



PLANNING ACCESS, DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

PARLIAMENT HILL FIELDS ATHLETICS TRACK PAVILION - REPLACEMENT OF FRONT ELEVATION WINDOWS

Note: This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings supplied with the planning application.

Background:

The Athletics Track Pavilion was designed and built by the London County Council in 1939, a year after the Grade II listed Parliament Hill Lido. Both are part of the LCC's ambitious inter-war programme to provide good quality sporting facilities for Londoners. According to Historic England, the pavilion is likely designed by the same LCC architects as the Lido, HA Rowbotham & TL Smithson.

Although the Pavilion is not listed in its own right, it forms a pair with the Lido architecturally and historically and should be considered in this context.



Above left: Pavilion in 1939, above right: Lido 2018

Project Description:

The current single-glazed aluminium windows were installed ca. 1974, when the front façade was structurally strengthened by the insertion of brick pillars. The windows are now coming to the end of their life and the City of London Corporation wishes to replace them with new windows that both limit the loss of heat and are more sympathetic to the architectural design of the building.



Left: 1970s aluminium windows to changing rooms, right: Cafeteria after redecorations 2018

Proposals:

The proposal is to install double-glazed W20 section steel windows with real glazing bars to match the remaining original window frames of the Cafeteria. No structural changes are necessary, and the windows will be fitted into the currently existing openings and hardwood frames.

Materials

The proposal is for double-glazed windows with insulated glass units 16mm thick. The frames will be hot rolled mild steel W20 sections, hot-dip galvanized and powder coated (white).

W20 sections were introduced in 1956 and are generally considered to be a good match for original 1930s steel window sections.

Sustainability

To improve the thermal performance of the pavilion, the roofs were insulated and re-covered in 2017. Additionally, LED lighting and PIR-controls were installed to reduce energy costs. Hot & Cold-water installations were replaced, and heating controls introduced in 2014.

Replacing the single-glazed windows would further reduce heat loss and make the facility more sustainable for the future.

Accessibility

The Pavilion is accessible by vehicle from the main entrance on Highgate Road, subject to the North London Open Spaces Vehicle Management Policy.

There is existing level access from the path to the changing rooms, toilets and showers. Ramped access to the running track was installed in the early 2000s. The accessible toilet was brought up to modern standards of compliance in 2016 and the shower provisions further improved in 2018.

The pavilion is a popular, inclusive and flexible facility. Every year it is used by individuals, football and rugby clubs, running clubs, up to 80 different London schools and even for international athletic competitions.

In 2018 a comprehensive refurbishment of the changing rooms was undertaken. This proposal aims to further enhance the facility by improving the thermal performance and its aesthetic quality, making the pavilion an even more welcoming environment.

Planning Policy:National Planning Policy:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Feb 2019) contains two principles relating directly to heritage conservation and environmental sustainability.

On sustainability: "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development...to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment... and mitigating and adapting to climate change..."

On heritage: "(heritage) assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations".

The NPPF requires local planning authorities to take account of "...the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation..." in determining applications.

This proposal is seeking to reduce the energy needs of the pavilion, while at the same time enhancing its significance as a heritage asset.

Local List:

According to the National Planning Policy Framework: " Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value."

The Athletics Track Pavilion sits within the locally listed Parliament Hill Fields, noted for the "*... great importance to the character and amenity of this part of London...*". Sports have always been part of the amenities provided on the Heath and this was formalised through the construction of the Lido and the athletics track in the late 1930s.

While the Lido is Grade II listed and any works undertaken have consequently maintained and enhanced its architectural qualities, the pavilion has suffered comparative neglect and inappropriate interventions despite its prominent position on Parliament Hill Fields. The most significant of these was the installation of windows in the 1970s that did not respect the horizontal lines of the building. Subsequently, the pavilion is often wrongly dated and the historic connection with the Lido overlooked.

The proposed change of windows takes this into consideration and aims to re-instate the visual link with the Lido and thereby highlight the historic significance of the building. The proposal seeks to preserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness.

Local Plan 2017:

Policy A2 states the Council's aims to "*... conserve and enhance the heritage value of designated open spaces and other elements of open space which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas or to the setting of heritage assets...*" and "*... to preserve and enhance Hampstead Heath...*".

Policy C3 recognises that "*... Cultural and leisure facilities can contribute to townscape value and the special character and appearance of conservation areas and may be a heritage asset in their own right...*".

Policy D2 demands that "*... the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset...*".

Policy C6 further seeks to "*... promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent everyone from accessing facilities and opportunities...*".

The proposals will not cause harm to the building or the locally listed Parliament Hill Fields but will improve the facility both as a heritage asset and an inclusive sports facility, as well as in terms of energy efficiency. The proposal therefore meets the Council's planning policies as expressed in the Local Plan.