

	Cabinet 9 February 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
	Lead Member - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property (Councillor Teo Benea)
Approval for the Disposal of Council-Owned Commercial Properties	

Wards Affected:	Preston, Kingsbury, and Northwick Park
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Part Exempt: Appendix 1 is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: “Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
List of Appendices:	Two Appendix 1: Valuations (Exempt) Appendix 2: Site plans
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Denish Patel, Head of Property 020 8937 2529 Denish.Patel@brent.gov.uk Tanveer Ghani, Director Property and Assets 020 8937 1722 Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to dispose of three surplus General Fund property interests. The proposed disposals are necessary to reduce financial pressures, mitigate increasing asset liabilities, and support strategic priorities outlined in the Council's Property Strategy 2024–27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 1.2 The properties proposed for disposal are as follows (see Appendix 2 for site plans):

- 176 Preston Road (Lincoln Parade), Wembley HA9 8UA – Vacant single-storey retail unit (Preston Ward).
- Grove Park Pavilion, Grove Park NW9 0JP – Vacant two-storey building formerly used as a nursery (Kingsbury Ward).
- Freehold interest at 280 Watford Road, Northwick Park HA1 3TZ (golf course) – site is subject to a long lease; opportunity to realise capital value of the reversionary interest (Northwick Park Ward).

1.3 Subject to Cabinet approval, the disposals will be conducted through open and competitive marketing. Sale structures will be decided in consultation with appointed agents and may include:

- Freehold sale (a one-off capital receipt), or
- Long-leasehold disposal (premium plus ongoing ground/base rent).
- Consideration will be given, as part of the disposal structure, to the inclusion of overage (clawback) provisions linked to any future change of use or uplift in value, where appropriate.

1.4 All capital receipts will be retained within the General Fund and used in accordance with the MTFS and treasury management principles. Disposal generates cashable savings compared to the “retain” option by:

- Removing ongoing revenue costs (security, insurance, compliance, void rates)
- Reducing future capital liabilities; and
- Allowing capital receipts to be used to reduce borrowing, lowering interest costs and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) obligations.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the relevant Lead Member, to:

2.1.1 Determine the most suitable disposal strategy for each property listed in this report, including the method of sale, timing, marketing approach, and disposal structure, taking account of the Council’s Property Strategy, market conditions, and the goal of achieving the best consideration.

2.1.2 Agree on the final terms of each disposal, ensuring compliance with the Council’s statutory obligation to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable, and that the terms serve the Council’s overall financial and strategic interests.

- 2.1.3 Enter into and finalise all necessary legal agreements, contracts, and ancillary documentation required to give effect to the disposals.
- 2.2 To note that the net capital receipts, after deducting disposal and associated costs, will be retained within the General Fund and used in accordance with the Council's MTFS and Capital Programme, as outlined in the Financial Implications section of this report.
- 2.3 Where the land to be disposed of constitutes, or forms part of, public open space, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration to publish notices in a local newspaper for two consecutive weeks in accordance with section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and to consider any objections received prior to a final decision being made.

3.0 Detail

Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 This paper sets out a programme of property disposals that will release underused or non-viable Council assets, while supporting the delivery of our wider financial and sustainability goals. These sites, which are vacant, costly to maintain, or no longer aligned with service needs, represent an opportunity to make the best use of public resources and reinvest in the priorities that matter most to our residents.
- 3.2 By disposing of surplus assets, we can reduce ongoing costs and liabilities, generate income, and create new investment opportunities. This approach ensures that every Council asset contributes to the Borough's long-term wellbeing and financial resilience.
- 3.3 The disposal proposal also reflects commitment to sustainability: disposing of obsolete, energy-inefficient buildings reduces the Council's carbon footprint and enables new, modern development that can meet higher environmental standards through the planning process.
- 3.4 The programme directly supports the Brent Borough Plan (2023–27) and Property Strategy priorities:
- **A Cleaner, Greener Future:** reducing operational carbon emissions by releasing inefficient assets and supporting the delivery of sustainable redevelopment.
 - **A Prosperous, Inclusive Brent:** using capital receipts to reinvest in housing, regeneration, and local economic opportunity.
 - **Thriving Communities:** ensuring land and assets are used effectively to support community wellbeing and future growth.

- **A Responsible, Resilient Council:** managing our resources prudently, maximising value for money, and protecting essential services for residents.

4.0 Background

4.1 176 Preston Road, HA9 8UA

- 4.1.1 176 Preston Road, Wembley HA9 8AU (formerly 3-7 Lincoln Parade) is a vacant single-storey retail unit, forming the end of a commercial terrace on Preston Road, with a rear car park.
- 4.1.2 There is no current or future requirement for this property. It has been vacant for several years and previously supported short-term “meanwhile” uses that were unsustainable due to the building’s declining condition. No statutory or commissioned services rely on the site.
- 4.1.3 A structural inspection undertaken in February 2024 identified ongoing condition-related issues that would require significant capital investment before the building could be returned to operational or lettable use. Initial advice indicates that a full roof replacement is likely to be required, with estimated costs in excess of £100,000, excluding wider structural, internal and compliance-related works. When these are taken together, the overall capital exposure is likely to be several hundred thousand pounds.
- 4.1.4 In addition to the capital repair liability, the Council continues to incur annual holding and security costs of approximately £5,000–£7,000 while the property remains vacant. Although it could be argued that capital investment might be recovered over time through rental income, this would rely on a number of assumptions, including timely reletting, sustained demand and no further unplanned costs. For the Council, pursuing this approach would require committing scarce capital and management resource to a non-operational asset with uncertain outcomes and extended payback periods.
- 4.1.5 The site’s layout and relationship with surrounding land means that continued Council ownership would require further investment and ongoing management input to support any future use. Retention would therefore perpetuate holding costs and financial exposure. Disposal enables the Council to release capital value and allows the site’s longer-term potential to be explored through the market.
- 4.1.6 The site layout and its connection to neighbouring land reduce its suitability for Council operational use and limit opportunities for cost-effective re-letting without substantial investment or lengthy tenant rent free periods. Keeping the site would therefore increase ongoing holding costs; while selling it would release capital value and allow the market to unlock the site’s longer-term potential.
- 4.1.7 Disposal on the open market is therefore considered the most economically and strategically appropriate option, as it removes ongoing liabilities, generates a

capital receipt, and aligns with the *Dispose* theme of the Council's Property Strategy 2024–27 for non-operational assets. The estimated market value is set out in Confidential Appendix 1.

4.2 Grove Park Pavilion, NW9 0JP

- 4.2.1 There is no current or foreseeable requirement for this property. The asset, which previously served as a nursery and community centre, has been vacant for an extended period and is secured by a live-in guardian arrangement. An adjoining self-contained residential flat, occupied by a warden formerly engaged through the Parks Service, is part of the overall property (part first floor) and is excluded from the disposal. This residential occupation further limits potential for redevelopment. The site is designated open space, as a local policy designation.
- 4.2.2 The two-storey pavilion (approximately 400m²) would need significant capital investment to be operational or suitable for letting. Although £500,000 of SCIL funding was previously allocated for refurbishment and approved by Cabinet, inflation in construction costs since then suggests the investment will be higher. Considering current budget constraints and broader estate rationalisation goals, allocating additional Council capital to this asset would not be an efficient use of resources. Therefore, further Council investment is not advisable.
- 4.2.3 The property is surplus to operational needs and fits within the '*Dispose*' category of the Council's Property Strategy, which targets vacant, high-liability, low-benefit assets with ongoing hold costs (e.g., in this case c.£5,000-£7,000 per annum) for rationalisation. Disposal through the open market is therefore advised, subject to statutory open space procedures. The adjoining residential flat will be excluded from the disposal boundary, with its future use to be managed separately. The previously allocated SCIL funding should be returned or reallocated in accordance with funding conditions.
- 4.2.4 A building survey undertaken in June 2023 identified an estimated £363,000 of minimum repair and refurbishment works required to return the building to operational use. Given construction cost inflation since that assessment, together with the need for fit-out and compliance works, the overall capital requirement is now likely to exceed the previously approved £500,000 SCIL allocation. Even if such investment were made, the site's location within a public park would limit the scope of Council-led uses and require ongoing management input. Retention would therefore expose the Council to continued tenant, void, lifecycle maintenance and management risk, with uncertain financial and social returns.
- 4.2.5 When considered on a risk-adjusted basis, further Council investment in this non-operational asset cannot be justified, and disposal represents the most appropriate option, subject to statutory open space procedures. The estimated market value is set out in Confidential Appendix 1.

4.3 280 Watford Road, Northwick Park HA1 3TZ – Freehold Interest

- 4.3.1 The Council owns the freehold reversion to the Northwick Park Golf Course. Playgolf (Northwick Park) Limited occupies the site under a 99-year full repairing and insuring (FRI) lease from 7 November 2005 to 6 November 2104. The demised premises include the golf course, driving range, and a two-storey building of approximately 2,600 m². The permitted use is for golf and driving-range activities, with controlled rights to underlet retail units.
- 4.3.2 Under the terms of the lease, the Council receives a combination of base rent, turnover-linked rent (above thresholds set out in the lease) and income from permitted underletting. Rent reviews are linked to inflation and, in certain circumstances, can provide scope for rental growth over time. In favourable market conditions, this structure has the potential to support a stronger long-term income stream, subject to the lease remaining secure and the operator continuing to trade successfully. However, the extent and timing of any future growth are inherently uncertain and dependent on market conditions and operator performance over a very long-term horizon.
- 4.3.3 Although retention of the freehold provides access to future rental growth, this income is spread over the next 80 years, and its real value is sensitive to business performance, macroeconomic conditions, and the longevity of golf-related activity at the site. The Council has no control over operational decisions, investment levels, or market shifts that may impact long-term viability.
- 4.3.4 Disposing the freehold would:
- Capitalise the entire income stream upfront.
 - Remove long-term exposure to sectoral or tenant risk.
 - Simplify the Council's asset base by disposing of a non-operational, non-strategic freehold; and
 - Align with the *Dispose* theme of the Council's Property Strategy 2024–27, which identifies assets generating limited strategic or social value and carrying long-term uncertainties as appropriate for disposal.
- 4.3.5 The freehold interest is not essential for service delivery and provides limited strategic influence for the Council. Disposal is recommended based on value optimisation rather than reducing liabilities, recognising the trade-off between future rental growth and the certainty of an immediate capital receipt. Disposing the freehold offers a guaranteed, immediate capital receipt, reduces financial exposure to the leisure/golf market, and aligns with the Council's MTFS amid significant revenue and capital pressures.
- 4.3.6 The land subject to the proposed freehold disposal inherits established public rights of way. These are statutory highways, and the proposed disposal of the freehold will not of itself affect their current status or availability. The freehold will be disposed of subject to all existing public rights of way.
- 4.3.7 On balance, disposal through the open market is advised considering the Council's priorities, subject to statutory open space procedures. The estimated market value is set out in Confidential Appendix 1.

4.4 Option(s) Appraisal

- 4.4.1 A range of strategic approaches has been evaluated, considering service alignment, financial performance, deliverability, and risk. The properties are non-operational (or non-strategic), incur ongoing holding costs, and have no identified service requirement.

Option 1: Do Nothing - Not Recommended

- 4.4.2 Regarding vacant properties, retention would continue revenue leakage through security, insurance, and compliance costs, while exposing the Council to further deterioration and loss of capital value. This option does not fulfil Best Value requirements or support the MTFS.
- 4.4.3 In respect of Northwick Park (Playgolf), if the Council retained the freehold, the site would revert to the Council at the expiry of the lease (in approximately 80 years), at which point the Council would regain full ownership and control of the land, subject to the planning framework in place at that time.

Option 2: Invest or Redevelop (Refurbishment, Redesign, Planning, or Council-led Development) – Not Recommended

- 4.4.4 Restoring the assets to operational use or redevelopment would entail significant capital expenditure, with limited strategic benefit or assured financial return. Reconfiguration, redesign, or seeking new planning permissions would cause delays and increase risks without enhancing viability. Overall, these options offer poor value for money and prolong financial exposure.

Option 3: Disposal (Freehold or Long-Leasehold) - Recommended

- 4.4.5 Disposing of the freehold or long-leasehold would unlock capital value and eliminate ongoing liabilities. Freehold disposal is the preferred approach as it provides the greatest financial certainty and aligns directly with the Property Strategy and MTFS. However, long-leasehold disposal will also be considered for the vacant properties owned outright by the Council, particularly for Grove Park Pavilion which combines both commercial and residential uses.
- 4.4.6 Given current budget pressures, the need to generate capital receipts, and the absence of identified service requirements, priority must be given to options that provide financial certainty. Retaining the properties would also risk further deterioration and erosion of capital value, reducing the level of receipt achievable in future years. For these reasons, disposal represents the most prudent and Best Value option.
- 4.4.7 Following an appraisal of the plausible options, freehold disposal remains the preferred option for the properties. It provides the most deliverable, lowest-risk, and highest-value outcome, guarantees compliance with Best Value duties, and releases capital for reinvestment into Council priorities. Competitive marketing, via private treaty, auction, or sealed bids, will be used to secure the

best consideration, with protections such as overage considered where appropriate.

4.5 Proposed Timescales (subject to Council procedures)

Milestone	Start	Finish
Cabinet Approval	9 Feb 2026	9 Feb 2026
Publish required notices – Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, consider any objections and make final decision	Feb 2026	March 2026
Marketing	Mar 2026	May 2026
Completions	Jul 2026	Sep 2026

- 4.5.1 Given current market conditions and wider viability pressures in the development sector, disposals may take time to progress. Adopting a flexible approach, using auction, private treaty or tender as appropriate, will help manage risk and maximise competitiveness.

5.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 5.1 If any part of the land is public open space – such as at Grove Park Pavilion, the Council must publish notices for two consecutive weeks under Section 123(2A) and consider any comments received before making a final decision. Please refer to Section 7 for more details.
- 5.2 When a disposal involves land that is public open space, the Council will issue the necessary statutory notices under Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, or, if the land has been or is to be appropriated for planning purposes, under Section 233(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 5.3 The Northwick Park Golf Course forms part of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). MOL designation does not impose additional statutory consultation requirements for disposal (other than those stated in Section 7.) The Council's role as landlord is limited to the disposal of its freehold interest and does not predetermine or influence any future planning outcomes.
- 5.4 The Council's Property Strategy encourages engagement with service areas to identify long-term service needs at an early stage, before assets deteriorate and/or are constrained in a way that limits alternative use. The properties proposed for disposal are highly specific in nature and subject to complex constraints or long-term risks, with alternative uses having been considered and eliminated following appraisal.

6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 The Council's current financial position necessitates identifying additional funding sources and reduce reliance on borrowing. Increasing available capital receipts will enhance the Council's ability to finance capital investments and lower long-term revenue costs through reduced borrowing and associated interest and MRP charges.
- 6.2 The proposals in this report directly address a recommendation from external audit for the Council to identify surplus assets for disposal. This aims to generate capital receipts, support the capital programme, and reduce long-term borrowing commitments.
- 6.3 Indicative receipt ranges (subject to valuation and marketing) are shown in Appendix 1. Up-to-date independent market valuations or guides will be obtained prior to marketing to ensure that the Council secures the best consideration and maximises the capital receipts from disposal.
- 6.4 The costs of sale, including valuation, marketing, legal and survey fees, and agent commission (usually 1–2% of the sale price), will be paid from the capital receipt, subject to the statutory limit of 4% on allowable disposal costs. A one-off contingency of £15,000 per property has been included in the financial modelling.
- 6.5 The Finance and Property teams will ensure proper accounting treatment. Assets that are not in use will remain classified as surplus assets until there is a management commitment to sell them in their current condition, and a sale is considered highly probable within 12 months. At that point, they will be classified as Assets Held for Sale in accordance with the Council's accounting policies.

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 Grove Park Pavillion is public open space land. Open space is defined in section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990) as any land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground. Northwick Park Golf Course forms part of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). MOL is considered a type of open space within London as it falls within the definition of open space under section 336 of the TCPA 1990. It is predominantly undeveloped land, except for buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space. The London Plan explicitly recognises MOL as protected open space and supports its preservation and protection from developments that could adversely impact its openness.
- 7.2 Lincoln Parade is not public open space land but is held under the Council's books as general fund land. As with public open space and MOL, general fund land disposal must comply with legal requirements set out in paragraph 7.4 below.
- 7.3 Additionally, section 123(2B) of the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) specifies that if the Council disposes of land held under certain statutory trusts,

such as for public recreation or as open spaces under the Public Health Act 1875 or the Open Spaces Act 1906, the land will be freed from the trust upon disposal, provided the advertising and objection consideration requirements under section 123(2A) are met.

- 7.4 Under Section 123 of the LGA 1972, the Council has a statutory duty to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable when disposing of land. If a proposed disposal (whether the land is open space or otherwise) is considered to be at an undervalue it must comply with the LGA 1972: General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, which permits such disposals only where the undervalue does not exceed £2 million and where the disposal contributes to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental well-being of the area. Disposals falling outside these criteria would require specific consent from the Secretary of State. Any disposal at less than best consideration must also comply with UK subsidy control rules. This is because if publicly owned land is disposed of at less than best consideration, the Council will be providing a subsidy to the purchaser. Prior to any disposal of any land, the Council must exercise options for establishing market value using benchmarking and/or other standard valuation methodologies. To justify the price that the land has been sold for, it must be able to provide evidence showing that its decision to carry out the transaction was taken based on an economic evaluation comparable to that which a rational market economy operator would have considered.
- 7.5 Where the land to be disposed of constitutes or forms part of public open space, the Council must comply with Section 123(2A) of the LGA 1972. This includes MOL, as it falls within the definition of open space under section 336 of the TCPA 1990. This requires the publication of public notices in a local newspaper for two consecutive weeks, and the consideration of any objections received before a final decision is made.

Governance and Delegation

- 7.6 In accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 3, paragraph 11.3), Cabinet approval is required for disposals with a capital value exceeding £1 million. Cabinet may delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration to agree final terms and complete transactions, in consultation with the relevant Lead Member, subject to achieving the best consideration in line with Part 3, paragraph 11.6 of the Constitution.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 No equalities, diversity, or inclusion implications have been identified. All proposed assets for disposal are vacant and not used for any statutory or commissioned services, so no service users or protected groups will be displaced or adversely affected by their disposal. Based on current evidence, no mitigation actions are required.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 Disposing of these vacant and non-operational assets will decrease the Council's operational carbon footprint by eliminating associated energy use such as utilities, security, and maintenance, and by avoiding the embodied carbon that would result from extensive refurbishment or new construction on sites that are no longer suitable for Council-led delivery.
- 9.2 Future redevelopment or refurbishment of the properties will fall under the responsibility of the purchaser, with environmental performance and emissions managed through the planning and building control process, including compliance with EPC/MEES standards and broader sustainability policies.
- 9.3 Known environmental constraints, such as ground conditions, potential contamination, trees and ecology, drainage, and flood risk, will be disclosed to prospective purchasers. The Council will monitor compliance throughout the planning process but will not hold any ongoing environmental liabilities after completion.
- 9.4 Any open space considerations and known biodiversity features will be reflected in the marketing information and incorporated into purchaser obligations where appropriate.

10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 10.1 As set out in the main body of this report.

11.0 Communication Considerations

- 11.1 Ward Members and the relevant Lead Member will be briefed ahead of marketing. Secretary of State consent is not required for these disposals under the General Consents. Disposal opportunities will be publicised on the Council's website and promoted through appointed agents or auctioneers to ensure transparency and maximise market reach.

Report sign off:

Jehan Weerasinghe

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods &
Regeneration.