



West Hendon Playing Fields Masterplan - Consultation Report

Barnet Council

November 19



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In March 2018, the Council appointed The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) to develop an options appraisal and initial draft masterplan and feasibility study for the development of a strategic sports hub and wider leisure and community offer at West Hendon Playing Fields.
2. The Council's Environment Committee met in March 2019 to review the final draft masterplan and feasibility study and approved for it to be submitted for full public and stakeholder consultation. SLC has subsequently been appointed to manage this consultation on behalf of the Council.
3. A consultation plan was developed through discussion with the Council which identified the various stakeholders and agreed methods of engagement. The stakeholder groups are categorised as follows:
 - **Key occupiers / users** – clubs or organisations currently located on site or near West Hendon Playing Fields, including Parkside View Nursery and the bowls club.
 - **Key stakeholders** – interested parties such as community organisations, the West Hendon Partnership Board, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of sport.
 - **Statutory bodies and conservation groups** – key agencies with a particular interest in the site's ecological value and protection of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
 - **Under-represented groups** – community groups and organisations which provide services for under-represented residents, such as ethnic minorities, disabled people, young people and older generations.
 - **Local schools** – local schools within a 10-minute drive time catchment of West Hendon Playing Fields.
 - **General public.**
4. The 8-week consultation exercise was delivered through a combination of face-to-face meetings, email correspondence, telephone discussions, workshops, public drop-in sessions and an online questionnaire promoted through the Council's website and social media channels.
5. The key conclusions arising from the consultation on the draft masterplan for West Hendon Playing Fields are as follows:
 1. The consultation process engaged with over 900 local residents and stakeholders during the 8-week period which demonstrates a good level of engagement.
 2. The consultation was successful in ensuring a fair representation of different user groups. In particular, the views of children and young people came through strongly in the online questionnaire, with 35% respondents under the age of 25. This was supplemented by the workshop with Hendon School.

3. The online questionnaire generated 224 responses, with a high level of engagement from residents within 15 minutes of the site (66%).
4. The results of the online questionnaire show a positive response from the general public to the final draft masterplan proposals with 72% of respondents being either supportive or very supportive compared to 21% being unsupportive. The Council's Facebook page on the draft masterplan also received 133 likes.
5. Throughout the consultation, there was clear support amongst stakeholders and the wider public for the principle of creating a more engaging space which improves opportunities for local people to be physically active and increases use of the playing fields and exposure to the Welsh Harp.
6. The most popular facilities were the café (including toilets), improved pedestrian and cycle routes (including the Welsh Harp), woodland nature trail, multi-use activity space, toddler and adventure play areas and sustainable drainage system.
7. Young people were very supportive of the proposed masterplan. In the online questionnaire, only 5% of under 25's indicated that they were unsupportive of the development.
8. The masterplan is well positioned to deliver health and wellbeing benefits to residents, with 70% of respondents noting that the proposed facilities would encourage them to be more physically active and 73% stating that they would be more likely to visit West Hendon Playing Fields if the proposed facilities were provided.
9. Consultation with statutory bodies and conservation groups highlighted concerns regarding the potential impact of the development on the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR), particularly the High Ropes course, artificial turf pitches and path network. In order to secure a biodiversity net gain, a number of suggestions were provided to mitigate the environmental impact and there would be a requirement for more detailed ecological surveys to be undertaken in any subsequent detailed design stages.
10. The key areas of contention raised throughout the consultation period are listed in the table below. It is recommended that the Council discuss these concerns further and consider potential mitigating options.

Table ES1: Key Areas of Contention on the Final Draft Masterplan

Area of Concern	Key Issues Raised
Cool Oak Lane car park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable for a coach drop off • Narrow, tight bends – weight and width restrictions • Anti-social behaviour • Loss of greenspace • Other car park on Cool Oak Lane has proved problematic
High Ropes course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location within the Local Nature Reserve / woodland • Impact upon ecology / biodiversity
Artificial turf pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of greenspace • Impact upon ecology / biodiversity

Pedestrian and cycle routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of routes on SSSI / LNR
Management, maintenance and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of management presence, security and upkeep of proposed facilities
Traffic and congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications upon traffic and congestion • Sustainable transport routes and connections

6. It is recommended that the Council considers the feedback obtained during the public consultation and explores opportunities to mitigate any concerns through amendments to the draft masterplan.
7. In the event that the Council wish to progress the masterplan through to a detailed design stages, it will be appropriate to consider some of the feedback in relation to more specific design elements such as building layout, location of pathways and bird hides, CCTV, litter and dog bins and additional planting. It will also be essential to maintain regular dialogue with key stakeholders to ensure the final plans meet their requirements.
8. The Council will need to consider how they intend to report back the results of the consultation to stakeholders and the wider public and to advise them on how this process will be used to further inform the plans for the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Barnet Council has in recent years, developed a series of key strategic documents designed to shape the delivery of sport and physical activity services and facilities in parks and open spaces across the Borough. These include a Playing Pitch Strategy (2017), a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (2016-2026) and the Fit and Active Barnet Framework (2016-2021). The documents are underpinned by a commitment within the Council's Corporate Plan that 'Barnet's parks and open spaces will be amongst the best in London'.
- 1.1.2 The Council is seeking to implement some of the recommendations made by these strategies by exploring the development of new sports hubs at three identified strategic sites – Barnet Copthall, Barnet and King George V Playing Fields and West Hendon Playing Fields.
- 1.1.3 In March 2018, the Council appointed The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) to develop an options appraisal and initial draft masterplan for the creation of new and improved sports and community facilities at West Hendon Playing Fields.
- 1.1.4 Consultation with local stakeholders and residents was undertaken in November 2018 on the initial draft masterplan and the results of this consultation informed the development of a final draft masterplan and feasibility report.
- 1.1.5 The Council's Environment Committee met in March 2019 to review the final draft masterplan and approved for it to be submitted for full public and stakeholder consultation.

1.2 Our Terms of Reference

- 1.2.1 SLC has been appointed to manage the consultation exercise on behalf of the Council to provide members of the public and other key stakeholders with an opportunity to comment and feedback on the final draft masterplan.
- 1.2.2 Key requirements of the Council's brief were as follows:
- To deliver a full 8-week public consultation with residents and stakeholders through a variety of methods, including an online questionnaire, public drop-in sessions, stakeholder meetings, targeted workshops and social media advertising.
 - To ensure a fair representation of different user groups, with a particular focus upon children and young people and residents living locally to the sites.
 - A report summarising the comments received during the consultation exercise for the Council to consider further.

1.3 The Structure of our Report

- 1.3.1 The remaining sections of this report have been structured to meet the Council's requirements included in the brief, whilst ensuring a concise and accessible report setting out the core findings.

Table 1: Report Structure

Section		Key Content or Output
2	Overview of Consultation Process	A description of the approach to the consultation
3	Summary of Feedback from Key Stakeholders	Summary of feedback from consultation with key stakeholders.
4	Summary of Feedback from Public Consultation	Summary of feedback from the online questionnaire, public drop-in sessions, email correspondence and social media.
5	Conclusions and Recommended Next Steps	Key conclusions arising from the consultation exercise and recommended next steps for the Council.

1.3.2 Supporting information is included in a series of Appendices.

2 OVERVIEW OF CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section describes the approach and methodology adopted for the consultation process that was undertaken for 8 weeks between 3 June 2019 and 28 July 2019.

2.1.2 The principle objective of the consultation was to seek views from current occupiers / users, stakeholders and the general public on the final draft masterplan proposals for West Hendon Playing Fields.

2.2 Consultation Plan

2.2.1 A consultation plan was designed in conjunction with the Council. This was critical to ensure all parties agreed the approach and understood each other's roles and responsibilities in delivering the exercise.

2.2.2 The consultation plan included the following elements:

- Identification of key occupiers / users and wider stakeholders, including community and resident organisations, statutory bodies, local schools and under-represented groups.
- Agreed methods of consultation with these identified stakeholders including a combination of face-to-face meetings, workshops, telephone consultation and email correspondence.
- Agreed approach to the wider public consultation through development of a webpage on the Council's Engage Barnet portal, containing masterplan drawings, supporting information and a link to the online questionnaire.
- Agreed dates and venues for public consultation drop-in sessions.
- Agreed methods of promoting the consultation including roles and responsibilities.

2.3 Stakeholder Engagement

2.3.1 Current occupiers / users of the site and key stakeholders were provided with a link to the Engage Barnet webpage via email and invited to provide feedback on the final draft masterplan. They were also requested to circulate the Engage Barnet link to their members and promote it through their own social media platforms.

2.3.2 The engagement was designed to ensure the views of previous consultees, current users, existing occupiers, local sports clubs, stakeholders and under-represented groups were fully understood and provided them with an opportunity to relay any concerns or issues about the proposals.

2.3.3 This included environmental stakeholders and statutory bodies, who were invited to provide formal written feedback on the masterplan, to include consideration of the impact upon the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) of the Welsh Harp.

2.3.4 The primary form of communication was through email correspondence and a face-to-face meeting was attended with the West Hendon Partnership Board and Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. Telephone consultations were undertaken with Natural England and the London Wildlife Trust, which was followed up by formal written feedback from both

parties. Written feedback on the draft masterplan was also provided by the Canal and River Trust. A full list of stakeholders is provided in Appendix 1.

- 2.3.5 A total of 12 local schools within a 10-minute drive time of West Hendon Playing Fields were sent an email with the link to the Engage Barnet webpage, a copy of the poster for display and a request to circulate the link to parents, staff and / or students in newsletters and bulletins. This was intended to capture the views of young people and parents, who will potentially be key users of the proposed facilities.
- 2.3.6 A facilitated workshop was held with Hendon School to further this engagement and speak directly with the local students about the proposals and seek their views on the draft masterplan.
- 2.3.7 The results of the consultation with key stakeholders is detailed in Section 3 of this report.

2.4 Wider Public Engagement

- 2.4.1 In order to seek the views of the wider public, including current users and non-users of the site, the following activities were carried out to provide opportunities for Barnet residents to review and comment on the final draft masterplan.

Online Questionnaire and Email Correspondence

- 2.4.2 A short, user friendly questionnaire was designed by SLC in consultation with the Council and hosted on SLC's Zoho Survey platform. A link to the questionnaire was provided on the Council's Engage Barnet webpage, which also included background information, electronic copies of the draft masterplan and Community Sports Hub floorplan and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document. Hard copies of the questionnaire and an easy-read version were also available upon request.
- 2.4.1 Alongside this, a dedicated email address was created by the Council (WestHendonPFmasterplan@barnet.gov.uk) and displayed on Engage Barnet, allowing the public to provide feedback directly to the Council. This email correspondence was managed by the Council and subsequently forwarded to the SLC team.
- 2.4.2 The questionnaire asked a series of questions about how often the respondent visits West Hendon Playing Fields, what they do there and how they travel there. A range of pre-selected answers were provided, together with a comment box to provide other details. The questionnaire invited a score from respondents on their level of support for each of the proposed facilities (indoor and outdoor), the location and layout of these facilities and the overall final draft masterplan. A scale ranging from 'strongly support' to 'strongly oppose' was used and an additional free text box was provided for further explanation/comment. Respondents were also asked to provide details on their current physical activity levels and demographic information.
- 2.4.3 The online questionnaire was available to complete for the 8-week period and details of the results and further email correspondence is provided in Section 4 of this report.

Public Drop-In Sessions and Posters / Flyers

- 2.4.4 SLC arranged five public drop-in sessions across the consultation period, as shown in Table 2, which were purposely scheduled on a range of different days, times and locations to maximise engagement.

Table 2: West Hendon Public Drop-In Sessions

Date	Location	Time
Friday 28 June	West Hendon Community Hub	2pm-5pm
Saturday 29 June	West Hendon Playing Fields	10am-1pm
Wednesday 10 July	Parkside View Nursery	8:30am-12pm
Wednesday 17 July	West Hendon Community Hub	3pm-6pm
Friday 26 July	West Hendon Playing Fields	2pm-5pm

- 2.4.5 These sessions were designed to provide members of the public with an opportunity to view the plans up close, ask questions and provide feedback to Barnet Council and the SLC team.
- 2.4.6 Information regarding the public drop-in sessions was promoted on the Engage Barnet webpage and printed on a series of 'Have Your Say' posters and flyers. These also contained a 'QR code' to direct the public to the Engage Barnet webpage.
- 2.4.7 11 posters were displayed at West Hendon Playing Fields, 1 at Parkside Nursery, 2 at West Hendon Community Centre and were also sent to Greenwich Leisure Ltd (the Council's leisure operator), Inclusion Barnet and residents on request. Flyers were distributed via post to 1637 properties adjacent to West Hendon Playing Fields, including the West Hendon Estate and Brent residents to the west of the site boundary, to maximise residents' awareness of the drop-in sessions and online questionnaire.
- 2.4.8 The feedback from the public drop-in sessions is provided in Section 4 of this report.

Social Media

- 2.4.9 As well as requests to stakeholders to promote the public consultation on their social media channels, Barnet Council distributed the Engage Barnet link on their Twitter feed (over 17,000 followers) and Facebook page (over 4,000 followers).
- 2.4.10 In the final weeks of public consultation, the Council invested in geo-targeted promotion, where 'Have Your Say' advertisements were displayed on the Facebook pages of residents living within 1 mile of West Hendon Playing Fields.
- 2.4.11 The Council's Facebook analytics provided a summary of post views, engagement, reactions, comments and shares. The results of these and the key themes from the comments are provided in Section 4 of this report.

Further Promotion

- 2.4.12 Further promotional activities were provided through publications in the Council's internal newsletters and bulletins, as shown in Table 3. A summary paragraph about the public consultation and a link to the Engage Barnet page was provided.

Table 3: Details of Further Promotional Channels

Name	Details	Date(s) of Issue
Communities Together Network	A forum for the voluntary, community and faith sector, business, the police, public health, education providers and the council. Publish a fortnightly news bulletin.	7 June 21 June 5 July 19 July
Barnet First E-Newsletter	Fortnightly newsletter to bring residents the latest news from the council and community. Approximately 18,000 subscribers.	13 June 11 July

Barnet First Magazine	Provides information on council services, local news and community information for the borough of Barnet. Published and delivered quarterly to approximately 147,000 homes.	July 2019
Barnet Council News Hub	Barnet Council webpage listing latest news articles for the borough.	17 June

3 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section outlines the key findings from the face-to-face consultation, telephone discussions and email correspondence with key stakeholders.

3.2 Stakeholder Meetings

West Hendon Partnership Board – Resident Group

3.2.1 A member of the SLC team attended a meeting of the West Hendon Partnership Board Resident Group on 17 July 2019. Approximately 25 people attended including Board members and local residents of the West Hendon estate.

3.2.2 SLC presented a brief overview of the proposed facilities in the draft masterplan and the rationale for their inclusion and location on the site. The feedback from Board members and residents was very positive. The proposed facilities were welcomed as they would provide much needed improvements to the playing fields and a place for local children and young people to be active. Residents were keen to ensure that the activities were accessible for local people and were pleased to see a mix of free to use facilities alongside paid activities.

Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

3.2.3 A face-to-face meeting with 12 residents linked to the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC) was attended by Barnet Council on 1 August 2019.

3.2.4 The key feedback from this meeting is detailed below and predominantly relates to the proposed car park on Cool Oak Lane and the High Ropes course in the woodland at the south of the playing fields:

- There was strong opposition to the Cool Oak Lane car park, noting that there would be a loss of greenspace and that this element should be removed from the masterplan. The closure of two car parks further south on Cool Oak Lane is indicative that it would not work in the area. There has also been Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding identified for Hendon Football Club to resurface their car park, which may result in more car parking spaces provided.
- There was strong opposition to the proposed location of the High Ropes course, highlighting that this would destroy wildlife and habitats, particularly as large fences would be installed to secure the area. There was also concern that the High Ropes would not be financially viable and therefore would stop operating and leave the Cool Oak Lane car park to fall into disrepair.
- The 3G artificial turf football pitches should also be removed from the proposals as they intrude too far upon the natural area.
- Concerns were raised about potential anti-social behaviour and maintenance of the area, particularly given the fly tipping around Cool Oak Lane.
- The 2m wide footpath from the south west corner of the playing fields to Hendon Football Club is not required.

- Suggestion for shuttle buses to be provided, preferably electric, to reduce the number of car parking spaces.
- Suggestion to install a nature education centre, as the priority should be to preserve wildlife and nature.

3.2.5 A petition of 328 signatures was handed to Barnet Council stating:

'We the undersigned strongly object to the proposed car park and coach drop off that is intended to be located in the field behind Kinloch Drive adjacent to and accessed via Cool Oak Lane.'

3.2.6 The key reasons for these objections are as follows:

- The erosion of a greenfield site into a brownfield site resulting in pollution, noise nuisance, criminal activity, dumping and environmental issues affecting wildlife.
- The short-lived smaller car park that was located the other end of Cool Oak Lane, near the bridge, was a disaster and closed due to drug dealing and vandalism.
- The car park would inevitably be abandoned due to the problems created, and residents are concerned that it would eventually be allocated for housing or a traveller site.
- The access to the car park via Cool Oak Lane is inappropriate from either end as it is a long, narrow winding lane. At present, there is regular clipping of wing mirrors and a weight and width restricted bridge. The road would be unsuitable for large vehicles, such as coaches, particularly with the sharp narrow bends.

3.3 Local Schools

Hendon School

- 3.3.1 Hendon School is a mixed secondary school located on Golders Rise, approximately a 15-minute drive time and 40-minute walking distance from West Hendon Playing Fields.
- 3.3.2 A facilitated workshop was organised with Hendon School on 19 June 2019. 15 students from Year 7 – 10 (aged 11 – 15) attended the session.
- 3.3.3 A presentation was given by SLC to provide students with background on the project, an overview of the masterplan and some example images of each proposed facility to aid their understanding. The students were subsequently split into two smaller groups and had the opportunity to view the plans up close, ask questions and provide their views.
- 3.3.4 The majority of students rarely visit the park due to the lack of things to do and its poor quality, particularly the quality of the football pitches and tennis courts. Students described the park as 'rubbish' and had no interest in spending time there.
- 3.3.5 The overall feedback on the masterplan was positive. Students noted that the proposals were a 'great idea' and would make the park an appealing place to visit. They also agreed that the facilities are a good idea for local residents who do not have a garden, particularly in the West Hendon estate.
- 3.3.6 The most popular facilities were the outdoor gym and trim trail (particularly if calisthenics equipment is included), improved football pitches, tennis courts, multi-use games area (MUGA) and studio space in the Community Sports Hub for classes. A sustainable drainage system was also noted as a good idea, as the park is always flooded in the winter.

- 3.3.7 The main concern was whether the facilities are located too close together and ‘cramped’ in one corner, which could result in overcrowding at peak times and be intimidating to younger children. Other concerns referred to the extent of investment in an area which students thought was difficult to access and questioned whether the facilities would be used and managed effectively.
- 3.3.8 A number of suggestions were proposed by students, including:
- The sensory garden is located close to the other facilities in a potential noisy and busy area, which may be inappropriate for people with sensory processing or learning difficulties.
 - Installing water fountains and benches around the park to accompany the trim trail.
 - Parents supervising their children might find it easier if the adventure play and toddler play area were located closer together.
 - The MUGA should be prioritised for other sports, such as netball, as football can be played on the artificial turf and grass pitches.
 - Inclusion of strawberry picking as part of the orchard.
- 3.3.9 At the close of the workshop, all students completed a hard copy of the easy-read questionnaire, which were subsequently recorded on SLC’s Zoho platform. Hendon School also displayed posters in their library.

3.4 Statutory Bodies and Conservation Groups

Natural England

- 3.4.1 Natural England are the government’s adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect nature and landscapes.
- 3.4.2 A telephone conference was held with Louise Crothall and Johnathan Shavelar on 11 June 2019 to discuss the draft masterplan. Formal written feedback was received from Natural England’s Discretionary Advice Service on 13 June 2019 and is provided in Appendix 2.1.
- 3.4.3 An overview of the feedback provided by Natural England is as follows:
- The SSSI is in favourable condition (March 2019) and supports a number of breeding bird species and wintering species. The SSSI is notified primarily for breeding wetland birds, particularly nesting great crested grebe.
 - The most ecologically sensitive part of the site is predicted to be the east and north of the allotment plots.
 - The primary impact from construction will be disturbance. The impacts of construction noise and demolition should partially be mitigated by the existing vegetation boundary, but acoustic barriers should be utilised where necessary to prevent the disturbance of the SSSI species. The timing of construction should also be sensitive to breeding birds.
 - Directional lighting can probably be used to mitigate the negative impact of light spill, however sufficient evidence would need to be supplied to support this. It is worth considering reconfiguring the sports pitches to both operate on the western boundary of the site, to reduce the proximity of the light source to the SSSI.

- Visitor infrastructure, such as pathways and bird hides, should be designed to minimise potential impact to species of concern. The paths should also be kept as far away as reasonably possible from marginal vegetation.
- The use of permeable car parking surfaces and tree planting within the car parks was welcomed, however, it should be ensured that there is no potential for polluted run-off to enter the SSSI.

3.4.4 Natural England provided a positive summary to conclude the document:

'Natural England respect the intentions of this development and acknowledge that if delivered with appropriate mitigation, it should provide great value to local communities as well as bringing people closer to nature and biodiversity, especially if high quality interpretation is secured. The development makes good use of Green Infrastructure such as SuDs and planting which will improve the site for biodiversity.

With appropriate survey effort, it should be possible to design robust mitigation to prevent noise, light, recreation and other factors from impacting the integrity of the SSSI.'

London Wildlife Trust

3.4.5 The London Wildlife Trust is the local nature conservation charity for Greater London.

3.4.6 A telephone consultation was held with Mathew Frith, Director of Conservation, on 2 July 2019 and formal written feedback on the draft masterplan is provided in Appendix 2.2a. Written feedback was also provided by Diane Murphy from the Barnet Borough Group of the London Wildlife Trust, also found in Appendix 2.2b.

3.4.7 Initially, it was noted that the masterplan should visually show the scope of the playing fields and the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) boundary, to enable a full assessment of the proposals impact.

3.4.8 The Trust supports the principle of improving recreation facilities but raise a number of concerns regarding the draft masterplan, a summary of which is provided below:

- The Trust feel that the masterplan does not give enough weight to the combination of nature conservation designations that cover part of the playing fields, and on the sites adjacent to them (SSSI and LNR).
- The fields provide roosting and foraging areas for gulls and corvids, as well as for winter migrants such as fieldfare and redwing. Trees and other vegetation also support foraging and shelter areas. Intensification of usage through the new proposals will have an adverse impact and detailed surveys are required to assess this.
- **Artificial Turf and Football Pitches** - The Trust are concerned at the proposal of two full-size artificial turf pitches, noting that insufficient consideration has been given to their accumulative environmental impacts, such as loss of open grassland (and effective capping of soils), artificial lighting and use of plastics in creation. The perimeter fencing will also obstruct the movement and foraging of mammals, such as badgers, foxes and hedgehogs.

If the decision was to proceed with the ATPs, they should be placed as far away from the LNR as possible, in the north-western corner.

The proposed location of one of the U13/14 pitches (No.3) lies partly within the LNR, requiring the loss of scrub and two mature trees, which are of value to breeding birds. The Trust recommend that this pitch is relocated to the north, adjacent to the other U13/14 pitches, and to redesign the central path.

- **Landscape and Planting** - The loss of grassland through the development could potentially be mitigated by enhancements to the LNR.

New and additional native hedgerow planting would be welcome on the northern and western boundary, as this will provide increased privacy and security for neighbouring properties, as well as additional foraging, commuting and roosting habitat for wildlife.

- **Support** - The Trust welcome the relocation of the tennis courts following the previous consultation. They also welcome the clustering of features in the north, as well as the community garden, orchard, play spaces and other naturalistic features.

The sustainable drainage system is welcomed to help improve the surface water management of the site and reduce adverse flows and / or diffuse pollution into the Silk Stream and Brent Reservoir.

The use of permeable surfacing and planting to enhance the car parks is welcomed. However, the net loss of grassland resulting from the additional car parking should be mitigated where possible.

- **High Ropes Course and Cool Oak Lane** - The Trust object to the High Ropes course, as it is proposed within the LNR woodland and will result in trampling and compaction of woodland soils, disturbance to biodiversity (e.g. breeding birds) and damage to trees and flora.

The proposed location of the coach drop-off is not considered appropriate as tight bends, a narrow bridge and weight restrictions are in force along Cool Oak Lane.

- **Path Network** - The path network near the reservoir should be designed and structured in a way that is naturalistic, retains porosity, avoids sensitive habitat areas and can be easily maintained. The use of non-porous hard surfacing on paths outside of the LNR should be kept to the very minimum.

The Trust do not support the proposed cycle-paths being hard-surfaced within the SSSI/LNR. The 3m width of the cycle paths, and the subsequent loss of vegetation, would need to be mitigated. Preferably, the existing paths should be widened, rather than creating additional routes.

- **Lighting** - An increase in lighting within and adjacent to the SSSI and LNR is likely to have adverse impacts on biodiversity due to light spill. The Trust recommend that the circulatory path in the main part of the playing fields is lit with bespoke, unidirectional, movement sensitive lighting, whilst the other paths, such as near the reservoir, remain unlit.
- **Bird Hides** - Further consideration should be given to where the bird hides are installed, as they are currently positioned within wet woodland. Suggestions were made to position the bird hides on the eastern side of the reservoir or 70m North West of the existing hide, as well as improvements to the existing hide by extending the field of view and replacing the roof.

- **Community Sports Hub** - The Trust would like to see a range of Green Infrastructure incorporated into the design of the Community Sports Hub, such as living roof and walls and rainwater harvesting.
- **Other** - The Trust are also concerned about the lack of coordinated and consistent management approach to the Welsh Harp Reservoir land. The Trust has been advocating for the development of a clearer vision for the Welsh Harp, including Barnet and Brent authorities, and would like to secure an agreement by end of 2019.

3.4.9 Overall, whilst the Trust acknowledge the masterplan's desire to improve the recreational offer for the borough, the design is likely to result in a negative net biodiversity impact. This may be reduced through the measures recommended above.

3.4.10 The Trust recommends that a specific commitment is made as part of the final plan to deliver a detailed biodiversity net gain package. This can be through a combination of measures that demonstrate an ecological sensitivity is effectively embedded and the playing fields complement and add value to the SSSI and LNR.

Canal and River Trust

3.4.11 The Canal and River Trust (CRT) is the charitable operator and guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales.

3.4.12 Formal written feedback was received from Tessa Craig, Area Planner, on 19 June 2019 and is provided in Appendix 2.3.

3.4.13 As the masterplan encompasses the north bank of the Welsh Harp reservoir, the CRT provided the following feedback:

- Enhancement of pedestrian access to, and along, the bank and opening of views onto the reservoir was welcomed by the CRT. This would enable visitors to appreciate the form and scale of this regionally significant waterway heritage asset.
- The pedestrian paths should be permeable, and the CRT would strongly discourage the shared bicycle / pedestrian path being any wider than 3m.
- At strategic viewpoints, heritage and environmental interpretation should be introduced, to enhance visitors' appreciation of the asset and landscape. The CRT also welcome better access and signage to the reservoir.
- Further consideration should be given to the orientation of the bird hides, as it appears users would be looking into the sun.
- The CRT recommend that some of the grassed areas be given over to meadow to improve habitat and reduce nutrient loading, such as south of the bowls lawn.
- The CRT recognises that there is an opportunity for the masterplan to maximise the leisure potential of the Brent Reservoir and links to West Hendon through better connections to the site, particularly by Cool Oak Lane bridge.

Local Lead Flood Authority (Barnet Council)

3.4.14 A copy of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Plan developed by SLC's sub-contractors, Hydrologic has been provided to the Council as the Local Lead Flood Authority for review and comment. At the time of writing this report, SLC has yet to receive this feedback.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

3.4.15 The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is the country's largest nature conservation charity, working to promote conservation and protection of birds and the wider environment.

3.4.16 Formal written feedback on behalf of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) was provided by Bob Husband, North West London Group Leader, on 29 July 2019 and is provided in Appendix 2.4.

3.4.17 An overview of the Group's advice and recommendations is provided below:

- The proposed intensification and commercialisation of the playing fields will have a detrimental effect on the area's biodiversity by encroaching on the LNR and SSSI and decrease the buffer zone separating intense human activity and the LNR habitats.
- Introducing more man-made structures at the expense of natural habitats will aggravate the climate change situation further and is contrary to the Mayor of London's Environment Strategy.

- ***Artificial Turf and Football Pitches*** - There is an excessive number of football pitches proposed, resulting in the loss of grass fields and reduction of the buffer zone which protects the Nature Reserve from excessive human pressure.

The Group recommend that football pitch users and supporters should be made responsible for their rubbish and clearing up should be a condition of hire.

The two ATPs will decrease the area available for open foraging grassland species and diminishes overall biodiversity.

The ATP floodlights will potentially illuminate trees and hedgerows used by commuting bats and other nocturnal species.

- ***Community Sports Hub*** - The Community Sports Hub should be to a high standard of sustainability and work with the proposed Water Sensitive Urban Design, such as rainwater and grey water capture, bio-solar roof and vegetated walls.
- ***Sustainable Drainage*** - The Sustainable Drainage System should be designed to be amphibian friendly (no fish or exotic species), with at least two thirds of the perimeter made inaccessible to casual human disturbance. A wildlife refuge / breeding island should also be incorporated.
- ***Bird Hides*** - Careful consideration will need to be given to the construction of the bird hides and their maintenance, to avoid them becoming targets for unsocial behaviour.
- ***Path Network*** - The new pedestrian and cycle routes through the LNR and SSSI will result in significant loss of habitat and bring light and noise disturbance to sensitive areas. The Group recommend the retention and upgrading of the existing path only.
- ***High Ropes and Cool Oak Lane*** - The Group oppose the High Ropes course as it is within the Nature Reserve and will destroy habitats and species.

Cool Oak Lane is very narrow with sharp Z bends, width and weight restrictions, making it unsuitable for coaches. The car park is ill conceived and will encourage more fly tipping in the area.

- **Litter** - The few litter bins currently provided are not optimally positioned and are often overflowing. The masterplan will exacerbate this litter problem unless strict enforcement measures are introduced.

Addressing the rubbish deposited by the Silk Stream should also be a top priority.

- **Planting** - Additional planting should be incorporated, including new shrubs and hedgerows beside paths and field boundaries.

3.4.18 Overall, the RSPB NW London Group believe the masterplan fails to deliver sufficient biodiversity gain and should be re-visited based on the above comments.

Welsh Harp Conservation Group

3.4.19 The Welsh Harp Conservation Group (WHCG) is dedicated to protecting and enhancing Brent Reservoir and its surrounding area as a haven for wildlife.

3.4.20 Feedback was provided by Roy Beddard, Chairman, via email on 25 July 2019.

3.4.21 The WHCG express major concerns about the masterplan proposals, as they will cause significant damage and increased disturbance to the SSSI and LNR and have a detrimental effect on local wildlife, as well as a large reduction in public open space.

3.4.22 The Group highlight that the Welsh Harp and West Hendon Playing Fields complex constitutes one of London's most important wildlife areas, with an annual bird list of over 130 species, over 20 butterfly species and a range of bat species.

3.4.23 The WHCG propose that a 'significant rethink' is required.

3.4.24 The main problem areas are highlighted below:

- Birdwatching hides are unsuitably placed in wet woodland.
- The High Ropes course is within the LNR and will cause damage and loss to habitat.
- The new pedestrian and cycle routes within the LNR and SSSI are unnecessary and will result in loss of habitat and increased disturbance. The existing path is adequate.
- A junior football pitch is sited inside the LNR and will result in the loss of rough grassland important for breeding summer visitors.
- There will be a significant loss of grassland across the site and subsequent loss in habitat, enforced further by barriers around certain features.
- Artificial turf pitches are entirely unsuitable next to an LNR, particularly as there are adequate grass pitches already present. The floodlights will also illuminate trees frequented by nocturnal species.
- The increased size of the Community Sports Hub conflicts with Barnet's policy for Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).
- Cool Oak Lane is unsuitable for increased traffic flow, particularly coaches. It is a narrow, twisty road with a 7.5 T weight limit crossing a Grade 2 listed bridge in one direction and a Brent housing estate in the other.

3.5 Email Correspondence

Armstrong Rigg Planning

- 3.5.1 The Director of Armstrong Rigg Planning, an independent town planning consultancy, submitted a formal letter to Barnet Council on 26 July 2019 on behalf of their client Taylor Wimpey North Thames, a residential developer. A copy of the letter and indicative site plan is provided in Appendix 3 and a summary provided below.
- 3.5.2 Taylor Wimpey North Thames has an interest in the land at Woodfield Nursery, located south of West Hendon Playing Fields and Cool Oak Lane and north of Woodfield Park. They welcome the masterplan proposals, considering them to positively enhance access to sport and recreation facilities for existing and future residents.
- 3.5.3 In 2016, the landowners of Woodfield Nursery, Greenmantle, engaged Taylor Wimpey in exploring the potential redevelopment of the site and are currently progressing proposals to provide replacement business premises and new housing. A full planning application is yet to be submitted.
- 3.5.4 The site proposes a footpath through the southern part of Woodfield Nursery, providing a link between Woodfield Park and the Welsh Harp Open Space, alongside north-south pedestrian links through the housing development. This would further enhance the footpath network in the area and reduce the need for the public to walk along Cool Oak Lane.

4 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section provides a summary of the results from the online questionnaire and comments received from the public drop-in sessions, email correspondence and social media. A full version of the report on the online questionnaire and public drop-in sessions feedback is provided in Appendices 4 and 5.

4.2 Online Questionnaire

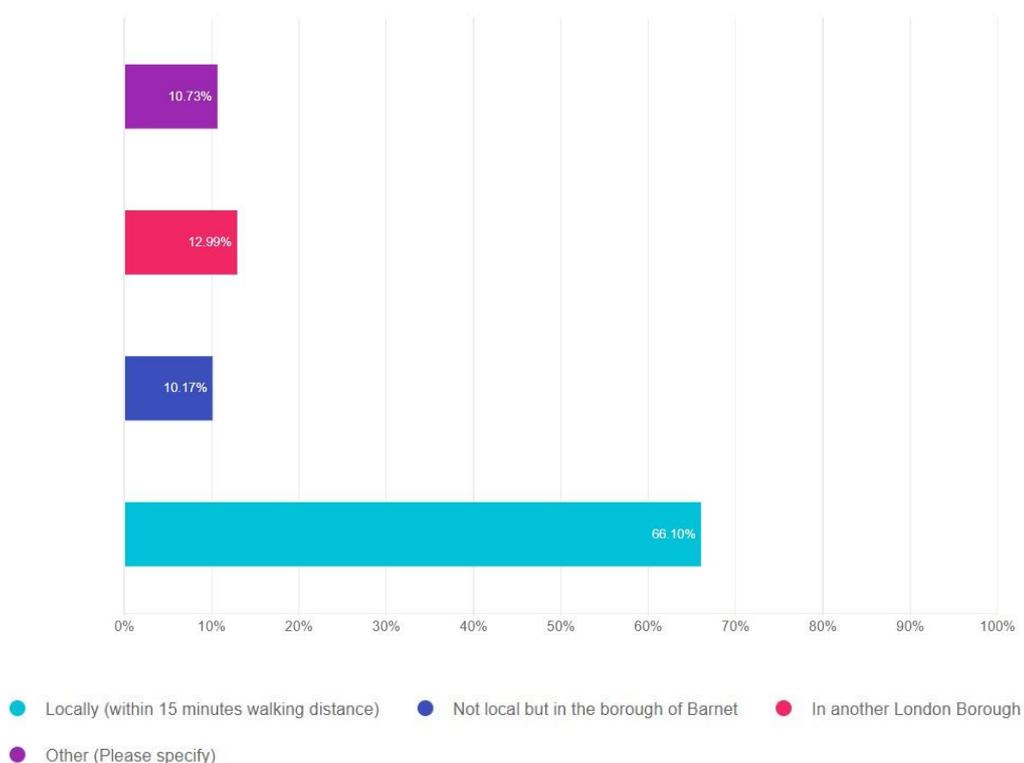
4.2.1 The online questionnaire generated a total of **224** responses.

4.2.2 Positively, 35% of respondents were under 25, which shows that the process has been successful in engaging with young people. The majority of other responses came from residents aged 25 – 54 (44%). Less than 8% of respondents were over 65.

4.2.3 Respondents were 53% male and 41% female. In terms of ethnicity, 32% of respondents were White British and the remaining 57% (12% preferred not to say) incorporated a diverse split of ethnic origins. 6% of respondents considered themselves to be living with a disability.

4.2.4 66% of respondents stated that they lived locally to West Hendon Playing Fields (within 15 minutes walking distance) as shown in Figure 1. This positively demonstrates that the online questionnaire reached and engaged with the immediate locality and those people most likely to use the site.

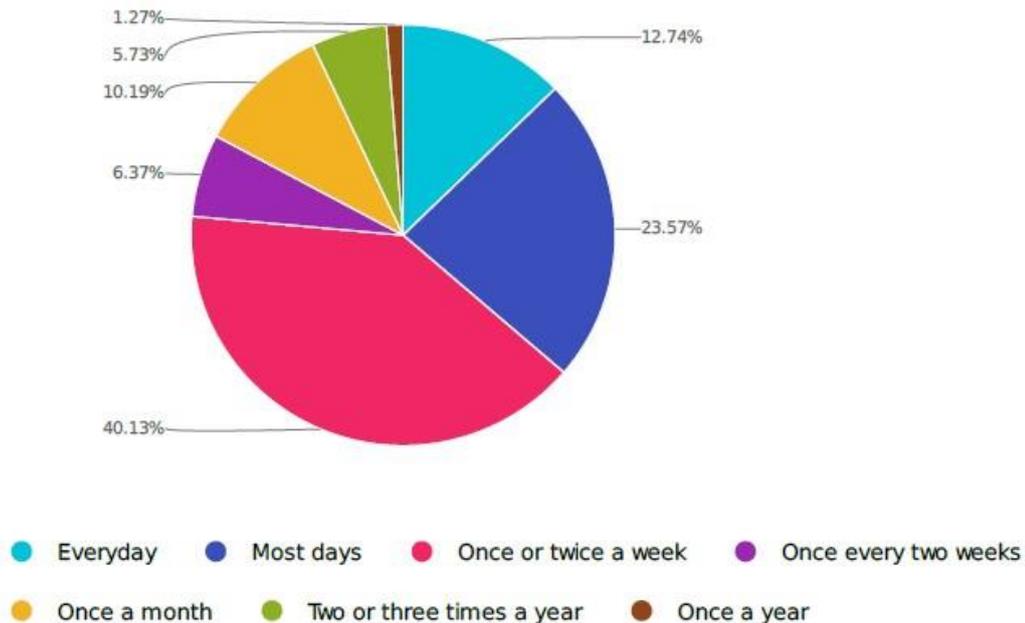
Figure 1: Residency of Questionnaire Respondents



4.2.5 The questionnaire asked respondents if they were current visitors to West Hendon Playing Fields. 78% of respondents selected ‘yes’ and 22% ‘no’. Of the 78%, the majority visit the site

most days or once or twice a week, indicating a good level of usage amongst respondents. The primary reasons for visiting the park are for walking (59%) and enjoying nature (48%), followed by using the play facilities (31%), going for a jog / run (27%) and casual use of the sports pitches (16%).

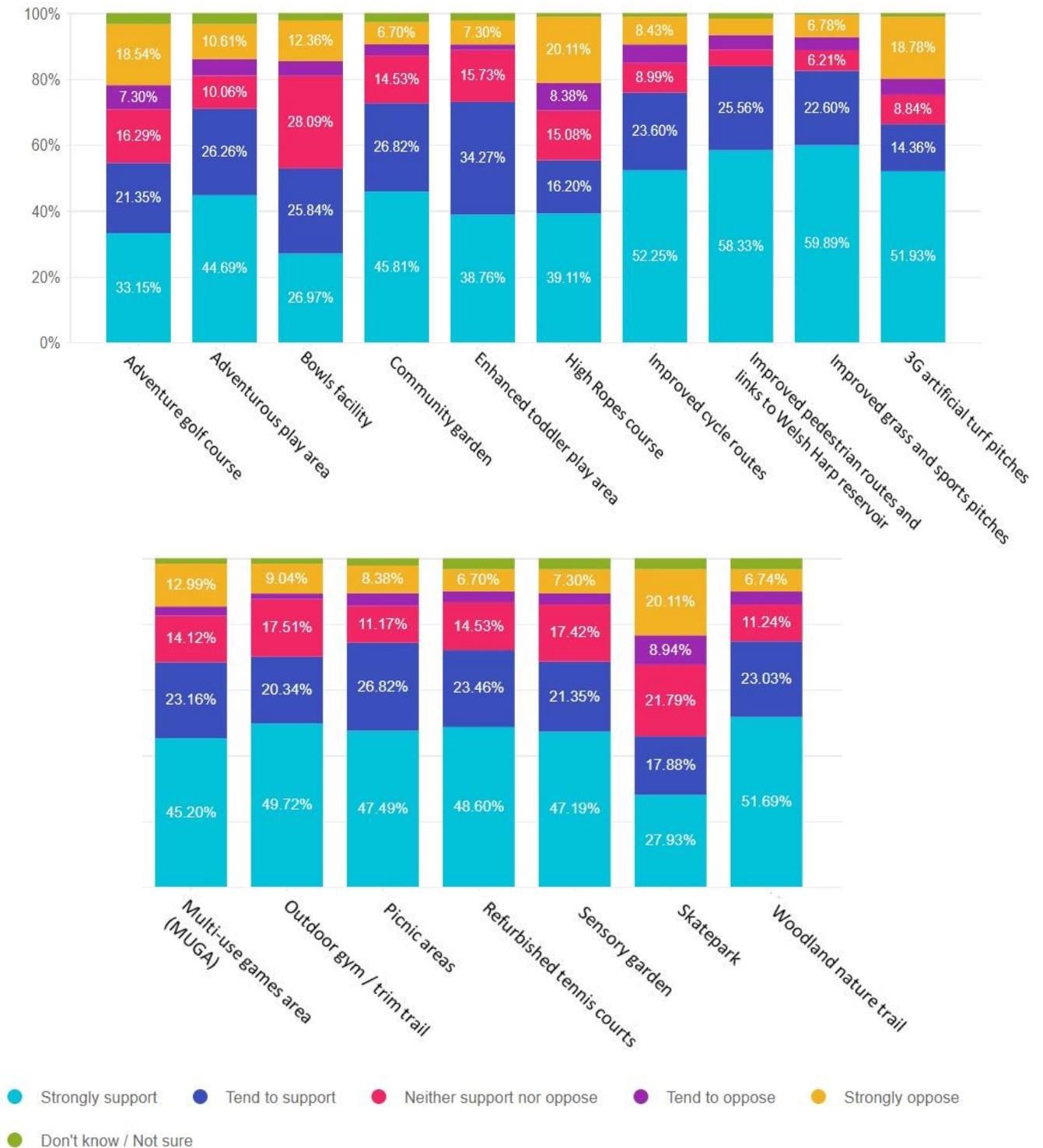
Figure 2: Frequency of Visit to West Hendon Playing Fields



- 4.2.6 Respondents predominantly travel to the site on foot (62%), 23% travel by car and 8% by bus.
- 4.2.7 For the 22% of respondents that do not visit the site, the main reasons were lack of awareness, lack of relevant facilities and the preference to visit another park(s).
- 4.2.8 The questionnaire also asked respondents to rank their support for the individual outdoor and indoor facilities within the proposed masterplan, ranging from ‘strongly support’ to ‘strongly oppose’. This was designed to reveal whether any particular facilities were more or less popular than others. An additional comment box was provided to allow respondents to explain their choices further.
- 4.2.9 As illustrated in Figure 3, the outdoor facilities with the highest support were as follows:
 - **Improved pedestrian routes and links to Welsh Harp reservoir** (84% selected either strongly support or tend to support)
 - **Improved grass and sports pitches** (82% selected either strongly support or tend to support)
 - **Improved cycle routes** (76% selected either strongly support or tend to support)
 - **Woodland nature trail** (75% selected either strongly support or tend to support)
- 4.2.10 Overall, there was support for the majority of outdoor facilities, with over 70% selecting either strongly support or tend to support for the picnic areas, community garden, enhanced toddler play area, refurbished tennis courts, adventure play area and outdoor gym / trim trail.

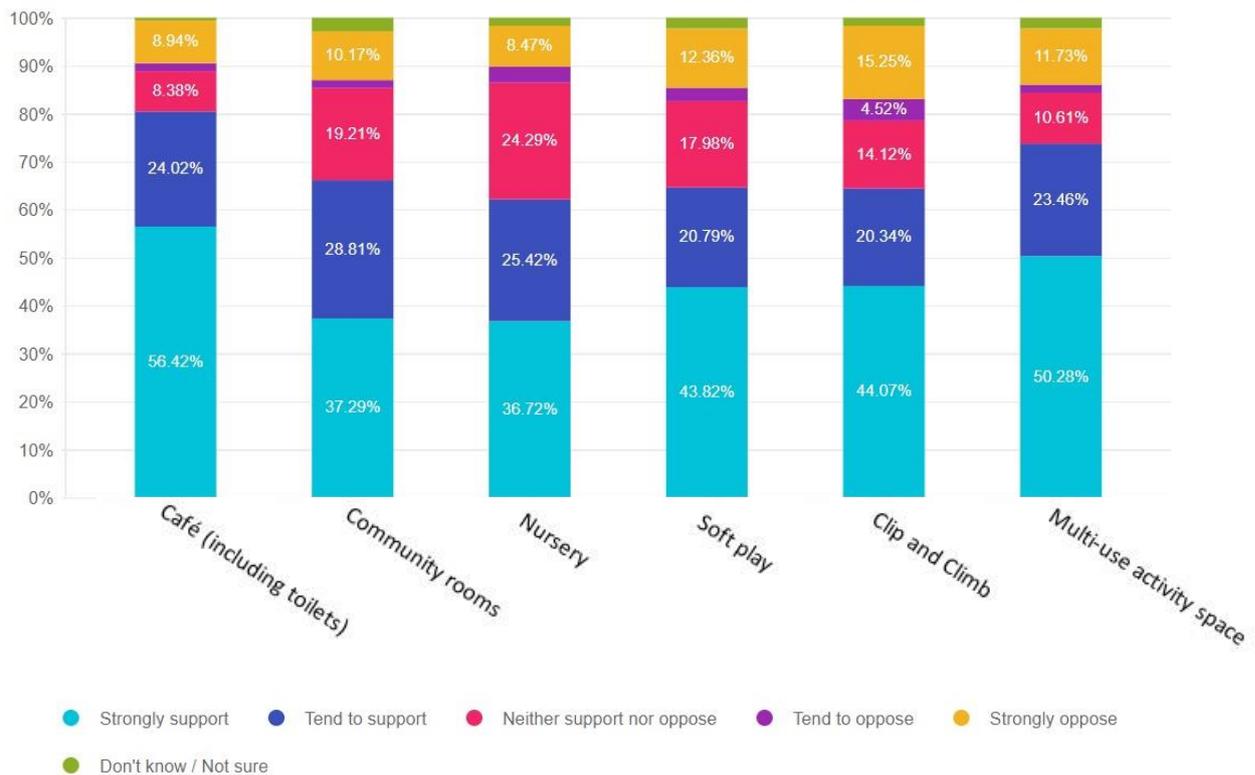
- 4.2.11 In terms of less positive responses, 29% indicated that they strongly oppose or tend to oppose the skatepark and 28% strongly oppose or tend to oppose the High Ropes course. This was followed by the adventure golf course (26%) and 3G artificial turf pitches (24%). It is worth noting, however, that the 3G artificial turf pitches equally received the third highest ‘strongly support’ score (52%) across the facilities.
- 4.2.12 Following the relocation of the skatepark from the previous consultation, 29% is a significant improvement on the 46% of respondents who previously indicated that they are unsupportive or very unsupportive of the skatepark.
- 4.2.13 The additional comments box received 72 answers. The main themes are as follows:
- **Supportive** – 22 comments in support of the draft masterplan and specific facilities, noting that it would be a great enhancement to a neglected area, create a sense of community and bring families and all ages together. In particular, the facilities would positively impact upon children and young people and encourage residents to engage with the outdoors and be physically active.
 - **Greenspace** – 20 comments referred to the proposed development eroding greenspace, ecosystems and biodiversity, particularly the High Ropes course, skatepark, adventure golf and 3G artificial turf pitches. However, those facilities which enhanced the natural area and encouraged residents to engage with nature were supported, such as the woodland nature trail, improved pedestrian routes and community garden.
 - **Car parks** – 16 comments noting concern over the proposed car parks and subsequent increases in traffic, pollution and congestion. In particular, the Cool Oak Lane car park was noted as unsuitable for coaches and a hotspot for fly tipping, travellers and criminal activity.
 - **Anti-social behaviour and security** – 7 comments noting concerns about the proposed facilities encouraging further anti-social behaviour and the need for improved security measures.
 - **Other** – Further comments referred to concerns over the number of facilities proposed and the unaffordability of High Ropes for local residents.

Figure 3: Support for Proposed Outdoor Facilities



4.2.14 With regard to the indoor facilities, and as shown in Figure 4, all of the proposals received over 62% of respondents’ support. The café (including toilets) was the most popular facility, with 80% selecting either strongly support or tend to support, followed by the multi-use activity space (74%).

Figure 4: Support for Proposed Indoor Facilities



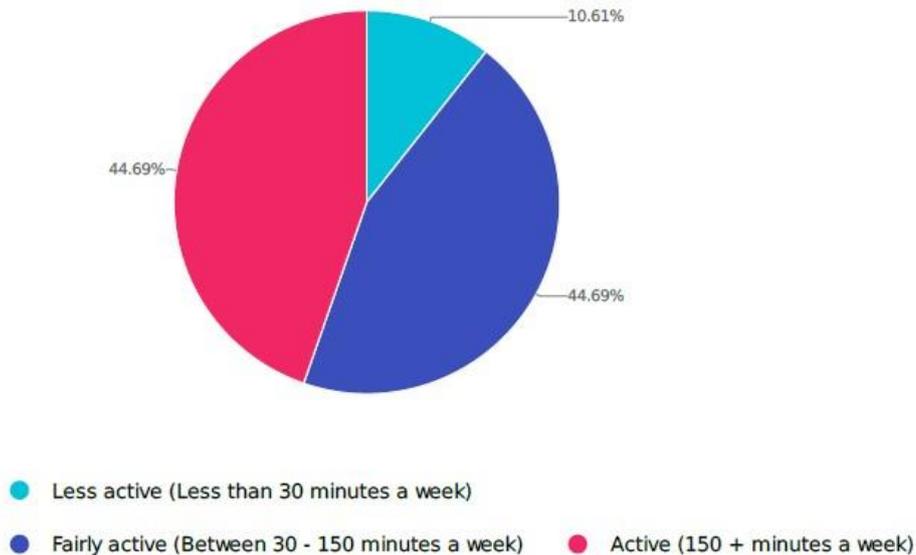
4.2.15 The additional comments received 26 responses. Positive feedback was received on the café and multi-use activity space, suggesting that local entrepreneurs and sport instructors should have the opportunity to use the studios. Other comments referred to refurbishing the existing building, eroding greenspace and suggestions to ensure high environmental standards for the new building.

4.2.16 Questions 8 to 10 were designed to assess respondent’s current levels of physical activity, their desire to be more active and the extent to which the proposed new facilities may help to achieve this.

4.2.17 Question 8 asked respondents ‘How physically active are you?’ with available answers matching the definitions of Sport England’s Active Lives Survey on physical activity. These included less than 30 minutes per week (inactive or less active), 30 – 150 minutes per week (fairly active) and 150+ minutes per week (active).

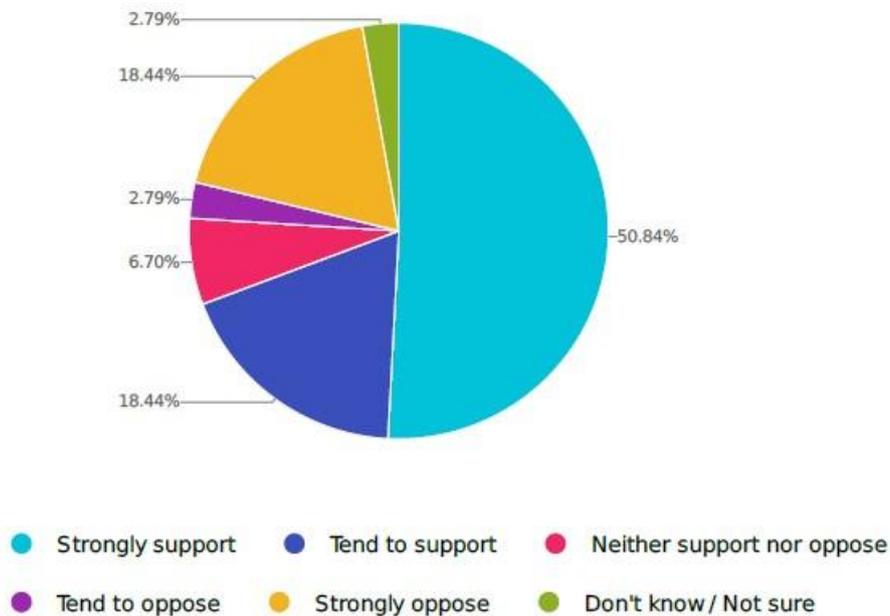
4.2.18 The UK’s Chief Medical Officer recommends that everyone is physically active for at least 150 minutes per week, with physical activity defined as any moderate intensity activity which raises your heart rate for a sustained period and makes you sweat. This definition was included in the questionnaire to assist completion.

Figure 5: Current Levels of Physical Activity



- 4.2.19 The results show that less than 11% of respondents are in the less active / inactive group which is below the national average and 45% classify themselves as active. In total, however, 55% are not meeting the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity each week, higher than the national average.
- 4.2.20 71% of responses highlighted that they would like to be more physically active and 70% confirmed that the proposed facilities in the masterplan would encourage them to be more physically active.
- 4.2.21 Increasing sport and physical activity levels amongst Barnet residents is a key strategic objective in Barnet Council’s Fit and Active Barnet Framework 2016 – 2021. Based on the results from the online questionnaire, the draft masterplan appears well positioned to assist in achieving this.
- 4.2.22 73% of respondents would be more likely to visit the park if the proposed facilities were provided, indicating potentially good visitor numbers and resident engagement with the site. Of the 44 respondents who do not currently visit the site, 68% noted that they would be more likely to visit if the facilities were provided.
- 4.2.23 The questionnaire also asked respondents to rank their support for the proposed layout and location of facilities. This was designed to gather feedback on whether respondents felt that the different facilities were positioned correctly on the site.
- 4.2.24 Figure 6 illustrates the summary of responses given. Positively, 69% of respondents strongly support or tend to support the proposed layout and location of facilities, compared to the 21% who expressed they were strongly opposed or tend to oppose.

Figure 6: Support for the Proposed Layout and Location of Facilities



4.2.25 The 21% who were unsupportive had the opportunity to justify their response further in an open comment box, which received 35 answers. The main reasons were as follows:

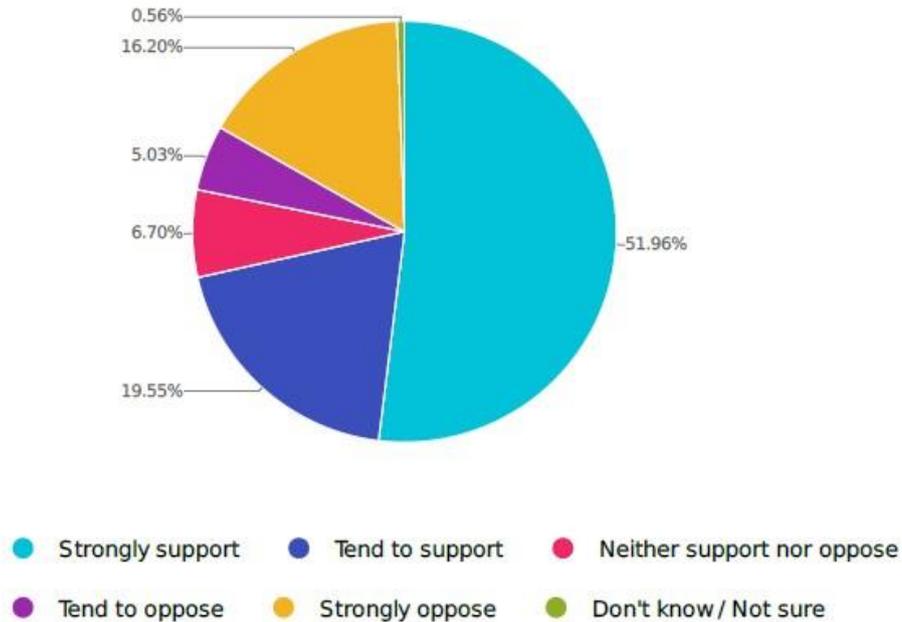
- **Greenspace** - 16 comments re-iterated their opposition to the development eroding greenspace and disturbing wildlife and habitats. The increased risk of flooding was also raised, due to losses in ground permeability. Some comments noted that the facilities were not required in the area and it should be left alone.
- **Cool Oak Lane** - 14 comments regarding the location of the Cool Oak Lane carpark, re-emphasising that it will have a detrimental impact on nature and pollution and is inappropriate for the width of Cool Oak Lane, which cannot tolerate any further traffic or congestion.
- **Other** - Further comments raised concern over the location of the artificial turf pitches, High Ropes course and football pitch proximity to residential properties.

4.2.26 An additional comment box was also open for further feedback and received 38 responses. The objections to the proposals reiterate the points raised above, regarding greenspace and the car park. 12 of the comments were supportive, noting that the facilities would be good for the community and improve residents’ health and wellbeing. Other suggestions were provided, including further security measures (CCTV), planting more trees and re-locating the second artificial turf pitch adjacent to Hendon Football Club.

4.2.27 The final two questions, prior to the Diversity Monitoring questions, were intended to encapsulate respondents’ overall opinion of the draft masterplan. As illustrated in Figure 7, 52% of respondents stated that they ‘strongly support’ and 20% stating that they ‘tend to support’ the draft masterplan. Conversely, 16% ‘strongly oppose’ and 5% ‘tend to oppose’ **72% of all respondents therefore positively support the final draft masterplan compared with 21% who stated they were unsupportive.**

4.2.28 On further analysis on responses from under 25s revealed that 86% positively support the draft masterplan and only 5% oppose it.

Figure 7: Overall Support for West Hendon Playing Fields Draft Masterplan



4.2.29 This question allowed the 21% of unsupportive respondents to justify their response in an open comment box, which received 29 answers. These comments re-iterated concerns raised previously in the questionnaire, concerning removing idyllic greenspace, preserving wildlife, increases in criminal behaviour, traffic and pollution and keeping it ‘as is’.

4.2.30 The closing question asked respondents to highlight if there was anything missing from the masterplan. 23% of respondents selected ‘yes’ and were asked to specify in a comment box. This received 35 suggestions on a wide range of facilities, some of which included:

- Cricket pitch
- Benches
- Flower garden / further planting
- Swimming pool
- Non-tarmacked car park
- Outdoor group exercise area – e.g. for boot camp
- Vehicle access to the bowls green (mowers, rollers)
- Safer crossing points / pedestrian route along Cool Oak Lane.

4.3 Public Drop-In Sessions

4.3.1 The five public drop-in sessions which were hosted during June and July 2019 received an approximate total attendance of 94 members of the public. The draft masterplan, floorplan of the Community Sports Hub and accompanying detailed area drawings were displayed and members of the SLC team and Barnet Council were available to explain the draft masterplan and answer any questions.

4.3.2 Local residents were invited to give verbal feedback, which was subsequently recorded by SLC in a written format. A full record of the feedback received is provided in Appendix 5.

4.3.3 The feedback has been divided into the overarching and recurring themes, a summary of which is provided below:

- **Parking and Traffic.** Residents' concern with the effect of the proposed masterplan on traffic and congestion in the area was repeatedly raised. In particular, the Cool Oak Lane car park was strongly objected to by Brent residents living in the Kinloch Drive area, noting that the width of the road will not cope with further traffic and will lead to accidents. Equally, a coach drop-off point is considered to be impractical and residents were concerned that the car park would attract drug users, vandalism and fly tipping if the appropriate security measures are not installed.

An extension to the car park at the north of the site was welcomed, as the current provision is insufficient. Suggestions were made to allocate specific spaces for the bowls facility and their predominantly elderly members.

- **High Ropes Course.** This was a controversial facility and was mainly opposed by residents along with the Cool Oak Lane car park. Others thought the facility was not required as residents would not be able to afford the entrance fee and it would impact negatively upon woodland and wildlife. The High Ropes course did receive some positive feedback though, particularly from families with younger children.
- **Pedestrian and Cycle Routes.** Improvements to the pathways for walking and cycling were received very positively, particularly as navigating the park at present is difficult. The woodland nature trail was also popular, providing more opportunities for exploring the Welsh Harp reservoir area.

Suggestions were made to retain a single pathway for shared walking and cycling within the SSSI rather than installing an additional route. Residents also noted that improving cycle routes should extend beyond the park edge to improve accessibility.

An extra pedestrian entrance was also requested to Jubilee Park (between pitches 2 and 4 on the map) to provide further walking routes.

- **Security, Management and Maintenance.** Improved management, security and maintenance was consistently requested and noted as key to the masterplan's success. Residents were largely sceptical about the future management of the site based on the current scale of littering, neglect and anti-social behaviour.

Suggestions were made for further CCTV, locking the car park at night and planting more trees at the back of residential properties for security.

Alternatively, other residents thought the development would help improve unsolicited behaviour, as it will encourage greater use and provide facilities for young people to engage with.

- **Children and Young People.** Positive feedback was received regarding facilities for children and young people, as there is currently nothing for them to do in the area. Improvements to the quality of the toddler play and installation of an adventure play area for older children was particularly welcomed.

- **Greenspace.** The preservation of green, open space was of vital importance to the public, noting the uniqueness of the area in London and necessity for residents who

do not have a garden. Several residents strongly objected to the proposals, highlighting it as an overdevelopment of a peaceful park and erosion of greenspace. Others respected the need for upgrading the facilities yet thought the number of proposals was excessive for the size of the area and would result in noise pollution and overcrowding.

- **Adventure Golf.** This facility was popular amongst families, whilst others preferred the area to remain as open land. The sustainable drainage system was positively received, as the park is inaccessible in the winter due to flooding. It was also viewed as an attractive water feature and opportunity for increased biodiversity.
- **Artificial Turf and Football Pitches.** It was largely agreed that the ATPs would be well utilised by local football teams, however, the perimeter fencing would reduce the openness of the site. Conservationists noted the fences may also block the commuter route for badgers and one of the junior football pitches (east of the ATPs) falls slightly within the LNR. A few residents also thought the football pitches would be too noisy and should be relocated away from residential gardens.
- **Community Sports Hub.** The facilities proposed within the Community Sports Hub were largely welcomed by residents as a required upgrade to the existing building and an important space for young people. In particular, the provision of a café and toilets was popular with dog walkers and families to extend their stay in the park. The soft play and Clip and Climb also appealed to families with young children. Local fitness instructors expressed interested in hiring out the studio space and running exercise classes.

The Bowls Club requested to retain the patio area located just before the green, as it is a key space to buffer the green from the clubhouse.

- **Nursery.** The re-provision of the nursery was regarded as a priority during the construction phase to minimise disruption to children. Parents raised concerns about the interim period, as children can find it difficult to re-settle in a new location.
- **Other.** Other facilities proposed on the masterplan, such as the outdoor gym, orchard and tennis courts received positive feedback. Many residents noted that the development was exactly what the local area needed and would bring the community together, offering opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. The layout of the masterplan was appreciated as utilising the site's potential whilst maintaining open space beyond the existing pathway and protecting the nature reserve.
- **Cricket.** The request for a cricket pitch was raised by several residents. Cricket is currently played informally in evenings and at weekends at the park, highlighting the demand for provision.
- **Further Suggestions.** Further suggestions which were made included drinking fountains, a splash park, extra benches, assault course (instead of mini golf) and an outside space for boot camp, food fairs and car boot sales.

4.3.4 Overall, the concerns raised by members of the public who attended the drop-in sessions were predominantly associated with the proposed new car park on Cool Oak Lane, the location of the High Ropes course and general concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and protection of greenspace. The other proposed facilities were received very positively, particularly the café, toilets, pedestrian and cycle routes, tennis courts, toddler play, outdoor gym and orchard.

4.4 Email Correspondence

4.4.1 The email feedback which was received via the dedicated email address (WestHendonPFmasterplan@barnet.gov.uk) received four responses from residents.

4.4.2 The first suggested the addition of a cricket pitch, highlighting that lots of people currently play at the park, but the lack of a proper cricket pitch restricts this.

4.4.3 The second made suggestions for further seating and picnic benches, trimming the shrubs / trees on the path to the bird hide for a better view and an information board detailing which birds use the Welsh Harp.

4.4.4 The third submitted a detailed response, with the following key points:

- The masterplan urbanises the area, without consideration to the natural environment.
- Enhancing the site is welcomed, but for people to enjoy nature and the health and wellbeing benefits of experiencing natural surroundings.
- The 99-space car park replacing a grass football pitch along Cool Oak Lane is not acceptable on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).
- The High Ropes, Adventure Golf, cycle routes and skatepark are opposed.
- The 3G artificial turf pitches should be kept to the minimum needed and positioned as far as possible from the Welsh Harp.
- The risk of vandalism is high, particularly if the car park entrances are not locked at night.
- Suggestion for pedestrian-only paths to avoid accidents with cyclists and overcrowding. All pedestrian paths should also be as natural as possible or incorporated with recycled rubber for safety and porosity.
- Suggestion to self-contain the public toilets, with outward opening doors to the outside space and appropriate security features.

4.4.5 The fourth response, from a member of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee, objected to the following facilities:

- **Cool Oak Lane car park** - The objections to this car park re-iterate the points raised from the WHJCC petition.
- **Pedestrian route** - The proposed pedestrian route through woodland alongside the back gardens of Kinloch Drive will promote break-ins and encourage motorcycle use.
- **Artificial turf pitches** - The covering of greenfield in plastics is not environmentally friendly and questions remain over the health risks.
- **High Ropes course** - The High Ropes will affect nesting birds, bats and other wildlife, as well as the oak trees and cause problems with the oak processionary moth.
- **Lighting** - Extra lighting will affect wildlife.

4.5 Social Media

4.5.1 Following the Council’s social media promotion, the Council’s Facebook analytics revealed that the multiple posts promoting the Engage Barnet link accumulated a total of 476 clicks, 149 reactions, 33 shares and 63 comments.

4.5.2 The breakdown of post ‘reactions’, as shown in Figure 8, indicates that 133 people ‘like’ and 6 ‘love’ the proposed masterplan compared to 6 ‘angry’ and 2 ‘sad’ users. This is a positive response, particularly as the majority of these reactions will have been from the targeted promotion to residents living within one mile of the playing fields.

Figure 8: Summary of Facebook Post Reactions



4.5.3 A selection of feedback from the comments provided is detailed below. Despite the high number of likes, all of the comments posted contained either suggestions or negative comments opposing the development.

Negative:

- *“There is a lot going on in a relatively small space...Crazy golf, Go Ape and the skatepark all really need to be in an area not so close to people’s homes, noise pollution and overcrowding will become a problem.”*
- *“Keep our area green, at it is. We need park area and open space. We are turning North West London into a concrete jungle.”*
- *“This park needs to be left alone, we stopped the last proposal for a golf course years ago, we will fight it again.”*
- *“Too much changing from a leafy pleasant place to walk, cycle or picnic to a busy overcrowded centre and what about all the added traffic and parking? No to your plans.”*

Suggestions:

- *“Refurbishment of the nursery / gym hall I think is a nice idea and a new playground area for various ages of children, a café, new tennis and basketball courts, but that’s all this space really needs...Please keep it simple.”*
- *“It’s better to put up a café, develop the seating facilities and footpath. Don’t do anything else, keep it clean and green.”*
- *“It’s open space with lots of wildlife that should not be spoilt. At the very least update and repair the children’s play area and the benches.”*
- *“We need the cricket ground in this park.”*
- *“May I suggest something for the dog walkers, an enclosed dog run perhaps.”*

4.6 Summary

4.6.1 The public consultation exercise has secured good levels of engagement and was successful in capturing the views and opinions of a wide range of residents and stakeholders on the final draft masterplan for West Hendon Playing Fields.

- 4.6.2 The results from the online questionnaire indicated a positive response to the final draft masterplan with 72% of respondents strongly supporting or tending to support the proposals compared to 21% strongly opposing or tending to oppose.
- 4.6.3 The public drop-in sessions were successful in providing an opportunity to discuss the plans with the general public face-to-face and engage in a more in-depth conversation than the online questionnaire.
- 4.6.4 The email correspondence and social media analytics have equally supplemented the results and added value to the engagement.
- 4.6.5 The exercise has revealed a good level of support for the proposed development in the north of the site to revitalise an under-utilised and neglected park. However, objections were highlighted throughout the process regarding the proposed new car park on Cool Oak Lane, erosion of greenspace and disturbance to wildlife. Other controversial facilities included the High Ropes course (primarily its location), artificial turf pitches and proximity of football pitches to residential homes.
- 4.6.6 It was repeatedly re-iterated that the development would need to be sensitively planned to preserve wildlife and the green, open space, as well as ensuring that strong and effective management, maintenance and security is established on site to prevent litter and anti-social behaviour.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

5.1 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 The public consultation exercise on the draft masterplan for West Hendon Playing Fields was developed in partnership with the Council and delivered through a combination of face-to-face meetings, telephone discussions, email correspondence, workshops, public drop-in sessions and an online questionnaire promoted through the Council's website and social media channels.
- 5.1.2 The process has been successful in gathering feedback from a wide range of interested parties and stakeholders and provides a solid evidence base from which the Council is able to consider the next steps.
- 5.1.3 The key conclusions arising from the consultation on the final draft masterplan for West Hendon Playing Fields are as follows:
1. The consultation process engaged with over 900 local residents and stakeholders during the 8-week period which demonstrates a good level of engagement.
 2. The consultation was successful in ensuring a fair representation of different user groups. In particular, the views of children and young people came through strongly in the online questionnaire, with 35% respondents under the age of 25. This was supplemented by the workshop with Hendon School.
 3. The online questionnaire generated 224 responses, with a high level of engagement from residents within 15 minutes of the site (66%).
 4. The results of the online questionnaire show a positive response from the general public to the final draft masterplan proposals with 72% of respondents being either supportive or very supportive compared to 21% being unsupportive. The Council's Facebook page on the draft masterplan also received 133 likes.
 5. Throughout the consultation, there was clear support amongst stakeholders and the wider public for the principle of creating a more engaging space which improves opportunities for local people to be physically active and increases use of the playing fields and exposure to the Welsh Harp.
 6. The most popular facilities were the café (including toilets), improved pedestrian and cycle routes (including the Welsh Harp), woodland nature trail, multi-use activity space, toddler and adventure play areas and sustainable drainage system.
 7. Young people were very supportive of the proposed masterplan. In the online questionnaire, only 5% of under 25's indicated that they were unsupportive of the development.
 8. The masterplan is well positioned to deliver health and wellbeing benefits to residents, with 70% of respondents noting that the proposed facilities would encourage them to be more physically active and 73% stating that they would be more likely to visit West Hendon Playing Fields if the proposed facilities were provided.
 9. Consultation with statutory bodies and conservation groups highlighted concerns regarding the potential impact of the development on the SSSI and LNR, particularly the High Ropes course, artificial turf pitches and path network. In order to secure a biodiversity net gain, a number of suggestions were provided to mitigate the

environmental impact and there would be a requirement for more detailed ecological surveys to be undertaken in any subsequent detailed design stages.

10. The key areas of contention raised throughout the consultation period are listed in the table below. It is recommended that the Council discuss these concerns further and consider potential mitigating options.

Table 4: Key Areas of Contention on the Final Draft Masterplan

Area of Concern	Key Issues Raised
Cool Oak Lane car park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable for a coach drop off • Narrow, tight bends – weight and width restrictions • Anti-social behaviour • Loss of greenspace • Other car park on Cool Oak Lane has proved problematic
High Ropes course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location within the Local Nature Reserve / woodland • Impact upon ecology / biodiversity
Artificial turf pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of greenspace • Impact upon ecology / biodiversity
Pedestrian and cycle routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of routes on SSSI / LNR
Management, maintenance and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of management presence, security and upkeep of proposed facilities
Traffic and congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications upon traffic and congestion • Sustainable transport routes and connections

5.2 Recommended Next Steps

- 5.2.1 It is recommended that that Council considers the feedback obtained during the public consultation and explores opportunities to mitigate any concerns through amendments to the draft masterplan.
- 5.2.2 In the event that the Council wish to progress the masterplan through to detailed design stages, it will be appropriate to consider some of the feedback in relation to more specific design elements such as building layout, location of pathways and bird hides, CCTV, litter and dog bins and additional planting. It will be essential to maintain regular dialogue with key occupiers to ensure the final plans meet their requirements.
- 5.2.3 The Council will need to consider how they intend to report back the results of the consultation to stakeholders and the wider public and to advise them on how this process will be used to further inform the plans for the site.

APPENDICES

6 APPENDIX 1: STAKEHOLDERS / CONSULTEES

6.1.1 This appendix provides the details of the different groups of current occupiers / users and stakeholders that were engaged with throughout the consultation period.

6.1.2 These groups are categorised as follows:

- **Key occupiers / users** – clubs or organisations currently located on site or near West Hendon Playing Fields.
- **Key stakeholders** – interested parties such as community organisations, the West Hendon Partnership Board, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of sport.
- **Statutory bodies and conservation groups** – key agencies with a particular interest in the site’s ecological value and protection of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
- **Under-represented groups** – community groups and organisations which provide services for under-represented residents, such as ethnic minorities, disabled people, young people and older generations.
- **Local schools** – local schools within a 10-minute drive time catchment of West Hendon Playing Fields.

6.2 Key Occupiers / Users

Table 6: Stakeholder Engagement – List of Key Occupiers / Users

Occupier / User
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chin Woo Martial Arts Club • Hendon Bowling Club • Hendon Football Club • Hendon Springfield Football Club • Highgate and Muswell Football Club • Parkside View Children’s Nursery • Phoenix Canoe Club • Princes Park Youth Football Club • Real Hendon Football Club • St Lawrence Football Club • West Hendon Allotment Society

6.3 Key Stakeholders

Table 7: Stakeholder Engagement – List of Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Contact
West Hendon Partnership Board	Rob Webb, Independent Tenant Advisor
Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee	Abigail Lewis, Support Officer
West Hendon Community Hub	Andrew Bindi, Employment Lead London
Metropolitan Thames Valley	Andrew Bindi, Community Investment
Argent Related	Julia Finlayson, Project Director
Greenwich Leisure Limited (Better Leisure)	Gillan Kelly, Partnership Manager

Sport England	Mark Furnish, Planning Manager
Middlesex Football Association	Craig Nicholson, Head of Participation and Development
Ward Councillors for West Hendon	Saira Don; Alex Prager; Helene Richman
Community Engagement, Barnet Council	Danusia Brzezicka
Strategic Planning and Regeneration Service, Barnet Council	Cali Ibrahim
Barnet Youth Foundation, Barnet Council	Janet Matthewson
Family Services, Barnet Council	Kerry Hodges; Mark Vargeson; Karen Ali
Older People Engagement, Barnet Council	Claire Desouza; Sarah Perrin

6.4 Statutory Bodies and Conservation Groups

Table 8: Stakeholder Engagement – List of Statutory Bodies and Conservation Groups

Name	Contact
Natural England	Jonathan Shavelar, Lead Advisor
London Wildlife Trust	Mathew Frith, Director of Conservation
Canal and River Trust	Tessa Craig, Area Planner
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Bob Husband, North West London Group Leader
Welsh Harp Conservation Group	Roy Beddard, Chairman

6.5 Under-Represented Groups

Table 9: Stakeholder Engagement – List of Under-Represented Groups

Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age UK Barnet • Barnet Multicultural Community Centre • Colindale Community Club • Inclusion Barnet • MENCAP • Young Barnet

6.6 Local Schools

Table 10: Stakeholder Engagement – List of Local Schools

School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnet Hill Academy • Colindale Primary School • Fryent Primary School • Hendon School • Kingsbury Green Primary School • Kingsbury High School • Little Pebbles Hendon • North London Grammar School • Oliver Goldsmith Primary School

- Parkfield Primary School
- Saint Robert Southwell School
- Woodfield School

7 APPENDIX 2: FEEDBACK FROM CONSERVATION AND ECOLOGY ORGANISATIONS

7.1.1 A copy of the following statutory bodies feedback is provided in separate documents:

- **Appendix 2.1** - Natural England
- **Appendix 2.2a** - London Wildlife Trust (Mathew Frith)
- **Appendix 2.2b** – London Wildlife Trust (Barnet Borough Group)
- **Appendix 2.3** - Canal and River Trust
- **Appendix 2.4** - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

8 APPENDIX 3: ARMSTRONG RIGG PLANNING RESPONSE

- 8.1.1 A copy of Armstrong Rigg Planning’s response is provided as a separate document, including the Site Layout (Appendix 3.1).

9 APPENDIX 4: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT

9.1.1 A report of the online questionnaire is provided as a separate document.

10 APPENDIX 5: PUBLIC DROP-IN SESSIONS FEEDBACK

10.1.1 The public drop-in session notes are provided in a separate document.



This report has been written by The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC). SLC was established in 2009 and advises organisations by developing effective strategies, planning sustainable facilities and procuring successful operational partnerships.

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