



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2024/0367
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	Coolhurst Lawn Tennis And Squash Racquets Club, Courtside, Hornsey, London, N8 8EY
Proposal:	The addition of six (6) floodlight columns with 12 low level LED fittings to one existing outdoor tennis court.
Case Officer:	Nathan Keyte
Valid Date:	06/03/2024
Applicant:	Mr Jonathan Stephens
Agent:	Mr Lee West

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. Proposed development

Planning permission is sought to erect six 6m tall floodlight columns, each containing two low level LED fittings, to one tennis court (Court 5). The columns will be positioned to the east and west side of the court, which is a synthetic court, located in the south west section of the site.

The lights will be in operation until 9pm during weekdays, and 8pm during weekends, to match those of existing lighting for adjoining courts 6-8 previously granted under planning permission.

The columns and fittings will be the same type and manufacture as those already installed in adjacent courts, but are stated within the submitted documents to be of a lesser height, smaller size, and lower wattage than the existing lights.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site is Coolhurst Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club located off Coolhurst Road and within Crouch End Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to St Aloysius Planning Fields, which is designated as Significant Local Open Land (SLOL). The tennis club is located to the rear of nos 1-11 Coolhurst Road and to the rear of nos 2-34 Avenue Road. There is an access road to the side of no. 11 Coolhurst Road which provides access to this facility including a club house and associated car parking.

The club has 14 tennis courts and a practice wall. There are a variety of surfaces to the courts – 3 grass courts, 3 artificial courts and 8 hard courts (10 are floodlit), including those to the north and east of Court 5.

A visit was undertaken to the site 09.05.2024.

3. Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

The following is the relevant recent planning history of the site:

HGY/1991/0192 - Installation of eight floodlighting poles, supporting twelve asymmetric floodlights with 1KW M.V. lamps to Courts 4,4,6.(as identified on ordnance survey plan attached to application. – Approved 10-02-92

HGY/1994/1454 - Erection of a new covered tennis court building and new squash court. – Approved 10-01-95

HGY/1996/1333 - Installation of new floodlights to Courts 6, 7 & 8. – Refused (by Planning Sub Committee) and dismissed on appeal 05-11-1997

HGY/2002/1125 - 12 new floodlighting columns to tennis courts 4 & 5 (8m in heights) (6.7m in height) and creation of new proposed mini tennis court with junior practice area. –Refused 22-10-02

HGY/2003/0276 - New floodlighting columns to tennis court 4, new mini-tennis court and junior practice area. Replacement Air Hall to tennis court – Approved 25-03-03

HGY/2008/1439 - Construction of three floodlit porous macadam tennis courts and associated access pathways (additional information supplied in support of application including suggested planning conditions – Approved 10-11-08

HGY/2010/1365 - Demolition of existing single storey shed and erection of sports building with 4 squash courts including modification of clubhouse.- Approved 08-11-10

HGY/2012/1478 – Conversion of existing undercroft space into new accommodation for multi-purpose club facilities. Approved 07/12/2012.

HGY/2014/0352 - Variation of Condition 5 (hours of operation) attached to planning permission HGY/2010/1365 in order to allow use of the squash courts between 07h50 and 22h50 on all days. – Approved 13/08/2014

HGY/2016/3991 – The installation of 7.00m high LED panel fitting floodlighting to three existing outdoor tennis courts. – Approved 19/09/2017.

HGY/2018/2826 – Construction of three outdoor porous asphalt tennis courts with associated fencing. – Approved 05/11/2018.

HGY/2022/0008 – Change of colour of three tennis courts from green to red. – Approved 11/02/2022.

HGY/2024/0018 – Certificate of lawful development (proposed) for the proposed installation of solar panels on the roof of Coolhurst Lawn Tennis & Squash Racquets Club. – Approved 28/02/2024.

3. Consultation and Representations

Internal

LBH Conservation – No response.

LBH Lighting – confirms as acceptable, subject to shields established on the lights to reduce light spillage.

EHS – Noise and Pollution – No response.

LBH Parks and Open Space – No response.

External

CASCH – No response.

CREOS (Crouch End Open Space) – No response.

Natural England – No response.

4. Local representations

The application has been publicised by way of 1 site notice displayed in the vicinity of the site, letters and public notices.

The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 36

Objecting: 5 – though one objection is on behalf of 7 parties.

Supporting: 30

Neutral: 1

Objections material to planning:

- Negative impact on wildlife including bats, robins, moths and frogs.
- Impact on amenity through additional noise and light pollution, including cumulative effects.
- Club membership has expanded without extra provision of car parking.

Objections non-material to planning:

- Comment on past applications and their impacts to trees

5. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of Development
2. Design and heritage
3. Impact on neighbouring amenity.
4. Other matters

Principle of Development

Section 8 of the NPPF relates to promoting healthy and safe communities. Para 96 states decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs.

Para 97 states that planning policy and decisions should, amongst other things, ensure established facilities are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.

London Plan (2021) Policy S5 'Sports and recreation Facilities' supports sports lighting in areas where there is an identified need for sports facilities to increase sports participation opportunities, unless the sports lighting gives rise to demonstrable harm to local community or biodiversity. Sports facilities are also supported by Local Plan Policy SP14 'Health and Well-Being' and SP16 'Community Facilities'.

The proposed development would allow for evening use of the existing court which would in turn provide improved sports facilities for local residents and visitors in line with local and national planning policy and the promotion of active, healthy communities. A letter of support has been submitted with the proposal from LTA, stating the proposal will increase the court usage time by 30% and the existing floodlit courts on the site are generally fully booked throughout the winter period and therefore justifies the need of an additional floodlit court. These public benefits of the proposal should be weighed in the assessment including should any harm associated with other areas of consideration be identified.

Therefore, the proposed development is acceptable in principle, subject to the determining material considerations discussed below.

Design and heritage

London Plan (2021) policies emphasise the importance of high-quality and seek to optimise site capacity through a design-led approach. Policy D4 'Delivering good design' states that development proposals should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' requires development proposals to relate positively to their locality, while Local Plan (2017) Policy SP11 requires the highest standard of design that respects local context and character and historic significance, which is equally supported by London Plan (2021) Policy D6.

London Plan Policy HC1 seeks to ensure that development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, should conserve their significance. This policy applies to designated and non-designated heritage assets. Local Plan Policy SP12 and DPD Policy DM9 set out the Council's approach to the management, conservation and enhancement of the Borough's historic environment.

The columns will be slender and have a height of 6m. The columns will be screened from wider views by existing vegetation and built form, and will not be adjacent to a public highway. The columns and lights will be located adjacent to courts with existing lighting. The LED panel fittings will be designed so as to localise light spill, minimising sky glow and light spillage. Officers consider the siting of the proposed floodlighting columns and fittings to be acceptable and will have minimum visual effect on the appearance of the site and visual amenity of the area, nor the character and appearance of the broader conservation area.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan Policy D4 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring residents.

The proposal to erect additional floodlighting will result in the use of an existing outdoor court operating in the evenings. The hours of operation are to align with the adjoining courts 6-8 to the east, approved under planning permission HGY/2016/3991, with the lighting generally required in the winter months. The information provided with the application states that the mounted light fittings will be installed with side and rear deflectors, with zero upward tilt angle.

A 2.75m fence was approved under planning permission HGY/2016/3991 to the south of Court 5, as shown on the approved plans, and has been considered in the modelling of light levels provided with the application. While not yet constructed, as the 2016 planning permission has been given effect. Notwithstanding this, a condition is recommended to ensure the fence is established prior to the proposed flood lighting being established on Court 5. The fence will also serve to mitigate noise on neighbouring residents.

Considering these points, the existing environment including planning permission HGY/2016/3991, the proposal complies with the above stated policies relating to neighbour amenity and is considered to be acceptable.

Other matters

Ecology and wildlife. Concerns were raised by local residents from the impact of the lighting on wildlife. Noting that many of the courts on the site are already lit, the impacts from one additional court will be acceptable. Furthermore, as noted in the approval for lighting of courts 6-8 the floodlights are only required during winter months when bats are hibernating. The nature of the floodlights here, its low wattage, the height and angle of the fittings mean that light spillage is largely contained within the courts and as such will not affect the ecological value of the neighbouring Significant Local Open Land (SLOL) which may be used for bats hibernating.

It is noted that the fence to be erected along the southern boundary of the court, approved under HGY/2016/3991, is in proximity to a group of large trees within a conservation area. The applicant has accepted a condition that the installation of the fence will take place with the supervision of an arborist, to ensure the trees are not adversely impacted by the installation of the fence.

Traffic. Although the public transport accessibility for this site is low, it is considered that the proposal would not generate any significant increase in parking demand, mindful of the current usage levels of the site. The Club benefits from its own car parking and in addition the surrounding roads are not heavily parked.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable. All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been considered. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.

CIL

N/A

6. Recommendation

GRANT PERMISSION -Subject to conditions

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The floodlighting shall be installed fully and thereafter maintained in accordance with the recommendations of the Institution of Lighting Engineers (ILE) 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (GN01:2021) for zone E3, including the lux levels shown in the approved documents in relation to the curtilages of neighbouring properties, unless alternative lux levels are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The design to include shields to reduce light spill into neighbouring gardens.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the residential amenity of nearby dwellings.

- 4 The floodlighting hereby approved shall not operate (be switched on providing artificial light) outside the hours of:
 - Monday to Friday: 09.00 - 21.00
 - Saturday: 09.00 - 20:00
 - Sunday and Bank Holiday: 09.00 -20:00and the courts shall be fitted with their own individual automated time switches.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not have an adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

- 5 No development comprising the erection of floodlighting columns shall commence until details of the 2.75m high sound reflective solid timber fence and windbreaks to the southern boundary of 'Court 5' (under planning permission HGY/2016/3991) have been submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The fence shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details and maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: In order to minimize light and noise nuisance to neighbouring properties.

- 6 The 2.75m fence along the southern boundary of 'Court 5' shall be installed under the supervision of a suitably qualified arborist, to direct the placing of posts and any excavation, and be in accordance with BS 3998:2010 in order to protect the health of the nearby trees.

Reason: To protect the amenity value of the trees consistent with Policy DM1 of The Development Management DPD 2017.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.