

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Reference No: HGY/2006/1684

Ward: Crouch End

Date received: 21/08/2006

Last amended date: N/A

Drawing number of plans: 967/PL101 - 106 incl.

Address: Highgate Wood School, Montenotte Road N8

Proposal: Replacement of existing hard play/games area with new flood-lit all weather pitch. Development includes 6 x new 12m high flood lights, 3m high weld mesh fencing to the main pitch and 2m high palisade fencing to boundary.

Existing Use: Education

Proposed Use: Education

Applicant: The Governors Of Highgate Wood School (In Assoc SMIF)

Ownership: Council

This application was previously reported to the Committee on 11 June but on legal advice it is being reported again for a fresh decision.

The original application did not state any time limits for the proposed floodlighting. Subsequently the applicant School Governors wrote to the Planning Service agreeing to a 7 p.m. time limit and this was communicated by them to local residents at the time when the application was under consultation. It appears that this was broadly acceptable and no objectors attended the meeting. At the meeting on 11 June an amendment was proposed to permit floodlighting until 10 p.m. and this was included in the resolution to grant planning permission. The planning permission has not been sent to the applicants and therefore it has not been granted legally.

Legal advice was then obtained that there had been no proper consultation on the proposal to allow floodlighting until 10 p.m. so a permission on this basis would be challengeable unless there was a further full consultation. However, the School are content to keep a 7 p.m. time limit as previously proposed. A decision on this basis would not be vulnerable in the same way. Accordingly, the matter is brought back for Members' to reconsider.

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

Borough Road

Officer contact: Stuart Cooke

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Highgate Wood School is a co-educational community comprehensive day school with performing arts status for 1370 pupils aged 11 – 19.

The application site comprises the existing games/hard play area at Highgate Wood School. The games/play area is located in the centre of the school campus and is surrounded on three sides by the school buildings which are a mixture of 2, 3 and 4-storey buildings. On the fourth side the games / play area opens on sports pitches.

The closest residential properties are those in Glasslyn Road behind the music and drama block. These properties are at a higher level than the proposed all weather pitch.

The area proposed for the new pitch is already used for outdoor sports activities and hard play. The existing surface is a mixture of materials, including tarmac to the southeast end and shale to the North West which is not ideal and seriously limits the curriculum opportunities. The area for the proposed pitch sits within a hollow approximately 2 – 2.5 metres below the upper hard play area, with raked grass seating areas to the main playground site.

There is a substantial screen of mature trees along the boundary with the sports field and these will not be affected by the proposal.

The application site is within the MOL boundary of the wider Shepherds Cot sports ground area. It is close to but not within the Hornsey conservation area and is not identified as a site of ecological significance in the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

PLANNING HISTORY

Planning permission for the major redevelopment of the school as part of its change to PFI status was originally granted in 2000, (ref: HGY2000/0675). An all weather pitch with 16 metre high floodlights was originally included as part of that scheme but the pitch was not included in the permission.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks the laying out of a new all weather sports pitch to provide for a range of sports curriculum requirements. The proposed pitch will be 74 metres long x 48 metres wide with an overrun to all sides. It will be used principally for football, hockey and general training. The pitch will be of sand filled artificial grass coloured green. There will be a 3 metre high Weldmesh fence surrounding it coloured green.

6no. 12 metre high floodlights are proposed with 2no. 2KW floodlights per column and controlled light spillage diffusers. The lighting is designed for evening training for football and generally training only. It is not suitable for hockey.

Ramped access for disabled/wheelchair users is proposed at the northern end of the new pitch adjacent to the main sports hall.

It is proposed the proposed pitch will be available during normal school hours and from 15.00 to 19.00 hours for after school activities.

Some limited works are proposed to the trees adjacent to the boundary in the northern corner of the site to reduce the crown and cut back any branches where they overhang the proposed pitches.

CONSULTATION

Ward Councillors
Hornsey Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Park Road CC
Calthorpe C & LTC
Ferme Park CC
Highgate C & LTC
North London CC
CREOS

1-18 Montenotte Road N8
1-72 Glasslyn Road
1-8 View Crescent, Tivoli Road
1-37b (cons) Tivoli Road
1-60 Wolesley Road
1-8 High View, Shepherds Hill
51-85 (odd) Shepherds Hill
1-12 Mount Lodge Shepherds Hill
1-24 Fitzroy Court Shepherds Hill
1-23 77 Shepherds Hill
1-19 Melior Court Shepherds Hill

1-15 Pastor Court Shepherds Hill
1-18 Stanhope House Shepherds Hill
1-16 Panorama Court Shepherds Hill
1-11 Jameson Lodge Shepherds Hill
1-12 Dale Lodge Shepherds Hill
1-38 Altior Court Shepherds Hill
1-105, 2-84 Wood Vale
27-45, 36-70 Coolhurst Road
1-24 Charlotte Court Coolhurst Road
15-45, 16-42 Clifton Road
15-49, 16-42 Birchington Road
119-185, 94-152 Cranley Gardens

RESPONSES

Ward Councillors – no responses received
Conservation team – no response received

Hornsey Conservation Area Advisory Committee – no objection

CREOS – support the sports pitch but not the floodlights. Better screening required. Use of pitch should be limited to 19.00 hours.

Glasslyn, Montenotte, Tivoli Roads Residents Association – support the pitch. Opposed to 12 metre floodlights. Concern over private useage. General concern over floodlights to the sports clubs.

31 other responses were received from local residents. Many of the residents generally support the pitches but are opposed to the floodlights and the hours of use. Some responses suggest the floodlights should be lower or omitted completely. Others consider that the hours of use should be limited, for example to 19.00 or 21.00 hours. A smaller number are concerned about the effect on the conservation area and the ecological impact.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

PPG17 sets out the governments advice on the use of open space and recreation genrally. It recognises the issues that may be caused by floodlighting and some of the approaches that may be taken towards addressing those issues.

HARINGEY UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006

The Council's new Unitary Development Plan was adopted by the Council in July 2006 following its Public Inquiry and modifications procedures. It complies with relevant national policy guidance and the London Plan. The principal policies which are relevant to this case area set out below.

CW1: Community Wellbeing

Good community facilities are essential to the fabric of a successful, healthy and inclusive society. Community facilities include schools, higher education facilities, health centres, childcare providers, places of worship and community halls. Every resident in Haringey that needs a school place, a childcare place, or medical assistance, should have access to these services preferably within walking distance of where they live.

UD3: General Principles

New development in the borough should complement the existing pattern of development in that part of Haringey. The policy aims to ensure that future development in the borough will not worsen the quality of life for those living and working in Haringey.

OS2: Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

The London Plan recognises that MOL encompasses a wide range of sites and locations, and that limited development to serve the needs of the visiting public may not be considered inappropriate if clearly ancillary to the identified purpose of the MOL. Such appropriate development will only be acceptable where it does not have an adverse impact on the open character of the land.

ENV7: Air, Water and Light Pollution

Pollution can come from a range of uses, such as industrial processes, transport, construction, foul water misconnections and energy consumption. Inappropriate lighting conservation areas cause light pollution to habitable rooms nearby and/or can contribute to light pollution of the night sky. There are various Supplementary Planning Guidance notes, including SPG8e Light Pollution which contains additional guidance on light pollution based on advice from the Institute of Lighting Engineers.

OS17: Tree Protection

Tree cover in the form of masses and spines/copse is of major significance for the borough's character as a whole and contributes to Haringey's Urban Open Space. Trees provide major benefits to biodiversity, improve visual amenity and screening, reduce air pollution and other benefits.

ANALYSIS / ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

The main issues relating to this proposal are:

- Effect upon the MOL
- The provision of a new all weather pitch
- Loss of amenity resulting from light pollution
- Noise particularly from after school use
- Trees

1. Effect Upon The MOL

The current sports pitch is directly adjacent to the wider area of open land comprising the sports clubs and pitches known as Shepherds Cot and is included within the MOL boundary encompassing this wider area. The purpose of MOL is to protect strategic areas of open land which is significant to London.

Policy OS2 states that planning permission will not be granted for development other than essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. The area of MOL of which the application site forms part is characterised by open sports use and the existing use of the site is hard games/play area for the school. The development of the site as an all weather sports pitch is therefore considered appropriate to the MOL designation and so meets the requirements of policy OS2.

2. The Provision of a New All Weather Pitch

Policy CW1 seeks to ensure that good quality facilities are available provided they are appropriate to the location, meet a local need and may be used for more than one community purpose.

The current games/hard play area which this proposal will replace is old and of poor quality which restricts the school in providing the widest range of sports related activities possible at the site. The new facility will replace the existing one to a much higher standard to the benefit of the school and its curriculum. In this respect the proposal is considered to meet the requirements of policy CW1.

3. Loss of Amenity Resulting from Light Pollution

The issue of most concern to local residents is that of potential light pollution. Light pollution is caused by installed luminaries directing light onto surfaces and into spaces other than where desirable and intended. Adverse effects can be illumination of the night sky, light trespass above the horizontal plane of roofs and light ingress into buildings where it is undesirable. The guidance contained in SPG8e Light Pollution is based on advice from the Institute of Lighting Engineers which seeks to overcome or minimise these issues. These

include technical solutions to avoid light spill and direct or focus light precisely to the intended areas.

The original scheme submitted by the school included 16 metre high floodlight columns. However, in the light of the level of objections received from local residents the school has reviewed the floodlight element of the scheme. As a result the height of the columns has been reduced to 12 metres which is regarded as the optimum height, both in terms of its suitability for the proposed activities and avoidance of light pollution.

To support their case, the evidence and advice offered is that the use of 12 metre high columns will allow the light to be directed downward at a greater angle than with a shorter column. The ILE advice recommends keeping this angle below 70 degrees. The lighting proposed here will be within this guidance and will incorporate ultra low glare floodlights specifically designed to minimise to amount of light spillage into the surrounding area. In addition, the applicant has submitted a certificate from the British Astronomical Society Good Lighting Award for protecting the night sky for their scheme at the English Institute of Sport at the University of Bath which was installed by the same specialist firm of installers. The lighting to be used at Highgate Wood School uses the same system and should therefore have similar impact.

The applicant has also submitted detailed technical pictorial analysis to demonstrate that the level of light spillage from the 12 metre high columns will be less than that from 10 or 8 metre high columns and will result in less light spilling from the proposed sports pitch area toward the adjacent residential properties. This is consistent with the advice from the ILE.

As such, the scheme is considered to meet the requirements of Policy UD7 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

4. Noise

Concern has also been expressed by local residents in terms of potential increased noise from the development, particularly after school hours. In order to avoid this, the school has undertaken to use the new facility only during school hours and from 15.10 to 19.00 hours for after school activities. This regime is considered to be reasonable in this context in that it will allow the school to obtain maximum benefit from the new pitches but avoiding disturbance to local residents at what might be considered unsocial hours. As such the scheme is considered to meet the requirements of Policy UD3 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

5. Trees

Some minor works to the trees overhanging the application site in the north east corner is required. These works will involve cutting back the crown of the trees to remove the overhang. This is not considered to adversely affect the health or the amenity value of the trees involved and will not significantly reduce their screening effect. As such the works are considered satisfactory

and meet the requirements of policy OS17. A condition is attached to ensure the works are carried out to the satisfaction of the Councils Arboriculturist and to the required BS standard.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The application site comprises the existing games/hard play area at Highgate Wood School.

This application seeks the laying out of a new all weather sports pitch to provide for a range of sports curriculum requirements. It will be used principally for football, hockey and general training. 6no. 12 metre high floodlights are proposed with 2no. 2KW floodlights per column and controlled light spillage diffusers. The lighting is designed for evening training for football and generally training only. It is not suitable for hockey.

It is proposed the proposed pitch will be available during normal school hours and from 15.00 to 19.00 hours for after school activities.

The provision of the new pitches is appropriate and generally supported. The school has reduced the height of the floodlighting columns from 16 to 12 metres and undertaken to limit the hours of use until 19.00 hours only following concerns expressed by local residents. On this basis the scheme is considered acceptable and meets the requirements of the appropriate policies in the Unitary Development Plan 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Registered No. HGY/2006/1684

Applicant's drawing Nos 967/PL101 - 106 incl.

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.

3. The existing trees on the site shall not be lopped, felled or otherwise affected in any way (including raising and lowering soil levels under the crown spread of the trees) and no excavation shall be cut under the crown spread of the trees without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to safeguard the trees in the interest of visual amenity of the area.

4. That the development hereby approved shall be used during school hours and between 1510 and 1900 Mondays to Fridays only for after school activities.
Reason: To protect the existing amenity of surrounding occupiers.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The provision of the new pitches is appropriate and generally supported. The school has reduced the height of the floodlighting columns from 16 to 12 metres and undertaken to limit the hours of use until 19.00 hours only following concerns expressed by local residents. On this basis the scheme is considered acceptable and meets the requirements of the appropriate policies in the Unitary Development Plan 2006.