

3275/08-2302DS01

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Dear Sir / Madam

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PARLIAMENT HILL CRICKET PITCHES, HAMPSTEAD HEATH,
LONDON, NW5 1QR

On behalf of The City of London Corporation, Metropolis Planning and Design has been instructed to submit this planning application for:-

“Installation of non-turf cricket pitch on existing cricket square.”

This application (PP-11995853) comprises the following documents:

1. Completed Application Form and CiL Questions;
2. This Covering Letter; which comprises Planning Statement;
3. Site Location Plan which highlights the extent of works within the redline site boundary, set within a blue line which denotes the overall ownership of the City of London Corporation:-

3275-D1000-01 – Ownership Plan; and

4. Design & Specification Overview; prepared by Notts Sport Synthetic Surfacing / Cricket South.

Background to the Application

The existing cricket pitch at Parliament Hill (TQ 28203 86031) is situated opposite the Parliament Hill Café and Bandstand in the south-eastern corner of Hampstead Heath.

The existing pitch is made available by the City of London Corporation to hire for matches, practice and casual play.

Given the location of the subject cricket pitch, there is no general vehicular access to the pitch, aside from City Corporation Service vehicles.

The Heath is designated Metropolitan Open Land, and the site is outside but directly adjacent to the wider Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The subject cricket pitch is also outside the boundary of the Hampstead Conservation Area.

The City Corporation's Cricket Pitch Project follows an in-depth review of facilities and access provisions at several locations within their management. The current review has identified improvement works required to facilities in order to ensure that the pitches would ensure the long-term durability and functionality of the pitch to the benefit of all users.

The requisite works associated with the installation of the non-turf cricket pitch on the existing cricket square are set out in this submission. The subject works, excavation, or physical engineering are considered to meet the definition of development set out in S.55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) necessitating the submission of this planning application.

The Proposals

The application proposals involve the following scope of works at the identified cricket pitch.

- The installation of a non-turf cricket pitch (NTP) on the existing cricket square.
- The new NTP is to replace the last track on the north-western end of the existing square.
- The NTP is rectangular in shape measuring 24.1m x 2.74m in size.
- The proposed surface is the NottsGrass Ultra, which is a monofilament surface used within ECB Approved systems.
- The base system uses non-degradable porous geotextile membrane to wrap aggregate layers, which is within the Notts Sport range of ECB Approved pitch systems.

Full details are contained within the accompanying Design & Specification Overview; prepared by Notts Sport Synthetic Surfacing / Cricket South.

The content of this application submission reflects the minor scale of development proposed.

Planning Policy Considerations

For the purposes of considering this planning application, the 'Development Plan' comprises the London Plan 2021 and the Camden Local Plan 2017. Relevant Material considerations are also included in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Impact on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and Adjacent Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

The Camden Local Plan endorses the preservation and enhancement of open space in the Borough. The site lies within designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), and is directly adjacent to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Policy A2 provides protection from development for MOL. Given the significance of the Heath, there is specific reference in Policy A2, with the following objective clearly stated:

“preserve and enhance Hampstead Heath through working with partners and by taking into account the impact on the Heath when considering relevant planning applications, including any impacts on views to and from the Heath;”

The application proposals are being advanced by the City Corporation in their role as custodians of the Heath and is considered to be in accordance with their adopted Management Strategy 2018-2028 which includes proposals for facilitating sport and recreation and access for all.

It is however recognised in policy that proposals which support the open space and recreation objectives of MOL should be supported:

“A2

d. exceptionally, and where it meets a demonstrable need, support small scale development which is associated with the use of the land as open space and contributes to its use and enjoyment by the public

g. give strong protection to maintaining the openness and character of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL);”

In the case of these proposals, the installation of a small section of non-turf cricket pitch (NTP) on the existing cricket square will enhance the durability and functionality of the existing facilities.

The total replacement pitch area will be less than 100sqm but will deliver significant improvements to facilities.

The proposals have been sensitively designed in terms of scale, siting and materials to ensure that they have no significant impact on the openness of the Heath.

Trees / Ecology

A key consideration in the development of the proposals has been to ensure that the biodiversity of the heath will not be adversely affected.

The project team has worked closely with the Heath's team of Arboriculturists and Ecologists in the development of the proposals (and their construction) to ensure that impact is minimised.

This is in accordance with policy A3 of the Camden Plan, which states:

"A3 Biodiversity

The Council will protect and enhance sites of nature conservation and biodiversity. We will:

b. grant permission for development unless it would directly or indirectly result in the loss or harm to a designated nature conservation site or adversely affect the status or population of priority habitats and species;

g. require the demolition and construction phase of development, including the movement of works vehicles, to be planned to avoid disturbance to habitats and species and ecologically sensitive areas, and the spread of invasive species;

Trees and Vegetation

The Council will protect, and seek to secure additional, trees and vegetation. We will: j. resist the loss of trees and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value including proposals which may threaten the continued wellbeing of such trees and vegetation; k. require trees and vegetation which are to be retained to be satisfactorily protected during the demolition and construction phase of development in line with BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction' and positively integrated as part of the site layout;

Given the nature, modest size, and siting of the proposals, there will be no trees felled or root protection areas disturbed to facilitate the development; nor will there be any resultant impact on the overall ecological value of the Heath.

Construction Management

Notwithstanding the small scale of the development proposals, the sensitive nature of the sites necessitate thorough consideration of construction impact on the Heath and its users, and the imposition of

management measures from the outset to ensure that any impact from construction can be suitably mitigated.

Residential Amenity

Policy A1 seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours and provides that the Council will grant permission for development unless this causes unacceptable harm to amenity.

Given the distance of the cricket pitch from any surrounding residential property, it is not considered that the minor proposals will cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of residential properties.

Overall Summary

There is broad policy support for the proposals contained in the Health and Wellbeing' policies of the Plan.

Policies C1, C2 and C6 include support for development which 'positively contributes to creating high quality, active, safe and accessible places'.

The purpose of this application is to facilitate improvement works to the existing facilities in order to ensure the long-term durability and functionality of the pitch to the benefit of all users.

For all of the above reasons, the proposals are considered to comply with Planning Policy.

I trust this is sufficient to validate the application and I look forward to receiving your written acknowledgement shortly.

Yours faithfully



Paul O'Neill
Director

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