

Item No.	Classification	Decision Level	Date
4	OPEN	Planning Committee	12/01/05
From Interim Development & Building Control Manager		Title of Report DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	
Proposal (04-CO-0044) Erection of single storey changing pavilion, resurfacing of playing areas, provision of new fencing to playing areas and changes to existing boundary walls, provision of new floodlights and ancillary landscaping.		Address Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, St Georges Road SE1 Ward Cathedrals	

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the above application. The application requires Committee consideration in view of the number of representations received.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Grant planning permission.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Application site is a local park situated within the West Square Conservation area, between the Imperial War Museum and the residential properties and Charlotte Sharman School facing West Square. The area affected by the proposal currently comprise of games courts with a tarmac surface and 8 floodlights located around the tennis courts to the north of the site.
- 3.2 An application for the demolition of existing playroom building and erection of timber clad single storey nursery building was submitted to the Council for consideration in November 2001, for which planning permission was subsequently granted in April 2002. There are no other planning permission directly relevant to this site.
- 3.3 An application for alterations to existing sports facilities including provision of 5-aside football pitches, netball pitches, tennis courts, construction of a single storey sports changing pavilion, provision of fencing enclosures and flood lighting to pitches/courts, landscaping works, new openings to existing boundary walls to allow for disabled access and new boundary wall to park compound. The application was subsequently withdrawn on 15/04/2004.
- 3.4 The proposal under consideration is for erection of a single storey changing pavilion, resurfacing of play areas, provision of new fencing to playing areas and changes to existing boundary walls, provision of new floodlights and ancillary landscaping.

4. FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Main Issues

The main issues in this case are the principle of the proposal, the impact on the surrounding buildings and West Square conservation area, potential amenity issues for nearby residents with regards to noise and disturbance, light pollution from flood lighting.

4.2 Planning Policy

Southwark Unitary Development Plan 1995 [UDP]:

Policy E.1.1 - Safety and Security in the Environment - the proposal complies with this policy.

Policy E.2.3 - Aesthetic Control - the proposed pavilion building and other improvements proposed is considered to be in keeping with the character of the area.

Policy E.2.5 - External Space - the proposed scheme will result in general improvement to the park.

Policy E.3.1 - Protection of Amenity - the proposal is unlikely to result in loss of amenity for nearby residents.

Policy E.4.3 - Proposals Affecting Conservation Areas - the proposal is unlikely to affect the character of the Conservation area.

Policy C.4.2 - New Leisure and Recreational Facilities - complies, the proposal would result in improvements to the park.

The Southwark Plan [Revised Deposit Unitary Development Plan] March 2004

Policy 3.11 - Quality in Design - the proposal complies with this policy

Policy 3.16 - Development in Conservation Areas - the proposal is unlikely to affect the character of the Conservation area.

Policy 3.2 - Protection of Amenity - the proposal is unlikely to result in loss of amenity for nearby residents.

4.3 Consultations

Site Notice:25/08/2004

Press Notice:15/07/2004

Consultees:

Traffic Group, Public Protection,
West Square Residents Association, 5-19 (incl) West Square, 59-99 (odds)
Brook Drive, 91, 110, 112, 114, 116 St Georges Road, Imperial War Museum,
Charlotte Sharman JMI School, Notre Dame RC Secondary School, Friends of
Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park

Replies from:

Conservation and Design - no objections subject to conditions.

Traffic Group - no objections

Public Protection - satisfied with the floodlight details will not result in light pollution to nearby residential properties. Request condition regarding soil condition.

CAAG - no objections to pavilion building, but object to creation of new opening on St Georges Road. Comment that new opening on Geraldine Street should be widened.

9 West Square - objects on grounds of flood lighting being intrusive and substantially increase light pollution and lack of car parking provision.

15 West Square - Although support improvement to existing facilities, concerned about the impact on local residents with regards to the effect of flood lighting resulting in light pollution, hours of operation, traffic generation and car parking, safety and security.

28 Gladstone Street - objects on grounds of traffic congestion, new entrance on St Georges Road unnecessary, also concerned about netting on top of boundary wall along St Georges Road.

8 West Square - object on grounds of loss of open space, light and noise pollution, traffic generation.

17 West Square - no objections to the proposal but seek assurance that the proposed floor lighting will not reflect into the gardens of houses along West Square and that the play area lighting should not be on late at night.

49 West Square - object on grounds of flood lighting not being suitable for the location because of its proximity to residential properties, loss of open space.

Imperial War Museum -

19 King Edward Walk -

1 Temple West Mews - subject to comparative lighting levels being used occasionally with dedicated staff being available at all times, then no objections raised.

40 West Square - request that entrance is moved from Geraldine Street.

45 West Square - comments that local residents should be able to use the facilities free of charge. Flood lighting considered okay on the basis that the lights are focussed down and are not used after 8pm.

5 Harmsworth Mews - welcomes improvements but no area of the park should be built on, although any new building allowed should be as unobtrusive as possible. Concerned about light pollution, security, noise and comment that no activities should be allowed after 8 pm.

19 King Edward Mews - concerned that the proposed improvements would exclude some locals if the use of the facilities will incur charges. Welcomes proposal but suggest as much open space should be retained.

7 Orient Street - no objections to the proposed improvements

10 Mead Row - comments that the facilities should be made available to locals at no charge.

Elephant & Castle football club - concerned that the proposed improvements will reduce the amount of open space available to the public and that the facilities should be available at no charge.

4 Oakley Close - no objections in principle but concerned that payment for the use of the new facilities will deprive local access to a very well used amenity.

1 Temple West Mews - concerned about light pollution, safety and security.

10 Mead Row - concerned about vehicles accessing the park, reduction in open space and paying for the use of the improved facilities.

2 Austral Street - no objections to the proposal

149 Kennington Road - concerned about the reduction of open space.

89 Wegewood House - no objections to the proposal, the park needs doing up.

69 Brook Drive - concerned that the improved facilities will result in users being charged.

5 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the proposal

- 5.1 The proposal involves general improvements to the park which includes the erection of a single storey pavilion building to provide changing facilities. Immediately adjacent to the rear gardens of dwelling houses along West Square. The improvements include restoration of the existing sports play area as well as providing additional facilities that are considered incidental to the use of the park, together with the provision of flood lighting to the games courts.
- 5.2 Minor elevational alterations which include new openings to the eastern boundary wall along Geraldine Street as well a new door opening to the northern boundary wall along St Georges Road. Landscaping works which include the provision of some trees also form part of the proposal. In policy terms the proposed works does not raise any fundamental issues particularly with regards to the principle of the scheme. It is considered therefore that the principle of the proposed scheme is in principle acceptable.

Play Areas

- 5.3 These facilities include kick about area, netball, basketball and tennis courts as well in addition to 5-a-side football courts. The netball, basketball and tennis courts will be located along the eastern boundary of the site spanning almost the full depth of the site from north to south and will be adjacent to Geraldine Street and the rear gardens of houses along West Square. The courts measure approximately, 30.5 x 15.3m with 2m overrun all around and 28 x 15m with 3m overrun all around, respectively. This section of the park benefits from a very high boundary wall which provides adequate protection for residents from users of the park in terms of noise.
- 5.4 The 5-a-side football courts are located further away from residential properties towards the western boundary. The courts measure 29 x 16.7m and the surface construction will be 24mm polypropylene sanded artificial turf and each court would be enclosed with surrounding 1.2m high kick boards and 3m high weldmesh sports fencing. The kick about/casual use area is located to the southern end of the site adjacent to residential properties on Harmsworth Mews.

Pavilion Building

- 5.5 The proposal also include the construction of a pavilion building which will be located to the northern end of the park immediately to the rear of the park rangers storage area. This building will comprise changing and shower facilities for users of the park. In addition a small cafeteria area is proposed. The building proposed is single storey oval shaped with a very gentle pitch roof and has a footprint area of 200sq.m. The design of the building is based on simplicity and the choice of materials including facing brickwork, metal roof and glazed clerestory/rooflights is considered appropriate in this location. Although details of the materials are not available, these can be secured by condition.

- 5.6 In terms of visual impact, the pavilion building is unlikely to be visible in views from St Georges Road, with the exception of the centrally positioned raised rooflight. Given that the park benefits from a high boundary wall is sufficient to

obscure the new structure behind. Furthermore, the scheme will not impact on the setting of the Imperial War Museum given its location and intimate scale.

- 5.7 Although improvements to the park will result in development on Borough Open Land in so far as the pavilion building is concerned, the new building is considered to be in compliance with the relevant policy criteria given that it would provide facilities incidental to the use of the park. Furthermore the inclusion of a small cafeteria within the pavilion building will provide a useful facility for the public that will positively contribute towards the vitality of the park. In so far as amenity issues are concerned, this can be safeguarded with a condition controlling hours of operation.

Flood Lighting

- 5.8 The improvements to the park also involve the erection of floodlights to the games court. A combination of single and twin floodlights mounted on 6m high columns are proposed. The floodlight has been designed to minimise light over spill to the adjacent residential properties around Harmsworth Mews and West Square. The northern most netball courts nearest to the residential properties will only have recreational floodlights to them whilst the two courts further south will have no flood lighting at all. The northernmost courts located further away from the residential properties and the five-a-side football courts along the western boundary are fitted with a combination of recreational and competition lighting.
- 5.9 In design terms, the proposed floodlight raise no issues in so far as design is concerned. However the strength of the floodlights have been reduced and positioned to take into account potential light pollution for nearby residents. The Council's Public Protection Department raise no objections to the floodlights as they have been changed to the satisfaction of the Council to a level which is not deemed to be a nuisance.

Landscaping

- 5.10 The proposal involves additional landscaping works to the park which includes tree planting to the periphery of the site and along walkway across the site. Planter beds are also proposed to the north and west of the site adjacent to the 5-a-side courts, the tennis courts and the pavilion building respectively. In visual amenity terms the proposed landscaping is welcomed as it would contribute positively towards enhancing the park.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The pavilion building will be accessible to people with mobility difficulties.

7. LOCAL AGENDA 21 [Sustainable Development] IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal will improve and enhance the park.

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