

Report for: Cabinet 10 March 2020

Title: Draft Highgate School Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

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Ward(s) affected: Highgate

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

1 Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report introduces a proposed draft Highgate School Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation. This draft SPD gives further guidance on Local Plan Site Allocation: 41 - Highgate School, to fulfil the Plan's commitment to bring forward an SPD with an agreed masterplan for the School's future development. The objectives are to take a comprehensive approach to the effective planning and delivery of new accommodation to meet the long term needs of the school and support enhanced community use and benefits. The SPD has particular regard to making open space as accessible as possible and ensuring that development preserves or enhances the appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

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 it's past, continues to show shown 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:

A) Notes the comments and recommendations of Regulatory Committee of 2 March 2020 regarding this Draft SPD; and

B) Approves the draft Highgate School SPD, attached as Appendix 1, for public consultation in accordance with the Haringey Statement of Community Involvement.

4 Reasons for decision

- 4.1 To progress the preparation of an SPD. The purpose of the draft SPD is to provide a masterplan and provide guidance on a comprehensive approach for the 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 and will help inform any future applicants and local residents.
- 4.2 The Council's adopted Site Allocations DPD envisages the Council adopting an SPD for Highgate School as this is considered to be the most effective way of securing that any future development of Highgate School meet its needs, accessibility requirements and provides for enhanced community benefits, whilst preserving the heritage and amenity of Highgate in line with the adopted Local Plan Site Allocation for the School.

5 Alternative options considered

- 5.1 There is one alternative option to the preparation of an SPD which is to do nothing. Notwithstanding the commitment in the Site Allocations Local Plan document to bring forward an SPD for the School, this is an option, albeit with some disadvantages as outlined below.
- 5.2 If the 'do-nothing' option was continued, Council officers, the Planning Sub-Committee and in the event of appeals, Planning Inspectors, would continue to exercise judgement when making decisions on specific proposals that Highgate School put forward, but without the guidance the SPD would provide. However such an approach may give rise to greater uncertainty and slower decision making, and does not allow for the more strategic consideration of the School's development as a whole, including giving guidance on key land use principles, notably that of development in Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and in the curtilage of Listed Buildings.
- 5.3 Additionally, such an ad-hoc way of dealing with estate wide issues may not give the local community the overall picture of development intentions in and would not enable the community to comment and input into the School's long-term development. Rather residents and businesses would only be able to comment on individual applications without this wider context. Set against the benefits and relatively modest costs associated with the preparation of an SPD, this option can be discounted.

6 Proposed draft Highgate School SPD

- 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 draft 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. Consulting on the draft SPD will help the Council and School to engage with the community and share the School's proposed plans to improve, alter and extend its buildings and School facilities over the next 10 years.
- 6.4 The draft SPD therefore 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 solely to meet modern academic standards and to improve the facilities, amenity and accessibility in Highgate.
- 6.5 The School lies within Highgate Conservation Area and contains important historic buildings, some of which are listed. The draft SPD has a strong focus on conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environments, including MOL openness, sensitive landscaping, and creating fit for purpose new buildings, facilities and spaces. There is a commitment in the draft 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.

Draft SPD Proposals

- 6.6 There are a number of key developments that the draft SPD proposes. 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 draft 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 draft 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 impacts 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 draft 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.

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 two 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 draft 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 The draft SPD provides guidance to ensure that any extension would be undertaken sympathetically, should seek to enhance or improve the external appearance generally and should be to the same standard as the other work undertaken recently across the Pre-Preparatory School.

Temporary Decant Facilities

6.16 Temporary decant facilities will need to be constructed whilst redevelopment works are underway. Specific requirements are identified within an accommodation needs assessment within the draft SPD which identifies that the construction of temporary buildings on the Junior Field may be an appropriate 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 draft SPD therefore identifies that a temporary decant solution will only be supported by the Council and the Greater London Authority 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 draft 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 draft 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 draft SPD acknowledges that Dyne House and the buildings behind it are not included within the Highgate Bowl allocation. The draft 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 Issue

6.23 In delivering proposals within the Senior School and, specifically those related to Dyne House, the draft SPD will expect 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 draft 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 draft 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 Guidance on strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal advises that Supplementary planning documents 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 draft 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 draft SPD has been subject to a separate Strategic Environmental (SEA) screening opinion, which can be viewed at Appendix 2 to comply with European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment". The European Directive is transposed into law by 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 will be consulted on this and the final screening report will be published upon adoption

Consultation on the draft Highgate School SPD

- 6.29 It is proposed to consult on the SPD in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Specifically, the following consultation methods will be employed:

- notification by e-mail or 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 pages and the corporate consultation portal of the Council's website;
- drop-in exhibition event;
- printed documents available in local Highgate Library and Highgate Literary Scientific Institution (HLSI) reception area;
- social media posts;

6.30 In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the Council must publish a Consultation Statement which sets out the date by which representations must be and the address to which they must be sent. Following the close of consultation this statement will be updated to explain how any issues raised in representations have been addressed in the SPD.

6.31 The consultation will be open for a minimum of six weeks and will commence as soon as possible following the approval of Cabinet. Officers will liaise with Haringey Communications team to ensure the consultation is publicised as widely as possible. During the consultation period, a public drop-in exhibition event will be scheduled to enable residents and business owners to comment in person. The outcome of the consultation, and any resulting proposed amendments to the draft SPD, will be reported back to for a final decision on whether to adopt the SPD.

Regulatory Committee comments

6.32 The report was considered by Regulatory Committee on 2 March 2020 which is after the Cabinet report papers are finalised. Regulatory Committee's comments on the report will be reported separately to the Cabinet.

7 Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 The preparation and subsequent adoption of this SPD will contribute significantly to the Borough Plans objectives, particularly those under the People and Place Priorities by helping establish guidance that will lead to the provision of new and updated 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.

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

Finance

8.1 This report recommends that Cabinet approves the draft Highgate School SPD, attached as Appendix 1, for public consultation (Regulations 12 and 13), and;

- 8.2 Delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability (incorporating Planning) to subsequently adopt the SPD (Regulation 14), taking into account representations received.
- 8.3 The cost of preparing this SPD and associated consultation will be met from a pre-application / Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) fee income from the Highgate School.

Procurement

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

Legal

- 8.5 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted on the preparation of this report and comments as follows.
- 8.6 Although the draft 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.
- 8.7 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance, the draft SPD should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on the development.
- 8.8 The Council is required by law to consult on the draft 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 Supplementary Planning Documents. 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.

Equality

- 8.9 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”.

8.10 Supplementary planning documents 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 draft SPD 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.

8.11 Therefore, there is no requirement to carry out an equalities impact assessment of the draft SPD the subject of this report, 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 (Appendix X) on the proposed draft 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. 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 Use of Appendices

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

10 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