

Community Development Programme Overview

Ealing and Hounslow Councils

Gunnersbury Park Sports Facility Development Project

Project overview

Gunnersbury Park is a nationally important 72ha park with a rich history and strong historic significance. It is registered by English Heritage as Grade II*, making it one of the top 30% of Registered Parks and Gardens in the country. The park is located in the Brentford ward of the London Borough of Hounslow and is designated metropolitan open land. It is situated on the border with the London Borough of Ealing. The two boroughs have been the joint owners of the park since an agreement on the joint stewardship of the Gunnersbury estate was established in 1927.



The two boroughs are working on Phase 3 of the Gunnersbury Master plan to develop and deliver the sports phase of the project which will transform a virtually derelict outdoor sports facility used by a handful of people last season into a year round seven day a week daytime and evening indoor and outdoor sports facility offering a five court sports hall, three cricket pitches an assortment of adult and junior football pitches, two floodlit full size Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and eight floodlit tennis courts. Planned opening will be autumn 2017.

The plan is to reinstate, upgrade and provide new facilities, as follows:

- New sports centre including 8 changing rooms, toilets, café, sports offices and classrooms
- 5 court sports hall
- 8 full size grass football pitches
- 3 adult grass cricket pitches each with a non-turf strip
- 2 full size floodlit 3G AGP
- 6 - 8 outdoor floodlit macadam tennis courts

The new sports facilities will form part of the Community Interest Company (CIC), formed in April 2015; which will take over formal operation of the site from April 2018. The CIC will manage all aspects of the Park on a 25 year lease basis and will have a service contract with both boroughs covering the management and operation of the site. The two boroughs will retain ownership of the Park and will also oversee the CIC performance against the contract through regular reporting processes and Executive Board meetings.

The pictures below show the current state of the condemned sports facilities which have now been taken out of use.



The proposed project will provide new indoor and outdoor sports facilities for local people to enjoy.



Strategic facility need

Gunnersbury Park serves both Ealing and Hounslow residents. Ealing's Sports Facility Strategy 2012 – 2021 adopted in 2013 and endorsed by Sport England shows that Ealing has an identified need for more sports hall space particularly in the South East of the borough, equating to a need of 34 more courts by 2021; more floodlit AGPs, unmet demand is equivalent to 4 pitches and supply is well below the FA guideline of 1: 25,000 people; and more cricket and football pitches with the required quality of ancillary facilities which meet league requirements.

Hounslow's draft Built Sports Facility audit shows that there is currently unmet sports hall demand equivalent to around 11 courts; unmet demand for AGP's is currently equivalent to 2 pitches; like Ealing, Hounslow is also in need of quality grass winter and summer playing pitches with ancillary facilities that meet NGB standards.

Ealing and Hounslow Councils have identified the redevelopment of the outdoor sports facilities at Gunnersbury Park, as well as the development of new indoor facilities at the site, as being of key importance in addressing both existing latent demand and potential future demand for access to sports participation opportunities in the area.

Gunnersbury Park is one of the biggest open outdoor sports facilities in West London with approximately 80,000 people living within a 1 mile catchment area. This, combined with good public transport links and close proximity to major roads, makes the park an ideal location for a major community sports facility.

National Governing Body and local partner need

Four outdoor sports NGB's (Cricket, Football, Rugby and Tennis) and local sports clubs have already expressed an interest in using the site to accommodate the growing numbers of people wanting to participate in sport. To date, twelve indoor minority sport NGB's such as handball, volleyball and judo are also interested in using the much needed new sports hall. Local club Old Actonians adjacent to the park and the only remaining regular user has over 700 members and its current facilities cannot meet any additional demand which has already been identified in the area.

Key users of the site will be University of West London students and staff, local sports clubs, schools, Middlesex Cricket, Brentford FC Community Sports Trust (BFCCST) and the general public. The University currently has no sports facilities available to students; this new facility will mean a hugely significant rise in activity levels amongst this group.

Demographic need

Results from the 2011 census show that there were 338,449 residents of Ealing across 124,082 households. Hounslow is slightly smaller in population size with 253,957 residents across 94,902 households. As Gunnersbury Park serves both Ealing and Hounslow residents, the demographic breakdown of each borough needs to be considered as the two boroughs do have similarities but also have major differences as well.

Since 2001 Hounslow's population has grown by 19.6% and Ealing's population has grown by 12%. London's population grew by 14.4% and national population growth was 8.1% during the same period. The high rate of population growth in Hounslow and maintained growth in Ealing has placed particular pressure on existing facilities for sport, active recreation and physical activity.

Public Health need

Both Ealing and Hounslow perform worse than the national average for indicators such as childhood obesity (Year 6) and the proportion of children living in poverty. Hounslow performs worse on health indicators for children than for adults when compared with the national average. Ensuring that any enhanced sports facilities at Gunnersbury Park can be used by and meet the needs of school groups and youth groups will mean that the new proposed facilities at Gunnersbury Park can help to target this health issue. Ealing shows higher than average rates of early death from heart disease and stroke. The proposed development at Gunnersbury Park may also be able to help to address this by increasing the opportunities for inactive adults and older people in particular to be active within a community setting and realise the associated health benefits of an active lifestyle.



Community involvement and consultation

Ealing and Hounslow Councils engaged Continuum Sport and Leisure to develop a Needs Assessment and Business Planning report for the proposed sports facility development in Gunnersbury Park. The views of various stakeholders have been summarised below and these views have fed into the planning, design and operational plans for the site in order to make the facility both viable and sustainable for the foreseeable future.

Sport England

The Consultant Team undertook a telephone consultation session with Stuart Makepeace from Sport England to determine facility requirements within the catchment area and the potential to apply for funding towards the project through the Strategic Facilities Fund reference. Sport England also provided the latest FPM data for Hounslow to feed into the needs assessment ahead of the borough's new Sports facility Strategy being completed.

The Football Association (FA) / Football Foundation

The FA and the Football Foundation are key partners and potential funders of what is deemed a priority football facilities project. The Consultant Team accompanied Jonathan Kirby from the Client Team to an FA Facilities Workshop hosted by Middlesex County FA and also held a separate consultation session with Stuart Allen on local demand for improved football facilities at the Gunnersbury Park site.

Middlesex Cricket

Middlesex Cricket and the ECB are key partners and potential funders of this priority cricket project. Both identified that there is a need for additional outdoor cricket pitches in the area to serve clubs in Ealing and Hounslow and the wider west London catchment area. Both felt that there was a lack of cricket pitches in Ealing, meaning that there is a lack of facilities in relation to demand. The view was that the development has the potential to be a hub for cricket due to its location on the Ealing and Hounslow boarder. It is a strategic site as it serves four boroughs.

Lawn Tennis Association

Ealing is one of the LTA's focus boroughs for tennis development. The LTA is prioritising investment in improving facilities at park sites and this project is aligned with the current strategic direction of the LTA. Pay and play provision which encourages recreational participation is a key priority.

Brentford FC Community Sports Trust

The Consultant Team met with Lee Doyle, the Trust's Chief Executive, to discuss his aspirations for the Trust and how it would like to be involved in the Gunnersbury Park scheme moving forwards.

Featherstone and Willow Tree School Sports Partnerships

Both Adam Bunce and Mark Needham the respective SSP managers have been consulted to determine the potential need for specific types of sports facility, possible future usage for SSP events and activities and potential use from individual local primary schools.

Public consultation events and activities

Two sport specific public consultation events have taken place to date, attached to this application are the presentations made at these events as well as the FAQ documents produced as a result of the queries and questions raised. In addition to these events, public consultation has also been carried out as part of the wider Master Plan for the redevelopment and refurbishment of the heritage aspects of the park. Again the information associated with this consultation and specific to the sports element of the project will be submitted with this application.

Impact – outcomes and visits

The current base level of activity is zero. The decline is attributed to the condition of the sports facilities and lack of changing facilities on site. Currently there is no formal use of any sports pitches onsite and no indoor facilities exist. All usage of the new indoor and outdoor sports facilities will be additional; the table below illustrates the projected usage over the first five years of operation.

Facility type	No.	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Sports Hall	1	22750	25025	27300	29575	31850
3G AGP - floodlit	2	42000	46200	50400	54600	58800
Grass Football Pitches	8	6240	6864	7488	8112	8736
Cricket Pitches	3	2200	2420	2640	2860	3080
Tennis Courts - floodlit	6	9828	11466	13104	14742	16380
Classrooms	2	1800	1980	2160	2340	2520
Other (Distance markers, outdoor gym)	NA	10500	11550	12600	13650	14700
TOTAL VISTS		95318	105505	115692	125879	136066

The sports development programmes across all the sports available will be delivered by partners with a proven track record such as Brentford FC Community Sports Trust and will focus on getting people of all ages more active and playing sport for fun and enjoyment. The new indoor facilities will also provide a base for health related fitness programmes which will focus on getting inactive people active, making use of both the formal and informal sports facilities in the park.

People of all ages and abilities will be able to make good use of free to use distance marker routes, outdoor gyms and multi-use games facilities as well as the more formal sports facilities such as the sports hall, studio, artificial grass pitches and grass cricket, football and rugby pitches. The tennis courts will provide those more interested in individual sports with the opportunity to play year round.

The investment into these new sports facilities will ensure generations of local people have affordable, good quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities to use for many years to come.



Gunnersbury Park Community Sports Hub Sports Development Activity Options

