Argles James

From: Planning Support
Subject: FW: Comment Received from Public Access

Application Reference No. : HGY/2016/0109
Site Address: Aquarius Archery Club Fortis Green Reservoir Southern Road London N2 9LN
Comments by: Philip Eliades
From:
28
Lauradale Road

East Finchley
London
N2 9LU
Submission: Objection
Comments:
Dear Sirs,

RE: PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT AQUARIUS ARCHERY CLUB, FORTIS GREEN RESERVOIR, SOUTHERN ROAD, LONDON, N2 9LN (LPA Ref: HGY/2016/0109 & HGY/2016/0111)

I am the owner of 28 Lauradale Road, immediately to the north of this application site and I would like to object to the above planning applications by Aquarius Archery Club at Fortis Green Reservoir, Southern Road, N2 9LN.

I am supportive of the archery club being located at Fortis Green Reservoir and welcome the opportunity to engage with the club on providing an appropriately designed and sited clubhouse. However, local residents have significant concerns regarding the current proposals including the approach taken to the planning applications, the proposed design and scale of the clubhouse building and proposed operation.

Existing Clubhouse and the Proposals

Planning permission was granted for the ¿erection of a temporary replacement clubhouse¿ (LPA Ref: HGY/2013/1521) on 5th November 2013.

Condition 1 granted planning permission for a limited period expiring on 11th October 2015 after which the building should be removed and the land reinstated. The temporary building remains in situ and notwithstanding that a programme for submission of the current applications was agreed with the LPA, the proposals are in breach of condition 1 and the building should be removed until a satisfactory proposal for a new permanent clubhouse is submitted and approved by the Council.

The reason for implementing condition 1 was given as ¿The building because of its design, size, materials and or siting, is not considered suitable for permanent retention.¿

The Officers Delegated Report also acknowledged the exceptional circumstances for the current building after the original clubhouse burnt down in April 2012 and it made clear that the existing pre-fabricated/sectional temporary building was accepted as a replacement and interim measure until sufficient funds were raised through fundraising activities and charitable grants to provide a permanent clubhouse facility.

Instead of undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the site and the needs of the Club, the current applications seek to retain the temporary clubhouse building on a permanent basis with minor alterations and re-cladding of the building, provision of a south facing pavilion and other works. The design, size, materials and or siting of the building have not therefore been comprehensively reconsidered particularly given the site¿s ¿Significant Open Land ¿(SLOL) and as a ¿Site of Important Nature Conservation¿

(SINC) Borough Grade II designations and in our view, the applicants have not demonstrated why the existing building should be permanently retained at this location.

Approach to the planning applications:

The 2013 permission was granted on a temporary basis to enable proposals for a permanent; more acceptably designed, sited and scaled building to be erected on the site.

The supporting Planning Statement for the current application details in the pre-application section that Officers stressed that engagement with the archery club neighbours was key to resolving the design issues with the previous proposals. However, during the 2 year period of the temporary permission, no significant consultation has been undertaken by the applicants with neighbours and local groups on proposals for an alternative permanent clubhouse facility.

Pre-application consultation has instead been initiated following the expiry of the temporary permission as a reactive response to potential enforcement proceedings rather than as meaningful engagement on a more appropriate proposal for the site. Engagement with local residents in November and December 2015 [post expiry of the temporary permission] consisted of presentations of only one option for the site consisting of retaining the existing building, re-cladding and undertaking minor alterations rather than outlining a series of options which could address residents¿ concerns. It is understood that the principal rationale for retaining the existing building is viability however no evidence of this is presented in the application submission and economic considerations need to be weighed against harm to the SLOL and residential amenity.

The applicant has secured letters of support from existing members and local sporting bodies but Officers should note that the majority of supporters are not local residents immediately affected by the proposals. Members are only visitors to the site whereas the clubhouse building is a permanent structure and the associated club and social activities that will thereafter occur in its location will have a long term impact on the amenities of Lauradale residents and their views to, and across the SLOL.

Design, size, materials and siting of the building

The site¿s SLOL designation is an important consideration.

The proposals are considered contrary to Saved UDP Policy OS3 as the proposed building is not small in scale; it will detract from the site¿s open nature and character, particularly when viewed from the gardens of residential properties on Lauradale Road; and as a result it will have a detrimental impact on the setting and quality of the SLOL.

The supporting Planning Statement identifies that a building accommodating a recreational use had existed at this location since 1933 however no acknowledgement is made of the fact that the original building was significantly smaller than the temporary and currently proposed building and that its timber-framed ¿Victorian¿ style clubhouse was low level and in keeping with its suburban location.

The treated volume of the original clubhouse building was 325 cubic sqm whilst the treated volume of the proposed building is 502 sqm with substantial enhanced accommodation including meeting rooms and WC¿s that were not provided in the original.

The applicant has measured different elements when comparing the footprint areas. The open area below the external awning to the original clubhouse is incorrectly included in the footprint measurement and the footprint of the original clubhouse was 100 sqm compared to 139 sqm for the temporary and proposed building.

Whilst the addition of overcladding improves the existing utilitarian appearance of the temporary clubhouse it also adds to the scale, bulk and massing of the building. The bulk and scale of the proposed building is also increased with the addition of the timber clad canopy supported by metal support columns along the southern elevation and as shown on views from the east and south, it also increases the proximity of the clubhouse to the attractive pagoda structure which houses electrical intake into the site and the wider, open setting of the covered reservoir to the south of the building forming the SLOL.

Currently there are additional storage containers on site used by the club and these further contribute to the built up areas on the SLOL. No details are provided in the application submission on whether these will be retained or removed as part of the current proposals.

Access and Parking

No details are provided of proposed car and cycle parking. This is considered important as no details are provided of existing club membership and it is considered the new clubhouse with the proposed extended opening hours could intensify use of the site resulting in the loss of amenity to residents on Lauradale Road from noise and disturbance from cars parking and manoeuvring on site.
Additionally we understand that the alternative access road from the east has been temporarily closed due to works at the depot site and that vehicles can currently only access from the site from the western access off Greenfield Drive. Members are parking alongside the access road instead of in the car park and parked cars are obstructing access by Thames Water maintenance vehicles who now have to drive up the grassed verge nearest to the southern boundary of Lauradale Road properties to get past parked cars and the existing clubhouse. More significantly emergency access by fire vehicles and ambulances to the eastern section of the site is also obstructed by informal parking along the access road.
A building of a similar scale to the original clubhouse could retain the existing access arrangements whilst reducing the proximity of the building to Lauradale Road residents.
Operation
The proposals seek to extend existing hours of operation permitted under HGY/2013/1521 to between 08.00 hours and 23.00 hours Mondays to Saturdays and 09.00 hours to 23.00 hours on Sunday and Public Holidays. This represents an additional hour Monday to Saturdays and up 5 extra hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays to that permitted under the temporary permission.
The applicant argues that the proposed extension of hours would not intensify the use of the clubhouse but will simply allow the Club to offer a clubhouse ¿fit for purpose¿ that can accommodated their operational needs. Local residents disagree and contend that there will be a loss of amenities due to noise and disturbance from parking and manoeuvring cars and visitors to and from the clubhouse. Additionally, we understand that the applicant is separately applying for a Premises License and this will likely exacerbate noise and disturbance and harm to residential amenities. This approach is disingenuous and indicates the disregard the Club has for local residential impact. Local residents in Lauradale Road have no objection to wider use of the club house ¿ just not in this location as it is these residents who will be impacted by late night activities and associated noise (car doors closing, people leaving the premises etc). By undertaking a proper site analysis there may well be a more appropriate location to site the building away from existing residential properties, closer to the car park and in an area of the site that enables the potential for longer operational hours as the Club would like. Such a location may be on land facing Woodside Avenue. However this analysis has not been undertaken but rather there is a submission post the expiry of the temporary permission; little engagement with the affected resident¿s and then a dual approach to creep of the operational hours again with little consideration of the impact on local residents. This is not a neighbourly way to behave.
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCS) Haringey Local Plan: Strategic Policies policy SP13 (Open Space and Biodiversity) states (amongst others) that all development shall protect and improve sites of biodiversity and nature conservation including private gardens through the protection, enhancement and creation of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCS) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).
It is considered that the proposals for permanent retention of the existing clubhouse (with some alteration) should be supported by a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and biodiversity assessment to demonstrate how the proposals protect and enhance the SINC - no Phase1 Habitat survey or biodiversity assessment has been undertaken or proposed by condition at the pre-commencement stage. The LPA cannot therefore properly assess and consider if the development will protect and improve biodiversity and nature conversation on the site. This is a fundamental failing of the application submission.
Conclusions:
It is concluded that the proposals do not address the Council¿s reasons for only granting temporary permission for the existing clubhouse building in 2013 and that no evidence or comprehensive site assessment has been provided to support its permanent retention.
It is our view that the scale and design of any new building should be similar to the original clubhouse building as this is considered more appropriate to the open character and setting of its surrounding context.

Taking into consideration the above concerns, it is recommended that the current applications are refused and an application prepared for a new building, similar in scale and massing to the original, following proper public consultation with the community.
I would like to be kept informed of Officers consideration of the applications and to receive any notification of any proposed Planning Committee dates for determination.

Yours sincerely

Philip Eliades