertaken at optimal time of year</li> <li>• Information incomplete with regard badgers</li> <li>• Hydrology survey should be provided due to alkaline fen in lower Louie Memorial Field (Local Wildlife Site) and possible impact from surface water run-off; Development should be carbon neutral</li> <li>• May create increased traffic movements and harm wildlife on the highway</li> </ul>

<p><b>Louie Memorial Pavilion Trustees</b></p>	<p>Supporter:</p> <p>A more accessible community space. Current condition of pavilion building a concern.</p>
<p><b>Friends of Louie Memorial Fields</b></p>	<p>Objector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No proven demand for proposal – 407 signed petition against development (more than took part in consultation)</li> <li>• Many other existing local facilities already exist</li> <li>• Scouts do not support development</li> <li>• Consultation data misrepresented and shows little local interest in a new facility. Waste of public money.</li> <li>• Large building will contravene Green Belt policy – greater footprint and volume than existing. No exceptional circumstance. Design of building not sympathetic and will dominate street scene.</li> <li>• Will harm character and openness of area and open space will be lost.</li> <li>• Development will block long views to the north.</li> <li>• Concerns re impact on local wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>Response to amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain initial objections</li> <li>• Note football pitch of poor quality so future usage unclear</li> <li>• Inadequate pre-submission consultation</li> <li>• Will generate car usage</li> <li>• Harm to lower field fen by increased hard standing</li> <li>• Should retain Scout building</li> <li>• Note District Council contributed funding for project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Branches Young Peoples Support Service</b></p>	<p>Supporter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement to facilities which will increase use.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building not comparable with other new facilities due to access to outdoor activities.</li> <li>• Would like additional lighting for safety</li> <li>• Would like to see storage space in conjunction with kitchen area.</li> <li>• Changing areas should address Sport England comments.</li> </ul>
<b>Open Spaces Society</b>	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to Louie Memorial fields.</li> <li>• Disproportionate impact on green space and building - car park will dominate area.</li> <li>• Footprint and height of building too large</li> <li>• Not supported by local demand – area mainly used for informal recreation.</li> <li>• Green Belt harm will outweigh benefits.</li> <li>• Will restrict long views to the north</li> </ul>
<b>Crime Prevention Design Adviser</b>	No response.
<b>Cllr Debby Hallett</b>	<p>Supporter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support plans, subject to changes proposed by Sport England.</li> <li>• Appropriate use of Green Belt.</li> <li>• Modernises recreational facilities.</li> <li>• Supported by neighbourhood plan and Vale’s leisure strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Cllr Emily Smith</b>	<p>Supporter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment accords with local need for better facilities, especially for young people.</li> <li>• Improved facilities provide greater access.</li> <li>• Building’s footprint will be larger but the increase is not disproportionate. The angle of the building will maintain openness.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the proposed storage could be agreed separately from the current application.</li> <li>• Agree with Sport England recommendations.</li> <li>• Building will be more energy efficient and would like building to be carbon neutral.</li> <li>• Welcome provision of bike racks and limited parking spaces.</li> <li>• Would like to see parking on a permeable surface.</li> <li>• Wildlife corridor and trees are to be preserved.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neighbour – supporters – 33</b></p>	<p>Community and leisure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports a healthy community</li> <li>• Accessible leisure and sport provision including for wide cross section of population</li> <li>• Playing fields and changing facilities have suffered neglect so good to develop</li> <li>• Acts as gateway to open countryside</li> <li>• Could generate new groups and leisure uses</li> <li>• Only local community facility with access to a safe sports field/ outdoor area</li> <li>• Allows for use by several groups at the same time</li> <li>• Botley is 'local service centre' so should have good community facilities</li> </ul> <p>Sustainable transport and construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is close to public transport links</li> <li>• Existing buildings are poor quality and energy inefficient so unsuitable for use in the winter</li> <li>• Can reduce emissions by use of green roof and solar panels, sustainable construction methods</li> </ul> <p>Design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will improve appearance of the area – superior design to current buildings.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing buildings visually unpleasant and dilapidated</li> </ul> <p>Green Belt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complies with policies</li> <li>• Current buildings detract from character of area</li> </ul> <p>Other comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building does not impact important long distance views</li> <li>• Does not impinge neighbours</li> <li>• Increased use of buildings likely to reduce anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Reinforces designation of site as an open green space</li> <li>• Improvement to wildlife corridor</li> <li>• Supports neighbourhood plan policy aims</li> <li>• Should include cctv to reduce risk of crime</li> <li>• Should have more internal storage, rather than container storage</li> <li>• Should incorporate energy efficient measures</li> <li>• Building should be larger to meet community needs</li> <li>• Note original and amended plans meet Sport England exception for development on Playing Fields</li> </ul> <p>Response to amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved design</li> <li>• Balances needs of residents, community and environment</li> <li>• Sought engagement with Scout group</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neighbour –objectors – 47</b></p>	<p>Community/leisure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces already limited informal amenity space in Botley</li> <li>• Not replacement provision but a community centre</li> <li>• No demand - many other local facilities including new community centre</li> <li>• Existing buildings and equipment not much used</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unsited to Scouts – difficulty with shared facilities and inadequate storage/tent drying and unable to generate funds from rental of Hall.</li><li>• If Scouts relocate, how can such a large building be justified?</li><li>• Building will not allow Scout group to grow as availability of building will be limited. Current group is thriving with large waiting list. Parents will have to travel further to access Scout groups.</li><li>• Poorly located for community facility</li><li>• Renovate existing facilities instead</li><li>• Football and play equipment discourages use by girls/women</li><li>• Unsited to use for changing rooms as this area is located furthest from the playing field/pitch</li><li>• Football pitch is poor quality and does not meet standard for men and women's football</li></ul> <p>Sustainable transport and construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Building not carbon-neutral</li><li>• Concern about extent of parking area– new car parks should not be encouraged and should limit to disabled provision only</li><li>• Will generate more use so more on-road parking</li></ul> <p>Design issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Materially larger, higher building with car park - should not increase beyond current footprint</li><li>• Will encourage anti-social behaviour and conceal the MUGA and other play equipment</li><li>• Not sympathetic to local character – an eyesore</li><li>• Angle of building to road increases impact and increases blocking of views</li><li>• Proposed changing facilities need improvement to address privacy and disabled use</li></ul>
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	<p>Green Belt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm to Green Belt (policy CP13)</li> <li>• Inappropriate development in Green Belt - no exceptional circumstances</li> <li>• Harms openness as larger building plus parking further from the existing hedgeline</li> </ul> <p>Character of area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harms long views to the north</li> <li>• Harms the fields and beauty of the area</li> <li>• Object to car park on area adjoining existing buildings - should remain an area of open space</li> <li>• Will create light pollution and may generate excessive noise</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmful to wildlife corridor linking south and north Playing Fields</li> <li>• Should be accompanied by hydrology report</li> <li>• Too costly - poor use of public funds to build and maintain</li> <li>• Initial consultation process only engaged with 205 parishioners whereas 2018 petition in opposition to development had 407 signatures – consultation process inadequate and flawed</li> <li>• Concern about use of Vale of White Horse funds to support the development of the plans /use of Nortoft consultants</li> <li>• Concerned about safety of area at rear of site and anti-social behaviour due to building blocking sight-lines</li> <li>• Green space should not be covered with new buildings.</li> </ul> <p>Response to amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendment does not overcome main objections which are re-stated</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neighbour – no strong views – 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about Scout group loss of provision i.e. basic, cheap self-contained accommodation but would</li> </ul>

	support proposal if supported by local groups and support pavilion/changing room element
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### 3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

#### 3.1 [P98/V1106](#) - Approved (04/02/1999)

Replacement floodlights.

#### [P97/V1535/COU](#) - Approved (22/01/1998)

Change of Use from Sports Pavilion to Sports Pavilion and Youth Centre.

#### [P79/V0508](#) - Approved (01/08/1979)

Extension to scout hall to provide committee room and store.

### 4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

#### 4.1 The proposed development is neither of a sufficient scale, nor within a location of sufficient environmental sensitivity, to require an EIA.

### 5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

#### 5.1 The main considerations are:

- Principle of the development
- Green Belt considerations
- Design and impact on character of area (including views)
- Leisure and community facilities
- Trees and landscaping
- Wildlife
- Highway safety, parking and access arrangements
- Impact on neighbour amenity
- Other matters including; drainage and flooding; crime and anti-social behaviour; sustainable design, construction and renewable energy; CIL; and covenant restrictions on the use of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields.

#### 5.2 **Principle**

Botley is a settlement identified at policy CP3 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 as a Local Service Centre and therefore a more sustainable location for development. The Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area Strategy Core Policy 8 further clarifies the Spatial Strategy for this area. As such, Botley is a suitable location for the provision of services and facilities to support the area as a viable and sustainable community. The proposed development will contribute to the supporting infrastructure of the area.

#### 5.3 **Green Belt**

Policy CP13 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 and paragraph 145 of the NPPF advise that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as 'inappropriate' unless it meets one of the specified exceptions. The exception given at criterion ii) of policy CP13 and also at criterion b) of

paragraph 145 of the NPPF is, 'the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.'. The exception given at criterion iii) of policy CP13 and at criterion c) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF is 'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building'.

- 5.4 The agent has suggested the proposed development could be assessed against criterion iii) of policy CP13 and criterion c) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF. However, officers disagree, the proposal being for a replacement of facilities, rather than an extension or alteration. Nevertheless, it is possible a 'fallback' position could be established for a larger facility were an application first made to extend the current building(s).
- 5.5 Officers consider the relevant criteria for consideration are ii) of policy CP13 and b) of paragraph 145 of NPPF.
- 5.6 The first element of the requirement is that the facility is an appropriate facility for outdoor sport and recreation. Officers consider this to be the case here, in that the proposal is for the erection of a replacement pavilion building containing facilities for outdoor sport and recreation purposes.
- 5.7 The second and third elements of the policy test are; whether the openness of the Green Belt is preserved and whether there is any conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 5.8 With regard to the meaning of the 'openness' of the Green Belt, the Court of Appeal judgement *Turner v SSCLG & East Dorset Council [2016] EWCA Civ 466* confirmed that the openness of the Green Belt has a spatial aspect as well as a visual aspect and assessing openness was found not to be limited to measuring the volume of the existing and proposed structures on the site. Many factors were found to be relevant and could include how built-up the Green Belt was currently and how built-up it would be if the proposed development went ahead.
- 5.9 The five purposes of the Green Belt are:
  - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 5.10 The combined footprint of the existing buildings is approximately 325m<sup>2</sup> whereas the proposed footprint of the replacement building together with storage containers is approximately 500m<sup>2</sup>. The associated area for car-parking and the 'garden' and 'outdoor room' areas will also be seen to form part of the development as a whole.

- 5.11 A number of concerns have been raised by local residents in respect of the impact of the proposal on the Green Belt and whether there is a conflict with policy CP13 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1. However, officers feel whilst the proposal will increase the area that is built-on and will make a material difference to the visual amenity of the site, the overall scale and appearance of the proposal is suitable for the site and its surroundings, and the existing dilapidated structures on site will be removed which will improve the visual amenity of the Green Belt. On balance, Officers consider the proposal will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and will not conflict with the reasons of including land within it.
- 5.12 **Design, landscaping and character of area**  
The visual amenity of the area will be materially altered should the proposed development proceed, due to the design of the proposed building when compared with the current facilities. The new building is an outward-facing structure with its principal elevation towards Arnolds Way which can be compared with the current buildings which are positioned parallel to and close to the site boundary. The proposed building will also be higher than the existing with the leading edge eaves level at approximately 5.6m and maximum height of 5.9m. This will allow for design features such as the installation of pv panels and for storage and services provision within the eaves, together with an airy spacious interior.
- 5.13 Concerns have been raised that the proposed building design is not in-keeping with the character of the local area, that the building will be dominating, is too large and too high, and that the building will block important distant views. There are further concerns that the car parking area will dominate the street scene.
- 5.14 With regard to the character of the area, the application site is set in a mainly residential area with the Matthew Arnold School to the west but there are no buildings immediately adjoining the application site, thereby allowing more scope for a unique identity for the building. It will also be seen in the context of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields and would be expected to be of a design suited to a sport or recreational use.
- 5.15 Officers consider the design is of an appropriate scale and appearance, having regard to its intended use and represents a benefit to the visual amenity of the area since the existing buildings are dated and in poor condition. The seven car parking spaces to be provided on-site are considered to be sufficiently limited so as not to dominate whilst allowing the buildings are more accessible for elderly or disabled users.
- 5.16 With regard to concerns that the proposal will block panoramic views to the north, officers consider this is not the case. Neighbourhood plan policy GS3 identifies important views from the top of the lower Louie Memorial Playing Fields, but does not refer to views from the Upper Playing Field. Additionally, the site lies in the north west corner of the Upper Playing Field at one of the lowest points of the upper Field and the long distance views to the north from the higher areas of the area will not be significantly changed, views from the



land immediately to the rear of the proposed development already being partially restricted by play equipment, the MUGA and the current buildings.

**5.17 Leisure and community facilities**

The relevant saved policies from the Local Plan 2011 are L7 and L8. Policy L7 establishes that the District Council wishes to protect existing local open space, sport and recreational facilities that are available to the public and to prevent their loss to other uses. Policy L8 lends support to new leisure proposals to extend facilities where they are designed to serve local communities. The relevant saved policy from the Local Plan 2011 is CF1 which indicates that the Council will resist proposals involving the loss of existing services and facilities unless the proposal includes alternative provision sufficient to meet identified community needs.

5.18 Officers consider the proposal has been designed to accommodate a variety of local sport and recreational groups. The amended plans reflect the comments from Sport England regarding improving the design and layout of the changing facilities. Having regard to the substandard changing and recreational facilities currently offered at the site, the proposal looks to replace current facilities with better quality provision which has better accessibility for a wider section of the community. The improved sports change accommodation is intended to encourage more diverse user groups including women's and youth football teams.

5.19 Much concern has been focused on the objection to the current proposal by the 4<sup>th</sup> Oxford Scout group, being a significant user of the current accommodation. Concerns have been raised about the suitability of the proposed building if the Scout group re-locate. Officers understand the Scout group concerns centre on the affordability of using the new provision, equivalent access to the facilities in conjunction with the competing needs of other community groups, and the suitability and convenience of the proposed storage provision. The Scout group wishes to see its existing building retained.

5.20 However, after much consideration, officers consider the proposed design of the buildings and facilities are acceptable and could be used by a Scout group. If the land-use is acceptable, the remaining concerns raised by the Scout group centre on the management and operational decisions regarding the new building, which are not material planning considerations but which it would be hoped can be resolved by the parties involved.

5.21 Objections have also been raised to suggest that there is no support for the proposal and no demand for the facilities, having regard to alternative provision within the local area. It is noted that the building is on the edge of the parish boundary. However, there are users of the current facility and it is clearly in need of updating. The new provision will also offer opportunities for a wider section of the community to access the buildings and wider area. For example, there is currently no disabled provision making access difficult, whereas there will be parking available for wheelchair users with better access to the buildings and wc and changing facilities.

5.22 The proposal offers flexible leisure and sports accommodation for the community and officers consider the proposal accords with the leisure and community facility policies of the development plan.

5.23 **Trees and landscaping**

Policy CP44 states that measures should be sought to integrate development into the landscape character of the area and that development should preserve and promote local distinctiveness and diversity.

5.24 There are a number of maturing trees located within the site, most of which are within the area adjoining the existing Scout building. This area is proposed to be part of the 'woodcraft area' and, as a result, it is likely that they can be retained. The young trees at the Arnolds Way frontage offer a screening function but they could be readily replaced within a scheme of landscape mitigation by planning condition.

5.25 The retention of existing trees should be subject to appropriate protection during the construction works and if planning permission is granted, a condition requiring the submission and agreement of a tree protection plan should be required.

5.26 **Wildlife**

Planning policies seek to ensure that development likely to result in the loss, deterioration or harm to habitats or species of importance to biodiversity will not be permitted and opportunities for biodiversity gain will be sought. With regard to the current site, the vegetation is regarded as of low value. The Council's ecologist has indicated there is unlikely to be any impact on badgers from the proposal but has recommended a bat emergence survey be undertaken and suitable mitigation provided if protected bat species are found to present.

5.27 Concerns have been expressed regarding the development impacting the wildlife corridor connecting the Lower and Upper Playing Fields and the impact of light pollution. However, having regard to the content of the ecological report submitted in support of the proposal and the view of the Council's ecologist together with the intention to remove overgrown scrub vegetation and replace it with wildlife friendly planting, officers consider the proposal to be acceptable in terms of biodiversity impact. A planning condition is recommended to be imposed to ensure external lighting to the building is appropriate.

5.28 **Highways and access considerations**

Policy regarding the impact that the development will have on the transport network around the development is set out in Policies CP33 and CP35 of the Local Plan Part 1 2031. Policy CP33 sets out that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road networks need to be minimised and developments need to be designed in a way to promote sustainable transport access both within new sites and linking with surrounding facilities and employment. Policy DC5 of the saved Local Plan 2011 requires proposals for development to provide acceptable access arrangements. Policy DP16 of the emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 2 states proposals for development will need to

provide evidence to demonstrate that adequate provision will be made for loading, unloading, circulation, servicing and vehicle turning. Policies TR1 and TR2 of the neighbourhood plan are also relevant.

- 5.29 The amended plans take into consideration the Highway Liaison Officer's comments and propose 7 car parking spaces including 2 for wheelchair users. There is also cycle parking provision. A new vehicular access and egress point will be formed off Arnolds Way, to serve the replacement building. Existing emergency and maintenance access gates to the south Field off Arnolds Way will be re-provided in a new location. Currently, there is no direct vehicular access to either of the existing buildings so current parking arrangements are at the kerb-side along Arnold Way (which currently has no parking restrictions) or within the existing car park on the north Field.
- 5.30 A number of concerns have been raised regarding the inclusion of parking provision adjoining the proposed new building, including that this will encourage visiting the site by car and add to traffic congestion in the local area.
- 5.31 Officers consider the proposal for a limited number of vehicle parking spaces represents a suitable balance between improved access and parking whilst not dominating the appearance of the site. The site is on a cycleway route and has good public transport links so the site is conducive to supporting access via bike or public transport.
- 5.32 There is no objection from the Highway Liaison Officer but a number of planning conditions are recommended to ensure the detail of the development is satisfactory.
- 5.33 **Neighbour amenity**  
Whilst there are no immediate neighbours to the application site, there are nevertheless residential properties in close proximity to the site on the north side of Arnold's Way.
- 5.34 Policy DC9 of the saved Local Plan 2011 states development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment, including through dominance or visual intrusion, from noise or external lighting. Policy DP23 of the emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 2 states, 'Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses'.
- 5.35 Officers are satisfied the new building would not harm the amenity of neighbours via dominance or visual intrusion. There would be no direct lighting to the parking area and external lighting would be security and safety building-mounted lighting. Officers do not consider there will be any greater impacts from noise, as compared with the current impact situation.
- 5.36 **Other considerations:**

5.37 **Drainage and flooding**

The site does not fall within any Flood Risk Areas and does it fall within any local groundwater flood risk area. Subject to further assessment of sub-soil permeability at detailed design stage, pavings to new parking bays are proposed to be in porous materials draining to sub-soil and disposal of rooftop rainwater run-off will be to soakaways, or else to holding tanks allowing for water reclamation as noted below. The rate of water run-off from new rooftops will be partly mitigated by the use of sedum 'green' roof finishes.

5.38 Officers have noted concerns raised that the fen area of the North Louie Memorial Fields be protected from harm due to the drainage. It has been noted by some members of the public that a hydrology report has not been submitted. However, the drainage engineer is satisfied with the proposal subject to the imposition of planning conditions to require detailed information in respect of surface and foul water drainage.

5.39 **Sustainable design, construction and renewable energy**

It is understood the proposed development will seek high construction standards in terms of insulation, controlled ventilation and the specification and sourcing of construction materials and where possible will incorporate alternative energy sources.

5.40 **Crime and anti-social behaviour**

Concerns have been raised that the building will encourage anti-social behaviour, particularly at the rear of the building. However, it would be expected that a soundly constructed, well-used building and surrounding area will give rise to reduced levels of anti-social behaviour as compared with the existing buildings.

5.41 **CIL**

There is no residential floorspace created and so the development is not liable for CIL.

5.42 **Covenant restrictions on use of Louie Memorial Fields**

The terms of the covenant are not a material planning consideration but have been raised by a number of local residents. In any case officers consider there is no conflict between the original conveyance to gift the Fields and the current proposal. An extract from the conveyancing document is included below and indicates the land was intended for sport, recreation and related recreational buildings.

*"THIS CONVEYANCE is made the 16 May 1939 BETWEEN Sir William James Mallinson of "Pine End" Reigate in the County of Surrey Baronet and Ernest Henry Tipping of 14 Saint Giles in the City of Oxford Land Agent (hereinafter together called "the Vendors") of the first part Henry Stephen Kinglerlee of Queen Street in the City of Oxford Builder and Contractor (hereinafter called the Doner") of the second part and The Parish Council of North Hinksey in the County of Berks whereinafter called The Council") of the third part.*

*WHEREAS: -The donor in commemoration of his late wife Louie Emma Kingerlee is desirous of making a free gift of the said property to the Council in order that the same may be laid out equipped maintained and either managed or let by the Council for the purpose of Cricket, Football, Tennis, Hockey or other games or recreations or otherwise preserved as an open space PROVIDED that the Council shall not be prevented from erecting thereon any lodges for groundsmen, pavilions, refreshment houses, or other buildings to be used for recreational purposes.”*

5.43 **Cost**

Concerns have been raised about the cost of providing the new facility and whether this is a good use of public funds in the current economic climate. However, this is not a material planning consideration.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

6.1 Although it is within the Oxford Green Belt, the application site is an appropriate and sustainable location for a pavilion which supports community sport, leisure and recreational activities. The design of the proposed building is appropriate to its intended use and the building will be in-keeping with its playing field location. The proposal allows for the retention of existing trees, improvements to the landscaping of the site and the provision of a new access allowing for limited on-site parking, including for wheelchair users. The proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on wildlife or the amenity of neighbouring residents. On balance when taking into account all relevant policies and material planning considerations, the proposal is considered to be acceptable subject to planning conditions, and considered to accord with the aims of the development plan and relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 saved policies**

- DC5 - Access
- DC6 - Landscaping
- DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
- L1 - Playing Space
- L7 - Retention of small-scale Local Leisure Facilities
- L8 - Provision of small-scale Local Leisure Facilities

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 policies**

- CF1 - Protection of Existing Services and Facilities
- CF2 - Provision of New Community Services and Facilities
- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
- CP08 - Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area
- CP13 - The Oxford Green Belt
- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
- CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

CP40 - Sustainable Design and Construction  
CP41 – Renewable Energy  
CP42 - Flood Risk  
CP44 - Landscape  
CP46 - Biodiversity

### **Emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 policies**

A publication draft of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 has been subject to public consultation and Examination and the Inspector's final report (received 25 June 2019) has found the plan sound. Its policies therefore carry significant weight in decision making and the following policies are material to the consideration of this application:

DP16 - Access  
DP21 – External lighting  
DP33 – Open Space  
DP34 – Leisure and Sports Facilities

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

The North Hinksey Neighbourhood plan is underway. The draft plan documents and comments received during the publicity period have been submitted for independent examination.

Policies:

TR1 – Cyclists, pedestrians and public transport  
TR2 – Parking, accessibility and electric vehicle charging  
SI1- Leisure and social facilities  
UT1 – Flooding and ground water  
UT2 – Sustainable design, energy efficiency and renewable energy  
GS1 – Local green spaces  
GS2 – Biodiversity, wildlife corridors, TPOs and tree canopy cover  
GS3 – Locally important views

### **Vale of White Horse Design Guide (March 2015)**

### **National Planning Policy Framework, 2019**

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

### **Equality Act 2010**

The application has been assessed against section 149 of the Equality Act. It is considered that no recognised group will suffer discrimination as a result of the proposal.

### **Human Rights Act, 1998**

The application has been assessed against Articles 1 and 8. The impact on individuals has been balanced against the public interest and the officer recommendation is considered to be proportionate.

**Vale of White Horse District Council – Committee Report – 31 July 2019**

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