

Brodick Tennis Courts - Arran

Feasibility Report : April 2024

Advantage Sports Consultancy Ltd

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Executive Summary

Tennis in Brodick

KA Leisure are current operators for a block of three derelict tennis courts in Brodick Hall Park in

Brodick on the Isle of Arran. The courts have fallen into disrepair and various local parties including

the Leisure Trust, Council and community groups are keen to reinstate this area as a community

sports facility.

KA Leisure is a registered charity committed to creating opportunities,

inspiring people and changing lives using sport and physical activity.

KAL want to explore reinstating the tennis courts, expand the facilities available in Brodick

and to consider the addition of other racket sports like padel. They also wish to open up tennis

to more people in the town through provision of smartgate technology that will manage

access and light controls and allow anyone to book and play tennis or padel without simple

online administration and minimal staffing.

KA Leisure have initiated a feasibility study to carry out an appraisal on the potential to secure

funding for the reinstatement of the facility and additional activities in the park. The vision

would be to create a new community sport facility that would revive a derelict space and that

would be visited and enjoyed by many.

Key aspects to review include site suitability and potential, capital cost, business plan,

operating budget, timeline, statutory permissions, and marketing to ensure a sustainable

facility that benefits the local community. The success of the project is important to both the

aspiration to improve facilities in the town and also to grow and develop tennis and racket

sports on the island.

This project will help to address a gap in community facilities that are currently available

locally and provide a popular activity that is close to the centre of Brodick.

ADVANTAGE SPORTS CONSULTANCY LTD
DEVELOPING PLACES FOR SPORT

The local community have been engaged in the project and have expressed support for the proposed facilities. KA Leisure and the Council aim to provide a range of racket sports that will be available to all sections of the local community and be used by schools to enhance provision of PE.

The project, reviewed more fully in this study, would appear to be ambitious but realistic and deliverable by KA Leisure and the Council combined with specialist support from experienced consultants and suppliers.

KA Leisure intends the new facilities to become a legacy project that will be enjoyed by the community and visitors for many years to come.

Introduction

KA Leisure (KAL) working with North Ayrshire Council wish to review options for the reinstatement of the Brodick Tennis Courts. The study will also consider the potential to add to the facilities to broaden their appeal and create a multi-generational facility that appeals to both the local community and visitors to Arran.

During initial discussions with KAL and other interested parties a number of facilities were identified including :

- Two or three new all-weather tennis courts
- One outdoor padel court
- A mini court or pickleball court
- Other sports or a multi-use games area (MUGA)
- Floodlights
- A Smart Access system to manage bookings and control floodlights to widen community access

Feasibility Study Objectives

The study was commissioned by KA Leisure to provide an independent appraisal of the options available at the site and to review longer term operational processes.

Whilst this report is prepared for KAL it has been written in a format that could inform external parties who may be approached at a later date for support or for funding.



Methodology

Calls were held initially with Scott Morrison of KA Leisure and Ross Dobson of Active Schools in early February to understand the status of the site, to agree the scope of the feasibility study and look at potential school and community benefits.

A site visit took place on 27 February 2024. A meeting was held the same day with Councillor Timothy Billings to understand the background to the site and the wider provision of tennis on Arran. Locally there are a number of keen tennis players who want to retain and enhance tennis on the island. Detailed comments were received from Maggie Carson on the need for tennis and background on current provision and steps taken to develop a tennis infrastructure.

The feasibility study was then developed online with further information collated as required. Advice was also sought from **sport**scotland and LTA / Tennis Scotland on facility design and funding. A draft report was presented in early April 2024 and the final version then circulated later in April.

Site Visit – Tuesday 27 February

Peter Gordon of ASC visited Arran in late February 2024 to view the current condition of the courts and to consider the immediate location and other adjacent facilities.

The weather was wet at the time of the visit with surrounding ground and paths being waterlogged. The site was entered from beside the library where there is some off street parking.

The courts are in a poor state of repair with one broken net post, repairs required to fencing and a complete overhaul of the surface being required.

Blaes courts are seasonal and even when in good condition require regular upkeep and specialist maintenance. They also require intensive work at the start of every season to roll and compact the surface, re-lay lines and apply a top dressing.



During use blaes courts also require regular watering, rolling and brushing to maintain the playing surface in a good condition and to keep lines clear of dust. Blaes courts can become waterlogged and are prone to flooding after heavy rain.

Later in the day we also visited the tarmac courts in Lamlash run by COAST. These are in a playable condition but by no means good and will, in the medium term, require resurfacing. Loss of these courts would result in very limited access to tennis on Arran.

On returning to Brodick a second visit took place to the Brodick courts this time approaching from the Co-op car park across the little stream to get a better sense of access routes and to view the portacabin that could be turned into a café /shop.

Site Overview

The old tennis courts are centrally located in Brodick and after falling into disrepair were used latterly by a commercial dog training business. We undertand that many years ago there were 6 courts on site. These were eventually landscaped and the remaining three blaes courts gradually deteriorated until they were unplayable. The site is accessed by footpaths leading to and from the main park. Court area is estimated to be around 1570 m2.

There is an adjacent portacabin which does not form part of this study but could be used for equipment rental and refreshments if it were taken on by a separate operator.

Nearby the golf club have also offered to help with equipment storage and rental.

Location



Site Plan



Site Access

The site can be approached from both the south passing the library or from the east via a path and grass area crossing a small stream.

There are existing gates into the tennis courts which would be replaced as part of the project.

Access paths and amenity lighting should be improved as part of the project.

Services

A detailed study has not been undertaken at this stage but existing services are understood to be available adjacent to the site.

It would also be prudent to carry out a check for services crossing the site as this could impact on the location of certain facilities or incur extra expense dealing with utilities during construction.



Trees

There are mature trees in the surrounding park but the main site area is clear and trees would be unaffected by the proposals.

Planning

The site is currently used for sport and so the resurfacing to reinstate tennis and possible inclusion of other sports like padel is unlikely to cause issues. Floodlighting is proposed and this would be the subject of a planning application. Modern LED lighting is very directional with low spillage and so would be far enough from neighbours to not cause any light issue.

Some Councils impose a 10pm curfew on the use of lights and this would not impact on use of the courts. The surrounding area is largely residential with neighbours at sufficient distance to not be impacted by tennis or padel activity.

We recommend that the community are fully consulted at each stage of the project so they feel part of the project plan and support any planning application.

Bringing back tennis and adding other sports should cause minimal disruption to neighbours and there is adequate parking close to Brodick Hall and in the surrounding area.



Community Consultation

A community survey was undertaken to look at past and future use of the tennis court site. Whilst a number of other uses including commercial dog training were mentioned the overwhelming majority confirmed their interest in playing tennis on refurbished courts.

A total of 561 responses were received and of these 381 or 68% confirmed they would be interested in playing tennis.

A large proportion of respondents had also used the court in the past either regularly, seasonally or annually.

Most surveys in favour of tennis came from permanent residents who confirmed their interest in tennis.

Additional facilities would also encourage greater use including access to toilets or changing places. Floodlights were mentioned in 211 responses.

In many of the comments submitted with the survey people mentioned online booking as a key requirement and some also requested padel and / or pickleball to be included.

There was a good cross section of responses from residents and visitors, both sexes and a range of ages including families with children.

The survey has helped to inform this report and recommendations and can be used to demonstrate community engagement and consultation to funding bodies.



Project Layouts

This report considers budget costs for a like for like replacement of three tennis courts with the addition of floodlights and smartgate. A second scheme for a multi rackets facility is also considered comprising two floodlit all weather tennis courts with the third court area used to add padel and mini tennis. With a slight increase in space this could be extended to incorporate the fast growing sport of pickleball.

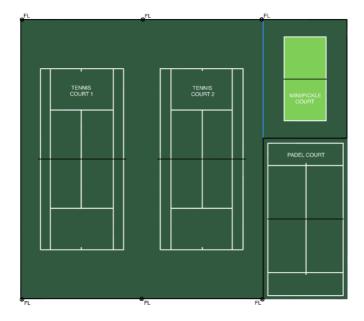
Option 1

- o Reinstate three all-weather tennis courts with no changes to layout or sports.
- No drawing required at this stage

Option 2

- Reinstate two all-weather tennis courts and add padel and mini tennis.
 - o with some modification Option 2 could be extended to include pickleball.
 - A multi racket option with wider appeal and potential for higher revenue to make the facility sustainable

The schematic below is a representation of what could be achieved in the site including the main elements to reinstate tennis, add the new and fast growing sport of padel and to create a mini tennis or pickleball area so that the site can be used by people of all ages and abilities.



Scale 1:200 @ A3



Capital Budget

ASC approached a specialist contractor, Sportex Group who provided a budget quote in February 2024 (see Appendix 2). Sportex Group are the lead contractor for projects in Scotland funded through the LTA Park Renovation Fund and had been asked to survey and price the work as part of that funded programme.

Budgets outlined below are given as a guide only and could be subject to significant change depending on the impact of wider issues affecting UK and worldwide markets. Construction is currently under cost and supply chain pressures and updated quotes will be required as the project progresses.

Park Renovation Fund - Budget Cost

| Contractor | Budget Cost |
|---------------|-------------|
| Sportex Group | £147k |

All budget costs are exclusive of VAT

This budget reflects the **minimum** work that the LTA considered necessary to form three all weather tennis courts on the existing footprint. There are a number of items of work that would need to be considered to fully complete the site. For example

- A smartgate system to manage access and light controls.
- Floodlights
- Access paths and landscaping
- Amenity lighting in the wider park for safe access and egress
- Any other works for additional sports like padel or a MUGA

In addition allowance should be made for fees and contingencies and the sums below are in line with the recommendations of the LTA and **sport**scotland for funding purposes.

Professional fees 5%-8% of costs

Contingencies 10%

KA Leisure will be VAT registered but may not get full recovery of VAT costs. Some consideration should be given to the most efficient procurement route and whether the Council could manage the project on behalf of the Trust and secure recovery of VAT.



Option 1 – Reinstate Three Tennis Courts adding Lights and Smartgate

| Budget Cost – core works | 147,000 |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Smartgate | 10,000 |
| LED floodlights | 30,000 |
| Paths and landscape | 15,000 PROV |
| Amenity lighting | 10,000 PROV |
| TOTAL | 212,000 |
| VAT @ 20% | 42,400 |
| Fees @ 8 % | 17,000 |
| Contingencies 10% | 21,200 |
| BUDGET | £292,600 |

Option 2 – Floodlit tennis plus padel and mini tennis with Smartgate

| Budget Cost – core works | 147,000 based on 3 tennis courts |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Smartgate | 10,000 |
| LED floodlights | 30,000 |
| Padel and mini tennis / pickleball | 50,000 extra over to add in lieu of 1 tennis |
| Paths and landscape | 15,000 PROV |
| Amenity lighting | 10,000 PROV |
| TOTAL | 262,000 |
| VAT @ 20% | 52,400 |
| Fees @ 8 % | 21,000 |
| Contingencies 10% | 26,200 |
| BUDGET | £361,600 |

It is likely that if all elements of the scheme as outlined in this study were to be delivered the total budget could be £361,600 including VAT, fees and contingencies.

The simplified plan involving floodlit tennis only but including smartgate, lights and improvements to the surrounding area reduces the budget by around £69,000.

As the project proceeds the work would need to be competitively tendered to a minimum of three specialist contractors (normally members of SAPCA the Sports and Play Construction Association) to ensure best value for money and to satisfy external funding rules.

Potential Funders

External Grant Funding

There is significant pressure on grant funding and funds are often targeted at areas with economic or social problems. There are no guarantees of funding and so it is important to highlight the strengths and potential of the project and demonstrate the positive impact that external funding can have for the wider community.

There may be local funds available to KAL and in particular discussions should take place with North Ayrshire Council for specific funds appropriate to the development of a range of community sport facilities.

There may be other specific funds that are available for individual elements of the park with some examples given below:

LTA Quick Access Loans and Park Renovation Fund

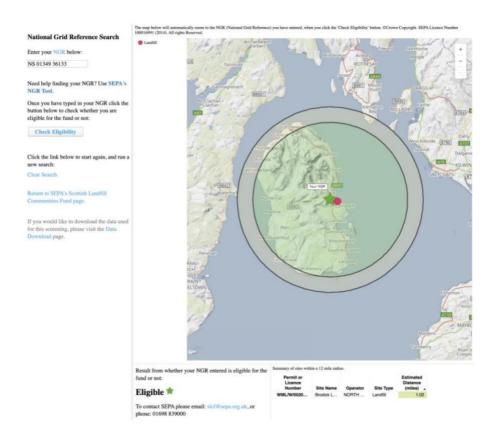
The LTA no longer offer grant funding to clubs but currently have a funded programme for Park Renovation. It is understood that an offer of limited funding was available but this might not cover all works that are required. The LTA also impose funding conditions that may not be acceptable to the applicant. This fund is available for a limited time.

The LTA have a long-term Quick Access Loan programme so financial support could also be available in the form of a loan. Typically these are interest free, up to £250k is available with a quicker process for smaller loans up to £50k. There could be fees associated with securing a loan. Many applicants access loan funding as a way of making up any budget shortfall and this could be considered once other funding had been confirmed.



Scottish Landfill Communities Fund

This is a Scottish Government scheme which allows landfill companies to offset tax liabilities by creating a community fund that is used to mitigate the effects of landfill operations. A simple eligibility check has been done to show that the site location is eligible to apply to any of the 11 approved bodies that are currently offering funding.



Each approved body has their own criteria and award levels but they have supported sport and environmental projects for communities around Scotland and many elements being considered for the site would be eligible.

Further details of the funds can be found here. Typically KA Leisure could apply under Object C of the scheme "To provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity."

Awards vary between approved bodies but typically range from around £5k to £50k. Different elements of the project can be funded by different awarding bodies.

sportscotland Sport Facility Fund

This fund is currently accepting applications twice a year (1 April and 1 September). The fund is normally heavily oversubscribed, and the application process is quite demanding. Grants of a maximum of £100k are available but in practice typical awards may be up to £50-70k.

Recently **sport**scotland have required projects including tennis to also receive an element of LTA funding either from the Park Renovation fund or in the form of a loan. This reduces the burden on the **sport**scotland fund and also demonstrates governing body support for the project.

sportscotland have funded many tennis projects (new or improved facilities but not for repairs or maintenance) and a limited number of padel facilities.

The **sport**scotland application involves an extensive process with detailed supporting documentation and a key requirement is to show community engagement, impact of funding and inclusion of underrepresented groups and particularly offer activity in areas of higher deprivation who may be unable to access sport on a regular basis.

Local Funders

Alternative funds like wind farms can be investigated and there may be local businesses who are willing to provide financial or in-kind support.



Funding Timescale and Focus

Typically grant applications take around 3-6 months to reach a conclusion. Applicants then have 6 to 12 months to complete projects and spend grant monies.

Some funds eg **sport**scotland, have set application dates as do some of the Landfill bodies. Other funds are more flexible being open to applications at any stage so careful consideration needs to be given to the sequence and timing of applications.

Advantage can support KA Leisure with actions and timescales and then work through the funding applications required for each project.

A key funding source, with either cash or in-kind support, could be the Council. They currently own the site and KAL should explore all types of support available to them from North Ayrshire Council. The Council could also procure the contract and recover all of the VAT before KAL take over operation of the completed site.

On the basis of a budget of c. £310k ex VAT then the club could target the following funds :

| sport scotland | £70k - 100k |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Landfill Funder 1 | £25k |
| Landfill Funder 2 | £15k |
| Trust Funds | £50k |
| LTA loan funding | £50k |
| Local fund / North Ayrshire Council | Shortfall funders £70k+ |

While funding from these sources is not guaranteed experience on previous projects would suggest this is a realistic outline at this stage. Council support in terms of funding and VAT recovery could be significant in realising the overall budget required.

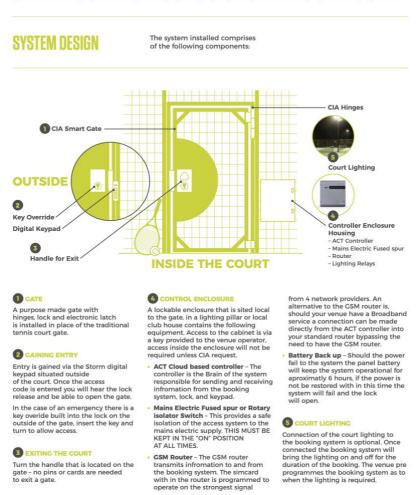
Operating Model

The main requirements for KA Leisure and the Council are to fund and manage the construction of the facility. Longer term they will need to maintain the facility and create a sinking fund to allow for future repair and replacement of the courts.

The operating model proposed would be for an automated remote access system to manage both member access and offer pay and play. This manages online bookings and payment through proprietary software linked to a specialist smartgate. The booking will generate a one-time pin code which unlocks the gate at booking time. The gate controller hardware can also activate the floodlights when there is a booking and turn off the lights at the end of the booking period.

This system requires no staff on site and has low running costs.

GATE BOOKING ACCESS SYSTEM USER GUIDE



Typically the gate contract is around £800 per annum to cover maintenance and 3G/4G wi-fi data costs. There is a small transaction fee of c. 3% for bookings made through the platform. This system is widely used in the UK and has been tried and tested by the LTA and is considered a good solution to manage the new facility at a low cost while allowing access to the local community and vsiitors.

The site can register with Tennis Scotland / LTA and benefit from their support on operational activities and secure extensive liability insurance as an affiliation benefit.

Revenue would be generated from pay and play tennis bookings and more particularly from padel. This fast-growing sport is not available anywhere else in North Ayrshire and should prove a popular new activity generating income to support the whole facility.

The operating model should be considered in more detail in a subsequent study which is beyond the scope and remit of this initial feasibility study.

Timeline

Timescales will be determined by the speed at which a detailed project plan can be prepared and subsequent progress based on the availability of funding and securing planning permission.

Provisional dates, subject to funding, would be to start work on site on the project in early Spring 2025 with a view to being complete and operating from Summer 2025.

Venue Management

KA Leisure

An operational plan will be required for most funders. KA Leisure will need to consider day to day running of the facility. This will be managed primarily through the smart access system with regular checks made on the surface, litter picking and maintenance.

Specialist maintenance will be required annually but this can be dealt with through periodic visits from a contractor.

A sinking fund will also be required to satisfy funding conditions and this will ensure the long term maintenance and replacement of surfaces to keep the courts in a good condition.

As part of the operational plan annual budgets should be set to include the sinking fund and a business plan prepared to project revenues from racket sports.

Community and Coaching Team

An important factor in the long term success of the site will be engagement with local players and provision of a simple coaching programme and regular activation events. This will also be requested by funders to show the impact of the project and their investment.

Creating a rackets community in Brodick that is welcoming and inclusive will contribute to the growth of tennis and padel.

Tennis Scotland have delivered coaching courses for leaders and teachers and this is something that could be developed further. There are already a number of trained individuals locally who may be willing or interested in getting involved in the delivery of school and community programmes.

There is also scope for a community club to be set up at the site and this could be a longer term aim as interest in tennis and padel grows.



Key Benefits to local community and wider economic benefits

The **sport**scotland research report *The Economic Importance of Sport in Scotland 1998-2016* concludes :

"The results of this study demonstrate the importance of sport to the Scottish economy. This report confirms that sport generates significant consumer expenditure, GVA and employment for Scotland"

Sport England commissioned research by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University to calculate the social impact and the economic importance of sport and physical activity in England. They found that, when measured against costs of engagement and providing opportunities, for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, a return on investment (ROI) of £3.91 was created for individuals and society.



The upgraded facility could generate revenues in and around Brodick. Depending on the business and operating model there could also be a direct employment benefit with new jobs created in the operational phase. Contractors are likely to be based in Scotland so project expenditure supports the wider economy and local employers.

There are clear secondary benefits created by improved recreation facilities and the tourist industry would benefit from this and may provide support for the project.

Health Benefits

The Hallam findings also demonstrate how physical activity plays an important role in preventing several serious physical and mental health conditions, with the research showing this had a value of £9.5bn across England.

Various studies have shown that sport and physical activity helps mental and physical health including :

- Improved Mood
 - o Research shows people feel more awake, calmer and more content
- Reduced Stress
 - Regular exercise alleviates stress
- Increased Self-esteem
 - o Improved self-esteem helps coping with stress and improves relationships
- Depression and Anxiety
 - Preventing onset and managing symptoms

The Brodick facilities will allow access to enjoyable outdoor physical activities with all the potential benefits outlined above.

There is scope for significant use of the new facility by children as part of school groups or with family and friends.

Tennis and padel appeal to all ages and abilities and there is the potential to create a multigenerational facility.



Conclusions

There is an exciting opportunity to regenerate a redundant community facility and reinstate the tennis facilities whilst also introducing the new and fast-growing sport of padel.

The project would help to re-invigorate this part of the park and bring tennis back for locals, tourists and children as well as add new racket sports like padel or pickleball.

From a construction perspective the project is straightforward and can be managed by KA Leisure and the Council with support from specialist consultants.

The main challenge to the project is funding and whilst this study has identified potential funders further work is now required to investigate these options, add local funds and to gain support from North Ayrshire Council.

The completed facility would widen opportunities to take part in sport and offer a community facility that would be open to everyone and appeal to people of all ages and abilities.

Acknowledgements

Advantage Sports Consultancy would like to acknowledge the support and advice received from KA Leisure, Active Schools, Councillor Billings and members of the local community.



Appendix 1 - Site Photos – Court Area



Appendix 2 – Additional Photos – Access Routes



Appendix 3 – Sportex Outline Specification and Budget

| <u>6254</u> | | | | | SPORTEX |
|-------------|---|----------|-------|----------|------------|
| | - Bill Of Quantities | | | | <u> </u> |
| | ype : Gross | | | | |
| | ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,, | | | | |
| | | Feb-24 | | | |
| | | | 10024 | | |
| Item | Description | Quantity | Unit | Rate (£) | Total (£) |
| | North ayrshire council | | | | |
| | Brodick tennis courts | | | | |
| | Existing bank of 3 courts in blaes | | | | |
| | Site Prelims, Set up and Transport | 1.00 | item | | 7,430.00 |
| | | | | | |
| | <u>Downtakings</u> | | | | |
| 1 | Remove 50mm depth existing Red Blaes dressing, dispose of site. | 1,572.00 | m² | 3.99 | 6,272.28 |
| 2 | Break out and dispose off site existing net post sockets and associated insitu concrete foundations. | 3 | Item | 209.90 | 629.70 |
| 3 | Treatment of mairs tail weed growth | 1 | Item | 510.53 | 510.53 |
| | <u>Civil's</u> | | | | |
| 4 | Grade and compact formation to slopes and falls | 1,572.00 | m² | 2.50 | 3,930.00 |
| 5 | Supply & installation of geotextile membrane | 1,572.00 | m² | 1.64 | 2,578.08 |
| 6 | Supply & installation of 150mm depth aggregate sub- base Type 3 805 | 1,572.00 | m² | 16.27 | 25,576.44 |
| 7 | Supply and installation of new precast concrete kerbs 150mm x 50mm with associated insitu concrete bed and haunching | 160 | m | 35.61 | 5,697.60 |
| | | | | | |
| | Surfacing | | | | |
| 8 | Supply & installation of 40mm consolidated depth of 10mm porous asphalt binder course | 1,572.00 | m² | 27.37 | 43,025.64 |
| 8 | Supply & installation of 25mm consolidated depth of 6mm asphalt surface course | 1,572.00 | m² | 22.14 | 34,804.08 |
| 9 | Supply & and application of two tone colour coating slip resistance of 60 wet or dry | 1,572.00 | m² | 4.48 | 7,042.56 |
| 10 | Setout and paint Tennis lines | 3 | Item | 490.29 | 1,470.87 |
| | <u>Fence</u> | | | _ | |
| 11 | Inspection and tightening / replacement of existing line wires on chainlink fence surround | 160 | m | 15.62 | 2,499.20 |
| 12 | Supply and install double leaf gate | 1 | Item | 2,107.06 | 2,107.06 |
| | <u>Equipment</u> | | | | |
| 13 | Supply and install new set of sockets including insitu concrete foundations, centre net anchor, net posts, nets and centre band | 3 | Item | 1,071.21 | 3,213.63 |
| | | | | | 146,787.67 |