

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

21 March 2019

**APPLICATION NO.**

18/P4236

**DATE VALID**

13/11/2018

**Address/Site**

The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club  
Church Road, Wimbledon, London, SW19

**Ward**

Village

**Proposal:**

Application for temporary permission to erect 5 x air domes over existing clay courts between September and May for a period of 3 years

**Drawing Nos**

51326-REW-0010-XX-DR-A-00, 01, 02 B, 04, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 12, 15 B, 17 and 45-0320-00 (x2).

**Contact Officer:**

Stuart Adams (0208 545 3147)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions.**

**CHECKLIST INFORMATION.**

- Heads of agreement: - No
  - Is a screening opinion required: No
  - Is an Environmental Statement required: No
  - Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted – No
  - Press notice – Yes
  - Site notice – Yes
  - Design Review Panel consulted – No
  - Number of neighbours consulted – 170
  - External consultations – No.
  - PTAL score – 1a/1b
  - CPZ – No
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application has been brought before the Planning Application Committee for consideration in light of the number of objections received against the application and officer recommendation of grant permission conditions subject to conditions.

## 2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site comprises the site of The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC) on Church Road, Wimbledon. The whole site area is 17.3 ha, however the application site spans across two site areas situated either side of Somerset Road. The larger of the two site areas is located on the eastern side of Somerset Road and the smaller site area is located on the western side of Somerset Road.
- 2.2 The area located to the east of Somerset Road comprises the main leisure and recreational facility of the AELTC. This area, where the proposed air domes would be located, accommodates a variety of different functions used in connection with members use throughout the year and the annual Wimbledon Tennis Championship.
- 2.3 The area located to the west of Somerset Road is characterised by two large uncoordinated structures housing 5 indoor tennis courts with ancillary facilities. Chillers for centre courts are currently located to the rear of the indoor tennis court building.
- 2.4 Outside the Championships the indoor tennis facilities are used by the members of the AELTC and car parking for staff and contractors. During the Championship the existing courts at the Somerset Road site are used by tournament players as a warm up area. The site also acts as the main transport hub for the fleet of courtesy cars that operate during the Championships, as well as housing the VIP accreditation areas, a ticket collection area, members car parking, bus drop off and a BBC aerial camera hoist.
- 2.5 Residential properties on Somerset Road and Marryat Road sit opposite the Sothern apex of the main site. Properties in Somerset Road face directly onto the southern apex and properties in Marryat Road sit at a right angel to the main site.
- 2.6 The main section of the AELTC site is identified as open space within Merton Sites and policies Plan (2014).
- 2.7 Further to the east of the main site, is Wimbledon Park, this area is identified as MOL, a Green Corridor, Open Space, Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Wimbledon North Conservation Area, Historic Park (Grade II) and Archaeology Priority Zone within Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

## 3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Application for temporary permission to erect 5 x air domes over existing

- clay courts between September and May for a period of 3 years.
- 3.2 The redevelopment of the AELTC Somerset Road site under planning permission 16/P4651 will result in the temporary loss of five existing covered courts (which are currently used by Members and for the training of Ball-boys and Ball-girls) during the construction period. Early works on the Somerset Road scheme have commenced, and whilst new covered courts will be included within the redevelopment site, there will be a shortage of covered courts during the main works construction period which is due to commence in August 2019 (post Championships) and last for a period of 3 years until May 2022.
  - 3.3 It is therefore proposed to provide five single court 'air domes' over five existing clay courts in the Southern Apex of the main AELTC site for a temporary period of 3 years until the Somerset Road construction works are completed. The air domes will ensure facilities for Members are maintained during the construction period of the Somerset Road site and will allow for year round play outside of The Championship period (i.e. so that play isn't limited by poor weather). The air domes are outlined as being critical in ensuring the overall Wimbledon Master Plan is carried out without detriment to the Club's facilities.
  - 3.4 The air domes are proposed to be erected in September each year and dismantled in May so that the courts can continue to be used for hospitality and other purposes during The Championships. The application seeks permission for a temporary period of 3 years with the domes to be first erected in September 2019 (post Championships) and be dismantled in May 2022 after the completion of the Somerset Road redevelopment scheme.
  - 3.5 As air supported structures, the domes derive their structural integrity from the use of internal pressurised air to inflate the structure envelope. The air is the main support of the structure and therefore access to the domes must be via air locks. The air domes will be lit from within, and the provision of shelter from the weather will ensure the clay courts are usable throughout the year.
  - 3.6 The air domes are proposed to cover existing Clay Courts 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. The footprint of each dome is approximately 35.5m x 17.5m, and the height of each is approximately 9m.
  - 3.7 Each dome has a small heat and inflation unit, the position of which varies for each dome based on the existing topography of the site and to be acoustically screened behind the existing boundary wall (which ranges in height from 2.8m-3.9m). The inflation units to the air domes over clay courts 2, 3 and 6 incorporate 1m attenuation units and 0.5m

attenuation to the inflation units to air domes over clay courts 1 and 5. The built in attenuation will include sound dampening intake boxes on both the main blower and standby blower that acoustically attenuate fan units.

- 3.8 Electrical supplies are to be provided to each of the clay courts to drive the fans of the inflation units. As air supported structures, the domes are dependent on the inflation units for their structural integrity. Each fan unit is provided with a heater battery for frost protection and snow loading which will enable the air temperature to be maintained above freezing to ensure frost doesn't form on top of the domes. In order to reduce energy consumption, the heater batteries will not be used to heat the domes for the users of the courts.
- 3.9 The courts require internal illumination and low energy suspended luminaires will be utilised with manual control. The lighting will be turned off when not in use to conserve energy.
- 3.10 The proposed domes will be comprised of a similar material to the existing air dome on the AELTC Community Sports Ground in Raynes Park, although it should be noted that the proposed domes are smaller in footprint and height due to the Raynes Park dome covering three courts rather than one. The material is fully opaque and there is very little (if any) light spill in the evenings when the lights are on within the dome.

#### 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 18/P3306 - Non-material amendments to LBM planning permission 16/P4651 (6 x indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) changes relate to rewording of conditions 31, 36, 38, 39, 42 and 48 to take into consideration early enabling works – Grant - 19/09/2018
- 4.2 18/P3532 - Application to discharge condition 44 (piling calculations) attached to LBM planning application 16/P4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Pending decision
- 4.3 18/P3033 - Application to partially discharge condition 15 (trees) attached to LBM planning permission 16/P4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 28/08/2018
- 4.4 18/P2510 - Application to partially discharge condition 5 (boundary treatment) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 24/08/2018
- 4.5 18/P2531 - Application to discharge condition 26 (bat boxes) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 22/08/2018

- 4.6 18/P2534 - Application to discharge condition 27 (stag beetle) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 22/08/2018
- 4.7 18/P2529 - Application to discharge condition 25 (bird nesting) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 22/08/2018
- 4.8 18/P2715 - Application to partially discharge condition 28 (suds) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 20/08/2018
- 4.9 18/P2545 - Application to discharge condition 46 (green roof) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 14/08/2018
- 4.10 18/P2502 - Application to partially discharge condition 3 (materials) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 13/08/2018
- 4.11 18/P2509 - Application to partially discharge condition 18 (landscaping) attached to LBM planning application 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 13/08/2018
- 4.12 18/P2709 - Application for partially discharge of condition 20 (vegetation clearance) attached to LBM planning permission 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Grant - 08/08/2018
- 4.13 18/P2667 - Non-material amendments to LBM planning permission 16/p4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities). changes relate to internal alterations, omission/new/relocated doors, windows & stairs, relocated/new flues, amended lifts & lift over-run and changes to louvres & timber cladding – Grant - 25/07/2018
- 4.14 18/P2716 - Application to discharge condition 10 (WMS), 12 (CLP) and 43 (CMS) attached to LBM planning application 16/P4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – pending decision
- 4.15 18/P1897 - Application for discharge of condition 45 (movement monitoring report) attached to LBM planning permission 16/P4651 relating to the demolition of existing 5 x covered tennis courts and erection of a new building comprising of 6 x indoor courts and associated facilities, 6 x outdoor tennis courts, single storey basement for parking (up to 338 vehicle spaces and 60 cycle spaces), 9 external covered car parking spaces, relocation of chiller plant (which services centre court roof) and associated equipment, associated landscaping, hardstanding, access

- roads, boundary enclosures and amended access arrangements – Grant - 27/06/2018
- 4.16 18/P2501 - Application to partially discharge condition 4 (surface treatment) attached to LBM planning application 16/P4651 (6 indoor and 6 outdoor tennis courts and associated facilities) – Pending decision
- 4.17 16/P4651 - Demolition of existing 5 x covered tennis courts and erection of a new building comprising of 6 x indoor courts and associated facilities, 6 x outdoor tennis courts, single storey basement for parking (up to 338 vehicle spaces and 60 cycle spaces), 9 external covered car parking spaces, relocation of chiller plant (which services centre court roof) and associated equipment, associated landscaping, hardstanding, access roads, boundary enclosures and amended access arrangements – Grant subject to conditions and S106 agreement - 29/05/2018.
- 4.18 16/P2750 - Application for a certificate of lawfulness for existing use (implementation of planning approval 11/P2865) – Issue - 23/08/2016
- 4.19 14/P0632 - Replacement of existing portacabin and erection of 2 x portacabins on plantroom roof, including associated hard and soft landscaping – Grant - 09/04/2014
- 4.20 11/P2865 - Erection of a new covered court facility over three levels containing six new indoor tennis courts to replace the existing building containing 5 indoor courts to be demolished, formation of new access to somerset road, car parking facilities at ground floor / undercroft levels, replacement bar/lounge/changing facilities and new tree planting and landscaping – Grant by planning applications committee - 18/02/2014
- 4.21 11/P2864 - Pedestrian tunnel between car park 3 and the millennium building, erection of a new single storey front extension with canopy to the millennium building and associated works connecting the tunnel with the player entrance at ground level – Grant - 10/01/2012
- 4.22 11/P0300 - Removal of an existing timber outbuilding in car park 4 (gate 20) and hardstanding, and the construction of new stepped terrace concrete floor slab bases for temporary portacabin building during the annual championships together with the construction of a strengthened grass hardstanding for an articulated outside broadcasting vehicle and equipment , involving construction of a retaining wall within an existing embankment and an inclined strengthened grass area to the remainder of the embankment plus new security fence, gate and security cabin - Grant - 07/03/2011.

- 4.23 10/P2911 - Erection of a temporary pedestrian access area, vehicle access areas at the covered courts on Somerset Road/Marryat Road, operational compounds, technology cabins at court 3 facilities building and security fencing for the purposes of hosting the test event and the London 2012 Olympic games at the all England lawn tennis club - Grant - 14/01/2011
- 4.24 10/P2300 - alterations and extensions to east and west elevations of millennium building to refurbish and improve facilities including provision of new internal staircase, alterations and two storey extension on eastern side of building above part of competitors garden to form improved lounge and larger reception area, construction of a covered outdoor plant space to service the new extension and relocation of the press writing room into an extension along the western facade above competitors drop off point, involving removal and replacement of two trees – Grant - 21/10/2010
- 4.25 86/P1326 - Erection of a new three court covered tennis hall building with two level bar seating area/changing/ viewing area linked to existing 2 court building including layout of car parking areas with landscaping and planting around the building and along the Somerset Road frontage – Grant - 09/04/1987

## 5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by major press notice procedure and letters of notification to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 5.2 7 letters of objection have been received. The letters raise the following concerns:

### Noise

- Level of noise pollution. To keep these air domes inflated, machinery will be in operation 24 hours every day for 3 years from September to May. This cannot be considered to be a temporary application.
- Although noise mitigation measures (repositioning of machinery) have been proposed for 2 of the courts on Somerset Road side, no proposals have been made for the dome over court 6. Court 6 is closely positioned to neighbouring houses. It is not sufficient to rely on there being some building structure near to this court as a noise mitigation measure.
- The proposed noise mitigation measures are unlikely to be effective, noise is very difficult to obtain and will be particularly noticeable during the night. How sound travels is also dependent on weather factors e.g., wind direction.
- The noise report does not guarantee that its proposals to mitigate

sound pollution will be effective. It also does not contain a conclusion on the proposed sound proofing approach to be built, neither does it make recommendations for sound proofing court 6, which will be required given that, as per the point above, barrier attenuation alone is unlikely to provide sufficient attenuation.

- Noise report – the existing background noise levels e.g. from the odd passing vehicle at night is very different from the constant noise emitted from 5 generators running 24 hours a day for 3 years.

#### Light pollution

- Light pollution

#### Environmental impact

- The environmental impact also needs to be considered. Is it justifiable to run heavy machinery through the night to support limited use of tennis court for members of a private club? The environmental impact from 24 hours machinery use is excessive considering these courts are used only for a few hours a day.

#### Other

- The AELTC is relying on a precedent at Raynes Park. The comparison is not appropriate as there is only one air dome in the Raynes Park site. The proposed development involves 5 domes in a small area with neighbouring properties close by.
- Disappointing that the AELTC have sneaked in this minor application as an afterthought when it is really part of their extensive redevelopment project. It should have been former part of the master development plan.
- It is misleading to suggest that these air domes have local support.
- Is it really necessary to construct 5 domes?

#### Visual

- Tennis air domes are notorious eye-sores when viewed in the context of existing surroundings of trees, parkland, golf course and spired church.
- Significantly disturb views from dwellings

5.3 Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions

5.4 Community Involvement – The applicant has submitted a Statement of Community Involvement, which outlines that surrounding residents were consulted in October 2018 by the applicant.

## 6. POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 The relevant policies within Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014) are:

- DM R5 Food and drink / leisure and entertainment uses
- DM R6 Culture, arts and tourism development
- DM C1 Community facilities
- DM E4 Local employment opportunities
- DM O1 Open space
- DM O2 Nature conservation, trees, hedges and landscape features
- DM D1 Urban design and the public realm
- DM D2 Design considerations in all development
- DM D4 Managing heritage assets
- DM EP2 Reducing and mitigating noise
- DM EP3 Allowable solutions
- DM EP4 Pollutants
- DM F1 Support for flood risk management
- DM F2 Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and; wastewater and water infrastructure
- DM T1 Support for sustainable transport and active travel
- DM T2 Transport impact of development
- DM T3 Car parking and servicing standards
- DM T5 Access to the Road Network

6.2 The relevant policies within the Merton Core Planning Strategy (July 2011) are:

- CS 11 Infrastructure,
- CS 12 Economic Development
- CS 13 Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture
- CS 14 Design,
- CS 15 Climate change,
- CS 16 Flood Risk Management
- CS 18 Active transport
- CS 19 Transport
- CS 20 Parking, Servicing & Delivery

6.3 The relevant policies within the London Plan (July 2016) are:

- 2.18 Green Infrastructure: The Network of Open and Green Spaces
- 3.19 Sports Facilities
- 4.6 Support for and enhancement of arts, culture, sport and entertainment
- 5.1 Climate change mitigation
- 5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction
- 5.7 Renewable energy
- 5.12 Flood Risk Management
- 5.13 Sustainable drainage
- 6.3 Assessing Effects of development on Transport Capacity
- 6.8 Coaches
- 6.9 Cycling

- 6.10 Walking
  - 6.13 Parking
  - 7.3 Designing out crime
  - 7.4 Local character
  - 7.5 Public realm
  - 7.6 Architecture
  - 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
  - 7.13 Safety, security and resilience to emergency
  - 7.15 Reducing and managing noise, improving and enhancing the acoustic environment and promoting appropriate soundscapes
  - 7.18 Protecting open space and addressing deficiency
  - 7.19 Biodiversity and access to nature
  - 7.21 Trees and Woodlands
  - 8.2 Planning obligations
  - 8.3 Community infrastructure levy
- 6.4 Other
- National Planning Policy Framework 2018
  - National Planning Practice Guidance 2014
  - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act – 2004
  - Draft London Plan 2017
  - Draft Local Plan 2020

## 7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1.1 The principal planning considerations in this case are: the principle of development, the design of the structures & their impact on the character and appearance of the Somerset Road street scene, adjacent Wimbledon North Conservation Area, impact on neighbouring amenity, open space and parking/traffic considerations.

### 7.2 Amendments

7.2.1 The applicant has provided an updated noise report - Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019) with the application. The report states that to further safeguard the amenities of the area, additional acoustic measures have been introduced to the inflation units. The original acoustic assessment and report was based on inflation units without any attenuation at source. It is now proposed that the inflation units to air domes over clay courts 2, 3 and 6 incorporate 1m attenuation units and 0.5m attenuation to the inflation units to air domes over clay courts 1 and 5. The built in attenuation will include sound dampening intake boxes on both the main blower and standby blower that acoustically attenuate fan units. The main fan and back up fans require ventilation and these sound dampening boxes act in a similar

way to an acoustic louvre by reducing the sound emittance from the fans as the air travels through the boxes. The acoustic assessment has therefore been recalculated.

### 7.3 Principle of Development

7.3.1 The redevelopment of the AELTC Somerset Road site under planning permission 16/P4651 will result in the loss of five existing covered courts (which are currently used by Members) during the construction period. Early works on the Somerset Road scheme have commenced with the main works contract due to commence in August 2019 (post Championships) and last for a period of 3 years (until May 2022).

16/P4651 - Demolition of existing 5 x covered tennis courts and erection of a new building comprising of 6 x indoor courts and associated facilities, 6 x outdoor tennis courts, single storey basement for parking (up to 338 vehicle spaces and 60 cycle spaces), 9 external covered car parking spaces, relocation of chiller plant (which services centre court roof) and associated equipment, associated landscaping, hardstanding, access roads, boundary enclosures and amended access arrangements.

7.3.2 The application encompasses the erection of five single court air domes over existing clay courts within the Southern Apex of the main grounds which is bound by Church Road and Somerset Road to the east and west. The air domes are proposed to be erected in September each year and dismantled in May for a period of 3 years starting in August 2019 and being removed in May 2022.

7.3.3 The 'Wimbledon Master Plan' sets out the club's vision for the future of the grounds and is a framework against which new development will be assessed and refined. Whilst the Wimbledon Master Plan is not an adopted plan of the Council, it sets out the club's direction of development over a 20-year period. The proposed air domes are proposed on a temporary basis of only three years whilst the Somerset Road development is being constructed and completed. Given the temporary nature of the domes and their role within the wider Wimbledon Master Plan, in principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

### 7.4 Design

7.4.1 Planning policy DM D2 (Design considerations in all development) of Merton's Site and Policies Plan 2014 requires all development to relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, heights, materials and massing of surrounding buildings and

existing street patterns, historic context, urban layout and landscape features of the surrounding area.

7.4.2 The proposed air domes would be located on the main site of the AELTC. The site contains a number of seated tennis courts, ancillary facilities and outdoor tennis courts. The application site therefore has a leisure and commercial character. The proposed air domes would sit within the site, behind existing high level brick walls. Section plans submitted show that the domes for courts 2, 3, 5 and 6 would be on a lower ground level than Somerset Road. The structures would, however, be artificial in nature, and given their overall height of circa 9.0m (akin to the height of a two storey house) they are not considered to cause visual harm to the local area. The proposed air domes are not considered to be excessively large within the context of the AELTC site, sitting alongside other sporting stadia and ancillary buildings. The proposed air domes are therefore considered to relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, heights, materials and massing of surrounding buildings. It should also be noted that the air domes are temporary structures which would only be erected between the months of September and May for a period of three years.

7.4.3 The proposed air domes would be located opposite Wimbledon Park which is identified as MOL, Historic Park and within the Wimbledon North Conservation area. Planning policy DM D4 (Managing heritage assets) requires development to conserve and where appropriate enhance Merton's heritage assets and distinctive character. The proposed air domes are considered to respect the context of the leisure use. The domes are not excessive in size and are partly screened from views within the park by mature trees along the Park boundary and by the high level brick walls of the AELTC site. In addition, the domes would be well distanced away from the Park to ensure that the proposal conserves the MOL, Historic Park and the Wimbledon North Conservation Area.

## 7.5 Neighbour Amenity

### Noise

7.5.1 The applicant had commissioned an independent noise report with the application. Following the original comments from the Councils Environmental Health Officer and objections received from neighbours, the applicant has now provided an Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019). The updated Noise Report has considered the potential impacts of the proposed development on the nearby residential properties. Specifically, the Assessment reviews the impact of the proposed inflation units for each of the five air domes.

7.5.2 A brief summary of the position of each inflation unit is outlined below (against the closest neighbouring property, 86 A Marryat Road):

All courts will be now incorporate in-built attenuation units.

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86A Marryat Road - Assessment location 1 = boundary  
Assessment location 2 = 1m from first floor window

Clay Court 1 – This court’s inflation unit is located at a distance of approximately 166m from Assessment Location 1 and 168m from Assessment Location 2. It is positioned to the eastern side of the court. Acoustic screening will therefore be provided by court’s air dome.

Clay Court 2 – This court’s inflation unit is located at a distance of approximately 48m from Assessment Location 1 and 50m from Assessment Location 2. It is positioned to the western side of the court. Some acoustic screening will therefore be provided by the boundary wall of the site which is 3.8m high.

Clay Court 3 – This court’s inflation unit is located at a distance of approximately 20m from Assessment Location 1 and 22m from Assessment Location 2. It is positioned to the western side of the court. Some acoustic screening will therefore be provided by the boundary wall of the site which is 3.8m high.

Clay Court 5 – This court’s inflation unit is located at a distance of approximately 80m from Assessment Location 1 and 82m from Assessment Location 2. It is positioned to the eastern side of the court. Acoustic screening will therefore be provided by court’s air dome.

Clay Court 6 – This court’s inflation unit is located at a distance of approximately 48m from Assessment Location 1 and 50m from Assessment Location 2. It is positioned to the south western corner of the court such that heavy acoustic screening will be provided by the adjacent building.

7.5.3 The applicants latest Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019) states that the noise receptor locations for the residential properties in close proximity of the proposed air domes were originally assessed to the boundary of the adjacent properties. However, in order to address Merton’s specific concerns, a subsequent assessment has been undertaken to measure the noise impact at both the boundary of the adjacent properties and a point

1m from the nearest noise sensitive window. To further safeguard the amenities of the area, additional acoustic measures have now been introduced to the inflation units. The acoustic assessment has been recalculated using the revised data. The original acoustic assessment and report was based on inflation units without any attenuation at source. It is now proposed that the inflation units to air domes over clay courts 2, 3 and 6 incorporate 1m attenuation units and 0.5m attenuation to the inflation units to air domes over clay courts 1 and 5. The built in attenuation will include sound dampening intake boxes on both the main blower and standby blower that acoustically attenuate fan units. The main fan and back up fans require ventilation and these sound dampening boxes act in a similar way to an acoustic louvre by reducing the sound emittance from the fans as the air travels through the boxes. The applicant has also confirmed that the consultant will introduce, if necessary, any additional noise control measures upon final design to ensure that the units comply with the Councils noise condition, as set out below.

7.5.4 The Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019) states that it should also be noted that the acoustic data is measured when the inflation units are running at full capacity. Once the domes are fully inflated, the current to the inflation units reduces and the noise readings would reduce further. The data on which the Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019) was written was based on the worst-case scenario which would only present when the domes are being erected (in September each year for the temporary 3 year period) or on the rare occasion there is an air leak due to failure or that misuse.

7.5.5 The applicant has confirmed that the air domes will be installed in accordance with the mitigation measure recommended in the Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019).

7.5.6 The Councils Environmental Health officer has confirmed no objection subject to the following condition:

Noise levels, (expressed as the equivalent continuous sound level) LAeq (10 minutes), from the new plant/machinery associated with the installation of the new air inflation units shall not exceed LA90-10dB at the boundary with the closest residential property. A report demonstrating that the aforementioned criteria shall be submitted to the LPA prior to the first use of the development.

7.5.7 It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse impact upon neighbours as the proposed development would include mitigation features to ensure that the noise levels do not exceed the noise limits contained in the Councils noise condition above.

### Light Pollution

- 7.5.8 The proposed domes will be comprised of a similar material to the existing air dome on the AELTC Community Sports Ground in Raynes Park, although it should be noted that the proposed domes are smaller in footprint and height due to the Raynes Park dome covering three courts rather than one. The material is fully opaque and there is very little (if any) light spill in the evenings when the lights are on within the dome.

### Visual Amenities

- 7.5.9 The properties on Somerset Road face directly towards the proposed air domes and properties on Marryat Road sit at a right angle. These neighbours are separated from the application site by Somerset Road, thereby forming a visual barrier between the neighbours and the application site. The proposed air domes are considered to be modest in size, their curved roof forms slope away from neighbours, are set well away from neighbouring properties and behind the existing high level boundary walls. The proposed air domes are therefore considered to preserve the visual amenities of these neighbouring properties.

### Daylight and Sunlight

- 7.5.10 There are substantial separation distances of at least 20m between the air domes and the nearest windows of residential dwellings and the maximum height of the proposed domes is 9m. Therefore, there would be no significant loss of amenity in terms of loss of daylight or sunlight to existing properties.

### 7.6 Open Space

- 7.6.1 The applicant site is identified within the Sites and Policies Plan (2014) as open space. Planning policy DM O1 (Open space) of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014) seeks to protect and enhance open space and to improve access to open space. The justification text for policy DM O1 (open space) states that proposals to redevelop buildings in open space should be of high quality design, and of a scale, height and massing that is appropriate to their setting.

- 7.6.2 It is considered that the proposal will not harm the character, appearance or function of the existing open space as the proposal simply introduces temporary air domes over existing outdoor tennis courts. The air domes would assist the AELTC in implementing their Wimbledon Master Plan vision which among other improvements seeks to enhance landscaping throughout the site. It must also be noted that the site has already been

partly built on already and Merton's Open Space Study 2010-2011 does not identify the subject land as surplus.

7.6.3 The proposed air domes will cover existing clay courts on a temporary basis that ensures that the venue maintains its sporting facilities and helps deliver the AELTC long term Wimbledon Master Plan vision (sporting enhancement, including enhanced landscaping). The proposal, given their temporary nature, may not be considered as high quality design, but their scale, height and massing are appropriate to the context and setting of the site. They will play an important part in the AELTC delivering the Wimbledon Master Plan, with the end result creating an enhanced sporting facility. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in line with planning policy DM O1 (Open space) of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014).

## 7.7 Climate Change

7.7.1 Objections have been received from neighbours in regards to the environmental impact from 24 hours machinery use being excessive considering the courts would only be used for a few hours a day. Each dome has a small heat and inflation unit. Electrical supplies are to be provided to each of the clay courts to drive the fans of the inflation units. As air supported structures, the domes are dependent on the inflation units for their structural integrity. Each fan unit is provided with a heater battery for frost protection and snow loading which will enable the air temperature to be maintained above freezing to ensure frost doesn't form on top of the domes.

7.7.2 In order to reduce energy consumption, the heater batteries will not be used to heat the domes for the users of the courts and the low energy efficiency internal lighting will be turned off when not in use.

7.7.3 Permanent structures would not be feasible in this instance as the facilities are only required from September to May each year for a 3-year period. Whilst there would be some environmental impact from the temporary nature of the domes, this is not considered to be excessive to warrant refusal of planning permission. Given the constraints and timetable of the AELTC site, temporary structures are unavoidable whilst works commence on the existing covered courts. It should also be noted that any short term environmental impacts could be offset by the AELTC improved sustainability credentials for the new covered courts facility and the club's wider sustainability improvements (energy center) across the whole site.

## 7.8 Highways

7.8.1 The courts will predominantly be used by current Members and given

the proposal will provide cover to replace the existing courts which will be lost as part of the Somerset Road proposals, there will be no impact on the highway network when compared to the existing scenario.

## 7.9 Flooding

- 7.9.1 Clay court 1 drainage channel system would be extended to provide channels along the north and east side of the court with outlets into the existing surface water drainage system. The ground to the south of court 1 slopes down from the court towards the road. The existing channel and drainage gullies on the south side of court 1 are deemed to be sufficient to take the rainwater runoff from the south face of the proposed air domes.

## 8. **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- 8.1 The application does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there are no requirements in terms on EIA submission.

## 9. **CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 In conclusion, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable with the temporary air domes helping the AELTC deliver their Wimbledon Master Plan vision. The design, size and height of the building are considered to satisfactorily relate to the context of the site. The residential amenities of adjoining residential properties will be preserved to a satisfactory level given the design, size and siting of the proposed structures and the requirement that the domes must comply with the requirements of the noise condition suggested by the Councils Environmental Health Officer. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out below.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT permission subject to conditions

1. A.1 Commencement of Development
2. A7 Approved plans
3. B.3 Materials as Specified
4. D.1 Hours of use - (7am-10pm daily)
5. E.5 The air domes shall only be used for indoor tennis and for no other

purpose, (including any other purpose within Class D2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1998), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority would wish to retain control over any further change of use of these premises in the interests of safeguarding the amenities of the area and to ensure compliance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy DM EP2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

6. Noise levels, (expressed as the equivalent continuous sound level) LAeq (10 minutes), from the new plant/machinery associated with the installation of the new air inflation units shall not exceed LA90-10dB at the boundary with the closest residential property. A report demonstrating that the aforementioned criteria shall be submitted to the LPA prior to the first use of the development.  
Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area and occupiers of neighbouring properties and to ensure compliance with policies DM EP2 and DM EP4 of the Adopted Merton Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.
7. The air domes shall only be erected between September and May each calendar year, between the year of September 2019 to May 2022.  
Reason: to ensure that the application is temporary in nature in the interests of the amenities of the area and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policies 7.17, 7.18 and 7.4 of the London Plan (2016), policies DM O01 and DM D2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan (2014) and policies CS 14 and CS 20 of the Core Strategy (2011).
8. The development must be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Addendum Report (4<sup>th</sup> March 2019).  
Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area and occupiers of neighbouring properties and to ensure compliance with policy PE.2 of the Adopted Merton Unitary Development Plan 2003.

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[Click here](#) for full plans and documents related to this application.

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