

160 Camden Road
London NW1 9HJ



21 April 2025

Daren Zuk
Planning Officer
Planning Solutions Team
Camden Council

Dear Daren

Planning Application 2025/1301/P Cantelowes Gardens: Construction of a second floodlit MUGA pitch for padel tennis

1. Although Cantelowes Gardens is not part of the Camden Square Conservation Area, its prominent position between Sandall Road and Torriano Avenue has a significant impact on the Conservation Area.
2. The current design of the Cantelowes Gardens sandpit and play area was led by the landscape designer Tim Wilson in 2006 in consultation with local parents and residents. Their remit was to create a unique play area for children that would have a big impact on the community. The result was just that: a sand filled crater that seemed to have been created by a massive 60 tonne granite boulder resembling a meteorite crashing into the ground and skidding to a halt in the park. Fallen trees and smaller boulders surrounded the skid path offering separate individual play areas for parents and children. The unique design was widely praised and has given great pleasure for young children and their parents over the past twenty years.
3. The proposed development of the site which will involve the destruction of this celebrated structure of which the sandpit is a central part is sheer vandalism. The play area offers children an exposure to art, science, education, play and wellbeing. It should be subject to a preservation order. Indeed to secure its future, the Council should seriously consider submitting this unique play area for listing with English Heritage.
4. The sandpit serves the needs of young children, toddlers and their parents; facilities that are significantly absent from other parts of Cantelowes Gardens where the overwhelming focus is on the needs of older children and young people.
5. That it is free makes it accessible to all families whatever their income and in so doing addresses the levels of inequality that are sadly significant in the borough. To replace this facility with a MUGA pitch for padel tennis for which

players have to pay, will inevitably exclude young children from poorer families from essential play activity and further enhance levels of inequality.

6. It should also be noted that padel tennis facilities are available nearby in Market Road less than ten minutes away
7. Ensuring that the padel tennis pitch is economically viable for the private sector company behind the proposal, will necessitate maximising its usage through extended hours. This will inevitably have an adverse impact on nearby residents through light pollution from the floodlights and excessive noise from players and supporters. The alternative would be to raise prices which in turn would make the game increasingly inaccessible to poorer families,
8. Finally, I note that this proposal has rightly attracted widespread opposition from parents and local residents. I just hope that the Council listens to their voices
9. In conclusion, I strongly object to the proposal: it will destroy a much needed and unique play space for young children, toddlers and their parents, increase levels of inequality and have a negative impact on the lives of local residents



David Blagbrough