

**Report for:** Cabinet 9 March 2021

**Title:** Adoption of Highgate School Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

**Report authorised by:** Rob Krzyszowski, Interim Assistant Director for Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability

**Lead Officer:** Bryce Tudball, Planning Policy Team Manager

**Ward(s) affected:** Highgate

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

## **1 Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 This report documents the responses to a consultation on the Draft Highgate School Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (October – December 2020) and the Council's response to these, and recommends Cabinet adopts the SPD, subject to a number of amendments in response to the consultation responses.
- 1.2 The purpose of the SPD is to provide further guidance on the Site Allocation: SA41 Highgate School in the Council's adopted Local Plan. The adoption of the SPD will fulfil the Local Plan's commitment to bring forward an SPD containing an agreed masterplan for the School's future development and provide guidance for determining planning applications.

## **2 Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1 The Council has developed this SPD in partnership with Highgate School, to help give more certainty to the local community about future development in the School's estate. It is important to recognise that the School's historic and contemporary buildings make a significant positive contribution to the built environment of the area. The SPD seeks to ensure that the School, in keeping with its past, continues to show great sensitivity in the conservation, repair and enhancement of its built heritage and in its approach to new buildings. It is also important that the School environment is accessible and environmentally sustainable and this SPD sets the framework for doing so.

## **3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet:
  - 1) Notes the representations received in response to the consultation on the Draft SPD, the Council's responses to these set out in Appendix A, and the consequent changes proposed to the Draft SPD before adoption.
  - 2) Notes the comments and recommendations of Regulatory Committee of 25 February 2021 regarding the changes proposed to the SPD

- 3) Adopts the Highgate School SPD attached at Appendix B

#### **4 Reasons for decision**

- 4.1 Public consultation took place on the Draft SPD for 8 weeks from 26 October 2020 to 21 December 2020. The responses to the consultation have been considered and it is recommended that a series of changes are made to the SPD before it is adopted. Once adopted the SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the School, a series of which are expected to come forward in the near future. The SPD will provide guidance to help preserve the special character, heritage and amenity of the local area in line with the adopted Local Plan's Site Allocation for the School and will discharge the Council's commitment in the Local Plan to prepare an SPD for the site.

#### **5 Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 The alternative options considered are:

Option 1 – Not to adopt the SPD. The disadvantages of this are that the Council would not meet the commitment in the Site Allocations Local Plan document to bring forward an SPD for the School, it would not have specific adopted guidance to inform the submission and determination of future planning applications relating to the School, there would be no agreed strategic approach to the School's development as a whole, and an ad-hoc way of dealing with estate wide issues would not give the local community the overall picture of the School's development intentions and it would not enable the community to comment and input into the School's long-term development in a meaningful way. Rather residents and businesses would only be able to comment on individual applications without this wider context.

Option 2: To adopt the SPD without any changes to the SPD following public consultation. This option would be contrary to legislation which requires the Council to take into account all consultation responses received before adopting the SPD. This would mean that not taking account of important feedback from the community and the stakeholders and would not allow changes to be made to the Draft SPD which would improve the robustness of the guidance within, including in relation to key land use principles.

Option 3: To adopt the SPD incorporating changes arising from responses to the public consultation on the Draft SPD. This would enable feedback from the community and other stakeholders to be incorporated within the adopted SPD.

- 5.2 Option 3 is being recommended as it will ensure that there is an agreed strategic approach in place for the future development of the School and that robust guidance is in place to support the making of future planning decisions for the School.

#### **6 Background**

- 6.1 The Local Plan Site Allocations Development Plan document identifies Highgate School as a Site Allocation (SA41) to explore how the School facilities can be

enhanced whilst simultaneously benefitting local communities. To enable this, the Site Allocation commits the Council to develop an SPD for which future development should accord to.

- 6.2 The Site Allocation and thus the SPD area also fall within the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan area and any future redevelopment will also have to accord with relevant policies within this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.3 The purpose of the Highgate School SPD is to provide a campus masterplan to take a comprehensive approach to the effective planning and delivery of new accommodation to meet the long-term needs of the School, and to support enhanced community use and benefits. This SPD will be used by the Council as a material consideration when determining any future planning applications for the School. The SPD has been drawn up in conjunction with the School and has been subject to public consultation, the results of which are detailed below.
- 6.4 The SPD describes the current situation within the School and the surrounding area, outlines the characteristics of the School and key issues faced, and details sites within the estate where new development is needed and the likely form this will take. It also details the proposed refurbishment of existing buildings to meet the School's future academic needs including temporary decant facilities. It should be noted none of the proposals are to accommodate an increase in numbers at the School; rather they are to meet modern academic standards and to improve the facilities, amenity and accessibility.
- 6.5 The School lies within Highgate Conservation Area and contains important historic buildings, some of which are listed. The SPD has a strong focus on conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environments, including Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) openness, sensitive landscaping, and creating fit for purpose new buildings, facilities and spaces. There is a commitment in the SPD and within the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan to continue to support the existing wider community through the use of the School's facilities. The provision of new facilities will therefore be of benefit to the local area.

## **Key SPD Proposals**

- 6.6 The SPD proposes a number of key developments. These include: significant upgrades to the Sixth Form Centre, improved senior School drama and music provisions, and enhancements to the sport and exercise offering including both internal and external sporting facilities. These key developments do not exclude the School from coming forward with routine or other minor applications which might be necessary throughout the course of the SPD. In terms of the sites and buildings included these are:

### **Bishopswood Road Campus**

- Mallinson Sports Centre
- Richards Music Centre
- Far Field
- Pre-Preparatory School
- Temporary Decant

### **Senior School Campus**

- Science Block
- Dyne House and Island Site Tunnel Access

### **Mallinson Sports Centre Redevelopment**

- 6.7 The Mallinson Sports Centre is located on Bishopswood Road and accommodates both internal and external sporting facilities including a swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts and Fives Courts. It was developed on a piecemeal basis and no longer fully meets the current and future needs of the Sports and Exercise (SpEx) programme. The current building also does not provide step-free / disabled access to the majority of facilities, only allowing disabled access into the main reception area and mezzanine hall.
- 6.8 The Mallinson Sports Centre building does not enhance the Conservation Area and is identified in the Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal as being a negative contributor and detracting from the environment. Therefore the SPD provides guidance that states that the demolition of the building and adjacent 'Fives' Courts may be considered acceptable subject to appropriate redevelopment of the site including impact on the openness of MOL and Heritage Assets. The main aim would be to provide a modern sports centre which was fully accessible on this site.

### **Richards Music Centre Redevelopment**

- 6.9 The existing building is a single-storey building with a mansard roof built originally for the School as a sports pavilion before largely being converted for use as a music centre and is now predominantly occupied by the SpEx Department and IT team. The existing building's layout and its form of construction severely compromise its use for any educational purpose. There are also problems with the building's drainage and foundations.
- 6.10 The unlisted building is not located within the MOL but is located adjacent to the MOL boundary. The SPD therefore provides guidance on how any redevelopment of the Richards Music Centre could be achieved to provide additional and enhanced educational accommodation. This is subject to the consideration of heritage views which includes an assessment of how the existing building contributes to the Highgate Conservation Area.

### **Far Field Drainage and Amenity Block Redevelopment**

- 6.11 This site lies some distance from the School and is used principally by the School for sports purposes. It is subject to regular drainage issues through inclement months significantly limiting its use. It also includes a small utility building with changing rooms and toilet facilities.
- 6.12 The intent of the School is to undertake a series of engineering works to rectify/reduce the risk of flooding, to replace the amenity building with one capable of meeting the needs of a co-educational establishment and covering the main playing field areas in a permeable green artificial surface to enable the area to have greater utility across a wider range of sports.

- 6.13 The SPD includes guidance to require that any proposal for improvements to the proposed new amenity block would need to be supported by a robust justification for very special circumstances as to the requirement for any new, extended or enlarged replacement structures in the MOL with regard to the impact on the MOL's openness and permanence, and to improve biodiversity on the site.

### **Pre-Preparatory School Extension**

- 6.14 The building is a part-three part-four storey building adapted for the School as a pre-preparatory School to accommodate children aged 3-7 years, with the main entry year being Nursery. The intent is to provide three new classrooms each of the same size as the existing classrooms located within the Pre-Preparatory School to facilitate a change to the main entry year being Reception. The SPD guidance indicates that the garden area to the north could be a suitable site for this and the School has desires for the development to be in the form of a 'treehouse' concept.
- 6.15 A planning application for an extension to the Pre-Preparatory building to provide three additional classrooms, a library, covered outdoor play space and level access to the existing school building was granted in January 2021 (HGY/2020/2980). This was brought forward in advance of the SPD as a result of a demonstrable operational need as set out within the application documents. Following the decision to close the School's Nursery in September 2021, the Pre-Preparatory project affords an opportunity to increase entry to the Pre-Prep school.

### **Temporary Decant Facilities**

- 6.16 Temporary decant facilities will need to be constructed whilst redevelopment works are underway. Specific requirements are identified in the SPD including that construction of temporary buildings on the Junior Field could be an option for temporary decant facilities. This does pose significant challenges, notably this would result in the temporary loss of MOL and 50% of the playing field during the decant.
- 6.17 The SPD therefore identifies that a temporary decant solution will only be supported by the Council and the Greater London Authority (GLA) where a very special circumstances case is presented by the School as part of a future planning application, and where a planning obligation is secured ensuring that the land used would be reinstated as MOL and playing field of equal or higher quality following cessation of the temporary use.

### **Science Block Renovation and Limited Extension**

- 6.18 The Science Block is located within the Senior School campus of Highgate School. The fabric of the Science Block is designated, falling under the listing of the 'Old School Building' known as the 'Big School' which is Grade II Listed. The Science Block requires substantial refurbishment and reconfiguration, particularly the laboratories. The scope of works is being developed by the School but will require some small-scale extensions in the Garner and Science Quadrangles to facilitate full accessibility and reconfiguration of the laboratories.

- 6.19 The SPD therefore provides guidance that states that any extensions would be undertaken sympathetically to Heritage Assets, should seek to enhance or improve the external appearance generally and should be to the same standard as the other work undertaken across the Senior School.

### **Dyne House Redevelopment and Island Site Tunnel Access**

- 6.20 Dyne House forms an integral part of the Senior School in the heart of Highgate Village. The site slopes down steeply from west to east. The main building (Dyne House) was opened in 1967. Behind the main building are the two-storey classroom building and the Gymnasium which is currently used as a Drama Studio. There is a redundant open-air swimming pool and the Parade Ground which is used as a pupil amenity area. The building is partially accessible for those with mobility issues from Southwood Lane; it is not accessible for pupils with mobility issues from the Island Site due to narrow steep stairs at either end of the tunnel.
- 6.21 The services, windows and other elements have reached the end of their life and the joints on the external precast concrete panels are now starting to break down and leak. The SPD therefore identifies that additional and improved space is required to meet the academic requirements on the Senior School and that a way to achieve this is through the sensitive refurbishment or redevelopment of the Dyne House site. Improvements to the tunnel access from the Island Site to the Dyne House Site are also necessary to allow a safe, secure and fully accessible route between the two parts of the School.
- 6.22 The SPD highlights that this site has a significant number of challenges for any redevelopment, given it occupies a prominent location in Highgate Village and the Conservation Area. Guidance is given on the key impacts that will need to be considered as part of any planning application. It is also highlighted that the 'Highgate Bowl' allocation is located adjacent to the site but for the avoidance of doubt, the SPD acknowledges that Dyne House and the buildings behind it are not included within the Highgate Bowl allocation. The SPD also identifies that The Parade Ground will be protected as Significant Open Land and should not be built on other than improvements to its surface and facilities.

### **Key Land Use Issues**

- 6.23 In delivering proposals within the Senior School and, specifically those related to Dyne House, the SPD expects the School to have regard to site allocation SA42 which relates to the 'Highgate Bowl'. SA42 seeks to protect the Highgate Bowl as open space, and to improve public access to it through limited redevelopment of Townsend Yard, Broadbent Close and Duke's Head Yard.
- 6.24 The School's Bishopswood Road Campus, together with the Far Field, contains the majority of the School's sporting facilities including the playing fields. These playing fields have been designated as MOL and as such Policy SP13 of the Haringey Local Plan applies which protects these open spaces and green land from inappropriate development. The SPD details these policy considerations for each proposed development and in doing so provides a framework that can



effectively manage these issues and give more certainty to the School and wider community with regards to the future development on these sites.

- 6.25 Additionally, given that many of the School's buildings are in a Conservation Area, and the number of listed buildings the School has or is in the vicinity of, there is necessarily a substantial amount of guidance to ensure that development proposals do not harm the setting or character of any of these heritage assets. Historic England will be consulted during public consultation, and as and when any relevant planning application is submitted.
- 6.26 Given the School's proposed pipeline of development, the SPD sets out an expectation that the School should bring forward the strategic proposals for the School estate simultaneously so that the proposals can be looked at holistically and comprehensively.

### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

- 6.27 Paragraph 8 of the National Planning Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal advises that SPDs do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies. The SPD supplements Site Allocation 41 of the Site Allocations Local Plan document. A full Sustainability Appraisal was carried out at each formal stage in the preparation of the Site Allocations. Nevertheless the SPD has been subject to a separate Strategic Environmental (SEA) screening opinion, to comply with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 6.28 The screening concludes that the SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects and, accordingly, should not be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. The statutory bodies Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency were consulted on this and they concurred with this conclusion, and the final screening report is published alongside the SPD at Appendix C.

### **Consultation on the Highgate School SPD**

- 6.29 Cabinet approved the SPD for consultation on 10 March 2020. Following Cabinet a number of minor text, layout and design changes were made to the SPD including changes needed for clarification and for consultation purposes. Due to restrictions imposed as a result of the first Covid-19 lockdown, consultation was delayed until 26 October 2020 and ran to 21 December 2020 (8 weeks). The SPD was consulted on in general accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Specifically, the following consultation methods were employed:
- notification by e-mail / letter to all persons/organisations listed on the existing Planning Policy database including the Highgate Neighbourhood Forum;
  - notification by letter to those addresses within proximity to the Highgate School site;

- publicity on the Planning Policy webpages and the corporate consultation portal of the Council's website;
  - two online consultation events (in lieu of in-person events);
  - printed documents available in the local Highgate Library;
  - social media posts;
  - Public notice in the Ham and High, and on lampposts in the vicinity of the School estate
- 6.30 Concern was raised during the consultation that additional time was needed to comment on the document given another national lockdown had come into effect. The consultation was extended by two weeks, with the original end date extended from 7 December 2020 to 21 December 2020.

## **Consultation Outcomes**

- 6.31 As a result of the consultation arrangements outlined above, 40 responses were received. The substantive points raised in the responses are detailed, alongside the Council's responses, in the Consultation Statement at Appendix A to this report. However, in summary the following key issues were raised, and the changes detailed are recommended to be made to the document before the SPD is adopted.

## **Academic Needs**

- 6.32 A significant number of respondents queried the basis for the proposed improvements and development, and stated that the whilst the documents are quite specific on the amount of development that will be needed to meet needs, there are no details of pupil numbers taking the relevant subjects to quantify the need. This was also expressed with concern as to whether these needs are aspirations as opposed to actual needs, and as such whether the SPD took the right balance between what the School may aspire to or 'need' and the importance of enhancing the Conservation Area, local amenity, protection of MOL and transport issues.
- 6.33 The principle of the enhancement of the School's facilities is established in adopted Site Allocation 41, and the provision of new or enhanced educational facilities is supported in the Local Plan, the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The SPD has been developed taking into account supporting documents provided by the School, including an Education Needs and Accommodation Needs Assessment. Importantly, the estate development programme proposed is not one of growth; rather it is predicated on providing high quality facilities to the existing pupil body which is expected to remain within the School's currently licenced capacity of 1,970. The need for the estate development programme is built upon a requirement for the modernisation of the School's facilities and is designed to replace life expired buildings and provide flexibility in response to modern requirements of teaching today. In many cases, the programme also reflects and responds to changes in legislation and the need to provide a sustainable and resilient estate, responding to the climate emergency. It is acknowledged that the need for the specific facilities proposed is an important consideration in the planning balance, therefore the SPD has been revised to clarify that when strategic proposals in the SPD come forward



the development quanta proposed should be justified within planning applications to help in the weighing up of the planning balance against potential impacts on designations and amenity affecting each site.

### **Simultaneous Applications**

- 6.34 A majority of respondents requested that the SPD commit the School to bring forward its applications simultaneously so the community can see the holistic treatment of the different proposals.
- 6.35 Given the cumulative impacts of the proposed developments, the SPD has been revised to include a clearer guidance that applications for strategic proposals in the SPD should be submitted simultaneously, so that the developments can be seen in the round, and that cumulative impacts across the various development sites can be assessed. The Council cannot preclude the School submitting planning applications at any time but the SPD is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

### **Pupil Numbers**

- 6.36 A majority of respondents expressed concern that the proposals in the SPD were to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers, with potentially significant negative impacts upon Highgate Village, and would be inconsistent with SPD's statement that the new facilities are for existing pupils to bring them up to modern standards. Respondents wanted to see a much more specific commitment to not increase pupil numbers.
- 6.37 The Council has confirmed with the School's administration that the School does not intend to expand its pupil numbers above those already allowed for in its Department for Education license, and so the SPD text has been strengthened to clarify this, and to re-iterate that the proposals within it are to meet the modern academic needs of the School's current population, and are not proposed to help accommodate any expansion of the pupil body.

### **Further Engagement**

- 6.38 Many respondents expressed a desire to continue to be engaged throughout the School's redevelopment proposals and requested that the SPD confirms that the School will conduct pre-application consultations with full details for each site and over a reasonable length of time. Additional proposals were put forward including that the School could establish a version of a Community Review group (used by a number of local authorities on key sites) including representatives from key community organisations to create a regular and constructive forum for dialogue.
- 6.39 The existing Local Plan requires that all new development confidently addresses feedback from local consultation (Policy DM1). The Council's Statement of Community Involvement recommends applicants of major schemes to undertake early community involvement before submitting an application to the Council. It is the responsibility of the applicant to conduct pre-application community involvement. For major planning applications the Council requires that, at the point of submission, the applicant identifies the consultation undertaken and its results, together with how this has been incorporated into the submitted planning

application. It should be noted that the School has already undertaken some pre-application consultation on a number of its emerging proposals and has made further commitments around future engagement and text has been added to the SPD to highlight this commitment. The SPD has been amended to clarify that any future planning applications will be subject to mandatory consultation with local residents in line with planning legislation.

### **Indicative Building Heights and Massing**

- 6.40 There was widespread support for including more detail on indicative heights, design, massing, and building footprint. Respondents stated that this is required, in part, because the need for new buildings should be balanced by appropriate heights and design considerations (including massing, bulk, footprint) which preserve the significance of the heritage assets and residential amenity. This linked back to the respondents' concerns about academic need, and that the School's requirements will dictate the future heights, massing and footprints of the buildings in future applications.
- 6.41 The SPD does contain guidance as to how the impacts of any building including its height and massing should be considered and balanced against needs. It is considered that the best place to consider and assess detailed matters such as heights and designs is at the planning application stage; the SPD could not realistically prescribe these given the numerous impacts that will need to be considered on each site, and over the course of the 10 year SPD period. Instead it is considered appropriate that the SPD clearly highlights these potential impacts and site constraints and gives guidance as to how any development proposal should deal with these and result in a good design that protects amenity, heritage and character. Text within each of the relevant sites in the SPD subject to redevelopment has been strengthened to make clear how the constraints, including neighbouring impacts, should be considered in relation to a submitted application's massing, height and design. This is to ensure that planning policy requirements can be addressed, the development's overall design is appropriate and that the academic needs demonstrated for the development do not override or take precedence over the need for good design and overall impacts of the development.

### **Dyne House**

- 6.42 A large proportion of responses focused on the proposals for Dyne House, with concern expressed with regards to neighbouring privacy and amenity, views through Highgate Bowl and Southwood Lane, the importance of the Parade Ground and a desire for it not to be developed upon, and the potential for excavations. Support was given for any redevelopment to be set well back from the back edge of the footpath replicating a development line set by buildings demolished to make way for the present building alignment and footprint. There were also objections to the demolition of the School Gymnasium building on this site.
- 6.43 The text regarding Dyne House has been strengthened to confirm that impacts on neighbouring properties, including excavation or any potential basement works must have regard to their amenity and relevant Local Plan policies. Additionally, it is clarified that the Parade Ground is not included within the scope

of any redevelopment, and that this area will remain as is. The SPD has also been amended to further stress the importance that any building's final design must also respect and minimise impacts on important local views and character across the Highgate Bowl. It is noted that the current building line respects the historic street pattern therefore guidance has been added that the building line of any redeveloped buildings fronting Southwood Lane should be carefully considered.

### **Highgate Bowl and Views**

- 6.44 There was concern that the SPD does not adequately consider views, and requests that important local views, including in and out of the Highgate Bowl, need greater protection in the SPD. It was also noted that all current views looking toward the Highgate Bowl from Southwood Lane and residents homes and gardens are protected and so should not be obstructed by any replacement buildings.
- 6.45 As noted above, these concerns particularly relate to the redevelopment of Dyne House given its proximity to Highgate Bowl and these views. The SPD has therefore been amended to further stress the importance that any building's final design should also respect and minimise impacts on important local views and character across the Highgate Bowl.

### **Far Field**

- 6.46 Where respondents mentioned the Far Field it was to express concern with regards to potential issues with artificial lighting, and impacts on visual amenity and biodiversity.
- 6.47 The SPD has been amended in this regard to state that any proposals for lighting would be subject to assessment of impacts and should take into account the site's context and particularly biodiversity. It is considered that the current text within the SPD gives sufficient guidance and control to ensure that works in this area will not harm overall amenity, and should help improve biodiversity. The existing playing pitches are a mono-culture, heavily mowed and so in themselves offer no real biodiversity value. Landscaping works associated with playing pitch improvements offer the opportunity to improve biodiversity value on this site. Text has been inserted to clarify that the works are to meet modern academic needs and to enable the pitches to be used throughout the year and to improve biodiversity value.

### **Richards Music Centre**

- 6.48 There was support received for the building's retention as it was stated it is a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.49 Whilst the building is a positive contributor to the area, it is not a designated heritage asset. As such, the SPD sets out that redevelopment may be acceptable where the needs for a modern accessible facility are demonstrated, and that any new building would also make a positive contribution to the area. The SPD text has been amended to clearly clarify this. It is not considered appropriate within

existing policy to protect buildings from any redevelopment where the benefits of redevelopment can clearly be demonstrated.

### **Mallinson Sports Centre**

- 6.50 There was some concern regarding the impact of redevelopment on the open aspect across fields on either side. Sport England commented on the need for replacement facilities unless surplus to requirements.
- 6.51 The SPD includes guidance to ensure it is clear that any replacement building should not impact any further than current buildings on the openness of the MOL and amenity, this however has been revisited to be made more explicit. The SPD also includes guidance that states that new facilities should enhance sporting facilities in line with Local Plan requirements. However additional text has been added to state that any application should clearly outline how the facilities in any new building replace those already in situ to ensure there is no unjustified loss of provision.

### **Island Site**

- 6.52 There were suggestions that the SPD should be more specific with regards to this site, highlight that proposals to build on or above open space should be resisted, and that additional clauses should be added to include more detail on design and streetscape along Southwood Lane, heritage impacts, access and useability of the tunnel and amenity, sustainability and safety impacts.
- 6.53 The SPD references sustainability and access in general so that they cover all sites. The guidance has been strengthened to reference the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and to give further detail with regards to the heritage and design solutions that could be utilised.

### **Impact upon Highgate Village**

- 6.54 Some respondents mentioned that redevelopment would not be a benefit to Highgate Village and the impacts could detract from it especially during construction.
- 6.55 The benefits of redevelopment will primarily be to the School and its students to enable modern, accessible and fit for purpose facilities. However it is considered that these improvements could benefit the area through improved design and quality, particularly in relation to Dyne House and the Mallinson Sports Centre, which are identified as negative contributors to the area. Construction impacts are covered below.

### **Sustainability**

- 6.56 A significant number of comments requested the SPD go further on sustainability measures including requiring the estate to achieve zero carbon by 2030. There

was also support for retrofitting of buildings to improve sustainability, not just achieving BREEAM standards on extensions or new build.

- 6.57 SPDs cannot introduce new policy requirements, they can only provide further guidance on adopted policies. Therefore Local Plan policies will continue to apply for any redevelopment and they must meet those minimum requirements as currently stated in the SPD, and in recognition that these standards may well be increased during the lifetime of this SPD. However, the SPD can incentivise best practice and include aspirations for achieving better sustainability outcomes. Therefore the SPD has been amended to further elaborate in the sustainability section that the School should seek to maximise and go above current standards where feasible, and where works include extensions to buildings rather than wholly new buildings that opportunities to incorporate further sustainability measures in the rest of the building should be explored to help the estate move towards zero carbon.

## **Transport**

- 6.58 Many of the representations that were received expressed concern that any redevelopment, including construction works would worsen traffic congestion and safety rather than improve it, and that there are already issues with parking. Suggestions for improvements including more use of buses and promoting walking and cycling were offered. It was requested that impacts must be demonstrated cumulatively, not individually by scheme. Additionally it was noted that:

- TfL should be consulted on the Transport Assessment and any updates to the Travel Plan
- Travel by car should be decreased and active travel modes prioritised
- Active travel infrastructure, such as bike racks and lockers should be provided
- Future developments should look to decrease car parking. Existing car parking should not be an acceptable justification for retention of spaces

- 6.59 The SPD has been amended to include more detail on active travel and to reflect the above bullet points. It should be noted that the School is not seeking to undertake development that would lead to a significant impact in terms of traffic generation. The proposals are to accommodate the existing School pupil body. However, the SPD does contain guidance ensuring that walking and cycling are prioritised, and that the School continues to work to ensure parking is managed effectively. The SPD also provides guidance that the School's Travel Plan should be updated where new development would necessitate this such as where it could lead to a variation in travel patterns. Text has been amended to make clear the travel plan should be updated iteratively to take into account the cumulative impacts of each application. This should be possible to assess through the commitment to submit applications simultaneously.

## **Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)**

- 6.60 The SPD identifies the potential to use the Junior Field which is MOL for a temporary decant facility, and for the sports hall which adjoins MOL to be



redeveloped. Concern was expressed by many regarding the potential that MOL could be developed on.

- 6.61 Detailed consideration as to whether any temporary use on MOL is acceptable will occur when formal planning applications are made and this would be subject to a Section 106 planning obligations agreement. In response to these concerns, additional text is included in the amended SPD to clarify the considerations that will be taken into account for the principle of any temporary use.
- 6.62 There was also concern that there could be detrimental impacts upon MOL from development in the vicinity. The SPD contains guidance for proposals in the vicinity of MOL setting out that its openness and function must be considered and protected. In this regard, existing Local Plan and London Plan policies protecting MOL will be applied, and these do not need to be replicated in the SPD but are signposted.
- 6.63 The GLA advised that there should be more emphasis on the strategic policy protection of MOL across the SPD as a whole. This has now been explicitly listed among the objectives of the SPD (pages 3-4). Where development would be inappropriate, this must be robustly supported by very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm to the openness of the MOL, and any other harm. Any site-specific proposals need to accord with MOL policy protection in their own right. This has been further highlighted, particularly on the Richards Music Centre site guidance for clarity.
- 6.64 Additionally updates have been made to reference the Publication London Plan 2020 requirements on protecting MOL in Policy G3.

### **Accessibility**

- 6.65 There was general support for improvements that result in buildings made more accessible for all. This was welcomed, and these requirements remain.

### **Biodiversity**

- 6.66 There was encouragement for proposals to contribute further to improving biodiversity. Notably Natural England included suggestions for improvements to biodiversity and to protect existing habitats.
- 6.67 Additional text has been inserted to further emphasise the importance of increasing biodiversity through redevelopment under the Natural Environment section, and this does signpost a policy requirement for a net gain in biodiversity across the estate as a whole.

### **Construction Impacts**

- 6.68 There were many concerns expressed that the scale of the School's proposed development could lead to significant disruption in Highgate Village. It was therefore requested that the SPD must require staggered implementation of development schemes and require the inclusion of planning conditions which robustly protect Highgate from the combined impacts of several large-scale projects being delivered at the same time. Similarly there were concerns about



the general impacts of construction including timings, noise, excavation. There was support for requiring Construction Management Plans.

- 6.69 The proposals in the SPD are intended to be delivered over 10 years, and so implementation will be staggered. This must be balanced with the desire for applications to be submitted simultaneously as far as is possible. However, guidance has been added to the SPD to reference relevant adopted Local Plan and London Plan policies that must be followed to mitigate against construction impacts, and in particular referencing the Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'The control of dust and emissions during construction and demolition' (July 2014). Further, the SPD has been amended to advocate that Construction Management Plans should be submitted and where any other development is proposed simultaneously, that the cumulative impacts must be planned for to avoid undue disruption, noise, and emissions during their construction.

## **Community Access**

- 6.70 Comments were received in relation to ensuring / securing public access to the proposed facilities (i.e. sporting / cultural). The SPD notes the existing external use of many of the facilities on the site and recognises that many of the new facilities will benefit existing users, as well as providing capacity to accommodate greater local School and community use. The extent of access to the new facilities will form part of the assessment of the detailed planning applications.

## **Statutory consultees**

- 6.71 Statutory consultees were notified of the draft SPD in accordance with the relevant Regulations. Responses were received from the Highways Agency, Historic England, Natural England, Sport England, the Environment Agency, Greater London Authority and Transport for London. The key points raised by these consultees are included in the above summary.

## **7 Regulatory Committee comments**

- 7.1 This report and the appendices to it were considered by Regulatory Committee on 25 February 2021. Regulatory Committee's comments are set out in an addendum to this report.

## **8 Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 8.1 The adoption of this SPD will contribute significantly to the Borough Plan's objectives, particularly those under the People and Place Priorities by helping establish guidance that will lead to the provision of new and improved educational and sporting facilities, and by making Highgate and the School's buildings within it more accessible and attractive, whilst preserving the historic fabric that is of cultural value to the Borough.

## **9 Statutory Officers comments**

### **9.1 Finance**

9.1.1 This report recommends that Cabinet approves the Highgate School SPD with amendments as specified in Appendices A and B for adoption.

9.1.2 The cost of preparing this SPD, consulting on it and adopting it have been met from existing Planning Policy budgets.

## **9.2 Procurement**

9.2.1 Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report; however there are no procurement implications.

## **9.3 Legal**

9.3.1 The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted on the preparation of this report and comments as follows.

9.3.2 Although the SPD is not a development plan document it will, on adoption, provide advice and guidance on the policies in the development plan and be capable of being a material consideration in the determination of proposals for development for Highgate. As the SPD will not be a development plan document, it does not need to be approved by Full Council and will not need to be subject to independent examination.

9.3.3 In accordance with the National Planning Practice Guidance, the SPD should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on the development.

9.3.4 The Council was required by law to consult on the SPD and to take into account all consultation responses received before adopting the SPD. Regulations 11 to 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the requirements for producing SPDs. Regulation 12 provides that the Council must publish a Consultation Statement which must include, amongst other requirements, the date by which representations must be made and the address to which they must be sent. There must be a minimum consultation period of 4 weeks. These requirements have been satisfied.

## **9.4 Equality**

9.4.1 In the exercise of its function as the local planning authority the Council is subject to the Public Sector Equalities Duty set out in section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 which obliges the Council in performing its functions “to have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it”.

9.4.2 SPDs cannot introduce new policies nor modify adopted policies and do not form a part of the development plan. Rather, their role is to supplement a ‘parent’ policy in a development plan document. The SPD which is the subject of this report supplements Site Allocation 41 of the Site Allocations Local Plan document. A full

equalities impact assessment was carried out at each formal stage in the preparation of the Site Allocations.

9.4.3 Therefore, there is no requirement to carry out an equalities impact assessment of the SPD because the impact of implementing Site Allocations 41 has already been considered as part of the Site Allocations equalities impact assessment. Nevertheless, EQIA screening has been conducted on the SPD, which confirmed that there were no negative implications on any equalities group as a result of the SPD's guidance, and thus no need for a full EQIA to be undertaken (Appendix D). In fact there should be an overall positive impact on many groups arising from the SPD given the guidance seeks to support step free access across various facilities which does not currently exist, and this will have a significant positive impact on protected characteristics.

9.4.4 Additionally, the amount of consultation, engagement and assessment as part of the SPD process have resulted in more positive impacts upon certain groups such as clarifying the requirement to submit Construction Management Plans and a more managed approach to development which should mitigate local disruption which otherwise could have a negative impact on protected characteristics such as older people, or people with a disability who may be affected by construction/traffic disruption.

9.4.5 The extension of the consultation period would have had a positive impact on allowing more time to respond for people amongst protected characteristics adversely affected by Covid-19, and the commitment for ongoing engagement throughout the development process as well.

## **10 Use of Appendices**

- Appendix A: Consultation Statement
- Appendix B: Highgate School SPD
- Appendix C: SEA Screening
- Appendix D: EQIA Screening

## **11 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

- Haringey Strategic Policies Local Plan (2013) and Alterations (2017)
- Haringey Site Allocations DPD (2017)
- Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017)
- Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal
- Cabinet Report: Draft Highgate School SPD (10 March 2020)