

Heritage Statement

Application number: 132108/FO/2021
Proposal: Replacement of 2 no. 8m height lighting columns with 4no. 4m height lighting columns and replacement of lighting heads to 18no. existing lighting columns
Location: Northern Lawn Tennis And Squash Club, Palatine Road, Manchester, M20 3YA
Date: December 2021

1. Introduction

1.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared in accordance with Historic England guidance and with the NPPF and the NPPG. The statement assesses the impact of proposals on the designated heritage asset of Blackburn Park Conservation Area and should be read in conjunction with the proposed plans and elevations, the design and access statement, and other reports submitted with the planning applications.

1.2. This Statement assesses the significance of the site, the special interest of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area and the contribution that the site makes to this special interest. The Statement also describes the proposed works, sets out the desirability of the proposed works and assesses the impact of the proposed works upon the special interest of the Conservation Area.

2. Relevant Planning Policy

2.1. Local Planning Authorities have statutory duties regarding decisions involving heritage assets. The following provisions are relevant to the site: Section 72: 'General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions. In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

2.2. The relevant adopted development plan policy is as follows:

DC18.1 Conservation Areas

The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.

a. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

- i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;*
- ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;*
- iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);*

Heritage Statement

- iv) the effect of signs and advertisements; v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.*
- b. The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas*
- c. Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance of character of the area.*
- d. Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.*
- e. Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.*

2.3. Relevant policy guidance contained within the NPPF and NPPG states:

Section 16 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', provides the policy framework for the conservation of the historic environment. The following guidance is relevant to the site:

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and

Heritage Statement

the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: (a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; (b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- (a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- (b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- (c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- (d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

3. Proposed Works

3.1. The floodlighting on the six red all weather courts will with LED low-spillage lights but also redesigned to reduce spillage to the sky and surrounding areas. This more sustainable lighting will reduce the carbon footprint of the facilities with, for some courts an additional improvement in reducing light spillage, and for others no alteration.

3.2. Two existing 8m columns adjoining the courts will be replaced by 4 no. 4m columns.

4. Contribution of the NLTC to the Special Interest of the Conservation Area

4.1. The Northern is not a primary source of the special interest of the Conservation Area, as it is neither associated with historic interest deriving from Charles Blackburn and his development of Blackburn Park as an area of spacious residential homes, nor is the Club in the character and appearance of the area, identified as being one of late

Heritage Statement

19th and early 20th century large family houses set in spacious gardens along tree-lined streets.

4.2. However, it is associated with the last phase of the historic development of Blackburn Park. In this, as a prestigious club hosting an historic international annual grass-court tennis tournament, it may be judged a source of heritage importance. Furthermore, its addition preserved a large area of open space, in the absence of any planned public space. The character of this open space has evolved over time, as the expectations of members and the technical developments of playing surfaces have evolved, and it is certainly not uniform in character. The Northern does not form a part of any key views into, out of or within the area and has a low level of contribution to the Conservation Area due to its historic interest.

4.3. Accordingly, the main grass court area could be determined to have a **medium** contribution to the Conservation Area. All other areas including the 6 all weather courts which are the specific location for the changes to floodlighting subject of this planning application have a **neutral** contribution.

5. Impact of the Proposed Works on the Blackburn Park Conservation Area

5.1. The all weather courts currently make a 'neutral' contribution to the character of the Blackburn Park Conservation Area. In recognition of published Historic England guidance, we conclude that as such the proposal will have:

- ☐ No impact on the historic significance of Blackburn Park Conservation Area
- ☐ No impact on architectural quality and built form
- ☐ No impact on positive contributors to the value of the Conservation Area

5.2. Overall, this assessment determines that the proposals would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area. As the proposed development is assessed as having a neutral Impact, there is no harm to the affected heritage asset, the Blackburn Park Conservation Area. Therefore paras 201 and 202 of the NPPF, which discuss substantial harm or less than substantial harm do not apply here