

**LOCATION:** Allianz Park, Greenlands Lane, London, NW4 1RL

**REFERENCE:** 16/8568/ENQ

**Received:** 25 October 2016

**Accepted:** 26 October 2016

**WARD(S):** Mill Hill

**APPLICANT:** Saracens Copthall Ltd.

**PROPOSAL:** Extension and development of the existing Community Stadium at Allianz Park and the rationalisation of certain elements of the existing consent for the site.

## 1. DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

It is proposed to demolish the existing West Stand and replace with a new permanent spectator stand comparable in scale and appearance to the existing East Stand. The new stand will increase permanent spectator capacity of the Stadium from 10,000 to no more than 10,500.

As well as providing spectator seating, the new west stand will also include ancillary hospitality areas and space for the Saracens Sports Foundation. These will allow the Foundation to develop new community services initiatives.

The new West Stand will also incorporate new education accommodation, in the form of a purpose-built practice simulation suite, for Middlesex University. This would allow Middlesex University to expand training for undergraduate and post-graduate nursing students and researchers.

As well as redevelopment of the West Stand, the application will also seek a new consent to retain the existing East Stand and the demountable stands to north and south of the pitch. A new legal agreement linked to any new permission would carry forward the provisions of the existing consent at Allianz Park but allow the update and rationalisation of the existing stadium management plans to reflect the proposed scheme.

The extended Allianz Park would continue to operate in one of its three consented 'modes' - namely:

1. During the summer (May to August) for community sport, athletics and higher education
2. On non-matchdays during the rugby season (September – May) it will be used for community sport, athletics training, rugby (including occasional team training), and higher education and
3. On matchdays during the rugby season for Saracens home fixtures

The proposals also seek to amend the existing vehicular means of access to the West Stand from Greenlands Lane and, in doing so, create new landscaped areas

and space for informal leisure and recreation on the land in front of the new stand and improve emergency vehicle access to the facility.

The application will also seek consent for the resurfacing of the existing permeable area of matchday parking to the rear of Copthall Cottages that has experienced serious drainage problems since it was originally resurfaced. It is proposed that this area be resurfaced to match the existing south car park, in order to improve both its usability and visual appearance. The car park will continue to be used by media vehicles and spectator coaches during major events, and by Middlesex University staff at other times.

In order to better accommodate existing non-matchday use of the Stadium (including the use of the East Stand for conferencing and banqueting events), and following discussions with the Council, the application will also seek consent for the existing car parking area to the south of stadium to be used for parking during all operational modes not just on matchdays.

The application also proposes minor ancillary development – including the means of enclosure of the Stadium (including an application for retrospective consent for the existing entrances located to the south of existing Stadium); a minor extension to the existing reception area of the East Stand; and consent for the erection of ancillary accommodation for the storage of athletics and matchday equipment which is currently lacking onsite and much needed by all users particularly the athletic clubs.

Finally, the application will also seek consent for a one-off annual increase in Stadium capacity to allow Saracens to host a home quarter final fixtures in European Cup competitions. This will be achieved by providing extended demountable spectator stands to the north and south of the existing pitch to allow Allianz Park to accommodate up to 15,000 spectators.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The proposed development is being reported to Planning Pre-application Committee to enable Members to view it at an early stage. Any comments made are of a provisional nature only and will not prejudice the final outcome of any planning application submitted for formal determination.

## **3. PLANNING HISTORY**

<b>Application Reference:</b>	H/00928/11
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Kevin Waters
<b>Proposal:</b>	The erection of a community sports stadium (under Class D2) of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) comprising: i.) the demolition of the existing east spectator terrace and “jumps area” and erection of

new permanent spectator stand for up to 2,856, spectators (comprising 7,248 sq metres of new floor space) incorporating hospitality areas, restaurants and bar (1,470 sq metres - under Use Class A3 and A4); ancillary offices and supporters' shop; indoor athletics training facility (1,536 sq metres); and surrounding pedestrian concourse and permeable surface piazza; and comprising ground source heat pump system, green roof and green walls, solar panels as well as bat and bird boxes;

ii.) minor external alterations to existing spectator west stand and refurbishment of existing viewing area to provide seating for 600 spectators and 30 media personnel together with internal refurbishment to provide new changing facilities and accommodation for officials, medical staff, media and athletics club;

iii.) the erection of four new demountable spectator stands to accommodate up to 5,988 spectators on match days between September and May, outside these months the stands will be removed;

iv.) temporary pitchside standing spectator areas in front of proposed East Stand for a further 600 spectators and hoardings for the 16 match days (all of which are to be removed from the athletics track outside match days);

v.) the excavation and re-surfacing of the existing football pitch and the laying out of a new artificial playing surface for rugby and community sport;

vi.) removal of existing stadium floodlighting and installation of new more sustainable floodlighting for the pitch and relocated athletics facilities;

vii.) removal of 12,061 sq metres of existing hardstanding (used as an overspill parking area) to south east of existing stadium and laying out of new "green" permeable surface area for parking up to 568 vehicles on match days and for other major events at the stadium and for use as informal sporting and recreation activities on non-major event days;

viii.) the creation of a new "green" surface on the existing disused all-weather pitch to the rear of Copthall Cottages to create an area for

	<p>informal sporting and leisure activities on all days except major event days. On major event days, the area will be used for coach and media vehicle parking subject to its being fully protected on such occasions by covering in accordance with detailed arrangements to be approved by the Local Planning Authority;.</p> <p>ix.) remodelling of the field events areas on land to the east of the proposed new East stand;</p> <p>x.) diversion of existing culvert and construction of new swale area and reed bed and the reforming of existing ground on the eastern boundary of the site in order to accommodate spoil arising from the works on the proposed East stand;</p> <p>xi.) retention and reinforcement of existing landscaping (including existing hedgerows) and provision of additional planting along the eastern and southern boundaries; and</p> <p>xii.) erection of new 20m high replacement mesh fence on boundary with existing "Metrogolf" driving range.</p>
<b>Stat Start Date</b>	18/03/2011
<b>Application Type</b>	Full Application
<b>Decision</b>	Granted following Completion of S106
<b>Decision Date</b>	30/03/2012

#### 4. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed application site comprises the existing Stadium at Allianz Park. It includes the existing East and West Stands, the permanent parking area to the immediate south of the Stadium, together with matchday parking areas to the south and north west of the Stadium, as well as the area of landscaping in front of the existing West Stand.

The boundary of the proposed application site is identical to that of the existing planning consent for Allianz Park (Ref: H/00928/11). The original planning application for the redevelopment of what was then known as Cophall Stadium was, itself, the subject of comprehensive EIA before being approved by the Council

in March 2012.

The application site has a total area of 10.76 hectares and forms part of the wider Barnet Copthall Sports Complex - an extensive area of open space used for organised sport and recreation as well as more casual recreational use. This wider area is bounded by the A1 Great North Way to the south, Holders Hill Road to the East, Devonshire Road, Oakhampton Road and Ashley Road to the North East, Pursley Road to the North and Page Street to the West.

As well as the application site, the wider Barnet Copthall Sports complex includes the Copthall Leisure Centre (including swimming pool, gym and fitness centre) and the Metro Golf Driving Range (including ancillary American Golf retail outlet and cafe) to the north as well as various sports pitches used for both football and cricket. To the east of Allianz Park is Hendon Golf Club and, beyond that, the Hendon Crematorium and Cemetery. To the north of the existing Copthall Leisure Centre is the Powerleague 5-a-side all-weather football pitches as well as the Chase Lodge Playing Fields.

The application site and, indeed, the whole Barnet Copthall Leisure complex is designated Metropolitan Green Belt.

## **5. KEY MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Land Use**

The principle of the use of the site as a sporting facility for Saracens Rugby Club has already been established under the planning permission granted under Planning Application Reference H/00928/11. However Members can consider the intensification of the use including the ancilliary uses connected with the enlarged stadium including the use by Middlesex University.

### **Green Belt**

The application site and, indeed, the whole Barnet Copthall Leisure complex is designated Metropolitan Green Belt within which National, Strategic and Local Planning policies place strict restrictions on the development of land.

Relevant policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), London Plan Policy 7.16 as well as Local Plan Policies CS7 of the Core Strategy and DM15 of the Development Management Plan.

The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation is considered under the above policies to represent an appropriate form of development providing that the resultant form of development preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Due to the scale of the development proposed it is also necessary for the applicant to provide evidence of 'very special circumstances' which will need to outweigh any harm to the Green Belt as a result of the development.

### **Design and Appearance**

The applicant has provided illustrative elevations and floor plans of the proposed West Stand and surrounding Area. Members will need to consider this in the context of the Green Belt constraints outlined above and its relationship to surrounding development including the existing stadium. In this regard the applicant has advised that a new Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be submitted in support of any future application for planning permission.

### **Transport and Access**

The applicant has advised that a full Transport Assessment will be submitted with the application including an updated Travel Plan. The traffic analysis and modelling contained within the TA will consider the impact of the project on the local highway network and to identify whether any mitigation will be required taking into account the following factors:

- Any additional permanent impact that vehicle movements to/from the Stadium may have on the local and wider road networks in all its operational 'modes';
- The level of permanent car parking proposed on the site and its use in the various operational modes;
- Implications for the public transport network of the proposed development during each of its all operational modes but particularly on matchdays and during those temporary periods times when the capacity of the Stadium is increased;
- Site access for pedestrians and cyclists to the proposed development in all its operational modes but particularly on matchdays and and/or during those temporary periods times when the capacity of the Stadium is increased; and
- The temporary impact of traffic generated during the demolition and construction phase (Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), construction staff traffic movements, etc.), on-site car parking provision during demolition and construction.

### **Other Matters**

Other Matters which will need to be considered as part of the consideration of any future applicant would include, an assessment of the following issues which have been identified in the scoping report submitted by the applicant. These include: Ecology, Biodiversity and Arboriculture, Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, Water Resources and Flood Risk, Air Quality, Ground Conditions and Contamination, Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation, Sustainability and Energy, Lighting, noise, other neighbouring amenity considerations and socio economic implications.