



ORPS Flash Update

Important Information Regarding Oxford International College (OIC) Planning Up-date

Oxford International College now known as OIC

OIC have now submitted their planning application ref: BH2025/02107 (Please quote in all correspondence). You can submit your views in writing or online using the council's planning register using the following link: - <https://planningapps.brighton-hove.gov.uk/online-applications>

The consultation period ends on the 16th of October 2025, but you can still submit after this date prior to BHCC planning meeting, possibly early November. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact ORPS by email orps@ovingdean.co.uk Every adult in every household has the right to submit an objection/comment.

We have started a petition, details of which will follow as soon as BHCC confirm and please look out for our campaign details/posters: - OUT (Ovingdean Under Threat)

ORPS STATEMENT TO RESIDENTS OF OIVINGDEAN.

This is ORPS report on the proposed expansion plans of OIC and the potential impact on our amazing village. We consider that the committee of The Ovingdean Residents and Preservation Society have a responsibility to ensure that our residents are informed of any major development in the village that could have a major and possibly detrimental impact on us all. We have tried to be factually correct to present an accurate statement to you all on information that has been made available. We are not anti the college but believe that this expansion plan is too excessive for our small village and occupancy should be limited to c220 students with no new accommodation blocks and the existing MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) to be retained in its current or similar location.

Oxford International College.

Nord Anglia Education, the parent company of Oxford International College, who we believe operate offshore in Guernsey with no particular interest in Ovingdean Village, opened its new residential college at the site aiming to undertake a substantial renovation. They anticipate having approximately 400 boarding pupils and 100-day pupils.

Traditionally, we have had around 100 students/pupils in residence at the college, unconfirmed, OIC are proposing for up to 500 students, five times the capacity/usage in recent years plus another (estimated) 10 staff and ancillary workers daily. A huge increase in traffic, activity and noise. We currently have approximately 1200 residents in Ovingdean Village.

OIC have held two consultations made open to residents of Ovingdean, an open day and quite a few "private" meetings with residents yet we have not been heard and their plans have not changed.

The proposed residential accommodation blocks are located directly behind Beacon Court and can only be constructed by removing trees with preservation orders on the them (TPO's). The MUGA, is huge and is still planned to be located directly behind the residential properties in Ainsworth Avenue/Ainsworth Close. It will be floodlit and used by OIC with extensive usage, OIC have stated that they intend to "sub-let" the MUGA to outside organisations and it could be

used up to 9.00pm every evening and weekends including throughout the summer months when the students are away.

OIC originally submitted a similar planning application on the 17th of March 2023 which was subsequently refused on the 2nd of November 2023 by BHCC.

This is not the ORPS objection but our formal attempt to get some clarity from BHCC and also to raise our concerns on behalf of the Ovingdean Residents.

Michael Tucker

Senior Planning Officer
Brighton & Hove City Council
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

14th September 2025

Dear Mr. Tucker,

Re: Oxford International College Expansion – Location of Proposed Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

I write as Chair of the Ovingdean Residents and Preservation Society (ORPS), representing residents of Ovingdean who are directly affected by Oxford International College's plans to expand, and in particular the proposed siting of the new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).

For more than two years residents have objected to placing the MUGA on the southern boundary of the site, directly adjoining our homes. This location will subject residents to constant noise, intrusive floodlighting, and additional traffic. Many in our community are elderly, retired, or living with serious conditions such as Alzheimer's and depression. These are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, which places a legal duty on the Council to give proper regard to their needs.

The school's wider expansion proposes up to 500 pupils and over 100 staff daily. For a village of just 1,200 residents, this scale of additional activity would generate substantial ongoing pressure on roads, parking, and local amenity, far beyond what the community can reasonably absorb. It would also appear that OIC do not allow parking within the college grounds forcing visitors and the like to park on the residential roads causing chaos within the village. Apart from the extended college use during term time, including external groups, i.e. up to at least 10pm seven days a week, the proposals further indicate that the MUGA would be sub-let to outside organisations, potentially operating up to 11pm, including weekends during the summer. This would create not only noise and light pollution but also a significant increase in footfall, traffic movements, and parking pressures late into the evening, compounding the disturbance to neighbouring residents, many of whom are elderly and at home throughout the day and evening.

History and Engagement

- On 10 July 2024, residents raised these concerns directly with the college representative during the consultation event. At that time, residents made clear that placing the MUGA immediately behind homes would be intolerable, discriminatory against elderly and vulnerable people, and contrary to the Council's equality duties.
- Residents also met directly with the School Principal, Ms Tess St. Clair-Ford, on several occasions beginning in May 2024. In those meetings, residents highlighted the serious impacts of the proposed siting, including noise, disruption from unauthorised roadworks, and damage to health and wellbeing. We proposed relocating the MUGA further north by the wooded area where no residents would be affected.
- On 21 May 2025, residents met with the developer's representative Simon Tyrrell. Following that meeting, Mr Tyrrell wrote to residents:

"The local authority is not being overly helpful in respect to the location of the MUGA, but we are pushing back and have requested a pre application meeting with the officer and statutory consultees to present a few other ideas for them to consider."

- Most significantly, in September 2025 residents met again with Ms St. Clair-Ford, who confirmed in clear terms that the location of the MUGA has not changed because the local authority and English Heritage require it to remain where it is. This statement, from the Principal of the school herself, reinforces what the consultants have already said: that the planning authority and heritage consultees are driving the decision to site the MUGA directly behind residents' homes, despite repeated objections.

A Commercial Expansion in Breach of Equality Act Duties

The college have repeatedly suggested that the MUGA would provide a benefit to the “local community.” In reality, Ovingdean’s population is predominantly elderly and will not benefit from a floodlit sports pitch. The effect would be the opposite: increased noise, light, and traffic that undermine quality of life for those most vulnerable.

This must be recognised for what it is: a commercial expansion by a private school designed to attract wealthy overseas students, with a “community” add-on that is neither designed for nor of genuine benefit to Ovingdean residents.

In these circumstances, the Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to weigh the very real harm to vulnerable residents -many of whom have protected characteristics - against the supposed “wider community benefits” of the scheme. Those benefits are, in truth, commercial benefits to the school rather than genuine benefits to the village.

It also appears that preserving the vista of the Grade II listed building is being prioritised over the wellbeing of local people. Yet this “view” is already compromised by containers and prefabricated buildings, and it is not accessible to residents who pay local council tax. In contrast, the harm to residents would be daily, direct, and severe.

Our Questions

1. Please provide the specific detail and documentation given by planning officers or statutory consultees regarding the siting of the MUGA on the southern boundary.
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2. How is the planning authority planning to discharge its duties under the Equality Act 2010 in balancing the rights of vulnerable residents - particularly those living closest to the proposed MUGA who have protected characteristics - against what is essentially a commercial scheme designed to generate income from foreign students? The law requires that harm to residents can only be justified if it is outweighed by genuine wider community benefits, which this scheme does not provide. In addition, heritage considerations should not take priority over residents' rights.
3. Why has the residents' alternative proposal - to site the MUGA further north, away from homes and shielded by bunds and planting - not been adopted, despite its ability to address both residential and heritage concerns?

Conclusion

The Council has both a legal and moral obligation to put residents' wellbeing first. Prioritising a private school's "vista" and commercial expansion over the rights of local people to quiet enjoyment of their homes would not only be unjust but could also expose the authority to challenge for failure to comply with its Equality Act duties.

We therefore request a full written explanation of the Council's position, together with assurances that residents' voices and statutory protections will be properly considered during preapplication meetings and in the determination of this application.

Yours faithfully,

David Plant

Chair

Ovingdean Residents and Preservation Society (ORPS)

CC:

- Councillor Bridget Fishleigh, Rottingdean & West Saltdean Ward
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 - Councillor Mark Earthey, Rottingdean & West Saltdean Ward
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- Chris Ward MP, Brighton Kemptown & Peacehaven
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- Tess St. Clair-Ford, Principal, Oxford International College Brighton
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- Simon Tyrrell, Consultant, Oxford International College
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- Geri Silverstone, Communications, Oxford International College,
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Concerns raised by Ovingdean residents:

1. **Location of floodlit Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)** directly behind residential properties in Ainsworth Avenue and Ainsworth Close. The preference would be if it remained at its current location or moved slightly further away from the existing buildings on the Longhill Road line where there are no residential properties.
 2. **Three accommodation blocks** located directly behind Beacon Court, which will include removal of trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's).
 3. **400 additional students**
 4. **Huge Increase in traffic** by staff, cars, students/parents, deliveries and coaches parking outside residential properties. Our conservation area is under tremendous stress, we are a farming village with narrow roads not intended for this increase in traffic.
 5. **Noise and light pollution**
 6. **Impact by construction works** within an archaeological and historical area and the conservation plan.
 7. **Mental impact** on our villagers, many of whom are elderly.
 8. **Environmental effects** on our resident bats, owls, badgers and other wildlife populations that inhabit the village, and particularly the college grounds.
 9. **Potential devaluation** of properties in Ovingdean.
 10. **Flooding** We already have in place a flood risk assessment for Ovingdean mainly affecting The Grange and Church Yard. In extreme weather conditions the extra run off from the all-weather pitch/MUGA would only exacerbate the problems at the north end of Greenways and possibly the bottom end of Ainsworth Avenue. It cannot be guaranteed that there will be no escape of material/subbase into the immediate neighbourhood around the
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Greenways/Ainsworth Avenue including farmland with livestock and/or crops.

In essence, the decision is up to the individual households now that the formal planning application has been submitted but please consider the **impact on the whole village**, not just those residents who live near to OIC. The expansion will ultimately have an impact on all of us. This development is a business venture to maximise the financial gain for the landlord. In Longhill Road, Ainsworth Avenue and Greenways, we already regularly encounter a steady stream of fast-food deliveries, taxis, coaches parked inconsiderately as no access to college until the appointed time, Beryl bikes left on verges/pavements/allotments, unsociable noise/activities, construction traffic/street parking by site operatives, and construction works outside of the permitted working hours.

Any communication with OIC is extremely difficult with an apparent disregard towards the Ovingdean residents and very little interaction with our village community. They confess to being part of our community, but they are rarely seen in the village, at the village hall and/or village functions/church. A courteous greeting by staff and students when out in our village is extremely rare.

Various residents have asked our councillor for support, we still await a response.

Try to be specific in your objection/comment i.e. the MUGA location/usage, noise, expansion plans, the rights of local people to quiet enjoyment of their homes and/or failure to comply to the Equality Act 2010, which places a legal duty on the Council to give proper regard to their needs (see above) etc. rather than every item listed. Please, please support our village and residents by limiting this expansion plan by objecting to BHCC.
