

**31. Bancroft Gardens (EE); PP-13-20870
(6) 31**

B 2014

DECISION: REJECT

North Hertfordshire District Council sought a first round pass of £2,117,500 including a development grant of £110,600, 80% of eligible development costs (HLF £73,733; 66.66%)(BIG £36,867; 33.33%) to restore and enhance 3.4 ha Bancroft Gardens in the centre of Hitchin to attract wider audiences through a range of new facilities and activities and tell the history of the site through restored features and new interpretation.

The Committee for the East of England had recommended the project as a medium priority for support. BIG's representative had recommended it as a low priority.

The HLF Board and BIG England Parks for People Committee noted this was an experienced applicant and there was potential for this project, which included redesign of the public space and new capital works, to reach out to new and diverse audiences. However, this element appeared weak and there was a low budget for activity costs. Consultation with all parks users and potential audiences also needed strengthening together with more detail of the long term management requirements. HLF trustees queried the proposals regarding the tennis courts and the wider concerns regarding their removal and sought more detail.

The HLF Board and BIG England Parks for People Committee agreed that due to the concerns raised the application was a medium priority for support and the project was rejected in view of this and in light of the available budget.