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Via Planning Portal only

9<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Dear Sir/madam

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION – TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Please accept this letter as the Openness Assessment 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 is within the Thames Policy Area and is part of an area of land designated as Metropolitan Open Space.

## 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 13 (Protecting Greenbelt Land) 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)

G3: Metropolitan Open Land

### Local Plan (2019)

LP13: Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Local Green space

LP14: Other Open Land of Townscape Importance

### Planning Assessment

London Plan Policy G3 states that metropolitan open land is afforded the same status and level of protection as Green Belt and be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with the national planning policy tests that apply to the Green Belt.

Paragraph 152 of the NPPF sets out that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 sets out that decision makers should give substantial weight to any harm to the Greenbelt and that very special circumstances would not exist unless the potential harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Paragraph 154 sets out that the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport are exempt from being inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as long as they preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

Policy LP13 sets out that metropolitan open land will be protected and retained in predominately open use. Appropriate uses in the metropolitan open land are identified as open recreation and sport, among others.

The site is located in Metropolitan Open Land and is currently used for tennis, which is an appropriate use in the Metropolitan Open Land.

The existing site comprises a single storey pavilion measuring approximately 2.5 metres to the ridge, 3,9 metres in width and 20 metres in length, with a footprint of 65 square metres. The site also comprises approximately 2500 sqm of hard surfacing, 12 lighting columns, approximately 350 metres of boundary treatments, 2 table tennis tables and 6 table and chair sets.

No changes are proposed to the existing building on the site or the hard surfacing extent. 7 additional lighting columns are proposed. Approximately 50 additional meters of boundary treatments are proposed and 2 open sided, visually permeable canopies are proposed each measuring approximately 8 metres in length 5 meters in width, 2.5 metres to the eaves and 3.5 metres to the ridge,

The proposed additional lighting units and boundary treatments and the proposed canopies are required to enable the site to diversify its racquet sport offer and allow it to be used year round.

Owing to their configuration, scale and visual permeability, the proposed court enclosures, lighting, canopies and netting would not result in materially different openness impacts than that which currently exist. Furthermore, the proposed development enhances the racquet sport offer that the club provides, to the benefit of its members.

The proposal is appropriate development in Metropolitan Open Land and preserves the openness of the site, in accordance with London Plan Policy G3 and Local Plan Policies LP1 and LP13.

### 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