

Item No: 2/03
Address: LOWLANDS RECREATION GROUND, LOWLANDS ROAD,
HARROW
Reference: P/0218/13
Description: EARTHWORKS TO INCLUDE BANKING AND CHANGES IN
LEVELS, RETAINING WALL, AND ASSOCIATED
LANDSCAPING
Ward: GREENHILL
Applicant: HARROW COUNCIL
Agent: ADAMS AND SUTHERLAND
Case Officer: GERARD LIVETT
Expiry Date: 26 MARCH 2013

Legal Comments:

Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (Statutory Instrument 1992/1492) provides (in relevant part) that applications for planning permission by an interested planning authority to develop any land of that authority shall be determined by the authority concerned, unless the application is called in by the Secretary of State under section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for determination by him. The application is made by LB Harrow [Public Realm] who intend to carry out the development and the land at Lowlands Recreation Ground is owned by LB Harrow. The GRANT of planning permission for this development falling within regulation 3 shall enure only for the benefit of the LB Harrow.

RECOMMENDATION

DELEGATE AUTHORITY to the Divisional Director of Planning to grant planning permission subject to conditions following the end of the consultation period.

REASON

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken as the proposal would improve the attractiveness and utility of the open space and would assist in the delivery of a vibrant, diverse and attractive Metropolitan Town Centre, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy and as amplified by

emerging policy AAP7 of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan Development Plan Document.

The proposal would also safeguard this area of Metropolitan Open Land, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy, policy 7.17 of The London Plan and saved policy EP44 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

In addition, the proposal would facilitate further works at the recreation ground that will support new amenities on the site, which would increase the attractiveness of the space as an “urban park”, and the Town Centre as a destination for visitors and investors

The proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Roxborough Park and The Grove Conservation Area, and the setting of the Statutorily Listed Buildings at the adjacent Harrow College, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy, policy 7.8 of The London Plan and saved policies D11, D14 and D15 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

The decision has been made having regard to national planning policy, the policies of The London Plan 2011, the Harrow Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan 2004 as well as to all relevant material considerations including any responses to consultation.

INFORMATION

The application is reported to the Planning Committee because the site is owned by Harrow Council and is excluded by proviso C of the Scheme of Delegation dated 14 March 2012.

Statutory Return Type: Minor Development, all other

Council Interest: Council owned recreation ground

Conservation Area: Roxborough Park and The Grove

Listed Building: Within setting of Listed Buildings at Harrow College

Metropolitan Open Land

Application Site Area: 0.38 ha (area of recreation ground is 0.98 ha)

Net additional Floorspace: N/A

GLA Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Contribution (provisional): N/A

Site Description

- The application site comprises part of a 0.98 hectare recreation ground on the north side of Lowlands Road and the east side of Station Approach (a private road owned by Transport for London)
- The park also has boundaries with the Harrow on the Hill station car park on the north and the Harrow College campus on the east
- There are no boundary fences on the south side of the park (along Lowlands Road), and there is a metal fence along the Station Approach

- frontage, and a chain link fence along the northern site boundary
- The access points to the park are on Lowlands Road, one at the junction with Station Approach and one at the eastern end of the park
 - The park has a fall in levels of approximately 5m from the south-east to the north-west

Proposal Details

- The application proposes the regrading of a circular section of the park to provide a more level central area and to facilitate other developments within the park
- At the eastern edge of the application site, which would be approximately 10m from the eastern edge of the park, the higher levels would be supported by a retaining 'geological' wall (earth covered concrete) which would be up to 1.2m high with planting at the top
- The central part of the park would have a gentle slope from the east to the west with a fall in levels of 1.25m from east to west over the 80m of this central area
- A grassed mound is proposed in the southern part of this lowered section of park, which would be 2m above the prevailing ground level and would have a polished stone slide and a water feature
- At the western edge of the application site, adjacent to the proposed site for a café / rehearsal space (which does not form part of this application), would be a hard landscaped amphitheatre, which would be 60m wide and 30m deep, with six concrete seating steps (each 5m wide 60m long). Each of these steps would be 250mm high and would then match the new levels of the site.

Revisions to Previous Application

- N/A

Relevant History

P/0707/08/DFU – Redevelopment of Harrow College in a 1 to 10 storey building on adjacent site at Lowlands Road Recreation Ground to provide 30,380 sqm of floorspace, replacement and reconfiguration of 0.97 hectare of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), creation of new access at station approach, basement car parking, cycle and minibus parking and associated landscaping. Finally Disposed Of – 12-Dec-2012

P/0708/08/COU – Outline: redevelopment of part of Harrow College site to provide flats in a range of 404 to 420 in five blocks rising to twelve storeys and basement, new access, basement car parking in a range of 202 to 210 spaces, cycle parking in a range of 404 to 420 spaces, associated open space and landscaping involving the retention of the white house, creation of new pedestrian streets and routes linked to a public square and reconfigured

Metropolitan Open Land & resident permit restricted
Refused – 04-Jul-2008

Reasons for Refusal:

- The proposal represents an overdevelopment by reason of excessive mass and bulk to the detriment of the character of the area, contrary to Policies PPS 1 and 3 and S1 and D4 of the HUDP.
- The proposal would have an adverse effect on the setting of the listed building and would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the adjoining Conservation Area and Area of Special Character, contrary to HUDP Policies D11 and D14.

Pre-Application Discussion (Ref.)

- None
- The proposals have nonetheless been developed by a collaborative team across the Council as part of a round 2 Outer London Fund project for the Heart of Harrow

Applicant Submission Documents

- **Design and Planning Statement**
- The overall design intent is to turn the Lowlands into a destination park with a clear, captivating character. The proposed re-levelling of the park forms an integral part of this proposition.
- The levelled area will enable Lowlands to be used in a rich variety of ways, from picnics on the green, family ball games, space for extended audiences and summer fête style stalls
- Set within the new levelled ground is a play hill, a purpose-made grass-covered made and sized from the cut and fill of the earthworks. A large slide and water feature are carefully placed to provide opportunities for both purposeful and incidental natural play.

Consultations

London Underground Ltd: To be reported

Harrow Hill Trust: To be reported

Conservation Area Advisory Committee: To be reported

Landscape Architect: No objection

Design and Conservation Officer: To be reported

Highways Authority: No objection

Drainage Engineers: Further details of drainage would be required

Advertisement

Character of a Conservation Area / Setting of a Listed Building

Expiry: 28-Feb-2013

Site Notice (x 2)

Expiry: 27-Feb-2013

Notifications

Sent: 114

Replies: 1 to date. Additional replies to be reported

Expiry: 07/03/13

Addresses Consulted

84, 84a, 84b Lowlands Road

Technology House, 73-77 Lowlands Road

Harrow College, Lowlands Road

White House, Harrow College

Landsdowne House, 1 Landsdowne Road

Harrow on the Hill Underground Station

W H Smith, Station Approach

Lansdowne Road: 1-7 (odd)

Whitehall Road: 10-50 (even), 1-25 (odd)

Lowlands Road: 42-84 (even)

Pickwick Place: 11-27 (odd)

Maxed Park: 6, 7, 8, 9

Summary of Responses

- Play areas should cater for pre-school age children; Play equipment needs to be designed such that parents can supervise small children; A small café would be welcome, but needs to be carefully designed; Performance areas should be erected on an as and when basis
- Additional replies to be reported

APPRAISAL

Emerging Development Management Policies Development Plan Document and Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan Development Plan Document

While this application has been principally considered against the saved policies in the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004), some regard has also been had to relevant policies in the Development Management Policies and Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan DPDs (Pre-submission Drafts) which form part of the emerging Local Development Framework for the Borough and will eventually replace the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004) when adopted.

These documents have been subject to two rounds of consultation; between 13 May 2011 and 24 June 2011 on the Council's Preferred Options, and between 27 July 2012 and 7 September 2012 on the Pre-submission Draft documents. These DPDs have now been sent to the Secretary of State for Examination in

Public which was held in January 2013. Prior to this, a 4 week consultation was carried out between 11 October 2012 and 8 November 2012 on the Council's Proposed Minor Modifications to the DPDs as a response to representations received as a result of the Pre-submission Consultation.

Although the emerging Development Management Policies and Area Action Plan DPDs do not form part of the Statutory Development Plan for the London Borough of Harrow, they can be accorded appropriate weight as a material planning consideration.

MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 1) Principle of the Development
- 2) Character and Appearance of the Area / Setting of a Listed Building
- 3) Residential Amenity
- 4) Traffic and Parking
- 5) Development and Flood Risk
- 6) Accessibility
- 7) S17 Crime & Disorder Act
- 8) Consultation Responses

1) Principle of the Development

This application represents part of phase 1 of a three-stage programme for the redevelopment of Lowlands Recreation Ground.

Other works in phase 1 include the removal of the fencing along Station Approach and the provision of play equipment. These works are not included in the planning application as they are permitted development by virtue of Parts 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended.

Phase 2 would cover highways works and junction improvements in Lowlands Road and Station Approach. These works are also permitted development virtue of Parts 9 and 13 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended.

Phase 3 would be for the construction of the café and rehearsal space (shown on the land outlined in blue on the drawings submitted with this application). A planning application for this building is expected by the end of March 2013.

The overall aim of the programme is to provide a new urban park in Harrow Metropolitan Centre which would provide performance space and a café. In addition, new play facilities and significant new tree planting would be provided.

The project is co-funded by the Greater London Authority under the Outer London Fund (OLF).

The Harrow Core Strategy sets out the strategic vision for the development of the borough.

Part of this vision is the enhancement of the borough's open spaces and the creation of an interconnected Green Grid. Core Policy CS1.F sets out the aspiration that Harrow's open spaces and Green Grid will be managed as an interconnected, multifunctional environmental resource that, amongst other things, contribute to people's health and wellbeing. The policy also allows for the reconfiguration of existing open space where this would deliver qualitative improvements and greater access.

This overarching policy is supported by the emerging Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan (AAP), which seeks, through policy AAP7 to create new public realm to support the realisation of the plan's aspirations for a vibrant, diverse and attractive Metropolitan town centre.

Lowlands Recreation Ground is identified as Site 20 in the AAP, with the key objectives of establishing the south side of the railway as a highlight for Harrow, increasing the use and access to this town centre green space and the creation of outdoor performance space and complementary uses such as café and / or outdoor cinema screen to increase the attractiveness of the space as an "urban park".

The proposal under consideration with this planning application has evolved from the work of the OLF project team and represents an important part of the delivery of this identified policy objective for Harrow.

The associated permitted development works would remove the railings along Station Approach which would increase the permeability of the park and make it more accessible from the southern station exit.

In addition to the strategic vision for the site outlined in the Core Strategy and emerging Area Action Plan as described above, the proposal would comply with policies 2.18, 7.17 and 7.18 and saved policies EP44, EP45 and EP47 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan relating to the protection and enhancement of open space.

The site is defined as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), to which policy 7.17 of The London Plan, policy CS1.F of the Core Strategy and saved policies EP44 and EP45 apply.

The proposed alterations would not change the openness of the site, and its function as Metropolitan Open Land would be maintained, as required by saved policy EP44 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

The site is currently an under-used recreation ground. The works seek to create a high quality and multi-purpose accessible open space in the Heart of Harrow. Therefore, there is no objection to the principle of the development.

It is noted that there have been applications to redevelop this land for a new building for Harrow College (reference P/0707/08/CFU). This application was recommended for approval, subject to the completion of a Legal agreement. The Planning Committee approved that recommendation on 14 May 2008. However, negotiations regarding the Legal Agreement did not conclude and the application file was closed in 2012.

The proposed development for college use of the MOL is now unlikely to proceed. Accordingly, investment in and enhancement of this open space is considered acceptable in principle.

2) Character and Appearance of the Area / Setting of a Listed Building

The site is within the Roxborough Park and The Grove Conservation Area and is adjacent to the Listed Buildings at Harrow College.

Development plan policies, including policies CS1.A/B/D of the Harrow Core Strategy, policy 7.8 of The London Plan and saved policies D11, D14 and D15 seek to preserve and enhance Conservation Areas and the setting of Listed Buildings.

The Council's Conservation Area policies are also supported by the Roxborough Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy, which forms part of the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document.

The proposed changes to the levels of the recreation ground would change the topography of the area.

Although the proposal is expected to increase the pattern and intensity of the use of the recreation ground through the provision of additional facilities at the site, there would be no fundamental change to the character of the land and it is considered that the proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area and realise the policy aspirations in the emerging Area Action Plan.

The existing levels on the site fall towards the north and west, reflecting the site's location on the lower slopes of Harrow Hill. The works seek to exploit this change in levels to create a "bowl" within the park, with terraced areas that provide interest and informal seating. From the south, this "bowl" will appear as a depression in the land which, alongside new planting, will not adversely

impact upon views towards the town centre or change the setting of the Listed Building within the College, or the character of the Conservation Area. The proposals are therefore considered to positively respond to and enhance both the wider character and appearance of the Conservation and Listed Building within the College campus.

In views from Station Approach, the new level area and terraces will be more obvious and clearly visible. The amended form and the opportunity for new uses, alongside the other “permitted” elements of the scheme will nevertheless serve to significantly enhance the appearance of this open space and the setting of the college campus (including the Listed Building). The proposals are therefore considered to positively respond to and enhance both the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area and Listed Building within the college campus.

It is noted that a café / rehearsal building is proposed for a future planning application on the recreation ground, which would need to be considered against the policies of the development plan once that application is received.

Detailed drawings and specifications have been submitted with this application, and a condition requiring the development to be implemented in accordance with the approved drawings is considered appropriate. Other than this condition, and the standard commencement condition, further conditions are not considered necessary or appropriate.

3) Residential Amenity

There are no residential properties adjoining the site, although there houses on the north side of Lowlands Road, some 60m from the new level area created.

The only potential harm to the residential amenities of the occupiers of those dwellings could be from noise and amplified music arising from events at the performance space. There is also potential for amplified noise to be reflected from the retaining wall.

The use of the space for performance has the potential to disrupt office and residential amenity. This “event” use, including the hours of use of the performance space, and levels of amplified music, would be controlled by events licences. These matters, and the use of the public space, fall within the wider control of the Council as landowners, and it considered that this would provide a sufficient safeguard for the residential amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties.

On its own, the proposal is considered not to harm the amenities of nearby properties.

4) Traffic and Parking

The proposal would have no impact with respect to traffic flow and parking in the area. The associated highway improvements (that do not require planning permission) would represent an improvement in road safety.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would have no detrimental impact on highway safety.

5) Development and Flood Risk

The proposal includes alternate details of drainage arrangements for the land. The applicants have stated that the type of drainage, be it through the use of soak-aways or storage and filtration units, will depend on further site investigation.

These details are not considered sufficiently precise to determine the likelihood of the proposals resulting in increased surface water run-off from the site.

Therefore, it is considered appropriate to advise the applicant to liaise with the Council's Drainage Engineers to ensure that a suitable surface water drainage solution is provided to avoid surface water run-off from the site, as required by policy 5.13 of The London Plan and saved policy EP12 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

6) Accessibility

There would be no change to the accessibility of the site, and would therefore comply with saved policy C17 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

7) S17 Crime & Disorder Act

This proposal for the alterations to the levels of the park would have no impact with respect to this legislation.

The designers for other phases of the works, including the "permitted" works including fencing, lighting, play equipment and tree planting, are liaising with the Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Officer and Security Advisor to ensure that the wider development reduces opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

8) Consultation Responses

Play areas should cater for pre-school age children; Play equipment needs to be designed such that parents can supervise small children – *the location of the play equipment is outside the scope of this application, but these matters are being considered as part of the wider design of the project as a whole*

A small café would be welcome, but needs to be carefully designed – *this is outside the scope of this current application, but the Council is working with the*

agents to ensure a high quality of design for the buildings in Phase 3 of the project

Performance areas should be erected on an as and when basis – *this is not part of the application, and is not considered a suitable arrangement for the overall vision for the park*

CONCLUSION

The proposal would improve the attractiveness and utility of the open space and would assist in the delivery of a vibrant, diverse and attractive Metropolitan Town Centre, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy and as amplified by emerging policy AAP7 of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan Development Plan Document.

The proposal would also safeguard this area of Metropolitan Open Land, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy, policy 7.17 of The London Plan and saved policy EP44 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

In addition, the proposal would facilitate further works at the recreation ground that will support new amenities on the site, which would increase the attractiveness of the space as an “urban park”, and the Town Centre as a destination for visitors and investors

The proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Roxborough Park and The Grove Conservation Area, and the setting of the Statutorily Listed Buildings at the adjacent Harrow College, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy, policy 7.8 of The London Plan and saved policies D11, D14 and D15 of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan.

CONDITIONS

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

277_001 Rev P1; 277_002; 277_005; 277_010; 277_100 Rev P1; 277_150; 277_201; 277_202; 277_207; 277_220; Design and Planning Statement

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

INFORMATIVES

1 REASON FOR GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken as the proposal would improve the attractiveness and utility of the open space and would assist

in the delivery of a vibrant, diverse and attractive Metropolitan Town Centre, as required by policy CS1 of the Harrow Core Strategy and as amplified by emerging policy AAP7 of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan Development Plan Document.

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The decision has been made having regard to national planning policy, the policies of The London Plan 2011, the Harrow Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Harrow Unitary Development Plan 2004 as well as to all relevant material considerations including any responses to consultation.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The London Plan (2011)

- 2.18 – Green infrastructure: the network of open and green spaces
- 5.13 – Sustainable Drainage
- 7.3 – Designing Out Crime
- 7.4 – Local Character
- 7.5 – Public Realm
- 7.8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- 7.17 – Metropolitan Open Land
- 7.18 – Protecting local open space and addressing local deficiency

Harrow Core Strategy (2012)

Policies CS1.A/B/D/F

Harrow Unitary Development Plan (2004)

- EP12 – Control of Surface Water Run-off
- EP29 – Tree Masses and Spines
- EP44 – Metropolitan Open Land

EP45 – Additional Building on Metropolitan Land
EP47 – Open Space
D4 – The Standard of Design and Layout
D11 – Listed Buildings
D10 – Trees and New Development
D14 – Conservation Areas
D15 – Extensions and Alterations in Conservation Areas
T6 – The Transport Impact of Development Proposals
R8 – Play Areas
C17 – Access to Leisure, Recreation, Community and Retail Facilities

Supplementary Planning Document: Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas, including Roxborough Park and The Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)

Draft Harrow Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2012)

DM1 – Achieving a High Standard of Design and Layout
DM7 – Heritage Assets
DM9 – Conservation Areas
DM10 – Listed Buildings
DM16 – Managing Flood Risk
DM24 – Beneficial Use of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land
DM25 – Protection of Open Space

Draft Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (2012)

AAP1 – Development within the Heart of Harrow
AAP7 – Creating a New Public Realm

2 SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

The applicant is advised to liaise with the Council's Drainage Engineers (Tony Donetti on 020 8416 8347 tony.donetti@harrow.gov.uk) to ensure that a suitable form of surface water drainage is provided.

3 CONSIDERATE CONTRACTOR CODE OF PRACTICE

The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements in the attached Considerate Contractor Code of Practice, in the interests of minimising any adverse effects arising from building operations, and in particular the limitations on hours of working.

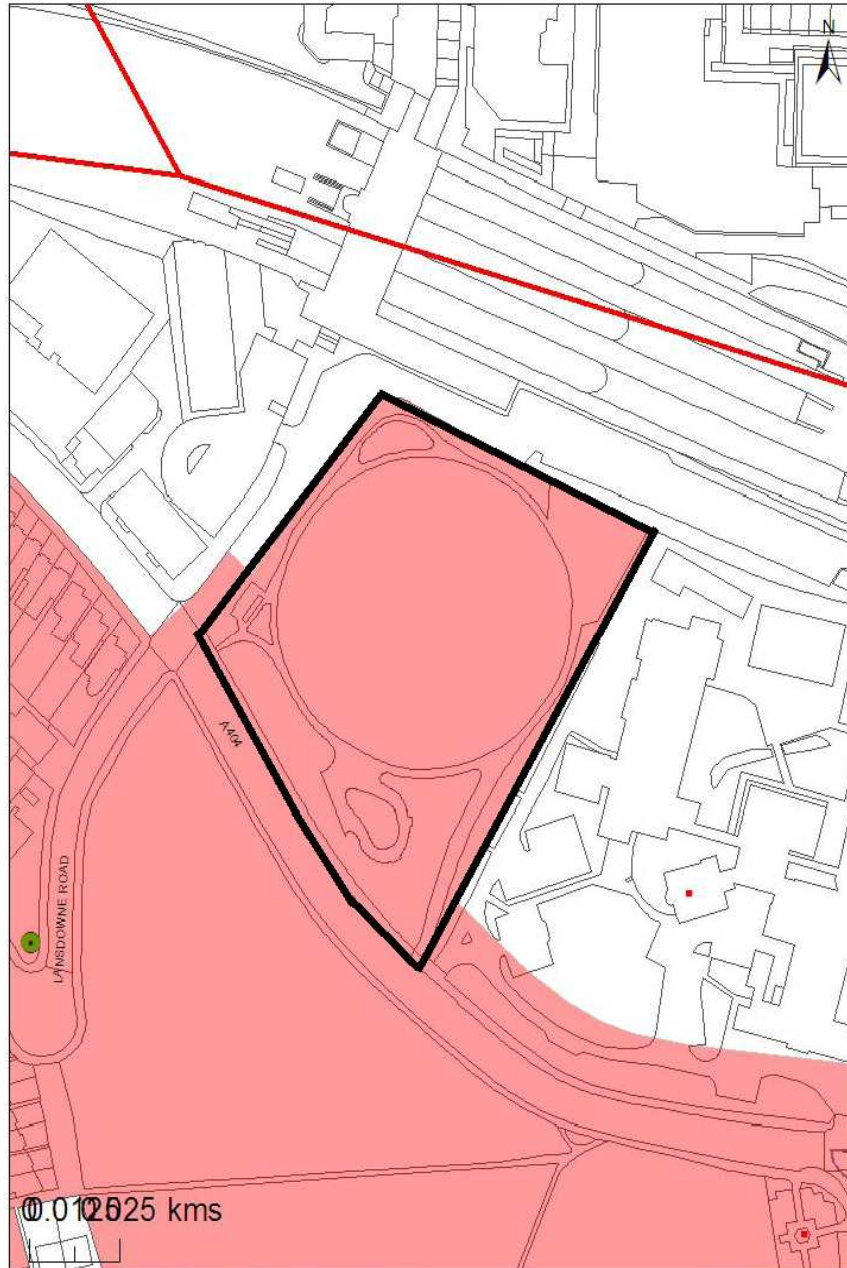
4 INFORM_PF2

Grant without pre-application advice
Statement under Article 31 (1)(cc) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended)

This decision has been taken in accordance with paragraphs 187-189 of The National Planning Policy Framework. Harrow Council has a pre-application advice service and actively encourages applicants to use this service. Please note this for future reference prior to submitting any future planning applications.

Plan Nos: 277_001 Rev P1; 277_002; 277_005; 277_010; 277_100 Rev P1; 277_150; 277_201; 277_202; 277_207; 277_220; Design and Planning Statement

LOWLANDS RECREATION GROUND, LOWLANDS ROAD, HARROW



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