

	<h2>Policy and Resources Committee</h2> <h3>13<sup>th</sup> February 2018</h3>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p>North Finchley Town Centre Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Councillor Richard Cornelius</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>West Finchley, Woodhouse</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>Appendix A – North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD                  Appendix B – Consultation Representation Report                  Appendix C – North Finchley High Level Transport Review                  Appendix D - Equalities Impact Assessment</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Nick Lynch – Planning Policy Manager (0208 359 4211)  <a href="mailto:Nick.lynch@barnet.gov.uk">Nick.lynch@barnet.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Emma Watson – Head of Strategic Planning (020 8359 3190)  <a href="mailto:Emma.watson@barnet.gov.uk">Emma.watson@barnet.gov.uk</a></p>

## Summary

The North Finchley Town Centre Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out an approach for revitalising one of the largest town centres in Barnet. The SPD seeks a greater focus on an appropriate mix of uses, where retailing remains important but residential makes a greater contribution to the town centre’s diversification and overall ‘offer’. Investment in residential led mixed use development will help to fund public realm and infrastructure improvements making North Finchley a more attractive centre to live, visit and enjoy.

In late 2017 the Draft SPD was subject to extensive publicity to encourage engagement as part of 6 weeks of formal public consultation. This generated nearly 500 responses including

a petition on behalf of the Finchley United Services Club. Feedback was generally supportive of the SPDs spatial approach for three core activity areas whilst more specific concerns were expressed about individual sites, tall buildings, traffic and social infrastructure.

In further support of the SPD's transport proposals a High Level Transport Review has been produced to explore how the implementation of the SPD would affect movement in North Finchley.

Following adoption the SPD will guide future masterplanning in North Finchley, supporting further technical work on traffic management, bus service networks and car parking strategy as well as other infrastructure delivery including provision for health and education. The SPD will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

## **Recommendations**

### **That the Committee:**

- 1. Notes the consultation response to the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and agrees the consequential proposed changes to the SPD outlined and explained in the Consultation Representation Report at Appendix B.**
- 2. Notes the contents of the North Finchley High Level Transport Review (Appendix C) which has been produced as an additional supporting document for the SPD.**
- 3. Agrees the adoption of the North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD (Appendix A) and delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to make any necessary changes of a minor nature to the final wording of the SPD in consultation with the Leader before the final version of the SPD is published.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 A SPD should be prepared where it can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012 – paragraph 153 refers). In so doing, it should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan without adding unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. (National Planning Practice Guidance - Local Plans – paragraph 28 refers).
- 1.2 Policy & Resources Committee (10<sup>th</sup> October 2017 Agenda item 7) approved the draft North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD for public consultation. As part of the approval the Committee requested that a High Level Transport Review for North Finchley be produced in support of the SPD. The Review

document has been prepared to more fully describe the concept proposals and further examining their technical feasibility. This early stage work has been progressed in liaison with Transport for London.

- 1.3 A formal 6 week period of public consultation was undertaken between 16<sup>th</sup> October and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017. This involved extensive publicity with nearly 12,000 leaflets being distributed to households within the N12 postal district and letters to local businesses on the High Road publicising the SPD and three drop-in events at North Finchley Library. This was in addition to email notifications sent to contacts on the Council's Local Plan database.
- 1.4 The drop-in sessions were well attended attracting nearly 300 visitors. Attendees had the opportunity to discuss the proposals and the methods for responding to them with the Council and its consultant team. Exhibition boards that outlined the proposals were displayed at North Finchley Library for the duration of the public consultation. Officers representing the Council together with their consultant team also attended meetings organised for local businesses (arranged by Café Buzz) and local residents (arranged by the Finchley Society/ Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents Association). Further details on the consultation arrangements are set out in the Consultation Representation Report (Appendix B).
- 1.5 Feedback on the SPD was encouraged by questionnaire which was available on-line and in hard copy. This generated nearly 200 responses. Over 70 responses were also received by e-mail and letter, the majority of which were from local residents. Artsdepot, Transport for London and Historic England provided specific comments as did the Finchley Society, three local residents associations, Northside School, Homebase and the War Memorials Trust as well as local businesses on Ballards Lane. Feedback included a petition of 228 persons with regard to the retention of Finchley United Services Club.
- 1.6 All comments, whether they are completed questionnaires or written responses sent direct to the council, have been considered with equal weight as set out in the Consultation Representation Report.
- 1.7 The GLA were unable to respond specifically on the SPD but stated support in principal for it's promotion of growth. The proposals in the SPD were also discussed with Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG ) who were encouraged to submit a formal response to the SPD.
- 1.8 Supporting comments were received from the artsdepot in terms of the SPD's recognition of a North Finchley cultural zone and that this would act as a gateway into the greater offer of the High Street. Artsdepot highlighted that they have the skills and technically ability to develop the culture offer of North Finchley beyond their venue and support the opportunity to develop the

outside spaces and curate a programme of engaging and participative outdoor arts and culture activity. They have also highlighted the restrictive covenant on showing films at artsdepot and requested Council support to lift the restriction so that arthouse films could be screened in future.

- 1.9 Transport for London (TfL) expressed concerns about North Finchley bus station highlighting that this was a safeguarded facility and that it would only consider moving part or all of the bus station from its current location if there was a clear operational and passenger benefit.

*The SPD has been changed to reflect this. A joint working group has been established with TfL to explore the use of the bus station and wider transport proposals in more detail. This group will continue to work on making sure if changes to the operation of the road network within the town centre and on adjacent parts of the road network especially for the buses can be re-modelled to improve bus reliabilities. Further and more comprehensive study, design and road network performance will be needed for North Finchley as set out in the supporting High Level Transport Review.*

- 1.10 Historic England raised concerns about the allocation of sites in the SPD, highlighted the lack of heritage assessment and specifically referred to the retention of buildings such as the Grand Arcade and Kidz Escape at 713 High Road. It also expressed concerns about the impact of tall buildings on character.

*In response the Council has added a new section to the SPD which states that :*

*“In locations where the adjacent context is of a lower scale and is not anticipated to change the SPD will expect proposals for tall buildings to provide a transition in the base building height down to the lower-scale neighbours and set back from the base. This will help to retain the streetscape character.”*

*The SPD has identified buildings contributing to local character. The Kidz Escape building was not identified through this assessment and local respondents to the SPD consultation have not highlighted the building as of historic value. With regard to the Grand Arcade this has not been a success and retention would restrict the necessary comprehensive development of the Tally Ho Triangle site and associated benefits in delivering a new leisure hub, public realm and residential units. Whilst the SPD identifies opportunity sites, it does not make formal site allocations. Allocating sites is a matter for the Local Plan, the first draft of which is expected to be published for formal public consultation in Autumn 2018.*

- 1.11 The Finchley Society and Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents Association expressed concerns about the future of North Finchley market and requested further studies on transport around the town centre including traffic management study and work on cycling infrastructure as well as car parking

supply. The impact of tall buildings in particular their effect on the micro climate was raised and further information was requested on residential unit numbers, affordable housing, car parking provision at Lodge Lane, social infrastructure and phasing in terms of next steps after SPD adoption. Similar issues were raised by Torrington Park and Ravensdale Residents Associations.

*The SPD now states that a new strategy and location for the North Finchley Market will be required prior to the redevelopment of the site. The Market is expected to move to the new public realm space at Ballards Lane.*

*As highlighted above there is a new section on the design of tall buildings mitigating their impact on character and clearly requiring new buildings to improve the microclimate. At present planning guidance requires new buildings not to make it worse.*

*The High Level Transport Review provides further detail on next steps and the SPD sets out a proposed phasing strategy.*

*The SPD identifies opportunity areas rather than allocate sites. As a high level strategy it is unable to set out densities or housing numbers.*

*The approach to affordable housing will be in accordance with Local Plan and London Plan policy.*

*In terms of the proposed re-provision of car park spaces at Lodge Lane the SPD highlights sensitivities in terms of adjacent properties including Northside School and seeks an appropriate solution. A decked car park is an option if it can respond to such sensitivities.*

*Further detail has been provided in the SPD on the use of Community Infrastructure Levy for supporting social infrastructure.*

- 1.12 The future of the Finchley United Services Club building on Ballards Lane (included as part of Key Opportunity Site (KOS) 2) has generated a large number of responses to the SPD including a 228 person petition and a representation from the War Memorials Trust.

*The SPD has been revised to remove the Club from KOS 2. Further text has been added to highlight the need for redevelopment to respond sensitively to the Club building.*

- 1.13 In their response to the SPD Northside Primary School expressed concerns about the impact of the Lodge Lane proposals on school expansion. They also highlighted concerns about safety, pollution and overlooking.

*The SPD has been revised to highlight that community space proposed as part of the Lodge Lane redevelopment should consider co-location opportunities with Northside Primary School. Reference is also made to a new pedestrian crossing at Lodge Lane ensuring safe pedestrian movements including those in relation to Northside Primary School. Changes outlined in the SPD and the supporting High Level Transport Review will act as a step towards a longer term strategy in North Finchley to address more challenging issues including traffic congestion and air quality. A transport assessment will be required as part of any application to ensure a safe pattern of vehicle and pedestrian movement and air quality effects, taking into account the proximity of the primary school. The issue of overlooking can be considered when more detailed proposals come forward.*

- 1.14 In terms of the response of local businesses Homebase considered that their store should be regarded as a town centre asset similar to Waitrose. Camani Oscar were concerned about the pedestrianisation of Ballards Lane and wanted further consultation with landlords. Businesses also expressed concerns about car parking provision. Businesses in the Key Opportunity Sites objected to redevelopment and the impact on small to medium enterprises.

*The SPD acknowledges the contribution of Homebase as well as Waitrose to the town centre. However they are both in out of town centre locations which Local Plan town centre policies do not support. As a Town Centre Framework it is right that the SPD which focuses on revitalising the town centre.*

*The Council will work with partners, to support businesses in North Finchley to relocate where required where it enables and secures the regeneration objectives set out in the SPD. The SPD provides more details on the scope of a dedicated development related parking strategy for North Finchley. This would review the existing pricing, timing, availability and management of spaces.*

- 1.15 The High Level Transport Review examines how the proposed transport proposals would affect movement in North Finchley explaining how transformations in busy urban areas are both possible and beneficial, benefitting local people and businesses whilst delivering an efficient movement network across all modes. A full appraisal was made of the existing situation, identified issues and opportunities drawing on traffic engineering expertise, professional judgement, local insight and through benchmarking the town centre with similar locations elsewhere. Such investigations are more typical of actions related to the early stages of schemes for planned implementation. With the North Finchley SPD the Review is intended to provide assurance regarding the feasibility of the proposals given the nature and scale of change implied. The Review looks at :

- Conversion of the High Road south of the Tally Ho pub to 2-way flow

- Limiting of Ballards Lane northbound movement to Access Only (i.e. buses, servicing and local residents) to the benefit of pedestrians, cyclist and public realm enhancement
  - Improved access flexibility of the two-way system to relocate bus facilities on-street to encourage bus use
  - Likely traffic flow effects for motorists resulting from the one-way to two-way flow conversion
  - Merits of changes to bus facilities and services, including the closure of the present bus station for possible re-use (subject to TfL agreement).
- 1.16 The Transport Review highlights next steps for implementing the SPD's transport proposals. This includes a comprehensive feasibility study for North Finchley which covers traffic modelling and assessment and provides prioritised, costed concept designs. Recognising the complexity and potential costs to implement change in North Finchley schemes and projects should be prioritised and costed, and where possible, funding identified to ensure projects continue to come forward to support the SPD.
- 1.17 The North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD (see Appendix A) recognises that the necessary comprehensive and coordinated regeneration of the town centre is also in part dependent upon ensuring that the right type of development takes place on areas of land close to the town centre. Accordingly the SPD area not only covers the town centre as designated in the Local Plan but also extends beyond the formal boundaries to include adjacent areas which are considered important to the town centre's future, most notably at the southern and northern "gateways".
- 1.18 The Town Centre Framework SPD sets out a vision for a vital and vibrant North Finchley :
- where the supply of housing will be boosted to deliver a wide choice of homes, creating sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities;
  - where the shopping experience will be improved with a range of shops that include independent and national retailers;
  - where the daytime and evening economy will become more attractive with a range of cultural, leisure, food and drink choices;
  - where the environment will be improved with local character enhanced;
  - where new public spaces will be created to encourage people to stay for longer in the town centre; and
  - where pedestrians will be given greater priority whilst maintaining ease of access for all users.

1.19 This vision is underpinned by a suite of 19 objectives that fall into four central themes on places, people, economy and movement. The SPD sets out the approach for delivering the vision and objectives. This includes:

- an **overarching strategy** for the town centre and surrounding area which consists of four core activity areas -
  - **Northern zone** – this area to the north of Sainsbury’s sits outside of the town centre and is changing from commercial uses to a more residential focused environment;
  - **Central zone** – this area runs from Sainsbury’s to the Ballards Lane / High Road gyratory at Tally Ho. Consisting of traditional parades with a mix of shops, cafes and restaurants as well as the 232 space car park at Lodge Lane (including the weekly market) this is the retail core of North Finchley;
  - **Southern zone** – this area extends from the Ballards Lane / High Road gyratory to the south side of Kingsway. The area consists of a number of parades of mixed character and uses as well as the Arts Depot hub and Tally Ho; and
  - **Mixed use hub** – to the south of Kingsway a mix of uses will be encouraged that intensifies the residential offer whilst retaining commercial activities.
  
- A spatial approach for different parts of the town centre covering six key opportunity sites, parade enhancement areas, other opportunity areas and an area where application of Local Plan Policy is re-emphasised.
  - **Key Opportunity Sites** comprise :
    - **Tally Ho Triangle and Arts Depot** – (1.15 ha) as main arrival point in North Finchley this site can complement the Arts Depot as a mixed use leisure led destination with new public realm, residential development and improved connectivity to parades on Ballards Lane and High Road. Through joint working with Transport for London, and subject to clear operational and passenger benefits, there may be potential for the relocation of buses out of the Arts Depot bus station to clearly marked locations within North Finchley. Space released by the bus station could be converted for retail, community and leisure uses;
    - **Ballards Lane / Nether Street** – (0.52 ha) in order to create new high quality frontage and gateway to North Finchley comprehensive redevelopment is proposed from Premier House northwards. Re-provision of office at lower levels as well as the existing community use is expected as is active ground floor commercial uses with residential above. Public realm improvements will enhance the setting of Finchley War Memorial and Finchley United Services Club which are both located outside of this opportunity site;
    - **Finchley House** – (0.28 ha) located on corner of Kingsway and High Road, re-development can provide an improved employment offer at lower floors with residential above;

- **East Wing** – (0.56 ha) comprises buildings on eastern side of High Road between Castle Road (Argos) and Woodhouse Road where enhancement with retail / café / restaurant at ground floor with residential above can work with Arts Depot and Tally Ho as retail, leisure and cultural anchor of North Finchley;
  - **Friern Park / High Road** – (0.61 ha) comprises buildings on eastern side of High Road between Friern Park and Stanhope Road where development will introduce high quality frontage with new modern retail units with residential above; and
  - **Lodge Lane** – (0.81 ha) comprises car park and YVA House where redevelopment should ensure more efficient use of land while continuing to provide an important car parking function. The SPD supports active retail frontage on the High Road with residential and other town centre uses above with community uses fronting Lodge Lane. The SPD highlights the need for development to sensitively respond to the Victorian terraced housing on Lodge Lane, the adjacent Northside Primary School and the back gardens of houses on Percy Road. A new strategy and location for the North Finchley Market will be required prior to the redevelopment of the site.
- The **Parade Enhancement Areas** primarily focused on High Road between Friern Watch Avenue and Tally Ho Corner, are identified in the SPD as having key functions as retail and active units where their contribution to North Finchley’s vitality and viability should be improved. There is potential for new residential uses above.
  - The **Other Opportunity Areas** including land on the southeastern corner of High Road / Woodhouse Road and Ballards Lane south of Kingsway are highlighted in the SPD as places that will benefit from more efficient use of land as well as redevelopment that helps improve their aesthetic contribution to North Finchley.
  - **Local Plan Policy Areas** cover the remainder of the SPD area. Although no specific sites are identified in these areas the Council will work with stakeholders in line with Local Plan policies to improve the local environment, increase housing supply and choice to meet local needs and to help underpin the overall vitality and viability of the town centre and local economy.

## **Development Principles**

- 1.20 In order to ensure delivery of a vital and vibrant North Finchley a series of development principles have been prioritised in the SPD. A key principle for the town centre is responding to local character. Buildings have been assessed in terms of their contribution to local character. Buildings that positively contribute to character should be protected where appropriate. The SPD divides the town centre into three character areas each with different levels of townscape sensitivity. The area north of Avenue Road / Ravensdale Road has potential for

more innovative, high quality contemporary design while the central area (between Avenue Road / Ravensdale Road and Hall Street / Stanhope Road) is considered to be the most sensitive area where new development must respond to context and emulate historic examples and traditional building typologies. Within the southern area new development should enhance the townscape and sensitive contemporary architecture is supported.

- 1.21 Another key development principle in the SPD is transport and movement. The Baseline Report highlighted difficulties for pedestrians in crossing the extensive High Road / Ballard's Lane corridor which is generally arranged in favour of vehicles rather than other users and uses. Bus services within North Finchley are convoluted in terms of movement around the Ballards Lane / High Road gyratory and with the Arts Depot bus station somewhat hidden from general view. Cyclists are also poorly served with a lack of facilities throughout North Finchley.
- 1.22 In response to these issues the SPD proposes reallocating roadspace to other movement and public realm improvements such as footway widening and narrower road crossings, bus waiting facilities and cycle lanes. At Ballards Lane there is potential for substantial public realm improvement. This may be achieved by limiting through movement to access traffic, retail and business servicing and buses. Associated with this is the re-routing of the present Ballards Lane northbound through traffic onto Kingsway and onto the High Road, itself converted to 2-way operation. Achieving such a substantial traffic management amendment would require a detailed technical study requiring data on traffic flows, junction operation and highway geometry, along with local and wider area road network modelling. In addition, there would be related public and technical stakeholder consultation to discuss, amend and sign off scheme development. The Council together with Transport for London would be involved in modelling traffic impacts and ensuring smooth road network operation. The potential gains for North Finchley from such an intervention would be considerable especially for development sites fronting Ballards Lane, adjacent occupiers and local people.
- 1.23 Although North Finchley has good bus services, the presence of buses can sometimes be negative with, as a result of the gyratory, buses on the road network longer than desirable. The bus station at the Arts Depot is unwelcoming and hidden from view with bus access arrangements that create awkward conditions for pedestrians and contribute to an unattractive streetscape. Although bus operations are complex, and making such changes will require detailed service planning, moving buses out of the bus station to clearly marked locations within the town centre will raise the profile of this travel mode and encourage use.
- 1.24 Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists should be a central focus to the future of North Finchley and should be aligned with public realm improvements arising from re-allocation of carriageway. Greater wayfinding between the town centre and Northern Line services at Woodside Park and West Finchley will improve the connectivity of North Finchley as well as specific on-road facilities including cycle parking to encourage cycling.

- 1.25 Further and more extensive technical work will be required to fully test the transport and movement proposals, such as the conversion of the High Road to two-way operation. To this end a supporting High Level Transport Review document was prepared to more fully describe the concept proposals and further examining the technical feasibility. This early stage work has been progressed in liaison with Transport for London.
- 1.26 Car parking is highlighted as a development principle reflecting the importance for the town centre of providing a convenient and good quality parking supply to maintain a competitive position with other centres. A car parking survey of on-street (kerbside) and off-street car parks) usage informed the development of the SPD and indicates that supply offers scope for better use such as public realm improvements, footway widening, narrower road crossings or servicing. Improved utilisation could be achieved through increased tariffs for long stay parking and greater partnership working with private car park providers in North Finchley. Subject to a development related parking strategy for the town centre the present supply of car parking, suitably optimised, together with physical changes to parking locations and types, as well as future planning requirements for car-free development, should provide for any additional related parking demand.
- 1.27 The fourth development principle highlighted in the SPD covers frontages and shopping parades. Given the range, quality and contribution of the existing parades the approach to parade enhancement focuses on existing shop frontages making a better contribution to the overall street scene and providing units that are more attractive to national and local retailers. In some instances it may be appropriate for a number of units within parades to come forward as a comprehensive development to create a revitalised offer that supports other opportunities identified in the SPD, in particular new homes above the retail provision. The purpose of combining units should be to create larger units internally, whilst retaining the overall appearance of single units where they contribute to the townscape quality.
- 1.28 An overall public realm strategy to direct potential improvements to North Finchley is the final development principle. Key objectives for public realm improvements include :
- Narrowing carriageways and increasing pavements to include planting zones;
  - Integrating cycle parking facilities and improved cycling infrastructure;
  - Prioritising provision of cycle lanes within carriageway when reallocating road space;
  - Improving signage and provision of public art;
  - Activating the streets and spaces by providing 'spill-out zones' for cafes/restaurants/shops;
  - Creating flexible event spaces;
  - Greening the streets; and
  - Identifying a new location for North Finchley Market which enables it to be more prominent in the town centre.

Further refinement and details are expected to be established through future planning applications.

- 1.29 The final section of the SPD focuses on delivery and implementation. A coordinated and comprehensive approach is required to North Finchley's regeneration to ensure piecemeal proposals are not prejudicial to the overall vision. This will ensure that the appropriate quantum and mix of development is delivered and that this is phased, enabling the required social and physical infrastructure to be in place at the right time. It will also ensure that public realm improvements throughout the SPD area are made, the town's car parking management strategy meets local needs and that there is a coordinated approach to funding infrastructure. Where proposals are for significant developments in the SPD area the Council will want to see these brought forward accompanied by an overall masterplan with associated planning application(s), to demonstrate they are part of and/or contribute to the comprehensive regeneration approach. The coordinated and comprehensive approach may facilitate an element of cross subsidisation from one area or site to another.
- 1.30 A phasing strategy has been added to the SPD. The preferred sequencing for the SPD Key Opportunity Sites is as follows :
- KOS2 Tally Ho has the largest regeneration benefits for the town centre and is a priority to be brought forward in an early phase, as it could take a number of years to deliver due to its scale and complexity.
  - KOS1 Ballards Lane and KOS4 East Wing are complimentary to KOS2 and should come forward as an early part of the regeneration of the area, including changes to the function of the gyratory, potentially as early wins in development terms.
  - KOS6 Lodge Lane is owned largely by the Council however this requires a new location for the North Finchley Market before its delivery, anticipated to be Ballards Lane, and therefore may come later in the process. A clear strategy will be required to ensure minimum disruption to town centre parking during the redevelopment of the car park.
  - KOS5 Friern Park / High Road may rely on wider remodeling of the parking strategy for the town centre to ensure that any loss of parking spaces does not lead to a net loss in the centre as a whole, and may therefore be later in the process.
  - KOS3 Finchley Houses is less reliant on other development activity and can progress as the market dictates.

### **The Council as Land Owner**

- 1.31 The Council is one of the largest landowners within North Finchley, principally with regard to the surface car parks, the Arts Depot and strips of land related to highways. However there are a wide range of ownerships throughout the town centre and the Council will expect to see site assembly carried out via negotiations and private treaty wherever possible. Where there is a compelling case in the public interest, the Council will consider the use of its compulsory

purchase powers to assemble sites within the SPD area, especially but not exclusively in the Key Opportunity Sites.

- 1.32 A SPD should be prepared where it can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012 – paragraph 153 refers). In so doing, it should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan without adding unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. (National Planning Practice Guidance - Local Plans – paragraph 28 refers).

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Adoption of the Town Centre Framework SPD will help maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of North Finchley by promoting sustainable mixed use development, with associated physical and social infrastructure, as well as public realm and environmental improvements.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not produce a Town Centre Framework for North Finchley. This would mean an opportunity missed to revitalise the town centre, deliver new homes and help implement Local Plan and Entrepreneurial Barnet objectives on main town centres.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Once adopted the final SPD will be capable of being used as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications in North Finchley.

## **4.2 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **4.2 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The proposals in Entrepreneurial Barnet relating to town centres directly support delivery of the Corporate Plan 2015-2020, particularly the following stated corporate priority:

☐ Promote responsible growth within the Borough, encouraging development and success, revitalising communities whilst protecting what residents love about the Borough.

- 5.1.2 Entrepreneurial Barnet 2015 – 2020 outlines Barnet’s approach to supporting the local economy to grow, and developing a successful, growing suburb in a successful, growing world city. It identifies North Finchley as a main town centre.

- 5.1.3 Within Entrepreneurial Barnet, the Town Centre offer framework specifically

outlines the Council's commitment to provide additional support to actively market and promote opportunities to developers, when dealing with main Town Centres. The new SPD for North Finchley will provide clarity around the town centre proposition for development in the face of growing challenges for high streets.

5.1.2 The Housing Strategy 2015 – 2025 highlights the role of purpose-built private rented sector housing when located within or around town centres in addressing distinct housing needs as well as supporting labour mobility.

## **5.1 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The cost of preparing this SPD has been at no additional cost to the Council. The costs of producing the SPD are covered through the Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Joseph Partners whilst statutory planning functions are delivered through the business as usual Re contract. Under the terms of the PPA the Council is obliged to devote sufficient officer resources to ensure compliance with the purposes of the PPA.

5.2.2 The production of this SPD required the Council to seek resource support. In April 2017 Re on behalf of the Council commissioned a consortium of BDP, Urban Flow and GL Hearn to produce the SPD. The costs of delivering the SPD by the Council and its consultant team have been met by the Developer in full.

5.2.3 In December 2016 the Policy and Resources Committee authorised the drafting of a Preliminary Agreement to make Council land available for development in North Finchley following the putting in place of a Town Centre Framework SPD. Under the Preliminary Agreement the Council is under no obligation to sell any property.

5.2.4 There are no anticipated implications in IT or sustainability in relation to the SPD.

## **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to consider how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

5.3.2 The SPD has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which assesses the social, economic and environmental implications of the document

5.3.3 Social benefits will principally be secured through opportunities to increase housing delivery (including affordable housing), widen the range of leisure and cultural activities as well as food and drink choices and improvements to the

public realm making North Finchley a more attractive destination town centre that reflects its historic character.

- 5.3.4 Economic benefits will be delivered through inward investment in the development opportunities highlighted in the SPD widening the daytime and evening economy making the town centre more attractive to independent and national retailers as well as new residents.
- 5.3.5 Environmental benefits will be delivered through the re-allocation of roadspace, giving pedestrians and cyclists more priority, sensitive development that complements buildings of positive character, and an enhanced public realm with greater planting that softens the existing hard landscape and improves air quality.

## **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1 Under the Council's Constitution, Document Article 7, under 7.5 Responsibility for Functions the Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Council including responsibility for Local Plans.
- 5.4.2 Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out requirements for SPD production.

## **5.5 Risk Management**

- 5.5.1 The management of risk is undertaken on a continual basis and reported as part of the Council's Quarterly Performance regime and considered as part of the Performance and Contract Management Committee quarterly monitoring report. Risks are managed through the project boards and are reviewed and revised at board meetings.
- 5.5.2 A key risk to the North Finchley SPD is that it is challenged in the High Court following adoption by the Council. The challenge must take place within 6 weeks of adoption. This has been mitigated by ensuring that the SPD is fully compliant with Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, a comprehensive six weeks of consultation and ensuring that all the consultation responses have been carefully considered and taken into account.
- 5.5.3 Another risk is that redevelopment proposals for the Town Centre come forward outside of the robust planning framework of the SPD to guide its consideration and determination. This can be mitigated by the Council, working pro-actively with relevant stakeholders to achieve the objectives set out in this SPD.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.6.1 The Equalities and Diversity Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act, 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.6.2 The SPD implements policy set out in the Local Plan Core Strategy which has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA). Furthermore, the SPD itself is accompanied by an EqIA which is attached at Appendix C.

5.6.3 The EqIA has considered the SPDs impact on the groups identified above. It has highlighted how the SPD helps to address issues such as the relocation of the weekly market from Lodge Lane market to a more prominent town centre location. The EqIA has been updated following the public consultation to make more specific reference to the impact of the SPD on groups with the relevant protected characteristics with regard to housing and access to services in North Finchley.

## **5.7 Crime and Disorder**

5.7.1 Production of the SPD has taken the terms of the Crime and Impact Disorder Act 1998 into consideration and that Metropolitan Police are key stakeholder in the consultation process. It is intended that the SPD will contribute to the prevention of crime and disorder. The SPD highlights Local Plan policies on Development Standards which cover designing out crime as well as our strategic planning policy on making Barnet a safer place.

## **5.8 Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) a period of formal consultation on the draft North Finchley SPD was undertaken over a 6 week period from October 16<sup>th</sup> until November 27<sup>th</sup> 2017. Consultation went beyond the benchmarks set out in the SCI most notably in terms of the 12,000 leaflets distributed to households in the N12 postal district.

5.8.2 All comments, whether they are completed questionnaires or written responses sent direct to the council, have been considered with equal weight as set out in the Consultation Representation Report. Multiple choice question responses have been presented in pie chart form to provide a snapshot of the results, however it is important to note that these pie charts do not include the 72 letter and email responses. However the specific comments in the letters and emails have been analysed and considered within the responses to the various issues raised by the public consultation.

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy DPD<sub>1</sub>, September 2012  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/planning-policies-and-further-information/local-plan---core-strategy-dpd.html>
- 6.2 Barnet Development Management Policies DPD, September 2012  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/planning-policies-and-further-information/development-management-policies.html>
- 6.3 Barnet's Statement of Community Involvement, July 2015  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/planning-policies-and-further-information/statement-of-community-involvement.html>
- 6.4 North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD Sustainability Appraisal, February 2017
- 6.5 North Finchley Town Centre Framework SPD Baseline Report, October 2017  
<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/town-centre-frameworks/emerging-town-centre-frameworks.html>