

HIGHGATE CLTC – BROOKSIDE RENOVATION

Planning Statement

August 2023

1.0 Introduction and Scope of Statement

1. This document accompanies an outline planning application by Highgate Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club (HCLTC) to renovate an existing part of the tennis club called Brookside. In summary the proposals involve replacing the surface of 3 existing courts and slightly extending them, providing floodlighting and demolishing and replacing the clubhouse building in a different location.
2. A significant amount of information is submitted with this application to describe the proposals reflecting detailed discussions with tennis court and floodlighting contractors and specifications from them. If outline permission is granted, the Club would then envisage entering into contracts to procure these and build the clubhouse enabling the provision of the necessary information to discharge the reserved matters.
3. Section 2 of this document describes the relevant aspects of the Club and Section 3 explains the proposals in more detail by reference to the drawings. Section 4 describes the proposed design of the clubhouse and Section 5 sets out the need for and benefits of the proposal. Section 6 assesses the proposals against the relevant planning policy situation applicable to the proposals and other material considerations. Conclusions are summarized in Section 6.
4. The proposals were the subject of a request for pre application advice in October 2021 and where applicable, reference is made to the advice received in response in January 2022 which was supportive of the principle of the proposals.
5. The following drawings show the current site and proposals.
 - Brookside Site Location Plan – ref TQRQM23230155408000
 - Drawing A201: Existing Site Pictures (taken on 13/08/23).
 - Drawing A100 Rev P01: Existing Site Plan
 - Drawing P100 Rev P01: Proposed Site Plan
 - Drawing P 200 Rev P01: Proposed Clubhouse Layout and Elevations
6. In addition to this Planning Statement, the application is also accompanied by:
 - Report and arboricultural impact assessment and accompanying drawings – updated 8 August 2023 (ref 20/130/4)
 - Ecological Assessment by Ecology Solutions – October 2021
 - Transport Statement – May 2023
 - Floodlighting information from PPG: Brookside Tennis Club, Highgate (Project code LSC10899/1 – 01-06-2023) and Drawing 3562 – Proposed Elevation Drawing of Lighting Columns with Luminaires.

2.0 The Tennis Club

7. Highgate C< Club is a cricket and tennis club. The proposals in this application relate to tennis and the Brookside site which comprises three courts and a dilapidated clubhouse and storage shed. The courts on this site are shale in construction and are as a result only usable for part of the year (late March to early November in a typical year). In addition, heavy rain can render the courts unplayable frequently during the playing season.
8. Highgate C< Club has approximately 400 adult tennis members, 350 junior tennis members and about 400 cricket members, both junior and senior. It has the use of 12 tennis courts, 9 of these courts are located to the south and southeast of the main clubhouse and provide year-round facilities with all-weather surfaces and floodlights, 5 of these are purely for use by HCLTC while 4 are used by HCLTC under a Shared User agreement with Highgate Wood School who own these courts which are also used as a playground and for PE use. The 3 courts at Brookside (and the Brookside clubhouse) are some distance to the north of the main clubhouse and physically separated from it by cricket grounds. Brookside LTC was a separate tennis club until it lost members and merged with HCLTC in 2001. HCLTC occupies both Brookside and the physically detached cricket field, tennis courts and pavilion as a beneficiary club of The Shepherds Cot Trust (SCT), the owner of the freehold of the land.
9. The Club has expanded over the years with the addition of Brookside and the use of the 'school courts' but, other than the member's gym and toilets, both cricket and tennis are effectively still only served by the modest sized main clubhouse with a bar and social area on the ground floor and what are effectively one home and one away men's cricket changing rooms and a small ladies changing room on the first floor.
10. Due to an increase in its membership, the general dilapidation of the Brookside site and the need to provide better facilities, HCLTC are proposing to install an all-weather surface and new clubhouse on this site and it is these works that are the subject of this application. It is envisaged that the court surface will be artificial clay which is a different surface from the other HCLTC tarmac courts, is popular with older players as the strain on joints is less, is an excellent surface for junior coaching and is suitable for competitive matches and tournaments. This has been supported by members repeatedly reporting in feedback surveys stating they want more and better court surfaces.
11. To enable use throughout the day and year HCLTC wishes to install floodlights on the three courts. These lights will use latest LED technology and would be more environmentally friendly than some of the other floodlights currently in use throughout the site. We are seeking consent to use these lights until 10pm in common with the floodlights on the rest of the Shepherds Cot site (excluding the two courts nearest the main Highgate clubhouse which can be used until 11pm). The floodlighting is key to the viability of the investment in the new clubhouse and courts as without floodlights there can be no use after dusk in the winter with no junior after school clubs and no availability for members in the evenings for much of the year which are a time of peak demand.
12. The Brookside clubhouse is a collection of three different buildings which were put up at different times. They comprise an equipment store, a main recreational area used as a gym for club members and toilet / changing area. These buildings are at the end of their life with the roof in particular causing a real problem with constant leaking and patch up repairs. The

planning application will seek the replacement of this building with one building and an increase in size to help accommodate the needs of what is already a larger club membership as a result of the use of the 'school courts' and which should grow further with this proposal.

13. Due to the proximity of a large oak tree (which is the subject of a TPO and which the Club wants to retain) to the existing clubhouse the proposed new building will be to the south eastern side of the site with the remaining area being landscaped with footpath access to the tennis courts. Outdoor seating and a viewing area are envisaged.
14. The Club is in discussion with the neighbouring Georgians Tennis Club to also take into its control one of their existing courts, Georgians lies to the west of the existing Brookside site and to the north of the roadway and parking area. The siting of the Clubhouse and outdoor seating/ viewing area would help to integrate an additional court with the Club.
15. The club runs team matches, social play, ladders and various internal and external tournaments. It caters for players at all levels. It also has a thriving junior section and coaching program. In the school holidays the club runs very popular tennis camps in addition to year- round high performance and junior development coaching.
16. The club has 5 full time tennis coaches in addition to a number of coaching assistants.
17. Highgate prides itself on its inclusivity initiatives and activities, it was the Middlesex Disabilities Provider of the year in 2017 in the British Tennis awards and with the encouragement of the LTA at both national and county level, it is now advising other clubs on how to make their clubs more inclusive. The club runs a range of youth, adult, inclusive and disability tennis activities (including wheelchair, Blind/VI, SEN tennis, see <https://highgate-tennis.co.uk/inclusive-tennis/>) and has disabled tennis members. Redevelopment of the Brookside site would particularly assist wheelchair tennis because, in contrast to the Club's main courts it offers the opportunity to have level access
18. All these activities impose significant demands on the courts and the Club cannot currently meet the demand for courts at the most popular times. The proposals set out below are to address this pressure.

3.0 The Brookside Proposals

19. The proposal is to replace the existing 3 shale courts with 3 artificial clay courts to meet Lawn Tennis Association size specifications, enabling them to be used for LTA approved tournaments and providing adequate run off areas for team and match play.
20. The existing 3 shale courts approximately date from the first half of the last century and do not meet the current minimum International Tennis Federation (ITF) and Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) dimensions. This is because of the need for larger side run off areas, i.e. areas for players to move into to hit the ball from safely. The minimum approved width for a block of 3 courts is now 46.33m (as shown on page 3 of the LTA document at Appendix 1). This is the width of the proposed block of courts in the application drawings. The existing block of 3 courts is only 42.1m wide with the main difference being that the courts are much

closer together than would currently be permitted (1.8m apart compared with the 3.66m minimum standard now).

21. The proposed 46.33m width is the minimum LTA width suitable for recreational play, not the recommended LTA width which, as the guidance shows, would require 48.77m. The Club recognizes that the site cannot provide sufficient space for the recommended width, but it would not invest substantially in a much-improved surface that it wants to use for matches and tournaments without at least meeting the minimum standard width of 46.33m. It is this increase in width that requires extension of approximately 4.2metres into the garden of the adjoining bungalow.
22. The resurfacing of the courts will involve an increase in level of approximately 0.3m. As with the existing surface, the new artificial clay surface will be permeable, and it is envisaged that drainage will rely on infiltration.
23. As shown on Drawing P100 the courts would also be lengthened to meet LTA minimum standards, extending them into the existing Brookside grounds.
24. The intention is to floodlight all 3 courts as shown on Drawing P100 and in more detail in the accompanying floodlighting information. The courts would be surrounded by fencing of a similar type and size to the existing courts, although on the northern boundary it is envisaged that additional higher netting may be added to protect players from cricket balls from the neighbouring North Middlesex Cricket Club.
25. The extension of the courts southwards would mean that, even if the clubhouse was to be retained in its current position, a part of it would need to be demolished to accommodate the courts. Due to this, the poor physical condition of the building and the need for a much more attractive and flexible clubhouse facility, the proposal is to demolish the clubhouse and neighbouring storage shed and erect a new building to include and upgrade the members' gym, toilet and changing facilities to the east of the mature oak, with the clearing of the building providing for an outside seating and watching area for the courts.
26. The timing of construction of the new clubhouse may be dependent on the club's financial position as the whole scheme is a very substantial cost to a member run sports club. Thus, it may be that the courts are developed first, accompanied by demolition of a small element of the clubhouse, with full demolition and the new clubhouse following at a later time.
27. It is envisaged that subject to the grant of permission the works to the courts will be carried out before the 2024 summer season and new clubhouse will be completed as soon as possible after that.
28. To ensure that the new clubhouse / gym supports the needs of the membership and coaching team going forward the club is seeking to increase the footprint of buildings on the site from 110 sqm (in the existing clubhouse and storage shed) to 150sqm. This would enable the replacement and improvement of the gym area and toilet/ changing facilities that already exist and the provision of multi-purpose space which does not exist in either of the 2 existing clubhouses at present, for tennis or cricket oriented strength and conditioning classes to support and complement the junior coaching programmes and for members of all

ages, committee meeting space and indoor areas to watch tennis and shelter from the weather. It would serve what is currently a growing large membership and support the increased use resulting from the year round, day and evening, use of the new Brookside courts, including the additional court adjacent to the site.

29. Because of the shale surface, the existing courts are only usable for part of the year (typically late March to early November) and are put out of action for some time after heavy rain even during the summer months. This, coupled with the absence of floodlights, severely curtails the playing hours they offer. Calculations in Appendix 2 show that the 3 new artificial clay surfaced courts could offer over 80% more available court hours of tennis per year than the current Brookside courts (14,235 hours compared with 7,796 hours). In practice, the % increase is likely to be slightly greater as the calculation makes no allowance for time lost on the existing shale courts resulting from the after effects of heavy rain – this would not be an issue with artificial clay. The calculation also assumes mid-March to mid-November operation of the shale courts which errs on the optimistic side with actual usability at the beginning and end of the period being weather dependent.
30. The playing benefits of the scheme are considerable in terms of a much higher quality playing surface, much more playing time including year-round and evenings, courts of a standard to meet requirements for matches and tournaments and to provide much enhanced inclusive tennis activities.

4.0 The Design of the new Clubhouse & Gym

31. The proposed design for the new Clubhouse & Gym is sensitive to its location with its scale and geometry and will be a significant improvement on the somewhat dilapidated utilitarian buildings on site at present.
32. Contemporary slatted timber rainscreen has been selected for the external cladding to be sympathetic to the buildings within the Shepherd's COT but at the same time to provide a modern and sleek feel to the site.
33. Large glass openings will maximise the use of natural daylight coming into the building, reducing demand for electric lighting.
34. The new Clubhouse & Gym building will be designed and insulated to current standards. The glazing of the windows and doors will be made of aluminium framing, anodised finished, with double glazed units with low emissivity/sun control coating to comply with the required minimum U-values by the Building regulations.
35. An internal stair would lead to a multi-purpose top terrace which would also provide spectators view of the courts particularly for LTA matches and competitions.
36. No significant changes are foreseen in terms of access to the Brookside side. Access for pedestrians and cyclists will be via the network of footpaths and roadways that serve the wider Shepherds Cot Trust area and car access to the existing car parking areas will be

from the existing access off Park Road that already serves several of the sports clubs in Shepherds Cot. The existing waste arrangements will be retained with the bins and recycling stored outside the property.

5.0 Planning Issues

37. The relevant elements of the Development Plan comprise the 2021 London Plan, Haringey's Strategic Policies adopted in 2013 with alterations adopted in July 2017 and Haringey's Development Management DPD adopted in July 2017. The NPPF sets the national policy context.
38. On the Council's Planning Policies Map the site is shown as part of an area of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), part of a Grade 1 Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and part of a Critical Drainage Area. In addition to these policy designations, there are several mature trees the subject of a 1978 TPO on or adjacent to the site.
39. Policy G3 of the London Plan identifies that MOL is afforded the same status and level of protection as Green Belt and that boroughs should work with partners to enhance the quality and range of uses of MOL. As the NPPF makes clear (para 145), outdoor sport and recreation are encouraged in MOL and LPAs should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of MOL. Similarly, Haringey's Development Management DPD supports the provision and improvement of outdoor leisure facilities in Open Space and Green Grid (Policy DM20).
40. More generally, planning policy at all levels supports the provision and enhancement of outdoor sports and leisure facilities. The NPPF (paras 92 and 93) seeks that planning decisions should enable and support healthy lifestyles through provision of accessible sports facilities and states specifically that planning decisions should ensure that established facilities are able to develop and modernize.
41. London Plan Policy S5 advises that development proposals for sports and recreation facilities should increase or enhance the provision of facilities in accessible locations. It also supports the provision of sports lighting within reasonable hours where there is an identified need for sports facilities and lighting is required to increase their potential use, unless the lighting gives rise to demonstrable harm to the local community or biodiversity. Policy SP15 of the Local Plan supports the Sustainable Community Strategy priority of providing even better leisure opportunities by supporting leisure activities.
42. In relation to the proposed redeveloped pavilion, the NPPF recognizes in para 149(b) that the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport is not inappropriate in the Green Belt and therefore, by extension, this advice applies in MOL.
43. London Plan Policy G6 deals with SINC's and advises that development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and aim to achieve biodiversity gain. This should be informed by the best available ecological information and addressed from the start of the development process. Local Plan Policy SP13 indicates that all development should protect and improve sites of biodiversity and nature conservation including through the protection

and enhancement of SINCs and contribution to wildlife and ecological habitats where possible including green and brown roofs, rainwater harvesting, green walls, bird and bat nesting/ roosting opportunities. Policy DM19 of the Development Management DPD supports this by advising that development on SINCs should protect and enhance the nature conservation value of the site.

44. Policy DM26 of the Development Management DPD requires that all proposals for new development within a Critical Drainage Area incorporate measures to reduce the overall level of flood risk in the CDA.
45. The proposals are considered below in the light of these policies which relate to the principle of the proposal and the site-specific designations.
46. Outdoor sports and recreation are encouraged in MOL and the proposals involve a continuation of the existing use for those purposes. Because they will be usable year-round and later into the evening for much of the year, they will allow a greater use for these purposes with the incremental benefits to physical and mental health of our membership and other users of the site. The proposal will enhance and modernize an existing sporting facility and are supported by the NPPF (paras 92 and 93), London Plan (Policy S5) and the Local Plan (Policy SP15). The proposals will not affect the existing bungalow and residential use but will take a strip of land from the garden to extend the courts to achieve minimum Lawn Tennis Association standards given the space constraints on the existing site. Given the greater support in policy for sport and recreation use in MOL than residential use, it is not considered that this should raise any policy concerns.
47. Most of the other tennis courts on the wider Shepherds Cot Trust area which forms part of the MOL are already floodlit and again floodlighting of the resurfaced courts will allow a greater use of the courts for outdoor sport and recreation, consistent with policy (see e.g. London Plan Policy S5 specifically).
48. The new Clubhouse & Gym will replace an existing old somewhat dilapidated building and provide a much more attractive, useable, modern and energy efficient building serving the same ancillary to sport and recreation purpose as the existing clubhouse enhanced for the additional requirements of the Club's growing senior and junior membership. Its relocation will avoid any impact on the mature oak to the south of the existing courts. Again, this is supported by National and Development Plan policies to modernize and enhance sporting facilities.
49. The Club has taken arboricultural advice to ensure that there is no impact on protected trees, that the works involved in installing a new surface will not adversely affect those trees and that the trees would not cause problems for the new courts.
50. The Report by Simon Pryce Arboriculture which accompanies the application considers the impact of the new courts, the floodlights and the new clubhouse and, subject to various measures and considerations set out in the Report does not identify any adverse impact on protected trees. Some unprotected trees have been removed from the site and others will be removed when the proposals are implemented and, as described in the Simon Pryce Report and shown on the accompanying plans, the Club (in agreement with SCT) is

committed to new planting in the vicinity. The Club is happy to discuss these planting proposals further if necessary and envisage the matter can be dealt with by planning condition. It is also considered that the details of the protection of the existing trees during construction and thereafter can be dealt with by planning condition.

51. One of the advantages of the proposed artificial clay surface over the existing shale courts is that they will require minimal maintenance. While this is an advantage to the Club, it also means there will be much less requirement for watering of the courts. In dry weather, the shale courts need watering constantly to maintain a reasonable playing surface i.e. between matches, whereas artificial clay does not require significant watering. The proposal will therefore substantially reduce the demand for water in accord with Policy SP5 of the Haringey Local Plan: Strategic Policies.
52. Both the existing and proposed court surfaces are permeable. The existing courts are believed to rely on drainage by infiltration and it is anticipated that the new courts are likely to result in the same. Therefore, there would be no increase or change in surface water run off resulting from precipitation.
53. The existing clubhouse and shed buildings are predominantly drained via infiltration, with one area of roof draining to a surface water drain. It is envisaged that the new clubhouse will rely only on soakaways therefore complying with DPD Policy DM25. The proposed external hard surface areas will all be permeable.
54. Because the site is located in a Grade 1 SINC as designated in the Haringey Local Plan, the Club has also sought advice from an ecological consultant and Ecology Solutions (ES) has carried out an assessment based on an extended Phase 1 survey methodology as recommended by Natural England, together with subsequent bat surveys. Their report is submitted with this pre-application inquiry. Their overall conclusion is to recommend several mitigation and avoidance measures but that there are no identified insurmountable constraints to the proposals.
55. Further discussions have taken place between ES and PPG to ensure that the floodlighting scheme complies with the ES recommendations and this is confirmed by ES in an email from ES contained at Appendix 3. Consistent with ES recommendations, the Club is also prepared to put one or more bat boxes on trees on the site or in the vicinity and envisage that this can be addressed by a planning condition.
56. A Transport Statement accompanies this application. It demonstrates that, when compared with the existing courts, the new floodlit all weather surface will attract a very low level of additional car traffic during the winter and dark evenings which are the quieter periods for the whole Shepherds Cot area because cricket is not taking place. During the busier periods of the summer months during daylight there would be no additional car trips. There is ample car parking to accommodate demand during the quieter periods.
57. Cycle parking would be provided in line with TfL London Cycle Design standards. Refuse and recycling facilities would remain unchanged from the existing tennis facility.

6.0 Conclusions

58. The proposals will substantially improve and modernize an existing sports use, replacing outdated tennis courts which are only useable for a part of the year and which no longer meet the governing body's space standards with a new allweather surface extended to meet these space standards. The combination of the improved surface and the addition of floodlighting will lead to a playable hours capacity of over 180% of the current courts with particular benefits in the winter and evenings.
59. The redevelopment of the Clubhouse/gym and storage shed will replace dilapidated, unattractive and energy inefficient buildings with an attractive building designed and insulated to current standards. This will provide much more user friendly space both for the members gym and other Clubhouse activities.
60. The principle of the proposals is entirely in accord with policy at both national and Development Plan level with those policies actively encouraging both the provision of sports facilities and the development and modernization of established facilities, including the provision of floodlighting. Such facilities are specifically encouraged in MOL.
61. All trees that are the subject of TPOs on or adjoining the site will be protected with the new courts' construction being specifically designed to protect the roots of those trees. New trees are proposed to be planted nearby.
62. An ecological report shows there would be no significant adverse effects and following bat surveys the floodlighting proposals have been developed in liaison with Ecology Solutions to ensure that there would be no deleterious impacts on bats.
63. The proposed new court surface will result in a very significant reduction in water use in comparison with the existing courts which require extensive watering in periods of dry weather.
64. The drainage of the building to soakaways, the use of permeable hard surfacing and the proposed reliance on infiltration for court drainage will all comply with policy on water use and drainage.
65. Matters such as tree protection measures, additional tree planting, bat boxes, construction method statement and drainage details can be dealt with by planning condition.
66. In summary, it is considered that the proposals will meet the requirements of planning policy, will provide very substantial benefits in the provision of enhanced sports facilities and will have no unacceptable site specific impacts .