



THE HORNSEY CLUB

The Arthur Cornick Pavilion
Tivoli Road, London N8 8RG
Founded 1870

Statement of Community Benefit and Very Special Circumstances

In support of Planning Application HGY/2026/0671

Construction of four padel courts with associated lighting,
canopies, pavilion and storage at The Hornsey Club

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Executive summary

The Hornsey Club has been in continuous operation on this site at Tivoli Road since 1870. It is the landowner and host institution for the proposed padel facility that is the subject of Planning Application HGY/2026/0671. This Statement sets out the basis on which the Club considers that Very Special Circumstances exist that decisively outweigh any harm to the openness of the Metropolitan Open Land on which the development would sit.

The case rests on three interconnected propositions. First, the Club is the active steward of this Metropolitan Open Land. Without the Club's continued operational and financial viability, the active maintenance of this hectare-scale tract of MOL cannot be sustained. The designation draws a line on a map; it is the institution that maintains the land within that line. Second, the income generated from the proposed padel facility will be ring-fenced, through a binding Club commitment, to fund the expansion of the Club's youth engagement and development programme targeted specifically at the deprived eastern wards of the borough — wards that face a healthy life expectancy gap of up to 17 years with the affluent west, a 35.7% physical inactivity rate among adults, and a child obesity rate of 36.7% in Year 6. Third, this investment directly advances five of the six Calls to Action set out in the Council's own Haringey 2035 Borough Vision, in a manner that no other applicant or use of this site can credibly offer.

The community benefit commitment

Headline commitment

The Club proposes to ring-fence a minimum of £20,000 per annum, or 25% of the net padel rental income received by the Club, whichever is the greater, indexed annually to CPI, to a dedicated Hornsey Club Youth Engagement and Development Fund.

This Fund will be deployed to four delivery streams targeted at the deprived eastern wards of the borough: (i) the salary of a full-time Youth Development Officer and Coach (target salary £45,000), part-funded from this Fund with the balance secured from existing Club resources and partner contributions; (ii) paid coaching delivered directly into east-borough state schools; (iii) free transport bringing children from the east of the borough to the Club's facilities at Tivoli Road; and (iv) mobile equipment and satellite training sites in eastern wards.

The Club already coaches at three Haringey state schools — Risley Avenue Primary (Bruce Castle ward, N17), Mulberry Academy Woodside (Wood Green, N22) and St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled Primary (Stroud Green, N4). The Club partners actively with the African Caribbean Engagement (ACE) Programme and Middlesex in the Community. The padel income is the anchor funding that allows this existing, evidenced programme to scale.

The planning balance

The harm to the openness of the Metropolitan Open Land arising from this proposal is, on any reasonable view, limited, localised, screened by mature planting, capable of reversal, and confined to a small area of existing hardstanding within the developed footprint of an established sports club that has occupied this site for one hundred and fifty years.

Set against this acknowledged but constrained harm, the public benefits are substantial, evidence-based, geographically targeted at the borough's most deprived communities, evidenced through a binding commitment of the Club, and aligned in detail with the Council's own published vision for the borough at 2035. The Club respectfully submits that the balance falls clearly in favour of granting permission, subject to such conditions as the Council considers appropriate to secure the operational, environmental and community commitments set out in this Statement.

1. The Hornsey Club: one hundred and fifty years on this site

A continuous institutional presence

The Hornsey Club has been in continuous operation on its present site at Tivoli Road since 1870. It is one of the longest-established multi-sport members' clubs in north London, and the oldest continuously operating cricket club in the borough. It is the host of Hornsey Cricket Club. An independent community nursery is also accommodated on the site. It is not a commercial developer in pursuit of an opportunity, nor a passing operator: it is the community institution that has stewarded this corner of Crouch End for over a century and a half.

The Club as steward of the Metropolitan Open Land

The Club's site is designated Metropolitan Open Land. The Club understands and respects the policy importance of that designation, and does not approach this application in any spirit of seeking to weaken it. But it is essential that the planning authority, in weighing this application, distinguishes between the designation of MOL and the active maintenance of MOL.

Designation is a planning policy instrument. It draws a line on a map and applies a presumption against inappropriate development. It does not, in itself, cut a single blade of grass, prune a single tree, maintain a single boundary fence, manage a single hedgerow, control a single invasive species, or provide for a single hour of public-facing sporting and recreational use of the land it protects. Designation alone does not maintain MOL. People do. Institutions do.

On this site, the institution that maintains the MOL — entirely at its own cost, without any contribution from the public purse — is The Hornsey Club. The Club's members and its paid groundstaff together commit many thousands of hours of work each year to maintaining the playing fields, the boundary planting, the trees, the hedges and the wider grounds in the condition that gives the site its open and verdant character.

The Club's members are the people who will defend this space, in any future circumstance, against its becoming anything other than land that can be enjoyed by the community. The Hornsey Club is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) registered with HM Revenue & Customs and is constitutionally not-for-profit. Any income the Club earns is reinvested in the site, in the active maintenance of its open and verdant character, and in widening public access to the sporting and community activity it hosts. The padel income that is the subject of this Statement is no exception.

The financial reality

The Hornsey Club, in common with most amateur multi-sport clubs in London, is loss-making on its core operations. Subscription income and bar revenue do not, year on year, cover the full cost of maintaining the grounds, the clubhouse or the playing surfaces. The Club has managed the resulting shortfall for many years through a combination of careful cost management, capital reserves accumulated in better years, and an enormous quantum of unpaid volunteer effort from its members.

That approach is no longer sustainable on its own. Costs have risen sharply across every line of the Club's operations. The same pressures that have closed amateur sports clubs across London over the past decade now bear down on this site. Without a meaningful and stable new income stream, the Club faces difficult choices about which activities to scale back, which facilities to allow to deteriorate,

and ultimately whether the Club can continue in its present form. These are choices the Club very much wishes to avoid.

The Council is not being asked to choose between a financially comfortable Club and a slightly less comfortable one. It is being asked to support a proposal that, in the Club's considered view, is essential to the continued operation of a one hundred and fifty year old community sports institution on this site at anything approaching its current scale. The continuation of the active stewardship of this Metropolitan Open Land is contingent on the financial viability of the institution that has stewarded it for one hundred and fifty years.

2. The strategic need: Haringey's geographic divide

Structural dualism and the East-West gap

Haringey is one of the most demographically polarised boroughs in the United Kingdom. The borough is divided, both physically and statistically, between an affluent west and a deeply deprived east. This is not a matter of degree; it is a matter of structural dualism in which the two halves of the borough display socio-economic, health and educational outcomes that would not be out of place in two entirely separate local authority areas.

Headline indicators: East versus West of Haringey

- Northumberland Park, in the east of the borough, is currently ranked as the single most deprived ward in all of London, placing it in the top 10% of most deprived neighbourhoods nationally.
- Average gross household income in Alexandra Park (west): £118,663. Average gross household income in Tottenham Bruce Castle Park (east): £53,165.
- In the eastern Tottenham constituency, residents are more than three times as likely to have no formal qualifications (10.3%) as those in the western Hornsey and Wood Green constituency (2.9%).
- Adults educated to NVQ Level 3 or above: 77%+ in the west; 67% in the east.

The Active Together evidence base

The Council's own Active Together blueprint, published jointly with the Department of Health and Social Care and Sport England, presents the public health consequences of this divide with unusual clarity. It is appropriate that this application is judged against the framework the Council itself has commissioned.

Active Together blueprint: the human, geographic and economic toll

- Peak adult physical inactivity in the eastern wards reaches 35.7%. The figure in western wards is as low as 9.2% — a fourfold gap inside a single borough.
- Healthy life expectancy drops by up to 15 years for women and 17 years for men in the most deprived eastern areas compared with the affluent west.
- Physical inactivity currently costs Haringey over £3.8 million per year.
- 21.9% of adults are completely inactive (less than 30 minutes per week).

- Only 18.9% of children in Haringey meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. 38.4% are classified as less active.
- Over one in five children (21.3%) come from Low-Income Families.
- Over one in three children (36.7%) in Year 6 are overweight or obese.

Why this matters for the present application

The Active Together blueprint identifies Lower Socio-Economic Groups as facing a primary barrier of "Opportunity and Cost", and explicitly recommends "Affordable leisure centres, Free Outdoor Gyms across 8 parks, reducing the £3.8m inactivity tax" as the focused response. The blueprint sets a measurable target of increasing the 65.3% active adult baseline by 2%.

A planning application that funds a Youth Development Officer post and a programme of free coaching, free transport, mobile equipment and satellite sites for children in the eastern wards is not a peripheral community benefit. It is a direct, targeted, evidence-led contribution to closing the specific gaps the Council's own published strategy has identified as its highest public health priority. It is, in effect, a privately-financed extension of public policy in a borough where the public purse cannot deliver the response at the scale the need requires.

3. The cricket-specific case: heritage, inequity and renaissance

The Haringey Cricket College: a pioneering legacy

Between 1984 and 1997, the Haringey Cricket College, a Black-led sports academy based in Tottenham, operated as what the Sports Council described as "the most successful Sports Academy in the world". Operating on a budget of approximately £50,000 per year provided by Littlewoods Pools, and under the leadership of the former West Indies international Reg Scarlett, the College produced over 100 graduates and between fifteen and twenty-five future first-class and professional cricketers. It launched the careers of players including Mark Alleyne, Keith Piper and Adrian Rollins.

The College outperformed many of England's most expensive elite cricket schools. Counties including Yorkshire sent representatives to study how it was achieving its results. Every graduate left with a National Vocational Qualification alongside their athletic development, ensuring viable career prospects whether or not they progressed to the professional game.

The College closed in 1997. The Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket, reporting in June 2023, identifies its closure as a "pivotal moment" in the decline of Black cricket in the United Kingdom. Over the last twenty-five years, the number of Black British professional players has declined by approximately 75%.

The ICEC findings: a sport that does not yet work for everyone

The Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket concluded unequivocally that cricket in England and Wales is not currently "a game for everyone". Deeply rooted and widespread forms of structural and institutional racism, sexism and class-based discrimination continue to exist across the sport. The ICEC identified the dominance of private schools (58% of the England Men's team in 2021 were privately

educated, against 7% of the general population) and the prohibitive financial cost of equipment, club fees, travel and coaching, as primary structural barriers to equity.

The Commission's recommendations include increased and sustained funding for the African Caribbean Engagement (ACE) Programme, the empowerment of Black-led community clubs, and a radical overhaul of the talent pathway to remove direct costs to participating families. The proposal set out in this Statement maps onto each of these recommendations: it provides sustained funding into a London borough that lost its single most successful Black-led academy a generation ago; it does so in partnership with the ACE Programme directly; and it removes financial and geographic barriers to participation for children in the borough's most deprived wards.

The Matthew Effect and the case for targeted intervention

The contemporary talent pathway is structurally biased. Children from affluent backgrounds, typically educated at private schools with access to extensive winter coaching, elite training facilities and equipment sponsorship, present to scouts with statistically superior performance metrics by age twelve. Selectors mistake the results of this relentless early coaching for superior natural talent. This is the "Matthew Effect": those who begin with an initial advantage are continually rewarded with further advantages, while late developers and children from state schools who lack the same early resources are filtered out before they have the chance to demonstrate their potential.

The Haringey Cricket College succeeded precisely because it disrupted this dynamic. It recruited directly from local, often unemployed, youth; it provided coaching, equipment and personal support without regard to family income; and it produced talent that the conventional pathway would never have identified. The Club's proposed Youth Engagement and Development Fund is designed on exactly the same principles.

The renaissance underway

There are early signs that targeted grassroots investment is beginning to reverse the decline. In 2019, Haringey schools swept key categories in the regional McKinsey Cup tournament, with Fortismere School claiming the Under 13 Boys title and Alexandra Park School lifting the Under 13 Girls trophy. In 2026, the Haringey boys' team won the London Youth Games Cricket Finals — the first time in the borough's history. These victories are not anomalies. They are the calculated output of reviving systemic support, training diverse coaches and activating local play spaces. They demonstrate that the latent talent in this borough is, and always has been, world-class. What it requires is the institutional infrastructure to find it, nurture it and carry it through to senior performance.

The Hornsey Club, by virtue of its location, its facilities, its existing school partnerships, its membership of the Haringey Active Network, and its working relationships with the ACE Programme and Middlesex in the Community, is uniquely well positioned to provide that infrastructure for the next generation of Haringey cricketers. The padel income is what makes that position financially viable on a sustained basis.

4. The Club's existing community programme

It is important to be clear at the outset of this section that the community benefit set out in this Statement is not an aspirational programme. It is the scaling of a programme that is already operating,

with established partnerships, safeguarding policies, DBS-cleared coaches, and demonstrated relationships with three Haringey state schools and the borough's two most credible community-cricket organisations.

Current school-based coaching programmes

The Club currently delivers in-school and after-school coaching programmes at three Haringey state schools, each of which has been selected for its location and demographic profile:

Schools currently coached by The Hornsey Club

- Risley Avenue Primary School — The Roundway, Tottenham N17 7AB. Bruce Castle ward, in the deep east of the borough. 543 pupils. 68% of pupils have English as a second language. Serves one of the borough's most ethnically diverse and economically disadvantaged communities.
- Mulberry Academy Woodside — White Hart Lane, Wood Green N22 5QJ. 1,156 pupils. 29.7% Free School Meals eligibility. 47.3% with English as a second language. 13% with Special Educational Needs. A high-deprivation, high-diversity secondary school in the borough's central-east.
- St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled Primary School — Albany Road, Stroud Green N4 4RR. 217 pupils. Serves a culturally diverse central-borough community.

Two of these three schools sit squarely within the borough's eastern deprivation belt. Their pupils are precisely the cohort the Council's Active Together blueprint identifies as facing the highest barriers to physical activity participation and the worst long-term health outcomes.

Inclusive cricket: blind cricket and SEND

The Club operates a blind cricket section, providing structured competitive cricket to players with visual impairment — a discipline in which Haringey is significantly under-provided. The Club has recently launched a SEND side, opening competitive cricket to children with special educational needs and disabilities. Both initiatives are loss-making to deliver and are cross-subsidised from the Club's general resources; both reflect the Club's understanding of what a modern multi-sport club in a diverse borough is for.

Netball and women's sport

In 2026 the Club introduced netball to its sporting offer for the first time, in direct response to local demand and to the broader policy priority of expanding sports participation among women and girls. This is consistent with the recommendations of the ICEC report concerning the structural under-provision of women's sport, and with the Active Together blueprint's identification of "Opportunity and Motivation" as the primary barrier facing women and girls in Haringey.

Strategic partnerships

The Club's community work is delivered in active partnership with two organisations of national and regional standing:

- The African Caribbean Engagement (ACE) Programme — launched by Ebony Rainford-Brent in 2020 as the principal contemporary vehicle for reviving Black cricket in England and

Wales, and the subject of an explicit ICEC recommendation for increased and sustained ECB funding.

- Middlesex in the Community — the official community arm of Middlesex County Cricket Club, and the organisation behind the "Selby Active" programme that operates from the Selby Centre in Tottenham, immediately adjacent to the historical site of the Haringey Cricket College.

These are not name-only associations. They are working partnerships that demonstrate that the Club's community programme operates within, and is accountable to, the established institutional framework of community cricket in north London.

The constraint: geography and resourcing

The Club's existing programme is constrained by two factors. The first is geography. A child in Northumberland Park, Tottenham Hale or White Hart Lane ward cannot realistically travel to Crouch End on a weekday evening for after-school coaching. The journey is too long, public transport links between east and west of the borough are limited, and the families most in need of the opportunity are least able to absorb the cost of private travel. The Active Together blueprint and the Structural Dualism analysis both identify this east-west transport challenge as a primary structural barrier to participation. The Club has therefore had to take its coaching to the schools, which is expensive.

The second constraint is resourcing. A high-quality community sports programme cannot be delivered indefinitely on volunteer effort alone. Sustained, year-round, in-school coaching at the standard and frequency required to make a meaningful difference to participation, talent identification and educational outcomes requires a dedicated, full-time, professionally salaried lead coach. The Club has not, to date, been in a position to fund such a post on a sustained basis. The padel income changes that.

5. The proposed expansion: what the income will fund

The Club's projected income from the proposed padel lease, based on the operator's modelling and comparable London padel facilities, is between £80,000 and £150,000 per annum. Twenty-five per cent of that figure, with a minimum cash floor of £20,000 per annum, would be ring-fenced by binding commitment of The Hornsey Club to a dedicated Youth Engagement and Development Fund. This Section sets out, in concrete operational terms, what that Fund would do.

Delivery stream 1: A Youth Development Officer and Coach

The flagship deliverable is the appointment of a full-time Youth Development Officer and Coach on a target salary of £45,000 per annum. This post would be the single most consequential investment the Club could make in its community programme. The post-holder would:

- Lead the planning, delivery and quality assurance of all in-school coaching across the Club's partner schools.
- Hold direct relationships with the heads of partner schools and with the ACE Programme and Middlesex in the Community at officer level.
- Coordinate the satellite training programme, the transport scheme and the mobile equipment provision described below.

- Lead the talent identification work that ensures children from non-traditional cricketing backgrounds are visible to the formal county pathway.
- Provide the safeguarding, DBS, line-management and operational infrastructure that any serious youth programme requires.

The padel income is the anchor funding that makes this post viable. The balance of the post's fully-loaded cost would be secured through existing Club resources, performance-related grant funding from the ACE Programme and Middlesex in the Community, and complementary sources including the Haringey Active Network. The post is the institutional centre of gravity around which the remaining three delivery streams cohere.

Delivery stream 2: Paid coaches travelling to east-borough schools

The Fund would underwrite the cost of qualified coaches travelling to deliver structured cricket and multi-sport sessions in additional state schools across the eastern wards of the borough, in particular Northumberland Park, Tottenham Hale and White Hart Lane wards. Target additional schools will be selected in consultation with Haringey's Education team and with the ACE Programme, with a focus on those with the highest Free School Meals eligibility and the lowest current exposure to cricket or to organised multi-sport provision.

This delivery stream addresses, in direct operational terms, the central finding of the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket and the central recommendation of the Active Together blueprint: that the children most likely to benefit from the cognitive, behavioural and physiological dividends of organised sport are precisely those least likely to encounter it through the current pathway.

Delivery stream 3: Free transport to Tivoli Road

For specific cohorts — selected academy training squads, holiday camp participants, weekend match-day fixtures — the Fund would underwrite the cost of minibus transport bringing children from the eastern wards to the Club's facilities at Tivoli Road. This is the single intervention that most directly answers the geographic constraint identified in Section 4. It enables participation that is otherwise structurally impossible for families that cannot absorb the time and cost of a cross-borough journey on public transport on a weeknight.

Delivery stream 4: Mobile equipment and satellite training sites

The Fund would procure and maintain mobile cricket equipment packs — portable wickets, appropriate-grade bats, balls, safety equipment, training cones — that can be delivered into east-borough schools and community settings for in situ use. It would also underwrite the operational costs of satellite training sessions held in suitable east-borough venues identified in partnership with Haringey Active Network members and with Middlesex in the Community. The model is based directly on the Selby Active programme that Middlesex in the Community runs adjacent to the historical site of the Haringey Cricket College.

Programme targets and reporting

The Club proposes that its commitment include annual reporting to the local planning authority on the performance of the Fund against a defined set of indicators: number of partner schools, number of children reached, total coaching hours delivered, geographic distribution of beneficiaries by ward, partnership activity with the ACE Programme and Middlesex in the Community, and progression of

identified participants into county and ACE Academy pathways. The Club is content for these indicators to be agreed with officers and set out as part of the Club's commitment framework.

6. Securing the benefit: the Club's binding commitment

Under planning law, a benefit advanced in support of a Very Special Circumstances case carries weight in the planning balance only to the extent that the decision-maker can be satisfied that it will, in practice, be delivered. The Club has accordingly developed the strongest available approach to securing the benefit set out in Section 5: a binding commitment by the Club, authorised by its Committee, structurally embedded in the operating lease between the Club and the padel operator, and supported by such planning conditions as the local planning authority considers appropriate to attach to any grant of permission.

Structure of the commitment

The Hornsey Club's binding commitment

The Hornsey Club, by resolution of its Committee, makes the following binding commitment in support of this application:

- (a) The Club shall establish and maintain a dedicated, ring-fenced fund (the "Youth Engagement and Development Fund") to be applied exclusively to the delivery of community youth engagement activities targeted at residents of the eastern wards of the London Borough of Haringey, in particular Northumberland Park, Tottenham Hale, White Hart Lane, Bruce Castle, Tottenham Green and Seven Sisters wards.
- (b) The Club shall pay into the Fund, in each financial year, a sum equal to the greater of: (i) twenty-five per cent (25%) of the net padel rental income received by the Club from the operator of the padel facility in that financial year; or (ii) twenty thousand pounds (£20,000) indexed annually to the Consumer Price Index from the date of grant.
- (c) The Fund shall be applied to the four delivery streams set out in Section 5 of this Statement, namely (i) salary contribution to a dedicated Youth Development Officer and Coach; (ii) paid in-school coaching in east-borough schools; (iii) free transport bringing east-borough participants to the Club's facilities; and (iv) mobile equipment and satellite training sites in east-borough wards.
- (d) The Club shall submit an annual report to the local planning authority recording performance against the indicators agreed with officers, including total Fund expenditure, partner schools and organisations, number of children reached, geographic distribution of beneficiaries, and progression of identified participants into formal cricket pathways.
- (e) The commitment shall take effect on the operational opening of the padel facility and shall continue for the duration of the planning permission.

Why this approach is robust

This commitment framework has three properties that make it the right approach in the circumstances of this application. First, the ring-fenced revenue share will be embedded in the

operating lease between the Club and the padel operator, structurally tying the Fund to the income stream that supplies it and removing the risk that future commercial pressures or governance changes at the Club could erode the community programme. Second, the floor-plus-percentage structure insulates the programme against the operational risk that net padel income may fall below projections in any given year, while allowing the community programme to share in the upside if the facility performs well. Third, the annual reporting requirement provides the local planning authority with a transparent monitoring mechanism capable of review at the renewal of any future planning permission, and capable of being formalised by appropriate planning conditions attached to the grant of permission.

The Club has discussed this commitment with its members and Committee and is ready to work with the applicant, with the local planning authority and with the Council's legal officers to agree the precise mechanisms by which the commitment is reflected in planning conditions attached to any grant of permission. The Club is also content for the local planning authority to require a review of the indicators after the first three years of operation, if officers consider that would further strengthen the monitoring framework.

7. Alignment with Haringey 2035: Our Vision

The London Borough of Haringey has published its Borough Vision for 2035: "A place where we can all belong and thrive." The Vision sets out six Calls to Action that the Council itself, in consultation with residents, communities and partners, has identified as the foundations of the future the borough wishes to build. This Section sets out the precise correspondence between the Club's proposed community benefit and five of those six Calls to Action.

Call to Action 2: Thriving places

The Council's published priority under this Call to Action is the "maximising of existing assets" and the "creative sharing of spaces". The Hornsey Club is an existing community asset of one hundred and fifty years' standing, hosting recreational activities, including the borough's only blind cricket programme, a SEND cricket programme, junior netball. The proposed padel facility extends the existing sporting footprint within the Club's developed envelope, on existing hardstanding, and does so in a way that delivers a year-round indoor-quality facility that complements rather than competes with the Club's outdoor cricket. This is exactly the model of asset-maximisation the Borough Plan sets as a strategic priority.

Call to Action 3: Supporting children and young people's experiences and skills

The Council's published priorities under this Call to Action include "driving opportunities and bridging skills gaps" and "facilitating high-quality activities and spaces for young people". The Club's proposed Youth Development Officer post, in-school coaching expansion, free transport, mobile equipment and satellite sites are, in operational terms, a direct response to this Call to Action. They provide high-quality activity, in high-quality spaces, delivered by qualified coaches, accessible to children from the eastern wards who would otherwise be excluded by geography and cost. The Club is not aware of any other contemporary planning application in the borough that delivers as directly against this Call to Action as the proposal set out here.

Call to Action 4: Feeling safe and being safe

The Council's published priority under this Call to Action includes the "multi-agency approach to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour" and "tackling hate and violence in Haringey". The evidence base on the role of organised team sport in adolescent behavioural development is substantial. The Capital Kids Cricket "Teams Not Gangs" model and equivalent programmes have demonstrated that intensive school-based cricket mentoring reduces absenteeism by up to eight days per pupil per year and improves academic performance by up to a third of a grade in English and 40% of a grade in Mathematics. Coaches operate as trusted adult mentors, building bonds with marginalised youth that improve relationships with teachers and significantly reduce disciplinary actions and school exclusions.

The borough's eastern wards are the wards in which the Council's own crime and antisocial behaviour data show the highest concentrations of youth-involved incidents. A privately-financed programme of structured, mentored, in-school multi-sport provision delivered into precisely those wards is a direct contribution to the Council's strategic objective.

Call to Action 5: Tackling inequalities in health and wellbeing

The Council's own published Vision document opens its Call to Action 5 narrative with the observation that "The gap in healthy life expectancy is approximately 10 years between the East and West of Haringey; child obesity in Haringey is significantly higher than the London average. These are outcomes we are committed to improve for everyone in Haringey."

It is difficult to imagine an application that aligns more directly with a Council-stated strategic priority than one whose primary public benefit is a privately-financed, geographically targeted, evidence-based programme of physical activity intervention aimed precisely at the eastern wards in which that healthy life expectancy gap is concentrated and in which the child obesity figures most exceed the London average. The Club's binding commitment represents the kind of "focusing on preventative pathways" that the Vision document identifies as the priority for action.

Call to Action 6: Supporting greener choices

The Council's published priorities under this Call to Action include "connecting communities with nature" and "empowering communities and businesses". The Club's continued operation as a working sports ground maintains a hectare-scale tract of green Metropolitan Open Land in active community use, at no cost to the public purse. The padel facility is a climate-resilient year-round outdoor sporting facility within an existing developed footprint, sited on existing hardstanding, and screened by existing mature planting. It enables outdoor sporting participation during the wet winter months when grass-based summer sports are not playable, and it does so without consuming undeveloped green space.

Summary

The proposed development, taken together with the Club's associated binding commitment, demonstrably advances five of the six Calls to Action set out in Haringey 2035. The Club respectfully submits that this degree of alignment with the Council's own published vision for the borough is, in itself, a material consideration of substantial weight in the planning balance under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

8. The planning balance: why Very Special Circumstances are met

The policy framework

The application site is designated Metropolitan Open Land. The London Plan policy framework applies the policy tests of the Green Belt to MOL. The relevant test, derived from Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework, is whether the proposed development constitutes "inappropriate development" and, if so, whether Very Special Circumstances exist that, taken together, clearly outweigh the harm to MOL by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm.

The Club acknowledges, for the purposes of this Statement, that the development will result in some harm to the openness of the MOL. The Club does not argue that the harm is nil. The question for the planning authority is whether the benefits, taken cumulatively, are of such weight as to clearly outweigh that harm.

The harm: limited, localised, screened, reversible

On any reasonable view, the harm caused by this proposal to the openness of the MOL is at the lower end of any scale:

- The proposed structures occupy existing hardstanding within the developed footprint of an established sports club. No undeveloped open space is consumed.
- The site sits against the backdrop of the Park Road Leisure Centre, with established high boundary vegetation already providing significant visual screening from surrounding residential roads.
- The proposal is for sporting use, expressly permitted as an exception under NPPF paragraph 154(b) for "the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport [and] outdoor recreation".
- The Club is content for a planning condition to be imposed requiring the removal of all structures and the full reinstatement of the site to its previous condition at the expiry of the lease or any cessation of operational use of the padel facility, whichever is sooner.
- The principle of padel court development on this site was accepted by the planning authority in 2025 under HGY/2024/3278.

The benefits: cumulative and specific

Set against this limited and constrained harm, the cumulative benefits of the proposal include:

- The institutional preservation of a one hundred and fifty year old multi-sport community club that is currently financially unsustainable in its present form, and that is the sole active steward of this tract of Metropolitan Open Land.
- A binding, indexed community benefit commitment by The Hornsey Club of a minimum of £20,000 per annum or 25% of net padel income, whichever is the greater, ring-fenced for youth engagement and development in the borough's most deprived eastern wards.
- The funding of a dedicated Youth Development Officer and Coach — a post the Club has not previously been able to sustain — to lead a scaled programme of in-school coaching, free transport, mobile equipment and satellite sites in the eastern wards.

- Direct and demonstrable alignment with five of the six Calls to Action set out in the Council's Haringey 2035 Borough Vision.
- A material contribution to addressing the 17-year healthy life expectancy gap, the 35.7% adult inactivity rate, and the 36.7% Year 6 child obesity rate identified by the Council's Active Together blueprint.
- A material contribution to closing the educational attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils in the borough, building on evidence that intensive school-based cricket mentoring reduces absenteeism by up to eight days per year and improves academic performance by up to a third of a grade in English and 40% in Mathematics.
- A direct contribution, through partnership with the ACE Programme, to the contemporary national effort to revive Black cricket — in the very borough whose lost Haringey Cricket College the ICEC identifies as a pivotal moment in the decline of that game.
- Year-round outdoor sporting provision in a part of London where climate volatility increasingly disrupts grass-based summer sport, and where the Active Together blueprint sets a measurable target of increasing the active adult baseline by 2%.

The balance

The harm is limited, localised, screened and reversible. The benefits are substantial, specific, evidence-based, geographically targeted at the borough's most deprived communities, underpinned by the Club's binding commitment, and aligned in detail with the Council's own published strategic vision for the borough.

Cumulatively, the benefits clearly outweigh the harm. The Club respectfully submits that Very Special Circumstances, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, are demonstrably made out on the evidence presented in this Statement and the application file taken as a whole.

9. Conclusion and request

Application HGY/2026/0671 is, at its narrowest, an application to install four padel courts under a covered canopy on the existing hardstanding of the Club's former tennis courts. But at its broadest, and considered in the context set out in this Statement, it is an application that secures the continued operation of a one hundred and fifty year old community sports institution, that maintains the active stewardship of hectares of Metropolitan Open Land, and that delivers a binding, financed, geographically targeted community youth programme into the eastern wards of one of the most polarised boroughs in London.

The Council is being asked to weigh, on the one hand, a limited and reversible incursion into the openness of an area of MOL that is already in active sporting use and is screened by mature boundary planting; and, on the other hand, an evidence-based, robustly committed, demographically targeted public benefit that aligns in detail with the Council's own published vision for the borough at 2035.

The Club respectfully requests that the Council grant planning permission for application HGY/2026/0671, subject to such conditions as the Council considers appropriate to secure the substance of the binding Club commitment set out in Section 6 of this Statement.

The Club stands ready to engage constructively with the planning officer, with statutory consultees and with the wider community on the detailed terms of any conditions, on the form in which the Club's

commitment is reflected in those conditions, and on the operational implementation of the community programme that this Statement describes. The Club has lived next door to its neighbours for one hundred and fifty years and intends to continue to do so for many decades to come.

Submitted respectfully on behalf of the members and committee of The Hornsey Club

James Chapman

Chairman, The Hornsey Club

The Arthur Cornick Pavilion, Tivoli Road, London N8 8RG

June 2026

Appendix A: Chairman's letter to the Planning Authority

The following letter from the Chairman of The Hornsey Club, James Chapman, was submitted to the Planning Officer in advance of the present Statement. It is reproduced and bound with this Statement so that both documents may be considered together as the Club's formal submission in support of Application HGY/2026/0671.

[The Chairman's letter follows as an appended PDF.]