

	Policy and Resources Committee 22 March 2016
Title	National Institute of Medical Research Planning Brief
Report of	Commissioning Director Growth and Development
Wards	Mill Hill
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix A – Consultation representations and responses Appendix B – Final National Institute for Medical Research Planning Brief
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Summary

The Planning Brief sets out the Council's vision for the residential led mixed use development of the National Institute of Medical Research. The Planning Brief focuses on the following key objectives :

- To deliver a high quality residential-led mixed used development comprising a range of housing types and tenures, including family homes;
- To ensure the positive management of the Green Belt, enhancing openness, as well as biodiversity and improving public accessibility for sport and recreation;
- To preserve or enhance its contribution to the character and appearance of the Mill Hill Conservation Area;
- To provide opportunities for employment creation, ensuring the continued contribution to innovation and growth through provision of workspace for small to medium enterprises; and
- To ensure any new development is of the highest design and environmental standards and appropriate in scale and siting.

The draft Planning Brief was subject to public consultation. The Brief has been

revised in response to this feedback.

Recommendations

That the Committee

- 1. Note the responses to the consultation, and agree the Council responses in the Consultation Report attached at Appendix A.**
- 2. Adopt the National Institute of Medical Research Planning Brief attached at Appendix B.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 With the relocation of the National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) to St Pancras in 2017 and the disposal of a 19 hectare site by the Government a major development opportunity has arisen.
- 1.2 The NIMR site is located in the Green Belt and also within the Mill Hill Conservation area. It also forms part of the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Area. There is a significant opportunity to transform the site into a residential-led, mixed use development that is sensitive to its surroundings and is policy compliant.
- 1.3 In order to shape the future of this site a Planning Brief has been produced. This sets out key parameters to consider in determining the future of the site reflecting its location within the Green Belt and a Conservation Area. It also highlights the opportunities it provides for the delivery of much needed housing and new business space that supports small to medium enterprises.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Adopting a Planning Brief is vital to ensure that future development of the National Institute of Medical Research site comes forward in line with Council priorities and delivers sustainable development.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not adopt a Planning Brief. Failure to adopt the Planning Brief could result in a less strategic response to the development of the site. This may also result in Council priorities not being achieved.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The National Institute of Medical Research Planning Brief has been subject to a period of public consultation and revised in light of comments received. The adopted Planning Brief will be a material consideration in determining future planning applications on this site.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

- 5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

5.1.1 The NIMR Planning Brief helps to meet Corporate Plan 2015-20 strategic objectives in ensuring that Barnet is a place:-

- of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life – *the NIMR Planning Brief provides guidelines for ensuring that development will enhance the setting of the site within Green Belt as well as the Mill Hill Conservation Area. It supports the provision of a good mix of residential type, sizes and tenures with adequate amenity space and provides opportunities for increased access to Green Belt as well as sport and recreation.*
- where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure – *the NIMR Planning Brief supports provision of commercial floorspace that meets the needs of modern business.*

5.1.2 Through supporting the provision of modern business space suited to the needs of small and medium enterprises the Planning Brief also helps to deliver the objectives of Barnet's Economic Strategy (Entrepreneurial Barnet) in facilitating business growth

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

5.2.1 The cost of producing the Planning Brief is being met by the prospective developers Barratts who have an agreement to purchase the NIMR site from the landowner, the Medical Research Council. The Planning Brief has been produced by Regional Enterprise (Re) on behalf of the Council.

5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 The NIMR Planning Brief sets out the parameters for the delivery of a residential led mixed use development on a strategic development site. Through the delivery of a new suburban mixed and balanced community in Mill Hill future development will secure social, economic and environmental benefits.

5.3.2 Social benefits will be secured through the delivery of a mix of housing unit sizes and tenures including affordable housing.

5.3.3 Economic benefits will be delivered through the provision of modern business space that addresses the needs of small and medium enterprises.

5.3.4 Environmental benefits will be delivered through enhancing the biodiversity on the site and meeting relevant energy and surface water run-off standards set out in the London Plan.

5.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 Constitution Responsibilities for Functions Annex A sets out the terms of the Policy and Resources Committee including "to be responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Council including approval of development of statutory Local Plan related documents".

5.4.2 Site specific Planning Briefs provide an opportunity to bridge the gap between the provisions of the Local Plan and the requirements of any future planning application for the site.

5.4.3 Planning Briefs should be consistent with and provide guidance, supplementing the policies and proposals of the Local Plan. Planning Briefs cannot contradict, rewrite or introduce new policies.

5.4.4 Planning Briefs can have a number of functions, such promoting development of a site; addressing particular site constraints and/or further interpretation of local plan policies.

5.5 **Risk Management**

5.5.1 A consequence of failing to produce a Planning Brief for the NIMR site may lead to a less strategic response to the development and result in Council priorities not being achieved.

5.6 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act places a legal obligation on the Council to pay due regard to equalities. The Brief helps implement policy set out in the Local Plan Core Strategy. Adopted in 2012 the Core Strategy was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA).

5.6.2 Adoption of the Planning Brief will ensure that there is a considered approach to the development of the site which will have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. It should also help advance equality of opportunity as well as foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.6.3 This mixed use residential led development will provide choice in terms of a range of units by size, type and tenure. It will also provide choice for businesses in terms of access to a range of employment spaces. It will also provide a long term opportunity for access to sports and recreational facilities in the northern part of the site.

5.6.4 Given the nature of the use there is no existing public access to the NIMR site. Accessibility to Green Belt will be improved through increased permeability across the non-residential elements of the site. Public realm improvements will help to reduce the real and perceived risk of crime and help to reduce feelings of vulnerability that certain groups of people feel.

5.7 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.7.1 The Council carried out a public consultation exercise on the draft Planning Brief for a period of six weeks. This included a presentation to the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum and an evening drop in session at Mill Hill Library.

5.7.2 Responses were received from local residents and statutory stakeholders including Historic England, Highways for England, Natural England and the

Environment Agency. Local groups including the Mill Hill Preservation Society, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the Hendon and District Archaeological Society submitted comments on the Brief. A response was also received from Barratt London, the prospective developer of the site.

5.7.3 Below is a summary of the issues raised, alongside the Council's response to each issue. Further details are set out in at Appendix A of this report.

5.7.4 *Impact on/ Development appropriate to the Green Belt Location/ Scale of development*

There was concern locally that any development on the site should have a beneficial effect on the setting and outlook to the green belt. This was a mixed response, with notable support for the development's impact, but concern that new development could be overbearing. Overall it seemed the Planning Brief had struck the right tone in this regard.

5.7.5 *Construction Traffic/ Traffic*

There was particular concern with the potential impact of construction traffic on the Ridgeway, amid reports that previous developments had impacted negatively on this issue. A certain amount of construction traffic is inevitable with any development, but that the effects can be managed by appropriate use of a construction management plan, which will be required alongside a planning application.

5.7.6 *Retention of existing buildings/ Conservation assets nearby*

There is generally support for the "main building" within the NIMR campus. There was concern from the potential developer that this building may be beyond repair and conversion. The Council is clear that if the building is to be removed, it will expect a faithful replica to be rebuilt. A new building that differs from the original, but maintains the same height will not be acceptable.

5.7.7 *Developer Response*

In addition to expressing concern about the potential to retain the main building on the campus, developers consider that the development does not need to expressly identify "very special circumstances" as it can be demonstrated through the Planning Brief, and subsequent application that the redevelopment will have a beneficial effect on the openness of the green belt setting. The Council agrees this position, but feel that there needs to be a rigorous set of criteria that the development needs to be assessed against in order for it to fulfil this.

5.8 **Insight**

5.8.1 Data from the Barnet Observatory on the socio-economic characteristics of Mill Hill has provided the basis for local prioritisation of community infrastructure.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 [Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy](#), September 2012

6.2 [Barnet's Statement of Community Involvement](#), July 2015

6.3 [National Institute of Medical Research - Draft Planning Brief](#) – December 2016