

# Britannia Site update

November 2016



Shoreditch Park

## Dear resident,

I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the proposals for the Britannia Leisure Centre site, now that we have completed work to find out what could possibly be achieved on the site, and we are nearing the stage where we will have some options to share with you.

I appreciate that several months have passed since we last communicated with you about this work, this is due to the various elections that have taken place, affecting this part of Hackney.

In the run-up to an election, there are strict rules restricting what the Council can publish and communicate with residents. Last week's Hoxton West by-election followed the election for the Mayor of Hackney; both of these elections were unexpected, and that unfortunately had an impact on our ability to communicate with you as we'd have liked to.

## What is proposed?

If you're unfamiliar with the proposals, in short, the Council is looking into 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 secondary

school - to help meet the demand for school places for local children - on the site. This would be funded in part by the sale of housing, which would also be built on the site.

## When will the consultation start?

Our consultation will start on 5 December and will last for 10 weeks. At this point, we will be able to share a number of options which the feasibility study identified as achievable. We'll share as much as possible at this stage, including why we have discounted some options, and we'll hold a number of drop-in sessions in the local area, where you can come and talk to us and ask questions.

Following this consultation, if it is decided to take an option forward, residents will be able to get involved in more detailed consultations, for example, on the design options for the new leisure centre.

Consultation documents will be posted by Royal Mail to every household in the ward. Documents will also be available online and at the leisure centre.

In the meantime, here is a brief outline of the key parts of the proposed development, and some of the feedback we've received already:

## Britannia Leisure Centre

We know that many local residents really value the Britannia and its family friendly facilities, but it's approaching the end of its life and is costing too much money to operate and maintain, even after recent investment.

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. Just last week we were forced to close the pool after a water pipe burst, requiring significant repair work. This closure was expected to last for several days.

We considered refurbishing the Centre, but it was estimated that this would cost around £14m and would mean it would have to close for a significant amount of time. We think it would be better to build a brand new, state-of-the-art leisure centre by Shoreditch Park. Our aim is to ensure that Britannia would only close when the new centre was ready to open and we intend to transfer all club users over to the new facilities. If we go ahead with this proposal, residents and users of the centre would be invited to take part in a further consultation about the design options for the new leisure centre.

## City Academy Shoreditch Park

Like many London boroughs, Hackney needs more school places. Despite investing over £500 million in our schools over the last decade we need to build two new secondary schools by 2021. We are working with the City of London Corporation to develop the schools, which would provide the high quality places we need. 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. We already have a good relationship with the City of London Academy Trust, which sponsors the highly successful City Academy Hackney.

## Housing

Hackney Council receives insufficient government funding to build leisure facilities and schools to the standard we have come to expect and consistent with our award winning Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF). This means that we're having to think creatively about how to pay for them. All of the money raised from the sale of the housing on the site would go to fund the leisure centre and school. We are also considering options that will include some affordable housing.

## Shoreditch Park Primary School

We are aware that earlier in the year, there were concerns about what impact the development might have on Shoreditch Park Primary School. We can confirm that there are absolutely no plans to close the school or move it from the site. This Outstanding school is successful and popular, and we expect many of its pupils to benefit from having a great secondary school close by.

## Shoreditch Park

Remodelling the site provides an opportunity to provide toilet facilities and a café at the leisure centre, facing onto the Park, which could be open to the public. This is something Park users have been asking for, for a long time, so this will be an important consideration when designing the new leisure centre.

We will be sending further details and a copy of a consultation questionnaire to every home in your ward in December. We'll also be promoting the consultation via Hackney Today, the Council's website and social media, so keep an eye out for your chance to input into these exciting proposals.

If you have any more questions at this stage, please do not hesitate to email me: [mayor@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@hackney.gov.uk)

**Philip Glanville**



Mayor of Hackney