

# LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date : 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012

**Report of**  
Assistant Director, Planning &  
Environmental Protection

**Contact Officer:**  
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3841

**Ward:** Enfield  
Lock

**Application Number :** TP/11/1650

**Category:** Change of Use

**LOCATION:** 4, KINETIC CRESCENT, ENFIELD, EN3 7XH

**PROPOSAL:** Change of use of part ground floor from offices to an innovation and training centre for The Oasis Academy.

**Applicant Name & Address:**

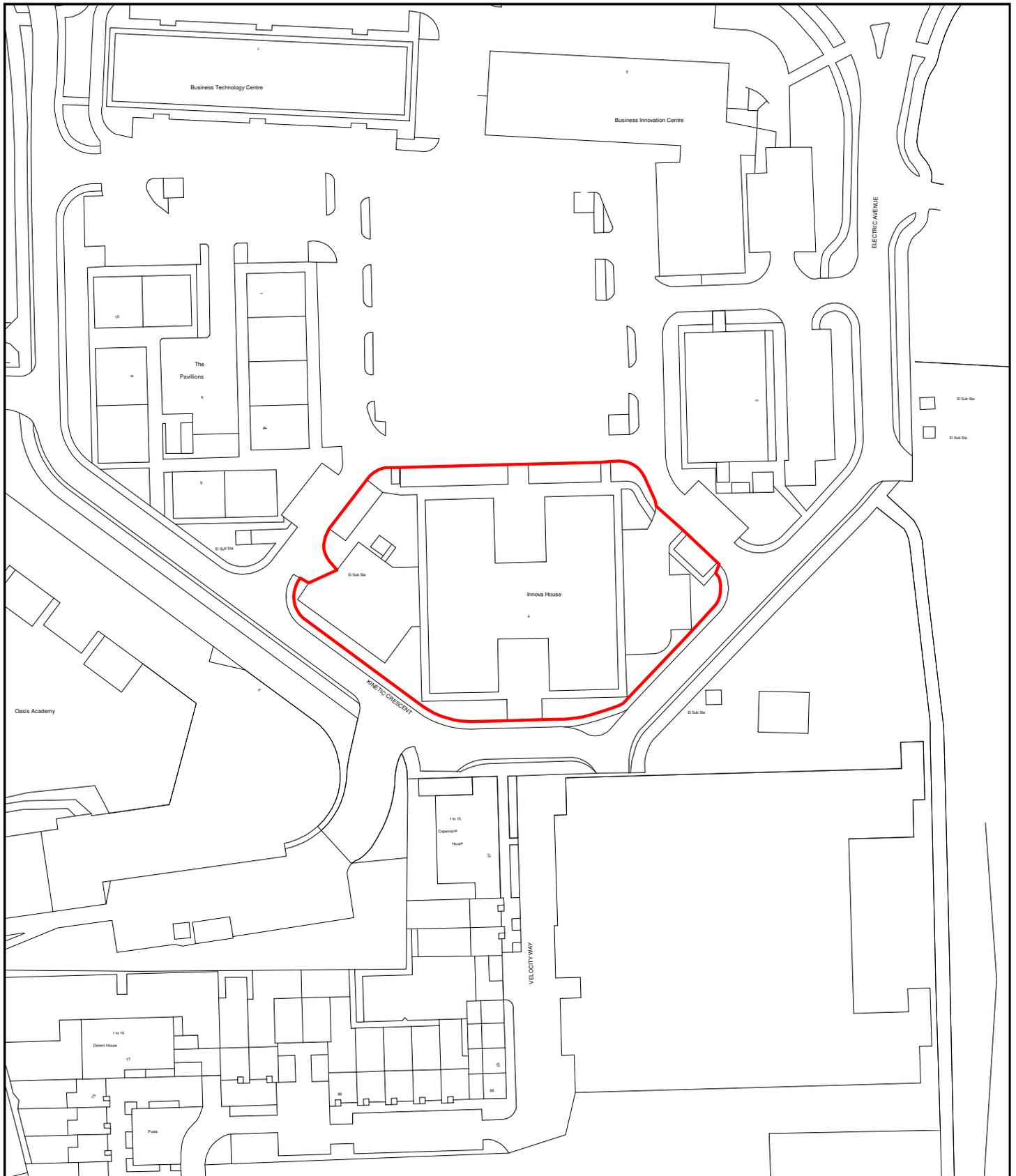
Alan J C Brown,  
Architects Co-Partnership  
Northaw House,  
Cooper Lane,  
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**Agent Name & Address:**

Alan J C Brown,  
Architects Co-Partnership  
Northaw House  
Cooper Lane  
Northaw  
Hertfordshire  
EN6 4PS

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That subject to any Direction from the relevant Government Office following the referral of this application and subject to the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking to secure the necessary contribution to provide a dedicated pedestrian crossing facility in the vicinity of the site, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions.



**ENFIELD**  
Council



**Development Control**



Scale - 1:1250  
Time of plot: 10:27

Date of plot: 11/01/2012

## **1 Site and Surroundings**

- 1.1 The application premises comprise part of the ground floor of Innova House, a two storey office building located within Innova Park. The building is located on the north side of Kinetic Crescent and is bounded by further office/light industrial units to the north, north-east and north-west. To the south and south-east of the site, new residential development is under construction; to the south-west is Oasis Academy.
- 1.2 This part of Innova Park is designated as Strategic Industrial Land (SIL).

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 This application proposes the change of use of part of the ground floor of the building from B1 office use to an innovation and training centre for the Oasis Academy. The proposals are to provide an expansion of the existing 6<sup>th</sup> form facilities within the existing Academy site, geared towards vocational courses and training through links with local businesses. The expansion will allow the Academy to cater for an additional 100 pupils in the 6<sup>th</sup> form. However, the centre will also be geared towards providing vocational education for young people not in employment. The Centre will :
- Provide Vocational Training Courses
  - Forge links with local businesses through the Innova Park Business Partnership that the Academy has set up, with such firms as Sony and John Lewis
  - Secure work placements with local companies
  - Provide a place for training of young employees and apprentices
  - Offer basic skills training such as interviewing techniques
  - Short term hiring of training facilities to local businesses
- 2.2 The existing building has a total floor space of approximately 2,800 sq.m, of which 1,700 sq.m is presently vacant and available to lease. This application relates to 705sq.m.
- 2.3 In support of the application, the applicant advises that the site has been identified for the proposed use due to its proximity to the existing Academy, enabling shared use of existing facilities for staff and pupils and reducing lost time between lessons. They advise that the project is being funded by a grant of £1.2 million from the YPLA Demographic Growth Capital Fund.

## **3 Relevant Planning Decisions**

- 3.1 TP/04/2623 Outline planning permission granted in April 2005 for a Master Plan for remainder of Innova Park site involving division into 5 plots for redevelopment; Plot 1- leisure (Class D2), retail (Class A1) and business (Class B1), Plot 2 - business/general industrial (Class B1/B2) or storage/distribution (Class B8), Plot 3 - secondary school or business (Class B1), Plot 4 - residential, Plot 5 - residential.
- 3.2 Reserved matters have since been submitted and approved pursuant to this outline permission and the secondary school (Academy) has been

constructed on Plot 3, the residential development remains under construction on Plots 4 and 5, and industrial/warehouse units have been constructed on Plot 2. Plot 1 remains undeveloped but has recently gained a free standing outline planning permission for further B1/B2/B8 development.

- 3.4 Since the granting of the Master Plan outline planning permission in 2005, the status of part of Innova Park has changed, with those plots consented for B1/B2/B8 development, together with the existing industrial land to the north being designated as Strategic Industrial Land.

### **3.5 Consultations**

#### **3.5.1 Statutory and non-statutory consultees**

##### *3.5.2 Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency advises that this is not an application that they need be consulted on and that the Local Planning Authority should refer to their Flood Risk Standing Advice.

##### *3.5.3 Environmental Protection and Regulations*

The Assistant Director, Planning and Environmental Protection does not object to the application as the development is unlikely to have a negative environmental impact.

##### *3.5.4 Traffic and Transportation*

Traffic and Transportation advise that the use/associated parking provision is acceptable for the proposed education use. However because there will be a regular pedestrian demand to walk between the two sites, which there is no particular demand for now, then safer crossing facilities should be provided on Kinetic Crescent and funded by the applicant. Any associated waiting restrictions/zig-zag markings etc will be included within the scheme that is in the course of being brought forward for Innova Park anyway, and this could also address related one-way working, 20 mph zone etc. past the site.

#### **3.5.6 Schools and Children's Services**

School's and Children's Services advise they are in full support of this application.

#### **3.5.7 Public**

- 3.5.8 Consultation letters have been sent to the occupiers of 6 neighbouring occupiers and a notice has been posted on site and displayed in the local press. No responses have been received to date.

## **4 Relevant Policy**

### **4.1 London Plan**

2.17 Strategic Industrial Locations

3.18 Education facilities

6.13 Parking

#### 4.2 Core Strategy

Core Policy 8 Education  
Core Policy 14 Safeguarding Strategic Industrial Locations  
Core Policy 16 Taking part in economic success and improving skills  
Core Policy 24 The Road Network  
Core Policy 28 Managing flood risk through development  
Core Policy 40 North East Enfield

#### 4.3 Unitary Development Plan

(II)GD6 Traffic implications  
(II)GD8 Access and servicing

#### 4.4 Other relevant considerations

PPS1 Delivering sustainable development  
PPS4 Planning for sustainable economic growth  
PPG13 Transport  
PPS25 Development and flood risk  
Draft National Planning Policy Framework (2011)  
Ministerial Policy Statement Planning for Schools Development (2011)  
Ministerial Policy Statement Planning for Growth (2011)

North East Enfield Area Action Plan

### **5 Analysis**

#### Principle

5.1 The application site is located within Strategic Industrial Land wherein policy seeks to resist the use of land or buildings for purposes other than those that fall within the broad industrial type activities or the B1/B2/B8 use classes. As this application proposes the introduction of an innovation and training centre, linked to the 6<sup>th</sup> form facilities within the Oasis Academy and constituting a D1 use, the application represents a departure from the provisions of the development plan and has been advertised as such.

5.2 The policy presumption is clearly and strongly in favour of retaining this land for B1/B2/B8 type activities and therefore it is necessary to consider whether the proposed development has overriding benefits which outweigh the loss of this space to such appropriate employment uses. In this respect the applicant has provided information on the types of courses that will be available to 6<sup>th</sup> form pupils and the importance of the linkages between these courses and local businesses:

5.3 The courses offered by the sixth form at this site will be :

- BTEC Level 3 and Level 2 course include Business, Child Development, ICT and sport;
- AS levels will include Business, Law, Media, Psychology;
- ASDIAN Employment Skills; and
- AQA Bacculerate.

5.4 The applicant advises that:

#### **“BTEC**

The BTEC courses have a work experience element. They will therefore require partnerships with local industry in order to fulfil the course requirements. All are vocational qualifications and designed to be delivered with business partnerships in mind.

#### **AS levels**

All of the AS levels identified above have an enterprise element and are related to the world of work. Many introduce new and innovative ideas to enterprise.

#### **ASDAN Employability Skills**

Skills is a course designed at getting lower achievers ready for work and to develop an understanding of money management and other relevant business skills.

#### **AQA Bacculerate**

This is a course aimed at high achievers. One of the specific which allows students to be rewarded for work experience which we hope to be able to find via internships on the business park and the completion of the extended project which allows students to set a title surrounding a local issue (business or community related) and research the issue surrounding it to find a solution. This can be in the form of a business report, an artefact for an office or public building or putting on performances for the local community.

#### **NEETS/External training**

There will also be opportunities for local businesses and the local community to use the facilities.

The training that would be available for those outside of the school community would be planned jointly with local business. This will ensure that the courses offered are relevant to the needs of employers, filling the skills gap between the employees and the jobs they are aspiring to.

However, these courses could stem from ICT to other formal evening classes for courses such as those identified above (AS levels/BTEC/AQA Bacculerate)

The issues surrounding child protection are not in force as only sixth form would be on the new site and as a college, adults are not all screened. Consequently, once timetables have been organised there will be an opportunity to identify times that will be used for this training both during the day and also out of hours, which is anticipated to be 1700.”

5.5 In addition to offering the above courses, which have key links with local businesses and offer employment training for the local community, the applicant has also confirmed that have set up the Innova Park Business

Partnership, which is specifically aimed at improving links between the Academy, pupils and businesses. Currently the initiatives include:

- Internships for 6<sup>th</sup> formers – a number of the businesses would have 6<sup>th</sup> formers for half a day every week of the year. This would be for AQA Baccalaureate students and Business A-level students.
- Work experience for pupils aged 15-16. Positive discussions have been held for form business partnerships with Academia, Danwood, G6 Construction, Premier Inn, Guarding Professionals, JK Palmers, Café Di Amici and Eurotec;
- The training of employees and apprentices of local businesses in the facility, who are in the 16-19 age range;
- Offering Basic Skills training such as interviewing techniques training to companies. In return participating companies agree to interview students from the school for an entry level position and provide them with feedback. To date Premier Inn, JK Palmers and John Lewis have indicated interest.
- Responsibility posts – pupils will be given the opportunity to take up posts of responsibility both within the new centre on reception for example or taking on internships with local businesses.
- Short term use of training facilities by local businesses in the partnership, including evenings and weekends;
- A business club will be established and pupils will be encouraged to set up trial Business Ventures which could be capable of developing into a new start up business.

5.6 There are thus clear links between the proposed training centre and local business and the proposed facility would be mutually beneficial.

5.7 It is recognised that these employment/training benefits could be achieved by providing this training facility elsewhere and not necessarily on the application site. The applicant has considered alternative sites, some of which lie outside land designated as SIL. However, these have been discounted for a variety of reasons, including distance from the existing Academy site resulting in time loss by students moving between sites, general poor accessibility, timescale for provision of a new building in relation to the timescale for the grant availability (the £1.2million grant funding must be invested by March 2011). It is recognised that the facility is an extension of the existing 6<sup>th</sup> form facilities on the existing Academy site and therefore there is a need for proximity to these existing facilities to enable shared use of welfare facilities etc for staff and pupils. The proposed site clearly meets these proximity requirements.

5.8 The space is presently vacant and has been so for over a year, despite active marketing by agents and competitive rents being charged. Given this, together with the employment training related benefits associated with the use, whilst not strictly within the employment use classes considered appropriate for SIL, the proposal would provide a beneficial and employment related training facility that would complement the business park and facilitate links between students and local businesses. In summary therefore it is considered that the proposal would bring sufficient benefits to outweigh the loss of the space to traditional B1/B2/B8 activities.

Impact on adjoining occupiers

- 5.9 The introduction of this use on site does not require significant physical alteration to the building and therefore the space could readily revert to the more traditional employment uses should the need for this additional 6<sup>th</sup> form space change.
- 5.10 The remainder of this building is either in or remains available for appropriate employment uses. The provision of this innovation and training facility within the vacant ground floor space should not compromise the functioning of the remainder of the building or negatively impact on existing businesses. Access to the building remains as existing, through a communal lobby area with the 6<sup>th</sup> form accommodation then being relatively self-contained. With the exception of on site toilet facilities, students would utilise the existing Academy's welfare facilities.
- 5.11 The facility will be available to 6<sup>th</sup> form students within the normal working day, with the potential for extended local business and community use beyond these hours, including weekends. The present building has no restriction on hours of operation. The nature of the use should not generate noise and disturbance over and above that which might be expected with a typical office/light industrial use, for which the building is presently used for.

#### Access and parking

- 5.12 Vehicle access to the building remains as existing and no objections are raised to the level of parking facilities available to support the use.
- 5.13 The main issue arising from the proposal relates to pedestrian movements associated with the proposed use and particularly the increase in pedestrian movements between the proposed site and the existing Academy. It is considered that a dedicated pedestrian crossing facility ought to be provided between the proposed site and the existing Academy and the cost of this would be in the region of £20,000. The applicant has agreed to this contribution. This will be secured by a Unilateral Undertaking with the works being implemented by the Council at the earliest opportunity having regard to other construction activity presently taking place to the south of the application site.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 In conclusion, whilst the introduction of this use on the site represents a departure from policy, the proposed innovation and training centre has clear links to employment training and will offer local businesses and the wider community access to training facilities that will assist in identifying skills gaps and assisting those looking for work to gain the necessary skills to gain employment. Accordingly, given the nature of the use proposed and the limited amount of floor space involved to accommodate it, it is considered that the use is acceptable on the site and would not undermine the wider SIL designation. It is therefore recommended that planning permission that planning permission be granted for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed use includes the provision of employment training facilities and provides training opportunities linked to local businesses in the existing business park. The facility will also provides training opportunities for local businesses and the wider community. In this

respect it is considered that the use is appropriately linked to the existing employment area and given the limited floorspace involved will not undermine the wider Strategic Industrial Land designation and therefore has appropriate regard to London Plan policy 2.17 and Core Policy 14 of the Core Strategy and complies with Core Policy 16.

- 6.2 As the application has been advertised as a departure from the provisions of the development plan, the application cannot be determined until it has first been referred to the relevant Government Office so that they have the opportunity to confirm whether they agree with the decision of the Council. The recommendation therefore reflects this requirement.

## **7 Recommendation**

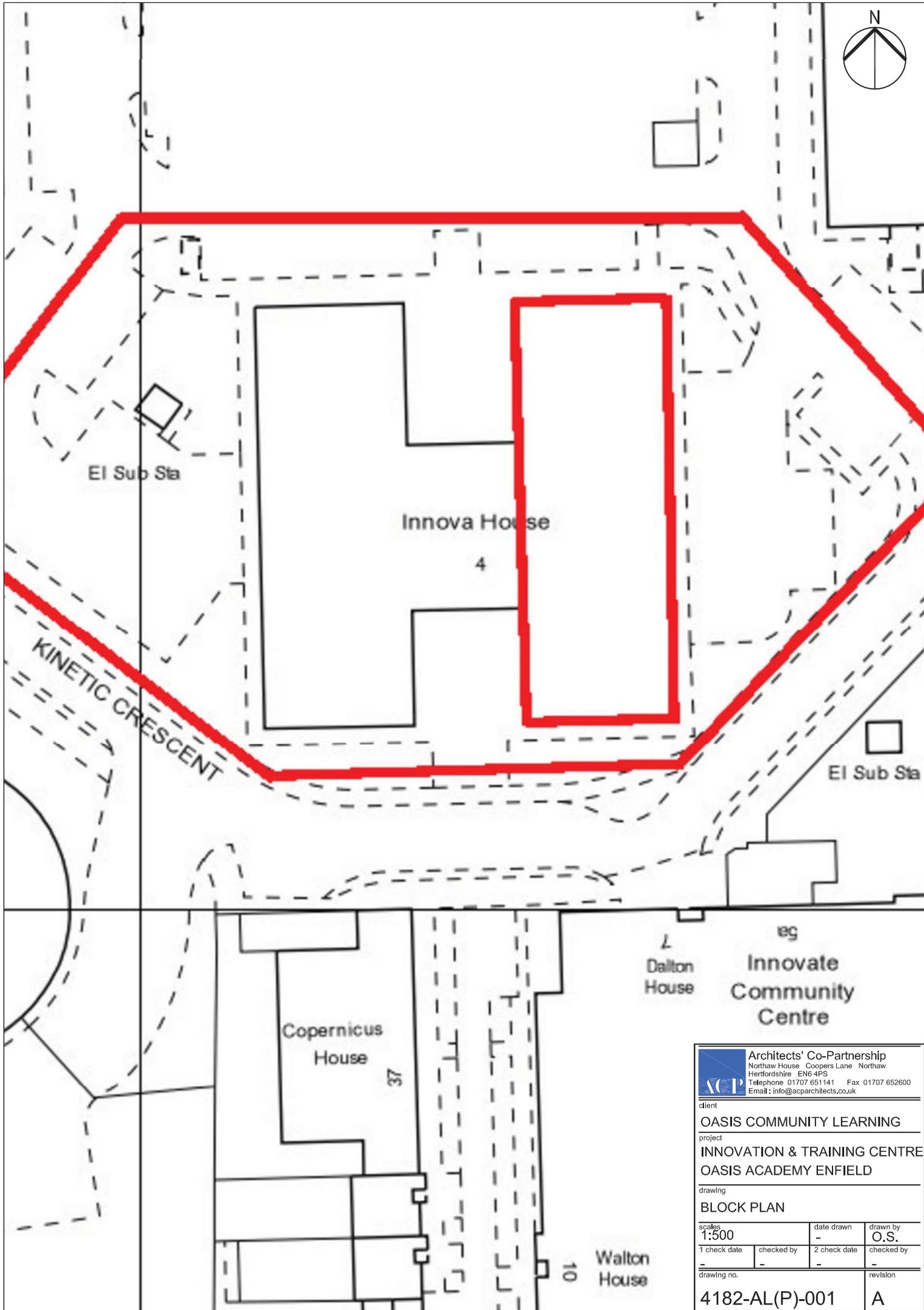
- 7.1 That subject to any Direction from the relevant Government Office following the referral of this application and subject to the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking to secure the necessary contribution to provide a dedicated pedestrian crossing facility in the vicinity of the site, planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1 C60 Approved plans
- 2 The premises shall only be used as an innovation and training centre in connection with the existing Oasis Academy, Innova Park and shall not be used for any other purpose within use class D1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or any amending Order  
Reason: Having regard to the location of the site within the Strategic Industrial Land.
- 3 That prior to the occupation of the development a School Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall include:
  - i) Agreed targets with the aim of reducing the impact of car travel on the environment;
  - ii) Measures to promote sustainable transport and provisions promoting a wider range of cleaner travel choices;
  - iii) A full travel survey in consultation with relevant Council Officers;
  - iv) A programme for the review and monitoring of the Travel Plan to ensure target are met.

The School shall operate in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason: In order to reduce the level of car borne traffic associated with the development and move towards more sustainable modes of transport.

- 4 C51A Time Limited Permission



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Innova House

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KINETIC CRESCENT

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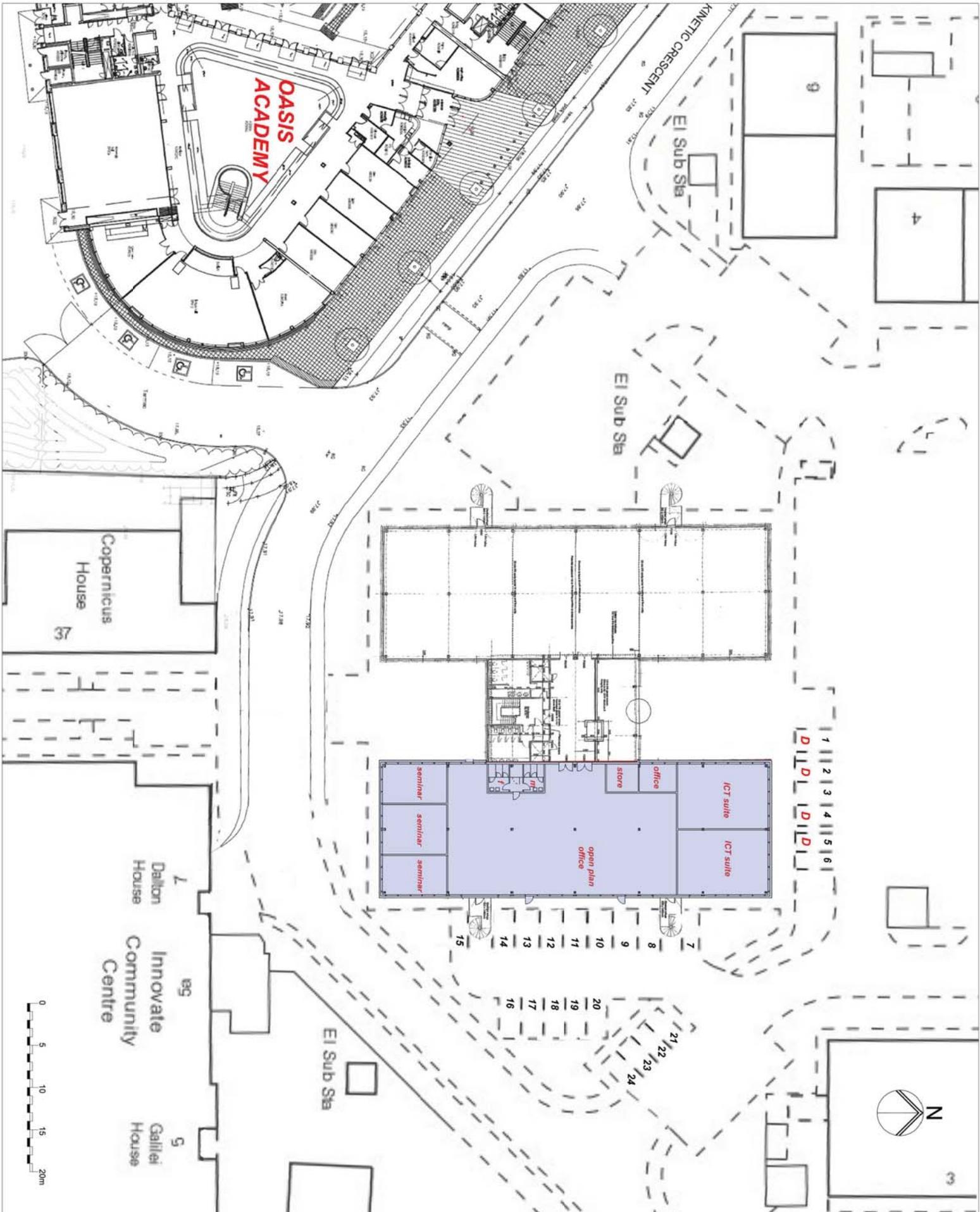
Dalton House

Innovate Community Centre

Walton House

10

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client			
OASIS COMMUNITY LEARNING			
project			
INNOVATION & TRAINING CENTRE			
OASIS ACADEMY ENFIELD			
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**Oasis Community Learning**

**Innovate House Conversion**

**Site Layout & Indicative Floor Plan**

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