

Appendix A – summary of representations received and responses.

	Comment	Response
1.	<p>The council has received various comments about the way public consultation has been handled to date and the lack of specific information on the leisure centre.</p>	<p>The purpose of the report is to inform local people of preferred site status and to begin the consultation process – this is not the final decision to build the new leisure centre – and we could not have started this process earlier because we did not have a specific proposal to talk about.</p> <p>The new leisure centre will be delivered as part of a major regeneration initiative that will see the creation of a new town centre. The planning around a project of this scale and complexity, and the consultation around it, must be progressed in stages; moving from general principles, to an outline plan and eventually through to specific proposals.</p> <p>Early consultation undertaken by British Land (BL) helped the council frame its thinking around the leisure centre re-provision. Working with our partner and a team of technical specialists we have considered a number of site options. That effort has progressed sufficiently that we have a specific proposal that can form the basis for meaningful consultation with local people.</p> <p>Our work to date has identified that the residents around Hothfield Place, Hithe Grove and China Hall Mews will be disproportionately affected by the proposal, hence the decision to undertake targeted consultation with them. The council and BL will continue to consult the wider local community as the regeneration masterplan progresses, including issues arising from the building of the new leisure centre. There will also be consultation as part of the formal planning consent process.</p>
2.	<p>The report reads like the site was the only one that British Land was prepared to sacrifice to community use on its vast 50-acre redevelopment, and that the council worked backwards from this point to justify this afterthought.</p>	<p>The council considered a number of site options before confirming the preferred location. Some of the reasons for the selection are set out in the report and will be discussed with local people during the consultation.</p> <p>When preferred site status is confirmed that will trigger a number of work streams, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed technical assessment of the site. • Discussions with TfL in relation to the Overground tunnel. • Detailed design and further consultation with local people prior to making a planning application. • Negotiation with BL on commercial terms for making the site available. • Appointment of a construction partner and agreement of a tender price. <p>Ultimately all of this work will be pulled together into a detailed business case that will be considered by the council prior to making the final decision to invest in a new facility. The next key decision point will be in early 2016 when the council will consider final terms for the commercial deal with BL, which will confirm the location and delivery mechanism for the new</p>

		<p>leisure centre.</p> <p>The council considers it essential to involve local people meaningfully in this process; hence the decision to confirm the preferred site now and to start the consultation process.</p>
3.	There is little evidence that any alternative site has been seriously looked at – no specific alternatives have been named.	There has been preliminary investigation of a number of sites and the report includes information on some of this work. The purpose of the report is to authorise consultation, during which further information on all of the options will be shared with local people.
4.	The report makes absolutely no mention of the impact on wildlife, in spite of the “ecological led approach” promised in the latest masterplan for the area.	<p>A full ecological audit will be undertaken as part of the design process and will form part of the public consultation. The information will feed into the environmental impact assessment needed as part of the planning process.</p> <p>Once preferred status is confirmed the leisure centre will be identified within the BL masterplan and ultimately will form part of the planning application for the scheme. At that stage a detailed environmental impact assessment will be prepared.</p> <p>Local people will continue to be involved in developing the masterplan and will be consulted as part of the planning application process.</p>
5.	There is a presumption that some kind of building has to go on the site of the wildlife area – why? They aren’t planning to build on Southwark Park are they? The wildlife area was to be left untouched in the previous version of the masterplan.	The wildlife area is part of a site identified for a major regeneration project and its future must be considered in that context. Protection of the environment and creating a top quality public realm are import considerations for the council, but they are only two of many factors that will shape the design for the new town centre. The council and its development partner must have the freedom to find the best overall solution, including the optimum provision of open space within the masterplan area.
6.	The report neglects to mention that the swimming pool the council plans is 25m long – 8m shorter than the 33m Seven Islands pool it is supposed to be improving on.	Guidance from Sport England is that municipal pools should be either 25m or 50m in order to meet school and club competition requirements. It should also be remembered that the length of a pool, its capacity and its suitability for different activities, are related but different matters. This means that for many customers a reduction in pool length will not, of itself, spoil their enjoyment of the new facility – and for some user groups it will be an advantage. Adopting a standard size for the new pool offers greater flexibility in use which ultimately will be to the benefit of all users of the facility.
7.	The option of prolonging the life of Seven Islands for the medium term, or doing a much more thorough long-term refurbishment, is dismissed abruptly.	<p>The council has previously decided that refurbishment of Seven Island does not represent value for money. It was therefore agreed to invest limited money in the centre to give it a five year life while a new facility is built.</p> <p>Details of this decision can be found at the following link.</p>

		http://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s49973/Report%20Qtr%20202014-15%20Capital%20Monitor.pdf
8.	The council says it only wants a leisure centre on a site to which it owns the freehold but gives no compelling reason why it can't be accommodated on another part of the Surrey Quays shopping centre site or Harmsworth Quays, whose freehold it does own.	As noted in the report maintaining the freehold of the site will ensure the council retains control over the future use of the facility. As noted in the report the council has taken an investment decision to invest £2m in 7 islands to extend its operational life for a further 5 years while a new centre is developed. It is therefore important that the preferred site can be developed within this period so that a new centre can be completed to replace 7 islands. The site also has to be accessible to the catchment area and be well served by public transport. As noted in the report only plots immediately around the Canada water basin meet these criteria. The preferred site is within this area.
9.	The report skates over the difficulty of siting a swimming pool so close to a London Overground tunnel – there is almost no evidence cited that this is actually possible.	This will be considered during further detailed design work, but does not preclude undertaking consultation.
10.	The upgrading of Deal Porters Way would leave residents of Hothfield Place, Hithe Grove and China Hall Mews unhealthily sandwiched between two major bus routes.	This will be considered during further detailed design work and there will be an opportunity for local people to comment as part of consultation on the masterplan later this year.