

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

**Application No :** 14/02210/FULL1

**Ward:**  
**Farnborough And Crofton**

**Address :** Newstead Wood School For Girls  
Avebury Road Orpington BR6 9SA

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 544671 N: 165209

**Applicant :** Mrs J Riley

**Objections :** NO

**Description of Development:**

Air hall over four existing outdoor tennis courts to be erected for 6 months from 1st October to 31st March

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
Urban Open Space  
Adjacent to Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London City Airport Safeguarding Bird

**Proposal**

The proposal is for a seasonal air dome (dark green upvc membrane) over four of the existing porous macadam tennis courts. It is proposed that the air dome will be erected between 1 October and 31 March each year.

The dome measures 65m by 37m and will be 10m in height at its highest point. An entrance to the dome is proposed in the eastern elevation with an emergency access in the northern elevation. The inflation unit will be located to the east of the air dome and will be surrounded by 2m high acoustic fencing.

The erection of the air dome will allow Bromley Tennis Centre to guarantee the use of the four outdoor courts during autumn and winter periods during which time play is often interrupted or prevented due to wet weather. The Bromley Tennis Centre anticipates that if the courts are covered the occupancy of these courts could raise from 20-50% to 80-90% within a short time. This will increase the opportunity for coaching programmes and for the community use of the facility.

It is anticipated that the coaching programme could accommodate 100 additional junior and adult players in the evenings and potentially 100 additional players during the daytime. It will also assist in growing the disability tennis programme.

The Tennis Centre does not intend to use the outdoor courts beyond the existing curfew time, and, therefore, it does not consider that there will be a net increase in traffic as a result of the installation of the air dome.

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has offered grant funding of £500,000 to erect the seasonal air hall.

### **Location**

The Bromley Tennis Centre is in the grounds of Newstead Woods School, Avebury Road, Orpington, owned by the school and operated in partnership with the Kent Lawn Tennis Association. The school is located adjacent to a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation.

### **Comments from Local Residents**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and no objections were received.

### **Comments from Consultees**

The Council's Highways Officer raises no objections to the proposal.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has highlighted the potential for the air pumps to generate noise, and the fact that they will need to run 24 hours a day. EH has requested some further information from the applicant in order to confirm whether a full noise assessment should be provided, but this information remains outstanding. A condition is therefore proposed requiring a noise assessment, unless the relevant information is provided in advance of the Committee meeting and this is to the satisfaction of EH.

Natural England (NE) advises that whilst the site is located in close proximity to the Crofton Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). NE is satisfied that the proposed development, if it is carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which the site has been notified and does not represent a constraint to determining the application.

Natural England has not assessed the site in terms of protected species.

### **Planning Considerations**

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following Unitary Development Plan policies:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- C7 Educational and Pre-School Facilities

- C8 Dual Community Use of Educational facilities
- G8 Urban Open Space
- L1 Outdoor Recreation and Leisure
- NE5 Protected Species

London Plan policies 5.12 and 5.13

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 is also relevant.

## **Planning History**

There is extensive planning history on the site. The planning history with most relevance to this proposal is summarised below:

02/02198 and 03/01513 - Approval of the reserved matters in respect of 01/01861 for the construction of the all weather tennis facility.

01/01861 - Outline planning permission was granted for the construction of an all weather tennis facility comprising 6 indoor tennis courts, 4 outdoor floodlit tennis courts, in August 2001

86/02057 - Planning permission was granted for the use of the field as an all weather pitch and with floodlighting in October 1986.

## **Conclusions**

The main issues to be considered are the impact of the proposal on Urban Open Space, the adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest for Nature Conservation, protected species and the amenities of the surrounding residents.

In terms of the impact of the proposal on Urban Open Space, the development is related to the existing use and will substantially increase the amount of court time available particularly during winter months enhancing the existing recreational use of the site. Whilst, in the context of Policy G8, indoor sports development is not normally regarded as being related to the existing use, this development is not permanent and will substantially increase the amount of court time available for school use, coaching programmes, disability programmes and community usage. The proposal is therefore considered to be of substantial benefit to the local community. In addition, the existing courts are well screened and the proposed air dome is located adjacent to a complex of existing buildings and is well screened on all sides from wider public view. It is not therefore not considered likely to impair the open nature of the site.

With regard to the impact on the amenity of the occupants of nearby residential properties, the courts are located a significant distance (approx. 140 m) away from the nearest residential properties and the site is well screened by a combination of the existing buildings to the north, existing vegetation to the west and a bund to the south. It is therefore considered that the air dome will not have an impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding residential properties.

Due to the extent of existing screening and the distance of the tennis courts from the nearest residential properties it is considered unlikely that the proposal will have any impact on residential amenity resulting from sporting activities or light spillage. A noise assessment has been requested to ensure that the plant required to inflate the dome will not have an unacceptable impact in term of noise. It should be noted that there is already evening activity at the school from other activities.

In summary, is it considered that the proposed air dome will substantially enhance the existing tennis facilities at the site increasing opportunities for participation from schools, individuals attending coaching programmes, the disabled and the wider community. It is considered that, subject to appropriate screening and additional landscaping, the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the natural environment. In terms of Urban Open Space, the development is not permanent, and the benefits of the scheme are considered to significantly outweigh any limited impact on openness, which is minimal as the site is already located adjacent to a complex of buildings, fenced off for recreational use and well screened from the surrounding area.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the file ref. 14/02210 and those set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

## **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1      ACA01      Commencement of development within 3 yrs  
ACA01R      A01 Reason 3 years
- 2      ACK01      Compliance with submitted plan  
ACC01R      Reason C01
- 3      The use hereby permitted shall only be erected during the period from 1 October until 1 April. At all other times the covers shall be removed and the site restored to its condition before the development took place.  
**Reason:** In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
- 4      The use hereby permitted shall not be open to patrons outside the following times: 09:00 to 21.30 on weekdays and between 09.00 and 21.00 on weekends.  
**Reason:** In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the surrounding residential properties.
- 5      Before the use hereby permitted begins, a scheme for the installation of equipment to inflate the covers shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All equipment installed as part of the scheme shall be thereafter operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.  
**Reason:** In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.
- 6      A detailed noise assessment should be submitted and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development. Any mitigation measures that may be recommended by the report will be implemented prior to the first operation of the equipment that will be used to

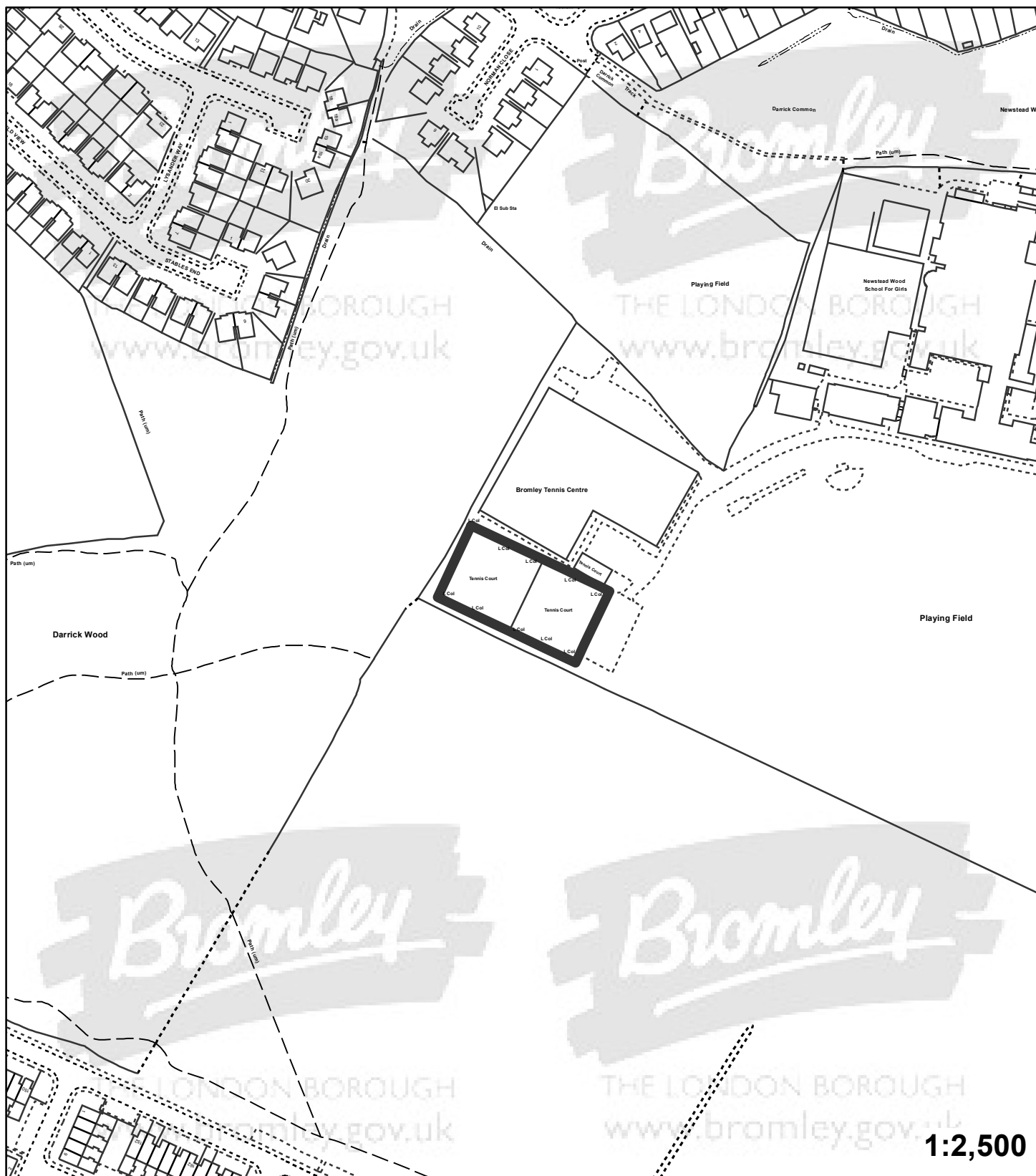
inflate the air dome, and should any mitigation measures be required these will be implemented within three weeks of approval and be permanently maintained thereafter.

**Reason:** In order to comply with Policy BE1 and in the interest of the interest of the users of the site and the occupiers of surrounding residential properties.

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"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

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