

Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club, Dublin 15, 2013

The scheme involves a light-weight steel structure situated over Courts 8-10, which is covered with a translucent roof membrane made of ETFE (ethene-co-tetrafluoroethene). ETFE is a fluorine based plastic which is very strong but 100 times lighter than glass. The ETFE covering is composed of a series of double skin inflated 'cushions', which are fixed to the steel structure. The ETFE does not degrade under ultra violet light and the entire structure is relatively low maintenance. The structure preserves the 'open' feel of the club, as it is possible to see through the open sides to other courts and the clubhouse. The idea is to create an iconic structure which is 'light' in feel and which allows air and light to pass freely through and around the structure.

In addition, an elevated walkway is shown, which runs alongside the covered structure and provides a viewing deck to look onto the covered courts of 8-10 and also courts 1-7 to the south. The walkway also wraps around the east and western side of courts 8-10, providing more viewing areas. The walkway also connects with the existing indoor building at first floor level and therefore the walkway acts as a 'spine' connecting all courts in the club. At the western end of the walkway the deck opens out to provide a wider balcony with more gathering space and spill-over from the Clubhouse Bar.

Advantages of a 'covered courts' proposal:

- Faster construction time as most of the steel and ETFE fabric construction is 'off site' and pre-fabricated and therefore much less disruption and 'downtime' for the club compared to traditional building construction.
- Minimum disruption to Club Activity during construction.
- No loss of a court in the provision of this structure.
- Outdoor play is possible all year with advantages of fresh air, year round training for outdoor play (which is where most tournaments are played).
- Fresh air with no requirement for costly mechanical air conditioning.
- Courts 1-7 will retain the present open sunny disposition with no overshadowing.
- Preservation of the 'open' feel of the Club grounds, as the structure is open at the sides and one can see through it to other parts of the club.
- The structure would be a "land-mark" structure and easily seen from the M50, thus advertising the location of the Club.
- Lower cost than a conventional indoor building.

The proposal also includes extending the existing clubhouse by building on the open piece of ground where the entrance is currently located. A two-storey structure is added, which creates a second matching 'bay' with a pitched roof over, also matching the current roof profile of the clubhouse. The new entrance to the clubhouse is moved to the northern side of the building and a new elevation is created for the clubhouse, as seen in the model.

The existing overflow car park has been rationalised and extended in this scheme, using the open ground to the east. Total car parking provided is 163 spaces, 152 spaces in the main car park and 11 spaces at the Clubhouse.