

Report for: Cabinet - 11 September 2018

Title: Designation of Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum.

Report authorised by : Helen Fisher

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Ward(s) affected: Stroud Green, Harringay

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011. It allows a community to self-define their neighbourhood and prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their area which then forms part of a local authority's development plan. The primary function of a Neighbourhood Plan is to provide localised planning policies that must be in general conformity with the policy hierarchy: Haringey's Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Neighbourhood Planning policies must be created as the result of robust evidence and engagement practices. The first steps in the Neighbourhood Planning process are for the Local Authority to designate a proposed Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum. Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum applications are separate, but it is recommended that these applications are submitted together, as is the case with the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area application and the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Forum application
- 1.2 A Neighbourhood Area application and Neighbourhood Forum application are attached at Appendix 1, and were submitted by a community group - the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (referred to as the Working Group in this report). This report considers the designation of a Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area and a Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Forum. The application submissions identify the area within which the group intends to operate and provide summaries of the group's membership and constitution in line with the regulations and requirements. This report also summarises the content of the applications including the evidence based submissions such as the Neighbourhood Area Boundary Study (Appendix 2), the Equalities Assessment (Appendix 6). and the results of consultation on the area and forum applications (Appendix 8).
- 1.3 The designation of a Neighbourhood Area and Forum are the first steps in the neighbourhood planning process. Following designation, a Neighbourhood Forum has the opportunity to utilise planning powers to shape their Neighbourhood Area, for example through the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

- 1.4 The proposed Neighbourhood Area straddles the borough boundaries of Haringey, Hackney and Islington, making it a tri-borough application. Officers from all three councils have been liaising to coordinate the processing of the two applications, including public consultation, and to synchronise the formal decision making processes in the three boroughs. As regards the proposal for the Neighbourhood Area, each of the three local authorities can make a decision only in respect of their part of the proposed Neighbourhood Area

2 Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 The Council is supportive of local communities taking a leading role in shaping the future of their local area. The Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Forum will be the third such forum designated in Haringey, following on from those for Highgate and Crouch End. Straddling the boundaries of three local authorities, there are likely to be administrative challenges associated with progressing a neighbourhood plan for this area, but Haringey Council is committed to working with the Forum and our neighbouring council's to ensure our local people can achieve their ambitions for their neighbourhood.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 To consider the summary of responses to the consultation on the applications for the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum (Appendix 8).
- 3.2 To refuse to designate the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area, as identified in Appendix 1 and Appendix 7, pursuant to Section 61G and 61I of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the Act") in so far as that area is within the London Borough of Haringey
- 3.3 To designate the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area as amended by Officers and identified in Appendix 9, pursuant to Section 61G and 61I of the Act in so far as that area is within the London Borough of Haringey
- 3.4 To agree to designate the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Forum, as set out in Appendix 1, pursuant to Section 61F of the Act

4 Reasons for decision

- 4.1 An application for the designation of the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area which falls within London Boroughs of Islington, Hackney and Haringey, as identified on the map submitted as part of the Neighbourhood Area application (at Appendix 7), has been made to the Council and the proposal has been subject to consultation. The application meets the relevant regulations.

Neighbourhood Area

- 4.2 In light of representations received Officers recommend that Cabinet designates the Area but with amendments to the proposed boundary within Haringey, namely to exclude the Finsbury Park itself.

- 4.3 The representations received highlight Finsbury Park is wholly within the Haringey administrative area, and thus there was significant concern that the proposed Forum would have undue influence over the future management and development within the park, for which the majority of membership is not within Haringey under whose administrative responsibility lies.
- 4.4 Additionally the Park is a Regional Park with more than local significance, and its future is considered important to many neighbourhoods within the three Boroughs and further afield. There is therefore concern that other neighbourhoods within the vicinity of the park would lose influence and sway over the future of the park and that there will not be the opportunity for consultation on issues which may affect them.
- 4.5 Officers would therefore conclude that there are no existing administrative or physical boundaries which justify the attachment of any part of the park exclusively to the Stroud Green/Finsbury Park Forum Area, and the inclusion of it within the proposed Forum Area could be to the detriment of other neighbourhoods within the vicinity of the Park. It is noted that there are a number of existing mechanisms which afford protection to the interests of residents and park users. This includes an active Stakeholder Group which includes representation on behalf of local residents (in the form of local councillors, resident associations and the Friends of Finsbury Park).
- 4.6 If Cabinet are minded to refuse to designate the Neighbourhood Area boundary as proposed, the provisions of section 61G(5) of the Act would apply. This requires the Council to exercise its power of designation so as to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more areas designated (or to be designated) as Neighbourhood Areas. This means that a smaller Neighbourhood Area would need to be designated (removing any areas which instigated refusal). As the proposed Neighbourhood Area crosses a local authority boundary the powers of designation apply to each Local Planning Authority for their own area only. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet use the Council's powers of Designation to designate a boundary for the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area as amended by Officers and identified in Appendix 9

Neighbourhood Forum

- 4.7 An application for the designation of a Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Forum (Appendix 1) has been made to the Council and the proposal has been subject to consultation which demonstrated no objections from stakeholders. The application meets the relevant regulations.
- 4.8 It is recommended that Cabinet designate the proposed Neighbourhood Forum.

5 Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The Council is required by Section 61G and 61I of the Act to determine an application to designate a neighbourhood area within 20 weeks of submission of the application. The only alternative options would be for the Council to:

- designate the area as submitted without alterations

- Refuse to designate the Forum.

5.2 For the reasons given above, the designation of the area as submitted is recommended to be modified. The section below outlines how the proposed Forum meets the requirements in regulations and there have been no objections received. Therefore it is not recommended to refuse the application to designate the Forum.

6 Background information

6.1 The Working Group began work on neighbourhood planning in 2015 as a result of the Finsbury Park Regeneration Conference 2015. The three Councils have provided feedback on several iterations of the forum and area applications before valid applications (i.e. consistent with the relevant regulations) were submitted to Islington, Hackney and Haringey Councils in April 2018

6.2 The application submissions include the following documents (appended to this report):

Appendix 1: Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum Application

Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Area Boundary Study

Appendix 3: Protected Characteristics Study

Appendix 4: Forum Constitution

Appendix 5: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Statement

Appendix 6: Equalities Assessment

Appendix 7: Neighbourhood Area Map

Appendix 8: Consultation Summary, produced by the Council

7 Neighbourhood Area Application

7.1 The Neighbourhood Area application includes the following relevant information as required under Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the Regulations”) (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 7):

- A map identifying the proposed Neighbourhood Area (the area to which the application relates)
- A statement explaining why the area is considered to be appropriate to be designated; and,
- A statement that the organisation is a relevant body (i.e. an organisation or body which is, or is capable of being, designated as a Neighbourhood Forum as defined in section 61G of the Act`.

7.2 In addition to a map of the proposed area, an explanation for the proposed boundary and the evidence used to determine it, is set out in the Neighbourhood Area Boundary Study (Appendix 2).

7.3 Officers (of Islington, Hackney and Haringey) are satisfied that the application submitted for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area meets the minimum

requirements set out in Regulation 5 of the Regulations and Section 61G of the Act.

- 7.4 The Neighbourhood Area spans eight wards of which two are in Haringey (Stroud Green and Harringay). The proposed area contains three main features: Finsbury Park town centre, residential dwellings, and the open space of Finsbury Park. The majority of the proposed neighbourhood area falls within Islington's boundary which contains the majority of Finsbury Park town centre, including the west side of Blackstock Road, west side of Stroud Green Road, and Seven Sisters Road up until the junction with Blackstock Road.
- 7.5 The Northern boundary In Haringey (Stroud Green Ward) runs along Mount View Road and adjoins the Crouch End Neighbourhood Forum Area. This was done to satisfy Section 61G(7) of the Act that states 'the areas designated as neighbourhood areas must not overlap with each other'. The area to the south of this line to Stroud Green Road was included as residents did feel a connection with the Finsbury Park Area, and Stroud Green was included within the Forum Area to avoid a divide between the Stroud Green Road and the Stroud Green Conservation Area, making Planning Policy in the area more comprehensive. The proposed name for the Neighbourhood Area, the "Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area", recognises the two distinct but inseparable neighbourhoods.
- 7.6 Outside of Haringey the western boundary of the Neighbourhood Area runs parallel to Hornsey Road. However, it does not follow the physical feature of Hornsey Road itself, instead following an irregular line that excludes all properties fronting Hornsey Road and includes selected properties to the east as a result of the boundary survey. This was felt appropriate by the Working Group in order to not reduce the chances of a comprehensive strategy for the regeneration of the adjoining area and allow for Hornsey Road's potential inclusion in another Neighbourhood Area (possibly linked to Holloway).
- 7.7 To the south-west, the boundary staggers south-eastwards in from Seven Sisters Road as a result of the boundary survey results indicating that half of residents west of Berriman Road and Parkside Crescent identified more with Holloway, and half with Finsbury Park. The boundary here therefore takes account of the survey findings and follows a route based on the local street pattern and character.
- 7.8 The southern part of the Neighbourhood Boundary in the Highbury West Ward follows an irregular line along Gillespie Road. The cluster of local services along Gillespie Road between Plimsoll Road and Avenell Road are excluded as these are said to likely have a catchment area largely serving areas outside the neighbourhood boundary.
- 7.9 The north-west of the boundary in Islington follows the Overground Line west through Crouch Hill to its intersection with the boundary parallel to Hornsey Road. This was done to satisfy Section 61G(7) of the Act that states 'the areas designated as neighbourhood areas must not overlap with each other'. The proposed Neighbourhood Area therefore abuts but does not overlap with the designated Crouch Hill and Hornsey Rise Neighbourhood Area. Although there is no designated forum for this latter area, the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Working Group acknowledge the need to engage proactively on cross boundary

issues if a neighbourhood forum for Crouch Hill and Hornsey Rise were to form in the future.

- 7.10 The Boundary to the South East in Hackney runs down from the south-east side of Finsbury Park where it then follows an irregular line southwards to the west of Green Lanes in the London Borough of Hackney. This is due to boundary survey results, existing planning applications and Area Action Plans that have been taken into account. The boundary then finally meets up with Blackstock Road to the south.
- 7.11 The Working Group conducted a range of exercises in devising the proposed Neighbourhood Area. This included a boundary survey via an online survey generating 490 valid responses; running nine street stalls; hosting and attending community events; and targeted door knocking, generating an additional 607 valid responses. Additionally, contact was made with Friends of Finsbury Park Management Committee (FFPMC) and Ladder Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) to gauge their views on the boundary proposal. This mainly concerned whether to include the Park in the boundary which FFPMC felt may be appropriate to create a coherent plan. LCSP had reservations about including the whole Park in the plan, though further discussions concluded that LCSP would not take an official line on the issue.
- 7.12 The Council's decision on the designation of the Neighbourhood Area must be made in relation to the proposed Neighbourhood Area within the boundary of the London Borough of Haringey only.
- 7.13 A large part of the proposed Neighbourhood Area is covered by Conservation Area (CA) designations, with further Conservation Areas adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area boundary. The Conservation Area encompassed by the boundary within Haringey's jurisdiction is the Stroud Green CA (a small part of which falls within the Crouch End Neighbourhood Area to the North).
- 7.14 Section 61G(5)(c) of the Act allows the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to refuse to designate a proposed Neighbourhood Area if it is considered to be inappropriate, subject to the below provision. Section 61G(9) requires the LPA to give reasons for refusing to designate a Neighbourhood Area application. However, if Cabinet are minded to refuse to designate the Neighbourhood Area boundary as proposed, the provisions of Section 61G(5) would apply. This requires the Council to exercise its power of designation so as to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more areas designated (or to be designated) as Neighbourhood Areas. This means that a smaller Neighbourhood Area would need to be designated (removing any areas which instigated refusal). As the proposed Neighbourhood Area crosses a local authority boundary the powers of designation apply to each LPA for their own area only. The refusal of a proposed Neighbourhood Area however must be supported by evidence and justification.
- 7.15 National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides guidance on what considerations could be taken into account when deciding the boundaries of a Neighbourhood Area. This includes:

- village or settlement boundaries, which could reflect areas of planned expansion;
- the catchment area for walking to local services such as shops, primary schools, doctors' surgery, parks or other facilities;
- the area where formal or informal networks of community based groups operate;
- the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood, for example buildings may be of a consistent scale or style;
- whether the area forms all or part of a coherent estate either for businesses or residents;
- whether the area is wholly or predominantly a business area;
- whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary, for example a major road or railway line or waterway;
- the natural setting or features in an area;
- size of the population (living and working) in the area;
- electoral ward boundaries, which can be a useful starting point for discussions on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents.

7.16 The PPG also states that, when deciding whether to designate a Neighbourhood Area, a LPA should avoid pre-judging what a qualifying body may subsequently decide to put in its draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order; and it should not make assumptions about the Neighbourhood Plan or Order that will emerge from developing, testing and consulting on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order when designating a Neighbourhood Area.

7.17 As per the recommendations above, Officers are not satisfied that the Area as submitted is appropriate, as it includes a park of Regional significance, that would be inappropriate to be within the Neighbourhood Planning Powers of one Forum.

Neighbourhood Forum Application

7.18 The minimum requirements for a Neighbourhood Forum application are set out in the Regulations. Under Regulation 8, as well as the name of the forum and area and contact details of at least one member, applications must also include a copy of the written constitution and a statement which explains how the forum meets the conditions set out in section 61F(5) of the Act. This requires that an organisation must be established for the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. The above requirements are addressed in the Neighbourhood Forum application in (Appendix 1) and the Forum Constitution in (Appendix 4). It also requires membership of the forum to be open to individuals who live, work or are elected members in the area and that membership includes at least 21 individuals each of whom falls within one of these categories (as set out in Appendix 4).

7.19 In addition to ensuring, or taking reasonable steps to ensure membership from each category, section 61F(7) of the Act requires that, in determining whether to designate a Neighbourhood Forum for a Neighbourhood Area, a Local Planning Authority must have regard to the desirability of designating an organisation whose membership has secured (or has taken reasonable steps to attempt to secure) members from different places and different sections of the community in

the area and whose purpose reflects (in general terms) the character of the area. The forum application provides details about the forum's purpose and aims for the area (Appendix 1) and The Protected Characteristics Study (Appendix 3) together with the Neighbourhood Area Boundary Study (Appendix 2) demonstrate the comprehensive engagement and evidence gathering that took place in order to try and make the forum as representative as possible and identify groups where more engagement will be needed.

7.20 The forum application also provides an overview of the membership of the forum, with the Register of Members being redacted from the public consultation for data protection reasons. However, the Register of Members has been reviewed by officers and the forum membership complies with the requirements. There are 82 members which includes people who live and/or work within the area. There is one councillor from each borough that would also sit on the forum. Efforts have been made to consult and involve different parts of the area and different sections of the community - as set out in the Equalities Assessment (Appendix 6) and the Protected Characteristics Study (Appendix 3).

7.21 The Equalities Assessment (Appendix 6) demonstrates a concerted effort to ensure inclusivity of the Neighbourhood Forum through:

- explicit objectives in the constitution to include people from across the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010;
- once the forum is adopted the appointed treasurer will secure funding to support residents to get involved, especially those who do not typically get involved in planning policy development;
- Subject to the approval of the Neighbourhood Forum and Area, the forum will ask members to voluntarily provide equalities monitoring data to allow the ongoing assessment of how the forum makeup compares to the makeup of the Neighbourhood Area as a whole and thus deploy resources to engage underrepresented groups;
- continuous engagement with the local community including non-members of the forum and those outside the Neighbourhood Area through a range of methods including surveys, door knocking, events, online discussions, newsletters and workshops. The Working Group also propose methods to engage those who do not typically take part in civic activity by embedding consultation in cultural, sports and leisure activities;
- Meetings and events will also be accessible and key information provided in a variety of formats.

7.22 The Equalities Assessment acknowledges the need to ensure that development contributes towards reducing economic inequality within the Neighbourhood Area for all protected characteristics.

7.23 After providing feedback on several iterations of the forum application officers of Haringey, Hackney and Islington Councils are satisfied that the application submitted for designation of a Neighbourhood Forum meets the requirements set out in Regulation 8 of the Regulations and Sections 61F(5) and 61F(7) of the Act.

7.24 If a Neighbourhood Forum is designated, then sub-section 61F (8)- of the Act is clear that this designation will expire after 5 years. In addition, a LPA can

withdraw the designation if they consider the organisation is no longer meeting the conditions by reference to which it was designated or any other criteria to which the LPA is required to have regard to in making the designation. If a forum designation is withdrawn the reasons for this must be set out.

7.25 If a decision is made to refuse to designate a Neighbourhood Forum the LPA must publicise their decision and set out their reasons for making that decision in a “refusal statement”, as required under Regulation 10 of the Regulations.

Consultation and discussion of responses

7.26 Haringey, Hackney and Islington Councils carried out a joint consultation exercise on both applications. Under Regulations 6 & 9 of the Regulations (2012) as amended, the Councils were required to publicise the applications to those who live or work in the area to which the applications relate. The consultation took place for six weeks from the 14th May 2018 to 25th June 2018. Copies of the applications were made available on the Council’s website, along with information on how to make representations. Notices were also displayed at various locations throughout the proposed Neighbourhood Area. Finally, individuals and organisations on the Planning Policy database were notified about the consultation, where to find further information and how to respond.

7.27 A total of 18 responses were received by the three councils in total during the formal consultation period (see below for a contextualisation of this). A summary of all responses received, and the Council’s response to these, is provided at Appendix 8. Two of the respondents did not declare what borough they were from.

7.28 A total of 8 responses provided general comments that were neutral in relation to the forum and area proposals, mainly from statutory consultees and organisations (TfL, National Grid, Highways England, Natural England, Canal and River Trust, Historic England, Openreach, Deloitte)

7.29 Three responses expressed support for both the forum and area applications. Of these, two were from local residents and one was from a respondent representing the NHS. Overall, there were no responses that specifically supported just the Neighbourhood Forum, and equally there were no responses that specifically opposed the proposed Neighbourhood Forum.

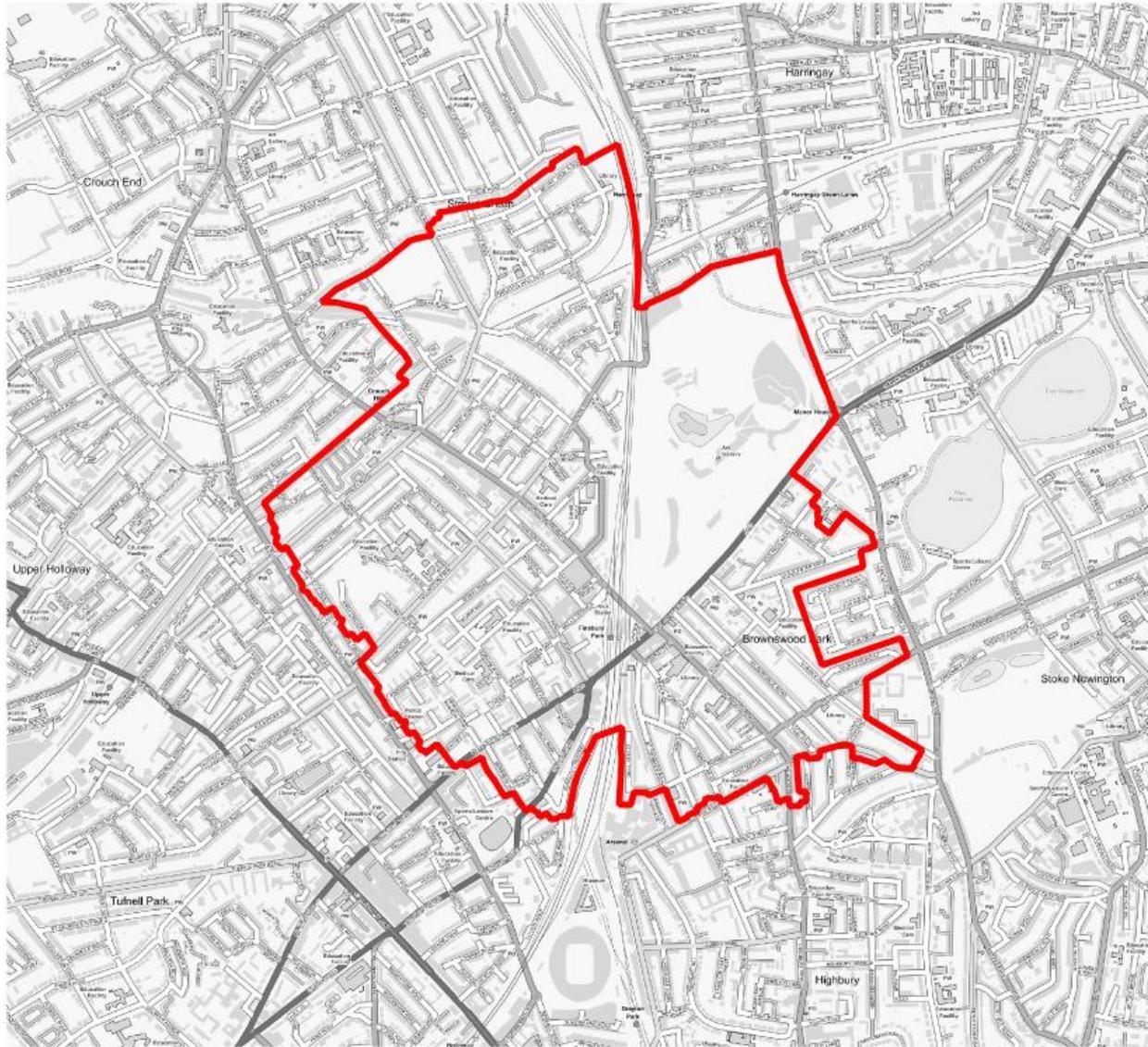
7.30 There were seven responses that objected to the proposed Neighbourhood Area boundary, although these were almost entirely related to the inclusion of the whole of Finsbury Park itself within the boundary. All respondents objecting to the proposed Neighbourhood Area were either based in Haringey or objected to the inclusion of the park which itself is within the London Borough of Haringey. The one response not related to this issue stated that they were not aware of previous engagement and would have liked to be included in the boundary.

7.31 The primary reason for the above objections to include the whole of the park, is that these respondents felt that the inclusion of the park would give residents on the west side of the park, primarily within Islington, undue influence over its development and management. In their consultation response, Historic England noted that Finsbury Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. Therefore,

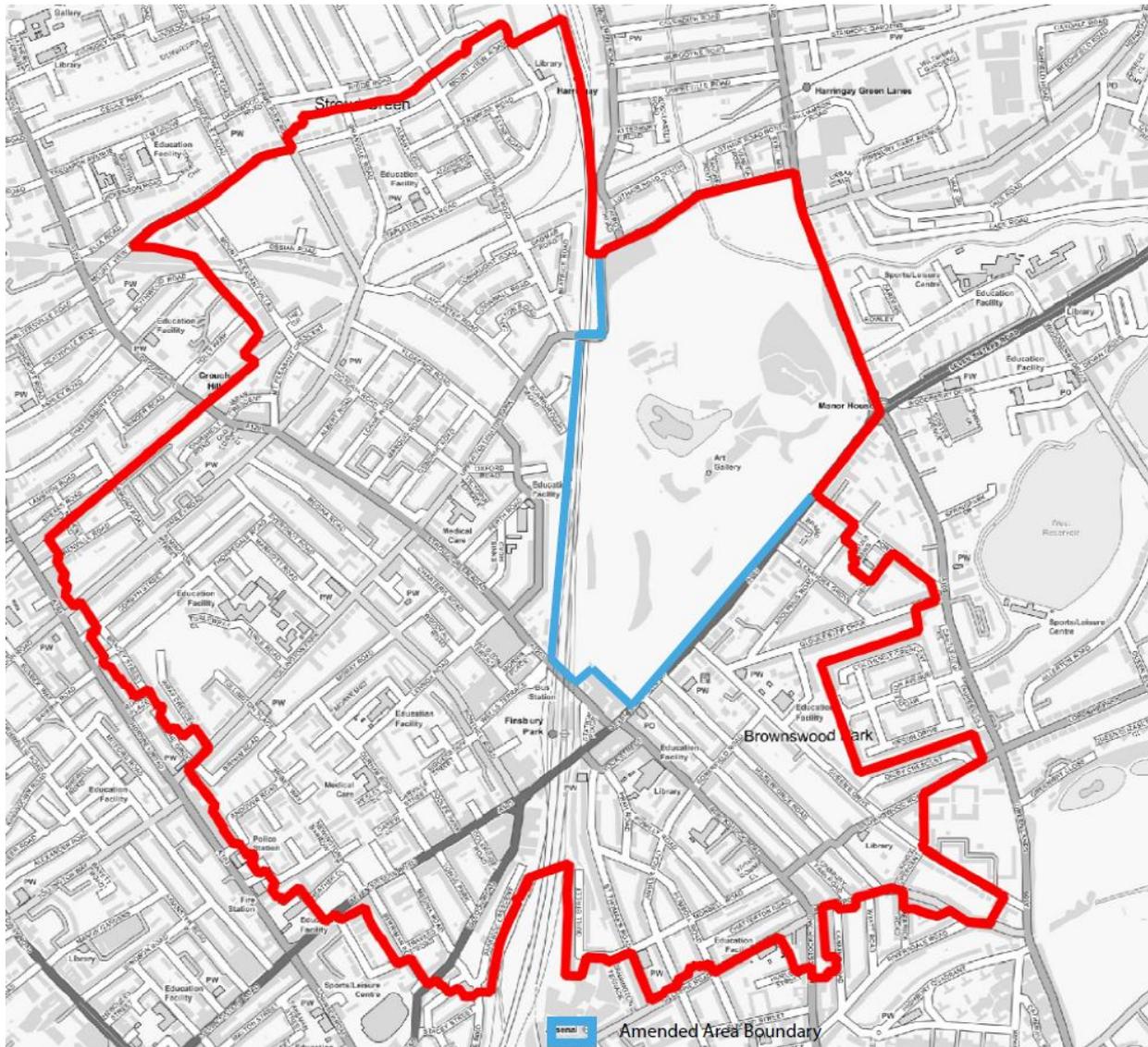
whether the park is included in the Neighbourhood Area boundary or not, development beyond 'enhancement' of the park would not be allowed.

- 7.32 Support for the area and forum mainly revolved around the opportunity to increase community involvement in the development of the neighbourhood; create a coherent approach to development as the area is at the intersection of three boroughs, and with TfL and Network Rail playing a significant role; and provide opportunities to identify, protect and enhance community assets.
- 7.33 The NHS response welcomed the forum and area application citing opportunities to explore cross boundary working to improve healthcare services and access to these, as well as opening opportunities for the sharing of premises and assets.
- 7.34 There were no objections to the proposed forum by any stakeholders. Through liaison between officers and the Working Group, the forum constitution does not allow affiliate voting rights so as to ensure forum members have full and fair democratic agency over forum decisions. The constitution (Appendix 4) also builds on the comprehensive equality assessment (Appendix 6) by committing to open membership of the forum and striving to continuously engage demographic groups that are underrepresented or more challenging to engage.
- 7.35 A late representation was received from an Islington resident objecting to the inclusion of a small part of the Islington area, between Seven Sisters Road and the railway line to the east, within the proposed Neighbourhood Area. It is considered that this late representation does not justify amending this part of Islington's boundary as proposed by the Working Group.
- 7.36 The boundary of the proposed Neighbourhood Area (reproduced from Appendix 7) is shown below followed by the amended boundary recommended by Officers;

Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area



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Joint Borough working

- 7.37 Officers from Haringey, Hackney and Islington have worked closely on managing the neighbourhood planning process for Finsbury Park and Stroud Green and will continue to do so to ensure consistency in advice to the prospective Neighbourhood Forum and that regulations are met throughout the process.
- 7.38 Hackney and Islington Councils' will also be taking the proposed applications forward through their formal approval processes during the summer, and there is a statutory deadline to formally consider applications within 20 weeks of their publication.
- 7.39 Subject to Cabinet approving the recommendations in this report, and Hackney and Islington also agreeing the Forum designation, and the Neighbourhood Area designation for the part of the Neighbourhood Area in Hackney and in Islington, the Forum and Area (as amended) would form the basis for the Forum to commence work on a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. It is not anticipated that LB Hackney or LB Islington would recommend an amendment to their part of the boundary but it is within their powers to do so.

The role of the Forum

- 7.40 If the Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum applications are approved by all three Councils (with or without amendments to the boundary of the Area), then the designations will be publicised consistent with Regulations 7 and 10 of the Regulations.
- 7.41 If designated, the Neighbourhood Forum can develop a draft Neighbourhood Plan, in consultation with residents and other stakeholders. The final Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying material would be submitted to Haringey, Hackney and Islington Councils, who will invite representations on the plan for a period of six weeks. Following this, the plan would be assessed by an independent examiner to ensure basic requirements have been met.
- 7.42 Following a statutory examination, if the examiner is satisfied that a proposed Neighbourhood Plan is sound, a referendum on the proposed plan would be held. All registered voters in the whole Neighbourhood Area would be entitled to vote. A simple majority of votes in favour is required for the Councils to be able to adopt the plan. Upon adoption, the Neighbourhood Plan would form part of each Council's statutory Development Plan and would be used to make decisions on planning applications.
- 7.43 Officers will continue to advise the Neighbourhood Forum when developing any further neighbourhood planning proposals in order to ensure that they are effective and consistent with local policies. The Council will set out expectations of the process; this will include setting milestones and strong encouragement of ongoing dialogue between the Forum, local communities and councillors.
- 7.44 It is important to note that once there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place the Neighbourhood Forum would have a role to play in considering the spending of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the future. The National Planning Practice Guidance states that 25% of CIL receipts from an area with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan should be allocated in consultation with the local community, and this is also applicable where developments are secured through a Neighbourhood Development Order or Community Right to Build Order. This applies to CIL receipts secured through planning permissions granted after the Neighbourhood Plan has passed the referendum.

8 Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 8.1 Neighbourhood planning can accord with the delivery of the majority of corporate objectives, as it enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work, setting out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop and in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people. In this respect it represents residents and businesses within a community coming together to work in partnership to help improve their local area for the betterment of all.

Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

- 8.2 The Council has statutory duties in relation to neighbourhood planning including publicity, administration costs such as referendums, cost of assessing the Neighbourhood Area and Forum, and supporting local neighbourhood forums in preparing their neighbourhood plans.
- 8.3 Some of these costs will be met within the existing Neighbourhood Plans budget and staff resources to implement the Plan will come from the Council's existing staff resources.
- 8.4 In addition, Government provides funding to help local authorities meet the cost of their Neighbourhood Planning responsibilities and to support local communities. Local Planning Authorities can claim £5,000 for each of the first five Neighbourhood Areas designated and a further £5,000 for each of the first five Neighbourhood Forums designated.
- 8.5 As the neighbourhood area crosses three borough boundaries, the resource implications of supporting the work of the forum is likely to be significantly greater than this as a result of the administrative burden involved in co-ordinating meetings, consultations, and running the referendum. If this is the case this may impact on the ability of the Service to deliver other priorities.

Procurement

- 8.6 N/A

Legal

- 8.7 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance had reviewed and noted this report.
- 8.8 The consultation on the neighbourhood area and forum applications has been conducted in line with the Regulations.
- 8.9 The Regulations) set a prescribed date for the determination of an area application. In this case, the prescribed date is 20 weeks from the date immediately following that on which the application is first publicised, which was the 14th May 2018.
- 8.10 Section 61G(5) of the Act states that the Council must exercise their power of designation so as to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more areas designated (or to be designated) as neighbourhood areas. This means if the boundary as proposed is refused a smaller neighbourhood area would need to be designated (removing any areas which instigated refusal). A justification would also need to be set out for the changes to the boundary.
- 8.11 In determining the decision to designate an organisation as neighbourhood forum the Council must comply with section 61F(7) of the Act, including having regard to the desirability of designating an organisation or body whose membership is drawn from different places in the neighbourhood area concerned and from different sections of the community in that area. If a decision is made to refuse to

designate a neighbourhood forum the Council must publicise the decision and set out their reasons in a “refusal statement”.

Equality

8.12 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

8.13 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

8.14 The Council has consulted with residents on the designation of the boundary and forum and the outcome of the consultation is summarised in this report. Some respondents to the consultation note that were a neighbourhood forum designated and a neighbourhood plan brought forward, there is potential to bring about positive impacts on local environmental quality and health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

8.15 With regard to the forum application, officers have worked closely with the Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to ensure that as far as possible the forum is open to all, including people sharing the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act (paragraph 7.1), with membership drawn from different sections of the community and from different places within the area, as required by legislation. The application demonstrates a commitment to continue to engage with the local community and be as inclusive as possible, working to identify and engage diverse members of the local community. Specifically, the Neighbourhood Forum contains explicit objectives to include people who share the nine protected characteristics, the application makes a commitment to seeking funding to ensure that individuals with protected characteristics participate in the forum, and equalities considerations have been taken into account in plans for the forum’s operations.

8.16 If designated, the neighbourhood forum can proceed to preparing a neighbourhood plan. The neighbourhood plan must be inclusive, with due consideration for the needs of individuals and groups with protected characteristics, and will therefore need to include ongoing consultation with all sections of the community. The Council’s role in the preparation of the potential neighbourhood plan will be to support and guide the process. The Council will advise on consultation requirements throughout the process, including ensuring the group engage with relevant statutory bodies as well as the community.

9 Use of Appendices

- Appendix 1: Finsbury Park and Stroud Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum Application
- Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Area Boundary Study
- Appendix 3: Protected Characteristics Study
- Appendix 4: Forum Constitution
- Appendix 5: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Statement
- Appendix 6: Equalities Assessment
- Appendix 7: Neighbourhood Area Map
- Appendix 8: Consultation Summary (produced by the Council)
- Appendix 9: Proposed Amended Neighbourhood Boundary

10 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
None