



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Sand Arena

Ham Polo Club, Petersham Road, Petersham, Richmond, TW10 7AH

This design and access statement is to accompany a planning application for a new sand arena at Ham Polo Club, as detailed on the accompanying drawings and reports.

1.0 SITE AND CONTEXT

1.1 Ham Polo Club's land covers around 25 acres to the south of the River Thames, and is bound by Park Lane Stables and the German School London to the east and Melancholy Walk and Ham House to the west. The club itself has a Club House positioned centrally and a livery to the east, with polo pitches to the north and south. The pitch to the north is bound by an equestrian exercise track, which was resurfaced relatively recently under planning approval 21/3248/FUL. There is a small sand arena to the north west, and a grassed area to the south of that which forms the western boundary.

1.2 Vehicular access to the Polo Club is via a shared unadopted road which enters the site in the south east corner, and is accessible from the A307 at Petersham.

1.3 Ham Polo Club is within the Ham House Conservation Area and is close to Ham House which is a Grade I Listed Building and a Scheduled ancient monument. The estate of Ham House is Grade II* listed, along with the adjacent German School. The site is within three Metropolitan Open Land Designations (Douglas House, Ham House, and Ham Polo) and forms part of a Site of Nature Importance (Field North of Ham House), Public Open Space (Meadows in front of Ham House and Petersham Meadows) and is within Flood Zones 2, 3, 3a and 3b, an Archaeological Priority Area and Thames Policy Area. There are also a number of protected views and vistas across the site. The site for the new arena is within the conservation area, but outside of the grade II listed registered historic park (Ham House Sandy Lane).

2.0 HAM POLO CLUB

2.1 Ham Polo Club is the last remaining of the many club's that existed as satellites to London's 'Big Three' - Ranelagh, Hurlingham and Roehampton. The club began life as the Ham Common Polo Club in 1926, with one full sized ground and two smaller grounds. Ham

Common Polo Club was ideal for Londoners who did not compete in the major tournaments at the 'Big Three' but who played for the fun of the game.

2.2 In 1947, the first post war English polo tournament was held at Roehampton and the Ham Polo Club team carried off the premier trophy known as the Roehampton Cup (which is now played for at Ham Polo Club). Three years later, in 1950, the Club began using a field adjacent to Ham House to host matches, which is where they still reside today. The club are passionate about furthering the sport of Polo, and have maintained their original philosophy of making polo accessible to all, and not just to those who compete at an elite level.

2.3 Traditional polo is only played at Ham Polo Club from April to September, as it is unsafe for players and ponies alike to play through the wetter winter months, due to increased risk of injury as the grass surface becomes muddy and slippery.

2.4 As well as traditional Polo matches, Ham Polo Club provides polo lessons and riding lessons on a day to day basis, with participants predominantly being non members. The club supplies horses for these lessons, together with accredited instructors, and these lessons currently benefit a wide demographic of people within the local community. There is an efficient booking procedure in place for this via the Club's website and on-site administrative team.

2.5 Similarly to traditional polo, the club predominantly undertakes these lessons in the summer months, due to ground conditions and safety, as the participants are largely beginners and can be inexperienced riders. As a result of this, during the winter months, numbers are reduced to a handful of lessons across weekends only.

2.6 Given that Ham Polo Club only hosts Polo matches and the vast majority of riding and polo lessons within the warmer, summer months, the Club's activities are significantly reduced during the winter months. Only skeletal staff remain on site in order to facilitate the on site livery, which remains operational all year round.

2.7 Ham Polo Club is set up as a Company Limited through Guarantee. As such, they operate very differently from a normal company. The club can make profits and losses the same as any other company, but there are no shareholders and any profits can not be taken as dividends by its members. Instead they are kept within the club until they are needed for reinvestment purposes only. Many sports clubs are set up like this, with the Club's members having voting rights but no right to withdraw any profits from the club. Therefore all of the profits generated by the club, whether it be from polo matches, riding lessons or from spectators, is reinvested back into the club to improve its facilities and in turn enhance the range of activities offered to the local and wider community.

3.0 WINTER POLO

3.1 Winter Polo, sometimes called Arena Polo, is a smaller, faster paced version of traditional polo which is played on an all-weather surface and has its own rules. The typical game consists of four chukkas (or periods) of six and half minutes each.

3.2 The sport is played on a smaller pitch than traditional polo, which is fully enclosed by inclined walls of 1.5m or more tall. The ball has the same characteristics as a mini football and is larger and softer than the hard plastic ball used in outdoor polo. Due to the smaller pitch size players use the inclined perimeter walls to bounce and pass the ball off, similarly to

indoor football, so the requirement for a solid, close boarded fence is imperative. In comparison, the ball used for traditional polo is smaller and harder and bears more resemblance to a cricket ball, and will not bounce as high as a winter polo ball when struck. This is why a traditional polo field only has a 200mm high kick board to its perimeter.

3.3 Winter polo is played on a sand based surface which is developed specifically for equestrian activities and will not become slippery and hazardous like wet, muddy grass. This ensures that polo can be played safely during the wetter winter months.



Figure 01 - Traditional polo with 200mm high kick board to perimeter and small, hard polo ball



Figure 02 - Winter polo with 1.5m high incline fence to perimeter and larger, softer polo ball

3.4 A Winter Polo team is made up of three players, meaning that the whole team has to commit to either attack or defence, quickly switching between the two, meaning the pace of the game is a lot quicker. Winter Polo also makes a great introduction for beginners and novice players as it is a great way to learn to play polo, within a safe, manageable enclosure.

4.0 THE PROPOSALS

4.1 The proposal is for a new sand arena in the northeast corner of Ham Polo Club's site. The arena would be 90m x 45m as is shown on the accompanying drawings.

4.2 The area is currently used as corrals for the horses, part of an exercise track, part of a polo pitch and there is an area of scrubland to the north. The east boundary has an ornate hedgerow which is circa 3m high, and there is a native hedgerow to the north of similar height. The exercise track would be shortened to accommodate the new arena, as is shown on the accompanying drawings.

4.3 A 1.5m high close boarded, inclined timber fence would enclose the new arena, which would allow the club to safely facilitate a broad spectrum of uses, including winter polo, riding lessons in the winter months, schooling for lunging/dressage and jumping for non polo.

4.4 Currently, horses at the club are turned out on the grassed area to the north of the existing smaller sand arena to the west edge of the site. This is problematic as trespassers are free to wander on to the land and come into contact with the horses, which poses a health and safety risk to the public and horses alike. There have been numerous issues in the past with dogs running onto the area and the public feeding the horses. The proposed sand arena would also provide a safer, more practical area for turning out the horses, as well as the other uses previously described.

4.5 Being able to use the sand arena for the previously mentioned equestrian activities throughout the year, but especially in the winter, would help to establish a more even usage of the club throughout the course of the year, rather than just during the summer season which runs from April - September. This would be of great benefit to the club and local community alike. The local community would benefit from the all year round availability of riding lessons, polo lessons and other equestrian activities on a purpose built, implicitly safe sand arena. Ham Polo Club would benefit from being able to be operational all year around, rather than having to essentially close down during the summer months, which is an extremely difficult business model to make successful.

4.6 If planning approval was granted for the proposed new sand arena, it would provide Richmond with a world class equestrian facility, and allow Ham Polo Club to further their ethos of making polo accessible to all. The arena will be used to enhance Ham Polo Club's provision of Polo to players of all ages and abilities throughout the year, whether members or not, and would benefit from the administrative infrastructure that is already in place.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 An application for a similar sized sand arena was recently refused and then dismissed at appeal. The site for this refused application was to the western edge of the site, and was within the grade II listed Registered Park and Garden (RPG), and in the curtilage of Ham House.

5.2 The appeal reference was **APP/L5810/W/23/3327811**, and the original planning application reference was **21/2454/FUL**. On the appeal decision notice, the Inspector accepted the development was not inappropriate in the MOL, and that there was no conflict with national Green Belt policy or any other policy which sought to protect the MOL from inappropriate development.

5.3 During the assessment of the heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposal, the inspector concluded that "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. It explains that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. In this case, harm would result to several designated assets, of which the RPG is Grade II* and Ham House is Grade I listed, respectively denoting their particular and exceptional heritage importance."

5.4 The inspector went on to say that: "Overall, given this particularly sensitive context, I am not persuaded that the sum of public benefits would outweigh the harm. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with national policy to protect the historic environment."

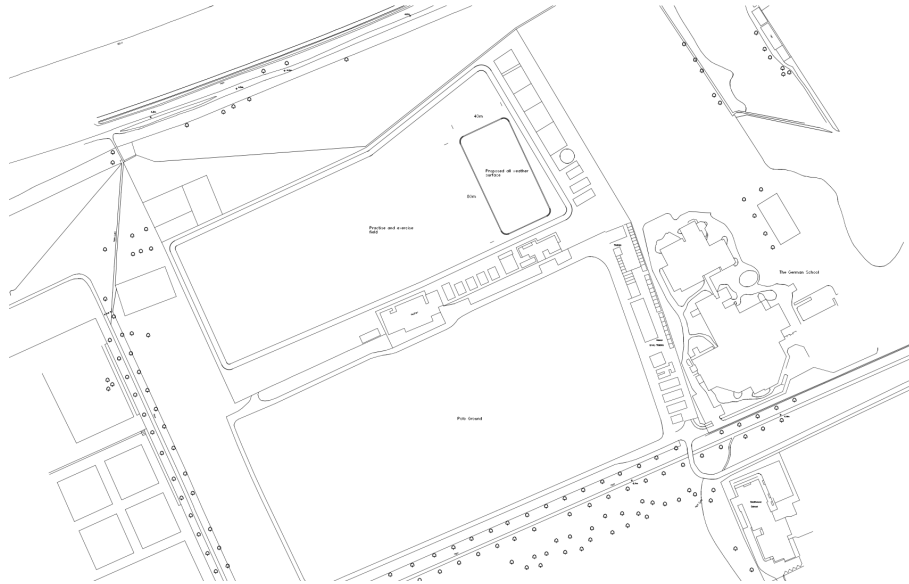
5.5 So to summarise the Inspectors findings:

1. The principle of the development is appropriate within the MOL
2. Given its proximity to the local heritage assets including the Grade 1 Listed Ham House, and its proposed location within the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, the proposals would cause less than substantial harm on the heritage assets, which the public benefits would not outweigh.

5.6 This new planning application responds positively to the inspector's findings. The applicant agrees with the Inspector that the principle of the development is appropriate

within the MOL. The site for the new sand arena has been relocated to the far eastern end of the site and is now completely outside of the RPG.

5.7 To add further weight to the suitability of the new location, a planning application for a similar sand arena to the east of the site was approved in late 2012, ref. **12/0926/FUL**, which is relevant history, given the similar location to the new proposal.



5.8 The location is shown in the image above. This was never implemented by the club, as at the time it was deemed to encroach too far into the top polo pitch. The site for the current application is very similar to the previously approved site.

5.9 In the Planning Officer's report in 12/0926/FUL, it was concluded that *"Given the appearance of the enclosure itself would be similar to that of an ordinary fence in terms of materials and height and that the surface material is of a natural finish which is earthy in colour, it is considered that the proposal would result in no unacceptable impact on the openness or character of the area. It would not intrude into the key designated views / vista from Marble Hill, the Star and Garter, Richmond Hill Radnor Gardens and the Twickenham Embankment."* Emphasis added given the similar location of the sand arena proposed within this new application.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main planning considerations are as follows:

- i. Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)
- ii. Land use / Public Open Space
- iii. Design and impact on Heritage Assets
- iv. Archaeology
- v. Residential amenity
- vi. Biodiversity
- vii. Trees
- viii. Transport
- ix. Flood risk and drainage
- x. Fire safety

6.2 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) / Land use / Public Open Space

6.3 As was discussed in 5.2, the planning inspector in **APP/L5810/W/23/3327811** concluded that the proposed use was not inappropriate for the MOL.

6.4 With regard to the proposed perimeter fencing, the inspector noted that, *“In terms of the enclosure fencing, it is explained that it must be close boarded and be of the minimum height required to provide suitable facilities for arena polo, as the ball is bounced off the fence during play. Effectively the fencing comprises part of the playing surface for this outdoor sport. On that basis, I am satisfied that the fencing would comprise an appropriate facility for outdoor sport. Seen in combination with the flat arena area, there would be a marginal change to the prevailing open spatial qualities of the land”*.

6.5 Continuing on the subject of openness, the inspector noted that, *“In terms of visual openness, the land would remain predominantly open in nature and the restricted height of the perimeter fencing would allow for views over it”,* and that, *“whilst there would be visual changes to the land because of the proposal, the attribute of visual openness would be largely preserved.”*

6.6 The inspector went on to conclude that *“Assessing the development holistically, it would result in some spatial and visual changes, but they are ones that I judge would ultimately preserve the openness of the MOL.”* The applicant agrees with this conclusion, which is relevant and transferable to the new proposal.

6.7 Design and impact on Heritage Assets

6.8 In the Planning Inspector’s report for the previous refused appeal, the inspector concluded that *“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. It explains that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. In this case, harm would result to several designated assets, of which the RPG is Grade II* and Ham House is Grade I listed, respectively denoting their particular and exceptional heritage importance.”*

6.9 In this revised submission, the location of the sand arena has been moved completely out of the RPG, and as far from Ham House as the site allows.

6.10 A Heritage Statement, written by AB Heritage Ltd has been submitted with this new application. The report concluded that, *“Ham House Conservation Area was the only heritage asset susceptible to impacts arising from the proposed development. In turn, the Ham House Conservation Area was assessed to be of Very High Heritage Significance. Other built heritage assets in the study area including Ham House & Gardens, Douglas House and the German School were carefully considered and concluded to not be susceptible to impacts due to distance, intervening development and substantial tree screening”*.

6.11 The Heritage Statement goes on to conclude *“The Impact Assessment concerning built heritage concluded that despite the proposed development altering a small part of the Ham Polo Club from part playing field and an enclosed area for horses, to a sand arena, this would not alter the character of the site as a sports and leisure facility adjacent to the modern Club buildings and stables. There was concluded to be No Harm to Ham House Conservation Area, in line with local and national planning policy.”*

6.12 Whilst the applicant agrees with the findings from the Heritage Statement, if the council decides that there is some level of Harm to the Heritage assets, it is submitted that the harm would certainly be less than substantial, and clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the new sand arena, which are discussed later in this report.

6.13 Views

6.14 In the Planning Officer's report in 12/0926/FUL, it was concluded that *"It would not intrude into the key designated views / vista from Marble Hill, the Star and Garter, Richmond Hill Radnor Gardens and the Twickenham Embankment."* Emphasis added given the similar location of the sand arena proposed within this new application.

6.15 The tall hedgerows to the east and north of the proposed sand arena would further screen the arena from these views.

6.16 Archaeology

6.17 The Archaeology report produced by AB Heritage Ltd concluded that there is a Low – Medium potential for encountering archaeological remains of the Prehistoric period within the site boundary. If Prehistoric finds or features were encountered within the site boundary depending on their nature and age, they could range anywhere between Low to High Significance. As such it is suggested that a watching brief condition is added to the planning approval, should the planning officer be minded to approve the application.

6.18 Residential amenity

6.19 Due to the distance from any residential buildings, and the current use of the area for equestrian based activities, the proposals will have no impact on privacy, pollution, visual intrusion, noise and disturbance, and will therefore comply with Policy LP8 (Amenity and Living Conditions) of the Local Plan.

6.20 Ecology and Biodiversity

6.21 An ecology survey accompanies the planning application from specialists Arbtech, which assessed the potential impact on biodiversity and ecology. Please see the accompanying report from Arbtech for further information and mitigation measures. The aim of the survey was to complete an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the survey area and all land that will be impacted by the proposal.

6.22 It was recommended within the report that planting fruit trees across the wider site would enhance the foraging potential for badgers, in line with the Local Authorities duty under the National Planning Policy Framework, and a condition of this nature would be welcomed by the applicant, should the council be minded to approve the application.

6.23 Various other Ecological enhancements, such as bird boxes, hedgehog houses, insect friendly planting and filling in the gappy hedgerows, have been included within the Ecology Report, which accompanies this application, to ensure compliance with Local Plan Policy LP15 - Biodiversity, which again, the applicant would welcome to be secured via planning condition.

6.24 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation is also submitted with the application. The BNG results demonstrate that a 28.5% net gain in habitat units and 186% gain in hedgerow units can be delivered on the wider site, well exceeding the standard 10% net gain target. The condition of existing and proposed habitats is appropriately assessed, ensuring the habitats proposed, and correlating net gain, are realistic and deliverable.

6.25 The enhancements to the site are proposed along the western boundary of the site, adjacent to Melancholy Walk in an enhancement strip which would stretch the length of the avenue. This would help to improve the existing native hedgerow, and provide improved habitat via modified grassland to the border of the site.

6.26 As noted above, it is the intention that post-development habitats would be managed under a Landscape & Biodiversity Management Plan. This would cover a 30-year period of management of monitoring of the proposed habitats and details of how each habitat will be maintained to achieve its target condition.

6.27 Trees

6.28 There are no trees on the application site, and no trees would be affected by the proposals.

6.29 Transport

6.30 A Transport Statement is included with the application documents which demonstrates that the sand arena would not result in an unmanageable increase to vehicular movement due to the additional activities / events that the new sand arena would facilitate. The new sand arena facility will enable additional uses mainly in the winter months when grass is not suitable for polo or riding activities. As such, rather than increasing vehicular travel into the site at peak times, it would balance the usage of the club out over the whole year.

6.31 Flood Risk and Drainage

6.32 The site is within flood zones 2, 3, 3a and 3b. A flood risk assessment by ARK Environmental is included with the planning application submission.

6.33 A series of 300mm x 300mm drainage channels are proposed to be excavated from underneath the new arena and will contain 100mm diameter perforated pipework in order for the arena surface to act as a large soakaway. This will ensure that the arena is utilised all year round, and will not affect flooding elsewhere, in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP21 Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage.

6.34 The proposed levels of the new sand arena have been designed to ensure no increase in ground levels at all over the entire application site, in order to ensure that no flood storage is lost as a result of the development, in line with guidance from the Environment Agency.

6.35 Fire safety

6.36 A Fire Safety Statement is included within the application to accord with London Plan Policy D12. The document adds to the robust fire safety strategy of the site as a whole.

7.00 COMMUNITY BENEFIT

7.01 The new sand arena would bring a multitude of benefits to the local community, which this section of the report will quantify.

7.02 SIMILAR FACILITIES

7.03 The Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA) is the governing body for Polo in the UK, Ireland and many other countries throughout the world. The HPA website lists clubs which offer Traditional Polo, and also lists clubs that offer Winter Polo. The map below shows the location of the nearest polo clubs with an arena.

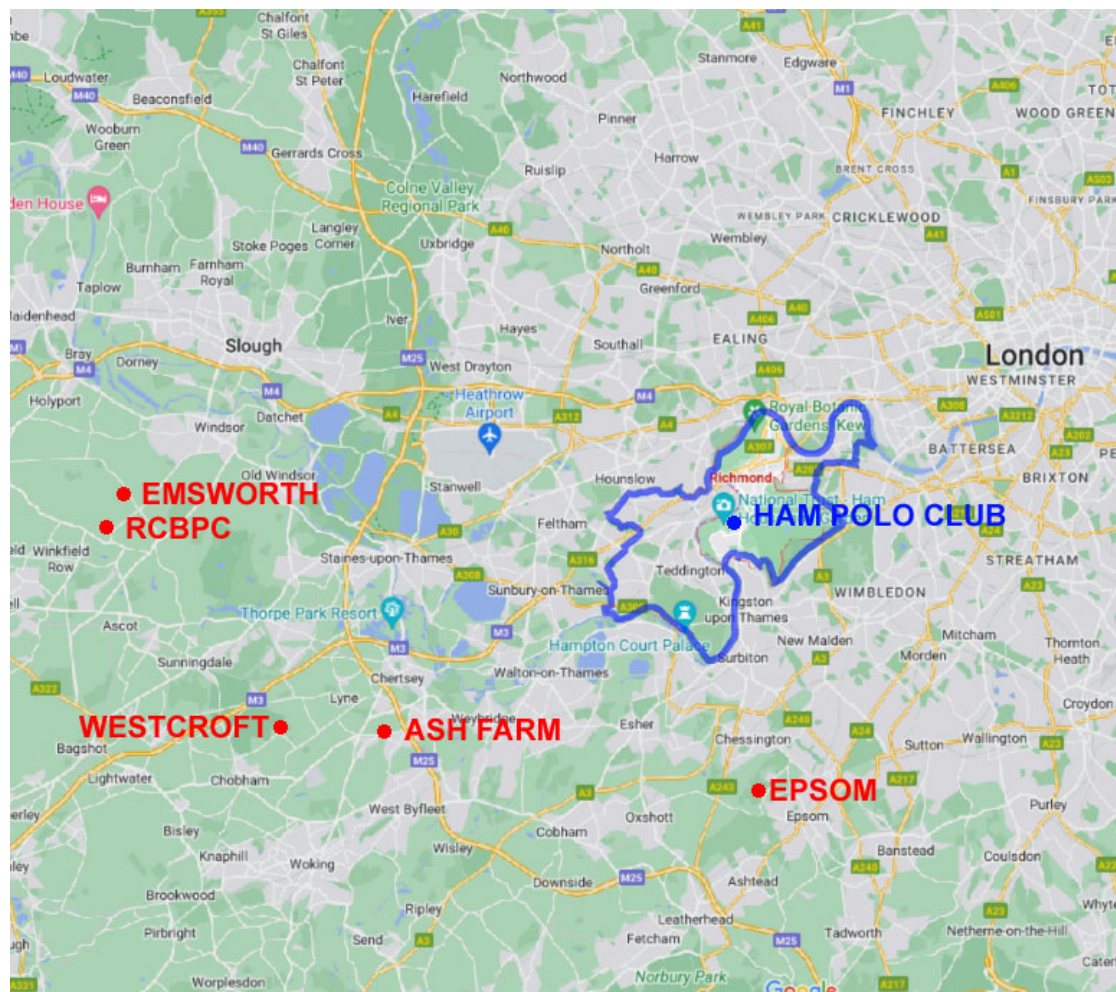


Figure 7 - Alternative Polo Sites

7.04 The Borough of Richmond on Thames is outlined in blue. If approved, the Sand Arena at Ham Polo Club will be the only arena in the Borough. The table below shows the distance to each representative club on the map, and their distance away from Ham Polo Club.

Club	Distance from Ham Polo Club
Emsworth	25 miles / 60 mins by car
Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club (RCBPC)	24 miles / 60 mins by car
Westcroft Park	25 miles / 50 mins by car
Ash Farm	18 miles / 55 mins by car
Epsom	10 miles / 45 mins by car

7.05 The proposed Arena offers a clear strategic value to the Borough of Richmond on Thames, as it would be the only such facility within the Borough. The local community currently has a significant journey to reach any of the closest similar facilities, and so the location at Ham Polo Club is within the public interest. It will provide the community with access to Polo throughout the winter months, as well as other equestrian uses.

7.06 Polo and Riding Lessons for the Community

7.07 As well as traditional Polo matches, Ham Polo Club provides polo lessons and riding lessons on a day to day basis throughout the summer months, with participants predominantly being non members. For example, a study of the club's recent data from July 2022 shows that 27 riding lessons and 102 polo lessons were undertaken. Riding and Polo Lessons are predominantly on a one on one basis, with the occasional group session. In July 2022 there were 8 group sessions in total, with typically 6 participants per group.

7.08 The club currently predominantly undertake these lessons in the summer months, due to ground conditions and safety, as the participants are largely beginners and can be inexperienced riders. In the winter months, numbers are reduced to a handful of lessons across weekends only. The new sand arena will be able to accommodate these activities, as well as winter polo, throughout the entire year which will clearly be of benefit to the local community, given the use of what will be a first class facility. The new sand arena will also enable more group sessions, due the perimeter fence and the additional security that it will provide.

7.09 Taking July 2022 as a typical month, a simple estimate at the potential numbers is as follows:

Polo Lessons = 102
Riding Lessons = 27
Total = 129 lessons.

Of the 129 lessons, 8 were group sessions, with 6 participants per group
= 129-8 + (8x6)
= **169 Participants per month**

7.10 So this gives a reliable estimation of predominantly non member participants of 169 per month. Given that the club currently have full time lessons between April - September, that leaves the 6 months between October - March where the new arena could facilitate 1014 additional participants per year which would predominantly be to non members.

7.11 The reality is that this number could be higher given the arena’s ability to enable more group sessions as previously discussed. Even if it assumed that a third of these lessons (38 per month) could be group lessons, that would give a projected monthly community participation number as follows:

Of the 129 lessons, 8 were group sessions, with 6 participants per group
 = 129-38 + (38x6)
= 319 Participants per month

7.12 Taking July 2022 as a typical month, the following breakdown shows the demographic of the 169 participants:

Age: 20% of lessons were under 8s
 37% were aged 8-21
 18% under 40
 25% over 40s

Location: 52% were from within a 2 mile radius
 38% were from London Boroughs
 The remaining 10% were from further afield

7.13 The above data shows how the new Sand Arena will benefit a broad demographic of the local community, and London Boroughs. As previously discussed, the new sand arena would allow a similar number of participants throughout the winter months as well. Using the numbers above as representative of a typical month, the arena would create around an additional 1,000 sessions per year, benefitting close to 2,000 people, given that there would be more group sessions in the summer months with the new arena in place. Using the location demographic figures above, the Arena is likely to benefit around 1040 per year, for people living within a 2 mile radius, and a further 760 per year from the London Boroughs.

7.14 In order for the club to ensure that the local community were aware of these opportunities, they would continue to advertise within local publications including the Ham and Petersham Magazine, provide leaflets at the Visitors Information Desk at Richmond Station and through door drops, advertise on various social media platforms and at the University Freshers Fairs at Roehampton University. Utilising all of the above avenues would ensure that the facilities would be marketed to a broad range of the local community.

7.15 Ham Polo Club’s website also advertises and promotes their facilities for learning to ride and learning to play polo. www.hampoloclub.com/learn-to-play-1 gives details on how to arrange lessons, hire equipment and ponies, and also the process of learning to play polo. It has testimonials from previous participants.

7.16 Polo and riding lessons will be competitively priced, to allow inclusivity for the community. What Ham Polo Club charge for lessons is detailed in the table below:

LESSONS	Midweek	Weekend
Adult 1 Hour Polo Lesson (£100 with own horse)	£170	£170

Junior 1 Hour Polo Lesson (£80 with own horse)	£110	£110
Group Polo Lessons (3-6 persons for 2.5 hours)	£340	£340
Adult Riding Lesson 1 Hour	£85	£85
Adult Riding Shared Lesson 1 Hour	£65	£65
Riding lesson 30 mins child	£50	£50

A quick google search of prices from other local riding schools give the following:

Stag Lodge Stables Child Riding Lesson 30 mins £45 Weekday / £50 Weekend
Adult Riding Lesson 1 hour £75 Weekday £88 Weekend

Ham House Stables Child Riding Lesson 30 mins £50 Weekday / £50 Weekend
Adult Riding Lesson 45 mins £73 Weekday / £75 Weekend

7.17 This shows that the riding lessons are competitively priced when compared to other local riding schools, to ensure inclusivity for the community.

7.18 Many of the previous Stables and Riding Schools surrounding Richmond Park have been lost over the years, and as such the amount of riding schools and lessons available in the borough are in decline. This is mainly a result of the high resale cost of development sites in the area and they are being sold on to developers to build flats. Most recently Kingston Riding School has moved to a site in Chessington which is over 30 minutes drive away. Ham Polo Club's new Arena will help to supply riding lessons back to the community and ensure that the availability of equestrian activities to the local community is secured for years to come.

7.19 **The University of Roehampton** have expressed a firm interest in using the arena to develop the University of Roehampton Polo Club and the South West London Universities League. The University is located 4.5 miles away from Ham Polo Club.

7.20 The full letter is listed below:

Dear Howard,

We were very pleased to hear about your plans to develop a Polo Arena at Ham Polo Club, especially given our own plans here at Roehampton Sports to set up the University of Roehampton Polo Club which is scheduled to be launched in September this year.

By doing so we aim to open up the sport of Polo to our diverse and vibrant community of over 10,000 students hailing from over 100 different countries from around the world. In doing so giving our students an invaluable experience in participating within a sport that they would otherwise not have had access to or indeed had even considered possible to play.

Our own plans include to eventually go on and become part of the Schools and Universities Polo Association and its proposed South West London Universities League which would include other Higher Education Institutions such as Surrey, Kingston and St Mary's Twickenham.

As a result of which Ham Polo Club and its proposed Polo Area would potentially play a pivotal role in the development of the University of Roehampton Polo Club and in turn the South West London Universities League.

Your vision in wanting to turn Ham Polo Club and its proposed Polo Arena into a sporting centre of excellence and to widen community participation in terms of diversity and inclusivity is only to be commended.

We look forward to developing a partnership with Ham Polo Club for the benefit of students here at Roehampton and bringing Polo back home to Roehampton where it began in the United Kingdom over 120 years ago.

Best regards,

James

James Ayres

Head of Sport and Active Communities

Sport and Active Communities

University of Roehampton

London

SW12 5PU

7.21 Barnfield Riding School

7.22 Ham Polo Club have also approached Barnfield Riding School during a fundraiser at the Polo Club to inquire about potentially hiring out the sand arena, and received the following response:

Dear Howard,

Following our recent fundraiser at Ham Polo Club I can confirm that BRS would be interested in taking part in further community fundraising events possibly using your planned enlarged arena.

The idea of equestrian events on a suitable surface during the winter and your proposal to hold a jousting competition open to the public at Christmas time to raise funds for BRS and other charities would certainly be of great interest to us.

Hopefully this will also support with maintaining equestrianism as a prominent part of local life and given the location near to Ham House a medieval weekend with horses, tents, costumes and traditional food could be a lovely family friendly annual occasion.

I would once again like to thank you for arranging the fundraising evening last month, the funds raised will make a big difference

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Kind regards,

Patsyanne Rose

Chairman BarnField Riding for the disabled

7.23 The supportive email above emphasises another community benefit of the proposed facility in terms of the potential to help smaller, local riding schools to further their provision and hold fundraising events at any time of the year.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 This design and access statement and the accompanying reports respond positively to the reasons for refusal of the previous proposals, mainly by relocating the arena outside of the RPG and away from the designated heritage assets.

8.2 If the Council was minded to decide that the new sand arena would cause harm to the conservation area and its heritage assets, it is submitted that, and backed up by the accompanying heritage statement, any harm caused would be less than substantial. This would be outweighed by the identified benefits to the local community and polo club by offering an extended provision of equestrian and polo related activities, and therefore in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies LP1 and LP3 of the Local Plan.

W Aust

WA Architecture

BSc(Hons), BArch, PGcert, ARB