

FRIENDS OF PRIORY PARK
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Response to

**London Borough of Haringey
Consultation Documents**

Priory Park Tennis Briefing 24 December 2010

Prior Park Tennis Briefing 27 January 2011

February 2011



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Executive summary

This document is a response to proposals of Haringey Council for the “commercialisation” of Priory Park tennis courts and old bowling green & pavilion. We have given the proposals careful consideration including consultation with our membership, the detail of which may be found within this document.

We are pleased that the Council’s primary driver is to seek to ensure that the park remains fit for purpose and well used. We are supportive of a goal for an improved Priory Park specific “tennis return” from the courts and the Council’s strategic push for “a place for diverse communities that people are proud to belong to” with “healthier people having a better quality of life”.

However, we fundamentally disagree with the Council Officers’ analysis “On the basis that, for an alternative plan to be successful, it would require external funding from the LTA...” and have extreme reservations with the tennis court development options proposed.

We see nothing wrong in having courts suitable for casual play only – it fits the ethos of the park, and we disagree with the introduction of LTA imposed minimum dimensions which will have the effect of reducing the number of available courts.

FOPP would therefore put forward an Option 5 based on some underlying principles:

- that we believe that tennis should remain free in the park
- that whilst tennis is important it is only part of the wide mix of activities – tennis, or indeed sport, should not be the dominant feature of the park
- that the parks facilities remain in public ownership – we are only trustees for future generations
- that we offer a genuine community option based on partnerships, strategic alliances and sponsorship - we will use our local knowledge and local contacts to maximise participation and park usage.

The FOPP Option 5

A 5 year plan, centred on the Café and working closely with the lessee:

- We support the application of the current lessee of the café and would work with him to develop a programme of activity catering for all ages and all levels of physical abilities – for example, boules, table tennis and board games, as well as aiming to develop ecological aspects.
- We will work with outside organisations (already identified) to deliver time-tabled tennis coaching for schools to increase participation, whilst continuing to offer free tennis for all.
- The bowling green will become a community hub, we will redecorate and repair the Pavilion so it can continue to bring in rental revenue.



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At the end of the 5 years (or within), the financial situation should have eased and further work on the tennis courts may be possible. Meanwhile, we would happily accept Paul Ely's offer of help in identifying and applying for suitable funding and we would encourage and support any initiatives to keep the courts playable.

If our proposals are accepted we would look forward to working with the Council on funding applications to outside bodies to raise additional funding for the park where appropriate.



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Carter's Steam Fair, Priory Park



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The Friends of Priory Park

www.fopp-n8.org.uk

The Group was founded in 1996 with the aims of working with the Council to improve and maintain the Park's facilities; to campaign for increased funding for the Park by lobbying councillors and MPs; and to increase public awareness of the use and importance of parks.

The vast majority of members are local residents and regular Park users. Since its inception, the Friends group has liaised closely with other parks in Haringey through the Parks Forum in respect of overarching issues affecting all green spaces within the borough.

One of our first major projects was winning lottery funding commissioning local sculptors to work with nearby schools on artworks for the Philosophers' Garden. Since then, we have created a wildlife pond, held music and carol concerts and successfully opposed the introduction of a permanent skatepark.

For two years running now, we have sold a highly successful calendar of views of the Park and held an exhibition of more photographs from the same photographer in the Park cafe.

Most recently, we have worked with BTCV on planting a wildflower meadow, pond maintenance and shrub and bulb planting, as well as general work days.



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Background to the consultation

The London Borough of Haringey is faced with substantial funding cuts and is looking for ways to make savings or generate income in any area. With the unexpected termination of the lease to the cafe in July 2010, the Borough has considered two options for Priory Park

- Leasing out the Bowls Pavilion and Bowling Green to a commercial children's nursery, along the lines of the existing operation in Alexandra Palace.
- Leasing out the Cafe, Bowls Pavilion and Bowling Green and the six tennis courts to a commercial sports operation, on a long lease. This commercial organisation would become responsible for refurbishing the courts, for which it would expect a financial return.

In November 2010, Paul Ely, Sports Policy and Development Manager, London Borough of Haringey requested a meeting with the Friends of Priory Park to sketch out the proposals.

We met on December 6th with Paul Ely, and Andrea Keble, Sport and Recreation Programme Manager and it was decided that Paul Ely would set out the proposals in more detail.

This briefing was sent out on December 24th, with a response deadline of the end of January 2011. (Please see Appendix 1 for the full text of Briefing 1)

However, this briefing raised such a considerable number of questions that it was not until January 27th that we received a revised briefing, with a response deadline of the end of February. (Please see Appendix 2 for the full text of Briefing 2)

Our consultation process

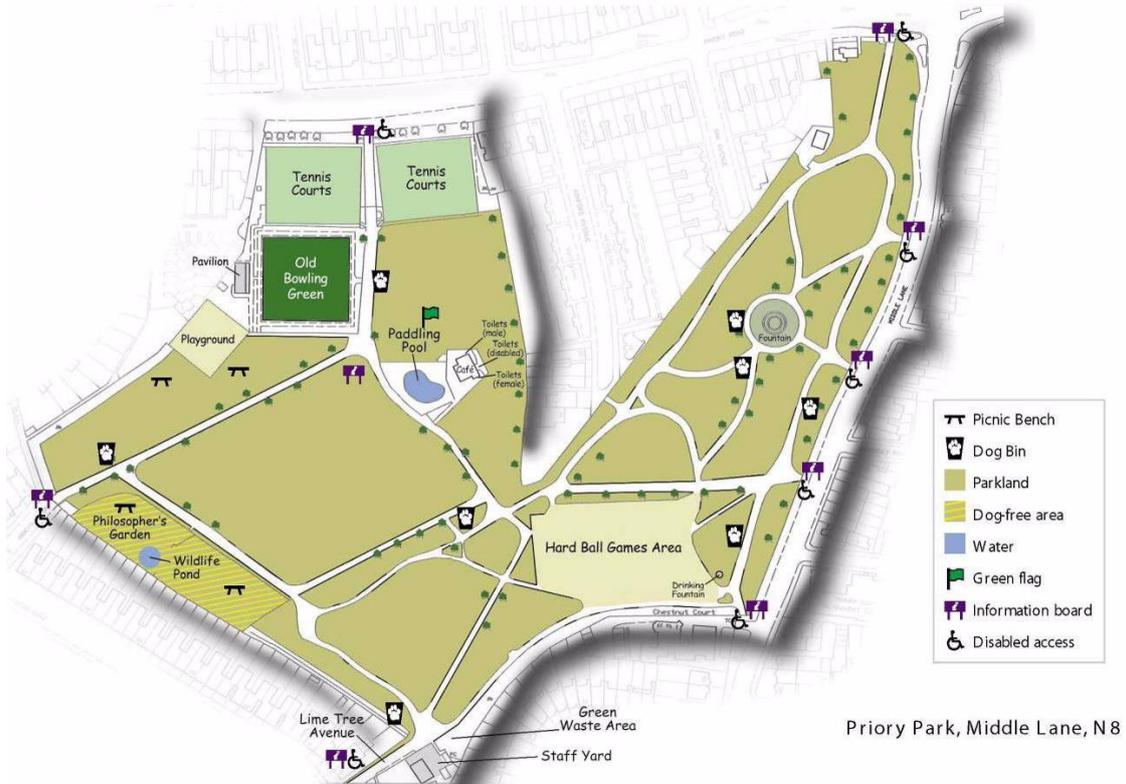
In order to inform our decision making, the Friends have

- visited the Albert Recreation Ground and been shown the Haringey Tennis operation
- investigated the Will to Win Tennis operation in Hyde Park and the Hackney City Tennis Club operation based at Clissold Park
- spoken to the Lawn Tennis Association
- contacted Ping! England and Tennis for Free
- consulted with the YMCA (Hornsey)
- Consulted with BTCV
- consulted the Friends of Priory Park membership (see Appendix 4)
- conducted ad hoc surveys of Park users (see Appendix 4)



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The Priory Park



Copyright http://www.haringey.gov.uk/priory_park_management_plan_2010.pdf

Before we look at the Borough's proposals, we think it helpful to look in some detail at the Park itself.

The Park has been a focal point of the area, since the original Pleasure Gardens (on the right hand side of the above plan) was formally opened in the 1890s as "a pleasant and safe retreat ... greatly to the advantage of children and others residing in the locality".

In 1923, the Council acquired the nine acres of land known as "Lewcock's Field" bounded by Park Avenue South, Barrington Road and Priory Road and three years later renamed the whole area Priory Park.

Back in 2003, it was the joint first Haringey park to receive Green Flag status and has been awarded it every year since.

The Park is listed in the Haringey Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan (HBAP) as a "Local Ecologically Valuable Site" for Hedgerow Habitat with associated mistletoe, birds foot trefoil and spiked sedge species.

It remains such a "a pleasant and safe retreat" that it is currently being cited by Bellway Homes as one of the reasons to move to its new development on Park Road.



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With 100,000 visitors each year, the Park offers its users a wide variety of landscapes and amenities in a space of 14.8 acres; -

- the ornamental gardens stocked with colourful beds and a wide variety of trees and plants elsewhere in the Park
- well used basketball and tennis courts and kick about space
- the tranquil atmosphere of the Philosophers' Garden and wildlife pond
- an extensive children's play area, recently refurbished with Big Lottery funding and with swings and slides, a wooden fort and a flying fox aerial glide
- a children's paddling pool
- a cafe open throughout the year
- and the former Bowls pavilion and green for hire for parties.

Last year the Friends of Priory Park submitted a proposal to upgrade the Park from Significant Local Open Plan to Metropolitan Open Land, in accordance with the MOL criteria stated below.

It is part of a green chain

- Priory Park is part of a green chain, in that it links to Crouch End Open Spaces (designated MOL) via a "green link" of back gardens (between Park Avenue North and Barrington Road) and to Alexandra Palace Park via Priory Common and gardens.

It contributes to physical structure by being clearly distinguishable from built up area

- One of the best views in the area of Alexandra Palace obtained from the centre of Priory Park. A sense of continuing open landscape to the Palace is obtained as a result of community trees (gardens and tree lined streets) between the park and the base of Alexandra Palace Park (designated MOL).

It is land which includes open-air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation, sport, arts and cultural activities and tourism which serve the whole or significant parts of London.

- Priory Park is second only to Finsbury Park (designated MOL) in the borough in terms of number of visits despite being only a fraction of the size.

It is land which contains features or landscape of historic, recreational, nature conservation or habitat interest, of value at a metropolitan or national level

- The park has origins as Victorian Pleasure Grounds, being laid out by Hornsey Urban District Council in 1894.
- The park contains two Grade II listed fountains of historic interest

We have proposed that this MOL upgrade could be achieved either by a separate designation for Priory Park or adding it to number 5 on the Schedule 9 list of Metropolitan Open Land, which currently consists of Highgate Wood, Queens Wood, Shepherds Hill Allotments and Crouch End Playing Fields.



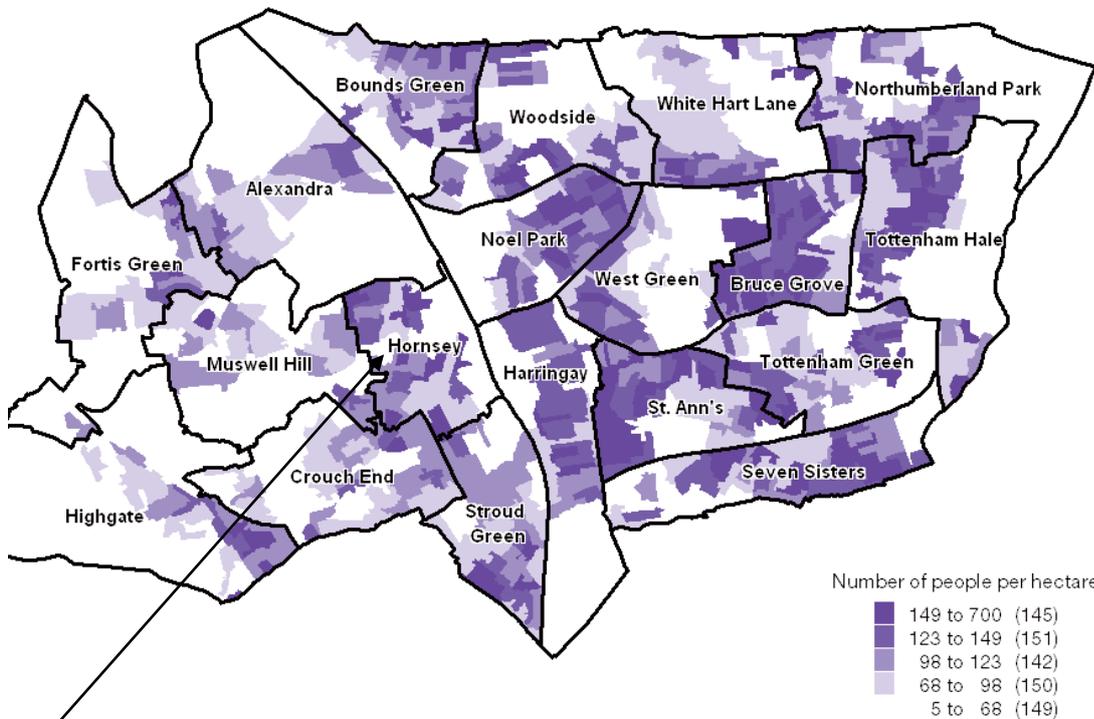
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Our Park Users

Our users come from both the local area and from further afield.

Priory Park is in both the Muswell Hill ward and the Hornsey ward and the Hornsey ward has the highest population density in the west of the borough. With many large houses in the area converted into flats and many purpose built blocks within 500 metres of the Park, Hornsey has the highest proportion of rented housing, at 52.7%, of the surrounding wards, so its green space is vital to people's health and well being.

Many people that we have spoken to in the Park say, quite spontaneously, that the park is their back garden.



Priory Park

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We have people jogging through the Park and around the circuit, joining others on the Wednesday health walks, walking their dogs, bringing in their children to play, having singing sessions in the cafe, practicing basketball, being coached in football, doing tai chi exercises, playing tennis – and just quietly enjoying the Park.

More distantly based visitors attracted to the Park will find it easy to travel by public transport. The 144 and W3 buses from the east of the Borough pass the northern and eastern gates of the Park on the way to Muswell Hill and Finsbury Park and the W7 from Finsbury Park to Muswell Hill stops 5 minutes walk from the western gates.



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People travel for the annual visit of the popular Carters Steam Fair to the Park, which is timed to coincide and anchor the important community centred Hornsey Carnival which draws entries from across London and beyond.

Another important event which has been bringing visitors to the Park for the last 20 years is the Crouch End 10k and Fun Run, which attracts thousands of entries (including many from outside the borough) and which is one of the largest community events in North London.



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The Park has the only public paddling pool in the west of the Borough and carers and children will come for the entire day, setting up around the pool, whilst older children make camp in the play area.

In addition, the YMCA has run "Fun in the Park" for the past seven years in the Park during the April holidays. The sessions provide toddler activities, including face painting, bouncy castle, painting, bubbles, music and song and a children's entertainer. This is all free and offers a taste of the types of activities on offer at the Harringay Club, Children's Centre.

The Children's Playground

There has been a playground in the Park for many years – according to long term users, 30 years ago it consisted of a small roundabout, a few swings and some plastic climbing boxes in a waste of tarmac.

It has developed a lot since then and when it won a grant from the Big Lottery Fund in 2008, schoolchildren from the local St Mary's School contributed ideas for its extension and improvement.



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Now the playground is zoned for different age groups and provides a wealth of playground equipment including benches and tables where parents can chat while kids play in a safe and stimulating environment

It is very popular. In the mornings, carers and children move into it after their music sessions in the cafe and later on, in good weather, it becomes part of the after school ritual.

The Cafe

The cafe is one of the key focal points of the Park. Set in a low hedged enclosure, with the paddling pool, it is also situated on the main path into the Park, opposite the children's play area and the old bowling green. The staff act as a first aid point and also a focus for lost children.

It is a venue for Carer and Child music sessions each week, a weekly midwives drop in session and shows art and photography exhibitions. On a sunny day in summer, it can barely keep up with the demand for ices, drinks and snacks.



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The Basketball Court

The basketball court is an all purpose space – in addition to the basket ball hoops, it also serves as a football pitch when the grass is too wet and muddy and it's also where most of the local children learn to ride their bicycles.



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The Tennis Courts

We have six tennis courts arranged in a row divided by the Priory Road entrance. We understand from Haringey that they were built about 50 years ago and, anecdotally from long term users that no work has been carried out on them for at least 15 - 20 years.

In spite of the relatively poor quality of the surface, they are well used – people accept this in exchange for the opportunity to play for free.

This relatively tatty quality is also a positive for many of our users – it gives people a chance to try out tennis in a less formal atmosphere and it also enables our users to play without having to go to the expense of buying 'proper' tennis shoes – compulsory on new or refurbished courts.

Some people play there every day, but usage varies according to the season, the weather and the time of day. On summer weekends, often all courts are in use from the Park opening to closing.

Tennis court take up is swelled by Stationers' Park users, who often cannot get to play on 'their' two courts, because of their popularity and stand a better chance of getting a game with the six courts at Priory Park. This is borne out by our visit to Stationers' Park shortly after Christmas, both courts were occupied and a family of four was waiting.

The Bowls Pavilion and Bowling Green

Park usage is creative – when bowling ceased and the Bowling Pavilion was vacated, the green became the place for children's parties, setting up bouncy castles and holding the YMCA summer camps.

It is the best drained grass area in the Park, so in winter it is where juniors get their weekend football coaching and both juniors and adults play kick about.



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Tennis in Haringey

The London Borough of Haringey launched its Tennis Development Plan 2010 – 2013 in 2010, with full details at http://www.haringey.gov.uk/tennis_development_plan_2010-2013.pdf

The Plan states that “tennis is a growing sport in the borough with huge potential particularly in the east of the borough where provision for many years has been limited”. Its aims are to increase participation, raise standards, develop better players, develop the workforce and develop facilities.

The focus seems to us to be on competitive, rather than recreational, play as the Plan talks about “establishing a straightforward, high quality competitive framework that gives juniors the stimulus they need to get on, and stay on the winning pathway”

To this end, Haringey is supporting White Hart Lane Tennis Club in the east and Highgate Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club (HCLTC) in the west, less than half a mile from Priory Park, to become Centres of Excellence and Satellite Clubs of the country’s ‘High Performance Centres’[HPCs]. These Satellite Clubs focus primarily on talent development for up and coming performance players under the age of 12 and channel them through to the 15 HPCs in Great Britain, which provide high-level coaching and fitness programmes and access to top facilities for ten to sixteen years old players.

Another of the goals of the Plan is to increase the number of clubs with Clubmark status in the borough to four – we are pleased to see that we have already two within a half a mile of Priory Park and a third within a mile.

The Plan identifies a number of strengths – the west of the borough, which includes Priory Park, has 93 tennis courts, 60 within private clubs, 8 at Pavilion Tennis, 8 on public courts and 17 within secondary schools.

The Plan also rates highly a number of excellent existing tennis programmes in the west, such as the performance programme at HCLTC, which shares the tennis courts at Highgate Woods School – resurfaced by the Council in 2009 at a cost of £120,000.

As a result of these strengths, the Council has clustered the Priory Park courts, together with HCLTC, Hornsey School for Girls, Highgate Woods School and Greig Academy at the bottom of its Tennis Plan priorities at 5/10, with the lowest amount of Council investment (£20,000), the largest amount of external funding from unknown sources (£260,000) and the second smallest Tennis Foundation funding (£50,000) (see table on following page).

Identifiable weaknesses include the poor condition of the courts at seven of the ten public facilities, together with a lack of shelter or nearby lavatories or storage to support a coaching programme. Added to this, coaches at new tennis programmes have complained of a lack of support, guidance and financial backing.



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To deal with these weaknesses, Haringey is developing tennis facility clusters in each of the seven Area Assemblies, addressing in particular, the quality of the courts and amenities such as toilets, social/shelter and storage areas and where possible, installing floodlighting.

The Tennis Foundation / Lawn Tennis Association have indicated that they will jointly provide £500,000 of funding for facility development in Haringey. The Foundation is also keen to broker relationships between the Council and private investors.

So far, we know that the Albert Recreation Ground has received £300,000 and Bruce Castle is receiving £147,000. In the Priory Park area, HCLTC has received £36,000 to add to the £120,000 that Haringey has paid for the resurfacing of the Highgate Woods School courts.

Tennis Development Plan
Indicative costs and funding table

Neighbourhood Management Area	Scheme	LBH £	GLA £	S 106 £	Other £	TF funding £	Total cost (estimate) £	Priority
Wood Green	WHLCS/White Hart Lane TC / Woodside/STM/Heartlands	≈£85,000	£200,000			£200,000	£485,000	10/10
Muswell Hill	Alexandra Park School/ Pavilion Tennis /Albert Rd Rec	£20,000	£150,000			£150,000	£320,000	10/10
Northumberland Park and White Hart Lane	Bruce Castle Park/ WHLTC/ Northumberland Park CS/HSFC	£150,000	£47,500			£47,500	£245,000	9/10
West Green & Bruce Grove	Downhills Park/White Hart Lane TC/ Parkview Academy	4£120,000	£52,500			£52,500	£225,000	8/10
Tottenham & Seven Sisters	Down Lane Park/WHLTC/Gladesmore/John Loughborough				≈£150,000		£150,000	7/10
St Ann's and Haringay	Finsbury Park/WHLTC				≈£180,000		£180,000	6/10
Crouch End, Homsey & Stroud Green	Priory Park/Highgate LTC/ Highgate Wood/Homsey Girls/Grieg City Academy	£20,000	£50,000		≈£280,000	£50,000	£380,000	5/10
Total		£395,000	£500,000		£570,000	£500,000	£1,965,000	

Notes

- 1 Private funding to be sought – lease conditions subject to satisfactory community programme
- 2 Private funding to be sought – lease conditions subject to satisfactory community programme
- 3 This is for the tennis related element of the wider scheme
- 4 ACCS have secured this funding
- 5 Various avenues such as private funding, additional Tennis Foundation etc funding will be explored.



The Haringey proposals

The full text of the two briefings, with a detailed breakdown of all the Options, is in Appendix 1 and 2. We received Briefing 1 on December 24, but we raised so many questions that this initial briefing was replaced by Briefing 2 towards the end of January.

In the following pages we examine

- An outline of the options 1- 4
- The rationale for the options
- The proposed business model
- The application of the proposed business model to the Priory Park
- The business case for the Tenant
- The business case for the London Borough of Haringey
- The business case for the LTA
- The business case for the Park and its Users
- The business case for the Park's Neighbours
- Conclusions on Options 1 - 4
- Option 5 – The Friends of Priory Park Proposal

An outline of the options 1- 4

Option 1 – to leave the courts as they are and carry out repairs as and when Council funding becomes available.

Options 2 – to install three new tar macadam LTA standard courts on the Bowling Green site and replace the three courts on the right of the Priory Road entrance with two LTA standard size courts.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £385,000

Option 3 - to install three new tar macadam LTA standard courts on the grass site on the land below the cafe and replace the three courts on the left of the Priory Road entrance with two LTA standard size courts.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £475,000

Option 4 – to replace the six courts with four tar macadam LTA standard size courts in the same location.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £310,000



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Options 2 to 4 and their costings go into considerable detail, itemising, for example, the location of the fencing around the courts and even the removal of a hedge (£8,000), but the fundamental question – how users would access these new facilities when they are behind the locked gates of the Park – does not seem to have occurred to the Council.

We have pressed on this and been told that

“... [we] can say with some certainty that fencing would not enclose the whole area (very expensive) – it would go around each bank of courts – each with their own gate.

As well there is no intention with any of the current options to change anything about the entrance to the park from Priory Road”

We can only conclude that the Council was unaware that, unlike the Albert Recreation Ground, the Priory Park is closed at dusk.

The rationale

- “The six tennis courts are in poor condition. In due course without investment the courts will become unplayable and may need to be closed for safety reasons”.

When we asked for a copy of the report on which Council base this statement, Council officers did admit that

- “The costs and drawings set out within this paper should be treated with some caution as they have not been generated via detailed investigations by a professionally qualified surveyor”.

However, we agree, on a visual examination, that the quality of the courts is not good, the painted lines have faded, the nets are wrecked and we can see cracks around the perimeter, one of which at least looks as if it is due to tree roots.

- “It is impossible to estimate how long the courts will be safe to play on; as this is dependent on further root damage and ground heave caused by weather conditions and time and at some point probably in the next few years they will need to be closed entirely”.

When we had our initial meeting, Council officers present mentioned a life expectancy for the courts of about four to five years. This is at variance with the view of the Albert Recreation Ground tenant, who tells us that the Priory Park courts are in a much better state than the ones that he took over and worked with for eight years, before getting funding to refurbish.

Another experienced tennis player, who uses the courts each week, tells us that the ones on the left of the Priory Road entrance are in a worse state than on the right, with the uneven surface delivering unpredictable bounces, but are still playable for some years to come.



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- “What is clear is that they are well below minimum LTA size standards”

We accept that they are not the LTA minimum standard size, but this has not been raised by any of the players we have spoken to. The lack of lines and the ragged nets are a more important topic for them.

- “...and are able to be used for casual play only”

We query what is wrong with casual play – casual play is surely good, it’s playing for fun, it’s playing for half an hour because the sun is shining, it’s seeing other people playing and deciding to try it, it’s meeting friends and it’s playing to keep fit – our Park has players of all ages.

- “If ... the tennis return stacks up... the LTA. The Council and the LTA would advise and facilitate this approach ... to ensure that the tennis return is achieved”

This phrase about the “tennis return” appears several times in the briefings - we see from the LTA website that for them this means -

- Increasing the number of regularly competing juniors
- Growing participation across all age groups and abilities
- Increasing the coaching time available

Again, this is an emphasis on competition and serious development and not casual play. We think it demonstrates a misunderstanding of the Park and its users. The users of the Park treat it as a friendly space, a space for fun and that’s how and why they play.

If the Council’s proposals mean free coaching for all, then we would totally support it – but we don’t think it does.

We echo the Council’s whole strategic push to encourage ‘*a place for diverse communities that people are proud to belong to*’ with ‘*healthier people having a better quality of life*’

- “There is no available capital from the Council to fund refurbishment of the courts or even to find sufficient funds for a relatively inexpensive re-tarmac (trying to deal with the root damage and heave problems) and reline (estimate £100K). Note there is also no funds from the LTA and other funding bodies for this option and the re-tarmac would only last for about 5 years”.

We understand the Council’s financial situation. However, we question the statement that the LTA will not fund re-tarmac and that resurfacing would last only 5 years. We certainly agree that the three courts, that don’t meet the LTA minimum size, would have to be relaid as two courts to qualify for LTA funding and the LTA would stipulate lighting as a condition of funding, but the LTA advise that a resurface should last ten years.

- “In addition, the Council will have far less funding available for capital works, partly because of a reduction in capital grant funding from Central Government and partly



because Council income from land and building disposals, that in previous years have supplemented the amount available for capital works have largely dried up”.

The Council has only talked specifically about LTA funding, but the LTA is in the same position as the Council.

We do not believe that the LTA would automatically award any funding to a Haringey project, given the amount they have already funded, the need to spread the money available around the country and their own financial constraints. The financial supply chain is very difficult for Public Authorities and private companies alike, with great uncertainty about Central Government funding, income generation and bank loans and a predicted rise in interest rates.

The LTA is currently working on a net operating deficit and investing more in tennis on an annual basis than the revenue it generates. It is using its cash reserves to fund capital projects, although its interest income from these deposits has fallen by 48% in the last financial year.

All projects funded by the LTA need to generate partnership funding alongside the LTA investment, but it has become clear to the LTA in 2010 that the more limited availability of partnership funding locally, and lack of affordable finance, is impacting on the number of sustainable projects applying for funding.

- “The café located in the park is available for rent. A tried and tested model for a tennis court operation in a park location includes a catering aspect. An option would be for the council to seek to lease out the café, the tennis courts and potentially the bowls pavilion to a tenant ... In London there are a number of successful park tennis operations; including Albert Road Recreation Ground and Hyde Park. These operations are run as private businesses working for the overall benefit of tennis and the park they are located in. The facilities are leased from the local authority”.

The Albert Recreation Ground operation is indeed leased from Haringey, but the Council has been misinformed about the Hyde Park situation. Hyde Park tennis is not on a lease, but is a 12 year service concession, with the operator paying The Royal Parks a percentage of their turnover, (not profit), which in financial year 2009/10 was £121,007+VAT – this figure also includes their concessions in The Regent’s Park and Greenwich Park.

Briefing 1 also cited Hackney City Tennis Club (HCTC) as another private business running a successful operation, but again, this is a misunderstanding. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee, which is useful for non-profit organisations that require corporate status.

The profits are not distributed to its members, but are retained to be used for the purposes of the organisation. It is currently making an application to be registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club, which will change its status from a business to a charity.



- “These operations are run as private businesses working for the overall benefit of tennis and the park they are located in”.

These operations are run as private businesses and as such are there to make a profit for their owners, directors and shareholders. If the company does not make a profit, the company will cease to exist.

- “Note the courts would not be privatised...”

We accept that leasing is not transfer of ownership, but it is transfer of management of a public asset. A five year lease for a cafe is a very different proposition to a 25 year, fully assignable lease.

- “[Note the courts would not] ... become ‘members only’ and this would be explicit in the lease”.

We accept the Council’s assurances and note section 28, page 24 of the Albert Recreation Ground lease, Involvement in the [Haringey] Easycard Leisure Scheme, stipulating the discount card holders will receive when they play on the leaseholder’s courts.

However, we also note that the Haringey Easycard has been replaced by the Haringey Leisure Centres membership scheme and that the Albert Recreation Ground operation has set up its own Pavilion membership card.

Pavilion membership card holders, (£25 a year for Juniors, £50 a year for adults, £100 a year for a family) get free British Tennis membership, advance online courts bookings, access to teams, access to ladder tournaments, access to competitive plays and discounts on court fees – eg £5 per court, instead of £6. This is everything that you would expect from a tennis club, except the court fees, which would be included in a tennis club membership fee.

Pavilion membership is not compulsory - people can still book or just turn up in the hope of getting a court, but they will have to pay the £6 rate, which, incidentally, has doubled since 2008.

And we also draw attention to the statement in the Council Tennis Plan that one of the aims is “Membership – Increase levels of tennis club membership across the borough specifically focussing on: White Hart Lane TC, Pavilion Tennis, Highgate LTC and Coolhurst LTC (2,000)”

- “Clearly to generate footfall to the courts and the café the operator will want to programme in a way that reaches the local community (actively encouraged by the council). While not wanting to pre-empt this, examples could include; Mum’s Coffee and Tennis Mornings, Nature Walks starting from the café, art displays etc”.



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We are glad to see that the Council sees Mums' Coffee Mornings, art displays etc.... as a way of reaching the community and will want actively to encourage them.

We are concerned, therefore, that the Council is unaware that these activities are already taking place in the cafe, as well as a weekly Midwives drop in session.

- “The general ambience created by having courts in front of the Bowls Pavilion will encourage general park usage and tennis take up”

We suggest that the general ambience, created by the Park's friendly atmosphere, children's playground, the paddling pool in summer, the weekly Wednesday health walks, the four times a week music sessions in the cafe, the joggers, the dog walkers, the BTCV groups, the after school meet ups and the tennis courts full in summer, already encourages general park usage and tennis take up.

One of the people we have interviewed as part of our survey, said straight off that when they bring visitors to the Park, they are impressed and envious that the area has such a resource.



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The business model explored

According to Briefings 1 and 2

- “In London there are a number of successful park tennis operations; including Albert Road Recreation Ground and Hyde Park. These operations are run as private businesses working for the overall benefit of tennis and the park they are located in. The facilities are leased from the local authority”.

Although it is true that the operation at Albert Road Recreation Ground operates as a business and leases the facilities from the local authority, this is not the case with Hyde Park or indeed the Clissold Park operation cited in Briefing 1.

Hyde Park and Will to Win

The Will to Win Tennis business in Hyde Park is not leased from the Royal Parks, but is a service concession. Will to Win took over the entire concession, when their partners, Park Tennis, (since dissolved) withdrew. Their concession, which started in 2002, runs until 2014.

Will to Win do not pay rent, but a percentage of their turnover (not profit), which in financial year 2009/10 was £121,007+VAT – this figure also includes their concessions in The Regent’s Park and Greenwich Park.

The Royal Parks have responsibility for the structure of the Premises and also carry out some grounds maintenance services in areas that are accessible to the general public, as these form part of the Parks.

Will to Win are closely managed by The Royal Parks through regular progress meetings and their staff also inspect and monitor the provision of services, such as

- the service being offered,
- prices, speed and quality of service,
- customer satisfaction and care, including
 - under-staffing
 - staff swearing in front of customers
- cleanliness of the Premises,
- level of staff training, including
 - use of under-qualified staff or non-English speaking staff
 - poor standards of dress / uniform
- degree of financial accountability and performance,
- staff rates of pay,
- marketing initiatives.

The Royal Parks can insist on the removal of staff if they believe their presence is detrimental to the service.



The business model explored

Clissold Park - Hackney City Tennis Clubs (HCTC)

Briefing 1 also identifies as a model the Clissold Park operation, which is run by Hackney City Tennis Clubs. HCTC was started in 1999 as Clissold Park Junior Tennis Club and developed into a club for adults in 2001.

In 2008, it was renamed Hackney City Tennis Clubs and became a Company Limited by Guarantee. Guarantee companies are useful for non-profit organisations that require corporate status. They not have a share capital, but have members who are guarantors instead of shareholders.

The profits are not distributed to its members, but are retained to be used for the purposes of HCTC. Limitation of liability takes the form of a guarantee from its members to pay a nominal sum (for HCTC members it is £1.00) in the event of the company being wound up while they are a member or within one year of their ceasing to be a member.

HCTC is currently making an application to be registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club. This will change its status from a business to a charity.



The business model explored

Haringey Tennis at Albert Road Recreation Ground

Three members of the Friends of Priory Park visited the Albert Recreation Ground tennis operation in December 2010 and another visited a few weeks later.

It is an impressive operation. It has taken eight years of hard work and a £300,000 grant to turn a derelict cafe and underused courts into a viable operation, but last year, it made a profit for the first time. The tenant has won two national awards from the Institute for Sport, Parks and Leisure: the sports development officer of the year award was in recognition of his achievements in the private sector and he was also the overall winner.

The park now has 6 full size tennis courts, 4 mini tennis courts and 2 basketball courts, as well as facilities for football, Aussie rules and cricket.

The lease between the Council and Haringey Tennis at Albert Road Recreation Ground

Appendix 1 of the Council's Tennis Development Plan reads (and the bolding is ours)

- “Private Investment: At a number of locations (Finsbury Park and Priory Park) in the borough there is interest from the private sector to invest in the tennis facilities at the park in return for a lease **to manage the facility on behalf of the council.**
- Subject to satisfactory conditions within the lease for the community programme these opportunities should be explored given the benefits they may bring to the local community and the boost they would deliver for participation at these locations”.

Both the Haringey briefings state

- “The council is able to apply certain conditions to the lease (which are subject to negotiation, but could include: rent reviews, timetable for development, opening hours, prices, right to view annual accounts) and expect at some point a rental return (which is subject to negotiation).

However the council would need to be mindful that the operator has to be able to run a successful business, pay back the LTA loan and any other loan related to the capital investment. The negotiations over the lease (including length of potential rent free period) are lead by the council's Property Department who have expertise in this area”.

We do not see the content of these statements reflected in the lease.



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Haringey has supplied us with the lease, which runs to 33 pages, with an additional 2 schedules covering 8 pages – however, it is incomplete, as page 2, which details the “Particulars” is missing from the main schedule. Although we have asked for the missing page, Haringey cannot locate the complete version.

The lease is for 25 years. At our initial meeting on December 6th, the Haringey officers present indicated that the lease could be 10, 15 or 20 years. Haringey has also stated in answer to our questions elsewhere that the length is open to negotiation, but we understand it is a condition of LTA funding that the lease must be at least 21 years.

The LTA funding criteria also require that the lease must be fully assignable – ie it must be capable of being transferred to another organisation, rather than reverting to the Council, which would have little option but to agree to new assignee (section 9, page 15 onwards).

We accept that “the Council’s Property Department have expertise” in the area of lease negotiation, but we question how much experience they have in drawing up sport specific leases.

Although the lease is substantial in length, it is minimal in tennis specific content. The first 23 pages, addressing issues such as discharge of effluents, not using the Demised Premises for any illegal or immoral act and not suspending loads from ceiling trusses, appear to be clauses standard to any commercial agreement.

It is not until page 24 and items 27 to 31 that we find any clauses specific to the cafe, tennis and basketball courts, after which pages 25 – 32 revert to standard content.

- 27 – Use of hatched area by Parks Service – 4 lines
- 28 - Involvement in Easycard Leisure Scheme – 3 lines
- 29 – Opening Hours Access and Usage Guarantee – 8 lines
- 30 – Refurbishment of the Tennis Courts – 2 lines
- 31 – Toilets in the Pavilion – 4 lines

We are surprised that these clauses take up a single page in total and the refurbishment of the courts just two lines, when these are the key reasons for the lease.

We are also concerned that there is no mention in the lease of a sinking fund. We understand that the LTA strongly recommends that funding recipients set up this fund for recolouring every 6 years and resurfacing the courts in years 10 and 20 after the initial refurbishment, as detailed in their Guide to Costings. (Please see Appendix no 4 for the full text) The costs are quite substantial - £1200 a year for years 1 – 6 for the recolouring and resurfacing and £1200 a year per court for the floodlighting.

This LTA Guide states that “Part of running a business involves looking after the assets. Every well run facility must ensure that an appropriate level of finance is allocated to maintaining the facilities; quality facilities retain members and attract new ones. ... we strongly recommend that ‘sinking fund’ is represented as a clear line in the expenditure



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and is separated out from the overall reserve. It demonstrates financial independence, a key measure for most investors”.

We do note that section 5 a) page 12, devotes 5 lines to Repairs, requiring the Tenant “to keep the whole of the Demised Premises including all alterations and improvements thereto and all works and services connected therewith clean and in good repair and condition...”

However, to us this reads as a very general requirement and we would expect, given the level of detail elsewhere in the lease, to have the regular resurfacing, recolouring and lighting maintenance made explicit. This is surely crucial to ensure that, at the end of the twenty five year lease, the courts are returned to the Council in a good state.

- “The council is able to apply certain conditions to the lease (which are subject to negotiation, but could include: rent reviews, timetable for development, opening hours, prices, right to view annual accounts)”
- “[Note the courts would not] ... become ‘members only’ and this would be explicit in the lease”.

We note that there is no mention of prices, right to view annual accounts or a ban on access becoming members only in this lease, but accept that this was drawn up before these aspects were perhaps considered.

This lease does address the following -

Rent reviews and rental return

We note that there is indeed a substantial section on the rent review, section 5, pages 7 – 9, but we also note that the 5 year rent review period, although within legal norms, is at the most generous end.

The rent was reviewed in 2008 and increased to £7,905 from £6,705, with a rent free period of 39 months from February 2003 to June 2006. This fixed five year rental looks very attractive, when compared with commercial rents in the area, but we accept that the Council’s primary aim is to support a Tenant, rather than to generate income.

Timetable for development – section 30

“To complete within nine months of the commencement of this lease the refurbishment of the tennis and basketball courts in accordance with a specification to be agreed with the Council”

We note that this would have set the deadline for the refurbishment of the courts as March 2007, whereas they were formally launched in 2010 – presumably a reflection on the length of time it took to raise the funding. We assume that this breach of the lease conditions has been addressed in an additional schedule that just has not been supplied to us.

Prices – section 28 and opening hours – section 29

We assume that these elements have been dealt by updated schedules as they both no longer apply. The closing hours on the schedule reflect the proposed hours, which were



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reduced as a condition of granting planning permission, whilst the Easycard Leisure has been replaced by the Haringey Leisure Centre membership card, together with pay as you play options, whilst the Tenant has set up a Pavilion membership card, which gives the holder a discount on Albert Recreation Ground fees.

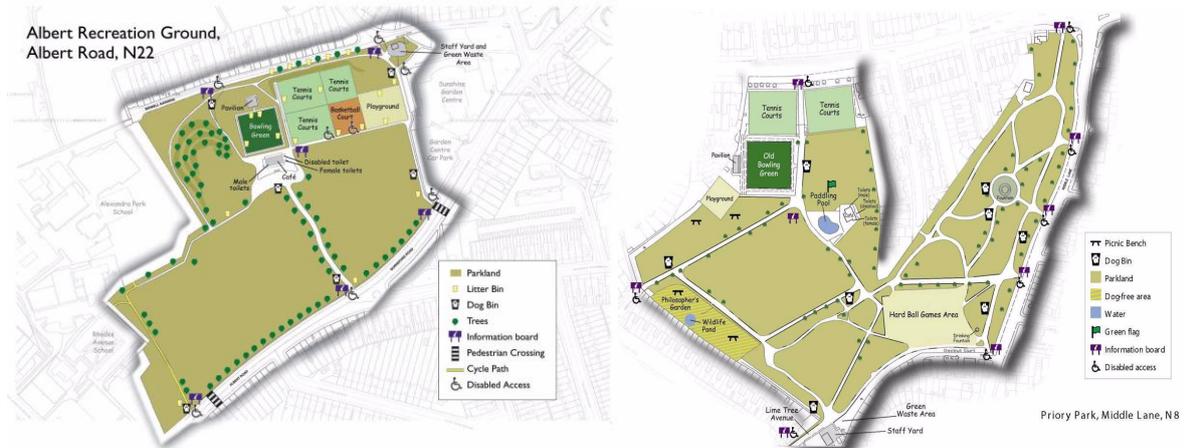
However, we do note that the Tenant has had to double the courts' fees, currently £6 an hour, £5 with the Pavilion discount card, which sets them above Haringey Leisure Centre standard pay as you play rates of £4.60.

In conclusion, we are concerned that the lease requires neither a sinking fund nor maintenance of the courts and we would not want to find that the Council is left exposed to a run down asset when the lease expires.



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Application of the Albert Recreation Ground tennis model to Priory Park



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http://www.haringey.gov.uk/albert_rec_management_plan_2010.pdf http://www.haringey.gov.uk/priory_park_management_plan_2010.pdf

The Albert Recreation Ground tennis operation has obviously been successful in attracting users and funding to a derelict, unused park and Haringey is obviously keen to repeat it in other parks.

However a model that is right for one park is not necessarily suitable for another.

Albert Recreation Ground and Priory Park are a similar size, but their similarity ends there.

Inception and development

The two parks were built for very different purposes - Albert Recreation Ground for sports, Priory Park for pleasure.

Albert Recreation Ground is flat and open, with a steeply rising section on the Bidwell Road side. Priory Park is situated on the side of a hill and has very little flat space.

Albert Recreation Ground was originally an informal open space, but was turned into an official recreation ground with football and cricket pitches in the early 1900s. Tennis courts, a bowling club and green and a mini golf course were added over the years, doubling the plot in size. It used to have a swimming pool to the right on the above plan, which was closed down and is now a garden centre. The grounds cover a wide and open space, but there is little casual recreational space left over.

Priory Park was originally created as a Pleasure Gardens and although now enlarged into an irregularly shaped park, has retained the feeling of intimate, planted space with avenues of trees and a network of paths, dividing it into smaller zones. Because it was created piecemeal, a couple of residential roads cut a wedge deep into the Park itself.



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It has a large, gated, children's play area and a cafe and paddling pool, as well as an enclosed wildlife garden. The former bowling green and pavilion have become a well used site for parties, YMCA summer camps, football coaching and kick about.

Access

Albert Recreation Ground has low fencing, but no gates, so all services can be accessed 24/7.

There is no access to Priory Park after it is locked at dusk and the entrance to the courts is from inside the Park gates.

Usage

The Albert Recreation Ground tenant has transformed a moribund, neglected and crime ridden open space to a well used park through gaining grant funding and developing a tennis training programme.

Looking back to 2003, the present tenant described Albert Recreation Ground as a place where "...People felt intimidated and afraid, there were break-ins and kids getting mugged..."

Looking back to 2003, Priory Park was the first park in Haringey, along with Bruce Castle, to receive Green Flag status for achieving and maintaining excellent standards for a public park and has held it ever since.

It would be hard to compare visitor figures for the two parks.

To begin with, the two parks have very different usage profiles, as Albert Recreation Ground is used during the week for the sports curriculum of the two adjoining schools and at the weekend for team games of cricket and football, with attendant audiences.

Based on the very different area housing profiles, we would not expect the Albert Recreation Ground to have as many casual visitors as Priory Park. Of the six wards around the two parks, Alexandra and Muswell Hill have the highest proportion of owner occupied housing at 69.6% and 62.3% respectively. Satellite images of the Albert Recreation Ground neighbourhood are overall green and confirm a pattern of housing units surrounded by gardens.

When people have their own gardens, they are less likely to go to a Park. Conversely, for many Priory Park users, the Park is their back garden.

The Park Management Plan, updated in 2010, states that Priory Park has 100,000 visitors a year. Priory Park is second only to Finsbury Park in the borough in terms of number of visits, despite being only a fraction of the size. Visitor figures are further boosted by Priory Park's two big annual events – Carter's Steam Fair and the Crouch End 10k and fun run, which draw people from outside the immediate area.



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However, we do have a usage snapshot of the two parks –

Sunday 6 February, temperature cold, light drizzle, sky variable, bright and cloudy later

Priory Park	11.45 Children's Play area	65 adults and children
Priory Park	11.45 Tennis Courts	2 courts in play
Priory Park	11.45 Bowling Green	5 players
		Juniors Football coaching
Albert Recreation	15.30 Children's Play area	12 adults and children
Albert Recreation	15.30 Tennis Courts	all adult courts in play
Albert Recreation	15.30 Green gym	5 adults and children
Priory Park	16.00 Children's Play area	30 adults and children
Priory Park	16.00 Tennis Courts	0 courts in play
Priory Park	16.00 Bowling Green	15 players
		Adult kick about

Cafe, social space and storage space

We understand from talking to the LTA that the Association regards a good social space as vital and more important even than changing rooms. The Haringey Tennis Plan also recognises the importance of social space and cites the lack of it as a weakness.

"Generally public facilities lack shelter, nearby toilets and storage to support a coaching programme".

The Albert Recreation Ground cafe is spacious, the Priory Park one is not.

The Albert Recreation Ground cafe was closed after the Second World War and semi derelict, before the current tenant took it over and revitalised it, in spite of the fact that it is the only cafe in the area.

The Priory Park cafe has been open since the 1960s and is thriving. It hosts four Carer and Child music sessions each week, a weekly midwives drop in session and shows art and photography exhibitions. On a sunny day in summer, its takings will reach four figures - in spite of the fact that there are four cafes within 100 metres of the two Priory Road gates and another seven cafes and restaurants within 200 metres.

The Pavilion cafe has a large dining space, a separate meeting room, an office / storeroom, washing machine room, kitchen, showers (doubling up as more storage space, with the contents having to be moved when the showers are needed for football matches) and lavatories. It also has a terrace, which the Tenant is proposing to enclose for more seating space. It is still not enough room.



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The Priory Park cafe has only one room, with kitchen and store cupboard space. Outside it has a small area for chairs and tables in front of the paddling pool and the whole is enclosed by metal railings. In the summer, when the sun shines, the area is packed out with children and carers.

The Tennis Plan identifies as a weakness that
“Parks with cafes such as Priory, Finsbury and Chestnuts have the social facilities however they are usually some distance from the courts and there is no capacity for storage”

Priory Park has a Bowls Pavilion, rented out for parties and classes, down to the right of the cafe, but it is not in good condition. It does have a central room, a lavatory for the disabled and a smaller storeroom, but a third of the space is, of course, already occupied.

Neighbours, floodlighting and noise annoyance

Planning permission for floodlighting the courts in Albert Recreation Ground was granted because, although Planning Officers agreed that neighbours would suffer ‘additional “glow”’, the houses affected were 25 metres away, there was existing street lighting, the new courts were in the same place as the old and not in a new location and the courts were three metres below the level of the front gardens.

However, in the case of Priory Park, the nearest houses in Wavel Mews are two metres away from the back fence on the option 2 floodlighting site on the Bowling Green. The nearest dwellings on Ashford Avenue are some 5 metres from the fence on the option 3 floodlighting site below the cafe.

The option 2 site will be above the garden level of the Wavel Mews houses. As the ground for option 3 is sloping and will need to be levelled, its southern end will be higher than the gardens in Ashford Avenue.

After it is closed at dusk, Priory Park is in total darkness and in total silence.

The Planning Officers’ solution for the Albert Recreation Ground neighbours of “additional planting” is not an option as it would cut out the residents’ light.

We also note that The Planning Officers accept that there will be a “problem of noise nuisance from late evening use of the tennis courts by numbers of players” to the houses 25 metres away.

We enclose the relevant extract from the Planning meeting.

Page 152The number of proposed floodlights and columns and the proposal for illumination to 10pm would have a visual impact both when viewed from across the Recreation Ground, and when viewed from the front windows of houses in Bidwell Gardens.

The nearest floodlights would be about 25 metres from the nearest houses in Bidwell Gardens. The tennis court site is some 3 metres below the level of the front gardens of Bidwell Gardens houses and there is a line of trees on the South side of Bidwell Gardens, just inside the Recreation Ground



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boundary railings. These would give some screening in the summer, much less during the winter after leaves have fallen. There are also some wide gaps between the trees.

Whilst the choice of light fitting and degree of shielding, will prevent significant light-spill into Bidwell Gardens, there is bound to be an additional “glow” from the new light sources both at the level of the floodlights, and at ground level.

In order to mitigate this, it is suggested that additional planting be provided on the bank immediately to the North of the tennis courts and that the hours of operation be up to 9pm rather than 10pm. This would also assist with the problem of noise nuisance from late evening use of the tennis courts by numbers of players.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

To conclude, the proposal for the provision of new playing courts with 3 metre high mesh fencing and floodlighting is acceptable. The proposal should be approved on the grounds that the new tennis and basketball courts are of similar size and in the same location as the existing. The associated floodlighting will be switched off at an appropriate time of night and not necessarily all of the time, therefore giving local residents respite.

<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=10505&ISATT=1#search=%22Albert%20Road%20Recreation%20Ground%22>

Provision of tennis courts and coaching elsewhere in the area

The Albert Road area has few close alternative places to play tennis, so the Albert Road courts have little competition.

Priory Park has six clubs and the two courts at Stationers’ Park within 1 mile – although many users come from this park to Priory Park because they are more likely to get the use of one of the six courts.

Albert Recreation Ground

Our Lady of Muswell	within 0.5 miles	Club
Muswell Hill Methodist	within 0.75 miles	Club
Bounds Green Bowls and LTC	within 1 mile	Club

Priory Park

Highgate Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club	within 0.5 miles	Clubmark
Georgians & Holly Park	within 0.5 miles	Club
Hanley LTC	within 0.5 miles	Club
Hornsey Club	within 0.75 miles	Club
Stationers Park	within 0.75 miles	Park
Wood Vale LTC	within 0.75 miles	Clubmark
Coolhurst LTC	within 1 mile	Clubmark

Source <http://www.lta.org.uk/clubs-schools/Find-a-Court/>



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Tennis coaching

The Albert Recreation Ground operation has even fewer competitors for coaching than for tennis courts provision, but five out of Priory Park's six neighbouring clubs provide extensive coaching programmes. In the case of some, players do not have to be even members of the club, they just pay a slightly higher fee.

Of the three clubs within a mile of Albert Recreation Ground, we can find no indication of coaching at Our Lady of Muswell, but some for both Juniors and Adults at Muswell Hill Methodist. We suspect that coaching provision at Bounds Green was poor, as this is now being provided by the Albert Road tenant at both the home ground and at Bounds Green. We also understand that the Albert Recreation Ground tenant is working with the Fortis Green Tennis Club on coaching.

Of the clubs within a mile of Priory Park, Highgate Cricket and LTC in particular, currently runs a performance programme and a school programme in 8 primary schools and 1 secondary school. Coolhurst's junior programme, sponsored by Anscombe and Ringland, takes place 6 days a week, with sessions in the morning, after school and early evening, starting from pre-school up to 18 years. Squads run throughout term time – in either 11 or 12 week blocks and then holiday camps during most of the school holidays.

We understand from the Albert Recreation Ground tenant that he arranged a coaching programme at Priory Park on behalf of Haringey Council. The Council advertised the programme, he turned up and waited on the first day, but no one came. He turned up the second day and still no one came, so he cancelled the rest of the programme.



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The business case for the Tenant

At the initial meeting with Haringey officers on December 6th, we said that we could not see how any business based on the small number of Priory Park tennis courts and the variable usage, dependent on seasons and weather, could be viable and profitable.

We still cannot see how any business could be viable and profitable.

As with any proposed new business start up, there are a number of questions to ask

1. Does the product satisfy or create a market need?
2. Are there potential customers?
3. Is the product unique, distinct or superior to those offered by competitors?
4. What competition will the product face?
5. Can the product be sold at a price that will deliver sufficient profit?

Taking these one by one -

1. Does the product satisfy or create a market need?

We have identified six tennis clubs within one mile of Priory Park, three of which are Clubmark accredited.

2. Are there potential customers?

Clearly, there are keen tennis players in the area, many of whom are already members of the above clubs, whilst others have coaching at the clubs, but are not members. Some of the latter practice for free on the Priory park courts.

When we asked Priory Park tennis players if they would pay for using the courts, with one exception, they said that they would not be able to afford it and would stop playing.

Only two would be prepared to pay for using the court and for one of them it would be on the proviso that he could book a time convenient to him.

3. Is the product unique, distinct or superior to those offered by competitors

As there is no identifiable Tenant, we have no comment on this aspect.

However, on a general note, at least five of the nearby clubs offer coaching for children and adults, together with courses during the week, weekends and school holidays.

4. What competition will the product face?

Any Priory Park tenant is surely going to face competition from Haringey itself. According to the Tennis Plan, the Council's stated aim is

“ Supporting White Hart Lane TC (east) and Highgate LTC (west) to become Centres of Excellence to provide an exit route for the most talented players in the borough. These clubs to be satellite clubs of the country's ‘High Performance Centres’ ”



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The Council has already refurbished the courts at Highgate Woods School, which are used by Highgate LTC out of school hours, at a cost of £120,000. We would expect that Highgate LTC is paying the Council for the use of the courts, so their income generation and viability is in the Council's best interests.

Elsewhere in the same tennis plan, Haringey refers to "excellent existing tennis programmes such as a performance programme at Highgate Lawn Tennis Club..."

and "It should be noted that Highgate Wood and Highgate LTC have excellent links and share facilities..."

and "1 informal primary intra-school tournament held at Highgate Cricket and LTC"

The six local clubs, within a mile, as far as we can see, offer individual and group coaching and Coolhurst, HCLTC and the Georgians offer extensive under 18's programmes, for example -
 Georgians 2010 programme

<u>Course</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>
Mini Tennis Red	5 - 7 yrs	Monday	4 - 5pm
Mini Tennis Red	8 - 9 yrs	Monday	4 - 5pm
Development 3	10 - 12 yrs	Monday	5 - 6pm
Development 1	14 - 17 yrs Boys	Monday	5.30 - 7pm
Mini Tennis Red	6 - 8 yrs	Tuesday	4.30 - 5.30pm
Mini Tennis Orange	9 - 10 yrs	Tuesday	5.30 - 6.30pm
Development 3	11 - 14 yrs	Tuesday	5.30 - 6.30pm
Mini Tennis Red	5 - 7 yrs	Wednesday	4 - 5pm
Development 1	11- 14 yrs	Wednesday	5 - 6pm
Development 2	13 - 15 yrs	Wednesday	6 - 7pm
Mini Tennis Red	6 - 8 yrs	Thursday	4 - 5pm
Mini Tennis Orange	7 - 9 yrs	Thursday	4.30 - 5.30 pm
Development 2	11 - 13 yrs	Thursday	5.30 - 6.30pm
Development 2	12 - 16 yrs Girls	Thursday	5 - 6 pm
Development 1	15 - 17 yrs Girls	Thursday	5.30 - 7pm
Mini Tennis Orange	9 - 11 yrs	Saturday	9.30 - 10.30am
Mini Tennis Red	6 - 8 yrs	Saturday	10.30 - 11.30am
Development	12+ yrs	Saturday	11.30am - 12.30pm

The six have club houses, active memberships and lively social programmes. Some have racquets courts, other sports pitches and gyms.

Some market themselves to non tennis players by offering social club or gym only membership for as little as £50 or £25 a year. This means that clubs have a large group of supporters to call on - HCLTC's determined members themselves raised the £24,000 for courts floodlighting.



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5. Can the product be sold at a price that will deliver sufficient profit?

It is impossible to compare prices between the clubs, as each has a different structure of age groups and differing offers. However, annual membership for the under eights at the Georgians is £20 a year and under eighteens is £50 with a one off joining fee of £25. Adults playing Midweek will pay £95.00 a year, as do full time students. Adult ordinary membership is £185 a year. All of these include court fees.

In comparison, the Albert Recreation Ground commercial operation offers players the opportunity to buy an annual membership card (£25 a year for Juniors, £50 a year for adults, £100 a year for a family) which brings free British Tennis membership, advance online courts bookings, access to teams, access to ladder tournaments, access to competitive plays and discounts on court fees which are £5 per court hour, instead of £6. As we have mentioned elsewhere, these rates have doubled since 2008 and are £1.40 an hour above Haringey Leisure Centre pay as you play rates.

Finance

According to the 3 options put forward by Haringey, the prospective tenant would need to raise between £300,000 and £485,000 to fund the refurbishment of the courts, through grants, loans and private finance.

We understand from the current Albert Recreation Ground tenant that it has taken eight years for that operation to move into profit and this is with the injection of a £300,000 grant from the LTA for the refurbishment of the courts.

We believe it unlikely that the LTA, with its current difficulties, will award another £300,000 grant to tennis courts just over a mile away, when in its own view the challenge for the Priory Park area is getting the private clubs to work together, not the provision of courts.

Therefore, any prospective tenant will need to be able to raise substantial loans, be able to provide security and need to generate sufficient profits to

- repay the LTA loan
 - we understand from the LTA website that their loan repayments are due twice a year over a ten year period
- repay any bank commercial loans
 - we understand that loans over £25,000 are repayable over a period of up to twenty years
 - we understand that financial forecasters expect commercial bank loan repayment loan interest rates to rise from their current 7 – 9%
- pay staff and pay rental to Haringey.

We cannot see how this will be delivered on an operation that will have only four, perhaps five tennis courts.



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The business case for the London Borough of Haringey

At first sight, it looks like a good deal – Haringey leases out the tennis courts and gets a rental income and a tenant that refurbishes the courts and / or builds new ones.

But, on closer inspection, is this really the case?

We note that the tenancy lease of Albert Road Recreation Ground had a three year rent free period to 2006, so that rental income was lost to Haringey. Then a rental of £6,705.00 (the same figure as for the Priory Park cafe current rental) was set until the rent review date of February 2008, when it was increased to £7, 905 for the next five years.

With a similar set up for the proposed operation in Priory Park, the Council would lose £20,115.00 in income over the first 3 years. All the income from the use of the Bowls Pavilion for parties and classes, which the Council currently receives, would go to the Tenant. We have asked for, but not yet received, the amount of annual income, but we understand that it is £70 for the first hour and £30 for subsequent hours. If there was only one booking a week, this could still amount to £5,000 a year.

But, the briefings state (and the bolding is ours)

“The council is able to apply certain conditions to the lease and **expect at some point a rental return (which is subject to negotiation).... However the council would need to be mindful that the operator has to be able to run a successful business, pay back the LTA loan and any other loan related to the capital investment”.**

Moreover, we note other statements by Haringey staff that it is not in Haringey’s interests for the business to fail.

The maximum number of courts according to Options 2 and 3 would be five and there are already a number of competitor tennis operations nearby. Compare and contrast this with the current Albert Recreation Ground Tenant, who has told us that it was only in the last year that he made a profit for the first time, since starting up in 2003 – yet with a larger number of courts, bigger accommodation, no LTA loans to repay and no rivals.

Clearly, therefore, we are concerned that Haringey might find itself in the position of

- having to put public money into a private operation to ensure its viability or
- having to make available to the Tenant more of the Park to increase the size of the operation.

We have already noted that there seems to be no requirement in the Albert Recreation Ground lease for the tenant to set up a sinking fund for resurfacing the courts after 10 years and then after 20 years of the initial refurbishment. With the prospect of the lease ending after 25 years, we suspect it unlikely that any Tenant would carry out any works with only a couple of years to run. The Council would then find itself taking back courts, that are of the same poor quality as they are now.



The business case for the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

Of course, there are other sources of funding, but the LTA is the one on which Haringey's briefing focuses, so this is what we shall examine.

The LTA's financial income comes from its assets, including Wimbledon and the Championships, its investments and its grant funding from Central Government via Sport England. It has been operating with a deficit, has had to cut HQ posts and has imposed a pay freeze.

As with all organisations with cash deposits, the interest from these investments is falling, but the LTA is having to fund capital projects from its reserves. We have spoken to the LTA about its future grant funding, but like other organisations dependent on Central Government, it is uncertain what it will receive in the following years.

The LTA's primary goals – its "tennis return" - are increasing the number of regularly competing juniors, growing participation across all age groups and abilities and increasing the coaching time available. However, the LTA also aims to address historic underinvestment in parks and community settings by bringing poor quality courts back into use.

Only projects that will increase the number of regularly competing juniors and grow participation across all age groups and abilities will be supported. Each year there are requests for support greater than the funds available and applications are assessed on identifying those tennis providers that will contribute most to British Tennis.

The tennis provider will also need to have a robust business plan showing financial sustainability and a five year cash flow that supports the proposed project and have the required level of partnership funding.

Although we would believe that refurbished courts could grow participation across all age groups and abilities, we believe that we have demonstrated that the operation would not be financially viable and therefore would not attract LTA funding.



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The business case for the Park and its users

We cannot see that there is a business case for the Park and its users.

In Haringey's favoured Option 2, the Park gets two new tennis courts, replacing the three by Priory Road and three new tennis courts on the Bowling Green area.

Judging by the responses of the tennis players, the majority see themselves losing free access, so some will be forced to give up playing because of cost, and losing one court, so their waiting time is increased.

Only a tiny minority would be prepared to pay and that would be on the proviso that they can play at a time of their choosing, whereas their choice of times would be restricted.

Comparing the fees at the Albert Recreation Ground, charges could be substantially higher than those of the Council (£6 pay as you play as opposed to £4.60)

In its preferred version of Option 2, dependent on finance available, the redundant tennis courts to the left of the Priory Road entrance are not returned to grass, but retained as a multi sports area, thus increasing the hard surfaces in the Park.

The Park loses the green space of enclosed Bowling Green to tarmac and high fences and floodlighting.

People will lose the opportunity of using the Bowls Pavilion for parties and classes. We appreciate that the Briefings say that it will be available for hire, but we believe that as it is so small, the Tenant would need to reserve it for its own use for courses when the weather does not permit use of the courts.

The parents and young children lose an enclosed green space for play, away from dogs.

The children lose the evergreen double conifer hedge where they play hide and seek.

With the destruction of the hedge, we all lose a valuable habitat that encourages the many species of birds and insects that use the Park as a vital stepping stone between Alexandra Palace, Crouch End Playing Fields, Queens Wood, Finsbury Park and the Parkland Walk.

Everybody loses one of the best views in the area of Alexandra Palace from the Bowling Green, framed by the evergreen double conifer hedge.

The Park footballers of all ages lose the best drained space in the winter for coaching and kick about.



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The business case for the Park's neighbours

We can see no advantages for the Park's neighbours, some of whose houses are a bare two metres from the boundary fence on the exact spot where the Council proposes the site redevelopment.

Based on their planning decisions on the Albert Recreation Ground tennis court redevelopment, we cannot see the Council's own planners supporting any planning application that requires development of a green site, above the level of the houses, with floodlighting they themselves characterise as creating light spill and glow and with attendant noise all the year around, where there has been no noise before after the Park closes at dusk.



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Conclusions - the Options 1 - 4

Option 1 – to leave the courts as they are and carry out repairs as and when Council funding becomes available.

Options 2 – to install three new tar macadam LTA standard courts on the Bowling Green site and replace the three courts on the right of the Priory Road entrance with two LTA standard size courts.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £385,000

Option 3 - to install three new tar macadam LTA standard courts on the grass site on the land below the cafe and replace the three courts on the left of the Priory Road entrance with two LTA standard size courts.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £475,000

Option 4 – to replace the six courts with four tar macadam LTA standard size courts in the same location.

Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £310,000

Our response to Options 1 – 4

In the previous pages we have examined and rejected the business cases behind the proposals, but here we concentrate on the detail of the proposals themselves.

Our fundamental view, backed up by the Park's users, is that tennis courts are an important part of the Park and that they should remain free.

We therefore reject Option 1 in its default position for the Council to do nothing and let the courts decline into closure.

We support Option 1 in its status quo and pledge to work to gain funding for refurbishment that the Council is ineligible to access.

We reject Options 2 and 3 as they both involve

- loss of precious green space,
- removal of established hedges and trees,
- significant and permanent change to the overall look of the Park, by
 - for Option 2 tarmacing the grass and building a retaining wall/s
 - for Option 3 flattening the slope below the cafe and introducing retaining walls
- noise impact on residents on both sides of the Park
- lighting impact on residents on Wavel Mews and Ashford Avenue

We support Option 4 in that the courts remain in that location, but reject the reduction of courts from 6 to 4.

We therefore propose the Friends of Priory Park Option 5



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The Friends of Priory Park proposal – Option 5

We understand that the Council is in a dire financial position and needs to scrutinise every item of expenditure and look for savings everywhere. We can also see that it is a very fluid situation and matters can change, we hope for the better.

The present Government is also subject to revision and change. During the past few weeks, it has gone from proposing to lease publicly owned forests to private companies and swiftly U turned in the face of mass opposition.

We attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on January 17th and were impressed by the considered debate by all Councillors present. We applaud many of the comments made in that meeting that services are being cut “faster than we would like” and “sooner than we would want to”.

We also went to the January Friends Forum and note Paul Ely’s comments that it is “impossible to plan for this [the cuts] in a meaningful way – it’s too much, too quick” and “we need to develop our own expertise” and “really make sure our assets are protected” and on the topic of working with the private sector is that “inevitably the issue is what we might ideally like, but getting something to work with a potential partner”.

We believe that these proposals are the understandable result of the Council looking on options, that it would not consider were it was not under so much time pressure. We believe that our Option 5 will give the Council a much needed breathing space.

We also accept Paul Ely’s offer at the same meeting to place Haringey’s expertise at the disposal of any Friends’ Group that wants to apply for any funding that The Council cannot. We have already made initial contact with Tennis for Free and Ping!

For us, these proposals have been a catalyst. They have made us debate the nature of the Park and helped us talk to the Park users about what they want to see in the Park in the future. We have also been thinking about what would encourage and attract non Park users to the Park.

In all of this, our concern is to identify what is right for the Park and its users and make it an even better Park than it is now.

From the many people we have spoken to, we have got the message that the Park is a friendly place. When we walked around asking for people’s views, everyone was happy to talk and as we walked around, we saw lots of comfortable, casual conversations going on. It’s that atmosphere that we want to build on.



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The Friends of Priory Park Option

Our Option is about encouraging activity and mobility and sociability and ecology.

This is a 5 year plan, working with the current leaseholder, whose application we shall support, together with input from the YMCA, the established events and activities provider and setting the park up as destination for fun and games and education.

We have football players, tennis players, solo and group runners, a tai chi man, Wednesday health walkers, a high wire man, mums and music in the cafe. We want as many people as possible to use and enjoy the park.

However, there are probably many people around here who don't use it, because they have a garden, because they don't see the park as providing anything of interest, or because they are too nervous or shy to go in on their own. So we plan to develop more activities and events to draw them in.

We would keep the tennis courts in their present location and pledge to work with the Council to get funding for their refurbishment.

We want to encourage more people to play, so we will provide tennis racquets and balls, so that they can try out the game or just play on impulse – Priory Park could have a role as the feeder site for the local clubs.

We have already made initial contact with Tennis for Free, but we can also supply some racquets from our fund. The current leaseholder will be happy to manage the loans from the cafe.

We would work with the Council on the issue identified in the Tennis Plan that the Tennis clubs have no substantial links with public courts or schools, perhaps by lobbying them for free coaching sessions in the Park and one off, free day taster tickets.

We would also be happy to see coaching courses take place in the Park, as long as some courts are left available at the same time for other users – the entrance from Priory Road provides a neat division. We have already had preliminary talks about this with YMCA representatives.

However, we would want to see these courses priced at the rates of the White Hart Lane courses eg £30 for a 5 week Adults course, of 5 hours of coaching, with all equipment provided.

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/community_and_leisure/leisurecentres/leisure-centres/racquetsports/tennis/whl_tennis_club.htm

We have surveyed the Park users and they are enthusiastic about seeing more small scale sports and games, so we propose introducing –



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- table tennis, which is increasingly popular and is portable – we have already made contact with Ping! England about the Park being a suitable site for a table when the campaign comes back to London in 2012.
- petanque / Boules – for this we propose using a small amount of green space by the cafe – this is a recreation that attracts a wide age range.

The present cafe leaseholder has already indicated that he would like to provide board games for users who would enjoy some quiet intellectual exercise. He also has other plans to attract an older age group – we all know that social isolation for older people is a big issue and may be exacerbated by cuts that the Council may have to make.

Friends of Priory Park will patch up the interior of the Bowls Pavilion and redecorate it with an environmental theme, so that it is more attractive for classes, parties and summer courses.

We already work closely with BTCV and have spoken to them about the possibility of their using the Pavilion for courses – at present they are focusing on coping with funding cuts, but will be in a better position next year.

This is just an outline, but we will be very happy to discuss this in more detail as soon as is convenient.

The Friends of Priory Park





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Appendix 1 London Borough of Haringey Briefing No 1 24 December 2010

Priory Park Tennis

This briefing has been prepared to assist the Council, the Friends of Priory Park and subsequently local residents to consider the future of tennis provision within the park.

Issue

Currently there are six tennis courts at Priory Park in poor condition. In due course without investment the courts will become unplayable and may need to be closed for safety reasons.

While the work has not been priced by a Quantity Surveyor, officers have estimated the cost of each option, based on past experience as detailed below.

A Proposed Way Forward

There is no available capital from the Council to fund refurbishment of the courts or even to find sufficient funds for a relatively inexpensive re-tarmac (trying to deal with the root damage and heave problems) and reline (estimate £100K). Note there is also no funds from the LTA and other funding bodies for this option and the re-tarmac would only last for about 5 years.

The LTA will part fund refurbishment of courts (subject to certain conditions, the most significant being court lighting and meeting LTA minimum standards of dimension etc). If the business case and the tennis return stacks up the LTA tends to fund one third grant, one third interest free loan (repaid over 15 – 20 years) leaving one third to be found from other sources (e.g. private capital or other funding bodies).

The café located in the park is available for rent. A tried and tested model for a tennis court operation in a park location includes a catering aspect. An option would be for the council to seek to lease out the café, the tennis courts and potentially the bowls pavilion to a tenant who can demonstrate:

- A successful track record running this type of business
- That they have access to sufficient capital to part fund a tennis court upgrade
- A good working relationship with the LTA.

In London there are a number of successful park tennis operations; including Albert Road Recreation Ground, Hyde Park and Clissold Park (N16). These operations are run as private business's working for the overall benefit of tennis and the park they are located in - leasing the facilities from the local authority. The council is able to apply certain conditions to the lease and expect at some point a rental return. However the council would need to be mindful that the operator has to be able to run a successful business, pay back the LTA loan and any other loan related to the capital investment.



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Appendix 1 cont

In this scenario the operator would charge to play tennis, run tennis courses, run holiday camps for children and operate the café and bowls pavilion. The LTA and the council would expect the operator to provide free court use for schools and key community groups. Note the courts would not be privatised and become ‘members only’. It is anticipated that the operator would need to engage proactively with all park users and the local community to ensure their business was successful. The council and the LTA would advise and facilitate this approach as much as possible.

The Refurbished Courts

The current location of the courts at Priory Park means that within the available footprint; 6 courts could not be refurbished to LTA minimum dimensions.

Option 1

On entering the park from Priory Rd – using the space on the right hand side - rebuild two courts to LTA minimum standards.

Three additional new courts oriented north to south (as recommended by the LTA) could be constructed on the bowls green area with court lighting. This will entail reducing the wide central tarmac path in places. We would propose to turn the existing 3 courts on the left side back to grass/garden. With this option any potential operator would want to lease the bowls pavilion as well to provide more changing and social facilities. Community hire would also be available.

This option is:

- Less expensive than option 2
- The works will cause less disruption than option 2
- The general ambience created by having courts in front of the Bowls Pavilion will encourage general park usage and tennis take up
- In terms of operating the courts it is desirable to have a building located in close proximity
- It could be the most desirable option for the above reasons to a potential tenant

Estimated Costs - Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £385,000

Option 2

On entering the park from Priory Rd – using the space on the left side rebuild 2 courts to LTA minimum standards.

In addition construct 3 new courts, with court lighting, oriented north to south as recommended by the LTA in the grass area immediately south of these courts. We would propose to return the existing courts on the right hand side back to grass or garden. While the bowls pavilion is not so attractive for an operator with this option it is likely they might still view the extra indoor space as desirable.



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Appendix 1 cont

This option would be:

- More expensive – as the land falls away significantly and would need levelling with retaining walls probably required on 3 sides
- Some trees will need to be removed (not the large plane tree on the corner)
- The works will cause significant disruption to the landscape
- It is not close to the Bowls Pavilion so may not attract a tenant, particularly given the extra capital they would need to find

Estimated Costs - Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts £475,000

Option 3

Using the available footprint rebuild 4 courts (2 on each side of the entrance path)

Note that option 3 may be less attractive because:

- Loss of 2 courts (note with option 1 and 2 one court is lost and there is also a potential to lose another court due to budget issues)
- Distance from café and pavilion making operating the courts problematic and thus it is unlikely to attract a tenants interest

Estimated costs including lighting 2 courts – £310,000

Could the Friends please come back with their views by the end of January. Should any of the proposed options or others you can think of be viewed as worthy of further exploration, we anticipate that a project might be completed by mid 2012.

Please also find attached our rough sketches of the possible options



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Appendix 2

London Borough of Haringey Briefing no 2 27 January 2011

Priory Park Tennis

This paper has been prepared to enable the Council and Friends of Priory Park to consider options for the future of the tennis courts in Priory Park. The six existing courts are not in good condition and will deteriorate over time. The Council does not currently have any access from its own resources to incur the costs associated with the preliminary stages of capital works. Hence the costs and drawings set out within this paper should be treated with some caution as they have not been generated via detailed investigations by a professionally qualified surveyor but are based on officer estimates using the experience and costs gained from working on other tennis capital works schemes.

Issue

We understand the courts at Priory Park were built at least 50 years ago. We have not been able to obtain records of when any remedial works may have been carried out or indeed the exact time they were built. The six tennis courts are in poor condition. In due course without investment the courts will become unplayable and may need to be closed for safety reasons. It is impossible to estimate how long the courts will be safe to play on; as this is dependent on further root damage and ground heave caused by weather conditions and time. What is clear is that they are well below minimum LTA standards and are able to be used for casual play only and at some point probably in the next few years they will need to be closed entirely.

Options

The Council's financial planning is based on a reduction of 28% in its revenue budget between 01/04/11 and 31/03/14 of which 15% will have to be delivered in the financial year 2011/12

In addition, the Council will have far less funding available for capital works, partly because of a reduction in capital grant funding from Central Government and partly because Council income from land and building disposals, that in previous years have supplemented the amount available for capital works have largely dried up.

Specifically in relation to Recreation Services, we will have no capital budget for works in parks next year and our budget for Grounds Maintenance is being reduced by 50%.

Thus there is no available capital from the Council to fund refurbishment of the courts or even to find sufficient funds for a relatively inexpensive re-tarmac (does not deal with the root damage or heave problems) and reline (estimate £100K). Note there are also no funds from the LTA or other funding bodies for this option and the re-tarmac would only last for about 5 years.



Appendix 2 cont

Option One

Therefore the first possible option would be to do nothing. Following this option we would:

- Monitor the condition of the courts to ensure that they remain safe to use
- If budgets allowed, undertake repairs as necessary
- Shut some or all of the courts if they become unsafe

Alternatively the LTA will part fund refurbishment of courts (subject to certain conditions, the most significant being court lighting and meeting LTA minimum standards of dimension etc). If the business case and the tennis return stacks up the LTA tends to fund one third grant, one third interest free loan (repaid over 15 – 20 years) leaving one third to be found from other sources (e.g. private capital or other funding bodies).

The café located in the park is available for rent. A tried and tested model for a tennis court operation in a park location includes a catering aspect. An option would be for the council to seek to lease out the café, the tennis courts and potentially the bowls pavilion to a tenant who can demonstrate:

- A successful track record running this type of business
- That they can access sufficient capital to part fund a tennis court upgrade or are confident of sourcing either additional LTA funds or grants from other funding bodies.
- A good working relationship with the LTA (note this element is significant as the LTA may fund a larger percentage of the overall cost where an operator has a good track record)

In London there are a number of successful park tennis operations; including Albert Road Recreation Ground and Hyde Park. These operations are run as private businesses working for the overall benefit of tennis and the park they are located in. The facilities are leased from the local authority.

The council is able to apply certain conditions to the lease (which are subject to negotiation, but could include: rent reviews, timetable for development, opening hours, prices, right to view annual accounts) and expect at some point a rental return (which is subject to negotiation).

However the council would need to be mindful that the operator has to be able to run a successful business, pay back the LTA loan and any other loan related to the capital investment. The negotiations over the lease (including length of potential rent free period) are lead by the council's Property Department who have expertise in this area.

In this scenario the operator would charge to play tennis, run tennis courses, run holiday camps for children and operate the café and bowls pavilion. The Council would seek to negotiate minimum times that the operator has to provide free court use for schools and key community groups e.g. disability groups, generally at off peak times. The LTA would also expect the operator to do this and in their Award Conditions would most likely impose this.



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Appendix 2 cont

Note the courts would not be privatised and become ‘members only’ and this would be explicit in the lease. It is anticipated that the operator would need to engage proactively with all park users and the local community to ensure their business is successful. Clearly to generate footfall to the courts and the café the operator will want to programme in a way that reaches the local community (actively encouraged by the council). While not wanting to pre-empt this, examples could include; Mum’s Coffee and Tennis Mornings, Nature Walks starting from the café, art displays etc.

The Council and the LTA would advise and facilitate this approach as much as possible to ensure that the tennis return is achieved (as will be detailed in the LTA’s Award Conditions) and that the business is successful.

In addition, the Council’s whole strategic push is ‘*a place for diverse communities that people are proud to belong to*’ with ‘*healthier people having a better quality of life*’ and we would work with the tenant to progress this via the lease, and less formal avenues such as the Tennis Forum, Friends of Priory Park, park events etc.

On the basis that, for an alternative plan to be successful, it would require external funding from the LTA, we have currently identified three approaches which are as follows.

The Refurbished Courts

The current location of the courts at Priory Park means that within the available footprint; 6 courts could not be refurbished to LTA minimum dimensions.

Option 2

On entering the park from Priory Rd – using the space on the right hand side – completely rebuild two courts to LTA minimum standards.

Three additional new courts oriented north to south (as recommended by the LTA) could be constructed on the bowls green area with court lighting. This will entail reducing the wide central tarmac path in places. We would propose to turn the existing 3 courts on the left side back to grass/garden. With this option any potential operator would want to lease the bowls pavilion as well to provide more changing and social facilities. Community hire would also be available.

This option is:

- Less expensive than option 3 and more expensive than option 4
- The works will cause less disruption than option 3 and more disruption than option 4
- The general ambience created by having courts in front of the Bowls Pavilion will encourage general park usage and tennis take up
- In terms of operating the courts it is desirable to have a building located in close proximity
- It could be the most desirable option for the above reasons to a potential tenant and the LTA



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Appendix 2 cont

Estimated Costs - Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts - £385,000

Option 3

On entering the park from Priory Rd – using the space on the left side rebuild 2 courts to LTA minimum standards.

In addition, construct 3 new courts, with court lighting, oriented north to south as recommended by the LTA in the grass area immediately south of these courts. We would propose to return the existing courts on the right hand side back to grass or garden. While the bowls pavilion is not so attractive for an operator with this option it is likely they might still view the extra indoor space as desirable.

This option would be:

- The most expensive – as the land falls away significantly and would need levelling with retaining walls probably required on 3 sides
- Some trees may need to be removed (probably not the large plane tree on the corner)
- The works will cause disruption to the landscape (i.e. there will be a significant and permanent change to the overall look of this part of the park as well as more disruption while works are carried out) due to the banking and levelling required.
- There will probably be an impact for some residents living in Ashford Avenue.
- It is not close to the Bowls Pavilion so may not be so attractive to a tenant and the LTA (particularly considering the extra cost)

Estimated Costs - Cost estimate including lighting 3 courts £475,000

Option 4

Using the available footprint rebuild 4 courts (2 on each side of the entrance path)

Note that option 4 is the least expensive and will cause the least disruption. However this option may be less attractive because:

- Loss of 2 courts (although note with option 2 and 3 one court is lost and there is also a potential to lose another court if unexpected costs are identified once initial surveys are carried out)
- Distance from café and pavilion making operating the courts problematic and thus it is unlikely to be attractive to a tenant and the LTA.

Estimated costs including lighting 2 courts – £310,000

Tennis Court Refurbishment – General Notes

- The LTA generally requires a complete rebuild where damage is extensive. This entails the removal of all existing materials down to the clay. The rebuild consists of



Appendix 2 cont

dealing with encroaching tree roots, installing a concrete root barrier before the installation of a porous membrane on top of the clay. New concrete edging is laid, followed by a 300mm depth of stone, before two layers of macadam are compacted on top. Then we spray on our selected colour(s) and add back the lines, with new sockets, posts and nets

- Prior to this there is a need for an Engineers Report, bat survey, nature conservation assessment, ground survey and tree survey.
- Drainage issues will be detailed in the ground survey and we are unable to comment about this until this survey is done.
- The Engineers Report will detail the banking/retaining walls required around the courts. It is our estimation that option 3 requires significant work in this area and as such the costs for this aspect of work will be high.
- The tree survey will advise us about the conifer hedge and other tree matters. We would wish to keep the hedge but it may need to be taken out and either not replaced, replanted in the same position or relocated elsewhere. A similar view is taken with other trees which maybe affected. Any trees lost would be replaced with new young trees within the park.
- The LTA minimum size dimensions for each court are: 34.75m x 17.07m.
- The height of fencing will be 2.75m green weld mesh. This is a stronger type of fence than the chain link currently provided. Fencing will go around each bank of courts, whether laid out as 2 courts or 3 courts. Possibly the side directly in front of the bowls pavilion will not be entirely fenced to promote and enhance the spectator experience.
- The LTA will only fund courts if lighting is part of the scheme, however they do not necessarily insist that all the courts are lit. For example at Bruce Castle Park they have agreed that only two of the new courts are lit.
- The height of the lighting columns is usually 10 metres but can be obtained at 8 metres. They are at a fixed height to minimise glow and light spillage, in particular 'light trespass' onto walls and windows of neighbouring properties. Nature conservation recommendations will impact on the final decisions about which courts the lights are located on and any mitigating actions required e.g. trees planted to provide screening.
- The current footpath tarmac will be affected depending on which option is chosen. For example with option two the tarmac beside the Bowling Green may need to be moved to a maximum of 1 metre. Alternatively the path could possibly be narrowed where required.
- Excavated top soil is usually kept to landscape the area, clay is removed to a licensed landfill.

In returning current tarmac area/s to green space we will attempt to create whatever park users would like to see in this area. One option could be to provide an artificial grass games area – however there is a high cost associated with this. It is more than likely that due to budget restraints it will be turned to an open grass area with some planting. It is likely that the work would be carried out as part of the overall refurbishment contract.



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Appendix 2 cont

- The following costs relate to option two. We must stress again that we have not engaged professionals to develop these costs they are Officer estimates based on previous projects.

Option Two - 5 courts LTA Minimum size

Removal of fencing, shrubs etc	£5,000
Break up and remove court surfacing	£25,000
Remove Bowls Green soil / clay to correct level	£7,500
Construct retaining walls	£40,000
Lay 300mm hardcore	£30,000
Edging	£5,000
Drainage	£5,000
Root barriers	£5,000
Binder and surfacing	£55,000
Colour and line markings	£13,000
Fencing	£30,000
Planting, landscaping	£8,000
Paths	£8,000
Reinstate 3 courts as grass	£10,000
Court Lighting 3 cts	£33,000
Power and ducting	£20,000
Path access lighting - timer controlled	£10,000
Sub total	£309,500
Prelims @ 10%	£31,000
Professional fees, surveys, contingency	£44,500
Total	£385,000

General Comments

- We have spoken with the tenant at Albert Road and he is happy to share his lease with the Friends.
- The refurbishment of the courts will increase usage. Likewise having a proactive tenant on site will improve the safety and ambience of the park which will further increase usage. Evidence for this is available locally at Albert Road and is observed elsewhere.
- It should be stressed that the options described in this paper are Council Officer's with some input from the LTA. We have no way of knowing at this time what potential tenants may propose and from that exactly how lease negotiations will progress.
- We are not currently in a position to take a view on the amount of rental income that could be generated from the café/tennis courts or the timing of when the rent may become due as this would only be clearer when the overall financial details are available. Whilst the Council seeks to maximise rental income from commercial



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Appendix 2 cont

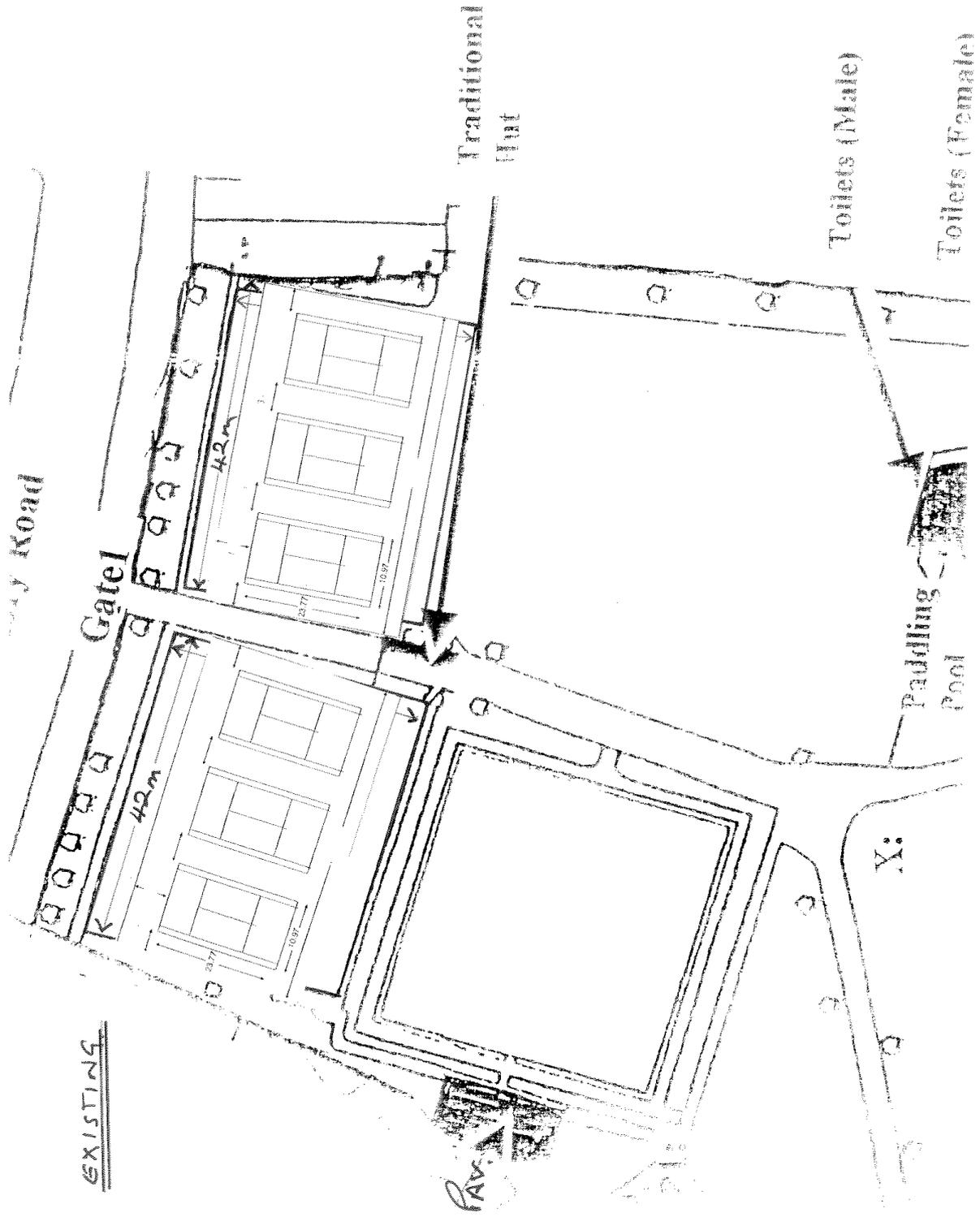
premises our stronger driver is to seek to ensure that the park remains fit for purpose and well used.

Could the Friends please come back with their views by the end of February. Should any of the proposed options or others you can think of be viewed as worthy of further exploration. Please also find attached our rough sketches of the possible options and the Albert Road lease.



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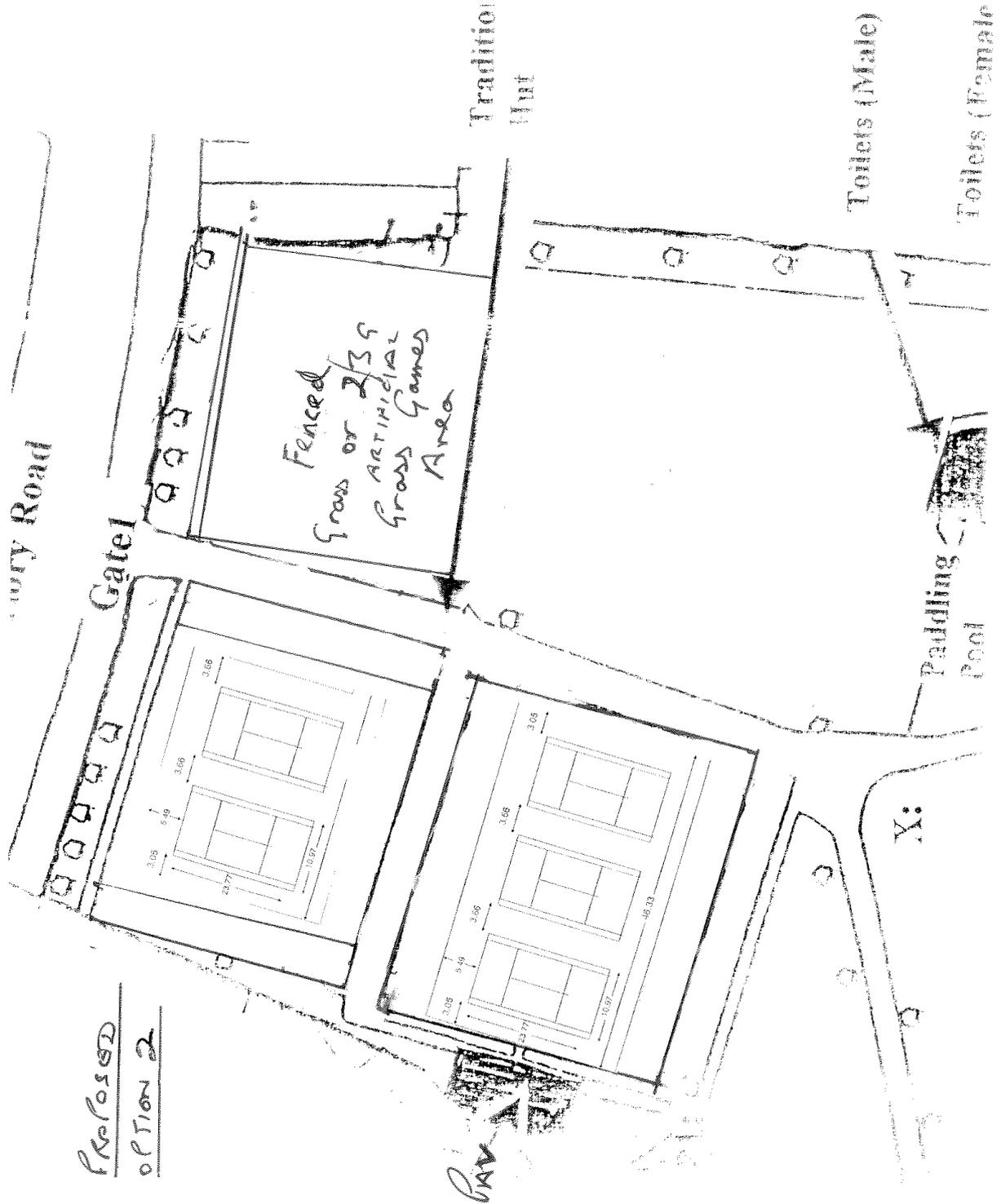
Appendix 3 – Site sketch - Option One





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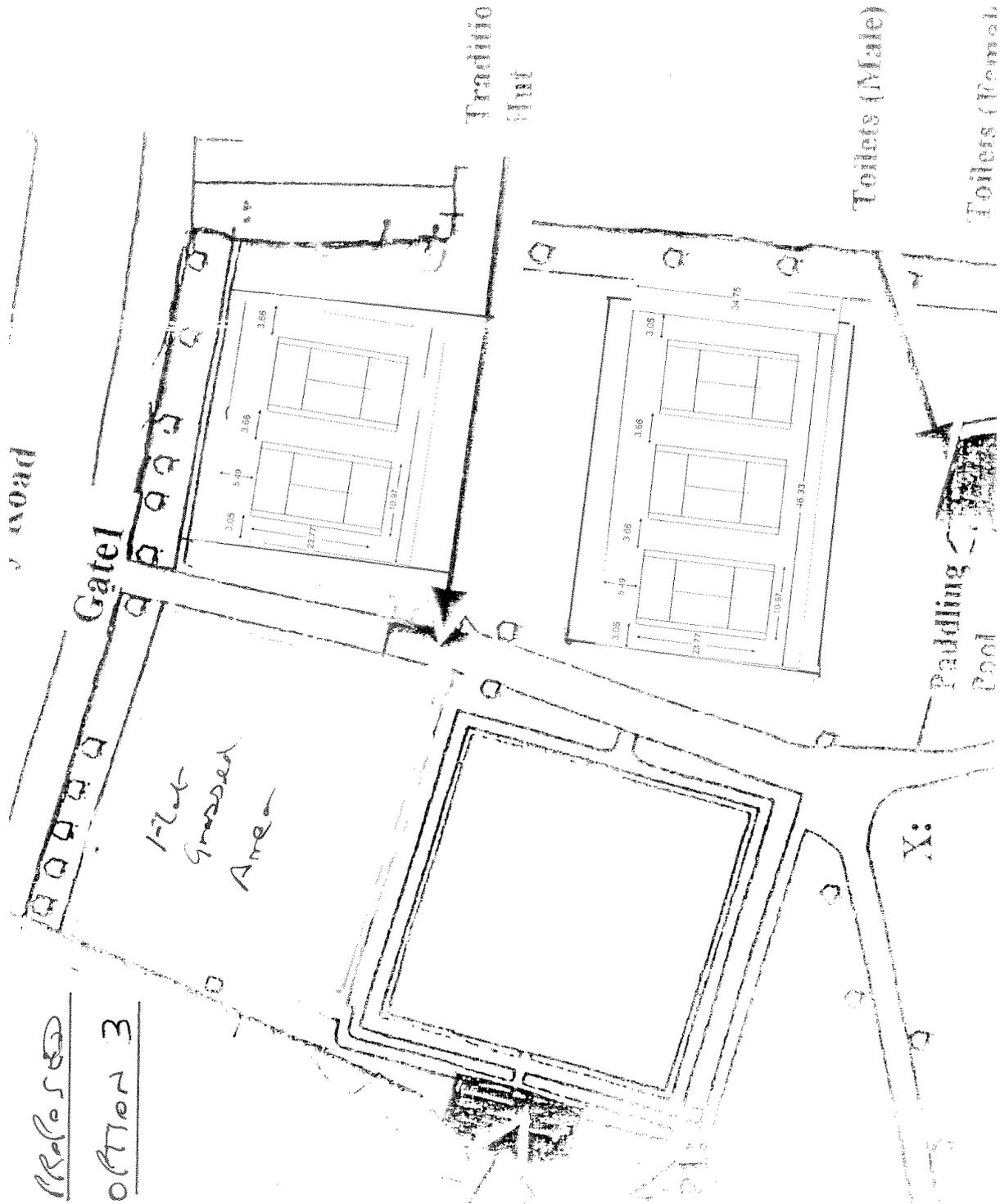
Appendix 3 – Site sketch - Option Two





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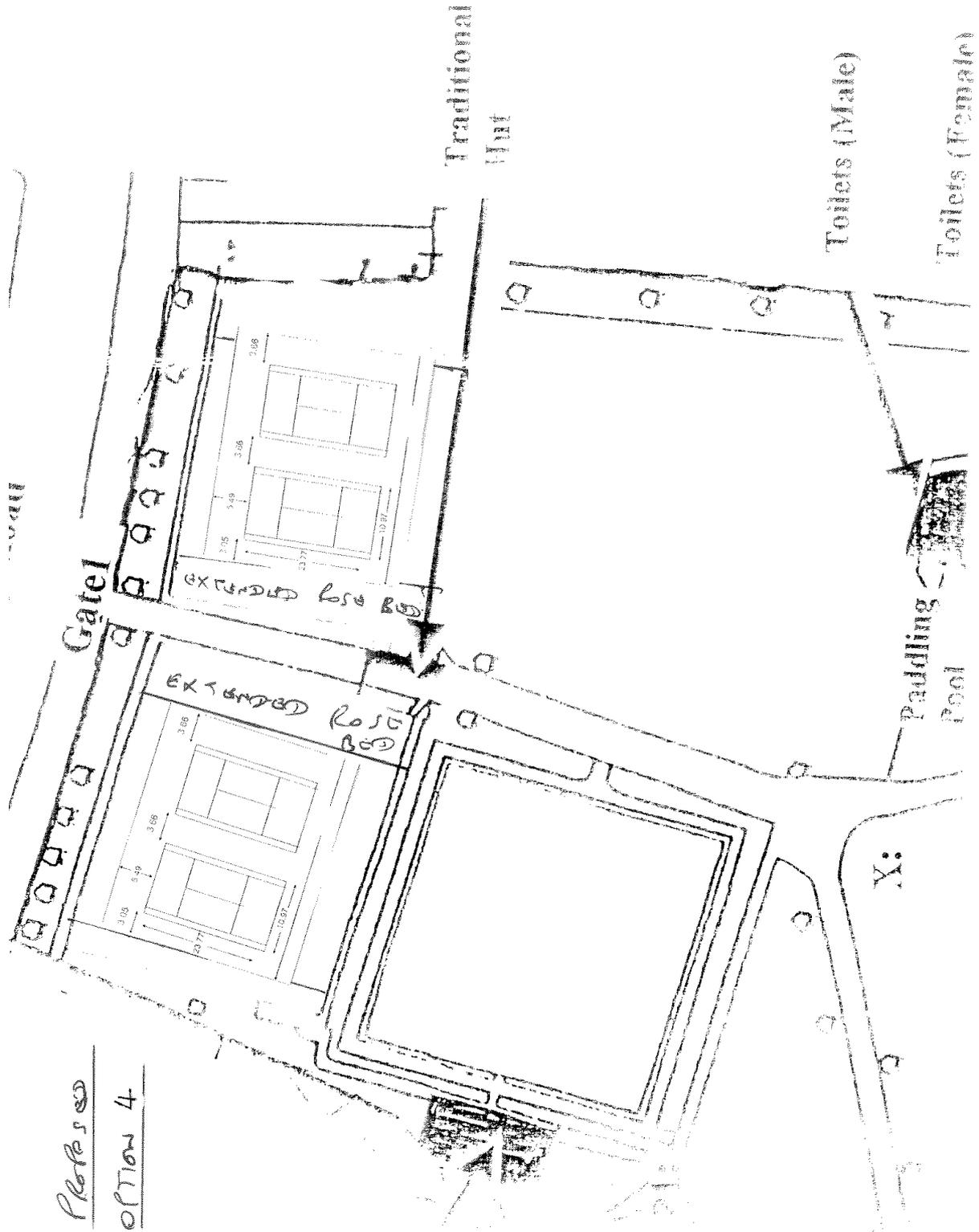
Appendix 3 – Site sketch - Option Three





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Appendix 3 – Site sketch - Option Four



Proposed
option 4



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Appendix 4

Survey results

We have sought the views of general Park users, Park tennis players and Park neighbours by walking around and interviewing them and by asking them to complete survey forms. We have emailed some FOPP members and telephoned others.

We have asked for their views on the five options, on any improvements in the Park and suggestions for what they would like to see in the Park.

As of Tuesday, 22nd February, the responses are overwhelmingly in favour of Options 1 and /or Option 5. We have had two responses in favour of Option 2/3/4

Some respondents were interested in boules or petanque, some liked the proposal of having board games and one was very enthusiastic at the prospect of tea dances.

It is off topic, but we have also had a number of respondents, for whom the most important issue in the Park is the state of the lavatories – if the lavatories were better, and included baby changing facilities, they would spend longer in the Park.

We enclose a selection of the responses.

Email survey

In favour of Option 1 / 5

1. I like Option 5. Sounds like a lovely way forward.
All the options of big, serious, floodlit tennis courts, losing grassy areas and the charm of the pavilion when we're surrounded by tennis clubs seems mad. This is a park not a sports facility.
Let's keep it simple and understated.
2. Option 5 sounds good. How does the café lessee feel about this idea?
I have lived opposite the tennis courts for 16 years and they are in need of repair and underused in general. To be honest there are too many courts for the amount of use they generally get. I would actually favour private lessons / paying courses, as I think this would attract a more committed crowd, e.g. a six week intro course. As an adult ed teacher for 20 years, I think short courses are generally v popular with people and give them goals.
More options for use for the pavilion is a great idea, as the building is already there and could benefit from some regular use for games etc.
3. I prefer your option 5. If this is not possible I would propose option 1 and hope that the financial situation has eased when they come to the end of their life.
4. I think option 5 is by far the best. The council is in no position to input finances to bring the tennis courts up to scratch and to partner with a commercial organisation for a long period of time ultimately takes ownership of the facilities away from ordinary people and families and makes it elitist , expensive and inaccessible to all.
The Pavilion could be renovated and used for kids' parties to generate revenue, plus other events. Small scale grass games such as boules, petanque, croquet and other would enable the bowling green to remain as a green, open space yet



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Appendix 4 cont

have some use. It is not impossible that bowls may have a resurgence of interest and to destroy the green would be a retrograde step, especially as there are already existing tennis courts. Or how about badminton on the bowling green? Or crazy golf? Small scale activities could attract a fee, albeit a small and easily affordable one, to make it self financing. Equipment could be rented from the café, so staffing a games area would not be a problem and a deposit would ensure its return.

5. As the financial situation is at present I feel that to expand the tennis courts would be unviable. I support the proposals of option 5 . As a Local Youth Leader I often see my young people using the courts, I do not believe that they would be able to do this if they were expected to pay . The more facilities that can be offered to teenagers the better. Table tennis , boules and board games are an excellent way to keep youngsters in the parks and off the streets. All power to your elbows!
6. I favour options 1 and 5. There are several local tennis clubs for keen players. Unless there is existing good experience of leasing arrangements as for options 2-4, I believe the risk of the 20+ year commitment is too high. Money that could have been spent on the park might get diverted into management and admin overheads.
7. Options 5, 1, 4 in that order. Other two not acceptable.
8. I would like the tennis courts to remain free to users, which rules out all but options 1 and 5.
9. If the Committee are willing to put in the time and work, Option 5 is obviously preferable as:
 - o It is in line with the Big Society,
 - o There would be a greater variety of leisure pursuits on offer,
 - o They would be accessible to the less well off, and gives youngsters the chance to try out the game at no cost.I suppose that the disadvantage would be that Haringey is hoping to receive a substantial income from the long lease of the courts etc, and therefore reduce the cuts in spending it is having to make, but I wonder if they are allowed to effectively sell our public park?
10. The three of us would favour Option 5, but why not have a small fee for the use of the tennis courts? It would at least provide a small amount of income that could be used to defray other costs. Most of our tennis-playing friends are in favour of this, as true tennis aficionados would be.
 - a. Whatever happens we do not think that any more of the green space should be encroached upon (as suggested in Options 2 and 3).
11. I use the courts to play with my children so this is a tough question. I like your option 5, but it would take some inertia to get things going. Option 1 too would leave them in public hands and with a small injection they could certainly be usable and free for a few more years. Whilst there are some advantages to options 2 to 4, I think overall I am less keen on passing the facilities to an outside organisation, we have enough tennis clubs



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Appendix 4 cont

locally for those that want to pay for playing on better quality courts and to get lessons. It would be good to get the pavilion and the old bowling green into use again however and I am unsure about adjusting the opening hours of the park, this has the potential to encourage more anti social behaviour in the area. I will go for Option 5 as my preferred option.

In favour of Option 2

Option 1 we believe is relying on money being available from council in 5 years +. We feel by this time the courts could be unplayable, and if no funds came forward, we could end up with a derelict piece of the park. Very risky in these times.

Option 2 maybe better, private investor would at least restore and maintain quickly. I'm sure the facilities would cost more to use, but negotiation concessions could be made for certain sectors of the community.

Extracts from face to face interviews in the Park and completed questionnaires

We have been playing here most days for 20 years – if we had to pay we would not be able to afford it.

It's the thin end of the wedge, isn't it? It's privatisation really. It's not on – and I'm a Sports and Business Studies student. Play every week.

I'm here with my two grandchildren, Stationers' Park is our local park, but it's really hard to get a court there, so we come here.

Our children have coaching at Coolhurst, but we come here for a bit of practice with them. [Privatisation] is very cheeky – look at the Park Road pool – it's much dirtier now that it's privatised. It's a well used Park and the Fair is fab in the summer. Would be good to have table tennis and boules and some little football goals.

The courts are not in very good condition, but they are still playable and it's a very people friendly place.

I'd be prepared to pay, if I can book a court at the time I want.

The courts are rubbish. We'd be prepared to pay, but it would be a deterrent to others. It would be a shame to lose the Bowling Green.

It's a friendly Park, why change it? Our friends from other areas are very envious of it. Charging for court use would price people out of it – this is not a rich area.

Comes from Wood Green once a week, would not be prepared to pay for tennis. Would like afternoon tea dances.



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Comes from Tottenham once a week, would like boules, table tennis, board games, Tea dances.

Comes from Edgware once a week, would like a big climbing frame, would not pay for courts.

At a time of massive cuts in public expenditure this does not make it the right time to embark on a potentially risky endeavour to provide additional tennis courts in an area which is already overflowing with them.



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Appendix 5

The Lawn Tennis Association Budget Costs with Sinking Funds

This was published in 2005, but we are advised by the LTA SE Area Project Manager that costs are stable, although VAT has increased this year.



Part of running a business involves looking after the assets. Every well run facility must ensure that an appropriate level of finance is allocated to maintaining the facilities; quality facilities retain members and attract new ones.

Every place to play has a format for cash flow, but we strongly recommend that 'sinking fund' is represented as a clear line in the expenditure and is separated out from the overall reserve. It demonstrates financial independence, a key measure for most investors.

Places to play with a multi sports set up in particular benefit from having a transparent cost line for ongoing maintenance, as often contributions end up in one big reserve pot and then it can be unclear about how much is allocated for each membership section.

Annual contribution to sinking funds for maintenance and replacement of facilities

Facility Description	Re-colour	Re-surface	Annual Contribution
Porous Macadam	£300 (every 6 years)	£900 (every 10 years)	£1200 (years 1-6)
Impervious Acrylic	Re-colour and coat every 6 years		£900 (years 1-6)
Porous Acrylic	£1200 (every 3 years)	£1800 (every 15 years)	£3000 (years 1-12)
Polymeric	£1060 (every 4 years)	£460 (every 8 years)	£1520 (years 1-4)
Artificial Grass	Remove and replace turf every 10 years		£1800 (years 1-10)
Floodlighting	Based on 1200 hrs of darkness per year, curfew time of 10pm and club usage typically 300 hours per court per year Routine Maintenance - £1.50 per court/hour Electricity - £0.50 per court/hour Lifecycle Costs - £2.00 per court/hour Equating to the following annual costs: Routine maintenance - £450 per court/year Electricity - £150 per court/year Lifecycle costs - £600 per court/year		£1200 (every year)



Appendix 5 cont

New outdoor and indoor court budget costs and renovation costs

Outdoor Courts	New Build Cost (incl. fencing)	Renovation Cost	
		Re-colour coating	Re-surface and re-colour
Porous Macadam	from £24,000	from £1,800	from £7,000
Impervious Acrylic	from £29,000	from £4,500	-
Porous Acrylic	from £35,000	from £3,500	from £19,000
Polymeric	from £34,000		
French Clay	from £55,000	-	-
American Clay	from £45,000	-	-
Synthetic Clay	from £40,000	-	-
Grass	from £50,000	-	-
		<i>Re-turf only</i>	<i>Macadam base and re-turf</i>
Artificial Grass	from £32,000	from £12,000	from £18,000
Floodlights	from £11,000 per court	assumes a suitable power supply is available near to the court block and that only minimal cable ducting and draw pit installation is required	
Indoor Courts	One Court	Two Courts	Four Courts
Single Skin Aihall	from £55-65,000	from £90-110,000	from £150-205,000
Double Skin Aihall	from £90-100,000	from £125-150,000	from £200-230,000
Framed Fabric	from £150-200,000	from £450-550,000	from £600-700,000
Traditional Build	from £450,000	from £850,000	from £1,500,000
Ancillary building	£1,000-1,500/m ²	£1,000-1,500/m ²	£1,000-1,500/m ²
Additional Extras			
Nets, posts, single sticks	from £400	excludes sockets	
Perimeter chain link fence	from £50 per metre	per metre run	

Note

The budget costs for indoor courts exclude court works and surface, ancillary building, and services. Costs allow for foundations, frame, shell and preliminaries only. For more specific technical guidance please see the individual facility guidance resources.

