

Firstplan



**FLOODLIGHTING APPLICATION AT
THE CUMBERLAND LAWN TENNIS
CLUB,
25 ALVANLEY GARDENS,
HAMPSTEAD,
LONDON,
NW6 1JD**

**PLANNING,
DESIGN AND
ACCESS
STATEMENT**

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of an application (submitted on behalf of the Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club) for the erection of 24 no. floodlighting columns at the 3 tennis courts situated on the southern edge of the site.
- 1.2 An identical application (ref: 2010/0211/P) was previously submitted to the London Borough of Camden on 21st December 2009, and subsequently withdrawn prior to determination on 8th February of this year, in order to allow the Club to carry out a detailed consultation with local residents.
- 1.3 This report summarises the results of the consultation and responds to the concerns raised by the residents. It also includes the Design and Access Statement.
- 1.4 The report is comprised of the following:
- Section 2 – Relevant Background Information
 - Section 3 – Application Proposal
 - Section 4 – Planning Policy
 - Section 5 – Planning Issues
 - Section 6 – Design and Access Issues
- 1.5 Section 7 then concludes that this proposal will not have any impact on existing residential amenities and will offer significant benefits in terms of the health and well-being of club members and local school children.



SECTION 2: RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a) Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site is a combined cricket and tennis club covering 3.29ha, used by a combination of club members, the large majority of whom live locally, and local school children. It is located in West Hampstead, just west of the A41 Finchley Road, and is bounded by Alvanley Gardens to the east, Lymington Road to the south, Crediton Hill to the west and West End Lane to the north. Residential properties adjoin the site on all sides.
- 2.2 The site includes twelve tennis courts at the northern end of the site adjacent to the clubhouse (six of which are floodlit), with a cricket pitch and eight further courts situated at the southern end of the site. Of these eight courts, there are five in the south-west corner of the site – two of which lie parallel to Lymington Road and are not lit as there is no screening separating them from the street; adjoining them to the north, away from Lymington Road, are three courts which are lit.
- 2.3 The three remaining courts – which are the subject of this application - lie to the east, again running parallel to Lymington Road, but set further back from the street, behind a substantial screen of trees and hedges. Aside from the two courts to the west, which are closer to the boundary and not screened from Lymington Road, these are the only courts at this southern end of the site which are not floodlit.
- 2.4 The nearest residential properties to these courts are situated a minimum of 15m away on Lymington Road, and a minimum of 40m away on Alvanley Gardens. The nearest properties on Crediton Hill are located approximately 100m away from these courts. These properties – especially those located closest to the proposed floodlighting, on Lymington Road - are well screened by extensive landscaping. It is also important to note that the majority of windows on the properties at Lymington Road are not habitable rooms. There are also streetlights along Lymington Road.

b) Planning History

- 2.5 A previous planning application (ref: 2010/0211/P) was submitted to the London Borough of Camden on 21st December 2009.



- 2.6 However, the applicant decided to withdraw this application prior to determination on 8th February 2010 in order to undertake a full pre-application consultation with the local community.
- 2.7 Following withdrawal of the application, discussions were carried out with the planning officer (John Sheehy) who confirmed that the proposal appeared to be satisfactory. He indicated that his recommendation had been to approve the application, subject to conditions.
- 2.8 In terms of similar proposals in the area, it is relevant to note that an application was submitted in 2008 (ref: 2008/0410/P) at the nearby University College School for the “installation of new floodlights to the 3 tennis courts to the rear of the site and the replacement of tennis court chain fencing with a metal wield mesh fence”. This application has been approved subject to the completion of a S106 agreement. The case officer’s report concluded that the lighting columns were considered acceptable as they would have no detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties in terms of visual appearance, light spillage, and noise disturbance.

c) Pre-application consultation

- 2.9 Following withdrawal of the original application, a demonstration of the proposed floodlighting was arranged at the Club. This took place on Wednesday 10th March at 7:30pm, and local residents, members and interested parties were invited to attend. In total, 7 local residents attended the demonstration.
- 2.10 One floodlighting column was set up and illuminated on one of the proposed courts and attendees were then able to stand on the court and assess the impact of the lighting.
- 2.11 Some attendees raised concerns predominantly relating to a potential loss of amenity to surrounding properties as a result of the impact of light spillage, potential noise disturbance as a result of tennis being played later in to the evening, and the use of additional electricity required to operate the lights.



SECTION 3: THE APPEAL PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application proposes the erection of 24 no. floodlighting columns, to be situated on the 3 southern courts against the boundary of Lymington Road; there will be 8 columns per court, with 4 on each side (as indicated on Drawing No. 144-A1-025).
- 3.2 The floodlighting is required in order to extend the amount of time which the courts can be used for. The courts will be used primarily by members and schoolchildren from the nearby South Hampstead High School for Girls during daytime hours extending up until 5:30pm, with use restricted exclusively to members in the evenings. The courts are also occasionally used by children from a number of other local schools. The proposed floodlights will not be turned on when there is no demand for the courts and they are not in use, and they will be turned off by 9:30pm every evening.
- 3.3 The floodlighting columns are 6m high and green in colour and they are of the same design and appearance as those on the top courts at the club, and, accordingly, are consistent with the existing character and appearance of the site.
- 3.4 A Light Spillage Survey has been submitted in support of this application and this confirms that there will be very limited light spillage beyond the playing area and therefore there will be no impact on the adjoining neighbouring residential properties.



SECTION 4: PLANNING POLICY

a) National Guidance

i) Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) – Planning for open space, sport and recreation

4.1 This document recognises that open spaces, sports and recreational facilities have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children of all ages through play, sporting activities and interaction with others.

4.2 Paragraph 19 of the guidance states that, in considering applications for floodlighting, local authorities should ensure that local amenity is protected. The impact on the openness of the Green Belt, or on the character of the countryside, of floodlight towers or pylons should be a key factor in determining whether planning permission should be granted. The companion guide to PPG17 notes that floodlighting can assist in increasing capacity of outdoor recreation facilities and playing space.

ii) Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) – Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment

4.3 This draft document is currently out for consultation, until June of this year. When adopted, the final version will replace PPS9 (Biological Diversity and Geological Conservation), PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation), and parts of PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) and PPG20 (Coastal Planning). Its key objective is to bring together related policies on the natural environment and on open and green spaces in rural and urban areas to ensure that the planning system delivers healthy sustainable communities which adapt to and are resilient to climate change and gives the appropriate level of protection to the natural environment.

4.4 Of specific reference to this application, the document specifically states:

“One area where the Government is considering modifying the existing policy relates to the determination of applications involving the floodlighting of sports and recreational facilities. The existing wording in PPG17 states that in considering planning applications



the LPA should protect amenity. While this remains an important consideration, it is also recognised that the use of floodlights can extend the time that outdoor facilities can be used, particularly in the winter, thereby increasing the level of provision of facilities and the health and well-being benefits they provide. The proposal is therefore to amend the wording of the existing policy to make it clearer that local planning authorities should consider and balance the impact on local residents against wider benefits to the community, particularly those using the facilities..... The intention is not to allow all floodlighting proposals, but it does recognise that floodlighting technology has developed significantly in recent years, reducing the amount of sky glow and light that falls onto adjacent properties.” (*our underline*).

- 4.5 This updated policy guidance recognises the health and well-being benefits that can stem from the greater availability of sports facilities resulting from floodlighting proposals and, if adopted, would attach a greater importance to these benefits when considered alongside amenity issues.

b) Local Guidance

i) Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (Adopted 2006)

- 4.6 Policy SD6 of the adopted Camden UDP relates to amenity, and states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that it considers causes harm to the amenity of occupiers and neighbours. The policy sets out a number of factors which the Council will consider, including artificial light levels and noise and vibration levels.
- 4.7 Policy SD7 relates specifically to light, noise and vibration pollution. With regard to lighting, it states specifically that the Council will not grant planning permission for floodlighting or other forms of lighting if it creates light pollution.
- 4.8 The supporting text to the policy highlights that lighting has a positive effect in increasing a sense of security for activities in the evenings and at night, and it can enable outdoor recreation at night time. It warns, however, that poorly designed lighting or lighting that operates excessive hours is a form of pollution that can diminish the quality of life for residents, and can cause glare and light spillage. The text confirms that in circumstances where there is potential for light pollution, the Council require a light impact survey outlining possible attenuation. To control the



potential harm caused by light pollution, the Council will use planning conditions to control the level of illumination, any spillage of light and hours of operation.



SECTION 5: PLANNING ISSUES

- 5.1 This application for floodlighting will assist in increasing capacity for outdoor activities which is supported by both national and local planning policies, in recognition of the vital role it plays in promoting healthy living. Currently the policies state that in considering planning applications for floodlighting, LPA's should protect amenity. However while this remains an important consideration, they intend modifying the policy to make it clear that LPA's should balance the impact on local amenities against the benefits to the wider community.
- 5.2 We assess below whether the application against UDP policy SD6 and 7 to determine whether this proposal will have any significant impacts on local amenities in terms of the following:
- a) **Light Pollution**
- 5.3 The key factor in terms of the consideration of applications for floodlighting is the impact of light levels on the amenities of adjoining residents. With regard to this, and in accordance with the guidance outlined in Camden UDP Policy SD7, a Light Spillage Survey has been prepared in support of this application.
- 5.4 The floodlighting has been designed to a high quality in accordance with LTA standards, to illuminate the playing area specifically but minimise light spillage outside of the court area. The survey confirms that there will only be a negligible degree of spillage outside the court, which is principally concentrated in a small area of the adjoining cricket pitch lying immediately to the north of the courts.
- 5.5 There will be no spillage onto Lymington Road as a result of the design and the circa 1.5m landscape buffer along this boundary. There are street lights along Lymington Road and, as a result, the floodlighting on these courts will not cause any significant increase in light pollution.
- 5.6 The survey confirms that the proposed floodlighting will have no impact on the surrounding residential properties on Alvanley Gardens and Crediton Hill, which are located at some distance from the courts (40m and 100m respectively) and are screened from view by substantial planting, or those located closest to the courts on Lymington Road.



5.7 In any event, it is also important to note that the lights will be turned by 9:30pm every night so will not be in operation late in to the evening unlike the street lights.

b) Noise

5.8 A question was raised about potential noise disturbance resulting from extended use of the courts. It should however be observed that during summer months these courts are already available for play into the late evening, sometimes well beyond 9.30pm, so permitting use to no later than 9.30 pm during winter months in no way extends potential noise disturbance, especially as, after dark, most residents will have drawn their curtains which naturally reduces noise.

5.9 It is considered that the noise created from playing tennis is relatively limited due to the small number of people who will be playing at any given time. In any event, the lights will be turned off by 9:30pm every evening so it will not disturb people sleeping. It should also be noted that during the summer months play can go on until as late as 9:45pm to 10:00pm when daylight extends to this time and, accordingly, the floodlights will not result in play going on any later than is already possible at certain points of the year. Furthermore, the majority of windows overlooking the courts on Lymington Road are not habitable rooms. The residents of Alvanley Gardens and Crediton Hill are located at such a distance from the courts that they are unlikely to be disturbed by any tennis games on the courts.

c) Visual Amenity

5.10 In terms of visual amenity, floodlights are a characteristic feature of sports clubs such as this and those proposed are designed to blend in with their surroundings and are in common with the floodlighting on surrounding courts and cricket and hockey pitches at the Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club. In addition, the site as a whole is well-screened from Lymington Road and Alvanley Gardens by existing dense hedging. As such, the floodlights will be well screened from the surrounding streets and it is not therefore considered that there will be any detrimental impact upon visual amenity.

d) Sustainability

5.11 The proposed floodlights will only be turned on when required for use during the evening and will be turned off at 9:30pm every evening, and, as such, will not result in any unnecessary use of energy.



e) **Benefits of the proposal**

- 5.12 The new draft PPS (Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment) is seeking to modify the existing policy involving floodlighting so that it recognises the health and well-being benefits they provide. It states that these wider community benefits should also be taken into account when determining any floodlighting application.
- 5.13 As indicated above in Section 3, the facilities at the Club are used regularly by South Hampstead High School for Girls as well as members, and by a number of other schools on an occasional basis. These include: Beckford School, West Hampstead; Holy Trinity School, Swiss Cottage; St. Mary's School, Kilburn; St. Paul's School, Primrose Hill and; Emmanuel School, West Hampstead. This will also be extended to include Kingsgate School (Kilburn) and St. Eugenes School (West Hampstead) this year. Accordingly, the application proposals will have benefits in terms for the wider local community in terms of the availability of sports facilities.



SECTION 6: DESIGN AND ACCESS ISSUES

a) Use

6.1 The site is currently in use as a sports club serving the local area, and contains cricket pitches, tennis courts and associated pavilions. This application relates to the erection of 24 no. floodlights at the tennis courts situated at the southern end of the site, in order to facilitate the use of the courts outside normal daylight hours. The use of the site will therefore remain unchanged.

b) Amount

6.2 There are 24 no. floodlights which are proposed. These are necessary in order to effectively illuminate these courts in line with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) standards, as highlighted on the Light Spillage Survey submitted in support of this application.

c) Layout

6.3 The layout of the site will remain unchanged. There will be 8 floodlights situated at each court, with 4 on either side.

d) Scale

6.4 The floodlights are 6.7m in height, and are of the same size and scale as those situated on the club's other courts. Accordingly, they are considered to be of an entirely suitable scale to serve this function.

e) Landscaping

6.5 The proposed floodlights will have no impact on landscaping at the site. There is significant thick hedging on the site's boundaries with Alvanley Gardens and Lymington Road, which will ensure that there will be no light spillage outside of the boundaries of the site and, in addition, ensure that there will only be very limited visibility of the structures from outside of the site.

f) Appearance



6.6 The floodlights will be painted green to blend in with the surrounding landscaping and the courts. They are consistent with the other floodlights on the site in design and appearance and will therefore fit neatly in with and have no impact on the character of the site and surrounding area.

g) Access

6.7 Access to the site will be not be affected.



SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This application proposes the erection of 24 no. floodlighting columns at the 3 tennis courts situated at the southern edge of the Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club, Alvanley Gardens, Hampstead.
- 7.2 The floodlights proposed are entirely appropriate in terms of size, scale, appearance and function for this site and will not cause any significant light spillage outside of the playing area of the courts. This has been demonstrated by the Light Spillage Survey submitted in support of the application. Accordingly, there will be no impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties in terms of light pollution.
- 7.3 The floodlights will be well-screened from surrounding properties by landscaping, will only be in operation when the courts are required for use during the evening, and will be turned off by 9:30pm every evening. As such, it cannot be considered that there will be any detrimental impact on the surrounding area in terms of visual amenity or noise pollution.
- 7.4 The proposed floodlights will provide significant wider community benefits for the Club, its members, and other local schools who use the facilities by extending the hours in which the courts can be used throughout the year, which should be taken into account when determining this application.
- 7.5 The floodlights accord with all relevant and emerging planning policies and, accordingly, we respectfully request that planning consent is granted.

