

	<h2>Policy and Resources Committee</h2> <h3>1 September 2016</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Cophall Planning Brief</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Cath Shaw – Commissioning Director Growth and Development</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>Mill Hill</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix A – Consultation representations and responses Appendix B – Cophall Planning Brief</p>
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<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>The Planning Brief provides a framework for the coordination of development within the Cophall sports and recreation estate in Mill Hill (“the Estate”). The Planning Brief focuses on the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a range of sports and physical activity facilities within a parkland setting • To support the development of the new Cophall Leisure Centre • To support new facilities including a new west stand at the Allianz Stadium • To develop and enhance other facilities and coordinate investment in the parkland areas, improving access and way finding throughout the site • To ensure the positive management of the Green Belt, enhancing openness and improving accessibility to sport and recreation <p>A draft version of the Planning Brief was consulted upon in winter early spring 2016, and the report of the consultation, and an updated final Planning Brief are attached to this report for adoption.</p>

Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the responses and agree the Council responses in the Consultation Report attached at Appendix A.
2. That the Committee approve the proposed Copthall Planning Brief attached at Appendix B for adoption for use as guidance for planning applications for the site.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 At the 17th February 2015 Policy and Resources Committee meeting approval was given for funding and the commencement of procurement work streams towards, and public consultation on, the delivery of a new leisure centre at Copthall. This was part of the wider Sports and Physical Activities Strategy of the Council.
- 1.2 At that time, it was envisaged that a Master Plan would be prepared for Copthall, in order to set out the objectives for the estate, identify the mix and spatial plan for facilities and a planning strategy for their delivery. The plan would also be used as part of the public consultation on the re-provision of Barnet Copthall Leisure Centre. However, in order to provide weight to planning decisions for the Estate, officers consider that a planning brief, which has been subject to public consultation, is the most appropriate avenue.
- 1.3 The Planning Brief (**see Appendix B**) sets out the key objectives for the site:
 - To create a hub for a range of sports that will sit within a parkland setting and attract the widest range of users that encourages sport take up, exercise and improves health within the Borough;
 - A core of sports and leisure facilities based on a new leisure centre, the Allianz Stadium and a new pavilion with satellite facilities which meet the future needs of sports clubs;
 - To provide a range of parkland facilities that will attract the widest range of visitors;
 - To respect the Green Belt location offering environmental and social enhancements that supports the case for development. In this regard the development must have a minimal impact on and enhance the landscape;
 - To create an accessible location for all visitors with vastly improved pedestrian and cycling movements within the site;
 - To create a park as an integral element of a network of green spaces connecting Copthall with its surrounding areas, in particular Sunny Hill Park, Hendon and the Middlesex University campus to the south, Mill Hill Park and Arrandene Open Space to the north, Burnt Oak and Mill Hill East via the disused railway line to the west and east respectively.

- 1.4 Copthall is located centrally within the Borough. Although enclosed by building development, it is also located within the Green Belt, is a public open space and part designated locally for nature conservation value. The site has an area of approximately 70 hectares (173 acres) of Green Belt land and supports a range of sporting facilities including the Copthall leisure centre, the Allianz Stadium, home to Saracens RFC and Shafesbury Barnet Harriers athletics club and a number of other sports tenants and seasonally let pitches. The site includes a Council's Green Spaces Operational Base which services the site and surrounding spaces.
- 1.5 The site is also an integral part of the green infrastructure network for the Borough and acts as a local park for the communities surrounding the site. The Estate helps promote health and wellbeing, conserve the natural character of the area, and encourage economic growth. An opportunity has arisen to fulfil these objectives and by working with the local community, stakeholders, tenants and users it will deliver an exemplar facility.
- 1.6 The site has many users with their own needs and aspirations for the future of the site. This is why this strategically important site requires an integrated plan and operating framework in place to guide these future developments.
- 1.7 The Planning Brief specifically promotes the development of:
 - A replacement for the Copthall Leisure Centre
 - A replacement of the west stand at the Allianz Stadium
 - A new green spaces operation base
 - New or renovated club houses for existing clubs
 - Improved access, car parking, and way finding
 - A replacement to the Copthall pavilion, including new changing and club house facilities
 - Investment in pitches

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Producing a Planning Brief is vital to ensure that future development of the Copthall site comes forward in line with Council priorities and delivers sustainable development. It is also vital to control development within this Green Belt location; ensure development accords with the objectives of the brief; and provide a framework for the coordination of development and working with partners on the site.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not produce a Planning Brief. Not doing so would leave the site without a planning framework to coordinate development of this important site in the Green Belt. This may also result in Council priorities not being achieved.
- 3.2 The other alternative is to produce a full 'Site Allocation Development Plan Document'. This option would have greater weight for considering planning applications but would require a long lead in time before adoption. A full DPD would be particularly justified where a departure from policy in the Local Plan in relation to Green Belt was being proposed. In relation to development in Green Belt the Planning Brief makes clear that the nature of the development proposed should not disproportionately increase above the original which is consistent with Local Plan policy. The Brief goes on to make clear that disproportionate increase will be judged on its merits.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The draft Copthall Planning Brief has been subject to a period of public consultation and revised in light of comments received and the proposed final Planning Brief will be used as a material consideration in the determining of planning applications on this site in the future.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

The Copthall 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, Copthall will provide a major centre of sport and recreational activities for residents and visitors to the Borough. It will provide a combination of public and competition based sports facilities for active users and spectators. By the promotion of sport – active or as a spectator – the Council is seeking to encourage a more active lifestyle and sport take up. This in turn will help with the long term sustainability of sports local clubs and the long term investment in facilities.
- Where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure, Copthall as part of wider Sports and Physical Activity strategy as well as the Open Space Strategy, will assist local residents to enjoy the benefits of sport and recreation. Improved access, way finding and the range of formal and informal activities in one location, and as part of a borough wide network, ensures that the needs and capabilities of all residents are met, breaking down some of the barriers to participation.
- Where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer,

The Copthall Planning Brief will encourage cooperation between the organisations on the site, delivering the most comprehensive level of services for the public, whether through public or private service provision.

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

5.2.1 The cost of producing the Planning Brief has been met from the Sports and Physical Activities transformation budget approved by the P&R Committee in February 2015.

5.2.2 The Council will engage with stakeholders to prepare a delivery plan for the proposals in the brief, including funding sources. Stakeholders include the clubs using the site, Sport England, National Governing Bodies of Sport, the local community and ward members.

5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 Social benefits will be secured through opportunity to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the Borough. This includes the health benefits, but also to benefits of participation.

5.3.2 Economic benefits will be delivered through the promotion of Barnet as a place for sport in North London. Businesses are attracted to locate to and stay in areas which offer staff a good range of sport and social activities. The continued presence of national teams such as Saracens Rugby Union Club and Barnet and Shaftesbury Harriers Athletics Club in the Borough is a major promotional tool for attracting business investment.

5.3.3 Environmental benefits will be delivered through enhancing the parkland setting of Copthall, which links to the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

5.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 [Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A](#), sets out the terms of reference of the Policy and Resources Committee including responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the Council, including:

- approval and adoption of planning briefs
- consideration for approval and adoption documents related to the Local Plan
- those matters not specifically allocated to any other committee affecting affairs of the Council.

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 Whilst Planning Briefs can have a number of functions, such as promoting

development of a site; addressing particular site constraints and/or further interpretation of local plan policies, it should be noted that a Planning Brief is not a full Development Plan Document and although a material consideration in any planning application it carries limited weight.

5.4.5 [Section 6.5 of the Responsibility for Functions](#) (Council Constitution) defines a key decision as one which:

- will result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Failing to produce a Planning Brief for the Copthall site may lead to a less strategic response to the development - particularly in the context of Green Belt, a less coordinated response to investment in the area, reducing potential economic benefits delivered through the promotion of Barnet as a place for sport which will result in Council priorities not being achieved.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The aim of Copthall is to create a fully inclusive location for sport and recreation within the Borough. The range of sport possible on the site means that all people, including those with disabilities, can use the facilities, or and visit the area as part of the Borough's extensive green spaces network.

5.6.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to a number of equality considerations when exercising their functions. In relation to the replacement leisure centre this function has been considered as part of decision making on the Outline Business Case for Sports and Physical Activity (SPA) Review. The Outline Business Case was supported by a desktop Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and rapid Health Impact Assessment alongside consultation and engagement with Barnet's residents including residents with protected characteristics.

5.6.3 The principal of equalities impact assessment is to identify whether people with protected characteristics are likely to be affected disproportionately and/or differentially by impacts arising as a result of the proposals contained in the Planning Brief. A disproportionate equality effect arises when an impact has a proportionately greater effect on people sharing a protected characteristic as compared to other members of the general population at a particular location. The SPA Review early equality analysis suggested that the outcomes of the SPA project will not discriminate against any group and indicate a potential overall positive impact for the proposals. The details of the replacement leisure centre, the proposed replacement Saracens West stand and various other sporting enhancement and other proposals contained in the brief are not considered sufficiently detailed to enable further work on EqIA at this stage. Therefore further consideration of EqIA will be updated as the project develops, principally at submission of planning applications for development.

5.6.4 In line with the SPA review objectives reference is made in the Planning Brief to seeking the relevant quality mark for inclusive fitness initiative. The latest Equalities and Cohesion Data Summary published by the Council in January 2016 was considered in drafting the Brief.

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 A period of formal consultation on the draft Copthall Planning Brief took place over a period of 6 weeks extending from 7th January until 17th February 2016. Consultation involved letters that were e-mailed to stakeholders on the Local Plan consultation database as well as posted to residents living next to Copthall. This letter was also posted to all properties with an address on the Copthall Estate. A Public Notice was published in the Barnet Press to publicise the consultation and the draft Planning Brief was published on the Council's website. Further publicity included a drop-in session at the Copthall Leisure Centre on 2nd February 2016.

5.7.2 There were 12 responses received during the formal consultation. They were received from statutory stakeholders; Historic England, Highways for England, the Environment Agency and other stakeholders; the Mill Hill Preservation Society, the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum, Hasmore School and local residents.

5.7.3 The consultation responses did not include a response from key stakeholders including Saracens, Sport England, the Camden Community Football and Sports Association (Chase Lodge), Metro Golf Club, the Hendon Rugby Club, the Mill Hill Rugby Club and Powerleague. These key stakeholders were given a further opportunity to respond in May 2016 and responses were received from Mill Hill RFC and Metro Golf Centre.

5.7.4 Below is a summary of the issues raised, with a full set of summarised comments available in Appendix A:

Protecting Existing Green Belt Use

- Misleading regarding replacement of Allianz west stand. If it is similar to east stand then footprint of a new stand would be far larger than the existing stand and be an overall increase in floorspace.
- Development of a BMX/skateboard park/track, MUGA in south-west corner would be over development and impact on green belt character.
- Concern over development of closed circuit road cycle raceway and impact on green belt.
- Queen Elizabeth Park is not a realistic comparison.

Delivery of the Brief

- Not clear how and when the draft Planning Briefs objectives will be delivered by the council or other parties with no information on funding.
- Timeline for the delivery not clear.
- Copthall consortium welcomed, although needs a broad representative membership.

- Mill Hill RFC requires a long term lease to support investment in facilities.

Existing uses and users

- Gaelic Athletics Association not identified.
- Various maps not accurate, also show conflicting Copthall site boundaries. Both existing uses and proposed uses are not accurately reflected which is confusing.
- The recent investment and extension to the Metro Golf Centre is not recognised.
- Has the varying biodiversity value across the Copthall site been considered in developing the brief.
- Archaeology potential highlighted.

Transport/ Access

- Very poor public transport access - majority of users come by car. Current and proposed location of leisure centre excludes public transport users with reduced mobility and it was raised if this is the best location for the new leisure centre.
- Should parks operation base be adjacent to an already congested junction.
- Transport plans for any increased use, [Allianz stadium] needs to be considered.
- Welcome the intended improvements to cycle and pedestrian access and hope they resolve issues with waterlogging of footpaths.

Hasmonean School

- Make clear expansion plans and the land on which the expansion is proposed.
- The statement that it is important that the school can thrive and grow in line with the Council's requirements for increased secondary school places to meet the needs of Barnet's diverse population, seems incongruous in the middle of a brief for sports facilities.
- The potential transport impact on Champions Way is not considered.

5.8 Insight

- 5.8.1 Data from the SPA project has helped identify the priorities outlined in the Brief.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 [Copthall – draft Planning Brief](#) December 2015
- 6.2 [Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy](#), September 2012
- 6.3 [Barnet's Statement of Community Involvement](#), July 2015
- 6.4 [Sport and Activity Review Revised Outline Business Case](#), February 2015