

PLANNING STATEMENT

THE NORTHERN TENNIS CLUB

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Authorised for and on behalf NJL Consulting

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been produced on behalf of The Northern Tennis Club (the applicant) for the proposed development on land at The Northern (the site). The proposed description of development is as follows:

'Full planning application for the development of padel tennis courts, with associated areas of hardstanding, means of enclosure, lighting and associated infrastructure'

Proposals

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



Figure 1: Site Location

- 1.3 The proposed Padel Courts will be orientated north east to south west in line with the proposed redeveloped all-weather courts that are subject to a separate application adjacent 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 in this location will offer a higher level of use converting two underutilised courts to 3 no. compliant artificial turfed courts and the Padel Courts detailed within this application.
- 1.5 The delivery of each separate application will provide better utilisation of space while providing opportunities and capabilities for a growing the clubs facilities to support other sports such as padel tennis.

- 1.6 The Northern was one of the earliest UK clubs to provide squash courts and new tennis surfaces. It is in keeping with its character to be one of the first clubs in the northwest to make Padel tennis available to its members and the wider community through its community outreach programmes. This innovation compliments the provision of existing racquet sports and in turn will serve to attract and retain members, thereby contributing to the long-term viability of the Club and associated tournament.

Purpose of this statement

- 1.7 This Planning Statement sets out the context for the site and the proposed development against local and national planning policy.
- 1.8 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:
- Architectural Plans and Elevations
 - Lighting Assessment
 - Noise Assessment
 - Heritage Assessment
 - Padel Development Plan Document
- 1.9 The aforementioned documentation reflects the local and national validation requirements as those necessary to ensure the application's validation and determination.
- 1.10 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.
- 1.11 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

- 1.12 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, 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 Palestine 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 racquet 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 involve the redevelopment of existing tennis court space to provide padel courts as detailed in the below proposals plan including lighting and associated infrastructure.

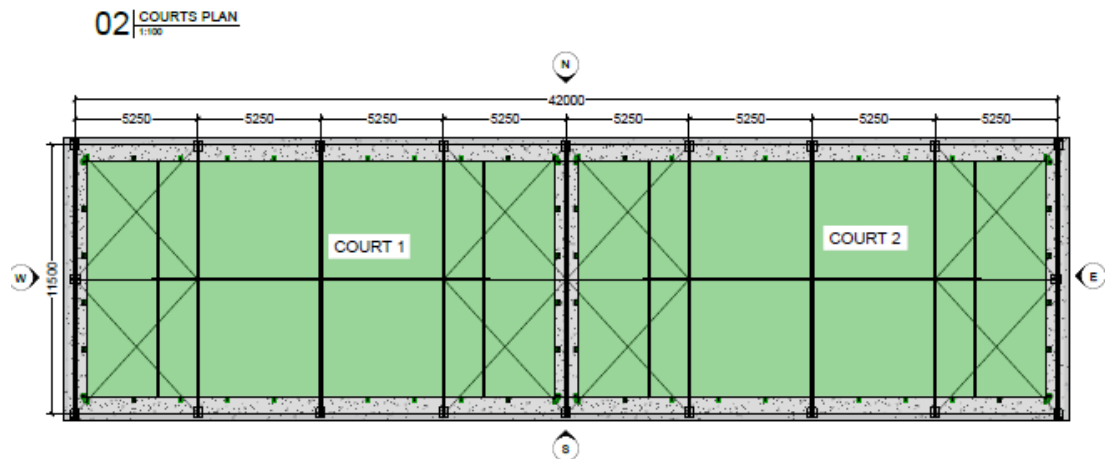


Figure 2: Proposed Court Plan

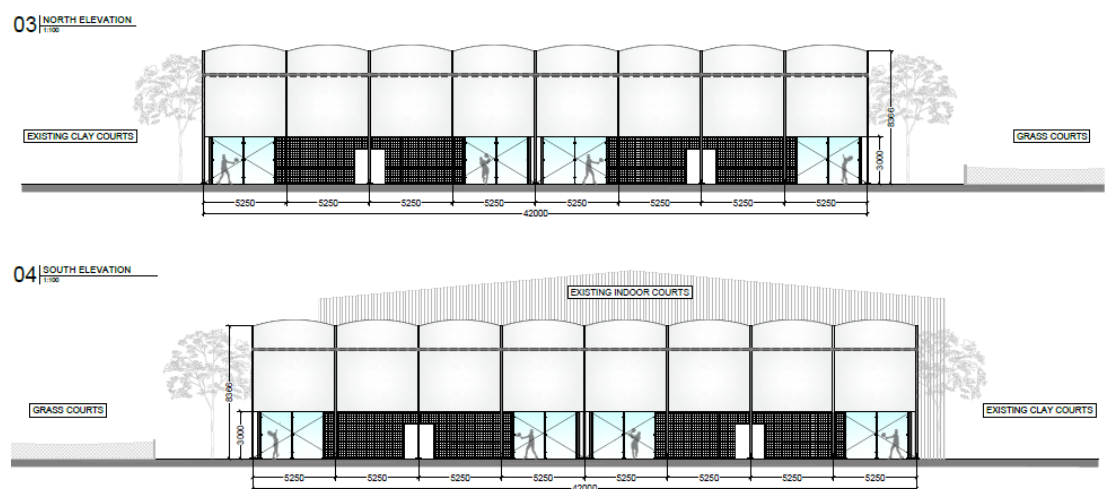


Figure 3: Proposed Elevations

Padel Tennis

- 3.2 Padel is a racquet sport similar to a mix between tennis and squash. The court is one third of the size of a tennis court. It is played on a court surrounded by walls of glass and metallic mesh. During the game the ball can be played off a wall.
- 3.3 Using a short, stringless racquet with holes and a low compression tennis ball, the service is made underarm. The game is not dominated to the same extent as tennis is, by strength, technique and serve. Compared to conventional tennis, points can be won more by strategy than strength and power.

- 3.4 There is a close relationship between padel tennis and conventional tennis and those who play each form of the sport. While some participants may be introduced to conventional tennis via padel tennis, some will remain players of padel tennis only. This will be because while padel tennis can be played to a very high level, it is also more accessible to those whose level of fitness, agility or skill make conventional tennis overly challenging or unrewarding (frustrating), even at an amateur and informal level.
- 3.5 Padel tennis therefore offers significant health and well-being benefits by attracting people who might not otherwise participate in a sport or indeed who might not otherwise participate in any form of exercise.

Layout

- 3.6 The proposed padel courts will be located adjacent to the boundary of the existing indoor courts to the north east and therefore benefits from screening. The paddle court will not be readily visible in the street scene due to the site being set well back from the road.
- 3.7 The neighbours to the south may have a limited view of the padel court fencing but this is set in the context of wider development. In terms of the visual impact of the proposal, this will not result in any demonstrable harm being caused to the visual amenity of the locality or the visual amenity of neighbours.
- 3.8 The existing footpath will be rerouted around the courts and provide direct pedestrian access.

Appearance

- 3.9 Aesthetically, the padel courts will enrich the current site and will remain consistent in design and lower than the current buildings on site.
- 3.10 The building will accommodate two courts, will have a canopy and supporting walls which are mesh and part tempered glass panels. This will allow full visibility of the court and of the sport being played, while protecting players from rain and wind and providing insulation.
- 3.11 Each court will be lit with by 4no 400W floodlights.

Scale

- 3.12 Each Padel court is rectangular, measuring 10 metres in width by 20 metres in length. Entrances are located at each side of the court. All these specifications comply with the standards established in the Regulations of the Padel Game revised by the International Padel Federation (IPF) on 1/1/2017

Landscaping

- 3.13 The existing site is mainly in use as the existing tennis courts so is limited to any landscaping. The proposals to not propose any additional landscaping however a space has been retained between the existing indoor courts and the proposed padel courts to retain a hedgerow that runs along the side of the existing indoor court.
- 3.14 This hedgerow will continue to be managed

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

CS Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character

- 4.18 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.
- 4.19 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

- 4.20 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.
- 4.21 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

- 4.22 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

- 4.23 The Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.
- 4.24 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.
- 4.25 b. The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.
- 4.26 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 or character of the area.
- 4.27 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.
- 4.28 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

Emerging Development Plan

Places for Everyone

- 4.29 Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine of the Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan)

for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts.

- 4.30 The plan is a joint development plan of the nine districts which will determine the kind of development that takes place in their boroughs, maximising the use of brownfield land and urban spaces while protecting Green Belt land from the risk of unplanned development. The Plan is at its publication consultation stage. Relevant policy includes:

Policy JP-P 2 Heritage

- 4.31 Through this Plan we will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance its historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place.
- 4.32 Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and a conservation area should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

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 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.

Need

5.9 The new covered padel tennis courts are required as due to recent membership growth we need to increase our racket sport offering. These courts will provide 188 hours of padel tennis court capacity per week. These courts will enable the club to provide a new growing racket sport which will complement the current tennis and squash offering as it provides the ideal cross-over sport for our existing members. This will also enable them to grow membership as currently the provision of padel tennis courts in Manchester is limited.

5.10 This proposals will enable The Northern to align with the Lawn Tennis Association strategy for padel tennis. A copy of this strategy is attached to the application. The provision of these courts will enable access for the community with a pay and play option as well as for members.

5.11 These courts will enable us to 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.

Noise

5.12 In response to concerns about noise from the paddle court, the applicant has submitted further information in way of a Noise Impact Assessment to understand implications.

5.13 Calculations have been undertaken for the Padel courts in constant use. Calculated noise emission levels in gardens and facades are lower than the recommended criterion and as such as acceptable.

5.14 The Noise Impact Assessment also considers the cumulative impact as a a result of a separate application for three all-weather courts which concluded that there would be no impact on residential properties as a result.

5.15 In terms of noise and UDP Policy DC26.1, 26.2 and 26.4 the proposal incorporates mitigation measures to ensure noise effects are acceptable and meet the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 185 and 186.

Heritage

- 5.16 A Heritage Statement has been produced by Katheryn Sather & Associates to support the application.
- 5.17 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.
- 5.18 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.
- 5.19 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

- 5.20 The application is accompanied by a lighting assessment by ExLed which confirms the level of luminosity from the proposed lighting.
- 5.21 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.
- 5.22 The courts will be lit by 8no 6.2 metre 400w floodlights, 4 per court.
- 5.23 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.

Summary

- 5.24 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.
- 5.25 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 development of padel tennis courts, with associated areas of hardstanding, means of enclosure, lighting and associated 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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