

Report of the Head of Planning & Enforcement Services

Address BRITISH AIRWAYS COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE
ACCOMMODATION LANE HARMONDSWORTH

Development: Variation of condition 1 (temporary consent) of planning permission ref: 43410/APP/2007/3886 dated 12/03/2008 (Retention of Community Learning/Visitor Centre and toilet block for a temporary period of three years) to enable the permanent retention of the Community Learning Centre.

LBH Ref Nos: 43410/APP/2010/2426

Drawing Nos: IL12297/02-001 (Site Location)
Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Peter Brett Associates dated September 2001
P344 1 (Site Survey)
Modelled Flood Extents

Date Plans Received: 18/10/2010 **Date(s) of Amendment(s):**

Date Application Valid: 18/10/2010

1. SUMMARY

The British Airways Community Learning Centre (CLC), which is located on the southern side of Accommodation Lane in Harmondsworth, has been in place since 1998 and provides a range of educational, environmental and heritage programmes to the local community in addition to accommodation for the parkland rangers, who are responsible for the upkeep of the park.

This application seeks the variation of condition 1 of planning permission ref: 43410/APP/2007/3886 (temporary consent) to allow the permanent retention of the CLC.

It is considered that the CLC provides a facility which is directly related to the conservation and management of the surrounding parkland. In addition it provides an important asset to the local community. It has limited visual impact on the surrounding area and the parking and access arrangements are considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant UDP and London Plan policies and, accordingly, approval is recommended.

2. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL subject to the following:

1 NONSC Removal of building when no longer required

The building and hard surfaces shall be removed and the access to Accommodation Lane closed within 6 months of the use ceasing and the land shall be restored in accordance with a landscape scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

In the interests of visual amenity and to safeguard the long-term openness of the Green Belt, in accordance with policies OL1, OL4 and BE13 of the Hillingdon Unitary

Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

2 NONSC Development in accordance with submitted documents

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the submitted application documents, except where expressly varied by other conditions of the consent.

REASON

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policies OL1, OL4 and BE13 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

3 NONSC Restricted use of building to visitor centre/CLC only

The building hereby approved shall be used as a parkland Visitor Centre and Community Learning Centre, as described in the letter from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, dated 18/10/10 and for no other purposes.

REASON

To ensure that uses, not appropriate to the Green Belt setting of the site and which could prejudice the openness and visual amenities of the Green Belt are not permitted in accordance with Policy OL1 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007).

4 NONSC Energy/sustainability

The building hereby approved shall employ devices that automatically turn the heating and lighting off when the rooms are not in use.

REASON

In the interests of energy conservation in accordance with Policy 4A.3 of the London Plan (2008).

5 NONSC Refuse details

Within three months of the date of this consent details of facilities to be provided for the covered, secure and screened storage of refuse at the premises shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

In order to safeguard the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy OE1 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007) and London Plan (February 2008) Policy 4B.1.

INFORMATIVES

1 I52 Compulsory Informative (1)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

2 I53 Compulsory Informative (2)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to the

policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all relevant material considerations, including the London Plan (February 2008) and national guidance.

OL1	Green Belt - acceptable open land uses and restrictions on new development
OL2	Green Belt -landscaping improvements
OL4	Green Belt - replacement or extension of buildings
R10	Proposals for new meeting halls and buildings for education, social, community and health services
BE13	New development must harmonise with the existing street scene.
BE38	Retention of topographical and landscape features and provision of new planting and landscaping in development proposals.
OE1	Protection of the character and amenities of surrounding properties and the local area
AM7	Consideration of traffic generated by proposed developments.

3 I1 Building to Approved Drawing

You are advised this permission is based on the dimensions provided on the approved drawings as numbered above. The development hereby approved must be constructed precisely in accordance with the approved drawings. Any deviation from these drawings requires the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site comprises an approximately 1.1 hectare irregularly shaped plot, located on the southern side of Accommodation Lane in Harmondsworth. The site is occupied by British Airway's Community Learning Centre, a single-storey pre-fabricated style building, and associated car parking and landscaping. The site is bounded to the south east by Waterside, British Airways' headquarters building, and associated parkland; to the west by the River Colne, beyond which is Tarmac Way and parkland; and to the north by Accommodation Lane, beyond which is parkland.

The principle vehicular access to the site is to the south, via Waterside. However, access is also available from Accommodation Lane to the north.

The site falls within the Green Belt and the Colne Valley Regional Park as designated in the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007). It also falls within the Harmondsworth Moor Comprehensive Rehabilitation Area.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

The CLC was originally granted planning permission in September 2001 for a temporary period of three years (ref: 43410/BA/98/2470). This was renewed in 2004 (ref: 43410/APP/2004/2591) and again in 2007 (ref: 43410/APP/2007/3886). Condition 1 of that latter permission states:

" The use hereby permitted shall be discontinued and the building and hard surfaces shall be removed and the access to Accommodation Lane closed on or before 5 February 2011. Within 8 months of the use ceasing in accordance with this condition the land shall

be restored in accordance with a landscape scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON

To enable full future consideration to be given to a permanent location for this facility following completion of the Harmondsworth Moor CPO No 1 and to ensure that this parkland site is properly restored in compliance with Policies OL1 and OL9 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved policies 2007."

This application seeks the variation of that condition to allow the permanent retention of the facility, which comprises a single storey building with dimensions of 19m by 42m by 3.7m in height, together with ancillary car and coach parking.

The CLC was established to support the local community with a range of educational, environmental and heritage programmes. It aims to specifically support schools within the Heathrow community as part of British Airways' good neighbour programme, as well as supporting communities in the immediate vicinity of their operation.

The original programmes were developed to enhance the learning and social development of children and young people between five and 25 years of age and community outreach to learners between 25 and 80 years of age.

Programmes that support formal and informal curriculum were developed in conjunction with teachers and other educators. These include new GCSEs in vocational subjects, post 16 programmes, programmes for children excluded from schools; programmes for those with special needs; and outreach programmes for community groups.

The applicant has advised that by 2010 over 58,000 children, young people and adult learners had participated in a range of programmes. The CLC plays a significant role within the local community, and helps deliver programmes to schools not only in Hillingdon, but also in surrounding boroughs including Hounslow, Slough, Spelthorne, Windsor and Ealing.

In addition to the above, it is understood that the facility also provides accommodation for the parkland rangers, who are responsible for the upkeep of Harmondsworth Moor Park.

3.3 Relevant Planning History

Comment on Relevant Planning History

In October 1992 the Secretary of State granted outline planning permission subject to a S106 agreement for a corporate headquarters building for British Airways (Waterside) and new public parkland. On 13 April 1995 planning permission was granted for details of a New Master Plan in relation to the area to be laid out as a new park and other elements. This was accompanied by a comprehensive legal agreement, which required, amongst other things, the requirement for British Airways to provide a visitors centre within the parkland. Following consideration over a number of sites, a 3-year temporary planning permission was granted on 13 September 2001 for retention of the construction project office for use as a Community Learning Centre and visitors centre. Planning permission was granted for the temporary retention of the Community Learning Centre and toilet block for a further 3 years in December 2004, and again, for a further three years, in 2007.

The reasoning behind the granting of temporary planning consents was to enable future consideration to be given to a permanent location for the facility following the completion

of the Harmondsworth Moor Compulsory Purchase Order (which was associated with the original consent for the nearby BA headquarters building known as Waterside) and to ensure that the parkland was properly restored.

The planning history can be summarised as follows:

43410/B/90/1428 - Erection of Corporate Headquarters and Business Centre with landscaping, new access and car parking, public parkland and community and leisure centre and sports facilities (Outline Application) - Approved by the Secretary of State 12/10/92

43410/X/94/1408 - Details of new master plan in relation to area to be laid out as new park, showing waste deposited in area 3 (Summerleaze Pit) and area 4 (adjacent to M25), and creation of lake in areas 7/13 (between River Colne and public footpath south of M4) in compliance with condition 2(i)(b),(ii)- (viii) of the Secretary of State's decision ref. LRP219/R5510/02 dated 12/10/92; Erection of corporate headquarters and business centre with landscaping, public parkland, community, leisure and sports facilities - Approved 13/04/95

43410/BA/98/2470 - Retention of project office and re-use as a Community Learning Centre (incorporating business partnership team) and visitors centre for a temporary period of three years - approved 24/09/01

43410/APP/2004/2591 - Retention of Community Learning Centre/Visitor's Centre for a temporary period of three years - Approved 10/12/04

43410/APP/2007/3886 - Retention of Community Learning/Visitor Centre and toilet block for a temporary period of three years - Approved 12/03/08

4. Planning Policies and Standards

Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007)
London Plan (2008)
Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts

UDP / LDF Designation and London Plan

The following UDP Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| PT1.1 | To maintain the Green Belt for uses which preserve or enhance the open nature of the area. |
| PT1.3 | To seek greater public access to the countryside for informal leisure activities. |
| PT1.12 | To avoid any unacceptable risk of flooding to new development in areas already liable to flood, or increased severity of flooding elsewhere. |
| PT1.30 | To promote and improve opportunities for everyone in Hillingdon, including in particular women, elderly people, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. |

Part 2 Policies:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| OL1 | Green Belt - acceptable open land uses and restrictions on new development |
|-----|--|

OL2	Green Belt -landscaping improvements
OL4	Green Belt - replacement or extension of buildings
R10	Proposals for new meeting halls and buildings for education, social, community and health services
BE13	New development must harmonise with the existing street scene.
BE38	Retention of topographical and landscape features and provision of new planting and landscaping in development proposals.
OE1	Protection of the character and amenities of surrounding properties and the local area
AM7	Consideration of traffic generated by proposed developments.

5. Advertisement and Site Notice

5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date:- **19th November 2010**

5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date:- Not applicable

6. Consultations

External Consultees

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
No objection.

BAA SAFEGUARDING
No objection.

HARMONDSWORTH & SIPSON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
No comments received.

Internal Consultees

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNIT

The application relates to the removal of condition 1 of planning permission ref: 43410/APP/2007/3886 dated 12/3/2008 for retention of British Airways Community Learning/Visitor Centre. The supporting letter states that the Community Learning Centre has been located in its current location since 1998 and its retention will not result in change in the surrounding area or additional floor space acquired.

Accordingly, EPU do not have any objection or major comments regarding the removal of condition 1 because amongst other reasons, the site is at considerable distance from any residential properties, thus the possibility of noise disturbance affecting residential properties is quite negligible.

ACCESS OFFICER
No objection.

TREES/LANDSCAPE OFFICER

The site is a single-storey portable building situated to the north-west of BA's corporate headquarters building at Waterside, within the Green Belt. The River Colne flows to the west of the site boundary and a local access road, Accommodation Lane, loops across the river and along the

northern boundary from which side there is vehicular access to the site.

The building is well screened to the west by riverside vegetation and to the north by established vegetation within the site compound. While all existing vegetation was retained, or planted as part of the Harmondsworth Moor / Waterside development (ref. 43410/X/94/1408) there are no Tree Preservation Orders on, or close to, the site, nor does it fall within a designated Conservation Area.

Saved policy BE38 seeks the retention and utilisation of topographical and landscape features of merit and the provision of new planting and landscaping wherever it is appropriate.

In this case no landscape features will be removed and the existing landscape effectively screens public views of the building from both the north and west boundaries. There is no requirement for landscape enhancement.

No objections are raised and, in this case, there is no need for landscape conditions.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.01 The principle of the development

The application site is located within the Green Belt. UDP Policy OL1 states that within the Green Belt, uses associated with agriculture, horticulture, forestry, nature conservation, open air recreational facilities and cemeteries, will be acceptable. Planning permission will not be granted for new buildings or changes of use of existing land or buildings other than for purposes essential for and associated with the above uses. This is reiterated in both the London Plan (2008) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2: Green Belts.

In assessing previous applications for the retention of the facility, albeit on a temporary basis, the view has been taken that the provision of essential, ancillary facilities for a public park is deemed appropriate in principle in terms of Green Belt Policy OL1 of the UDP Saved Policies 2007 and guidance within PPG2: Green Belts.

The original master plan for the park, agreed by the Secretary of State, included a visitor centre, although it is acknowledged that the combined use of the current building, including BA's Community Learning Centre, is not strictly in accordance with Green Belt policy, as that use is not totally directly related to the use of the open-air park. However, the vast majority of visitors are accessing the park for study, work, etc, and the large scale of Harmondsworth Moor Park (approximately 100ha) justifies the need for a building of this size which also operates as the base for the parkland rangers.

Notably PPG2: Green Belts, confirms that the reuse of buildings inside a Green Belt is not inappropriate providing it has no greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt.

In this instance, the facility is considered to make a positive contribution to surrounding communities in terms of its educational value and as a visitor centre for the surrounding parkland. It is considered that it plays an active role in teaching visitors about issues such as nature conservation, ecology and biodiversity. In addition it provides a base for parkland rangers who play a vital role in the ongoing management of Harmondsworth Moor. Accordingly, it is considered that the retention of the existing facility broadly complies with the principles of Green Belt policy.

Notably UDP policy R10 encourages the provision of new buildings for education, social and community uses. The proposal is considered to accord with the aims of this policy.

7.02 Density of the proposed development

Not applicable to this type of application.

7.03 Impact on archaeology/CAs/LBs or Areas of Special Character

The site does not fall within an Archaeological Priority Area and there are no Conservation Areas, listed buildings or Areas of Special Local Character within the vicinity of the site.

7.04 Airport safeguarding

BAA Safeguarding have been consulted and have confirmed that the development would not conflict with aerodrome safeguarding criteria. There is no requirement to consult National Air Traffic Services (NATS) on developments under 15m in height in this location.

7.05 Impact on the green belt

The CLC comprises a single-storey, green clad pre-fabricated building which has been in place for a considerable amount of time. No changes are proposed to the existing building. The site is well screened from wider surrounding views from the park, by tree screening along its boundaries and a grassed bund immediately in front of it. Accordingly, the proposal would have very limited visual impact in this location and its permanent retention is not considered to have any significant impact on the openness or visual amenities of the surrounding Green Belt, sufficient to justify refusal.

7.07 Impact on the character & appearance of the area

This has been addressed in part 7.05 of the report.

7.08 Impact on neighbours

The nearest residential properties are located approximately 400m away to the east, in Harmondsworth Village. The application site would be visible from the nearest property and, accordingly, it is not considered that the proposal would have any detrimental impact on the amenity of the nearest residential occupiers.

7.09 Living conditions for future occupiers

Not applicable to this type of development.

7.10 Traffic impact, Car/cycle parking, pedestrian safety

No alterations are proposed to the existing car parking and access arrangements. It is not considered that the retention of the facility would result in any increase in traffic to the site which could be to the detriment of pedestrian or highway safety.

7.11 Urban design, access and security

The size and scale and design of the proposed building is considered to be appropriate in this location. Whilst of a prefabricated design, the appearance of the building is unassuming and its dark green colouring helps it to blend into its surroundings. The facility is well screened from surrounding wider views by dense vegetation around the site boundaries and, on balance, it is not considered that it has a detrimental visual impact on this part of the Green Belt.

In terms of security, no alterations would be made to the existing arrangements. The applicant has confirmed that the building's location close to British Airways' corporate headquarters enables it to use the security and surveillance provided for Waterside. These existing arrangements are considered adequate.

7.12 Disabled access

No alterations are proposed to the existing access arrangements to the facility. The building benefits from appropriate ramped access and is fitted with internal accessible WC's. These features would be retained and are considered to provide an appropriate level of accessibility for the building. notably, the Council's Access Officer has raised no objections.

7.13 Provision of affordable & special needs housing

Not applicable to this type of application.

7.14 Trees, landscaping and Ecology

No alterations are proposed to existing landscaping surrounding the site. The proposal would not result in any further built development and, accordingly, would have no impact on surrounding trees and vegetation.

7.15 Sustainable waste management

No alterations are proposed to the existing facility. Nevertheless, no information regarding waste disposal has been provided. Accordingly, details of refuse provision would be required by way of condition should approval be granted.

7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability

Whilst this is an existing building and, accordingly, it would be unreasonable to require the developer to make significant changes to incorporate the use of renewable energy sources, a condition has been added, to ensure that lighting to the building is switched off when it is not in use.

7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues

The site is located within Floodzones 2 and 3. Accordingly, a Flood Risk has been submitted. The Environment Agency have been consulted and have confirmed that no objections are raised in terms of flooding or drainage issues.

7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues

The building has been in situ for a number of years. Its retention is not considered to give rise to any change in terms of noise or air quality. Notably the nearest residential receptors are located a considerable distance away. Officers in the Council's Environmental Protection Unit have confirmed that they have no objections in terms of noise or air quality.

7.19 Comments on Public Consultations

None received.

7.20 Planning obligations

Not applicable to this type of development.

7.21 Expediency of enforcement action

Not applicable.

7.22 Other Issues

None

8. Observations of the Borough Solicitor

When making their decision, Members must have regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies. This will enable them to make an informed decision in respect of an application.

In addition Members should note that the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA 1998) makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights. Decisions by the Committee must take account of the HRA 1998. Therefore, Members need to be aware of the fact that the HRA 1998 makes the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) directly applicable to the actions of public bodies in England and Wales. The specific parts of the Convention relevant to planning matters are Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

Article 6 deals with procedural fairness. If normal committee procedures are followed, it is unlikely that this article will be breached.

Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 are not absolute rights and infringements of these rights protected under these are allowed in certain defined circumstances, for example where required by law. However any infringement must be proportionate, which means it must achieve a fair balance between the public interest and the private interest infringed and must not go beyond what is needed to achieve its objective.

Article 14 states that the rights under the Convention shall be secured without discrimination on grounds of 'sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status'.

9. Observations of the Director of Finance

Not applicable.

10. CONCLUSION

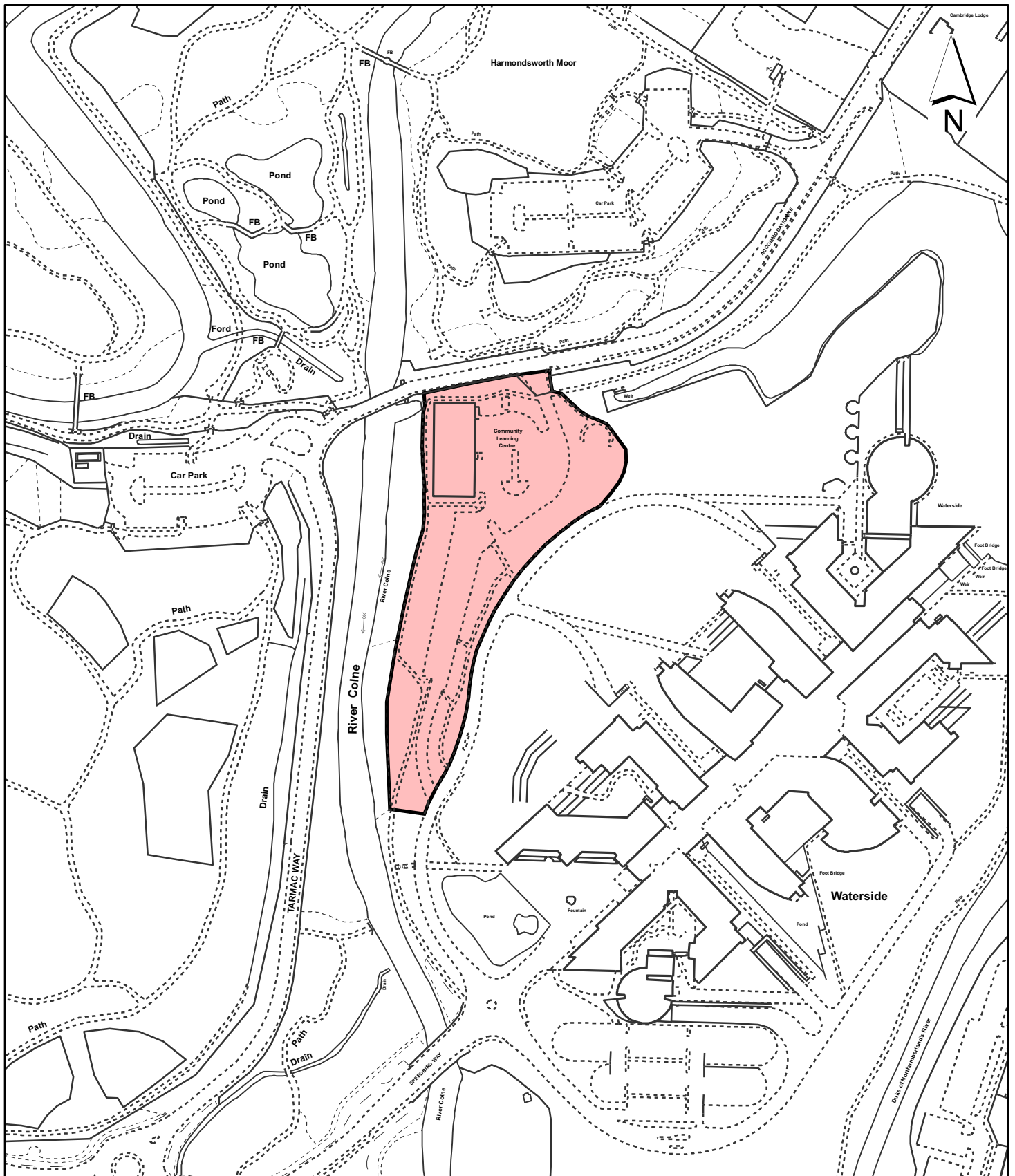
It is not considered that the retention of the facility in this location would have any adverse impacts on the character or appearance of the surrounding area or be of detriment to the openness of the Green Belt. Notably, the CLC provides an important community and educational facility. The proposal is considered to comply with relevant UDP and London Plan policies and, accordingly, approval is recommended.

11. Reference Documents

Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2007)
London Plan (2008)
Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts

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<p>Notes</p> <p> Site boundary</p> <p>For identification purposes only.</p> <p>This copy has been made by or with the authority of the Head of Committee Services pursuant to section 47 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (the Act). Unless the Act provides a relevant exception to copyright.</p> <p>© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. London Borough of Hillingdon 100019283 2010</p>	<p>Site Address</p> <p>British Airways Community Learning Centre, Accommodation Lane Harmondsworth</p>		<p>LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON</p> <p>Planning, Environment & Community Services</p> <p>Civic Centre, Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 1UW Telephone No.: Uxbridge 250111</p>
	<p>Planning Application Ref:</p> <p>43410/APP/2010/2426</p>	<p>Scale</p> <p>1:2,500</p>	
	<p>Planning Committee</p> <p>Central and South</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>November 2010</p>	



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