

**Report for:** Cabinet – 9 December 2025

**Item number:** 18

**Title:** Former Stamford Hill Primary School site, (Berkeley Rd, London N15 6HD), to be added to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme

**Report authorised by :** Taryn Eves, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

**Lead Officer:** Robbie Erbmman, Delivery Director

**Ward(s) affected:** Seven Sisters

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

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

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to include a site into the Council's Housing Delivery Programme.
- 1.2. The site, formerly known as Stamford Hill Primary School, its located in the south of the borough. The Council is the freeholder of the site, which sits within the General Fund (Children Services portfolio). Please refer to the red line boundary plan referred to as Appendix 1.
- 1.3. Housing team will be required to commission a Red Book Valuation to assess the site's land value, and an accounting adjustment will need to be made to show the site moving from Children's Services in the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account.
- 1.4. It is proposed that the land be appropriated from General Fund to Housing Revenue Account, first for planning purposes to facilitate the carrying out of the development, and after completion of the development, appropriated from planning for housing use into the Housing Revenue Account, portfolio prior to letting the new homes. The appropriation of land outlined in this paragraph would be subject to a further report and Cabinet approval at Gateway 3 (construction contract award).
- 1.5. In the event this site is found to be appropriate for the delivery of new homes, this report also seeks approval for designs to be developed and submitted for consideration by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 1.6. The Council will also carry out a programme of consultation and engagement, with residents, and ward members, prior to any final planning applications being

submitted to the Local Planning Authority. A Statement of Community Involvement would be included in the submission.

## **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1. The driving mission of this council is to build a fairer and greener borough. London has a housing crisis – and we are seeing more and more local residents unable to afford rents, let alone afford to buy.
- 2.2. To do our part in addressing this situation we – with financial support from both the Mayor of London and the government – are building at least 3,000 new council homes at council rents by 2031. We are creating more genuinely affordable homes for local people.
- 2.3. Numbers are essential, but we're focused just as much on quality as quantity. We're building homes that will last, with great insulation standards, great interior and exterior design standards and a strong mix of family and individual homes. We make sure homes are as well-insulated and energy efficient as possible, because we want homes that aren't just affordable to rent but affordable to run.
- 2.4. Public land should be used to maximise the public good, meeting local infrastructure needs and providing affordable spaces and services. At the old Stamford Hill school site, we're planning to prioritise the newly freed-up public land for affordable housing.
- 2.5. From initial estimates we think we could build at least 130-150 council homes here – council homes at council rents for hundreds of local residents.
- 2.6. As with all of our new council homes, we will build as many family-sized homes as possible (two, three and even four-bedroom homes) to prevent overcrowding. We'll insist on first-rate insulation standards to keep heating bills down. We'll demand great design standards so that our buildings stand the test of time and set the foundations for thriving communities.
- 2.7. The Stamford Hill homes will be another great contribution to affordable housing – real affordable housing – in this borough.

## **3. Recommendations**

### **It is recommended that Cabinet**

- 3.1. Approves the addition of the former Stamford Hill Primary School site to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme.
- 3.2. Notes that approval of pre-contract budgets would be within the delegated authority of the Delivery Director. The Pre-Contract Budget would include all costs to take the project up to the award of a construction contract at Gateway 3.

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

- 4.1. Delivering a new generation of genuinely affordable Council homes is an important corporate priority for Haringey Council. The Borough has committed to an ambitious Council home building programme that will deliver 3,000 new homes by 2031. This is in direct response to the national housing crisis which has left thousands of households in Haringey in need of a genuinely affordable home.
- 4.2. The Council is already making great strides towards this target: as of August 2025, 797 council homes have been completed as part of this ambitious programme, with around two thirds of these new homes welcoming tenants and their families during the current calendar year. This new housing is changing the lives of our residents, providing households with an affordable, warm and secure new homes in their community.
- 4.3. In addition, our needs-led programme is providing further additional benefits to the Borough's vulnerable residents and the wider community. Around 200 will be "bespoke homes" that are co-designed with tenants with mobility or other welfare needs: these homes will include adaptations designed to support tenants in their daily lives, for example through the installation of height adjustable worktops or specially designed bathrooms.
- 4.4. To help tackle the climate change emergency, our homes are being built to high sustainability standards, including green roofs, air source heat pumps, PV solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. In addition, wildlife planting, new trees and landscaping are included as part of our housing schemes. As part of our placemaking agenda, the programme has delivered additional infrastructure benefits to the existing community, including a new GP health centre, playgrounds for local children, new walkways and public bridges, and commercial spaces for local businesses.
- 4.5. This track record of delivery represents an outstanding achievement for Haringey Council given the difficult economic climate for the construction industry over the past few years.
- 4.6. The addition of this site outlined in section 1 of this report, will provide an opportunity for the Borough to continue its progress towards its 3,000 new homes target, and provide much needed affordable housing to residents on our housing waiting list. It will also allow the Council to explore the provision of more "bespoke homes" to some of our most vulnerable residents, and we can explore potential community wide improvements that will benefit existing residents as well as any new residents who may move into the new homes, should they be built.

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

- 5.1. **Not including this site to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme:** The alternative option is not to include the site into the Council's Housing Delivery Programme. However, one of the Council's top priorities is the delivery of a new

era of council housebuilding. To exclude this from the development programme would undermine the Council's capacity to deliver new Council homes.

- 5.2. **Disposing of the site:** Disposing of the site to a private developer could reduce the number of affordable housing which could be built by the council.

## 6. Background information

- 6.1. One of the priorities for The Corporate Delivery Plan 2024 - 2026 is "Homes for the Future". This sets out objectives of the Council's vision to create a borough where everyone has a safe, sustainable, and affordable home.
- 6.2. Cabinet is asked to add former Stamford Hill Primary School site to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme so that the feasibility for the delivery of new council homes can be determined. The red line plan illustrated in Appendix 1 shows the location of the site.

Site	Ward	Land held by
Stamford Hill Primary School	Seven Sisters	General Fund (GF)

- 6.3. Former Stamford Hill Primary School was established in 1882. An Ofsted inspection was carried out in November 2018, which rated the school as inadequate. The Secretary of State issued a directive due to significant concerns about the school's sustainability, stemming from low demand for school places and financial challenges.
- 6.4. In 2020, following Cabinet approval, Stamford Hill Primary School was closed. After its closure, the site was temporarily used as a Covid testing centre.
- 6.5. When redeveloping a school and considering land transactions, particularly disposals, the council must involve the Secretary of State for Education. A specific process must be followed, as there is a significant risk that consent for land disposal may not be granted.

The relevant pieces of legislation governing this requirement are:

- Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA 1998): This specifically applies to the change of use of school playing fields that have been used by a maintained school within the last 10 years. The Department for Education (DfE) generally has a strong presumption against such disposals or change of use, requiring robust justification.
  - Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010: This extends the requirement for Secretary of State consent to appropriate any school land (not limited to playing fields) held by a local authority that has been used wholly or mainly by a school (including academies) within the preceding 8 years.
- 6.6. The site is located near Woodberry Down Baptist Church, a locally listed building, and is surrounded by Victorian terraced houses on Berkeley Road and Vartry

Road. There are no obvious or visible signs that there is an access constraint into the site.

- 6.7. No decision will be taken to build on this site until the Secretary of State has agreed to the change of use from Education to Residential and it is deemed viable, and the necessary statutory consultations have been carried out.
- 6.8. The site has been identified as potentially suitable land on which to build new council homes. That assessment has included site visits, a red-line boundary plan of the site, a Report on Title to identify site risks which could impact upon the design or finances of the scheme. In addition, an initial capacity study has been produced based on the site delivering in the range of 130 -150 homes. Please refer to Appendix 2.
- 6.9. In order to assess the suitability of this site further work needs to be undertaken:
  - Department for Education agrees to the change of use of the site.
  - Valuation and financial appraisal
  - Design feasibility studies, and a SWOT analysis
  - An agreement of appropriation process at former Stamford Hill Primary School with Property Services prior to incurring design and planning costs
  - A valuation commissioned by Property Services for the appropriation of the site from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for the purpose of making the required accounting adjustment.
  - Internal consultations with Planning and Education.
  - Further checks to identify risks and constraints which could impact upon the design or finances of the scheme.
  - Legal searches including highways, railways, and utilities.
  - Review of easements, covenants, rights of way or restrictions on Title which may affect development.
  - Consultation with the Local Planning Authority to determine existing use, policy context, status of any existing consents, conservation area, or listed building status.
  - Environmental reports, including ground conditions, ecology, and flood risks.
  - Subject to site being found to be technically and financially viable for the delivery of new homes, the Council will engage with the community and local stakeholders, including ward members, regarding the site's suitability and to develop high quality design proposals.
- 6.10. Subject to site being found to be financially viable for the delivery of new homes, the Council will engage with the community and local stakeholders, including ward members, regarding the site's suitability and we will develop high quality design proposals.
- 6.11. The Local Planning Authority will conduct formal consultations with the community before reaching a decision on whether to grant planning permission. If planning

permission is granted, Cabinet will then be asked to agree the construction of the approved scheme and associated budget.

- 6.12. The site is the former Stamford Hill Primary School site which closed in 2020. As a designated school site, in planning policy terms it is a community infrastructure, due consideration is needed to planning policy DM49: Managing the Provision and Quality of the Infrastructure.
- 6.13. A) The Council will seek to protect existing social and community facilities unless a replacement facility is provided which meets the needs of the community.
- B) Where a development proposal may result in the loss of a facility, evidence will be required to show that:
- a) The facility is no longer required in its current use;
  - b) The loss would not result in a shortfall in provision of that use;
  - c) The existing facility is not viable in its current use and there is no demand for any other suitable community use on the site.
- 6.14. The Council considers the school is surplus to requirements, because the school has been closed for over five years following an Ofsted inspection. Due to this closure, children are being educated in other local schools. As a result of this the Council will be applying to the Department of Education for consent to change use of this site to deliver social rented homes. It is acknowledged that the current use of the site includes community infrastructure and taking into consideration the above planning policy, the council may need to re-provide an element of community infrastructure as part of any future development. The intention is to provide in the range of 130-150 social rented homes - see attached feasibility study prepared by Peter Barber Architectural Practice (Appendix 2) The preference is to maximise the site and deliver 150 homes.
- 6.15. The new Haringey Local Plan Regulation 18 is the first stage of consultation where Haringey Council asked the public for feedback on the draft Local Plan, this has now gone live. The Draft Local Plan represents the Council's 15-year spatial vision for new buildings and development in the borough, sets out a borough-wide framework for placemaking and complements the Council's overall vision for Haringey. The Regulation 18 consultation, is the stage in the plan-making process when the Local Planning Authority (LPA) prepares a draft version of the plan ready for examination and undertake a formal public consultation to ask the public, stakeholders, and statutory bodies to provide feedback on their draft plans, including policies, site allocations, and evidence base, prior to that submission. In this draft version of the plan, the policies within the document will have 'limited' planning weight, but policy weight nevertheless for planning decision making and therefore should be considered with all developments moving forward.
- 6.16. Considering relevant policy principles in this case, new draft Policy S2: Social Infrastructure is broadly in line with the policy adopted within the current Haringey Development Management Document (DM49) and therefore the aspiration to re-provide an element of community infrastructure, as set out above, would be required in planning policy terms when considered in the New Local Plan.

- 6.17. The potential costs of carrying out the feasibility and preparatory work up to a Planning Application for this site is expected to be within the delegated authority of the Delivery Director. If a viable scheme cannot be developed, any costs incurred would be abortive and borne by the Council.

**7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes**

- 7.1. Bringing this site into the Council's Housing Delivery Programme will make a significant contribution and support the delivery of key themes within the Corporate Deliver Plan (CDP) 2024-2026. We are on a mission to build 3,000 new high-quality council homes by 2031.
- 7.2. The Council's vision is to create a borough where everyone has a safe, sustainable, stable, and affordable homes.

**8. Carbon and Climate Change**

- 8.1. Responding to the climate change emergency is a core part of the Housing Delivery Programme. By bringing this site into the programme, the Council is seeking to deliver new homes that achieve Zero Carbon. All our new homes are built where possible from sustainable materials, are well-insulated and energy efficient. This can include innovative air source heat pumps, solar panels and the provision of energy-efficient appliances.
- 8.2. Where possible, we seek to deliver enhanced green spaces and biodiversity improvements that benefit the whole community. This can involve extensive high-quality landscaping, new tree planting, bat-bird boxes and green roofs.

**9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Director of Legal and Governance, Equalities)**

**9.1. Finance**

- 9.1.1. The HRA Financial plan has been designed with flexibility to add or remove sites from the programme while maintaining long-term viability. This site will be added to the programme once approved.
- 9.1.2. Approval to include this school site in the delivery programme at this stage does not guarantee progression beyond feasibility and capacity study stages.
- 9.1.3. This site's viability within the HRA will be appraised, and further approval will be sought if the appraisal confirms viability.
- 9.1.4. As the site is currently within the General Fund, it will need to be appropriated to the HRA at a later stage. Cabinet approval will be required for this appropriation.

- 9.1.5. Initial costs incurred in progressing the site, such as feasibility studies, will be accounted for as part of the overall delivery cost if the site proceeds.
- 9.1.6. If the site does not progress, any costs incurred will be expensed and cannot be capitalised.
- 9.1.7. Finance will continue to review the HRA modelling assumptions considering macro and micro economic factors (in collaboration with the service) to ensure the long-term viability of the HRA

## 9.2. **Procurement**

- 9.2.1. Strategic Procurement note the contents of this report and confirm there are no procurement related matters preventing Cabinet approving the recommendations stated in paragraph 3 above.

## 9.3. **Legal**

- 9.3.1. The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report. The Council proposes to appropriate the site currently sitting in the General Fund to the HRA subject to obtaining planning permission and development of the scheme. Section 122(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a local authority to appropriate land it owns for another statutory purpose, provided the land is no longer required for the purpose for which it is currently held.
- 9.3.2. If the site receives planning permission, and Cabinet is asked to appoint a contractor to carry out the works, a recommendation will also be sought to appropriate the site for planning purposes to carry out these works, with a further recommendation to appropriate the site from planning purposes to the HRA after practical completion of the works. The Cabinet report will also state the land's value when appropriating from the General Fund to the HRA. Following this, an accounting adjustment will be made to show the site moving from the General Fund to the HRA. It is advisable the valuation is within 6 months of the decision to appropriate.
- 9.3.3. The site is a former school site and for the Council to appropriate the site from its existing use as education, it will require Secretary of State consent under Section 77(3) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1988, as it involves a change use of playing field land that has been in the last 10 years used by a maintained school. The definition of playing field land under Section 77(7) of the 1998 Act is land 'in the open air which is provided for the purposes of physical education or recreation, other than any prescribed description of land'. It is likely the land within this site formerly used by the school will be caught by this.
- 9.3.4. Secretary of State consent will also be required under Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010. Under paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Academies Act 2010, local authorities must seek the Secretary of State's prior consent to



appropriate land they hold, where it has been used wholly or mainly for the purposes of a school in the last eight years, whether still open or now closed. The Council must be in receipt of the appropriate consents from the Secretary of State prior to seeking a Cabinet decision to appropriate the site. An early application to the Department of Education is advised.

- 9.3.5. There are no legal reasons preventing Cabinet from approving the recommendations in this report.

#### 9.4. **Equality**

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

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

- 9.4.2. The three parts of the duty apply 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.

- 9.4.3. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

- 9.4.4. The decision in this report seeks approval to include Stamford Hill School site into the Council's Housing Delivery Programme. The intention would be to provide between 130-150 social rented homes.

- 9.4.5. This is likely to have a positive impact on individuals in temporary accommodation as well as those who are vulnerable to homelessness. Data held by the Council suggests that women, young people, BAME people and those from a lower socioeconomic background are over-represented among those living in temporary accommodation. Furthermore, individuals with these protected characteristics, as well as those who identify as LGBT+ an individual with disabilities are known to have an increased vulnerability to homelessness, as detailed in the Equalities Impact Assessment of the council's Homelessness Strategy. As such, it is reasonable to anticipate a positive impact on residents with these protected characteristics. It should be noted that there are expected to be no negative equalities impact resulting from this decision.

## 10. **Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1– Red Line plans of Fomer Stamford Hill Primary School

Appendix 2-Peter Barber Architectural Practice – capacity study

**11. Background papers**

**N/A**