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Via Planning Portal only

9th April 2024

Dear Sir/madam

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION – TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Please accept this letter as the heritage statement for this planning application for the alterations to the existing tennis courts at Lensbury Club.

Description of Development

Alterations to the site layout including the removal, addition and reorientation of courts, removal and erection of lighting columns, removal and erection of court enclosures and nets, partial demolition and extension of the existing retaining wall and the erection of open sided canopies in association with the tennis/ mini-red junior tennis, pickleball and padel tennis use and associated works.

For full details of the proposed development please refer to the supporting plans.

Site Address

Lensbury, Club, Broom Road, Teddington, TW11 9NU.

The Site

The application site comprises an outdoor sports facility, which is part of a wider leisure club. The wider site extends to approx. 9.8 hectares, divided between 8.7 hectares on the eastern side (riverside site) of Broom Road and 1.1 hectares on the western side (roadside site).

The application site is located on the south side of Broom Road, comprising part of the club's existing tennis courts. The site currently comprises two tennis courts and 3 mini-red junior tennis courts. The site does not contain any listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments, is not located in a conservation area and is not located within the setting of any listed buildings or any scheduled ancient monuments.

The main Lensbury Club building is located approximately 90 metres to the east of the site is a building of townscape merit (a non-designated heritage asset).

The Proposal

Excavation works to provide single basement floor level with swimming pool, side and rear extensions at ground floor level, extensions and alterations to coach house and other external alterations including new windows, doors and associated internal works and reinstatement/ repair of boundary treatments, removal of car port and erection of cycle store, associated landscaping, and conversion from six self-contained flats to a dwelling house (Class C3).

For full details of the proposed development please refer to the supporting plans.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three specific strands – economic, environmental and social. Section 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment) is relevant to the determination of this application.

Local Planning Policy

For the purposes of this application, the adopted development plan for the London Borough of Richmond comprises the London Plan (2021) and the Local Plan (2019). Richmond's Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents are material planning considerations.

London Plan (2021)

HC1: Heritage Conservation Area and Growth

Local Plan (2019)

LP4: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Planning Assessment

Heritage Appraisal

Context:

The Lensbury Club building is located approximately 90 metres to the east of the application site. The building was added to Richmond's Building of Townscape Merit Register in September 1983 (reference 83/01977/BTM).

London Plan Policies HC1 reiterates that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to the assets significance and appreciation in their surroundings.

Local Plan Policy LP4 states that the Council will seek to preserve and where possible enhance the significance, character and setting of non-designated heritage assets including Buildings of Townscape Merit and that there will be a presumption against demolition of buildings of Positive Townscape Merit.

The site and its significance:

The application site does not comprise any listed buildings and is not located in the conservation area. The main Lensbury Club building on the north side of Broom Road is a building of townscape merit (a non-designated heritage asset).

The building is a large storey red bricked Georgian-style building, designed by architects Walker and Harwood. It was built in the 1920/30's as a private sports club for Shell staff members. The building was extended in the 1970s and 1980s, including the addition of a conference centre, which sits between the main building and the application site.

The surrounding land was assimilated in the 1930's for use as part of the club. The setting of the site has been altered over the years through development in its wider setting, to the extent where only the open nature of the ground's surrounding the building make a meaningful contribution to its setting. The original part of the building is of some architectural interest by virtue of its design and materiality. This has been eroded somewhat by subsequent large extensions to the building in the 1970's and 1980's and numerous other alterations of varying quality. The largely undeveloped nature of parts of the buildings grounds makes a positive contribution to its setting, allowing the building to be perceived from public vantage points. It's wider setting comprises urban development, including the relatively recently constructed Riverside flats which are of some scale.

The proposal and its impacts

The proposal is for alterations to the court surfacing, enclosures and involves the erection of two canopies and flood lighting columns. The site is at a lower level to the street and owing to the distant proximity of the site from the non-designated Lensbury Club Building, the intervening built form and vegetation, the site is not considered to be in the setting of the non-designated heritage asset.

At most, the existing tennis court site has a neutral impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage. Even if this position is not agreed, the proposal involves minor changes to an existing tennis court site and does not materially increase its built volume. The site would remain visually permeable

and innocuous in the streetscape and thus would not have any adverse impacts on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset.

The proposed development would bring multiple public benefits through the provision of a diversified court offer, contribute positively to the viability of the Club and ensure that the site continues to appear well kept and maintained.

The proposal does not impact the setting of the Building of Townscape Merit and therefore preserves any contribution it makes to its setting. The proposal accords with London Plan Policy HC1 and Local Plan Policy LP4 and the NPPF.

Summary

For the reasons set out in this letter it is considered that the proposed development constitutes sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal is in accordance with the adopted development plan and there are no over-riding material planning considerations which suggest the development should not be determined anything but positively in accordance with the adopted development plan.

I trust this letter and the enclosed documents provide you with sufficient information to determine the application but if you require any points of clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Minty
Director
SM Planning