

<u>MEETING</u>
ASSETS, REGENERATION AND GROWTH COMMITTEE
<u>DATE AND TIME</u>
MONDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2017
AT 7.00 PM
<u>VENUE</u>
HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BG

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed additional papers relating to the following items for the above mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda.

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)	3 - 38

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Public Questions and Comments – Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee – 4 September 2017

	Item	Raised by	Question Raised	Answer
1	7	Mary O'Connor	The paper mentions the 'Greenspaces Board' but I can find nothing on Barnet Council's website as to who are the members of this board or what it's purpose/ objectives are. Can you supply me with any information regarding the 'Greenspaces Board' so I can contact them?	<p>The Greenspaces Board is an internal management board that is chaired by the Strategic Director for Environment and its membership includes a number of officers from different areas of the council.</p> <p>The role of the Green Spaces Board is to direct and oversee activities of the LBB Green Spaces Service. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy • Delivery of the Playing Pitch Strategy • Monitoring of service delivery • Monitoring of revenue and capital expenditure • Monitoring of the Copthall Board
2	7	Roger Tichborne	<p>I note the proposal to outsource management of Darlands Lake to an unspecified third party. Given the abject failure of previous outsourcing. Excesses (Your Choice Barnet multi million bailouts, parking fiasco enforcement problems as documented by D. Dishman, chaos in IT, multi million court cases with Care Homes, huge hidden charges exposed in the One Barnet contract by John Dix, the illegal operation of Metpro,etc),</p> <p>What possible confidence can the Barnet Tax payer have that this outsourcing of a vitally important nature reserve won't end in yet another expensive fiasco.</p>	As identified in the paper the lease of Darlands Nature Reserve will be accompanied by a separate agreement which will set out the maintenance requirements for the reserve and the requirement to ensure general public access is maintained. The site would be subject to monitoring, in order to ensure that both the agreement noted above and the lease are both adhered to.
3	7	Samuel Levy	The lake is home to grass snakes and water shrews, and the area is used by up to eight species of bat (some of	As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were

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			<p>which are nationally scarce including Natterer's Bat and Nathusius' Pipistrelle). The field north of the lake (included in the proposals) supports numerous breeding birds including the scarce and 'red-listed' Grasshopper Warbler, plus Little Owl, Kestrel, Linnet, Reed Bunting, Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat. It also supports numerous butterfly species. In summary the entire area included within the proposals is of significant conservation value and needs to be appropriately and carefully managed for this to continue.</p> <p>Question: What were the assessment criteria used that led to the assessment of the site as being of 'low quality/low value'</p>	<p>assessed using a number of criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure; • Place; <p>The Darlands Nature Reserve scored highly for its Green Infrastructure contribution however the final assessment rating is an amalgam of all these criteria.</p> <p>Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy</p>
4	7	Samuel Levy	<p>With regard to tree maintenance this should be limited in scale and scope and managed sensitively. The numerous large mature trees on site contain legally protected roosting sites for bat species including Daubenton's Bat, as well as nest holes for owls, doves and woodpeckers. It is important these sites are not lost, either deliberately or accidentally.</p> <p>Question: Will the lessee be targeted to maintain and improve the wildlife value of the site (e.g. through installing suitable nest boxes and appropriate / sensitive management of invasive plants such as himalayan balsam and brambles)?</p>	<p>As noted in the report a separate agreement will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site, this document is yet to be formulated however the management and control of invasive species would be covered within the agreement. The agreement would also cover the management of the site's various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna).</p>
5	7	Samuel Levy	<p>What are the name, objectives and governance structure for the nascent charitable trust?"</p>	<p>At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee</p>

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				to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.
6	7	Dara Caryotis	<p>This land is used daily by the local community and valued as an unique asset to our local community. This nature reserve is utilised as it and I do not understand plans to transfer ownership of it from the council.</p> <p>Do the council realise this is an important conservation area to the local community, Greater London and England?</p>	The council is aware of the conservation value that the Darlands Nature Reserve brings to the area and recognises that it should be protected, this is why the council will retain the responsibility for a strip of land surrounding the entire site in order to prevent encroachment or development.
7	7	Dara Caryotis	Can you explain why this is being considered? What are the benefits to the council? the Barnet? to the local community?	<p>The council has been approached by local residents who would like to manage the site. Residents include members of local groups that have experience managing open spaces and ponds in the area. The proposed Trust has the support of the Barnet Group, London Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>The lease holder will take on the management and maintenance responsibility of the nature reserve along with responsibility for delivery of investment and improvements to the site at no cost to the council.</p> <p>The site will be managed in line with a separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will set out how the site should be maintained and enhanced so that it protects the flora and fauna as well as ensuring the site remains accessible to the general public.</p>
8	7	Dara Caryotis	You are putting community first, how is this true with this action?	Once the lease is in place the site will be managed by a not-for-profit group who will work to invest in the site.

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				They will improve and enhance the area for all its users, and will also maintain public access.
9	7	Dara Caryotis	What Charity is the beneficiary? What does this Charity do? Will it leave access open to the local community to utilise this valuable resource? What are the plans of this charity for this land?	At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.
10	7	Dara Caryotis	What are the longer term plans for this land?	The Trust will via the covenants in the lease and the service level agreement (SLA) improve and enhance the area for all its users, and will also maintain public access.
11	7	Robert Husband	Firstly, we wish to stress that this area is biodiversity rich and any proposals must include provision for the retention and enhancement of the ecological systems. Question 1. Why is this not reflected in the Council's approached, bearing in mind the document relates to a Nature Reserve?	As noted in the report a separate agreement will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna).
12	7	Robert Husband	The Council's seems to have failed to recognise the ecological value of the area. Question 2. Why is this not reflected in the obligations to be imposed on the lessee?	These obligations will be reflected in the agreement that will accompany the lease.
13	7	Robert Husband	RSPB members are particularly concerned that the Council views this area as "low value / low quality" Question 3. On what basis has this view been formed?	As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics;

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure; • Place; <p>The Darlands Nature Reserve scored highly for its Green Infrastructure contribution however the final assessment rating is an amalgam of all these criteria.</p> <p>Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy</p>
14	7	Robert Husband	Question 4. Why has no consideration been given to the wildlife value?	Wildlife value was included in the Green Infrastructure criteria noted above.
15	7	Robert Husband	<p>Scientific results show that getting in touch with nature reduces stress and lowers the risk of chronic illnesses.</p> <p>Question 5. Bearing in mind that the Barnet was very few tracts of really wild countryside why hasn't the Council shown more imagination and considered making the entire Totteridge Valley into a Wildlife Country Park?</p>	Officers agree that access to green spaces has been shown to improve mental health which is one supporting factor in the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy.
16	8	Gerrard Roots	At 'Resources' 5.2.4, it is stated that: 'it should be noted that other negotiations are currently taking place regarding the letting of commercial space at the Council's other library properties'. Please tell me which libraries, and who are the potential lessees?	<p>We are actively negotiating, using internal and external resources, to identify tenants for all our libraries commercial spaces. In order to meet strategic objectives some of the commercial spaces will be occupied by business hubs providers, who will support local businesses and entrepreneurs.</p> <p>LBB have received multiple offers to take up other</p>

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				<p>tenancies but as terms are currently being negotiated, details of potential tenants cannot currently be shared.</p> <p>The libraries where lettings will take place have been detailed in various public reports, including the Libraries Strategy paper.</p>
17	8	Gerrard Roots	<p>At 'Social Value' 5.3.1, it is stated that: 'the new library refurbishment demonstrates to the people of Barnet the Council's commitment to public services. A half empty (sic) building will deliver a different perception and distract from the positive elements of the refurbishment; an early letting will avoid that perception'.</p> <p>In other words, Barnet shut the building in April 2017 and began work on gutting it, without any certainty that Middlesex University (or anyone else) would take over the 'rentable' space. Hence the scramble to get Middlesex into the building, so that the public would get the right 'perception' of the Council's plan.</p> <p>Why doesn't the Council simply admit that its Libraries' 'Plan' was wrong from its inception, and think again?</p>	<p>The council faces a significant budget gap of £61.5 million between now and 2020, meaning that many of our services have to make savings and do things differently. Changes to the Library service, including the development of commercial spaces, will contribute £2.2 million towards reducing the budget gap whilst keeping all 14 sites open.</p>
18	8	Gerrard Roots	<p>At 'Consultation and Engagement' 8.1, it is stated that: 'there has not been any public consultation for this proposed commercial letting. However, the premises were publicly marketed and consultation was undertaken amongst the members of the Council'.</p> <p>So Barnet's 'flagship' library has been reduced by two-thirds, with discussions only between potential lessees who</p>	<p>The Libraries Strategy was subject to extensive consultation and within this was the proposal to let out space.</p> <p>Public consultation was not a requirement under the Management of Asset Property and Land Rules but the premises were offered for lease on the open market through a third party in order to maximise the number of</p>

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			<p>would want it cheap, and members of the Council who had already agreed to the Library's evisceration in the first place.</p> <p>Why was there no public consultation?</p>	<p>offers and ensure best value was obtained.</p>
19	7	Pauline Baseley	<p>I understand that the ARG Committee is meeting to consider passing control of Darlands Nature Reserve to an untried, unnamed nascent charitable trust.</p> <p>Why does Barnet Council consider this necessary or a good idea?</p>	<p>The leasing of the Darlands Nature Reserve is in support of the action plan set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy – Community Cohesion: To promote the involvement of residents in the management of open spaces to develop a sense of local ownership.</p> <p>The lease holder will take on the management and maintenance responsibility of the nature reserve, along with responsibility for delivery of investment and improvements to the site at no cost to the council.</p> <p>The site will be managed in line with a separate agreement that will accompany the lease, which will set out how the site should be maintained and enhanced so that it protects the flora and fauna, as well as ensuring the site accessible to the general public.</p>
20	7	Pauline Baseley	<p>Do they realise this is an important nature conservation area comprising around 65 acres? Will access remain free??</p>	<p>The council and the proposed lease holder is aware of the conservation value that the Darlands Nature Reserve brings to the area and recognises that it should be protected.</p> <p>The site will remain open to the general public free of charge.</p>

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21	7	Pauline Baseley	What ecological report has been drawn up and where is it available to read?	No ecological survey has been undertaken for this site.
22	7	Pauline Baseley	Why does Barnet think this new, untried group has the expertise to run this project (whatever it is)?	The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.
23	7	Pauline Baseley	If an inappropriate development is planned, the land will take years to recover - why take the risk?	There are no plans for any inappropriate developments on the land and the strip of land the council will retain responsibility for that fully surrounds the site will protect against that risk.
24	7	Pauline Baseley	Why does a nature conservation area need "improvements"	The improvements will be to the benefit of the area, although these have yet to be agreed and would be linked to the agreement that will accompany the lease. One example of improvements would be the de-silting of the lake in order to increase the water capacity, improve the water quality and enhance the habitat's biodiversity.
25	7	Barbara Jacobson	Who assessed the Darlands and what were the criteria? Is it possible to see the assessment so that members of the public can understand how the conclusions were reached or is there no documentation?	<p>The quality/value assessment was completed by the consultant on behalf of the council as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health;

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26	7	Barbara Jacobson	<p>Is the 'nascent charitable trust' fully formed at this time or is it in the process of being set up or is it currently just a proposal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is in existence • who are its officials and members • what is the experience and expertise of the trust that make it an appropriate body for the purpose of managing the Darlands? • If it is not in existence, what expertise, skills and experience will LBB require of any organization entrusted with management of the Darlands? 	<p>At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.</p>
27	7	Barbara Jacobson	<p>4.11 This clause states 'a not-for-profit organization can be sought' whereas 1.5 and some other clauses refer to a specific organization, i.e. the 'nascent charitable trust'. Will the council be seeking other organizations or is the intention to work with the unnamed nascent charitable trust?</p>	<p>The intention is currently to work with the nascent charitable trust but should the terms of the lease or the service level agreement ultimately not be agreed, the council may then choose to seek alternative organisations.</p>

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28	7	Barbara Jacobson	5.2.2 This clause seems too tentative to be meaningful or consistent with other clauses. 'Parks and Open Spaces will likely have an interest in corresponding ' is not consistent with the firmer statement in 5.5.2 that LBB 'will need to visit the site regularly'. Will the council revise the undertaking in 5.2.2 to be consistent with 5.5.2?	When the lease is being formally documented we will ensure all wording is consistent
29	7	Barbara Jacobson	5.2.2 What provisions will be made to prevent inappropriate maintenance, such as paving of paths, unnecessary 'weeding'?	The council will work with the Trust to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.
30	7	Barbara Jacobson	5.7.1 What does 'When that takes place' mean? Will there be full public consultation, as this is a site treasured by many residents of and visitors to Totteridge?	This matter will be considered at the Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee and has already been agreed in principle at Environment Committee. There has not yet been a decision on whether there will be a public consultation.
31	7	Barbara Jacobson	6.1 Why is the assessment referred to in 1.1 not a background paper relevant to this report	The quality/value assessment was completed by the consultant on behalf of the council as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure;

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32	7	Nigel Rustin	<p>The area is an important nature conservation area, approximately 65 acres of green belt.</p> <p>Will access remain the same as at present.</p>	<p>The site will be managed in line with a separate agreement that will accompany the lease, which will set out how the site should be maintained and enhanced so that it protects the flora and fauna, as well as ensuring the site accessible to the general public.</p>
33	7	Nigel Rustin	<p>Why is the potential lessee shrouded in mystery. Under Freedom of Information this should be open. Please supply the details freely or I will have to apply through the courts.</p>	<p>At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.</p>
34	7	Nigel Rustin	<p>What development of the site is proposed, and is it appropriate to a conservation area.</p> <p>I look forward to receiving your response.</p>	<p>The site will be managed in line with a separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will set out how the site should be maintained and enhances so that it protects the flora and fauna as well as ensuring the site accessible to the general public.</p>
35		Martin Hime	<p>What is the definition of 'low quality and low value' land and how has this been assessed for Darlands ? I certainly don't consider Darlands as low quality and value. It is one of the best quality 'wild' areas in the borough.</p>	<p>As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics;

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36	7	Martin Hime	Why has there not been wider public consultation on this proposal?	<p>This matter will be considered at the Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee and has already been agreed in principle at Environment Committee. There has not yet been a decision on whether there will be a public consultation.</p> <p>There was a full public consultation on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the action plan for the strategy identified that it was a intention to promote the involvement of residents in the management of open spaces to develop a sense of local ownership.</p>
37	7	Martin Hime	How is the 'not for profit' organisation's appropriateness to be decided?	<p>The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being</p>

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				delivered.
38	7	Martin Hime	Who will advise on the suitability of the terms of the service level agreement and how are these to be approved?	Property Services and Greenspaces, as well as any other relevant departments will be involved in the drafting of the documentation to ensure there is a rounded knowledge of the requirements on site.
39	7	Martin Hime	Why is it considered that the Social Values as set out in the report are not already being provided and obtained?	Social value is currently being provided by the site but these will be greatly enhanced by better management of the site's various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna).
40	7	Martin Hime	The 'do nothing' alternative has been dismissed, but where are the details behind this option?	<p>The current situation is that the land is unmaintained and unmanaged and this is no longer an acceptable situation for LB Barnet as freeholders of the land.</p> <p>The leasing of the Darlands Nature Reserve is in support of the action plan set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy – Community Cohesion: To promote the involvement of residents in the management of open spaces to develop a sense of local ownership.</p>
41	7	Danielle Pollastri	Through a couple of friends, I recently heard about the proposal to grant a 30 year lease to an unidentified emergent trust to take over the responsibility (from Barnet Council?), for managing Darlands Nature Reserve in Totteridge. Who is this trust and what is its/their interest? More importantly, why are they unidentified? This is a sizeable Green Belt site with valuable nature conservation as its function.	At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.

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42	7	Danielle Pollastri	I am concerned as to how Darlands Nature Reserve is to benefit and the full intentions of this anonymous trust established. Before this is rubber stamped, I think there needs to be some transparency about the long term implications for Darlands Nature Reserve and the identity made known of the organisation in receipt of this lease. As it is, there is some evidence of British Virgin Islands registered organisations (also impossible to identify), buying up property in North West London – two of which I know are also in the LB of Barnet.	N/A – No question
43	7	Mary O'Connor	The Darlands Nature Reserve paper mentions (1.5) the 'Greenspaces Board' but I can find no mention on Barnet Council's website as to who are the members of this board or what its purpose/objectives are. Can you supply to this meeting and me any information regarding the 'Greenspaces Board' including the membership and how members are appointed, it's purpose / objectives and where minutes of their meetings are available. But include a copy of the minutes for the meeting(s) when they considered and supported Darlands Nature Reserve disposal?	<p>The Greenspaces Board is an internal management board that is chaired by the Strategic Director for Environment and its membership includes a number of officers from different areas of the council.</p> <p>The role of the Green Spaces Board is to direct and oversee activities of the LBB Green Spaces Service. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy • Delivery of the Playing Pitch Strategy • Monitoring of service delivery • Monitoring of revenue and capital expenditure • Monitoring of the Copthall Board
44	7	Mary O'Connor	Can you please supply the detailed analysis that gave Darlands Nature Reserve low value / low quality?	The quality and value assessment for Darlands Nature Reserve has been provided at the bottom of this document.
45	7	Mary O'Connor	Please correct me if I have interpreted incorrectly, but am I correct that Jon Sheaff and Associates were the	All the sites that were assessed as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy followed the same methodology

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			consultants who wrote the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, and therefore gave Darlands Nature Reserve a low quality / low value score? Did they carry out comprehensive on-site evaluations of all sites? If not, how did they make their assessments? How much did producing this strategy cost?	<p>which included site evaluations as well as desktop studies.</p> <p>Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy</p>												
46	7	Mary O'Connor	When Darlands Nature Reserve, Bigwood, Hadley Green and Monken Hadley Common, as examples, are all low quality / low value, does it not suggest that the assessment criteria and / or the procedure of assessment was inadequate?	<p>The assessment of the quality of the natural environment and value of green infrastructure was one area of the assessment that was carried out as part of the strategy works.</p> <p>The assessment was carried out in order to form a basis for the borough investment programme identifying and prioritising sites for investment.</p>												
47	7	Mary O'Connor	What has been the financial cost to Barnet Council of Darlands Nature Reserve in the last 5 years?	<p>The councils grounds maintenance costs are managed on a borough wide basis so we are unable to provide details of any expenditure for any specific site however below are any costs that relate to the general management and maintenance repairs for the Darlands Nature Reserve for the last five years.</p> <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Amount</th></tr><tr><td>2013-14</td><td>£2,680</td></tr><tr><td>2014-15</td><td>£2,181</td></tr><tr><td>2015-16</td><td>£4,160</td></tr><tr><td>2016-17</td><td>£6,491</td></tr><tr><td>2017-18</td><td>£2,555</td></tr></table>	Year	Amount	2013-14	£2,680	2014-15	£2,181	2015-16	£4,160	2016-17	£6,491	2017-18	£2,555
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48	7	Mary O'Connor	There are 15 natural or semi-natural green spaces and 36 parks assessed as being low quality / low value in the	The leasing of the Darlands Nature Reserve is in support of the action plan set out in the Parks and Open												

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			Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. Are they all to be considered for "alternative management arrangements" and be recommended for disposal? How many parks is Barnet planning to dispose of?	<p>Spaces Strategy – Community Cohesion: To promote the involvement of residents in the management of open spaces to develop a sense of local ownership.</p> <p>At the Environment Committee on 13 July 2017 agreed in principle for the freehold of Central Square in Hampstead Garden Suburb to be transferred to the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, this was referred to a future meeting of the Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee for consideration.</p>
49	7	Mary O'Connor	Why does the Director of Resources Report not mention the size of Darlands Nature Reserve or that in the Barnet Local Plan, it is a 'Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation - Grade 1' (Table 17.2, page 57) or report on its ecological value? How many hectares / acres is Darlands Nature Reserve?	The Parks and Opens Spaces Strategy acknowledges the importance on nature conservation and Sites on Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) in Barnet, the leasing of the Darlands Nature Reserve is in support of the action plan set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. The site is Approximately 80 acres
50	7	Mary O'Connor	This report gives no indication of what this not-for-profit group would want and intend to use the nature reserve for. Who are they and what are their intentions? Given that the group is still being formed, how will Barnet Council be able to access that they are capable of 'managing' this valuable asset?	At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans. The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.
51	7	Mary O'Connor	The report says that Barnet Council considers it necessary to retain a "ring of land" around Darlands Nature Reserve	This has not yet been determined and further site visits will be necessary before the width can be confirmed.

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			to prevent the risk of encroachment or development. What is the width of this ring and what development are the Council expecting the not-for-profit group to have planned to require this?	The Council have received no notification of any development plans from the Trust. This is a precautionary measure the Council is taking to safeguard the land against any potential encroachments or development.
52	7	Mary O'Connor	Darlands Nature Reserve has many trees. What will you expect of the not-for-profit group to "maintain trees"? Are trees to be removed or pollard in a nature reserve and if so, how is that an improvement?	The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement is yet to be agreed but will cover the management of the sites flora and fauna, including the maintenance of the trees.
53	7	Mary O'Connor	How do you intend the not-for-profit group to "improve access and pathways to the site" without compromising it as a nature reserve? What do you consider needs to be done?	This is yet to be agreed and will be linked to the separate agreement that will accompany the lease however examples of such improvements would be; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and resurfacing sympathetic to the area • Enhancing entrances • Way finding signage including interpretation boards
54	7	Mary O'Connor	Darlands Lake was formed by damming the Folly Brook about 200 years ago. As it is an artificial lake there are varying opinions as to whether it should be dredged completely, partially or not at all. Presumably, dredging the lake would require machinery and access for large vehicles. Has any evaluation been undertaken as to the pros and cons of dredging the lake and if so, please make this available.	We hold no such report or evaluation.
55	7	Mary O'Connor	By not having direct control of Darlands Nature Reserve, might there be additional costs to Barnet Council	Once the lease is in place the council will undertake regular monitoring of the reserve in order to ensure the

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			downstream, if the reserve is not rid of invasive plants?	site is being managed appropriately, this will include the management and treatment of invasive species.
56	7	Mary O'Connor	Barnet will require the site to be open and for the benefit of the general public. Would access continue to be free for all the site, as it presently is, or would there be an admission cost and / or restricted access?	The site will remain open to the general public free of charge.
57	7	Mary O'Connor	Why does Barnet Council not employ in-house ecologists to evaluate and record the fauna and flora in Barnet's Parks and Open Spaces and plan to enhance them, rather than short-term consultants?	The council does not employ such expertise directly as it only retains a small in house parks management team which as part of the Environment Commissioning Team will procure or commission additional services or support as and when required, this is a more cost effective way and flexible way of working.
58	7	Mary O'Connor	16. What is the public consultation procedure? When will it take place and how will it be advertised?	This matter will be considered at the Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee and has already been agreed in principle at Environment Committee. There has not yet been a decision on whether there will be a public consultation.
59	7	Ian Ellis	1.1 The lake is home to grass snakes and water shrews, and the area is used by up to eight species of bat (some of which are nationally scarce including Natterer's Bat and Nathusius' Pipistrelle). The field north of the lake (included in the proposals) supports numerous breeding birds including the scarce and 'red-listed' Grasshopper Warbler, plus Little Owl, Kestrel, Linnet, Reed Bunting, Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat. It also supports numerous butterfly species. In summary the entire area included within the proposals is of significant conservation value and needs to be appropriately and carefully managed for this to	As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure; • Place; The Darlands Nature Reserve scored highly for its Green Infrastructure contribution however the final

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			<p>continue.</p> <p>Question: What were the assessment criteria used that led to the assessment of the site as being of 'low quality/low value'? The assessment appears to have ignored the above significant wildlife value, which could be further enhanced with appropriate management but lost with the wrong actions.</p>	<p>assessment rating is an amalgam of all these criteria.</p> <p>Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy</p>
60	7	Ian Ellis	<p>1.4 With regard to tree maintenance this should be limited in scale and scope and managed sensitively. The numerous large mature trees on site contain legally protected roosting sites for bat species including Daubenton's Bat, as well as nest holes for owls, doves and woodpeckers. It is important these sites are not lost, either deliberately or accidentally.</p> <p>Question: Will the lessee be targeted to maintain and improve the wildlife value of the site (e.g. through installing suitable nest boxes and appropriate / sensitive management of invasive plants such as himalayan balsam and brambles)?</p>	<p>As noted in the report a separate agreement will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site, this document is yet to be formulated however the management and control of invasive species would be covered within the agreement. The agreement would also cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna).</p>
61	7	Ian Ellis	<p>1.5 Question: What are the council's requirements regarding the objectives and governance structure for the nascent charitable trust?</p>	<p>At this point, the structure of the Trust is still being finalised but a representative will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans.</p>
62	7	Ian Ellis	<p>4.1.4 I would support LB Barnet putting in place a SLA with the ability to trigger termination of the lease if the SLA is not met. However it is important the SLA factors in the need to sensitively manage the site in order to maintain</p>	<p>The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the</p>

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			<p>and improve its high current value for wildlife.</p> <p>Question: How will the SLA ensure adequate protection for the conservation value of the site and that the lessee complies fully with relevant legislation?</p>	<p>sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.</p>
63	7	Tim Riley	<p>What information and data did Barnet Council use to form the judgement that Darlands Nature Reserve ‘low quality/low value’?</p>	<p>As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure; • Place; <p>The Darlands Nature Reserve scored highly for its Green Infrastructure contribution however the final assessment rating is an amalgam of all these criteria.</p> <p>Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy</p>
64	7	Tim Riley	<p>Why is an ecological report not available?</p>	<p>We hold no such report or evaluation.</p>
65	7	Tim Riley	<p>What are the ‘unnamed, nascent, charitable trust’s ‘intentions for the area?</p>	<p>The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular</p>

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				monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.
66	7	Tim Riley	How do we know the "unnamed,nascent" will have the expertise to manage such a valuable asset?	A representative from the Trust will attend ARG Committee to answer questions regarding their structure and to provide further details on their immediate plans. The council will work with the group to agree the separate agreement that will accompany the lease which will detail the maintenance requirements for the site. The agreement will cover the management of the sites various habitat and ecological values (flora and fauna). This agreement will be subject to regular monitoring in order to ensure the objectives are being delivered.
67	7	Tim Riley	What are their environmental credentials?	A representative from the Trust will attend ARG Committee to answer questions of this nature.
68	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>That the Committee notes the intention to dispose of</i> This sounds a very final and already ratified decision to “dispose of the land”: <i>the land shaded pink on the plan attached at Appendix A on a long lease to an appropriate not-for-profit group.</i> A “not-for profit group who has already been approached and a tentative agreement reached with?” Surely if no profit can be made then they will look to relinquishing their responsibility well before the 30 yeas is up and then what safeguards will there be in place for the area?	If the Trust were for any reason to relinquish their interest in the land, LB Barnet would need to take a view on the best course of action for maintenance of the land at that point.
69	7	Eleanor and Barry	<i>maintain the site as open to and for the benefit of the general public;</i> It already is so why do we need an	The leasing of the Darlands Nature Reserve is in support of the action plan set out in the Parks and Open

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		Smith	organisation to do this for us?	Spaces Strategy – Community Cohesion: To promote the involvement of residents in the management of open spaces to develop a sense of local ownership.
70	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>deliver investment to the site</i> ; This usually involves a road for access to the area, a café, a visitor centre for the educational needs and a fence around the whole area and an admission charge as it will no longer be a public right of way With what ultimate purpose in mind?	The improvements and investment to the site has yet to be agreed however they would be linked to the agreement that will accompany the lease. One example of improvements would be the de-silting of the lake in order to increase the water capacity, improve the water quality and enhance the habitats biodiversity.
71	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>maintain trees</i> ; How much maintenance has needed doing over the past 30 years? Can this question be answered at the meeting? It is a naturalised woodland, again asking how much maintenance has been needed over the past 30 years?	The councils Tree Team has surveyed the Darlands Nature Reserve on a three year identifying and completing works to trees that posed a health and safety risk. Additionally the tree team would deal with any issues that arose on a reactive basis that posed a risk of hazard. The Tree Team only has records for tree works to Darlands Nature Reserve as far back as 2001 this information can be provided by request to parks@barnet.gov.uk
72	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>dredge and maintain the lake</i> ; why? If it is left as it is, naturalised what is the problem with this?	The de-silting of the lake will increase the water capacity, improve the water quality and enhance the habitats biodiversity. If the lake was left as is it would continue to deteriorate and eventually become a marsh and possibly dry up completely.
73	7	Eleanor and Barry	<i>improve access and pathways to the site</i> . Again repeating, the lake has always been accessible to walk round since	This is yet to be agreed and will be linked to the separate agreement that will accompany the lease

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		Smith	we started going there 35 years ago. Why? Unless a tarmac path and road are built then how much could be done to improve access?	however examples of such improvements would be; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and resurfacing sympathetic to the area • Enhancing entrances • Way finding signage including interpretation boards
74	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>The Darlands Nature Reserve in Totteridge ward is assessed as low quality/low value within the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (POSS).</i> What constitutes low quality? Again please explain at the meeting. Low value??? How can such a beautiful asset be considered to be low value and worth getting rid of, in the Council's opinion? Do any of the council members go there?	As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2026 all the boroughs parks and open spaces were assessed using a number of criteria; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage; • Demographics; • Health; • Education; • Green Infrastructure; • Place; The Darlands Nature Reserve scored highly for its Green Infrastructure contribution however the final assessment rating is an amalgam of all these criteria. Full details on the assessment methodology used in the grading of parks and open spaces for the strategy can be found in Appendix D of the strategy documents; https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy
75	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>Members have received representations from local residents that residents would like to see the lake brought into use for educational visits, but this will require improvements to the maintenance regime, for which the Council has no budget provision.</i> What local residents have asked for an educational emphasis, can't schools visit if they want to now? What is preventing them from doing so if	A representative from the Trust will attend ARG Committee to answer questions of this nature.

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			it stays as it is?	
76	7	Eleanor and Barry Smith	<i>The site includes a lake which is not currently maintained and trees and pathways that require improvement.</i> Improvement on whose criteria? That is a subjective statement that hopefull will be open to scrutiny at the meeting.	The improvements and investment to the site has yet to be agreed however they would be linked to the agreement that will accompany the lease. Once the lease is in place the council will undertake regular monitoring of the reserve in order to ensure the site is being managed appropriately

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Darlands Nature Reserve Quality/Value Assessments

QUALITY ASSESSMENT 2015																	
Park Name	Area	Typology	Hectareage	Facilities				Welcoming		Cleanliness		Information		Natural Features		Overall Scores	
				Sport	Score	Non-Sport	Score		Score		Score		Score		Score		
Darlands Lake Nature Reserve	Totteridge	Local	3.49	POOR	0	POOR	0	FAIR	9	FAIR	7	POOR	0	EXCELLENT	7	FAIR	23

VALUE ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2015																						
Site Name	Area	Ward	Demographics			Health			Education		Green Infrastructure				Place				Resident Satisfaction	Provision	SUM	PERCENTAGE
			Growing population	Deprived ward	Higher housing density area	Incidence of chronic heart disease	Incidence of obesity	Incidence of depression	Used by schools	Potential to be used by schools	High flood risk area	Urban warming area	Designated nature conservation area	High pollution area	Close proximity to town centre	Heritage Significance	Park events	Friends of Parks user groups				
Darlands Lake Nature Reserve	Chipping Barnet	Totteridge	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0		6	37.5

References:

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy - <https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/open-spaces-strategy>

Environment Committee papers (Agenda Item 12 refers)

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g9091/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Jul-2017%2018.30%20Environment%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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ARG - Public comments

Raised by	Item	Public Comment
John Colmans	7	<p>I am writing in respect of the discussion to take place at the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee Meeting of Barnet Council on 4 September about Darlands Nature Reserve. I have very recently been made aware of the Council's proposals on this matter.</p> <p>I am writing both as an individual and on behalf the informal group of birdwatchers who watch birds in Totteridge Valley. I have been birdwatching here for 40 years: indeed, when I began birdwatching here Darlands Lake was still under the management of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>In your paper setting out your proposals for this area you describe the land in question as of 'low value and low quality'. My main purpose in writing to you is to let you know that, from the point of view of the local bird population, nothing could be further from the truth. The lake itself is a regular wintering ground for small numbers of Teal and a number of other waterbirds, including Mandarin Duck, breed here. Heron, Kingfisher, Little Egret and Grey Wagtail are regular visitors. In the surrounding woodland Treecreepers breed and in winter there is a regular population of Siskins.</p> <p>The large field immediately to the north of the lake is even more important. At present, although there are very narrow tracks through the field, the main access is through a wide path on the eastern side of the field which largely means that, other than by birdwatchers, the main bulk of the field is left undisturbed. The field, which is of significant size, consists in the main of thick grasses and brambles interspersed with small trees. This habitat is outstanding for breeding Whitethroat and has in recent years hosted breeding pairs of Grasshopper Warbler, a scarce breeding species in London: Pheasant also nest here. Surrounding trees hold breeding populations of Stock Dove, Little Owl, both Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker and Kestrel. Buzzard and Red Kite are frequently seen. This area is also of immense value as a stop-off point for spring and autumn migrants and every year scarce visitors such as Wheatear, Redstart, Whinchat, Spotted Flycatcher and Tree Pipit can be seen here. You should also be aware that in areas close to the reserve species such as Lapwing and Hobby have bred in the last couple of years and any changes to this area could impact upon them. I can provide, as can my fellow birdwatchers, much more detailed information on all of this should you require it.</p> <p>You should also know that the field plays host to a number of species of butterfly, including Marbled White and Ringlet,</p>

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		<p>both of which have only recently colonised. In addition you should be aware that, closer to the lake, there is a well-known and much loved colony of Snake's head Fritillaries, which come out in about April and are frequently visited and photographed.</p> <p>I recognise, as do my fellow birdwatchers, that the lake and the surrounding area are in need of sensitive and understanding management and there is work that could usefully be done. However, the fact of the matter remains that the benevolent neglect afforded to this area in the last few years has resulted in the creation of a very important wildlife habitat. We are extremely concerned that any plans for the future of the site should not jeopardise this fact.</p>
John Colmans	7	<p>I should also stress that the Grasshopper Warbler, which is referred to in my first email, is a bird on the Red List of British Birds which means that its' status as a breeding bird in the UK is a matter of national concern, with consequent implications for the management of sites where it nests.</p>
Simon Worsfold	7	<p>I had noticed recently through a recent leaflet at Totteridge Valley on Sunday 27th August of proposed plans for an 'alternative management arrangement.' What these intentions are, are unclear but I am under the impression that it could mean plans to build in the area which I fear will not only spoil the look of the countryside but interrupt the wildlife that has existed for years by which nesting and other habitat will be compromised.</p> <p>I am a local birdwatcher and belong to the local RSPB group which has the interests of the wildlife and landscape of the Totteridge Valley/Darlands Lake area at heart. There are other people that I know who also live in the local area who have watched the site for many years and have records of breeding birds such as the warblers, birds of prey and other species, some of which are endangered species and are supposed to be protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Conservation act. Some of these species have been put on the red list which are in declining numbers.</p> <p>As a conservationist and supporter of the local wildlife I intend to oppose any development building plans for fear of the destruction of the local ecology and long term damage. I also spoke to some of the local residents who are also opposed to any transformation of the land that they live in.</p>
Andrew Haynes	7	<p>I have no objection in principal to the Council transferring the operation and management of the site to a suitable not-for-profit body, but I am most concerned about a serious omission in the document. Although the title of the document is "Darlands Nature Reserve", it manages to ignore the fact that, as a nature reserve, the site surely exists to be managed for nature.</p>

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		<p>In Paragraph 1.4, the only requirements listed for the new management body are: “to maintain the site as open to and for the benefit of the general public; to deliver investment to the site; to maintain trees; to dredge and maintain the lake; and to improve access and pathways to the site.” I find it amazing that these management requirements do not include any aspect of nature conservation.</p> <p>And, according to Paragraph 5.3 of the document, the activities required of the management body will have a “social value” through promoting a healthy lifestyle “by encouraging the use of outdoor space” and through supporting “a desire for the lake to be used for educational purposes”. But again there is absolutely nothing about nature conservation, which surely also has a significant “social value”.</p> <p>The document completely fails to mention the area’s important flora and fauna. In summer the site features some nesting birds so rare in London that local birders are reluctant to advertise their presence because of the risk of disturbance. The reserve is also an excellent site in summer for spotting scarce grassland butterflies such as Marbled White. In autumn many passage migrant birds (Wheatear, Whinchat, Redstart, Ring Ouzel, Tree Pipit, Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, etc) stop off here to refuel on their way south. And unusual waterbirds and waterside bird, such as Mandarin Duck and Green Sandpiper, can be seen at Darlands Lake. The site’s flora also includes the London area’s most impressive display of the rare wild Snakeshead Fritillary.</p> <p>Apart from completely ignoring the need to protect these unusual species, the document fails to mention the need to control invasive non-native species such as Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>I wish to be kept informed about the progress of this proposal. Unless the bizarre failure to acknowledge the status of the site as a nature reserve is rectified, I cannot support the proposal and will register my objection at any future public consultation.</p>
Rosalind Wenham	7	<p>This beautiful area has been described as of low quality and value which I find an extraordinary statement. As a lover of nature I walk in the area often and it is a haven for birds, flowers and insects.</p> <p>I'm sure you will be hearing from a number of expert birdwatchers who study the area and have more expertise than me. They see a wide range of birds there.</p>

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		<p>I usually enter the meadow area from Totteridge Lane by the Orange Tree and in these meadows are a range of wild flowers. I have recently seen several vetches, an important insect food plant. In the last few weeks I have seen common blue butterfly and a number of marbled whites which I see on the South Downs but nowhere else as well as other butterflies.</p> <p>I'm sure that if a thorough survey of the whole Darlands area was done of the lake area, woods, bushes and meadows a wide range of species would be found.</p> <p>I meet a number of dog-walkers and walkers over there enjoying the nature and I am sure people are unaware of any plans to change the area. I'm sure they will not be happy when they do find out.</p> <p>I understand there is a suggestion of placing the management of this important site in the hands of an unnamed local group. This seems extraordinary and I hope that you will clarify this. This is too precious an area to be handed over to anybody however experienced without public consultation.</p> <p>This area is easy to access from both Totteridge Lane and Burtonhole Lane via footpaths. Many people enjoy walking here to the beautiful lake overhung with trees and in the spring wood anemones and snakeshead fritillaries are a delight. We need to protect the Darlands area not change it.</p>
Samuel Levy	7	<p>I would also like to stress my concern for the potential of losing birds species in the valley that are RED LISTED and therefore species of high conservation priority. This includes Linnet, Grey Wagtail, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Grasshopper Warblers, and Lapwing. A dramatic change to the landscape could push these species out of the area and it is within our, and I hope your interest, that this doesn't become reality.</p> <p>I also hope that you realise that the bird life isn't the only thing that is potentially at risk. In the summer months when the meadows flower the Totteridge Valley and the fields surrounding Darlands lake supports a large array of Butterfly and Moth species. Butterfly species include; Marbled White, Small Skipper, Peacock, Red Admiral, Comma's, Holly Blue, Common Blue, Cabbage White, Gatekeepers, and Meadow Brown to name just a few.</p> <p>Mammals in the area are also of interest with Munjac, Roe Deer, Hedgehogs (nationally declining), and Foxes. We also have populations of Wood Mouse, Bank Vole, Common Shrew (Nationally suffering due to loss of hedgerows and increasing use of Pesticide), Field Vole, and finally the Water Shrew (Also Nationally declining due to the loss of habitat</p>

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	<p>and also pollution in water ways). We also have other species of Mammals too but the ones I have mentioned are of most importance, and the Bats have already been mentioned in my quote from Ian Ellis's Email.</p> <p>As for Damselflies and Dragonflies Darlands lake and the surrounding Folly Brook create a home for many species. This includes nationally scarce Banded Damosille, and also commoner Species such as Blue-tailed Damselfly, Common Blue Damselfy, Southern Hawker, Migrant Hawker, and also Common and Ruddy Darters.</p> <p>I hope that from this email that you and the rest of the council can see that there are many things which make this area of land of conservation value. I would also like to stress the concern of not just the bird watching community, but also those that use this area to Walk, Run, Jog, and Picnic and I hope, like many of them, that this area can be enjoyed continually and that it is able to maintain the current level of wildness.</p> <p>I cannot make the meeting on the 4th, however there will be someone there representing the Totteridge Valley Birders.</p> <p>I would also like to make a point of asking how you intended to notify the community that uses the surrounding footpaths of Darlands Lake, for if it weren't for Mary at the Victoria Park posting leaflets around Darlands lake no one would have known!</p> <p>I take this opportunity to quote a local Dog Walker that I met and spoke to this evening near Darlands Lake " I will do what I can to ensure that this hidden gem will stay as it is now for generations to come, and improved access isn't necessarily the way to go by this. We don't need tarmacked paths, but Grassy paths are the best thing to keep Darlands accessible and also to keep the local wildlife happy. The many who come and enjoy this space do so because they like the way it is and also the fact that you can see the seasons change. From Flowers in early spring and summer to the Trees changing colour and losing their leaves. It is a wonderful place and something that we should not lose!"</p> <p>I would also like to stress my concern that this area of land which is Green Belted will in the end be tarmacked over. Please on behalf of the local community don't let this be the case in any shape or form!</p> <p>Even though I have said all this, the rest of the Totteridge Valley Birders and I would like to offer to work alongside this new organisation so that we can make sure that they understand how to manage this landscape and also so that we can make some sort of agreement on how management of this area should be done with the best interest of all the</p>
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		people and wildlife that use the area.
Dara Caryotis	7	<p>I walk this area weekly, often several times a week, and it has been a lifeline to me in managing my stressful life.</p> <p>A decision to change ownership of this land cannot be made. It is essential that it remains as is, and available to the local community, and beyond, to utilise.</p>
Anita Cheasty	7	<p>I wish to object to any transfer or alteration of ownership as this might affect access to Darlands Lake and surrounding areas.</p> <p>The lack of an identity to a supposed charity is of concern.</p>
Fran and Madan Katkar	7	<p>1. It is a real country walk, easily accessible to local residents.</p> <p>2. It offers the benefits of a change of scene, an escape from urban life and stresses of work and family.</p> <p>3. The route passes between the fields, and the grounds of the original eighteenth century Copped Hall Estate, open sloping ground, typical of the local landscape. The scenery varies along the walk, constantly changing, offering views of farmland as far as Totteridge Lane and the Ridgeway, often in dappled shade under the trees, with the path following the stream, leading to the lake.</p> <p>4. As well as the variety of the views, there is also the option of varying the length of the walk , and varying the route, or the starting point.</p> <p>That is vital, to have the option of doing a shorter or longer walk, and not the same route every time.</p> <p>5. There is a need to care for the trees, and regularly trim undergrowth encroaching onto the paths. It would be wonderful if the lake could be dredged to prevent it silting up any further, and allow the fish to flourish.</p> <p>We were expecting that work to be included in the maintenance work that was undertaken some 12 or so years ago, reinforcing the banks of the lake and rebuilding the dams and Victorian cascade, when the temporary access road was put in.</p> <p>However, we would simply want the area maintained in its current condition and character, this is a traditional country walk between the fields on a compacted earth footpath, we would not want to see it "upgraded" by surfacing the path with gravel or tarmac, as in a 'country park'.</p> <p>It is a traditional country footpath and should be kept as such, anyone choosing to walk there should expect it to be muddy in wet weather and wear appropriate footwear!</p> <p>6. We need the choice of walking in our parks, or walking along these traditional historic country footpaths, Both are</p>

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		<p>great assets in the local area, both have their own distinctive character, both offer vital opportunities for exercise, relaxation and refreshment. Both are part of our traditional way of life in this country.</p> <p>In conclusion, we hope that the organisation chosen to manage this site will keep it in its current condition by regular essential maintenance, not 'upgrading' it in any way that would change its essential character, which is enjoyed and appreciated each week, throughout the year in all weathers, by so many local residents, from Finchley, Mill Hill, Woodside Park, Totteridge and beyond.</p>
Martin J C Lamb	7	<p>We are concerned that the designation of the site as 'Low Quality/ Low Value' does not reflect its true value to the community (we understand that it is very widely used by walkers and visitors) and as a nature reserve. Barnet's own website entry for the lake indicates that interesting wildlife such as kingfishers and many species of dragonfly have been seen there. In our view, it should be regarded as 'high importance'.</p> <p>We are also aware that work needs to be done to maintain the site and its accessibility.</p> <p>In view of the fact that the charitable trust to which it is proposed to lease the site is unnamed and (as far as we can tell) untested, we wish to urge that the Council should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not enter into any agreement without appropriate public consultation, 2. Set clear terms for any potential lease that require that the site shall be maintained largely in its current form, for public access, 3. Undertake that, should the charity not be able to meet its obligations, Barnet Council will take back responsibility for the site, to be managed as set out above.
Fausto Furlotti	7	<p>The principle of this transaction (as presented) is to transfer responsibility for the area out of a publically funded entity (i.e. Barnet Council) into a charitably funded entity. Such charitable funding into said entity is likely to primarily come from the local community who have an interest in maintaining the area. If this funding relationship fails (which it most likely will without local public support) then any entity will likely seek other more commercial ways to raise the income with which to meet its obligations.</p> <p>Far more detail is required at this stage prior to delegating the authority sought and any such delegated authority should then be subject to closer scrutiny by the public prior to consent to any final transaction being given. 30 year leases are given to commercial enterprises - charitable entities do not require such a long "line of sight" in order to meet their obligations and do their good work.</p>

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Janet Francis	7	<p>I'd like to raise a concern. I have just heard that Barnet plans to transfer this 65 acre site to an unnamed charitable trust that does not yet exist, on a long lease. Apparently the land is of low quality/value despite being a Borough-wide area for Nature Conservation (could there be a contradiction here?) I'm told that a decision will be made at the 4 September ARG committee.</p> <p>I don't yet know the area, but intend to as part of my post-retirement plan to get to know more of Barnet's green spaces by cycling around them. I believe that in cities we need all the green spaces and wildlife we can get, and wildlife needs all the chances it can get. It may be that in due course, there is an appropriate charitable trust that could take on management of this space, but details about that trust, its resourcing and its plans would be needed before such a decision is taken. To decide to transfer the land to an unproven group that does not yet exist could be rash. Details about the ecology of the area would also be needed – questions might need to be asked about how the low quality/value label has come about.</p>
Tim Riley	7	<p>I am very disappointed that Barnet Council do not appear to recognise the value of Darlands Nature Reserve to the people of the Borough of Barnet and that they propose a 30 year lease to 'unnamed, nascent' for what is effectively public land. My wife and I walk in the area regularly and we feel saddened that the council judges it as 'low quality/low value.' We get great personal enjoyment from this area, as do many people we meet on our regular walks. Indeed there is a community recognition that this is a unique place of real value. Therefore, Barnet Council should conduct a audit to properly evaluate the true value of Darlands Nature Reserve and the value to the public that use it.</p> <p>Before any decision is made as to whether a long lease should be made on the Darlands Nature Reserve the Council needs to be open and transparent about the 'unnamed, nascent, charitable trust' that they propose so that public scrutiny can be conducted. At present the fact that the 'nascent, charitable trust' remains 'unnamed' appears suspiciously secretive and therefore potentially underhand.</p>
Sharon Wilson	7	<p>I have walked in this area, unchanged, for the past 29 years. I would like to continue to walk in the area, unchanged for the next 20 years. I am deeply concerned by proposals for change especially as the proposals I have seen seem so vague and no details are given of the 'nascent, charitable trust'.</p> <p>I wish to register my concern and be kept informed of any decisions and of any right I have to input those decisions as a person who lives locally,</p>
Gillian	7	<p>However, I would like to state that I have been a frequent visitor to Darlands reserve for many years and am totally</p>

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Harmer		opposed to the Councils' plans.
Eleanor and Barry Smith	7	<i>A ring of land around Darlands Nature Reserve will be retained and maintained by London Borough of Barnet, to prevent the risk of encroachment or development once the site is transferred to a not-for-profit group – shown shaded in green on the attached plan. It is proposed to link the lease to a separate agreement that sets out the obligations of the not-for-profit group, outlining the nature of the maintenance to be undertaken and the requirement to enable access to the site by the general public.</i> There is currently access to the site by a number of different footpaths marked out by the numerous footfall over the years. The site is quite accessible as it is and enjoyed and loved by dog walkers and walkers alike. The footfall itself maintains the paths.
Margaret West	7	Although it may have been designated "low value/low quality", it is a valued a valued resource for the area. We are concerned as to how an unnamed nascent charitable trust is going to pay for/ recoup its costs without charging visitors. We would also like to be re-assured that any plans will be discussed publicly before implementation and that this nature conservation area will managed sympathetically and not 'disneyfied'.
Martin Hime	7	<p>There is no mention of how it is envisaged that the organisation will raise (or be permitted to raise) its funds for investment nor any comment on what will be suitable or unsuitable (concerts, paint ball, festivals etc),</p> <p>There is no mention of the public not having to pay for access or the appropriateness of 'fee' paying days which could be unsuitable and harm the area and environment.</p> <p>There is no mention of the number of representations received from 'local residents' and how the connection and 'big jump' from requests for the lake to be brought into use and the leasing of the adjoining and adjacent mainly open land has been made.</p> <p>A Principle Risk, not identified in the report, must be inappropriate lease or service level agreement terms and the overall impact of these on the public, access and Darlands environment for which there needs to be public scrutiny. This is more so if the 'nascent charitable trust' has already identified.</p> <p>For such an important area of land this long term decision should not be delegated to the Director of Resources to implement without referral back to the Committee and to allow other interested parties to comment on the final</p>

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		proposals. This should not just be a financial decision. I would hope that the Committee would commit to formal public consultation on the lease terms and the terms of the service level agreement both of which greatly affect the public and its continuing use of Darlands. This will also ensure the statements on transparency are met in full.
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