


|   |  |
|---|--|
|  | <p><b>Finchley &amp; Golders Green Area Committee</b></p> <p><b>21 October 2015</b></p>  |
| <b>Title</b>  | <b>Percy Road Open Space Mural</b>   |
| <b>Report of</b>  | Street Scene Director  |
| <b>Wards</b>  | West Finchley  |
| <b>Status</b>   | Public   |
| <b>Enclosures</b>   | Appendix 1 - Mural Proposal From User Group  |
| <b>Officer Contact Details</b>  | Tracy Sawyer, Parks & Opens Spaces Officer<br><a href="mailto:tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk">tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 7824 |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Summary</b>   |
| <p>As part of the renewal works taking place at Percy Road Open Space N12, the local user group wish to paint a community mural on some of the existing walls within the play space and on concrete benches to be installed across the site. This paper is seeking in principle approval for the concept of a mural at the site.</p> |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Recommendations</b>   |
| <p><b>1. That the Committee approve the principle of a community mural to be painted at Percy Road Open Space as part of the renewal works being undertaken by the Council.</b></p>        |
| <p><b>2. That authority to approve the final design for the mural be delegated to the local Ward Councillors for West Finchley in consultation with the Director for Street Scene.</b></p> |

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

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the proposal for a community mural to be painted at the Percy Road Open Space.
- 1.2 Percy Road Open Space is a 0.05ha play space in North Finchley, within the West Finchley ward. The Council and the Percy Road User Group have secured over £80,000 of funding (through Section 106 contributions and the Mayor of London's Pocket Park scheme amongst others) to carry out improvement works to renew this well used space.
- 1.3 The idea of a mural has been actively driven by the Percy Road User Group in consultation with local residents and users of the play space. The group have engaged a local artist to help draft initial proposals and the artist will co-ordinate the community painting event.
- 1.4 The mural forms part of the proposed renewal works which include the replacement of the existing play equipment (which is dated and not fit for purpose), improvements to the general layout of the space, more coherent access routes, enhanced landscaping and planting, improved lighting and new furniture and signage.
- 1.5 While the Council has a zero tolerance policy relating to graffiti, the mural is not seen by the Greenspaces Team as graffiti. It is anticipated that the proposed mural will have a positive impact in the play area and on those using the space. It will be an opportunity to hold a community event and should increase the sense of ownership and pride.
- 1.6 There are currently two parks, one at Childs Hill Park and the other at Swan Lane Open Space that already contain murals as a form of art. These originated in a similar way to Percy Road and have generally been accepted as beneficial to the community as well as deterrents to other graffiti.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 As part of the renewal works to improve this space a number of proposals for a mural will be drawn up by a local artist for consideration. The mural will add colour and vibrancy to the space and increase the sense of ownership and pride for the local community.
- 2.2 The Council's Parks Team will co-ordinate any further consultation with the user group and the local West Finchley ward councillors to reach a preferred final design to be painted. Once approved, the mural will be painted by members of the local community under the supervision of the local artist.

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

- 3.1 A number of designs will be considered and consulted on as described above. The agreed design will be chosen to be put forward for final approval from the Ward Councillors.

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Should approval be granted, the mural will be painted during an organised community event as part of the improvement works programme expected to complete in Spring 2016.

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The mural will contribute to the wider improvement works in the open space. This investment is in line with a number of the Council's' Corporate Plan priorities for 2015-2020:

- *Barnet's residents will be some of the most active and healthy in London, benefitting from improved leisure facilities and making use of the borough's parks and open spaces.*

- 5.1.2 It is hoped that increased use of the new play equipment, and the wider space, will offer opportunities for improved general health and wellbeing.

- *Barnet's parks and green spaces will be amongst the best in London... The Council will develop more innovative ways of maintaining its parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups and focus on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the borough.*

- 5.1.3 The Council will continue to carry out its statutory obligations with regards to maintenance of the play equipment but the intention is that the user group will take on greater responsibility for the general maintenance of the space including two planting beds.

- *The Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is a place... of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life. Barnet's*

*exceptional parks and open spaces will be well used for leisure, enjoyment and sport. Over 75% of residents will be satisfied with Barnet's parks and open spaces.*

5.1.4 It is hoped the mural, along with the other improvement works, will contribute to making the space more attractive and well used and recognised as a valuable community asset.

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

5.2.1 The mural will be painted by the local artist who drafted the design options. Any costs associated with the painting of the mural will be met by from the s106 parks reserve budget of £139,150.

5.2.2 An anti-graffiti coating will be used to protect the mural, and should there be any instances of vandalism (graffiti) these will be met from the street cleansing teams maintenance budgets.

## 5.3 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.3.1 Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act") provides the legislative framework governing planning obligations (as further amended by Section 12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. Government circular 05/2005 'Planning Obligations' (issued on 18-07-2005) provides guidance on how the provisions of s.106 of the Act should be applied in practice. It advises that each local authority's s.106 policy framework and processes should be predictable, transparent and accountable. It further states that obligations should be implemented in an efficient and transparent way and that any monies received should be spent on their intended purpose.

5.3.2 As specified in the Council's Constitution, Annex A, Responsibility for Functions, this Committee has the powers to:

- *Approve town centre regeneration and management schemes on a local level*
- *Discharge local functions relating to parks and open spaces*

## 5.4 **Risk Management**

5.4.1 There are a number of identified risks associated with the mural including third party ownership, adverse views relating to the approved design and vandalism of the mural once painted. The

assessment and mitigating actions taken are outlined below:

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Risk:</b>       | Third party ownership of a section of the wall.   |
| <b>Description</b> | A prime location for the mural would be on the brick wall to the north-west of the play space. A portion of the wall is situated on land not owned by the Council. There is the risk that the current owner (or any subsequent owner) may decide to remove the wall in the future. Engagement with the current owner of the neighbouring property has been positive regarding other issues in the play area. There is however no guarantee that they (or subsequent owners) will not remove the wall. |
| <b>Impact:</b>     | Mural, or part of it, will be lost  |
| <b>Mitigation:</b> | The Council could seek a written confirmation from the current owners that they have no intention to remove the wall but this leaves some uncertainty. Therefore the Council is exploring options to install an independent structure in the area next to the wall on which the mural can be painted thus removing this risk. The costs of any possible options are not yet known and it will likely have to be delivered within the constraints of the project's budget.                             |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Risk:</b>       | Negative comments / objections received once mural is painted.   |
| <b>Description</b> | Local residents or users of the space disapprove of the mural and make complaints to the Council.  |
| <b>Impact:</b>     | Damage to Council's reputation.<br>Potential delay and cost associated with any remedial action.   |
| <b>Mitigation:</b> | The Council's Parks team have held a number of meetings with the user group to discuss the proposal and offer guidance to reach an agreed position. The options will be publically displayed in the notice board on site so that all users of the space have the opportunity to review the options and submit comments. The user group were also encouraged to seek the views and support of their local Ward Councillors prior to the seeking of Area Committee approval. The preferred option will be reviewed and agreed by both the Director and the Acting Head of Streetscene and Parks. |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Risk:</b>       | Vandalism (graffiti)  |
| <b>Description</b> | Unwelcome painting  |
| <b>Impact:</b>     | Unightly and potentially gives impression of neglect  |
| <b>Mitigation:</b> | An anti-graffiti coating will be applied over the mural once it has been painted. The Council's Street Cleansing Team will respond to any reports of graffiti at the site in a timely fashion and ensure it is cleaned off. |

## 5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 The Council's parks and open spaces benefit all sectors of the community and are widely used. The provision and maintenance of green spaces allows all residents and visitors to the borough access to over 850 hectares of parks and open spaces and the facilities contained within them, e.g. playgrounds, cafés, sports facilities and horticultural features.

## 5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 A portion of the wall is located on land owned by a third party. The Council contacted the owner to discuss the proposal. They are in support of the mural and have confirmed that they have no intention to remove the wall.

5.6.2 The mural proposal has been discussed with the Percy Road User Group during regular project meetings. The design options will be circulated to local residents and placed in the notice board within the play area for at least two weeks to invite comments.

5.6.3 The designs will also be issued to North Side Primary School (located nearby just to the east of the site) for comment as the teachers and children from this school often use the space.

5.6.4 Any comments received will be reviewed. It should be noted that the final proposal will require approval from the Greenspaces Department and the local Ward Councillors.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Please see enclosures which include

- Appendix 1 - Mural Proposal from the Percy Road User Group