

Estate Project, Far Field
Highgate School
Bidwells LLP
January 2023



ESTATE PROJECT, FAR FIELD PLANNING STATEMENT

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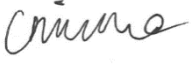
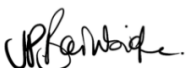
Appendix 1

SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

Appendix 2

SITE ALLOCATION

Quality Assurance

Site name:	Far Field, Highgate School
Client name:	Highgate School
Type of report:	Planning Statement
Prepared by:	Christian Milner, Senior Planner
Signed	
Date	20/01/2023
Reviewed by:	Jonathan Bainbridge, Partner, Planning
Signed	
Date	24/01/2023



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Highgate School (the applicant), for the redevelopment of the sports field and pavilion at Far Field. The site is bounded by The Bishops Avenue, Hampstead Lane and Courtenay Avenue.

Engineering and groundwork operations to relevel existing playing surface and improve drainage including installation of a synthetic turf pitch, creation of biodiverse margins, new emergency and service access and refurbishment of existing changing pavilion.

- 1.2 The submission of the applications listed above follows pre-application consultation with the London Borough of Haringey and other interested stakeholders which has taken place since 2015 (2019 for this specific project). The Statement of Community Involvement should be read alongside this document. Design of the proposals has evolved accordingly.
- 1.3 Highgate School is situated in Highgate, North London and the local planning authority is the London Borough of Haringey.
- 1.4 The site is within the Highgate Conservation Area and Allocation (SA41 – Highgate School).
- 1.5 The Far Field Playing Field is designated as Metropolitan Open Land. Further details of the application site are set out within Chapter 3.
- 1.6 Each application is accompanied by a number of supporting documents and plans which should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement, these are listed in Appendix 1.
- 1.7 This Planning Statement provides supporting information in respect of the proposed development, and a planning policy review, and highlights key issues and considerations which the applications will be determined against. It aims to assist the local planning authority in reaching a considered determination of the applications.

2.0 The School and Estate Project

Highgate School

- 2.1 Highgate School was established in 1565 by a Royal Charter of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the First. Sir Roger Cholmeley, the School's Founder, was granted Letters Patent to found 'a grammar school...for good education and instruction'.
- 2.2 It is three schools in one and includes:
- Pre-Preparatory School established in 1993 located in Bishopswood Road. The School teaches pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
 - Junior School established in the nineteenth century on the current location of Dyne House and relocated in 1938 to Cholmeley House in Bishopswood Road. Cholmeley House was demolished in 2014 and a new Junior School was completed for the 2016/17 academic year. The Junior School teaches pupils in Years 3 to 6.
 - Senior School, located in the centre of Highgate Village. The School teaches pupils in Years 7 to 13.
- 2.3 The three schools share facilities across the School's estate which is principally formed of:
- Senior School Campus, incorporating the "Island Site" bound by North Hill (B519) and Southwood Lane (B550) and the "Dyne House" site sitting beyond Southwood Lane to the east and including the subterranean access tunnel;
 - Bishopswood Road Campus, incorporating a) key properties of Mallinson Sports Centre, Richards Music Centre, Junior School, Pre-Preparatory School, b) key openspace and playing fields, and c) various other teaching, administrative and ancillary properties; and
 - Far Field, a playing pitch located some 600m west of the Bishopswood Road Campus and contained by The Bishops Avenue and Courtenay Avenue.
- 2.4 The School is one of Haringey's leading schools and largest employers. As a charity it has developed significant partnership arrangements with a considerable number of Haringey primary and secondary schools. Its position in the Haringey community has been further advanced in 2017 with the establishment of the London Academy of Excellence in Tottenham, with the welcome and active support of Haringey Council. Highgate is the lead academic sponsor of the new school, working in partnership with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

The Estate Project

- 2.5 The School was initially established as a boys' only school but is, today, a flourishing co-educational independent school. It needs to ensure that the range of its curriculum, and what it offers in, for example, sport and the arts, remains relevant and of the highest quality in support of its charitable objectives. As part of this, it needs to continue to invest in new and refurbished facilities where, notwithstanding the investment of recent years, there remains a significant task across parts of the estate.

- 2.6 It has been identified by the School that there is a need to invest in the improvement of the following facilities:
- The VIth Form provision;
 - Senior School Drama provision;
 - Senior School Music provision;
 - Science Block; and
 - Internal and external sports facilities.
- 2.7 The current facilities associated with these essential requirements are inadequate either as a result of the increased popularity and opportunities within these academic and extra-curricular areas or as a result of the current provision using ageing and converted buildings and areas of the estate.

VIth Form Centre

- 2.8 VIth Form facilities have evolved over the years and do not provide adequate space for self-study or for socialising. In addition, there are no specific VIth Form teaching spaces which should be laid out in order to promote discussion and student-led learning in preparation for university study. By co-locating VIth Form social areas, support services and teaching spaces the School will facilitate a culture of independence and pre-university readiness.

Senior School Drama provision

- 2.9 The School has introduced Drama as a curriculum subject from Year 7 to Year 13. However, the School's facilities lag behind its ambitions both for teaching and for productions. Drama productions are currently hemmed in by Highgate's facilities. The School cannot currently provide each Senior School student with an opportunity to be in a play. The Estate Project seeks to rectify this.

Senior School Music provision

- 2.10 Pupils who either wish to study academic music and/or learn to play instruments and collaborate as part of ensembles or orchestras have increased at Highgate by circa 33% over the last seven years and the popularity and take-up of music is expected to continue to grow. The School therefore must introduce flexibility into its estate to provide for the continued growth of the popularity of music within our pupil body. In addition, a larger facility is required for the ever-growing orchestras and choirs to rehearse and perform.

Internal and external sports facilities

- 2.11 The School offers sporting excellence employing specialist sporting coaches and currently has sporting facilities, both indoor and outdoor. The Mallinson Sports Centre requires significant maintenance in terms of both upkeep and investment to modernise and substantially improve the facility. The outdoor facilities require improvements to optimise their use in term time and ensure they are fit-for-purpose and welcoming for both users of those facilities and spectators.

Building refurbishment needs

- 2.12 In assessing the opportunities for the academic requirements set out within the brief, the School has considered those buildings and areas of the estate that are in need of substantial repair and maintenance, or general modernisation as they are no longer fit-for-purpose as modern educational environments. It was identified that there was significant investment needed into:
- Senior School Campus: Science Block (internal refurbishment of science laboratories) and the Dyne House site;
 - Bishopswood Road Campus: Dining Hall, Caen Wood Hall, the Mallinson Sports Centre and associated buildings, the Rifle Range and the Richards Music Centre.

Preparing the SPD

- 2.13 The entirety of the School's estate is covered by Allocation SA41 of the Haringey Local Plan Site Allocation DPD (2017). The allocation required the adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which appropriately manages future developments across the Estate.
- 2.14 Whilst the allocation envisaged that this would be in the form of two campus masterplans, it was agreed that given the interconnection of the sites and the need to manage the brief requirements across them, a single comprehensive document should be prepared.
- 2.15 As a material consideration, the SPD should be given weight in the planning balance and it is set out within the independent applications how the requirements of the SPD have been met.

3.0 The Site

- 3.1 The site is an area of approximately 2Ha consisting of playing fields located to the west of the School's Bishopswood Road Campus, accessible along Hampstead Lane.
- 3.2 The Far Field Playing Fields are bounded by residential properties to the North (Buxmead), East (Courtenay Avenue) and West (The Bishops Avenue). To the South, on the opposite side of Hampstead Lane, is the large open space of Hampstead Heath.
- 3.3 The site borders the London boroughs of Camden (to the south of Hampstead Lane) and Barnet (to the west including Bishops Avenue, and north including Buxmead).
- 3.4 The site is designated as Metropolitan Open Land and is within the Highgate Conservation Area.

Planning History

- 3.5 Key applications relevant to the proposed development are as follows:

PLANNING REF	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
HGY/2018/1310 Farfield, Hampstead Lane, London, N6 4NT	To remove dilapidated railings and sports netting and to install new railings to match new railings to Highgate School's Bishopswood Road campus as completion of a programme of replacement started in 2012.	Granted 06 Jun 2018

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 Highgate School is proposing to improve its existing grass pitches at the site in order to increase the opportunity for all pupils to engage with sports year-round. The School has undertaken sporting activity at the site since the 1920's and, in recent times, the field has suffered from very poor drainage through the winter months. This renders the field unusable for long periods of time during the academic year due to surface water and muddy conditions. Subsequently, pupils often must be taken by coach to other pitches, hired by the School as required, in the local area and beyond. It is therefore proposed to undertake significant improvements to the site's drainage infrastructure, and to lay a synthetic surface facilitating year-round use, and flexibility in terms of the sports offer overall.
- 4.2 The proposed description of development reads as:
- "Engineering and groundwork operations to relevel existing playing surface and improve drainage including installation of a synthetic turf pitch, creation of biodiverse margins, new emergency and service access and refurbishment of existing changing pavilion."*
- 4.3 It is important to understand that the concept of the scheme is simply the replacement of the playing surface. There will be no permanent line markings, nor will there be permanent infrastructure (including lighting) associated with the works. In effect, the field would be managed in the same way as today.
- 4.4 In order to create a quality playing surface, there will be re-levelling of the playing surface plateau by minor cut and fill, following topsoil removal. Excess topsoil will be removed from the site. These works will allow the installation of a sand-carpet synthetic turf pitch, with drainage and layered construction, including an attenuation capacity. Further, as part of the improvements the existing outfall pipe to Courtenay Avenue will be renovated. Around the boundaries of the synthetic turf pitch will be significant biodiverse planting incorporated.
- 4.5 In order to improve accessibility to the site, the development includes the formation of an access ramp with iron handrail from the currently disused pedestrian access off Hampstead Lane. The proposals will also provide reinforced natural grass for emergency vehicle path connecting the Pavilion to Courtenay Avenue and The Bishops Avenue access points.
- 4.6 The changing pavilion will be renovated, including new timber cladding of the facade and re-roofing, converting the current flat roof to a green roof and extending it to form a canopy area for shelter.

5.0 Policy Overview

- 5.1 Planning Practice Guidance [‘Practice Guidance’] states that to the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. This reflects section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.2 The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In relation to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads:
- *“Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

Development plan

- 5.3 The development plan consists of Strategic Policies (2013 with alterations 2017), Development Management Policies (2017), Site Allocations DPD (2017), Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017), and the London Plan (2021).

London Plan

- 5.4 The London Plan (2021) sets out the strategic planning aims and policies for London. It includes a city-wide spatial strategy as well as development management policies for key strategic issues.
- 5.5 Of principal importance to the proposals are policies:
- **Policy S3:** ‘Education and childcare facilities’
 - Seeks to ensure there is a sufficient supply of good quality education and childcare facilities to meet demand and offer educational choice.
 - **Policy S5:** ‘Sports and recreational facilities’
 - *“Development proposals for sports and recreation facilities should:*
 - 1) *increase or enhance the provision of facilities in accessible locations, well-connected to public transport and link to networks for walking and cycling*
 - 2) *maximise the multiple use of facilities, and encourage the co-location of services between sports providers, schools, colleges, universities and other community facilities*
 - 3) *support the provision of sports lighting within reasonable hours, where there is an identified need for sports facilities, and lighting is required to increase their potential usage, unless the lighting gives rise to demonstrable harm to the local community or biodiversity.”*
 - *“Existing sports and recreational land (including playing fields) and facilities for sports and recreation should be retained”*
 - **Policy HC1:** ‘Heritage conservation and growth’

- *“Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and appreciation within their surroundings.”*
- *“Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation.”*
- **Policy G3: ‘Metropolitan Open Land’:**
 - Outlines that such land is afforded the same status and level of protection as Green Belt.
- **Policy G4: ‘Open space’** states that development proposals should:
 - *“not result in the loss of protected open space” and “where possible create areas of publicly accessible open space, particularly in areas of deficiency”.*
- **Policy G6: ‘Biodiversity and access to nature’** states that:
 - *“development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and aim to secure net biodiversity gain”.*

Local Plan

5.6 In relation to the proposed development, the most pertinent policies of the Haringey Local Plan include:

- **Site Allocation: SA41:** The site forms part of the wider Highgate School allocation. This allocation reads as:
 - *“Exploration of how school facilities can be enhanced while simultaneously benefitting local communities including potentially increasing accessibility through the landholdings.”*
 - It states that development shall be in accordance with a future SPD. The Highgate School SPD was adopted in March 2021.
- **Policy SP0: ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development’:**
 - *“When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)”*
- **Policy SP9: Improving Skills and Training to Support Access to Jobs and Community Cohesion and Inclusion:**
 - *“The Council will encourage the provision and growth of education and training facilities within the borough”*
- **Policy SP12: ‘Conservation’:**
 - *“The Council shall ensure the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey’s heritage assets, their setting, and the wider historic environment”*
- **Policy SP13: ‘Open Space and Biodiversity’:**
 - *“All new development shall protect and enhance, and when and where possible, extend the existing boundaries of the borough’s Green Belt, designated Metropolitan Open Land, designated Open Spaces, Green Chains, allotments, river corridors and other open spaces from inappropriate development.”*
- **Policy SP16: ‘Community Facilities’:**

- *“The Council will work with its partners to ensure that appropriate improvement and enhancements, and where possible, protection of community facilities and services are provided for Haringey’s communities”*

Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.7 The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in July 2017 and now forms part of the development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan includes relevant policies, such as:
- **Policy TR1:** ‘Promoting Sustainable Movement’
 - *“New development should promote walking, cycling and public transport use.”*
 - **Policy DH2:** ‘Development Proposals in Highgate’s Conservation Areas’
 - *“Development proposals, including alterations or extensions to existing buildings, should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Highgate’s conservation areas”*
 - **Policy OS2:** ‘Protection of Trees and Mature Vegetation’
 - *“Within the conservation areas or when protected by a TPO, specimen, veteran and mature trees and mature vegetation, which have townscape, ecological or amenity value should be retained where possible.”*
 - *“There should be no net loss of trees or as a result of development, and pro rata replacement will be expected”*

Material considerations

National Planning Policy

- 5.8 The National Planning Policy Framework [‘the Framework’] represents up-to-date government planning policy and is a material consideration that must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application or appeal. This includes the presumption in favour of development found at paragraph 11 of the Framework.
- 5.9 Paragraph 95 states that: “it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:
- a) *give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and*
 - b) *work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”*
- 5.10 Paragraph 98 states that:
- “Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for*

nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”

5.11 Key sections of the Framework include:

- Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Chapter 4: Decision making
- Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 11: Making effective use of land
- Chapter 12: Achieving well designed places
- Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.12 In respect of policies relating to Metropolitan Open Land, it is set out that the same tests are to be applied as for Green Belt. The policies are set out at Section 13 of the Framework and reviewed in detail at Section 7 of this Planning Statement.

5.13 Supporting the Framework is a series of online Practice Guidance which is also considered a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Highgate School SPD

5.14 The Highgate School SPD was formally adopted in March 2021. The SPD was developed in partnership between Haringey Council and Highgate School, the document exists to shape and form future planning applications. As such, it has been a key document in the preparation of this planning application.

5.15 Its sets out:

- *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.*
- *That applications for the strategic proposals identified in this SPD should be brought forward simultaneously to enable them to be considered holistically and comprehensively.*
- *A strategic review of the School's estate should be carried out at least once every 10 years, hence the life span of this SPD.*
- *Aspirations for development of the School within the life span of this SPD.*

5.16 In relation to forthcoming applications at Far Field, the SPD states that the Council will expect:

“Any proposal for the improvements of the Far Field 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.

It is also noted that proposals will need to consider Sport England’s Playing Field Policy including local need for artificial surfaces. Accordingly, any drainage improvement works must be designed and overseen by a competent sports agronomist to ensure that the improvements would be fit for purpose.”

- 5.17 *“New sports facilities should seek to enable community use as this would help the management and maintenance of such uses and would therefore meet Sport England’s Policies and the NPPF, paragraph 97.”* [note: the relevant paragraph of the NPPF (2021) is Paragraph 98 – this is included in full above].

Sport England

- 5.18 As noted within The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, Sport England is a statutory consultee for applications relating to playing field development.
- 5.19 In relation to this, Sport England have published “Playing fields policy and guidance” last updated in December 2021. It states: *“Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of: all or any part of a playing field, or land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or land allocated for use as a playing field unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.”*
- 5.20 These exceptions include:
- There is an excess of provision locally and the site has no special significance in the interests of sport;
 - The development is for ancillary facilities supporting the playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches and their use.
 - The proposed development affects land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:
 - reduce the size of any playing pitch;
 - result in the inability to use any playing pitch;
 - reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
 - result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities; or
 - prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.
 - The playing field lost as a result of development will be replaced, by a new area of
 - equivalent or better quality, and
 - equivalent or greater quantity, and
 - in a suitable location, and
 - subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

- The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

5.21 Considering this guidance, early discussions have commenced with Sport England and will be expected to continue throughout the determination of the planning application.

5.22 Further consideration is set out within the Planning Assessment.

6.0 Planning Assessment

6.1 The key policy issues in relation to the development are:

- Principle of development
- Metropolitan Open Land
- Design
- Heritage
- Sustainability
- Transport
- Flood Risk & Drainage
- Biodiversity
- Archaeology

Principle of development

6.2 London Plan Policy S5 states that: *“Existing sports and recreational land (including playing fields) and facilities for sports and recreation should be retained”*

6.3 The driving force behind these proposals is the need to accommodate a wider range of sports in view of changing requirements in school sports and to provide such sports and outdoor activities in all ground and weather conditions. The site at present has issues with drainage and has limited use through the winter due to substantial waterlogging. This is an issue common across the borough as identified in the Council's own Outdoor Sports Play Facilities Framework (2016-2026).

6.4 The synthetic turf pitch (STP) is urgently needed to consolidate improvements to the sports and outdoor activities on offer at the School. Improved hockey and netball facilities are particularly lacking, although in addition a range of other seasonal sports will be played on a more reliable basis on the STP. The requirements for hockey in particular show that the current grass surface does not provide a suitable playing surface, or the durability and weather resistance, and these can only be met by the introduction of a STP.

Sport England

6.5 During the inception of the proposed development, the School has undertaken consultation with Sport England via the pre-application service.

6.6 As outlined earlier, Sport England are a statutory consultee, with defined aims and objectives of protecting one of the most important resources for sport in England. During the development of the proposals, the School consulted with Sport England in order to prepare a proposal compliant with policy objectives.

- 6.7 As a development which “involves the replacement of the grass surface of a playing pitch on a playing field with an artificial, man-made or composite surface”, Sport England’s objectives are directly applicable.
- 6.8 At its most simple concept, the proposed development is seeking to enable more regular and consistent use of Far Field. Currently, the site’s topography, geology and surface conditions (natural grass on London Clay) compromises the suitability of the field in meeting the School’s needs, and significantly limits the overall annual level of use that the field can support during term-time.
- 6.9 In this respect, an effective drainage system is essential to the adequate wear capacity of a natural grass playing field. An industry ‘rule-of-thumb’ lifespan for land drainage is 25 years before replacement is needed.
- 6.10 Given the challenges that the School is facing with the current site, it appointed Hemstock Design Ltd, a internationally recognised sports agronomist, and expert in the provision of high quality playing surfaces, to understand the challenges associated with the existing field’s management.
- 6.11 Initial investigation noted that much of the existing pitch drainage is more than 25 years old, and some dates to the 1930s. Hemstock Design noted that the drainage systems have not been maintained since before WWII and the entirety of the drainage system has now largely failed through age. Consequently, the playing surface is regularly water-logged and permanently muddy in high wear areas through winter. This means that the field cannot be used reliably from November to March every year.
- 6.12 This presents a fundamental constraint on the School’s Sport and Exercise (SpEx) curriculum.

Need

- 6.13 Following the School’s move to co-education, and the changing nature of sports in schools generally, the School has undertaken a fundamental reassessment of the sports offered across the estate. This highlighted a shortfall in suitable surfaces for hockey for both girls and boys. For safety reasons and in accordance with Hockey England requirements, competitive hockey must be played on a smooth synthetic surface. This eliminates the risks associated with a potentially ‘bobbly’ natural grass surface.
- 6.14 At the School, hockey, tennis, and netball currently use the same space/surface in rotation at the Bishopswood Road Campus sports fields. This is unsatisfactory as it significantly reduces the season for each sport.
- 6.15 Further, the natural grass of Senior Field is used for soccer and cricket primarily, but with use limited by weather and ground conditions during long periods of the academic year.
- 6.16 For the SpEx curriculum to function properly, the synthetic turf pitch is of fundamental importance. It has been set out by the School that girls teams and representative sport cannot continue to be catered for within the Estate without access to additional synthetic turf pitch provision in the immediate future. In recent times, this has resulted in transporting pupils daily by

coach to alternative facilities. This is not viable in terms of time, expense, programming problems and the impact environmentally.

- 6.17 It is concluded that each year-group of pupils, boys and girls, requires access to a good reliable synthetic surface three or four times a week in order to develop the necessary skills in a range of different disciplines.
- 6.18 The provision of additional facilities for Hockey, Netball and Tennis is based upon a detailed need justification assessment as set out at 1.2.1 of the Design and Access Statement.
- 6.19 In addition, the Design and Access Statement provides detail on the inherent limitations which arise from natural turf – particularly where natural grass is maintained above a London Clay soil type where drainage and compaction problems limit winter use in particular, where a saturated ‘field capacity’ typically arises from mid-November to early April, limiting play when water-logged, and also severely limiting the quality during non-saturated months when the surface is significantly degraded.
- 6.20 In addition to the drainage problems, it is considered that wear and tear on the grass and the limited re-growth in the colder months results in periods when the grass pitches cannot be used and the School is forced to send pupils by coach to alternative hired facilities or switching to indoor sport. This in turn, displaces other indoor sports activities.
- 6.21 The existing Far Field grass playing field area is marked-out as three large junior-sized soccer pitches, with one cricket practice area, giving a capacity of 66 players at any one time.
- 6.22 In light of these considerations, the proposals have the opportunity to:
- **Protect** the provision of the SpEx curriculum at the School providing greater opportunity for students to take part in a range of sports.
 - **Enhance** the overall quality of the sports offer within the School’s Estate and, outside core teaching hours, for the wider public.
 - **Provide** a new opportunity for taking part in sport, whether a member of the school or wider community.

Applying Sport England Policy

- 6.23 The policy states:
- “Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of: all or any part of a playing field, or land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or land allocated for use as a playing field unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.”*
- 6.24 The development will result in the loss of a natural grassed surface and we acknowledge that this conflicts with the Sport England policy. However, this loss will result in the provision of an alternative playing surface which more successfully meets the needs of the School. The sporting resource offered by the new playing surface can provide for an identified wider community

benefit, particularly outside School hours, and the School wishes to discuss this with Sport England and the Local Planning Authority.

- 6.25 Elsewhere within the wider School estate, more appropriate grassed surfaces will be maintained. In this context, the proposed development will only increase the provision of Sport across the estate. It increases the range of sports that can be delivered across the estate and reduces the loss of on-site, outdoor teaching time so that the SpEx curriculum can be constantly delivered on the School's facilities in term-time.
- 6.26 In this respect, it is considered that Exception 5 applies: *"the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field."*

Metropolitan Open Land

- 6.27 The whole site sits within Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). London Plan Policy G3 and Local Plan Policy SP13 seek to protect MOL from inappropriate development, applying the same protections as the Green Belt as set out within national policy.
- 6.28 The NPPF (2021) states that *"a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt"* (paragraph 149). However, seven exceptions to this policy are set out, including:
- *...B) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- 6.29 There are no new buildings to be constructed as part of the proposed development; the existing pavillion will be refurbished with no increase in floor area, and the principal development relates to engineering operations associated with the proposed installation of a synthetic surface. On completion of the works, the playing field will remain available for outdoor sport and there will be no change to the openness of the site. The playing surface will have no permanent marks or permanent netting/borders and will be painted and set-up seasonally reflecting the field markings of a natural grassed surface. The proposed STP will have no discernible difference compared to the existing, and resultantly is considered to have no impact on the openness of the MOL.
- 6.30 We therefore conclude that the development would not be inappropriate development and there is no requirement for a very special circumstances case to be applied.
- 6.31 Anecdotally, it is highlighted that the proposed landscaping improvements around the periphery of the playing surface will enhance the setting of the MOL.

Design

- 6.32 London Plan Policy D3 requires that development should make the best use of land by following a design-led approach, ensuring that development is of the most appropriate form and land use

for the site. Development proposals should relate positively to their locality and enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.

- 6.33 Local Plan Development Management Policy DM1 highlights that all new development and changes of use must achieve a high standard of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area.
- 6.34 The existing changing pavilion located towards the central-northern boundary is functionally adequate to provide the very limited changing and toilet facilities required, however the building is now 60 years old, having replaced a wooden pavilion in 1960. The exterior appearance is deteriorating and is out of keeping with the surroundings, the roof is leaking and resultantly is in need of renovation and improvement.
- 6.35 A simple approach to the renovation of the pavilion is to be adopted. The structure will be retained, rearranging its changing and toilet facilities internally to provide a fully accessible toilet and shower changing room.
- 6.36 Installation of timber cladding to the facade and re-roofing the building to include a simple canopy area for supervisors to take shelter will improve the pavilion's external appearance in a manner which is sympathetic to the site and its surroundings.
- 6.37 It is considered that the proposed upgrade to the changing pavilion and the other works associated with this application are acceptable in design terms.

Accessibility

- 6.38 London Plan Policy D5 expects development proposals to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design.
- 6.39 The existing primary entrance on Courtenay Avenue is sufficiently wide for vehicular and maintenance access and can be utilised for level access. It has an unobstructed gently rising slope from road level to the playing surface level. However, in wet conditions, this access is not usable, and the field is therefore not wholly accessible for wheelchair users.
- 6.40 The proposals therefore include a ramp to be installed from the Hampstead Lane pedestrian gate towards the existing main gate and then on over a reinforced natural grass all-weather surface to the pavilion and synthetic turf pitch. Wheel-chair access will be provided via the Courtenay Avenue access point.
- 6.41 A new vehicle access is to be created off The Bishops Avenue creating an additional level-access entry point into the site. Crucially, the proposed entrance off The Bishops Avenue will provide access for emergency vehicles, such as ambulances, and maintenance. Currently direct vehicle access to the site is not possible. The access will be naturally grassed, and turf reinforcement will be used to provide an unobtrusive solution for protecting the surfaces when used for emergency and maintenance vehicle access.

- 6.42 Furthermore, the refurbishment of the existing changing block will provide a fully accessible toilet and shower changing room.
- 6.43 It is concluded that the proposed development will improve the accessibility of the sporting provision in full accordance with policy.

Heritage

- 6.44 The site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area and Kenwood Registered Park and Garden sits directly adjacent to the south of the site.
- 6.45 As set out in Practice Guidance, in addition to consideration of the development plan, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 6.46 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF (2021) states: *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”* Paragraph 199 continues: *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).”*
- 6.47 In respect of the development plan, Local Plan Strategic Policy SP12 (conservation) states: *“The Council shall ensure the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey’s heritage assets, their setting, and the wider historic environment. The borough’s heritage assets include Statutory Listed Buildings”.*
- 6.48 Local Plan Policy DM9 (Management of the Historic Environment) states that the Council will give consideration to, and support where appropriate, proposals for the sensitive redevelopment of sites and buildings where they detract from the character and appearance of a Conservation Area and its setting, provided that they are compatible with and/or complement the special characteristics and significance of the area.
- 6.49 Neighbourhood Plan Policy DH2 (Development Proposals in Highgate’s Conservation Area) states that: *“Development proposals, including alterations or extensions to existing buildings, should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Highgate’s Conservation Areas, and respect the setting of its listed buildings and other heritage assets. Development should preserve or enhance the open, semi-rural or village character where this is a feature of the area.”*
- 6.50 The application is supported by a comprehensive Heritage Statement. Given the separation and the limited extent of development on completion of the works, it concludes that the proposals will result in a neutral impact on the registered park and garden. In respect of the Conservation Area, it is noted that the development will not result in a perceptible change in character of the site as a

recreational field institutional in nature. However, improvements to the existing boundary treatment, including a low perimeter hedge and the continued removal of unsightly tall cricket netting are welcomed. Overall, the impact on the Conservation Area is also considered to be neutral.

- 6.51 The proposals are considered to accord with Section 72 of the 1990 Act and in causing no harm to the significance of the heritage assets identified, the relevant policies of the NPPF, in addition to local heritage policies, are satisfied.
- 6.52 The proposals are considered to have an acceptable impact in heritage terms.

Sustainability

- 6.53 The School has introduced sustainability as one of its six key objectives in its School Development Plan, with the aim of placing sustainability at the heart of the School's decisions and it is recognised that there appears to be an inherent conflict in the replacement of a natural grassed surface with a synthetic one.
- 6.54 It is widely accepted that sustainability includes three strands: social, environmental and economic. There are clear and meaningful social benefits which arise from the successful delivery of sport across the School's estate. The physical and mental health benefits of a broad and wide-ranging access to sports are well established. These social benefits must be weighed against environmental considerations.
- 6.55 In respect of the environmental considerations, the School has appointed an independent examination of the carbon impacts associated with the proposed development. Eight Versa, a sustainability consultancy with over 15 years of experience, have produced a 'Lifecycle Assessment Scenario Comparison' in support of this planning application. This explored the impact of the proposed synthetic pitch.
- 6.56 The report seeks to assess the impact of the proposed playing surface in three scenarios. The assessed scenarios are listed below:
- **Scenario 1:** Existing playing field: natural turf pitch: 13,950m².
 - Grass pitch with constructed drainage below and 5-year drainage maintenance intervals.
 - **Scenario 2:** Proposed playing field: synthetic turf pitch of 14,000m²
 - Synthetic turf with under pitch drainage and 7-year replacement intervals for turf.
 - **Scenario 3:** Ideal management proposed playing field: synthetic turf pitch of 14,000m²
 - The same construction as scenario 2 but with extended lifetime for the synthetic turf based on the school's management and lifetime of other synthetic turf playing fields. End of life has also been assumed as recycled or reused rather than plastic landfill for the synthetic turf.
- 6.57 In broad terms, the report identifies:

- The construction stage associated with keeping the existing pitch usable for 25 years (Scenario 1) accounts for 72% of the lifecycle emissions to a total of 1,821,558 kgCo2eq.
- In Scenario 2, a 7 year STP was assessed. This resulted in increased lifecycle emissions of 5,041,337 kgCo2eq, of which a considerable proportion come from manufacturing and replacing the construction products. As the pitch surface (shock pad and artificial turf) account for over 70% of emissions, this highlights the importance of considering environmental performance when procuring specific products.
- The final Scenario 3 considered an increased replacement interval of the turf in line with the replacement cycles and practices of existing pitches at Highgate School. This results in 4,453,144 kgCo2eq - a reduction of in-use emissions by 33% compared to Scenario 2.

- 6.58 It is recognised that Scenario 3 is still a greater Carbon impact than Scenario 1. However, to gain an insight to the real performance of the scenarios, it is necessary to look at the emissions per hour of use. Figure 3 of the Eight Vera report illustrates this and notes that Scenario 3 would be more favourable when considering the increased usage. Further, there are new products coming to the market which are “Zero Carbon”. These claims need to be verified, but in such an approach there is an opportunity to dramatically reduce even further the impact of replacing turf by using a certified net zero product in the future.
- 6.59 With these considerations established, the proposed development will have an acceptable sustainability impact.

Transport

- 6.60 NPPF Paragraph 111 notes that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 6.61 The impacts of the development in highways terms are considered in a Transport Statement prepared by TPA.
- 6.62 It notes that the Site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport services, in the form of local buses and school services. No existing road safety hotspots have been identified in the vicinity of the Site and the accident rates are not predicted to increase as a result of the proposed development.
- 6.63 The existing access on Courtenay Avenue will be retained, while the existing, disused pedestrian access on Hampstead Lane will be upgraded. A secondary vehicular access, in the form of a crossover, will be formed off The Bishops Avenue, and an Automatic Traffic Count Survey has revealed that its location is adequate, in the context of the observed speeds and the surrounding properties and crossovers on the road. This access is expected to be used occasionally, mainly by maintenance and emergency vehicles, as there is no car parking provided for staff, parents or visitors.
- 6.64 The Transport Statement concludes that:

“The development proposals are consistent with local, regional and national planning policy. No adverse impact on the local highway or public transport infrastructure is anticipated, as a result of there being as a result of there being a limited number of additional trips associated with the proposed development. As such, it is considered that there is no reason to refuse the application on highway grounds.”

- 6.65 Consequently, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of their transport impact.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 6.66 London Plan Policy SI12 looks to ensure that developments minimise and mitigate flood risk and address any residual flood risk. Similarly, Local Plan Strategic Policy SP5 requires all development in Haringey to be water efficient during construction and operation and to reduce all forms of flood risk.
- 6.67 Local Plan Policy DM24 (Managing and Reducing Flood Risk) seeks to ensure that all proposals for new development avoid and reduce the risk of flooding to future occupants and do not increase the risk of flooding. All proposals for new development will be required to: manage and reduce surface water run-off; and manage water and wastewater discharges.
- 6.68 Policy SI13 of the London Plan sets out that proposals should aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates and sets a preference for green over grey features in line with the policies defined drainage hierarchy. Local Plan Policy DM25 outlines that all proposals for new development must seek to manage surface water as close to its source as possible in line with the London Plan drainage hierarchy. The Council will require Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to be sensitively incorporated into new development by way of site layout and design, the policy then sets out the requirements for various types of development.
- 6.69 The accompanying Design and Access Statement prepared by Hemstock Design sets out the existing difficulties that are caused by the poor drainage and results in often poor ground conditions of the playing fields. The application is also accompanied by a ‘Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage Strategy’ prepared by Corner Water Consulting; this sets out how the existing drainage issues will be overcome, the key parts of which are included below.
- 6.70 The site is located in a ‘very low risk’ area in terms of surface water flood risk, meaning a yearly chance of flooding of less than 0.1%. Nonetheless, by regrading the site and adding a deep voided stone sub-base layer the proposals will improve the playing fields capacity to absorb rainfall during a storm. As set out within the drainage strategy, the development will provide for a 1 in 100 year event plus 40% climate change, with an outflow restricted to less than Greenfield rates for 1 in 30 and 1 in 100 flooding events.
- 6.71 Therefore, it is considered that the proposed works will comply with all relevant policies in relation to flood risk and drainage.

Biodiversity

- 6.72 London Plan Policy G6 expects development proposals to manage biodiversity and achieve biodiversity net gain. Whilst the proposed development will replace the natural grassed surface with a synthetic one, extensive consideration has been given to mitigating the reduced ecological potential of the site. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken by Applied Ecology focussing upon the proposed enhanced biodiverse margins including hedgerows.
- 6.73 Whilst the prescribed methodology results in a net loss of 1.99 habitat units, equivalent to a net loss of 14.02%, the development will deliver a net gain of +2.38 hedgerow units arising from the planting of 356m of new hedge. If allowed by the methodology, this would offset the loss of 1.99 habitat units, representing a meaningful biodiversity enhancement which reinforces the habitat connectivity function of the existing green corridor formed by the mature trees along the boundaries of the site.
- 6.74 Furthermore, the proposals have come forward as part of the wider estate strategy which delivers extensive environmental enhancement. When assessing the developments as a whole, there are significant benefits in terms of biodiversity net gain.

Archaeology

- 6.75 An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment has been undertaken by Compass Archaeology. It concludes that there is no requirement for further investigation as the likelihood of archaeology being present is extremely slim. It reaches this conclusion on the basis that there has been a lack of any development on the site prior to the 20th Century and that subsequent and extensive earthworks have previously been applied in order to create the original playing field surface.
- 6.76 Consequently, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of their archaeological impact.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposals form a part of the School's programme of redevelopment, refurbishment and modernisation across the estate. The proposals seek to provide an improved quality of sports provision which is flexible, accessible and resilient.
- 7.2 In accordance with Sport England guidance, these proposals will greatly improve the usability and the quality of the playing fields which suffer from drainage issues and are often waterlogged during the winter months. Improving the usability of the playing fields will reduce the need for the School to use other facilities further away from the site. Furthermore, it will reduce the risk of cancellations to the pupils' SpEx curriculum which often occur due to ground conditions.
- 7.3 Whilst the proposed development will result in a loss of naturally turfed pitch, a detailed needs case is set out which justifies that loss in accordance with Exception 5 of the "Planning for sport" guidance. Early consultation has been undertaken with Sport England and this is expected to continue during the determination of the application.
- 7.4 School pupils will walk from the School's main campuses to the playing fields along Hampstead Lane, as they do at present. There will be access improvements including the formation of an access ramp with iron handrail from the currently disused pedestrian access off Hampstead Lane and the provision of a reinforced natural grass emergency vehicle path connecting the Pavilion to the Courtenay Avenue and The Bishops Avenue access points.
- 7.5 The changing pavilion will receive much needed renovation works and will be provided with level access.
- 7.6 Whilst within MOL, the development is not considered to be inappropriate development. Rather, the principle of development accords with the development plan when read as a whole and therefore benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Consequently, the development proposals should be approved without delay.

APPENDIX 1

SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

PLANNING APPLICATION DOCUMENT	SUPPORTING INFORMATION
Planning Application Form and Certificates	Arboricultural Impact Assessment
Site Location Plan	Archaeological Assessment
Existing and proposed drawings as set out in the table below	Area Schedule (Estate Wide)
	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report
	Covering Letter
	Design and Access Statement
	Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage Strategy
	Heritage Assessment
	Lifecycle Assessment
	Outline Construction Logistics Plan
	Outline Methodology & Construction Logistic Plan
	Preliminary Ecology Appraisal
	Statement of Community Involvement
	Transport Statement

DRAWING TITLE	DRAWING NO
Site Location plan	-
Estate Wide Plan - Site Application & Ownership Boundaries	A_HS-RMC2_2010 Rev A
Existing	
Existing Site Plan	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-10001
Existing Pavilion	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-22100
Existing Drainage	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-52001
Existing Drainage	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-52002
Existing Sections	1704-FF-SZ-DR-A-21001
Proposed	
Proposed Site Plan	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-10101
Proposed Regrading	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-10102

Proposed Access	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-10151
Proposed Pavilion GAs	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-22101
Proposed Drainage	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-52100
Hockey Layout	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-90101
Proposed Sections	1704-FF-SZ-DR-A-21101
Proposed Banking	1704-FF-SZ-DR-A-21121
Other	
Example ST System	1704-FF-LL-DR-A-52507

APPENDIX 2

SITE ALLOCATION

SA41: HIGHGATE SCHOOL



Proposed Site Allocation

2.119 Exploration of how school facilities can be enhanced while simultaneously benefitting local communities including potentially increasing accessibility through the landholdings.

Commentary

- 2.120 The site falls within the Highgate Conservation Area. The school essentially occupies two campuses- the more prominent one at the junction of Highgate High Street and North Hill; the other within the Bishops sub-area of the conservation area. The site has a prominent position, both in terms of the location as well as status within the wider area. Whilst the aesthetic value of buildings would have to be considered based on individual proposals, the site has high communal and historic value.
- 2.121 Highgate School aims to expand to continue to meet the education needs of local schoolchildren. Additionally the school represents a significant landowner within the Highgate area. The Council will work in conjunction with the School to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document which appropriately manages future developments on this landholding.

Address	Highgate School, North Road & Southwood Lane, Highgate, N6		
Site Size (Ha)	15.63	PTAL Rating	1b-3
Timeframe for delivery	2011-2015	2015-2020	2020 onwards
Current/Previous use	School grounds		
Ownership	Single private freehold		
How site was identified	Existing pre-applications		
Planning applications	Highgate Conservation Area Metropolitan open land: Highgate School Playing Fields Locally listed buildings: Bishopswood Road, Castle Yard, Osborne Road Listed buildings: The Highgate Tabernacle, Highgate School – Old School Building, Highgate School Chapel, War Memorial at Highgate School, and many adjacent		
Indicative Dev' Capacity	None identified.		

Site Requirements

- Development on the site shall be in accordance with a future SPD. The SPD will take the form of two campus masterplans that take a comprehensive approach to the effective planning and delivery of new accommodation to meet the long term needs of the school and supporting enhanced community use and benefits.
- These will focus on creating improved management and quality of provision, potentially including new buildings.
- Open space should be made as accessible as possible in line with Policy DM 20.
- The site lies within the Highgate Conservation Area and development should preserve or enhance its appearance as per the statutory requirements.
- Development should preserve the setting of the statutorily and locally listed buildings on the site and neighbouring the School, having regard to their significance. Historic England has also highlight the potential for significant archaeology including a medieval settlement and recorded pre-school chapel.

Development Guidelines

- The objectives of the Highgate Bowl site should be considered on any properties that fall into this site allocation.
- A Supplementary Planning Document will be developed by the Council in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. This will take the form of masterplans to guide development on these sites, and ensure development comes forward in a co-ordinated manner. This will consider in more detail issues regarding heights and design.
- Any Masterplanning should give appropriate regard to the open character of the Bowl as well as the character of the Bishops area.
- A flood risk assessment is required for any development. Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment further outlines when an assessment is required and what it should include.



Highgate School



Highgate Primary School

ALLOCATIONS

