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**DESIGN STATEMENT**

**CHANGE OF USE OF  
FORMER WITLEY YOUTH CLUB  
PETWORTH ROAD  
WITLEY  
GU8 5SW**

**The D & M Planning Partnership Ref: JT/018/07  
23 April 2007**

### **Introduction**

The Design Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings submitted with planning application for change of use of former Witley Youth Club building off Petworth Road Witley to D1 and construction of a replacement front porch of the same dimensions:-

- Location plan 1:1250
- Block Plan 1:500
- Proposed and Existing site Plan at Scale 1:200
- Proposed and Existing Floor Plans and Elevations at Scale 1:100
  
- Committee Report WA2002/1130 **Appendix A**

### **Existing Use and Planning Approvals**

The application site is located on the southern edge of Witley Village beyond the settlement boundary.



This photograph shows the front (west) of the building as it exists at the moment. The windows are boarded for security reasons but otherwise the property is in a good condition.

It comprises a site of some 0.19 ha and contains a building of brick and tile construction of some 315 sq m with hard surfacing used as a car park front and rear built in the early 1970's.



This photograph shows the rear (east) elevation of the existing building and the area available for car parking.

The building was last used as a day nursery and before that as a youth club but is currently vacant. The building is in good structural condition although the windows are boarded up for security reasons.

In February 1970 planning permission was granted HM/R18246 for the construction of a Youth Club, subject to a number of conditions requiring approval of materials, car parking provision, and landscaping. The materials were approved in April 1970 under ref HM/R 18246ii. There were no conditions limiting the opening hours or the number of staff or persons using the building. There were no conditions relating to the use of the changing facilities for the adjoining playfields and users of the playing field including cricketers use facilities in The Chichester Hall.

Planning permission ref WA1994/566 was granted in September 1974 for the use of the building as a nursery school in the mornings of term time subject to 2 conditions limiting the number of children to 30 and the hours of attendance to 9.00am to noon during normal school term time only.

In November 1984 planning permission WA1984/1600 was granted for a single storey extension to form changing and shower room. There is only one condition regarding matching materials and no conditions limiting the use of the changing rooms.

Finally, planning permission was refused WA2002/1130 in November 2002 for change of use of part of the building to Class B1 (offices & Light industry). The Officers in their report to committee clearly put forward the argument that 'the site is considered capable of use for a number of other community facility functions'. The report says that community facilities include 'school, doctors, village halls and day centres'. This application was assessed against the current Policies of the Adopted Local Plan April 2002 and most importantly Policy CF1 which prevents the loss of community facilities.

The Officers' report says that the Milford & Witley Football Club was 'a paying user' of the changing rooms and these were shown to be retained as part of the application WA2002/1130. There are no conditions regarding the use of the changing rooms and the adjacent playing fields. The building is currently empty and unused being boarded up for security reasons and has not been used in this way for approximately 10 years.

A copy of the report for WA2002/1130 is attached at **Appendix A** which clearly established that the site and building is capable of use as a community facility.

This application seeks an open D1 use in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2005.

In the pre-application discussion with Mrs Sarah Burnett it was agreed that an application for an alternative community use, such as D1 may be acceptable in this building providing that the building is sound. Mrs Burnett requested confirmation on the use of the changing facilities. These were in the past used by the adjoining playing fields on an informal basis. The building has been closed for many years and users such as the Milford & Witley Football Club now use the facilities in Chichester Hall.

My clients have had several inquiries from community base uses including nursery school, holistic clinic and as a church and church hall, and accordingly they have instructed us to apply for an open D1 use which encompasses all of the non-residential community uses.

The building has not been used for approximately 10 years but is in good sound condition. It was designed as a youth club building and has all of the attributes for a good community use. It is situated in large secluded grounds off some 0.19 ha.

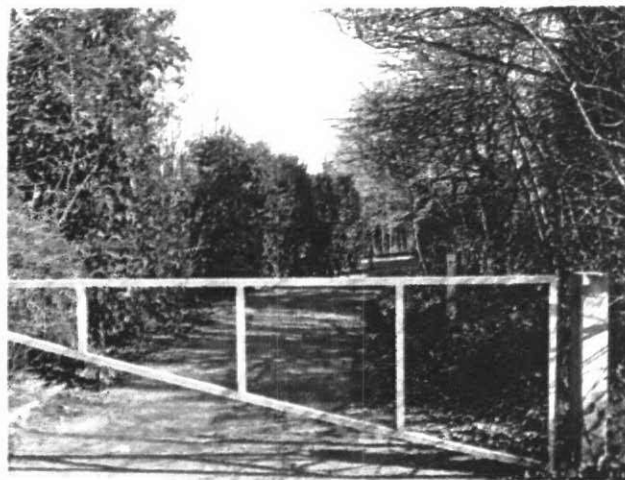
Although there is a Tree preservation order covering the front area of the site, none of the trees are affected by the proposed D1 use.

No changes are proposed to the existing access off the main A 283 which serves a front car park which will accommodate two disabled spaces and rear car park which has 12 spaces. These car parking areas are hard surfaced and the layout could be improved.



This photograph shows the access track to the property.

Shown here is the entrance gate to the former Witley Youth Club



The building totals some 315 sq m and comprises an entrance porch, lounge area, a main hall, a rear lounge area and bar, a kitchen, toilets, stores, changing areas and showers.

The use of the building for D1 would compliment the adjacent village hall The Chichester Hall on the other side of the playing fields and would contribute to the vitality of Witley village.

The proposed use would not cause any harm to local residents or the existing character of the area, the adjacent playing fields or the Witley Conservation Area.

**Policy Considerations**

Policies relevant to this application are C1, C3, DF1 and D1 of the Waverley Borough Council Local Plan 2002.

**Policy C1 & C3 – Green Belt and AONB & AGLV**

The application site and building are situated on the edge of Witley Village within the countryside designated as Green Belt and AONB & AGLV.

The Youth Club and the proposed D1 use are both appropriate forms of development and uses within the countryside and accordingly the proposal is acceptable within Policies C1 & C3.

**Policy DF1 Community Facilities**

Policy CF1 protects community facilities. When application WA2002/1130 was refused on the grounds that the existing site and building once used as a Youth Club was capable of use for other community facilities.

We agree with this view and the proposed D1 use falls fairly and squarely within current Local Plan Policy.

**Policy D1 – Environmental Implications of Development**

This policy seeks to ensure that development does not result in any material detriment to the environment. The policy states that development will not be permitted where it would cause :-

- a) *loss or damage to important environmental assets, such as buildings of historical or architectural interest, local watercourses, important*

- archaeological sites and monuments and areas of conservation, ecological or landscape value;*
- b) harm to the visual character and distinctiveness of a locality, particularly in respect of the design and scale of the development and its relationship to its surroundings;*
  - c) loss of general amenity, including material loss of natural light and privacy enjoyed by neighbours and disturbance resulting from the emission of noise, light or vibration;*
  - d) levels of traffic which are incompatible with the local highway network or cause significant environmental harm by virtue of noise or disturbance;*
  - e) potential pollution of air, land or water, including that arising from the storage and use of hazardous substances.*

It is the case that the application proposes the change of use of the existing vacant youth club building for an open D1 use. This proposal is in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan as it proposes no alterations to the external appearance of the building except for a replacement porch. This is the same floor area and height but with additional glazing. It will not result in any increase in floor area over the existing porch. It will not affect any of the trees protected by the Tree Preservation Order.

Furthermore there will be no impact on the visual character of the area. The existing building will be unaltered, except for the proposed replacement porch, and there will also be no detrimental impact on general amenity or loss of light or privacy will occur from the proposed change of use.

The re-use of the building will improve the appearance and character of the area as although the building is structurally sound and in relatively good condition the windows are boarded up for security reasons (see photograph below) and as such the re-use of the building will enhance the character of the area.





The re-use of this existing building for D1 use will not result in disturbance from noise light or vibration.

With regard to criteria d) it is the case that the levels of traffic relating to a D1 use will be compatible with the existing local highway network. In addition to this there are 14 car parking spaces on site with good turning facilities and drop off space for visitors and lorries delivering to the site. Further more there is good access to and from the main A 283.

No pollution of air, land or water is foreseen. In all these respects the proposal accords with adopted Policy D1.

The existing youth club use has no limitations on the hours of use. The nursery school was limited to mornings in term time only so that both the Youth Club and the nursery school could both use the same building. Although there is no need to stipulate the hours for the proposed D1 use my clients would be happy to agree to a condition limiting the use between 8am and 8pm daily which will protect the interests and amenities of neighbouring properties.

The nearest neighbour is some 37m from the site and there is extensive mature screening in-between. As the Youth Club could be reinstated and as the uses that could be operated within D1 have similar or less intensive activities the proposed use will not cause any unacceptable loss of amenity or privacy to occupiers of the neighbouring property. Unfortunately, with the building being unused, there have been instances of vandalism and drug related problems requiring repeated visits from the local police and the applicants wish to remove this issue by finding a suitable use for the building.

The proposed replacement porch comprises 5.8m<sup>2</sup> identical in size to the existing structure. It will significantly improve the appearance of the building although it will not be visible from outside of the site which is surrounded by a native tree screen.

**Conclusions**

The principle of the re-use of the building as an open D1 use has already been partly established by the nursery school approval and the youth club was clearly a community facility, although it is considered to be sui generis by the Council Officers.

The building is adjacent to existing community facilities in The Chichester Hall the village hall for Witley and the re-use of the building for D1 will allow for a continued community use of the building that will support Witley village.

The proposed replacement front porch will improve the appearance of the building and will not be seen from outside the site or have an impact on the appearance of the surrounding area.

As previously mentioned in this report, this unused boarded up building has attracted instances of vandalism and drug related problems requiring repeated visits from the local police and the applicants wish to remove this issue by finding a suitable use for the building.

To conclude, the proposal is entirely in accordance with the Development Plan for the area and that there are no compelling reasons why this application should not be approved.

***D & M Planning Partnership***

***23 April 2007***