



Haringey Council

Agenda item

[No.]

**Planning Committee meeting**

**On 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

Report Title: Open Space and Recreation Standards Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable): [add reference]

Report of: Ransford Stewart, Interim Assistant Director, Planning Policy and Development

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: key decision

### 1. Purpose

1.1 Following public consultation that took place between the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008 (later extended to the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 to accommodate the meeting cycle of the Friends' of Parks Forum) on the Draft Haringey Open Space and Recreation Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and the document's subsequent amendment to reflect the views expressed during this consultation, this report seeks any final members' views on the SPD prior to its adoption as an SPD which will be as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF), subject to the agreement of the Cabinet on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 That members note the work, including consultation, carried out on the proposed Haringey Open Space and Recreation Standards Supplementary Planning Document, and the accompanying Sustainability Report.

2.2 That the Committee recommends adoption of the above documents, subject to Cabinet approval on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Report Authorised by: Ransford Stewart, Interim Assistant Director

Contact Officer: Eveleen Riordan, Principal Planning Officer (ext 5132)

### 3. Director of Finance Comments

3.1 The costs associated with consultation, amendment and adoption of the Haringey Open

Space and Recreation Standards Supplementary Planning Document have been mainly met from within the approved PPD budget for 2007/08. Any remaining costs incurred in the new financial year will be met from the approved PPD for 2008/09. The negotiation and agreement of Section 106 resources should continue to be maximised for the benefit of the Council.

#### **4. Head of Legal Services Comments**

5.1 The Head of Legal Services comments that there is a hierarchy of conformity for planning documents and the policies in a Supplementary Planning Document must be in conformity in the core strategy and other Development Plan Documents as well as the London Plan

#### **5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

5.1 Background documents include:

- Haringey Unitary Development Plan, 2006
- Haringey Open Space and Sports Strategy Assessment (2003) Volumes 1 and 2
- Haringey Open Space Strategy
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Sport, Open Space and Recreation (PPG17) 2002
- The Companion Guide to PPG17 (200)
- Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations
- Towards a Level Playing Field – Sport England (2002)
- The London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2004)

#### **6. Strategic Implications**

6.1 The SPD covers the whole of the borough as it deals with open and recreational space. It will help to protect open and recreational space, and to secure additional space through monies received as a result of S106 negotiations. The provision of additional space could potentially be of particular benefit to the north east part of the borough where there is a deficiency in open space.

#### **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications for the adoption of the Open Space SPD. We already have a Section 106 officer in post that will monitor and control any monies received as a result of any S106 agreement.

#### **8. Legal Implications**

9.1 As the SPD does not introduce new policies, but supplements and provides clarity to existing UDP policies (particularly OS15), there are no immediate legal implications, but as the new Core Strategy is advanced this SPD may need to be reviewed. Also, the Planning Bill before Parliament has provisions for a new Community Infrastructure Levy and Regulations may provide for a Local Authority to produce a charging schedule setting out the rate and/or formula determining how the levy might be calculated in their area. The Government publication in January 2008 on Community Infrastructure Levy states that the Government wishes to explore in consultation with stakeholders the case for allowing charges to vary within charging authorities to reflect local conditions

#### **9. Equalities Implications**

10.1 The improvement of open space and recreation provision in the borough will benefit the whole community, in particular those residents who live in areas of the borough which are

deficient in open space and recreation provision. Generally, these areas are concentrated in the east of the borough. The increased provision of open space and better access to existing open spaces and facilities will be of particular benefit to those who are only able to access such facilities by foot or by public transport.

## 10. Consultation

10.1 In July 2007 the Council held a seminar aimed at key stakeholders, including park providers, at the Civic Centre. The seminar outlined the scope of the work that was being undertaken to develop local standards and the supplementary planning document, and included worked examples of how to assess developer contributions from new developments.

10.2 Once a draft SPD had been developed it was, along with the accompanying sustainability appraisal, issued for formal public consultation for a period of 8 weeks from the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007 to the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The length of the consultation period was set at seven weeks as opposed to the six week statutory period to take account of the Christmas and New year holiday period, and then further extended to eight weeks to accommodate the meeting cycle of the Friends' of Parks Forum. Those that were consulted included the statutory consultees (including adjoining boroughs, GLA, GOL, Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage), local groups and bodies, all Councillors and key council officers.

10.3 A Schedule of Responses to the consultation is attached at Appendix 1. We received a total of six written responses from individuals or organisations. In general the SPD was welcomed although a number of respondents raised queries and concerns which focussed on the following:

- The failure to adopt the National Playing Fields' "Six Acre Standard"
- The data collected is out of date and this is exacerbated by the use of the 2001 census data to set population projections as census data is not completely accurate.
- Some of the potential indicators could be expanded to include more heritage assets, and the SPD should recognise the value of existing open spaces that are of heritage value.
- PPG17 was used as "an excuse" not to act in the spirit of the London plan "which more directly informs the boroughs' LDFs and defines areas of open space deficiency to a higher criteria".
- The appropriate criteria for identifying deficiencies in open space are set out in the Mayor's London Plan and accompanying 'Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies' and it is these that should be adopted.
- The standards proposed are not those that are recognised as minimum standards by the GLA.
- 3sq metres of play space per child should be 6 sq metres.
- Many of the standards should be lowered.
- The level and quality of access needs to be taken into consideration – some public spaces are not accessible by the elderly, infirm or wheelchair bound.

11.3 The Schedule of Responses at Appendix 1 lists a the Council's full response and action (where appropriate) to all of the objections made to the SPD. Among other changes that we made, we agreed to include references in the draft SPD to the heritage value of open space and to highlight that the borough has two parks on the National Register of Historic Parks and that the 36 have locally listed status only, with no statutory status. We also amended the SPD to reflect a reference to Haringey Health Reports. However we did not

support all of the comments made – for example, the question of whether the SPD should reflect minimum national or regional standards. The whole purpose of the SPD is to set local open space standards that reflect the needs of Haringey as a borough. Planning Policy Guidance PPG17 sets out that local authorities should develop local standards which are derived using local information. This is the approach the SPD has taken and it is fully in line with the national and regional approach, and follows the guidance set out in PPG17. All council responses to the comments received are listed in Appendix 1.

## 11. Background

11.1 As part of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Inquiry (held between April and September 2005) the Inspector recommended in his Report that the Council developed local open space standards for inclusion in a future planning document. These standards should reflect the guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Sport, Open Space and Recreation (PPG17). The provision of local open space standards will also support the Council's Open Space Strategy by ensuring that the Council are able to secure the retention or provision of open space at every viable opportunity. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will form part of the Council's Local Development Framework. An SPD provides detailed guidance on the implementation of UDP policies and is supported by a sustainability appraisal.

### Planning Context

11.2 The SPD has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance:

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 – Sport, Open Space and Recreation (PPG17) 2002 – states that local authorities should use the information gained from their assessment of needs and opportunities to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities;
- The Companion Guide to PPG17 (2002) – provides guidance on how local authorities should identify and apply standards based upon assessment of local need;
- Towards a level Playing Field (Sport England) 2003 – provides a detailed methodology for assessing the number of playing pitches required for different sports, and advice on developing minimum local standards for playing pitches;
- The London Plan (consolidated with amendments since 2004) – includes various policies on open space, including policy 3D.12 (page 181) which states that boroughs should, in consultation with local communities, the Mayor and other partners, produce open space strategies to protect, create and enhance all types of open space in their area, and policy 3A.6 (page 71) which states that residential development should have regard to policy 3D.13 on play and informal recreation provision for children and young people.
- GLA Guide to Preparing Play Strategies (2004) – advises that use of standards can assist comparisons between boroughs and wards within the same borough. The guidance advises that boroughs should assess the amount of open space per 1000 of the population at the borough and ward level, and identifies some of the other possible approaches to developing standards, including quality and access and the use of open space hierarchies.
- GLA Guide to Preparing Play Strategies (2005) – the guide highlights the need to develop standards of provision locally with an emphasis on quality and accessibility as opposed to overly prescriptive measures of quality alone.
- GLA Supplementary Planning Guidance – Providing for Children and Young people's Play and Informal Recreation (March 2008) – The SPG provides guidance for boroughs developing play strategies. The guidance sets out benchmark standards

for play provision and these can be used to assess existing provision, future requirements and establish needs from new developments. The standards are regional and these may be modified to reflect local circumstances.

11.3 Haringey's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (July 2006) contains policies relating to the protection and improvement of open space, sport and recreation provision in the borough.

- **Policy OS11 Biodiversity** – All development should respect biodiversity and ensure that opportunities to enhance biodiversity are taken, in particular in areas deficient in accessible natural green space.
- **Policy OS12: Allotments** – the Council seeks to protect allotments. Where allotments are surplus to demand, other open space uses will be considered first before alternative land uses are considered.
- **Policy OS13 - Playing Fields** – Development of playing fields will only be allowed where the playing fields is surplus to requirements, the site is not an open space deficiency area, if access to open space nearby can be improved and where an assessment of existing and future needs of the community has been undertaken.
- **Policy OS15 - Open Space Deficiency and New Developments** – new developments in areas of open space deficiency will be expected to provide an appropriate area of open space, or improve accessibility or quality of nearby open space.

## 12. The Supplementary Planning Document

12.1 In March 2007 the Council commissioned Atkins Ltd to develop local open space and recreation standards for the borough and produce a supplementary planning document. The supplementary planning document provides guidance to support UDP policies relating to open space and recreation and sets out an approach to assess the open space and sports requirements arising from new development and secure planning obligations to increase open space and recreation provision and improve existing facilities.

12.2 The supplementary planning document will replace the existing draft SPD10D: Planning Obligations and Open Space which does not provide local open space standards.

### Why we needed to produce the SPD

12.3 The standards in the SPD are based on information derived from the 2003 Open Space and Sports Assessment which was used to inform the UDP policies. At the time that we commissioned Atkins to work on this SPD with us, we reviewed whether there had been any significant addition or deletion to the open space that we have within the borough, and concluded that nothing of any significance had taken place. On that basis we were able to rely on the 2003 Assessment as being up-to-date for the purposes of using its baseline information. The 2003 assessment confirmed that Haringey's current open space falls below the Fields in Trust' standard of 2.43 hectares per 1000 population (the "Six acre standard"). This standard was developed prior to the publication of PPG17, which requires local authorities to develop their own local standards. Further, such a standard is not realistically applicable in densely populated areas like Haringey where such high standards can never be achieved. Indeed the Planning Officers' Society commented in respect of the Six Acre Standards that: "Authorities represented by POS have varying characteristics depending largely on whether they are located in a rural area or an urban area. The Six Acre Standard is currently a uniform standard applied regardless of each authority's local context. On many occasions, urban authorities fail to meet this current uniform standard. The standard should therefore be revised and replaced with separate standards more sensitive to local characteristics". The local

- standards produced within this SPD are a needs based assessment of the requirements for open space within Haringey. They are based on local information and a local population and reflect our borough.
- 12.4 The proposed local standards in the SPD are consistent with PPG17 and take account of quality, quantity and accessibility whereas the national standard is purely a quantitative standard. The local open space standards also address a wider range of open space and recreation types than the national standard, which only addresses outdoor sport and children's play space. The draft SPD includes standards for:
- Public park provision
  - Children's play provision
  - Playing pitches
  - Tennis courts
  - Natural and semi-natural greenspace
  - Allotments
  - Indoor sports facilities
  - Swimming pools
- 12.5 The standards are based on future open space and recreation requirements of Haringey's population up to 2016. They take into account the quantity of existing provision, accessibility and quality factors, such as the Green Flag criteria for parks.
- 12.6 The SPD provides a strong justification for the protection of existing open space and recreational facilities in the borough. It also seeks to increase the amount of provision and improve existing facilities where there are existing deficiencies in provision or where the quality or access to facilities is poor. Table 1.7 of the SPD sets out the eligibility criteria to assess whether new or improved provision is required from new developments. The proposed standards and developer contributions are set out in Table 1.9 of the SPD (appendix 2). Where on-site provision or developer contributions are sought, a further maintenance contribution is sought. These contributions are set out in table 1.10.
- 12.7 The proposed approach is illustrated in Table 1.3. In most cases, contributions will be sought for off-site improvements. For large scale developments, on-site provision will be sought. The thresholds for on-site provision are set out in table 1.8 of the SPD. The SPD provides worked examples to calculate the off-site contribution and a maintenance contribution. In addition, a spreadsheet tool has been provided to help Council officers calculate the need for and scale of contribution when considering planning applications.
- 12.8 The standards apply to most new residential development. However, for small residential developments up to 5 units it is not normally considered administratively cost effective to secure a legal agreement and collect contributions. The SPD does not address the provision of private amenity space – these standards are presently included in SPG3a (Dwelling Mix, Floorspace Minima, Conversions, Extensions and Lifetime Homes) and are being looked at as part of a housing supplementary planning document which is out to public consultation from April 17<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The provision of private amenity space, particularly rear gardens for family housing will have a bearing on the provision of open space, especially children's play space.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

- 12.9 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, sustainability appraisal is a required process for supplementary planning documents (SPDs). To satisfy this requirement, a scoping report was prepared and released for consultation in April 2007.

The sustainability appraisal process seeks to predict the social, economic and environmental effects of the SPD. A sustainability appraisal report accompanies the draft SPD and concludes that overall the document has a positive effect on most identified objectives. The report, attached as Appendix 2 of this report, puts forward recommendations to improve the sustainability performance of the document. These recommendations have been reflected in the SPD.

## 15 Conclusion

- 15.1 The provision of public open space and facilities for sport and recreation underpins people's quality of life. As such, a satisfactory level of easily accessed open space and sports facilities is a key element of a sustainable community.
- 15.2 The Council are committed to developing local open space standards to support the UDP and its Open Space Strategy. The SPD will provide a strong policy justification to:
- Protect existing open space and recreational facilities in the borough; and
  - Secure increased provision and improve existing facilities where there are existing deficiencies or where the quality or access to facilities is poor.
- 15.3 The SPD is based on a comprehensive audit of open space, children's play areas, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and provides a detailed and robust methodology to assess the requirements for open space and recreational provision from new development. It also addresses the issue of maintenance contributions.
- 15.4 The approach to secure developer contributions as planning obligations through Section 106 Agreements is consistent with Government guidance in Circular 05/2005 and the Council's guidance in SPG10a, The Negotiation, Management and Monitoring of Planning Obligations.
- 15.5 The SPD has been prepared in accordance with national planning guidance and the policies in the Mayor of London's spatial development strategy. In line with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared to accompany this draft SPD to ensure that the document contributes to the achievements of sustainability objectives.

## 16 Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Consultation Responses

Appendix 2 – Open Space SPD

Appendix 3 – Sustainability Appraisal Report for Open Space SPD

Appendix 4 – Maps for the SPD.