

6 August 2026

Update Report: GLA/2026/0027/S3**Great North Leisure Park****in the London Borough of Barnet planning application no. 25/0213/FUL****Planning application**

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended); Greater London Authority Acts 1999 and 2007; Town & Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008.

Update:

To consider any material changes to policy and the Section 106 agreement since the Deputy Mayor's resolution to grant planning permission on 27 May 2026 and to extend the time period for completion of the Section 106 legal agreement to 30 September 2026 .

Recommendation:

That the Deputy Mayor:

- i. Agrees that the policy changes since the Representation Hearing do not affect the resolution to grant planning permission made on 27 May 2026. The proposal remains in overall conformity with the development plan.
- ii. Agrees that the changes to the Section 106 agreement since the Representation Hearing do not change the resolution to grant planning permission made on 27 May 2026 and agrees with the final wording of the Section 106 legal agreement and draft planning conditions noting there have been minor changes to the wording.
- iii. Agrees to an extension of time for the completion of the Section 106 legal agreement until the 30 September 2026 (i.e. the period after which the Head of Development Management has delegated authority to refer it back to the Mayor in order to refuse permission if the Section 106 legal agreement is not completed).
- iv. Agrees that it is unnecessary to re-open the Representation Hearing.

This Update Report addresses matters which have arisen since the Deputy Mayor considered the planning application (GLA/2026/0027).

Context

On 27 May 2026 the Deputy Mayor resolved to grant conditional planning permission in respect of planning application 25/0213/FUL within the London Borough of Barnet, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 legal agreement. The Deputy Mayor also gave delegated authority for the Head of Development Management to negotiate the Section 106 legal agreement and gave delegated authority to refer it back to the Deputy Mayor to refuse permission should the Section 106 agreement not be completed by 27 July 2026.

Planning Policy Update

The new draft London Plan was published for consultation on 16 July 2026 and the consultation will run until 15 October 2026. The draft London Plan is a material consideration. However, given its stage of preparation, in accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF, the draft London Plan attracts limited weight and as such GLA Officers consider that it does not have a material bearing on the acceptability of the proposals.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 17 August 2026 following a period of public consultation. The NPPF aims to set out national planning policy in a clearer and more comprehensive manner and incorporates a number of substantive reforms designed to boost housing supply and unlock economic growth. The NPPF contains a series of National Decision-Making Policies (NDMPs), that whilst not afforded statutory weight, are material considerations where relevant.

NPPF NDMP S3 applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development and NDMP S4 states that: "Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework".

As stated in the Land Use Principles and Conclusion sections of the Hearing Report dated 27 May 2026 the benefits of the proposals are not considered to be outweighed by any identified adverse effects arising.

NDMP HO7 states that "substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community, as identified through needs assessments prepared for the area of the local planning authority and other relevant evidence".

In addition, NDMP HO8 states that "development proposals should meet or exceed up-to-date development plan requirements for the proportion and mix of affordable housing tenures relevant to the location, including the minimum proportion of Social Rent". Affordable housing should be provided on site unless an off-site or payment in lieu would deliver a better outcome.

As stated in the Land Use section of the Hearing Report the comprehensive residential-led mixed-use redevelopment and intensification of the site, including the re-provision of the existing leisure centre, is supported in principle. Further the Local Plan identifies the site (site allocation no. 58) as being suitable for these uses. The proposal provides on-site affordable housing in line with NDMP HO8.

The NPPF (NDMP DP3) states that "Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the

restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.”

NDMP DP3 goes on to set out seven key design principles; Liveability, Climate, Nature, Movement, Built Form, Public Space and Identity. NDMP DP4 encourages the appropriate use of design review panels and promotes measures to secure the quality of the delivered development.

In this context, it is noted that the scheme evolved through an iterative process of pre-application advice and independent design scrutiny as detailed in the Hearing Report. Further detail outlining the acceptability of the scheme is discussed in the Urban Design section of the Hearing Report

Furthermore, a number of robustly worded conditions to secure matters such as materials and landscaping are recommended in order to ensure a high quality appearance.

NPPF NDMP N6 states that development proposals affecting nature conservation sites of local importance should only be supported if:

- “i. There would not be a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the site;
- or
- ii. The benefits of development in the location proposed clearly outweigh the likely impact on the features which make the site valuable for nature conservation.”

The Sustainability and Environment section of the Hearing Report examines the impacts of the proposals in terms of ecology and biodiversity and concludes that the proposal is acceptable in this regard subject to secured mitigation measures.

For the reasons outlined above, GLA Officers consider that it does not materially affect the acceptability of the proposals or the Stage 3 Report.

The Leisure Centre.

The Stage 3 Hearing Report includes the following in relation to the delivery of the new leisure centre, relative to the closure of the existing leisure centre:

Section	Paragraph	Text
Officer Recommendation – reasons for approval	4	The provision of the replacement leisure centre and sports pavilion is a benefit of the scheme. The existing leisure centre will remain operational until the replacement leisure centre is completed. This is secured in the S106 agreement.
S106 agreement heads of terms	11	Provisions for the existing leisure centre to remain open until the new leisure centre is completed and operational

Details of the Proposal	18	Whilst it is not guaranteed that the leisure centre will come forwards within this phase, and it is acknowledged that the Council raised the issue of securing the delivery of the new leisure centre, GLA officers do not consider it is necessary. The s106 agreement prevents a gap in provision by ensuring that the existing leisure centre is retained and will remain in operation until the new facility is completed however GLA officers consider that the new leisure centre is not necessary to mitigate the impact of the new development and so there is no clear justification to impose a planning condition or planning obligation requiring delivery of the leisure centre before residential units are occupied. The new leisure centre will be owned by the Council and operated by a third-party leisure provider, consistently with current arrangements.
Land use principles	57	The proposed development includes the replacement of the existing 2,171 sq.m. leisure centre with a new 3,791.4 sq.m. leisure centre. The new leisure centre will include a 25 metre indoor swimming pool, learner pool, lido water area, sauna, steam room, fitness suites, studios and changing areas, play room, café, and other health and leisure facilities. Although not all facilities are replaced on a like for-like replacement, such as the leisure water area with wave machine, the new leisure centre represents a significant qualitative and quantitative uplift in leisure provision, which is high-quality, modern, functional, and accessible. It is noted that Sport England raise no objection subject to conditions requiring that the leisure centre and changing rooms be designed in accordance with Sport England guidance. In this instance as the leisure centre has been designed to the Council's specifications. It is noted in the phasing strategy that the existing leisure centre will remain open to the public until the new leisure centre opens. Provisions for this are secured in the S106 agreement.
Conclusion and planning balance	291	The existing leisure centre will remain operational until the new leisure centre is delivered.

The draft section 106 agreement published with the Stage 3 Hearing Report included a covenant to "Ensure that the Existing Leisure Centre remains open for public use (on the terms and in the manner and condition that it is operated as at the date of this Deed, unless otherwise approved by the Council) until the New Leisure Centre has been Practically Completed and is fitted out and ready to be opened to the public for use in accordance with the Community Use Plan"

The section 106 obligation in relation to the leisure centre has changed. The s106 agreement now includes a covenant to "Ensure that the Existing Leisure Centre remains at

all times accessible and physically capable of public use until the New Leisure Centre has been Practically Completed."

The new leisure centre will be owned by the council and operated by a third party in line with existing arrangements. The change from ensuring the existing leisure centre "remains open for public use" to ensuring it is "accessible and physically capable of public use" reflects the fact that the applicant does not have complete control over the operation of the existing leisure centre.

The amended obligation would also mean that the current leisure centre could be closed before the new leisure centre is fitted out and open. The applicant has advised that it will be providing the leisure centre operator with a "fitted out" building rather than, for example, a shell-and-core building. However, following practical completion there will remain certain elements of fit-out and operational requirements that are subject to the operator's own requirements, preferences and programme. As such, the point at which the "fit-out" beyond that signed off at practical completion (PC) could be said to be fully complete would not be entirely within the applicant's control.

Distilling what the applicant is required to deliver into a workable section 106 obligation/definition is challenging and there might be ambiguity as to whether the relevant standard had been achieved.

For these reasons, any obligation linked to completion of the fit-out would be difficult to define with sufficient certainty and liable to depend on matters outside of the applicant's control. Therefore, GLA Officers consider that the revised obligation set out above is appropriate and reasonable.

Great Crested Newts:

The Deputy Mayor stated in his closing statement the following "I have instructed GLA officers to play close attention to this issue and relevant requirements in finalising the s106 agreement".

The published draft s106 agreement included the following obligation:

Subject to the Council's compliance with paragraph 3.2 of this Schedule [the council's covenant as landowner to allow access to its land for the purpose of implementing the Ecology Mitigation Strategy Framework], the Owner covenants with the Council to use reasonable endeavours to comply with the measures set out in the Ecology Mitigation Strategy Framework

The s106 agreement now includes the following obligation which has been strengthened to remove reference to reasonable endeavours:

"Subject to the Council's compliance with paragraph 3.2 of this Schedule, the Owner shall implement and comply with the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures including monitoring requirements set out in the Ecology Mitigation Strategy Framework"

Other clarifications/changes to the s106 Heads of Terms

The Deputy Mayor is asked to note the following changes and clarifications to the Section 106 Heads of Terms as set out in the Stage 3 Report. GLA officers do not consider that these materially impact the resolution to grant.

Heads of Terms (paragraph 11 of Stage 3 Report)	Change/Clarification
"Defined specification of the replacement leisure centre"	The s106 agreement does not require the submission and approval of a specification for the leisure centre. The application is for a detailed consent and, as above, the applicant does not have full control over the fit out of the leisure centre.
"Securing delivery of the sports pavilion and community use agreement"	This could be read as the s106 agreement will secure the delivery of the sports pavilion, which as per paragraph 58 of the Stage 3 Report, is not the intention. The s106 agreement secures a community use plan for the new leisure centre and sports pavilion.
Leisure (including Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club) Travel Plan	The Leisure Travel Plan does not include the Bowls Club. The Bowls Club is outside of the application site and therefore not part of the development.
Submission and agreement of site-wide and coordinated separate Car Parking Management Plans for the proposed residential units and the proposed leisure units (including Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club)"	Whilst the s106 provides for a residential car parking management plan and a leisure car parking management plan (which includes car parking provision for Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club), it doesn't additionally require a site-wide car parking management plan. However, a site-wide car parking management plan is an approved planning application document and the s106 requires the residential and leisure car parking management plans to be based on that approved site-wide plan
"Provision of a Construction Training Academy"	This is at the developer's election in lieu of the apprenticeship and work placement obligations.
"Biodiversity Net Gain Plan"	Now secured by condition (11 and 43)
"Implementation of Scheme in line with statutory requirements"	Now secured by condition (11 and 43)

Extension the date by which the s106 must be completed.

The recommendation in the Stage 3 Report delegated authority to the Head of Development Management to refer the application back to the Deputy Mayor if, by 27 July 2026, the section 106 legal agreement had not been completed.

Progress has been made in relation to the s106. The section 106 agreement at Appendix 1 has been agreed by the council and the applicant and, save for the changes set out above, the planning obligations have been secured as set out in the Representation Hearing Report heads of terms.

It is recommended that the Deputy Mayor give delegated authority for the Head of Development Management to refer back to the Deputy Mayor to refuse permission should the Section 106 agreement not be completed by 30 September 2026.

Recommendation to the Deputy Mayor

That the Deputy Mayor, acting as Local Planning Authority for the purpose of determining this planning application has considered the particular circumstances of this application against national, strategic, and local planning policy, relevant supplementary planning guidance, and all material planning considerations. He has also had regard to the comments of the Council and all consultation responses and representations made on the case both to the Council and the GLA. Accordingly, the recommendations at the beginning of this report are proposed.

Agrees that the changes highlighted in the above paragraphs made since the Representation Hearing do not change the resolution to grant planning permission made on 27 May 2026. The proposal remains in overall conformity with the development plan.

Decision record – recommendation agreed

Jules Pipe

Deputy Mayor of London

Appendix 1: Draft S106 agreement

Appendix 2: Draft planning permission

For further information, contact GLA Planning Unit (Development Management Team):

Neil Smith, Team Leader – Special Projects

Email: neil.smith@london.gov.uk
