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Our Ref: 2024_2
Application Ref: HGY/2026/0579

Addendum to planning application ref: HGY/2026/0579 for Erection of all-weather canopies over 3 no. padel courts (proposed) and installation of 2no. pickleball courts (retrospective) at the Georgians Tennis Club, Crouch End Playing Fields, Haringey, London, N8 8JJ.

WEA Planning have prepared this addendum to update the above planning application following the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework on the 17th August 2026. It should be read alongside the submission documents and essentially updates the new National Policy framework. It also cites a recent MOL decision for covered padel courts that is of direct relevance.

NPPF (2026)

The below policies relate to Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.

National Decision-Making Policy (NDMP) GB7 outlines types of development in the Green Belt that are not inappropriate.

“f. Certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are:

- iv. *The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments.”*

This places less significance on the impact of openness, requiring that impact on the openness is *minimised*. The superseded NPPF (2024) Paragraph 154 b stated that development was not inappropriate for *“the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;”*

Minimising the impact on the Green Belt and *preserving* openness are very different tests.

Applying the wording of the NPPF (2026) NDMP GB7 to the proposed development, and the supporting Planning Statement and Visual Impact Assessment, it should be considered that the siting of the coverings, permeable materials and open sides of the proposed coverings all minimise and mitigate any impact on the openness of the MOL.

There is no change to the weight given to protecting Green Belt land and Very Special Circumstances. NDMP GB6 states that inappropriate development in the Green Belt would need Very Special Circumstances to be approved. *“Such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In making this assessment, substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness.”*

Paragraph 153 of the superseded NPPF (2024) *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness⁵⁵. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

Decisions on covered padel since the adoption of the NPPF (2026):

There have been a small number of applications for coverings in MOL or Green Belt determined since the 17th August 2026. In LB Hounslow an application for ‘Erection of canopy encompassing three padel courts and the installation of two outdoor padel courts. Erection of two single storey shipping containers comprising of clubhouse food and drink facility and toilet/changing facilities with associated landscaping and cycle parking.’ At Land to the Northern

Extent of Syon Park, Brentford, TW8 8QZ was approved with conditions on 21st August 2026 (ref: P/2025/3478). The site is designated as MOL and a SINCL. It is also within a Grade I registered park and garden and sits in isolation from any other built development.



Aerial image of the site of the approved works at the Northern Extent of Syon Park (ref: P/2025/3478).

The Officer's Report assessed the proposal against the NPPF (2026) NDMPs GB6 and GB7. The report stated that *"The proposal would result in the change of use of the site for outdoor sport and recreation. The structures, including the canopy, court enclosures and ancillary single storey shipping containers relate to the sporting use of the site. The use and the associated facilities would not constitute inappropriate development in accordance the NPPF, provided that the impact on the openness of the MOL is minimised."* The officer considered that *"This location would help minimise any impact on openness. The proposed structures have been sensitively designed and positioned within the site to preserve the openness of the MOL."*

We assert that the same assessment should be made at The Georgians Tennis Club. Given its support for the continued outdoor sport and recreation use of the site, the proposed development is appropriate development in accordance with the NPPF (2026) GB7. The canopies are screened by nearby trees to minimise the impact to open views across the wider playing fields. The canopies have also been designed to appear lightweight and permeable and preserve open views through the structures at eye level.

As established within our planning statement, should the decision maker find that the proposal constitutes inappropriate development (though this would contradict other up-to-date decisions),

there are substantial benefits and Very Special Circumstances that weigh in favour of the development, in accordance with NPPF (2026) GB6.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Tanzini-Hale
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