

# Consultation on the Britannia site

## Development Proposal

December 2016

### Introduction

The Council is considering whether it would be possible to build a new leisure centre to replace Britannia – which is coming to the end of its life – and a new secondary school to help meet the demand for school places for local children. This would be funded in part by the sale of housing, which would also be built on the site.

We are looking at the Britannia site, in Hyde Road and bordering Pitfield Street, because it is a large site in Council-ownership, and we believe that, in consultation with residents, we could make better use of the land and provide the first class community facilities we need. Your feedback to this consultation is important and forms a key part of our decision making process.

### Background/context

Over the summer, the Council commissioned a feasibility study to identify the options available to build a new leisure centre, six form of entry secondary school and co-located housing on the Britannia site. The study took account of the lack of central government funding to build a new leisure centre, the limited funds for building a new school, the desire for the current leisure centre to remain operational during the build period and also whether it would be beneficial to rebuild Shoreditch Primary School elsewhere on the site. All to be achieved whilst retaining the land in the Council's ownership.

This consultation paper shares the outcomes of our work to date and invites residents and stakeholders to feed back their thoughts on these options. As the programme progresses, residents will be able to get involved in more detailed consultations on the design options for specific elements of the scheme; for example, the facilities and layout of the leisure centre.

As well as feeding back through this consultation questionnaire, you can find out more and ask questions at a series of drop-in sessions, which will take place at:

Where	Date	Time
Britannia Leisure Centre, 40 Hyde Road, London, N1 5JU	Thursday 15 December	8.45am to 12pm
	Saturday 17 December	12pm to 2pm
	Thursday 12 January	5pm to 9.45pm
Colville Estate Community Hall, 35 Branch Place, London, N1 5PH	Thursday 5 January	6pm to 8pm
Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, London E8 1DY	Wednesday 11 January	10am to 12pm
	Wednesday 18 January	2pm to 4pm
Shoreditch Park Primary School*, 113 Bridport Place, London 5JN	Tuesday 13 December	5pm to 7pm
	Tuesday 10 January	5pm to 7pm

\* Parents of pupils at Shoreditch Park Primary School will be invited to earlier consultation drop-in sessions.

For further information, we enclose a copy of a leaflet distributed to residents in the Hoxton East and Shoreditch Ward, parents at Shoreditch Park Primary School and made available at Britannia Leisure Centre, last month.



You can also complete the questionnaire online at [www.hackney.gov.uk/britannia-leisure-centre](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/britannia-leisure-centre)

### The aims of the multi-use development proposal

- Build a new leisure centre to replace facilities which are reaching the end of their life
- Build a new secondary school with six forms of entry and a sixth form
- Retain Shoreditch Park Primary School (formerly Whitmore Primary School) as part of

the Britannia site and fund some improvement works to the school

- Build affordable and private sale housing. The private housing is to contribute to the cost of the leisure centre, secondary school and improvements to Shoreditch Park Primary School.



Potential layout of Britannia site development

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 – Residential tower              | 5 – New secondary school           |
| 2 – Shoreditch Park Primary School | 6 – Residential tower above school |
| 3 – Residential development        | 7 – School play space              |
| 4 – Residential tower              | 8 – New Leisure Centre             |

## Britannia Leisure Centre

Britannia Leisure Centre was built in two stages in the late 1970s and 1980s and is now coming to the end of its life. The mechanical and electrical systems need replacing and there are leaks from the health suite into the pool circulation area and from the swimming pool tanks into the surrounding ground. Only recently we were forced to close the pool for three days after a water pipe burst, which required significant repair work.

Despite small scale refurbishments, the cost of fully refurbishing the centre would be approximately £14m, and would require it to close for a significant amount of time, about 18 to 24 months. We think it would be more effective to build a new leisure centre which better suits the needs of its users, is attractive, modern, more efficient to operate, and secures leisure provision in the area for the next generation and beyond. The aim would be to close Britannia Leisure Centre only when the new centre is open.

Some of the facilities we are considering in the new, state-of-the-art leisure centre include: a 25 metre swimming pool, a new learner pool, an introduction to water area – which could include a flume, a children's soft play area, squash courts, fitness studios, 6-court sports hall, a larger gym and two 5-a-side football pitches.

The new leisure centre would face onto Shoreditch Park, improving the relationship between the leisure centre and Park by allowing people to enter and exit it from the Park and Pitfield Street, and would include a café and toilets, both of which will be accessible by Park visitors.

If we go ahead with this proposal, residents would be invited to take part in further consultation events to input into design options for the new leisure centre. At this point, we would like to know your views about the idea of a new leisure centre.

**Image showing potential children's pool and confidence water area – by LA Architects**



**Computer generated image of possible Britannia site development**



## City Academy Shoreditch Park

Like many London boroughs, Hackney needs more school places. Despite investing over £500m in our schools over the last decade, we need to build two new secondary schools to keep pace with demand. Current legislation does not allow the Council to choose to open a new maintained school. All new state-funded schools have to be free schools or academies. To ensure the quality of education provision for our young people, we are working with the City of London Corporation, a trusted provider with a strong track record in the borough, to develop these schools, which would provide the high quality places we need. We need to start this work now to ensure they are ready in time.

The City of London Academy Shoreditch Park would have six classes in each year group, taking

180 students in its first year and eventually offering 900 new school places, plus a sixth form. It would open at a temporary location on Audrey Street in September 2017, before opening at its permanent site in 2020.

We already have a good relationship with the City of London Academy Trust, which sponsors the successful City Academy Hackney, which has achieved phenomenal results. Last summer, 89% of pupils achieve five or more A\* to C grade GCSEs, and 42% achieved at least three A\*/A grades.

The school would be designed and built to the same standard as Hackney's award-winning Building Schools for the Future schools with its own sports hall, multi-use games area (MUGA) and play space.



**Images of the Garden School, one of the newly built schools in Hackney**

## Shoreditch Park Primary School

The feasibility study considered whether Shoreditch Park Primary School (formerly known as Whitmore Primary) should remain on its existing site, or be rebuilt elsewhere. The study concludes that this school, rated Outstanding by Ofsted, should remain where it is, as the quality and size of the facilities it currently has could not be replicated in a new building somewhere else on the site. It is proposed that a small area of the school site would be used for housing. The Council would seek to increase and improve the school's remaining spaces in return for the loss of a relatively small part of its total area.

Shoreditch Park Primary School has a relatively spacious and varied external area relative to other schools in the Borough, but we are very aware that such space is precious and should only be considered for an alternative use if the benefits justify it. We have consulted with the school on these proposals and will continue to do so.

## Housing

Hackney Council receives no Central Government funding to build leisure facilities and insufficient funding to build schools to match the quality of those we built under our Building Schools for the Future programme. This means that we're having to think creatively about how to pay for them to achieve that quality. By building homes ourselves, rather than handing the site to a developer, we can ensure that every penny raised would go to fund the new leisure centre and school.

The feasibility study looked at how many units of housing would need to be built to fund these facilities. We also looked at how many affordable homes we could fund on the site. The homes are likely to be 1-3 bedroom properties. We anticipate that the housing units would be in the form of residential towers – in the range of 18 to 24 storeys.

If we go ahead with this development, residents will be invited to provide feedback on the design proposals for the residential towers.

## Options not being taken forward

We have carefully considered a wide range of options and some were found to be unfeasible:

### Do nothing

If the Council did not invest in the current leisure centre it would become increasingly difficult to keep it open, as the building deteriorated, so that ultimately it became unfit for use. If the Council did not build a new school, it would fail to meet its legal duty to provide sufficient school places, so that Hackney families would need to send their children out of the borough. Central government might open free schools run by providers that might not wish to engage with their local community as our existing schools do.

### Refurbishing the current leisure centre

Britannia Leisure Centre is approaching the end of its life and is costing too much money to operate and maintain. We considered refurbishing

the leisure centre, but it was estimated that it would cost around £14m and would mean that it would close for around 18 to 24 months for the refurbishment. This option wouldn't allow us to build a new secondary school on the site and therefore keep pace with the demand for school places.

### A new leisure centre and school with no residential:

This option was found to be impossible due to funding restrictions: there is no central government funding available to build a new leisure centre and not enough to build a new school. The option would require too much additional funding and is not affordable.

### A new leisure centre and school with over 560 private for sale housing units:

This option would be made up of more than 560 private for sale housing units, with no affordable housing at all.

This option would be sufficient to fund all the public facilities needed without any subsidy from other sources, but we considered the housing element to be too dense for the area, which could have unacceptable impacts on the surrounding area, and not result in the design quality that we are striving to achieve.

### Rebuild Shoreditch Park Primary School elsewhere on the site and bring the land into the scheme:

This would have meant a smaller school rebuilt on the site, with potentially significant loss of play space. In addition, this option would not contribute to the affordability of the scheme as any return from converting the existing primary school building to private for sale units would be offset by the cost of rebuilding the school.

## Feasible Options

Due to the constraints of the site and the funding available the number of feasible options is limited and vary around the balance of private for sale and affordable housing units, with the inclusion of affordable housing units making the development slightly more dense.

Each of the options assumes:

- a level of funding from the Education Funding Agency for the school in the region of half of what would be required to deliver the quality of the BSF schools rebuilt and refurbished in the borough.
- a contribution from funds generated from elsewhere across the Council's estate to mitigate the density of the development.
- housing units will be sold to meet the remaining gap in the funding for the school and part of the cost of the leisure centre.

**The feasible options are:**

### **Approximately 440 housing units, of which 40 are affordable homes**

This option allows us to provide a new leisure centre, a six form of entry secondary school and 40 affordable homes, all part-funded from the sale of 400 homes.

### **Approximately 400 housing units, with no affordable homes on site**

This option allows us to provide a new leisure centre and a six form of entry secondary school, part-funded through the sale of 400 homes. There would be no affordable housing on the site.

### **Approximately 480 housing units, of which 80 are affordable homes**

This option allows us to provide a new leisure centre, a six form of entry secondary school and 80 affordable homes, all part-funded through the sale of 400 homes.

\*We are seeking your opinion on some draft options, which will inform detailed proposals which we will consult on as part of developing our design for the scheme should it be taken forward.

Consultation timeline	
5 December 2016	Consultation launches
December to January 2017	Consultation drop-in sessions
12 February 2017	Consultation closes
February to March 2017	Consultation responses analysed
March 2017	Feedback results of consultation
April 2017	Council decides how to proceed

Residents will be able to get involved in more detailed consultations on the design options for specific options of the scheme; for example the facilities and layout of the leisure centre and design proposals for the residential towers.

### **How to have your say**

You can take part by: completing this questionnaire and returning it in the **FREEPOST** envelope enclosed, attending the scheduled drop-in events or online at **[consultation.hackney.gov.uk](http://consultation.hackney.gov.uk)** by **12 February 2017**.