

PLANNING STATEMENT

THE NORTHERN TENNIS CLUB

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Authorised for and on behalf NJL Consulting

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Managing Director

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been produced on behalf of The Northern Tennis Club (The Northern) for a full planning permission, submitted to Manchester City Council (MCC) in respect of the following development:

'Full planning application for the redevelopment of three all-weather tennis courts with associated lighting and infrastructure.'

Proposals

- 1.2 The application proposals seek to redevelop two of the existing grassed tennis courts with three all-weather pitches in the location detailed below.



Figure 1: Site Location

- 1.3 The three courts will be orientated north east to south west in line with the existing all-weather courts to the south east. The existing footpath will be realigned around the proposals to allow access in and around the courts.
- 1.4 The redevelopment of the existing tennis courts will offer a higher level of use converting two underutilised courts to 3 no. compliant artificial turfed courts offering better opportunities for all year play.
- 1.5 The area due north east of the proposal site is subject to a separate full application for two proposed padel tennis courts which will enhance the facilities at the Northern and ensure the best utilisation of the space provided.

Purpose of this statement

- 1.6 This Planning Statement sets out the context for the site and the proposed development against local and national planning policy.

- 1.7 The case as presented within this Planning Statement cross refers to supporting material accompanying this detailed planning application. In full, this suite of updated technical reports are as follows and are commensurate to the size of proposed development:
- Planning Statement
 - Architectural Plans
 - Heritage Statement
 - Noise Assessment
 - Lighting Assessment
- 1.8 The aforementioned documentation reflects the local and national validation requirements as those necessary to ensure the application's validation and determination.
- 1.9 The proposed development is shown to be compliant with the adopted development plan and is consistent with national planning policy. Moreover, there are no significant and demonstrable adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits of granting permission when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.
- 1.10 Furthermore, the proposals constitute sustainable development in the context of the three dimensions of sustainable development; environmental, social and economic, and therefore should be approved 'without delay'.

Structure of the report

- 1.11 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 1: Introduction
 - Section 2: Site Context
 - Section 3: Proposed Development
 - Section 4: Planning Policy Context
 - Section 5: Justification for the development and material considerations
 - Section 6: Conclusion

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The application site is situated at The Northern Tennis Club, West Didsbury, Manchester and has long been in use as a location for tennis and squash.
- 2.2 The site itself seeks to redevelop an area of existing tennis courts to better utilise the space. The site is surrounded on three sides by existing courts with residential dwellings to the south east.
- 2.3 The wider area is characterised by mainly residential uses on all sides with the rail line and West Didsbury Station directly north east.
- 2.4 Vehicular and pedestrian access is provided from Palatine Road. The site is accessible by public transport with bus stops and railway stations directly adjacent from the site. It is located within convenient commuting distance to the wider commercial centres within the north west region and connects to the Metrolink, regional and national rail services located in the nearby towns.
- 2.5 The site is located in the Blackburn Park Conservation Area (CA). The CA comprises the area bounded by Barlow Moor Road, Palatine Road, Lapwing Lane and Wilmslow Road and is principally an area of large mid-19th to early 20th century family houses with spacious gardens, arranged along tree lined roads.

Background

- 2.6 The Northern Tennis Club has operated for over 140 years and is one of the oldest lawn tennis clubs in the UK. The club was originally located in Old Trafford before relocating to its currently home in 1909. Northern Tennis Club is considered one of the north of England's premier racket sports clubs for squash and tennis. The member owned club also provides gym, fitness classes, sports physiotherapy as well as a club house with full catering and meeting/function facilities.
- 2.7 As the popularity of the sport grew, the club has expanded over time with the club making history in 1969 for being the first club in the north of England to have an indoor tennis court as well as additional squash courts being introduced in 1974. In 1997, two new indoor tennis courts were added along with three additional clay courts.
- 2.8 The Northern's expansion over the years has led to the club successfully hosting national and international tennis tournaments with the club striving to retain and enhance its facilities to remain a key location for tennis and an integral hub of the community.

Planning History

- 2.9 There is a substantial planning history for the NLTC spread over a number of years. A summary of the planning history until 2000 is listed below:
 - Replacement of 2 no. 8m height lighting columns with 4no. 4m height lighting columns and replacement of lighting heads to 18no. existing lighting columns – Ref. 132108/FO/2021 | Status: Application Approved
 - Variation of Condition No.2 (specified plans) and 8 (details of Green Roof) attached to application 077757/FO/2005/S2 for the erection of new building 8.43 metres high adjacent to 5A Parkfield Road South to accommodate 2

double and 1 single tennis court with associated landscaping following demolition of existing indoor court building. The change to the specified plans condition would see the building not being sunk into the ground and the removal of the green roof to be replaced by a sheet metal roof with photovoltaic panels – Ref. 111419/JO/2016/S2 | Status: Refused and allowed on appeal.

- Installation of terrace and canopy to existing club house and extension of balcony – Ref. 092896/FO/2010/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Notification of intent to carry out works to trees in Blackburn Park Conservation Area - Works to 1 beech tree - Ref. 068569/TCA/2003/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the existing indoor court building to facilitate the erection of building 8.43 metres high adjacent to 5A Parkfield Road South to accommodate 2 double and 1 single tennis court with associated landscaping - Ref. 077756/CC/2005/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Erection of new building 8.43 metres high adjacent to 5A Parkfield Road South to accommodate 2 double and 1 single tennis court with associated landscaping following demolition of existing indoor court building - Ref. 077757/FO/2005/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Installation of terrace and canopy to existing club house and extension of balcony - Ref. 092896/FO/2010/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of an existing indoor court building - Ref. 100419/CC/2012/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Installation of two none illuminated banner signs, internally illuminated box sign on entrance canopy and two internally illuminated pole mounted box signs at site entrance - Ref. 102422/AO/2013/S2 | Status: Application Approved
- Notification of intent to carry out works to trees within Blackburn Park Conservation Area lift overhanging branches to a height of 5 metres and those above that height tipped back by 1 metre - Ref. 061220/TCA/SOUTH2/01 | Status: Application Approved
- Retrospective application for the construction of a storage shed and siting of a steel water storage tank for use as an irrigation system for ground maintenance - Ref. 059126/FO/SOUTH2/00 | Status: Application Approved
- 1 externally illuminated free standing post sign - Ref. 058887/AO/SOUTH2/00 | Status: Application Approved

3. Proposed Development

3.1 The proposals are as detailed in the below proposed site plan.



Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

- 3.2 The proposed development is removing the existing grass courts 7 and 8 (outlined in red) with three green clay all-weather courts, west of the three green American clay courts and north of the existing red clay all weather courts (all of which are floodlit).
- 3.3 The courts will include a green mesh fencing and LED floodlighting. The existing footpath will be removed and relay to match the existing and lead northwest of the new courts.
- 3.4 Access to the new courts will be across the sports grounds of the Northern Club, using the existing entrance and car park, as well as through a pedestrian gate from Parkfield Road South, as at present.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Development Plan for the site comprises:
- Manchester Core Strategy 2012 ('The Core Strategy');
 - Manchester Proposals Map (2012);
 - Saved Policies of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan 2005 ('the UDP');
 - Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (2012); and
 - Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan (2013).
- 4.3 Other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.4 The NPPF was updated on 20 July 2021 and is a key material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 4.5 Sustainable development means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (paragraph 7). The planning system has three overarching objectives in achieving sustainable development: economic, social and environmental (paragraph 8).
- 4.6 Planning should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (paragraph 9).
- 4.7 At the heart of the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' ("the presumption") set out at paragraph 11, which establishes the planning principles in pursuing sustainable development in a positive way.
- 4.8 For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (paragraph 11c).

Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

- 4.9 Paragraph 92 aims to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction (e.g. through street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods and active street frontages). Developments should be safe and accessible (e.g. through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas). They should also enable and support healthy lifestyles

(e.g. through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops and layouts that encourage walking and cycling).

- 4.10 Paragraph 98 identifies access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities and can deliver wide benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.
- 4.11 Paragraph 100 suggests protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users (e.g. by adding links to existing rights of way networks).

Making Effective Use of Land

- 4.12 Paragraph 119 promotes an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.13 Paragraph 122 states decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land and be informed by regular reviews of land allocated for development in plans and of land availability.
- 4.14 Paragraph 124 supports development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it; local market conditions and viability; the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services as well as their potential for further improvement and scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use; the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting; and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Conserving And Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 4.15 Paragraph 189 recognises that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. These 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.
- 4.16 Paragraph 194 requires applicants 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 proposed on their significance. Where a site includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, developers should submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 4.17 Paragraph 195 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset (or its setting) when considering the impact of a proposal to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The Development Plan

- 4.18 The Manchester Core Strategy outlines the Council's vision for Manchester from 2012 to 2027. The Manchester Interactive Proposals Map illustrates that the site falls within South Manchester (Policies EC9). The site has no specific allocation.
- 4.19 The key Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework (LDF) is Manchester's Core Strategy which was adopted on 11th July 2012. The following policies are key to this application:

CS Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character

- 4.20 CS Policy EN1 states that all development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design, as identified in national planning guidance and listed above and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located.
- 4.21 Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes. Design and Access Statements submitted with proposals for new development must clearly detail how the proposed development addresses the design principles, reinforces and enhances the local character of that part of the City and supports the achievement of the Core Strategy Strategic Objectives.

Policy EN3 Heritage

- 4.22 Throughout the city, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.
- 4.23 New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of area and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy DM1 'Development Management' states

- 4.24 Policy DM1 states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:
- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
 - Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
 - Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
 - Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.

- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space. • Refuse storage and collection.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.
- The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.
- Flood risk and drainage.
- Existing or proposed hazardous installations.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) Extant Policies

DC18.1 Conservation Areas

- 4.25 The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.
- 4.26 a. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation area 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);
 - iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;
 - v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.
- 4.27 b. The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.
- 4.28 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.
- 4.29 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.

- 4.30 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

5. Assessment of Proposals

- 5.1 This section demonstrates that the principle of the Proposed Development aligns with the adopted Development Plan, the Framework and other material considerations.

Principle of development

- 5.2 The application site is presently actively in use as tennis courts owned and occupied by The Northern and as such the principle of this use is established.
- 5.3 The intensification of the site to provide an additional court and upgrade facilities to support the growing number of members and is a testament to the recent success of the club.
- 5.4 The NPPF seeks to ensure development meets its economic, social and environmental Role. This scheme aims to contribute to the above areas as follows:
- Economic Role – providing a self-funding facility for use by The Northern
 - Social Role – providing additional modern facilities that will encourage recreational activity to members with the benefits to health and wellbeing associated with this and potentially grow the club and support additional members.
 - Environmental Role – ensuring that the existing natural environment is not harmed and that facilities are designed to conserve and reduce energy wastage wherever possible.
- 5.5 Impacts relating to residential and visual amenity must also be considered and will be detail within this section.

Healthy Communities

- 5.6 This proposal satisfies the above planning objectives and is beneficial to the advancement of sports activity and development. It will deliver genuine beneficial outcomes as follows:
- Implement social, recreational and cultural facilities and services for community needs to enhance the sustainability of The Northern Tennis Club.
 - Provide access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.
 - Better utilisation of space resulting from the proposed development by an equivalent, better provision by more robust and durable facilities.
- 5.7 In conclusion, the proposed facilities will replace existing grass courts:
- Better quality provision
 - Provide access to greater quantity of provision
 - In a suitable location

- Supported by effective and appropriate management arrangements
- Implemented with best practice construction techniques to minimise waste and pollution

5.8 For these reasons, we believe the following the proposals support and enhance the continued regeneration at The Northern and allow for the promotion of:

- Health and wellbeing.
- Promoting more sustainable development.
- Providing a clean, safe and modern facility to inspire sporting participation and will enhance the existing sport and recreation provision
- Encouraging and inspiring more people to participate in sport.

Noise

5.9 A Noise Impact Assessment by Clement Acoustics was conducted on-site to determine the existing noise climate around the proposed development and likely impacts as a result of the additional courts.

5.10 Attended noise measurements have been undertaken at The Northern, West Didsbury, Manchester. Criteria has been set for noise emissions arising from the use of additional all-weather tennis courts, based on the set requirements of relevant guidance documents and standards.

5.11 Calculations according to the guidance from the relevant documents indicate that internal and external noise levels are expected to comply with relevant criteria. Further calculations have demonstrated that the cumulative effects of noise from this tennis court application and another Padel court application would also comply with the criteria.

Heritage

5.12 A Heritage Statement has been produced by Kathryn Sather & Associates to support the application as the site lies within the Blackburn Park Conservation Area.

5.13 The impact of the proposed development has been assessed using Historic England guidance on conservation areas and the ICOMOS heritage impact methodology. As the heritage asset being assessed is the Conservation Area, therefore the magnitude of impact is assessed by considering the changes to the Conservation Area as a whole.

5.14 It is assessed that the proposed new facilities at the Northern Lawn Tennis Club have a negligible magnitude of change on the Conservation Area; the two grass courts in question do not constitute part of the core central area of grass but are separated from this by a path and surrounded on three sides by modern tennis facilities.

5.15 The site can therefore be said to have the capacity to accommodate change without substantial harm to the designated heritage assets within the search area, their setting and significance or to the historic character of the wider urban and historic landscapes in line with NPPF paragraph 201 and 202 and UDP Policy 19.1.

Lighting

- 5.16 The proposed lighting strategy has been produced by Exled to support the application.
- 5.17 The courts are centrally located and therefore any lighting will be considerate of residential properties around the perimeter further from residential housing, therefore considering neighbouring houses and any impact on amenity.
- 5.18 The proposed lighting associated with the courts will utilise the same light fittings as currently in place on other courts and are placed at the same height (8m) as existing columns.
- 5.19 There is ground illumination isolines for reference within the accompanying report and vertical measuring field (0-10m high) is detailed across the whole of the face of the nearest house.
- 5.20 Presently the floodlighting of outdoor courts is permitted until 22:00hrs daily and will be maintained with this development. Overall, the proposed lighting scheme will ensure that The Northern are adequately catering for the growing club by providing sufficient lighting of courts as required.

Need

- 5.21 The additional tennis courts are required as due to recent membership growth and the need to increase provision for all year round and all-weather tennis. These courts will provide 282 hours of tennis court usage capacity per week and will enable the club to grow the current partnerships with both the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan Universities. Currently there are 54 and 20 players for each university, and this would grow to by an additional 50 for each university, an additional 100 players in total.
- 5.22 Currently both university tennis teams train with the club however they are unable to host their team matches or extend membership for their social memberships. The additional capacity would enable the club to offer Manchester Metropolitan University the ability to move their whole rackets offering which would result in an additional 20 squash players using the club as their base.
- 5.23 In addition to this, there is a need for additional capacity to enable us to grow our partnership with local Manchester schools in conjunction with Manchester active and The Lawn Tennis Association. Currently the deliver coaching in 10 schools and at the club however due to court access, this is limited, and the club are unable to extend the programme.
- 5.24 The club would be able to grow this programme to include a further 10 schools as well as the ability to hold more higher-grade junior tournaments for the local community. These courts will enable support and grow the sport in the local area, and this will in turn help secure the future of the Northern from a financial perspective to provide sporting opportunities for the local community from children through to adults.

Summary

- 5.25 In light of the above, the proposed development will contribute vastly to the strategic ambitions of the Council by aligning with the pro-economic growth and regeneration policies of the NPPF and the development plan by delivering additional high quality sporting facilities.

5.26 It is therefore clear that there is policy support in principle in the Development Plan and other material considerations.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by NJL Consulting on behalf of The Northern Tennis Club. The purpose of this Planning Statement is to assist Manchester City Council (the Council) in the consideration of a planning application as follows:

'Full planning application for the redevelopment of three all-weather tennis courts with associated lighting and infrastructure.'

- 6.2 The proposal comprises sustainable development and accords with national and local planning policy. The NPPF is focused on ensuring effective uses of land and providing opportunities to promote healthy communities and as such the proposals detailed here fall in line with the expectations of sustainable development.
- 6.3 The principle of development is therefore fully acceptable, and the proposal accords with policy. The technical assessments demonstrate that the proposed development will not give rise to any significant adverse impacts on the area or amenity of nearby neighbours.
- 6.4 The development therefore constitutes sustainable development and raises no material considerations which would outweigh its accordance with the development plan when taken as a whole.
- 6.5 Therefore, the proposed development should be approved in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

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