



Broomfield House Options

The options below have been examined by the Broomfield House Task Force in arriving at their proposals for the future of Broomfield House, and include options that have previously been explored by Enfield Borough Council and others since the house was first damaged by fire in 1984.

In arriving at costings, the assumption is that the house restorer is Broomfield Historic Buildings Trust, a charity entitled to rates relief and with access to charitable funding, soft loans, etc. All revenue is per annum.

The principal options are to do nothing, to demolish the structure, or to restore the building in some way.

Do nothing

Advantage: No capital costs

Disadvantage: This option has been explored for the last 21 years. The structure is an eyesore that deters visitors from coming to the historic park.

Revenue: **Cost A** – approx £40,000 per year for Repair & Maintenance and Health & Safety works; officer time (no rates or utility costs)

Capital: nil

Evaluation: Dismissed as unacceptable

Demolish

Advantage: would remove eyesore; attractive to a small group of people who believe that keeping old buildings is a waste of time and money

Disadvantages: Loss of heritage. National precedent would be set. A public enquiry would be needed. Costs of demolition and litigation could be applied to restoration of the building.

Comments: English Heritage would challenge

Revenue: **Cost A**

Capital: physical works – say £200,000; counsel costs, litigation expenditure, marketing / fact sheets – say a further £200,000

Evaluation: Dismissed as unacceptable

Restore

Three possibilities have been looked at: commercial/municipal use, full restoration, and staged restoration. These are explored below.

1 Commercial disposal or municipal use

(a) Commercial uses

Possibilities explored have included use by/as:

Music school – Royal Church School of Music finally relocated elsewhere

Chicken Shed Theatre – need for large extension on rear lawns considered unacceptable

Silver Collection of textiles (now at Middlesex University) – timing of second fire in 1994 prevented the deal proceeding

Hospice – exclusive extension and garden area precluded progress

Whitbread family restaurant – listed/planning consent obtained but dropped following branding change *

Bass family restaurant – dropped following adverse community reaction *

Conference centre – consultancy advice suggested house too small *

Hotel – house too small *

Destination restaurant – perceived as too elitist/exclusive prejudicial to community *

Headquarters of charity – British Nutrition Centre, Honorary Fellowship of Women Masons

* these uses required indemnity against covenant claims

There is strong and highly vocal local opposition to intensive commercial uses citing parking and noise nuisance, and park covenant prohibits commercialisation. A minimal modification of the covenants has been submitted to the Lands Tribunal to enable some commercial/residential use within the park.

(b) Municipal uses

Task Force mission is to seek self financing remedy for the house. Options for council re-use would rely on council investment, e.g. forward funding met by capital receipts from sites decanted to BH within limited council capital priorities budgetary constraints.

Examples of uses considered have been:

Library relocation from Palmers Green – house is too small and in wrong location for government public library standards for town centre locations.

Teacher training centre functions from council site that itself has covenants and metropolitan open land restraints against realisable development.

Task Force concept includes scope to use a room for wedding ceremonies but house is an inappropriate location for full registration services including births, deaths, etc.

Note: Council use of finished premises as meeting rooms and for municipal conferences will support revenue plan.

2 Full restoration

Full restoration of the house and Lanscroun mural in one step is possible, but long term viability must be assured. This cannot be achieved without intensive commercial use, since there is insufficient space in the house once DDA provisions have been made.

However, it is possible to ensure viability by building the proposed annex, which will also provide a much-needed facility in this part of the borough.

Advantages: fully meets all Task Force aspirations for vibrant fully accessible centre for all community activities

Disadvantages: raising the required capital will be more difficult than with Option 3 below.

Revenue: Costs approximately £250K

Capital: £4.5M (including annex and mural)

Evaluation: Not our preferred option

3 Staged restoration

Provided that each stage is viable in itself, restoring the building in this way offers a solution that will be easier to manage and that will bring more immediate benefits to park users.

It is important that the stages follow on without undue delay so that public interest in the project is maintained.

3.1 Stage One

3.1.1 House envelope only

Make house wind and watertight and landscape environs. This is the least expensive option for the first stage.

Advantages: Immediate and obvious improvement that will be beneficial to park as a whole. Improved access to house heritage leading to increased public use of park. Boost to public perception of progress – an aid to fundraising.

Disadvantages: Public access to the house will be very limited as at present. There will be no prospect of reducing liabilities. Increased security costs when house not in use.

Comments: This is the least attractive first stage.

Revenue: **Cost A** plus Security (say £20K); Repair & Maintenance to environs apart from parkland (say £5K). (Call total **Cost B** – £65K) Costs of added programmed and preventative maintenance will be offset by there being no R&M of scaffolding and associated H&S works.

Capital: Assuming no regular public access – less than £1.6M plus professional fees

Evaluation: This is a poor remedy – a ‘cosmetic’ solution

3.1.2 House envelope plus café

As in 3.1.1 above plus provision of café facility which the public wants and which engages them with the house – being able to ‘use’ the house and not just look at it. There are two possibilities for achieving this: provision of the whole café element or only part. In both cases the café would be run by a franchisee.

[Public Tours – We would provide a duckboarded and railed walkway in house to allow public access from main doors to view the core of the house from ground floor. Costs within option budget.]

(a) part café in house

Using kitchen (room G5A), servery (G6) and adjacent self service area of planned café element. Normally isolated from remainder of house in shell state, but with provision of emergency exit from kitchen into this area.

Advantages: Boost to public perception of progress and fundraising. Justifies provision of services into house. Positive impact on park.

Disadvantages: No franchisee investment – basic kitchen installation only. Trust / Council have to meet set-up costs for short term tenancy of café.

Comments: We would have to ensure that this did not compromise subsequent stages.

Revenue: Income from franchisee say £10K. **Cost B** applies (excludes share of rates, contribution to utilities, part security costs paid by franchisee).

Capital: A little less than £1.6M plus professional fees.

Evaluation: Not financially viable

(a) full café in house

Whole of planned café element installed (remainder of building in shell state) with full service to internal/external covers.

Advantages: Boost to public perception of progress and fundraising. Justifies provision of services into house. Positive impact on park.

Disadvantages: Franchisee investment unlikely if there is expected to be any future disruption. Revenue is insufficient to ensure long term viability.

Comments: We would have to ensure that this does not compromise subsequent stages.

Revenue: Expected income from franchisee £30K. **Cost B** applies (excludes franchisee’s share of rates, contribution to utilities, and part security costs).

Capital: Total £1.6M plus professional fees. Option for franchisee to meet capital cost of café equipment installation (approx. £50K) if offered sufficiently long lease.

Evaluation: The preferred option for the first stage.

3.2 Stage 2

The Annex

Construct annex to provide income stream to support use of entire ground floor of house. Building annex before restoring remainder of house enables DDA compliant activities to use a versatile ground floor setting in a safe environment, sparking enthusiasm for the rest of the restoration.

Advantages: Making this the next stage allows build up of customer base and makes the building and its setting more useable for the community. Loan is available from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

Disadvantages: Requires funding that is not HLF eligible.

Revenue: **Cost B** plus management/janitorial/marketing staff and additional heating/lighting/utilities (£40/50K); (Call total **Cost C** – £105-115K). Assume pessimistic income stream (ref: Turpin Smale report April 2002) of £76K.

Capital: Annex £500K; car park £100K; chairs & tables £50K; enhanced security £20K; gates to limit public movement after dusk £20K; **Total £690K** (Note: relocation of depot functions/tools £200K; traffic management £40K is not a cost of the project but will be met by core council funding)

Evaluation: To be explored and accurately costed prior to the full grant application.

Notes – **Franchises**: there is the alternative strategy of franchising the Annex operation, which would save some staff and capital costs at this stage. However, the franchising of the annex to a different party overcomplicates the house management relationships for what is a small facility overall. For example, Forty Hall has 3 house interests (house, café and banqueting) and is not ideal. If an appropriate franchisee can run the café and annex (e.g. as in Kenwood House) this would be ideal, although an exceptional achievement.

3.3 Stage Three

This and following stages can be flexible, focussing on specific rooms/areas of the house, completing the ground floor first and then moving on to the first floor and stairs/lifts. This work would include the mid 16th century core together with reinstatement of the early 18th century panelled rooms and staircase with its associated murals by Gerard Lanscroon.