



## A GROUP CREATED TO MANAGE OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED PADEL TENNIS CONSTRUCTION COMPLEX ON THE CATOR ESTATE.

21<sup>st</sup> May 2025

Today Martin Carr and Adrian Challinor attended a meeting host by our local councillors.

Present were:

Mariam Lolovar	RBG Councillor (Host)
Leo Fletcher	RBG Councillor
Adrian & Martin	PCAG
Tony Bugg & David Thomson	BCER
Tim Price	Savills

Absent:

Christine St Matthew Daniel	RBG Councillor (prior engagement)
Keir Goldstein	Cancelled at last minute

The first part of the meeting was for PCAG to introduce ourselves to the local councillors. We explained that PCAG is managed by five people but represents approximately 450 people on the Cator Estate. We discussed with the councillors the total lack of community engagement from V.Fund and Savills – they expressed that this was wrong for a development of this size. Mariam stated that given the size of the proposed construction this should not have been submitted this way, and she expected that it should be treated as a Major Construction.

We agreed that we would be calm, constructive and above all polite with Savills.

When Tim Price joined us, we briefly went through with them some of the key objections we have raised:

1. It does not meet the standards for the Greenwich Plan, London Plan or National Planning Policy Framework
2. Given the large size of the covered area, which by all metrics is to be treated as a permanent structure, this is contrary to MOL policy
3. The proposal contravenes conservation area policies
4. The proposal is incompatible with the local Grade II listed properties
5. There will be excessive noise which has been poorly modelled
6. There will be a dramatic increase in traffic
7. There will be a serious parking issue that has not been addressed
8. The noise report is not acceptable:
  - It does not follow standard modelling
  - It uses lawn tennis as the base point, not padel

We repeated to Tim the size and determination of the members of PCAG. He was somewhat taken aback by the determination, resolve and support that had been shown. This was further emphasised when we stated that we had a fund to fight the proposal in the courts and have advice from legal professionals.

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BCER had reviewed the covenants and no permission for construction vehicles has been agreed. In terms of vehicle movements, BCER's initial estimate is that there could be around of 50 cars trying to park at the site which is far in excess of the 17 planned spaces (that includes provision for staff). BCER will not allow parking on estate roads for commercial operations..

As a group, including the councillors, we expressed our dissatisfaction with the fact that there had been zero community liaison. Tim admitted this was a mistake. V.Fund had, mistakenly, believed that because the site was previously a tennis club and there had been broad agreement for its use as a bowls club, that its use for Padel would be acceptable. When it was pointed out the fact that an enclosed building for 8 padel courts was very different to an open bowls club he did agree that he would not wish this plan at the end of his garden. He said that the proposal hadn't started at this scale but had grown once Padium became involved and he understood that this was of concern to the residents.

We then explained that both PCAG and BCER are doing traffic reports and are co-ordinating our joint response.

We discussed and lamented that fact that V.Fund has engaged YourShout/Thornccliffe to do market research, but only after the official closing date for comments had passed. He claims this was purely V.Fund, but we stated that, given other cases where Savills have worked closely with Thornccliffe, this may not be strictly accurate. He did not deny a statement that V.Fund were advised by Savills and that this is where the contact had arisen.

We did stress, repeatedly, that the local community is not against the development of the land for the appropriate use. If V.Fund were to, somewhat belatedly, seek to engage with residents of the Cator Estate, they would find broad support for using the land for Bowls, or if this was not possible, as a tennis court. However, we did stress that minor tweaks to the padel court proposal would not be accepted by the community and would be vigorously resisted.

Tim stated that the planning applications for the land swap with the Bowls club on Brooklands Park and the construction of four town houses on that site are still under active consideration and are being discussed with RBG Planning Department. He did say that they had met with RBG Planning last week and that the planning department had a number of concerns but did not elude as to what these are.

He agreed that the noise report was unsatisfactory and would be revised.

He said that V.Fund/Savills were taking stock of the weight of opinion that is against their proposal. They are considering their options. These included amending the proposal or its total withdrawal.



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Throughout this discussion, the councillors were supportive of PCAG and BCER. We have their support, though until the RBG Planning Dept decides there is little of practical value they can do.

### Next Steps:

- **Tim/Savills to relay the discussion to the developer**

A key point to highlight is that residents are not against the development of the site, but the approach has eroded trust and a reset/change in approach is needed. This includes meaningful engagement, and if the developer is committed to pursuing the Padel application, this would include addressing concerns residents have raised.

Some of the points/concerns raised are included below:

- Opening hours
  - Scale of build and the canopy
  - Concerns about the enclosure of MOL
  - Concerns about noise (and noise report)
  - Loss of trees and enough tree/planting screening for the site
  - Low PTAL score, and concerns about traffic and parking, i.e. high reliance on driving to access and influx of drivers to the area and limited onsite parking
- **Savills/VFund to come back to the group regarding next steps and arrange a meeting**
    - Potential change in course, i.e. could this be an amendment or a withdrawal and resubmission? Or is there still an opportunity with the Bowls club app?
    - Tim/Savills & Kier/VFund/Developer to come back to the group with their thinking. Ideally, if sharing more detailed plans, we are suggesting over email in advance of a meeting in person.
  - **Public engagement**
    - Depending on the next steps, this could vary, but either way, we are suggesting that the developer engage in meaningful engagement, and we do feel there is value to a public meeting with residents. Mariam from RBG said that they would happily provide the room at the council offices in 2 weeks if Vfund or Savills would like to meet to discuss their proposals before submitting to planning to avoid a repeat of what has just happened.
  - **Bowls club application.**
    - Mariam & Leo to check in with officers regarding the Bowls housing application.