



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 11 September 2024
at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Kelcher (Chair), Councillor S Butt (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Akram, Begum, Chappell, Dixon, Johnson and J Patel

Also present: Councillors Kennelly (for agenda item 4)

1. **Apologies for Absence and clarification of Alternative Members**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of interests**

Councillor Kelcher declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda as a resident of the Wembley Event Zone and had attended hospitality events at the Stadium in the past.

Councillor S. Butt declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda as a resident of the Wembley Event Zone.

Councillor Akram declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda as a resident of the Wembley Event Zone and a recipient of complimentary tickets from a Residents Association.

Councillor Begum declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda as a resident of the Wembley Event Zone and a recipient of tickets.

Councillor Johnson declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda as a resident of the Wembley Event Zone and ward councillor for Barnhill Ward which received tickets for residents in the area.

All councillors who had declared an interest had not sought to take any position on the application and therefore felt able to consider the application impartially and without any form of pretermination.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 10 July be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **24/1329 - Wembley National Stadium, Olympic Way, Wembley, HA9 0WS**

PROPOSAL

Permission was sought for the variation of conditions 1 (Event Cap) and 2 (Temporary Traffic Management) of variation of conditions reference 20/4197

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dated 21 June 2021, for the proposed variation of Condition 1 (Event Cap) of planning permission reference 18/4307 (varied permission for the construction of the Stadium, dated 07/03/2019), to allow up to 8 additional major non-sporting events per event calendar year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- (1) Payment of the Council's legal and other professional costs in (a) preparing and completing the agreement and (b) monitoring and enforcing its performance;
- (2) Payment of the Council's reasonable costs associated with mitigation, including the following (please note that some of these mitigation measures are all secured through the existing (E)consent);
- (3) Indexation of contributions in line with inflation; and
- (4) Any other planning obligation(s) considered necessary by Committee and the Head of Planning.

Sean Newton (Development Management Planning Manager, Brent Council) introduced the planning application committee report, detailing the proposal to amend planning permission conditions 1 and 2 to increase the number of major non-sporting events at the Stadium from 46 to 54 per calendar year, adding up to 8 additional events. The planning application also increased the definition of a major event from a capacity of 51,000 to 60,000+.

Attention was drawn to the supplementary agenda which highlighted corrections and the additional responses from the London Boroughs of Ealing and Harrow, a resident on Dennis Avenue and a letter received from the National Wembley Trust.

The Chair thanked Sean Newton for introducing the report. As there were no Committee questions raised at this point, the Chair then invited Mr Francis Henry (who had registered to speak as an objector) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- Bus diversions had led to many bus services being cancelled or severely delayed, such as the 206 routes.
- The objector highlighted significant problems for Dial-a-Ride, particularly during concert season.
- The objector felt there was a need to increase the number of traffic wardens in the area on event days due to failures to enforce illegal parking and deal with road congestions caused by car hire drop-offs, with Mr Francis suggesting the installation of zoom-capable cameras that could facilitate ticketing to help keep areas clear.

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- The objector described the impact of events occurring on multiple consecutive days on residents living in the area, with many unable to access or leave their properties.
- Road closures occurred early in the day and continued late into the night, particularly during events like the Taylor Swift concerts; extra events would be welcomed if there was better management of existing events to alleviate current parking issues and noise challenges.
- The objector described residents who rented out their driveways to event goers, who operated unchallenged, further complicating the situation for residents.
- Mr Francis felt that the Stadium Access Corridor would never be completed, despite potential funding from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL).
- Mr Francis did not feel that the digital signage in the area was entirely effective, resulting in confusion and frustration for visitors and residents.
- There were insufficient toilet facilities available for event attendees resulting in public urination issues.
- An ice cream vendor had been parking on the pavement outside the Bubble Experience every day over the last three months and never received a parking ticket. Despite numerous calls to the Enforcement Team, little action had been taken, especially after 6 PM when the service closed at 9 PM.
- Coldplay had called for a 10-day event with very few gaps in between; during major events, there had been fireworks and helicopters, and residents were eager for the Stadium Access Corridor to be completed as originally planned.

The Chair thanked Mr Francis Henry for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- In response to a query on the primary concern, Mr Henry confirmed that residents would be less likely to object to the planning proposal if the existing events were managed more effectively.
- As a point of fact, it was noted that by law CCTV could not be used to enforce parking. Whilst cameras could not address some of the concerns raised, other solutions could be explored.
- Further details were requested about whether there were any additional concerns relating to rubbish and debris on event days, and the objector highlighted that waste dumping and urination were problems in the area. Mr Francis explained that where such issues were raised to the police and security officers' attention, they had not been proactive in addressing the problems. He felt similarly in regards to the response to antisocial behaviour. Regarding rubbish and littering, Mr Francis highlighted that, on event days, there were not enough street cleaning staff to clean up and this was resulting in the mental and physical health of residents being impacted. Residents were also experiencing sleep disruption due to noise pollution generated from events.

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The Chair thanked Mr Francis Henry for responding to the Committee's queries and proceeded to invite local Councillor, Daniel Kennelly (who had registered to speak as an objector) to address the Committee.

The following key points were highlighted:

- Councillor Kennelly began by acknowledging that Wembley Stadium had a number of benefits, such as providing employment and opportunity for the Borough. However, he believed that the expansion of events created some adverse consequences for local residents that needed to be addressed.
- Residents were concerned about the extent and robustness of the consultation that was conducted with regard to increasing the number of Wembley Stadium events, as SKIPPPRA Residents' Association had not been included as part of consultation.
- The need for traffic management mitigations was raised. He provided the example of the recent England football match against Finland, where no notifications had been posted at bus stops, provided through the TFL app, or communicated to residents regarding how diversions would be working for buses, such as the 92 and 206 buses.
- Councillor Kennelly felt that TFL should be lobbied and encouraged to increase the number of buses on event days, which would help to make events more environmentally friendly, reduce air pollution and ease road congestion. It was also noted that the committee report did not address private hire taxi vehicles, including UBER, parking in the area, and when enforcement officers approached, the taxis left.
- Councillor Kennelly addressed concerns regarding air pollution which he highlighted impacted the most disadvantaged residents in the area, especially on Wembley High Road. Due to the high levels of air and noise pollution caused during event days, he questioned extending the number of event days if high levels of air and noise pollution continued to persist. Light pollution was an additional concern that caused damage to the environment, local residents, and animals.

The Chair thanked local Councillor Kennelly for addressing the Committee and, as no Committee member had additional questions, subsequently invited Nick Baker (Planning Director) along with Mark Lynch (Wembley Stadium Director), Chris Bryant (Director of Tournaments & Events) and Tom Legg (Head of External Operations) as the applicants to speak.

The following key points were highlighted:

- The planning application sought to ensure that Wembley Stadium remained competitive, iconic, commercial, and hard working in an everchanging and challenging environment whilst also seeking to be a good neighbour and partner to residents, local businesses, the Council and wider community.

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- In recent years, the live music industry had seen changes, including increased competition from other venues across London and nationwide.
- Event promoters now required the option of reserving and releasing multiple dates along with longer tenancies. This meant that a wider variety of dates needed to be available and potentially booked to stay competitive, even if they were not ultimately used. Consequently, event dates could not be offered unless they could be guaranteed.
- The applicant felt it was important that Wembley Stadium remained an iconic, multiuse venue to showcase London and Brent to the world. To achieve this effectively, the Stadium needed to be flexible and better able to respond to the commercial booking process for music events moving forward.
- Taylor Swift concerts had been hosted at the Stadium for a record-breaking 8 nights in the summer. Oasis had recently released details of a similar run and there was also significant interest from other high-profile artists. Taylor Swift's Eras Tour alone had generated an estimated £300 million for the London economy and the Brent community benefited not only from spending and employment but also from charitable donations. Whilst not all artists had the same impact, an independent survey analysis indicated that each concert generated at least £3 million for the local Brent economy whilst also creating local job opportunities across the Stadium, including stewarding, catering, traffic management and hospitality.
- The proposed permanent variation would permit up to 8 additional major events which would constitute 60,000+ visitors per season. The increase would not necessarily mean that 54 events would take place. To date, 40 events had been delivered in the current season under the existing 46 events cap. The additional capacity and flexibility were key to the long-term success of Wembley Stadium and further economic growth and benefit for Brent, without which artists and events would be sought elsewhere.
- Wembley Stadium wanted to be good neighbours to Brent, and acknowledged that improvements in event operations could be made. Significantly, by listening to and addressing the needs of local residents in response to consultations and discussions, a comprehensive set of mitigation measures had been prepared in partnership with the Council. Measures included supporting the Council's operational costs and payment for CCTV upgrades and further transport initiatives. The applicant confirmed that the Council would not bear any costs for additional events delivered at Wembley Stadium.

The Chair thanked Chris Bryant (Director of Tournaments & Events) for addressing the Committee and invited Members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

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- The Chair queried why the identified mitigation measures had not already been implemented.. In response, Chris Bryant shared that more could always be done as part of the planning process and as a partner to Brent in order to make improvements for the benefit of the Council and local residents. Over the past 8 years, there had been notable improvements to the way the Stadium had been managed, but it had been recognised that this could be further improved, and so those mitigations had formed a part of the planning application with a Best-in-Class initiative in operation with the Council and Quintain to continually improve what could be done. The comprehensiveness of the proposed mitigation measures was also highlighted.
- Clarification was provided on whether the proposed increase in the number of events was exclusively focused on music and large concerts rather than sporting events, to capture the music entertainment market. The response confirmed that the proposed extension of the number of events was exclusively for non-sporting events.
- Details were sought regarding the differences in mitigation measures for sporting events compared to concerts, considering their respective impacts and benefits for Brent. In response, Members heard that, from an economic perspective, football traditionally attracted visitors for a shorter duration as fans came in and out of the stadium. By contrast, concerts had significantly greater economic benefits to the local area. The applicant advised members that people travelled from all over the globe to see music artists and music events tended to have an increased impact on the local area due to earlier arrivals. For both sporting and music events, roads were managed by implementing closures four hours prior to the events. The Committee heard that while the risk of anti-social behaviour from early arrivals at events was low, there were still mitigations required relating to congestion, cleaning, waste management, and urination issues. Stadium management teams were good at moving traffic away from Great Central Way and official stadium car parks, though challenges remained both on event and non-event days around diverting traffic on Harrow Road, Wembley High Road, and Wembley Triangle, in particular. The key issues around Harrow Road included private hire vehicles and vehicles parking on residential driveways with commercial value, both of which had an adverse impact on traffic management within the area. Traffic management was working well in the eastern area and considered best in class, but there was potential for further improvements on the western side of the estate. . A comprehensive transport study of those highly congested areas to the value of £100,000 was currently underway to understand the best ways to mitigate risk and improve traffic flow. The applicant felt it was equally important to ensure that there was sufficient funding to implement the recommendations the study found so £200,000 had been set aside to implement these suggested recommendations.
- Members requested additional information regarding comments on the need to remain competitive, particularly in comparison to other stadiums. In

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response, Chris Bryant expressed that the competitive nature of non-sporting events across London and nationally had changed compared to when the Wembley Stadium was first built. There were a number of other stadiums, such as Tottenham Hotspur, Twickenham and Emirates, keen to capitalise on music events. Remaining competitive to hosting the biggest and best artists in the world was seen as key to the continuing success of Wembley Stadium. Some artists were interested in holding multiple bookings and would release them if they were no longer able to fulfil them. It was essential for the Stadium's event cap to be modern, flexible, and purposeful in today's competitive environment.

- Questions were raised around whether hosting 40 events this season, with 6 unused slots, was typical for the Stadium and if there were there any significant changes taking place next year that would mean all event slots would be filled. Chris Bryant responded that there had been an increase in interest and opportunity to hold more events next year. This did not necessarily mean that 54 events would take place; the actual number would depend on potential interest and opportunities coming to fruition. He highlighted that the music industry was growing and there was a need to be able to flexibly adapt to market changes and have a modern and flexible cap.
- The Chair raised queries around how the stadium operating team had arrived at the figure of aiming to host 8 additional events per calendar year, and whether this model for hosting events would change again in the near future. In response, the Committee heard that the figure was determined by assessing the market, opportunities attained within the booking process and what was reasonable in the circumstances. The applicant highlighted that although it was unlikely that the music industry would grow significantly more than it already had, it was an important adjustment to increase the number of events per event calendar year to provide a flexible and modern event cap for the foreseeable future. It was not expected that the Stadium would be looking to further increase event days in the near future.
- Considering Chiltern Railway's concerns around rolling stock and TfL's issues regarding the rise in people travelling from the Stadium after 23:00 PM, assurance was sought by members on how stadium operating teams were working with travel services to mitigate travel disruption to residents wishing to access underground and overground services on event days. In response, Tom Legg confirmed that Chiltern Railway had initially raised concerns but had subsequently issued supporting statements on the matter. He noted that TfL's initial reservations were around capacity, so the Stadium had offered a financial support package designed to improve the way Wembley Park Station operated on event days, including additional resource around signage, wayfinding and CCTV.. Moving forward, the Stadium was looking to formalise processes that were already in place but not yet documented in collaboration with TFL regarding curfew times, risk mitigation of engineering works, capacity for event day operations, enhanced services and communications to passengers about the impact of

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events. Members heard that Chiltern Railway's initial reservations concerned its aging rolling stock fleet. Chiltern had been working with the Department for Transport (DfT) over the last 4 years to lobby support for additional funding to provide new rolling stock which presented an opportunity for them to work with the Stadium and DfT to bring forward that programme. The national stadium had reached an agreement with Chiltern Railway, committing to provide an Event Day Management Plan for all events. It was noted that there were now no outstanding issues with either Chiltern Railway or TfL.

- Further assurance was then sought that the national stadium would work more closely with local residents, including the Wembley National Stadium Trust, as part of the application, considering the impact of event days on residents in the locality and the letter received from the Trust regarding the application. Chris Bryant responded that the national stadium was working closely with the Wembley National Stadium Trust to generate a greater impact for residents in Brent with the funds provided to the Trust. The national stadium agreed with and were working to deliver the points set out in the letter written by the Trust, including around employment opportunities and ticket ballots. The national stadium was eager to continue working with the Trust as one of the most effective vehicles to engage with residents. To better understand the issues and needs of local residents, there was currently a Residents' Committee and drop-in sessions around events, though it was acknowledged that more could be done to further engage with local residents. Tom Legg added that a quarterly residents and business meeting was held and was open to all local residents and businesses across the Borough to understand local issues and agree resolutions. Some previous examples of 'you said, we did' were raised. For example, he highlighted that over the last 7 years, significant investments had been made into improving the way external operations worked. There were currently over 15 specially designed modular toilet units that had previously undergone consultation and were now deployed in problem areas of public urination. The applicant acknowledged that circulation lists and pre-event information such as fact sheets could be improved to ensure they reached all impacted resident households.
- In response to earlier comments around the deterioration of the controlled parking zone signage, Tom Legg informed the Committee that a new traffic management contractor had been appointed at the beginning of the year to implement new signage and equipment to provide real time messaging to motorists arriving on event days. Background information on non-event days would also be provided to advise residents and workers in the area about upcoming event dates. A range of funds put forward as part of the application could be used to improve controlled parking zone signage. There were approximately 150 traffic management operatives working to ensure local traffic kept moving.
- It was noted that, in the past, Wembley Central station previously ran a service from Wembley Central to Euston Station. Members queried whether

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any discussions had taken place around increasing the use of Wembley Central station and implementing additional transport links through Wembley Central. In response, the Committee heard from Tom Legg that a three-station strategy had recently been completed to gain a detailed understanding of how stations operated on both event days and non-event days. Wembley Central station was a significant aspect of the transport plan as it provided good access to Baker's Street via the Bakerloo Line and was useful in moving people away from the Stadium area. A key objective for the Stadium was to maximise the level of capacity on transport networks whilst promptly and efficiently moving people to the major transport hubs in the area for their onward journey. There was a recommendation within the transport strategy to improve signalling to halt West Coast Mainline services at Wembley Central with significant advantage to event audiences, as they would not need to go back into Euston for their onward transfer to the northwest. There were also plans to extend platforms at Wembley Stadium Station to support Chiltern railway with additional carriages.

- The Chair put questions to the applicants about the percentage of event goers that typically travelled by public transport. It was reported that at the recent Taylor Swift concert, approximately 92% of 90,000 event attendees travelled to Wembley Stadium by public transport, the majority of whom travelled through Wembley Park Station with smaller numbers travelling through Wembley Stadium Station and Wembley Central Station. It was acknowledged that more use could be made of London buses, a large number of which were diverted on event days, and the national stadium was currently working with London Buses to resolve this issue. The number of private vehicles had decreased to 2,000-2,500 following an increase in usage during the covid-19 pandemic. Travel behaviours were now changing again with people returning to pre-covid routines. Now, of the majority of event attendees travelled by public transport which was said to be the most, sustainable, efficient way for people to travel to the Stadium.
- Members sought details on the joint scheme the national stadium had been operating with partners concerning illegal parking in the surrounding streets and the possible outcomes. Tom Legg responded that in relation to illegal parking issues, the transport study would identify a range of mitigation measures to improve parking operations. The national stadium was working with Brent's Highways Team to ensure there were enforcement officers and tow trucks on the ground, with the appointment of the new contractor delivering a step change in responding to illegally parked vehicles. It was felt that more work could be done to promote the Trusted Parking Scheme which was designed to ensure that parking operators were acting responsibly and were not overloading the parking areas to ensure a sufficiently managed operation appropriate to the capacity of the local network. One benefit that had been observed from the Quintain operation was the use of the ANPR cameras that managed access into local high roads, and it was felt that investment was necessary to enable residents to safely access residential roads while preventing private hire vehicles from using those spaces.

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- Questions were also raised about the response of the national stadium to Quintain's measures to add s106 agreements and conditions to the Wembley Stadium planning application. Chris Bryant explained that there was already an estate management agreement in place between the national stadium and Quintain which ensured significant protections to Quintain, ; therefore, adding further restrictions and conditions through s106 agreements was felt to be unnecessary and the existing restrictions considered fair and appropriate. Whilst the applicants acknowledged the points made by Quintain, they would not seek more restrictions on the way the stadium operated to ensure the stadium stayed adaptable to changing circumstances, which included a modern event cap.
- In response to whether the applicant was committed to traffic management specifically on Harrow Road, Oakington Manor and Victoria Avenue, Tom Legg confirmed that all of those roads and associated roads were a key focus for the transport study looking to improve how those areas of Brent operated on event days. To alleviate current challenges, temporary traffic measures were in place at Oakington Manor to help get vehicles out as quickly as possible to support event day operations. Members noted these measures had helped to alleviate traffic there.
- Members noted that, in addition to increasing the maximum number of major events at the Stadium to 54, the application also proposed to raise the threshold at which an event was deemed to be a 'major' event from 51,000 to 60,000+ attendees. They asked the applicant to outline the reason for that change. Chris Bryant explained that the figure of 51,000 or more attendees was initially established based on the capacity of the lower two tiers of the Stadium, so that a major event could be easily defined as one where the upper tier was in use and provided a clear way to enforce the events at a 51,000 attendee limit. The Stadium had recognised that the added flexibility provided by electronic ticketing and turnstiles eliminated the necessity of linking the capacity threshold to the use of specific areas of the stadium. Studies and consultations showed that hosting an event with 51,000 attendees versus 60,000 did not result in any significant difference, as it did not trigger any additional impacts or measures. The Stadium's position was that 60,000 was a more suitable figure at this time, as the previous number was based on an operational factor that was no longer relevant. The applicant confirmed that the increased figure was not based on an increase in demand for event tickets, with strong emphasis on the need for a fit for purpose, modern event capacity.
- Members referenced the planning application committee report which they felt implied that, if permission was denied, any number of events could still be held below the 51,000-capacity limit. Chris Bryant explained that the reference in the report reflected the reality of the existing event cap in place which the Stadium currently operated. The ultimate commitment of the

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Stadium was to improve the delivery of services across the estate for all events.

- Members enquired whether the Stadium was open to working with Council Officers to develop an appropriate ticket scheme for residents within the Event Zone. Chris Bryant agreed that the distribution of tickets needed to be allocated fairly to the right people. The applicant confirmed that the Stadium was committed to working with Council Officers to develop an appropriate ticket scheme for local residents and would be supportive of a condition on this.

The Chair thanked representatives for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application.

The following responses were provided:

- With regard to the Stadium's efforts to be a good Brent partner, Chris Whyte (Director Public Realm, Brent Council) confirmed that the Council had a strong partnership with the national stadium that had evolved principally from the issues that arose during the European Championship Final in 2021 and the work to ensure those were not repeated. Since then, there had been a concerted effort to improve operations, including the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order and the Best-in-Class initiative, which saw improvements in infrastructure around the Stadium and the deployment of a large team of council officers working to support operations on event days, the costs of which were borne by the Stadium. He added that there was healthy enthusiasm from staff in support of the stadium and a talented and committed workforce.
- Further clarification was provided in relation to the allocation of funds to ensure that local residents benefited from the Stadium's operations. This was in light of the stadium's commitment to invest in road improvements, while also addressing existing issues such as potholes, worn road markings, inadequate lighting, and signage in Stonebridge and the surrounding area. Members were advised that there had been a number of improvements over the last few years around waste collections and toilet provision. The Council had been working with local businesses to prevent the sale of alcohol which had helped to significantly reduce the level of overall antisocial behaviour on event days, particularly around football matches. Officers felt that the key remaining issues to tackle were around traffic management in the area on event days, including illegal parking, which would be addressed by the transport study and subsequent investment in the implementation of the recommendations that the Stadium had committed to. Currently on event days, traffic management heavily relied on foot patrols by parking enforcement officers, but this often resulted in displacement. It was hoped that the transport study exercise would help in understanding how that could be mitigated, including how digital technology could help to prevent vehicles from entering the zone.

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- Members noted that several residents rented out their driveways and used social media to sell parking spaces on event days which attracted more vehicles into the area and affected the travel movement of other local residents. Questions arose regarding how to address this issue. David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services, Brent Council) confirmed that the transport study would look to identify solutions to those concerns. The study focused on areas where a large amount of parking and pickups took place, including in driveways. A joint programme between the Stadium, the Council and Quintain was looking at the issue known as 'pirate' parking, as there was little planning enforcement action that could be taken against the use of a single car parked in a driveway. . Members highlighted that the implementation of ANPR technology could help identify vehicles entering the local area that were not permitted to alleviate pirate parking. Officers highlighted that this would depend on a pre-approved list of permitted vehicles, allowing camera technology to ensure that only permitted vehicles were present in a designated area on any particular occasion. The Chair proposed a recommendation for the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to explore this topic area in more detail.
- In response to further concerns regarding antisocial behaviour and littering on event days, officers advised that a Public Space Protection Order containing a list of prohibitions had been introduced, as well as a team of enforcement officers attending events to effectively lower the level of antisocial behaviour and the number of dumping offences with a particular focus on littering, street urination and controls on the sale of alcohol to football fans. Any complaints the Council received regarding antisocial behaviour, littering, the sale and consumption of alcohol and public urination was fed back to the Stadium regularly to identify any gaps in operations. In response to whether the increase in events would impact the capacity of enforcement and operational staff to take action, Chris Whyte confirmed he was confident that there were ready and willing officers to work additional events who made themselves available outside of normal working hours as there was appetite to support event teams at Wembley Stadium. The Council had not had any difficulties in finding staff willing to come forward, but there was the option to extend the pool of staff and draw more officers across the Council, funded by the Stadium.
- In addressing the challenges of waste management, parking, and increasing staff numbers to ensure the Best-in-Class, Members were advised that the Best-in-Class process was reviewed annually to drive improvements in operations. At times, additional resources would be needed, which would be resourced appropriately by the Stadium.
- In terms of discussions with local residents around past experiences and potential improvements in operations, Members were advised that the Council was a stakeholder in the Residents and Business Associations meetings and officers attended meetings to listen to the concerns of local residents and worked with partners to resolve the issues raised at the meetings. The Council also received complaints and concerns regarding

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Wembley Stadium events on an event-by-event basis, which were addressed as part of the Council's responsibilities. This feedback would then be communicated to the Stadium to identify solutions for the issues raised..

- Members raised concerns with the lack of communications to local residents regarding event days, timings of road closures and other associated restrictions, requesting for more information to be provided on the FA website about event timings, factsheets to be distributed more widely to local residents, and for the feasibility of increasing digital signage around the Wembley area to be reviewed. Confirmation was provided that the Stadium led communication efforts while the Council served as a conduit to ensure a consistent message. Chris Whyte added that officers often undertook a debrief discussion with ward councillors following events to understand any issues.
- In response to questioning around the use of blue badges, Members heard that the blue badge granted motorists certain entitlements on their use, but it was expected the parking would be done considerately. Where there were challenges around invalid or fraudulent use of blue badges, there were opportunities for enforcement, where implementing a targeted operation at future events could be beneficial in addressing these issues.
- Officers confirmed that the brief for the transport study was still to be agreed, so there was an opportunity to include an additional condition explicitly stating that the transport study should review the management of traffic associated with Oakington Manor School.
- With regards to the ticketing and ballot system, assurance was sought from Members that the procedure would be effectively overseen to ensure implementation to an acceptable and fair standard. It was agreed that an additional condition should require that the Stadium undertook a full review of the ticket allocation scheme to ensure it was the fairest assessment possible which would be submitted to and approved by the Council. In undertaking the review, relevant groups would be engaged with in terms of the operation and implementation of any new scheme.
- The Committee strongly endorsed a further meeting with Ward Councillors to discuss concerns.
- The Committee requested for the issue to be referred to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to consider reviewing the impact of event days on the Borough.

As there were no further questions from Members, the Chair then moved on to the vote, which included the additional condition.

DECISION

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RESOLVED to grant planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report plus the following additional or revised conditions or obligations:

- (1) That the transport study that is to be secured through the Section 106 legal agreement shall include a review of the management of traffic associated with Oakington Manor School.
- (2) That the Stadium shall undertake a full review of the ticket allocation scheme to ensure it is the fairest assessment possible, and that shall be submitted to and approved by the Council. In undertaking the review, relevant groups should be engaged with in terms of the operation and implementation of any new scheme.

The Planning Committee also made a strong recommendation for the Stadium to host a further meeting with ward councillors to discuss concerns and for the issue to be referred to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to consider reviewing the impact of event days on the Borough.

(Voting on the above decision was as follows: For 6 and Against 1)

5. 23/0176 - All Units at Dowlings Parade, HNS Autos and Delta Hand Car Wash, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, HA0 1AJ

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the partial demolition of the HNS Autos building and other associated buildings on site and erection of new building comprising residential units and commercial space at ground floor level, cycle parking spaces, blue badge parking, amenity space and landscaping.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to completion of a legal agreement to secure the following planning obligations:

- (1) Payment of the Council's legal and other professional costs in (a) preparing and completing the agreement and (b) monitoring and enforcing its performance.
- (2) Notification of material start 28 days prior to commencement.
- (3) Off-site Affordable Housing Financial Contribution (£185,470) to be utilised to fund additional affordable housing within the Borough together with an early and late stage review.
- (4) Affordable Workspace Provision contribution (£150,000)
- (5) Detailed design stage energy assessment:
 - (a) Initial carbon offset payment to be paid prior to material start if zero-carbon target not achieved on site.

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- (b) Post-construction energy assessment. Final carbon offset payment upon completion of development if zero-carbon target not achieved on site.
 - (c) 'Be seen' energy performance monitoring and reporting
- (6) Controlled Parking Zone – Financial contribution of £16,000 towards implementation of Controlled Parking Zone in the vicinity.
- (7) A parking permit restriction to remove the right of residents to on-street parking permits in any future Controlled Parking Zone that is implemented in the area.
- (8) Highway Works under a S38/S278 Agreement to:
- (i) widen the footway along the eastern side of Bridgehill Close fronting the site to 2m
 - (ii) remove the existing crossovers to Bridgewater Road and reinstate them to footway and verge.
 - (iii) repave the footway fronting Bridgewater Road, together with associated amendments to lining, signing, lighting and drainage and any other accommodation works.
- (9) Car Club - Provision of three years free membership of a local Car Club for all incoming residents.
- (10) Financial Contribution of £7,000 towards off-site planting of two street trees and their maintenance within the vicinity of the site.
- (11) Submission of a detailed 'Television and Radio Reception Impact Assessment' and underwriting of all mitigation required in addressing any interference.
- (12) Indexation of contributions in line with inflation (to be indexed from date of Planning Committee resolution)
- (13) Any other planning obligation(s) considered necessary by the Head of Planning.

Nicola Blake (Principal Planning Officer, Brent Council) introduced the report, stating that the application was seeking approval of a new eight storey building situated on the northeast side of Bridgewater Road along the southeast junction of Bridgehill Close. The proposal sought to demolish the existing buildings on site and provide an eight-storey building accommodating residential units, light industrial workspace, and a single ancillary disabled parking space accessible via Bridgehill Close. Ancillary floorspace, such as cycle stores and plant areas would be located at the ground floor level, with refuse stores also on the ground floor and accessed via Bridgehill Close. While the proposal included 720 sqm of light industrial floorspace, the provision of affordable workspace would be provided by a CIL contribution of £150,000.

The Chair thanked Nicola Blake for introducing the report and subsequently invited Alan Gunne-Jones (who had registered to speak as the agent) to address the Committee.

The following key points were highlighted:

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- This site had extant planning permission which was granted in 2022 and had proposed 28 residential units and industrial floor space with a s106 agreement securing, amongst other matters, affordable housing.
- Following the grant of this planning permission, the viability of the approved scheme was appraised, given that it had undertaken a 2-year journey from application submission to the granting of planning permission in 2022. The appraisal concluded that the approved development proposals were no longer viable and furthermore, experience suggested that identifying a Registered Provider to acquire a small affordable package of sub-10 units would prove problematic and render the permission undeliverable.
- The concept of an off-site contribution to affordable housing on viability grounds was therefore considered and reviewed with the planning department through formal pre-application engagement with the outcome sufficiently encouraging to proceed with the submission of this current application.
- The key differences between the permitted scheme and the one currently under consideration were as follows:
 - a) An additional 4 residential units achieved by adding one extra storey to the approved scheme and increasing the height by 3.1 meters.
 - b) A scheme that is fully compliant with current building regulations in terms of fire safety and protection through the inclusion of a separate fire escape core.
 - c) A financial contribution to provide affordable housing off-site.
 - d) A financial contribution to provide street trees and their ongoing maintenance.
 - e) A financial contribution to provide affordable workspace.
 - f) A commitment to assess the impact of the development on television and radio reception and to mitigate any interference if deemed necessary.
 - g) Car club membership for residents increased to 3 years.
 - h) An increased financial contribution to the CPZ and carbon offset.
- Alan Gunne-Jones concluded by stating that the above points had significant benefits that had not formed part of the previously approved scheme and were delivered by a scheme that was only one storey higher than the approved scheme and added 4 residential units. He felt that, on balance, the proposed scheme delivered more benefits than the approved scheme and hoped this would justify a grant of planning permission.

The Chair thanked Alan Gunne-Jones for addressing the Committee and invited Members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented with the following noted.

- In response to further clarification being sought on plans to provide children's play areas on the first and fourth floors, the Committee were advised that there were discussions regarding the potential inclusion of small children's play equipment, a soft surface, and the creation of a facility catering to younger age groups.

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- Members sought clarification regarding the change in affordable housing provision from the approved scheme. Alan Gunne-Jones confirmed that the extant planning permission included a s106 agreement to provide affordable housing units on site as a percentage of the overall development. This presented challenges related to viability and the acquisition of a Registered Provider (RP) to take on the units within the development which included workspace, general market housing, amenity areas, and children's play areas. Establishing a clear maintenance responsibility for the RP had proved to be difficult. Whilst the extant planning permission was still valid, due to viability, the present scheme offered a financial contribution to deliver affordable housing off-site.

The Chair thanked Alan Gunne-Jones for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application. Issues raised included the financial viability appraisal, early and late stage upward only review mechanisms, and fire safety with the following responses noted.

- Confirmation was provided that the site was policy compliant. The financial viability appraisal had been reviewed by the Council's advisors and it was determined that on site affordable housing could not be provided if the scheme were to be delivered. Officers added that the extant planning permission granted in 2022 included an affordable housing quantum which met the Fast Track criteria and therefore, there had been no requirement for a financial viability assessment to be submitted. Following approval, the developer had conducted a more thorough financial analysis and concluded that it was not financially viable to proceed with what they had received planning permission for. The applicant had submitted a new application to effectively replace the extant consent which remained valid for another year. With the new application, which proposed a development at below 35% affordable housing, there was a requirement for a full viability assessment to be submitted with the application and independently assessed by the Council and its advisors. The assessment concluded that there was a slight surplus of less than it would cost to deliver even one onsite affordable unit. This was why officers were recommending approval for the application on the basis of an offsite contribution to the maximum breakeven amount calculated with independent advisors. It was also noted by officers that, since planning permission was granted in 2022, housing number targets had significantly increased, and it was important to have a site that could be deliverable to secure homes to meet overall housing targets. At the time of consideration for the scheme with extant permission, the old local plan was in effect and the current London plan had not been adopted. In response to the new Local Plan, the applicant was continuing to deliver the same quantum of commercial space and was proposing a contribution of £150,000 for the provision of off-site affordable workspace. It was noted that the application still carried a CIL liability.
- It was confirmed that there was both an early and late stage upward only review mechanism through the s106 legal agreement, with any additional surplus in viability increasing the contribution towards off-site affordable housing.

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- Members observed that the previous application site was one storey lower than the proposed site and inquired whether it might be feasible to add an extra storey to provide more affordable housing. Officers responded that a nuanced balancing exercise had taken place regarding the impact of the proposed building on the street scene and the maximum quantum of housing that could be accommodated on the site, with a previously taller proposed scheme being rejected. In assessing the proposed scheme, officers had consulted heavily with the Urban Design Officer to ensure the resulting scale was policy compliant, and Officers had concluded that the proposed scheme was the maximum in terms of the height and scale of the building that would reasonably be acceptable on the plot of land. Policy context details were also noted.
- Members asked whether there had been past instances where an approved scheme had been reassessed due to a new application being submitted.. In response, officers explained that there was a need to ensure that applications made were assessed on their own merit. Officers routinely considered new applications on sites that already had planning permission and emphasised the importance of acknowledging changing financial circumstances, such as build cost. The difficulties around viability were emphasised.
- In response to Members' questions around fire safety, officers advised that building regulations were separate to material planning considerations and that all relevant building regulations would need to be met if extant consent were to be implemented. The present application met those requirements. It was noted that the changes to overcome fire safety issues were substantive but not significant, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) was satisfied from a land use perspective under the current application.
- Considering that the current extant permission on site was not fast tracked and referencing the two fire escapes within the building, Members queried whether it held as much weight as indicated in the report, to which officers explained that this formed one factor for consideration, as it increased the development costs related to how the fire mitigation measures were implemented within the envelope of the building. Certain parts of the building needed to be separated from other parts of the building which had not been the case in the original consent. This constituted part of the reason for the submission of the application. Other reasons included financial viability. Although the site did not deliver onsite affordable housing, the development did deliver 4 additional residential units than the extant consent had. Officers had concluded that the planning gain in terms of an increase in housing delivery was acceptable.
- Inquiries were made around the challenges of acquiring a Registered Provider to take on a housing mix of different tenures. Officers responded that larger Registered Providers had a preference for larger developments with more homes in one space as opposed to various different sites across the Borough which would make maintenance and operational costs higher. Affordable housing blocks tended to be contained within the larger developments because they could all be concentrated into one building and associated costs would be distributed amongst those tenants as opposed to

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various different sites across the Borough. It was noted that, whilst the Council worked with developers struggling to find Registered Providers and provided lists, it was particularly challenging to acquire a Registered Provider for small sites.

- The Chair asked why the overall compliance and mitigating factors outweighed any concerns around height and overlooking at the existing semi-detached house at no.2 Bridgewater Road. Slides were presented, and the officers highlighted and explained the proposed site plan in comparison to the extant permissions.
- Members raised questions around parking spaces on the development site, considering that other developments within the area were normally car free. Officers confirmed that there was a car free agreement and a single disabled parking bay. It was noted that car free agreements removed the ability for residents to apply for a parking permit. There was also a contribution towards the CPZ in the area which had increased from 14,000 to 16,000 within the present application from the extant permission.
- As a separate issue, questions were raised about the Waste Management Strategy and whether there was a condition to have one for the application. The response was that there was a delivery and services plan which had been covered by condition 25 and was being reviewed by Highways Officers as well as Strategy Officers.
- As a further issue highlighted, Members queried whether safety was an issue regarding the communal roof garden above the 7th floor within the plans. Officers had secured by condition a railing and boundary treatments to ensure that the area was safe.

As there were no further questions from members the Chair then moved on to the vote.

DECISION

RESOLVED to granted planning permission subject to the completion of a legal agreement and the conditions and informatives as set out in the Committee report.

(Voting on the above decision was as follows: For 5, Against 0, Abstention 1)

6. **23/3647 - Willesden Sports Centre, Donnington Road, London, NW10 3QX**

PROPOSAL

Proposed change of disused sports area to provide 2 padel courts with associated fencing and new path.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That the committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

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That the Head of Planning is delegated authority to issue the planning permission and impose conditions and informatives to secure the following matters:

Conditions

1. Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials
4. Arboricultural Method Statement, Impact Assessment and Tree Protection
5. Opening Hours

Informative

1. Building near a boundary
2. Fire Safety

- (2) That the Head of Planning and Development Services is delegated authority to make changes to the wording of the committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions, informatives, planning obligations or reasons for the decision) prior to the decision being actioned, provided that the Head of Planning is satisfied that any such changes could not reasonably be regarded as deviating from the overall principle of the decision reached by the committee nor that such change(s) could reasonably have led to a different decision having been reached by the committee.

Damian Manhertz (Development Management Area Manager, Brent Council) introduced the application, sought the use of a disused sports area to provide 2 padel courts with associated fencing and new path. The application site related to an area of land to the northwestern corner of the Willesden Sports Centre as well an area to the south to form a proposed pathway to join up with an existing pathway within the site. The site was located on the south side of Donnington Road.

The Chair raised clarifying questions around whether the 2 padel courts were proposed to be built on the disused tennis courts in an area formed of hardstanding. Confirmation was provided that that the proposed courts were on a large tarmacked, hardstanding area of land. Additional questions were raised around the necessity of constructing a path in the area, noting that when tennis was previously played there, no path existed. Officers explained that, upon review, a path might also have been beneficial for the tennis courts, as it would prevent people from tracking dirt and mud onto the court from the grass, which could create a slippery surface. Access would be improved to the area.

The Chair thanked Damian Manhertz for introducing the report, and then invited Mr Pambakian (who had registered to speak in objection to the application) to address the Committee. The following key points were highlighted:

- The proposal was submitted a year ago and an appeal had been filed. Mr Pambakian had petitioned a number of residents from the neighbourhood who were concerned that the development would occur in their quiet neighbourhood.

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- The original plans for constructing a canopy had been revised to enhance its appeal by opting for single-glazed panels.
- Most of the houses in the area were residential and included lofts. He felt that the glass panels would not effectively reduce the high noise levels from padel sports, which would continue until 11 PM.
- Previously, there was a bike school, and at the time the Council had received a surge of noise complaint calls from local residents. Similarly, it was felt that the padel sport at the application site was not suitable for the location. Citing the location plan, Mr Pambakian highlighted that the padel courts would be situated in the most densely residential part of the sports centre. The continuous noise would also be difficult for residents with special educational needs and disabilities to cope with.

The Chair thanked Mr Pambakian for addressing the Committee and then invited questions and comments from Members in relation to the information heard.

- In response to Mr Pambakian's concerns about the sporting activities operating until 23:00 pm, it was clarified that the latest closing time for the courts would be 21:30 pm. Members then asked whether this clarification offered any reassurance. Mr Pambakian felt that the change in operating hours would have little impact, as residents would still experience frequent noise throughout the day.

The Chair then welcomed Mr Cody Burrige (who had also registered to speak in objection to the application) and invited him to address the Committee. The following key points were highlighted:

- In addressing the Committee, Cody Burrige shared that he was a huge fan of sport in the local area and had been a coach at Queens Park Harriers for 15 years at Willesden Running Track. However, he believed the proposal needed to be adjusted so that it was respectful to the nearest and most affected residents of Donnington Road.
- He felt there was a lack of awareness, with little contact or communication with the residents that this proposal directly affected. Cody Burrige lived in close proximity to the proposed site and had received no communication about the proposal until a neighbour alerted him to the plans a week ago.
- Working from home, including meetings, was cited to be a challenge, as sports noise could be heard from inside the home.
- Outside of work, residents believed family life and relaxation time would be disrupted by the level of noise.
- Persistent noise would be difficult to live with not only during the week but also on weekends.

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- He suggested that for the welfare of the residents in the nearby area, the padel courts should be enclosed and potentially sound proofed so as not to disturb the residents of Donnington Road living closest to the proposal site.
- Cody Burrige concluded that he was not opposed to the Padel Court plans, but strongly urged the Committee to listen to the concerns of residents nearest to the proposal site.

The Chair thanked Cody Burrige for addressing the Committee. As no specific questions were raised in relation to the information presented, the Chair then moved on to invite Kai Woodgate (who had registered to speak as an applicant / agent) to address the Committee.

The following key points were highlighted:

- Kai Woodgate shared that he was one of the Operations Managers for Padel United and had been working at the company over the past three years. He had also been a player at the company's venues for six years. The company had originally brought him on as a junior apprentice which had enabled him to progress to a senior position.
- He emphasised that the company was always trying to be as inclusive as possible and was proud to offer prices below the average rate for padel at all of their venues, enabling as many people as possible within the community to get involved.
- Across the country, the company had eight venues which consisted of 25 courts, with over 7,000 active padel players and a wide demographic from younger children all the way up to more senior players. Across their venues, the company also worked with 12 different schools who used the facilities to allow children to get involved with the sport and learn vital skills. In addition to their partnership with local schools, the company also had over 1000 under 16 players who played at their venues annually. The company also offered a free junior membership, encouraging young people to enjoy the sport.
- For their project in Willesden, the company was looking to transform an underused area of tennis courts by adding two padel courts on top of the existing area. The location of the proposed padel courts would be within the boundaries of the leisure centre, who the company were looking forward to working in partnership with, in order to offer extra activities to the community.
- After listening to the original feedback, the company had applied for the club to have no floodlighting to reduce the light pollution to the residents nearby, which in turn would decrease the amount of playable time to players, especially during the winter months.
- Kai Woodgate shared that padel was an exciting sport and one of the fastest-growing sports globally, primarily due to its appealing Unique Selling Point and accessibility for people of all backgrounds and skill levels. This

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inclusivity helped make the sport and its clubs central to communities, serving as fantastic venues for socialising, staying active, and enhancing the mental and physical well-being of diverse demographics across communities and the country.

- Kai Woodgate expressed the hope that padel would serve as a valuable addition to the leisure centre and also benefit the wider community.

The Chair thanked Kai Woodgate for addressing the Committee and invited Members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- In clarifying the position regarding mitigations within the design area to address noise concerns from residents, the Committee were advised that the sport was somewhat louder than tennis. Though the balls used were identical to tennis balls in terms of pressure and softness, the rackets were slightly harder. Noise assessments had been conducted at other venues similar to the proposed build near residential areas, and no complaints regarding regular noise had been received. As for mitigation measures, the amount of playable time would be decreasing during the winter months to around 4pm and would not be continuing through the evening.
- In response to concerns regarding noise, Kai Woodgate confirmed that the company would consider any further noise mitigations to soften the sound and reduce its noise impact on local residents.

The Chair then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application.

- The Chair sought details on what scientifically backed noise evidence existed to assist the Committee in making a decision. Officers explained that a noise acoustic report had been submitted as part of the application. An important consideration regarding noise was that perceived sound depended on the background noise levels. The background noise levels measured in the survey were reportedly high enough for the noise generated by the padel court during a 6-minute match, falling below that when measured from the nearest sensitive receptor, which was the window of the closest residential property. This provided a basic measurement of what the nearest resident would experience inside their home, which was lower than the background noise. It was confirmed that the information was assessed by Environmental Health Officers.
- Following on from the previous question, details were sought by the Chair about the weight an already well-used, noisy sports centre venue held in the Committee's judgment of noise pollution. Officers confirmed this was considered in the process. The sports centre venue was an appropriate place to hold an additional type of sport. Officers did not have the details of any noise complaints relating to the existing sports centre site but confirmed that these would be dealt with by the Environmental Health Team. The noise information available to the Committee was the impact the proposal would have by itself.

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- Members sought clarity on the maximum dB recorded for the source sound pressure level of two padel tennis courts at full capacity. Although the report indicated that the level was 63 dB, it had mentioned instances where it could be louder without providing specific details. Members further highlighted that difference in sound levels between tennis and padel was approximately 20dB and questioned the possibility of whether one padel court could be in use at any one time as opposed to two courts to reduce the noise. Officers responded that Environmental Health Officers determined that the initial noise assessment conducted did not exceed the permitted level of noise and had also considered unusual or higher peaks than the average noise levels in their assessment. As there was not a direct objection to the two padel courts, officers did not see a benefit in reducing the use of both courts to one. Officers then confirmed that the maximum noise level during a 6-minute game of padel tennis in 2 courts measured 3 meters away from the rear of the court was 71dB. Further to this, Members heard from officers that the noise level at the nearest receptor was 52 dB, which was 3.6 dB below the existing ambient noise level of 55.6 dB. Environmental Health Officers had reviewed the proposal and found the level of noise to be acceptable. Statutory noise nuisance was covered through Environmental Health legislation.
- In relation to Environmental Health, officers highlighted that without the use of floodlighting, the amount of time that the courts could be used was limited. Therefore, playable time of the sport and the sound emitting from padel was naturally limited to daytime hours.
- Members cited a similar application relating to the build of a sports centre around Queens Park School and questioned whether glass panes reduced noise levels. The response confirmed that the glass panels were not built for noise but was rather an enclosure for the court. It was added that measures to minimise noise consisted of management arrangements and reminders for players to keep their noise levels down.
- Members inquired whether discussions had occurred regarding alternative locations for the courts, suggesting that the site could potentially be moved to the back of residents' gardens, away from their homes. Officers responded that discussions had not taken place regarding this, with focus on the proposed location area because of the existing hardstanding. It was added that there were no plans for lighting based on consultative feedback.

As there were no further questions from Members, the Chair then moved on to the vote.

DECISION

RESOLVED to grant planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives as set out in the Committee report and supplementary report.

(Voting on the above decision was as follows: For 5, Against 1, Abstention 1)

7. Any Other Urgent Business

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There was no other urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.54 pm

COUNCILLOR KELCHER

Chair