

18 Broadlands Road (Management) Limited

Objection to HGY/2023/0338 Mallinson Sports Centre

I write on behalf of 18 Broadlands Road (Management) Limited, the freeholders of Broadlands Lodge, London N6 4AW, as representative of the owners and occupiers of the seventeen flats in this small block, to object to the application for proposed works to the Mallinson Sports Centre. This application, of the nine submitted, concerns us most closely.

Preliminary observations:

We live in close proximity to the Mallinson Sports Centre and its playing fields, as well as the Highgate School pre-prep school opposite it in Bishopswood Road. The twice daily arrival and departure of cars bringing children to and from school and sports activities has been a problem for us, not least because of the poor driving etiquette of some parents. It is often difficult to drive into and out of Broadlands Lodge safely because parents' cars are parked too closely to our entrance and exit, and the street is often clogged with cars whose drivers are looking for a place to park. While we understand the rationale behind the designation of Bishopswood Road by the Mallinson Centre and the pre-prep school as a school street, this imposes a limitation on the free flow of traffic for several hours each day which has increased the congestion on Broadlands Road and Denewood Road. It has also resulted in a deterioration in the air quality for those residing in the near neighbouring streets, many of whom are elderly. Recently the refuse collectors were unable to stop in front of Broadlands Lodge to collect Our communal rubbish bins because of the cars parked outside. These cars do not belong to residents, virtually all of whom have onsite garages, or access to places in the lot in front of the building.

Haringey has recently granted planning permission for the development of 13 luxury flats on the former Newstead Nursing Home site in Denewood Road, as well as for a newbuild house in the garden behind 12 Broadlands Road and for extensive works of renovation to 15 Broadlands Road. Work has now just commenced on 12 Broadlands Road and 15 Broadlands Road, though not on Newstead; but when it does the two will cause considerable traffic disruption and congestion in Broadlands Road and Denewood Road. If the Mallinson project is superadded the result will be gridlock, noise, and a serious deterioration in air quality, a serious health and safety issue for the neighbouring residents.

HGY/2023/0338

The proposed Mallinson Sports Centre Building

Construction of this greatly enlarged building fronting both Broadlands Road and Bishopswood Road will include a new sports hall and extra classrooms. The existing

fives courts facing Broadlands Road are at present a low, open structure with a glazed roof. It is to be demolished and replaced by a two-storey block including classrooms on the upper storey. This part of the new building will face Broadlands Road and will give the corner of Broadlands Road and Bishopswood Road an overbearing and industrial appearance at variance with the domestic villa aspect of most of Broadlands Road. There is also to be external lighting around the building which will create a light nuisance in what is now undisturbed darkness at night.

The proposed sports field and external sunken oval sports pitch/amphitheatre

These will be sited on what are now the playing fields beside the Mallinson Centre. Doubtless this new spectator space will attract crowds resulting in noise, increased traffic (there is no parking provision and public transport connections are not adequate) and new lighting, although no provision for lighting is found in the external lighting study. It is unclear from the application what the hours of operation of the new amphitheatre would be, and whether it will be used on weekends. From the limited details provided it is clear that it would negatively impact the near and not so near neighbours.

The two new basements, and their effect on local hydrology

Two new basements are to be constructed under “the large majority of the footprint” of the proposed Mallinson Sports Centre; that under the fives courts will be 4 metres deep, that under the new sports hall 5.5 metres deep.

It is well known that there are risks inherent in such excavation, especially in close proximity to existing buildings. Although the Basement Impact Assessment submitted states that the presence of groundwater in the area is minimal and the potential impacts on groundwater as a result of the development would be “negligible,” this claim is based on very limited borehole evidence collected only once over a twenty-four hour period. It completely ignores the well-known studies of the area by Alan Baxter and by Haycock Environmental Consultants, undertaken in the context of planning applications for projects in Grange Road and Broadlands Road. Their investigations have shown that there are significant groundwater flows fairly close to the surface in the area, discharged from springs on high open ground nearby, and associated with the open pools of Hampstead and Highgate. There has been groundwater flooding in the basements of 21, 23 and 25 Broadlands Road which have required sumps and pumps to keep the basements dry. It is likely that other houses on the east side of Broadlands Road have been similarly affected.

Every schoolboy who has attended Highgate School can attest to the fact that the playing field by the Mallinson Centre becomes sodden in winter because there is an active spring below. The excavation of an amphitheatre and external sunken sports pitch here could well result in its becoming permanently filled with water.

This feature could also attract surface water, an existing problem in Broadlands Road which slopes from the east at North Hill west to Denewood Road. During the torrential

downpour in July 2021 the basement of Broadlands Lodge was flooded. All the sewers in Broadlands Road were filled to overflowing, and clogged with debris. Haringey on being notified of this by us rose to the occasion and had them cleared before any damage occurred. However such weather phenomena are likely to recur because of global warming and any additional problems with the sewerage system could be very damaging.

We note that Thames Water, in its comments on this application have stated that the proposed development is located within 15 metres of a strategic sewer, and concludes that there is potential for damage to the subsurface sewerage infrastructure. The applicants have not shown any evidence that they have considered this possibility, which could create serious flooding in neighbouring low-lying properties.

We therefore consider it would be premature and dangerous to grant planning permission in respect of the Mallinson Sports Centre application, which unless suitable precautions are in place could cause serious damage and nuisance to Highgate School's neighbours, as well as resulting in inappropriate overdevelopment in this part of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Antony Polonsky,
Management Committee,
Broadlands Lodge