

MEETING NOTES

Gurnell Sounding Board – Meeting no.2
Thursday 16 June, 6pm – 7.45pm
Elizabeth Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall

Attendees:

Name	Organisation / Role
Adam Towle	London Borough of Ealing Housing Team
Adam Whalley	London Borough of Ealing Assistant Director Capital Investment Programme
Cllr Ben Wesson	Council Member (Pitshanger Ward)
Chris Bunting	London Borough of Ealing Assistant Director Leisure
	Save Gurnell
	Pitshanger Community Association
	Gurnell Grove Residents Association
James Parker	Expedition
Jennifer Ross	Tibbalds
	Pitshanger Village Traders Association
Julia Robertson	London Borough of Ealing Sports Development Manager
	Drayton Community Association / Stop The Towers
Katrina Duncan	Mikhail Riches Group
Laura McCarthy	London Borough of Ealing Leisure Contracts Officer
	Ealing Matters
	Save Gurnell

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Maria Gull	London Borough of Ealing Research and Performance Officer
Mark Gowdridge	GT3 Architects
	GLL Leisure Operator
	Empowering Action (EASE)
Pauline Lawrence	London Borough of Ealing Leisure Operations Manager
Richard Sims	London Borough of Ealing Lead Project Manager - Projects Delivery Unit
Sandra Fryer	London Borough of Ealing Interim Director of Growth and Sustainability

The following documents had been issued to all attendees before the meeting:

- *Agenda*
- *Notes of the Inaugural Sounding Board Meeting, held on Tuesday 10th May 2022*
- *Gurnell Leisure Centre; Sounding Board Terms of Reference*

1. INTRODUCTION FROM CHAIR

- a. The meeting was introduced by Sandra Fryer, standing in as independent Chair of the Gurnell Sounding Board in the absence of Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles who was unwell.
- b. There then followed a table round session where all attendees introduced themselves and outlined their role and interest in the Gurnell scheme.
- c. Apologies were received from the following:
 - i. Dave Heathcock, Ealing Swim Club
 - ii. Gary Starkey, Greenwich Leisure Ltd
 - iii. Mark Leahy, Everyone Active
 - iv. Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, Independent Chair
- d. Agenda and presentation
 - i. A presentation, prepared by Mikhail Riches, was put onto the screen and referred to for the duration of the Sounding Board meeting and a copy of which is appended to these meeting notes, named:

220616_Sounding Board 02 Slides V1.ppt

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2. NOTES OF THE INAUGURAL SOUNDING BOARD MEETING, HELD VIA MS TEAMS ON TUESDAY 10th MAY 2022

- a. The notes were acknowledged as received by those present and no new matters raised.

3. NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS FROM THE VISIT TO GURNELL LEISURE CENTRE ON TUESDAY 7th JUNE, 1PM – 2.30PM HOSTED BY LAURA McCARTHY (LBE), RICHARD SIMS (LBE) AND MARK GOWDRIDGE (GT3)

- a. Feedback from those who attended included:
 - i. The building design is poor and not up to modern standard.
 - ii. It was useful having Mark Gowdridge from GT3 Architects present as he was able to highlight spatial constraints and limitations of the existing building.
 - iii. It was also useful to hear details of modern technologies which could significantly reduce running costs of a new leisure centre.
- b. MG talked everyone through *slide no.5* of the attached presentation which set out in some detail key deficiencies in the existing leisure centre building.

4. SUMMARY OF ONLINE PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESULTS

- a. Maria Gull, LBE Research and Performance Officer, presented the headline results of the ‘Gurnell–Leisure for All’ consultation which was carried out between 24 March - 20 May 2022. A total of 1,913 responses were received, representing a strong community response to the consultation and capturing data from those having taken part as follows:
 - i. Regularity of visits to Gurnell and whether lone or in groups
 - ii. Typical methods of travel previously and preferred in future
 - iii. Favoured activities – in order of popularity:
 - *Swimming / water activities*
 - *Exercise / fitness classes*
 - *Indoor / outdoor sports*
 - iv. Likes and dislikes
 - v. Most desired facilities
 - *Water facilities*
 - *Fitness*
 - *Outdoor space*
 - *Outdoor sports / activities*
 - vi. Aspirations for wider landscape & outside space
 - vii. How would you like to see the new facility funded
 - viii. Places visited that could inspire the Gurnell project
 - ix. Any other community facilities/ activities located at Gurnell
 - x. Other comments and suggestions and contact details

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- b. A detailed summary of feedback from the public consultation can be found on **slides no.7 – 19** of the attached presentation.
- c. Questions were invited on the public consultation and the following raised:
 - i. Q: Who created the questions for the survey and did these questions pass the criteria for market research?
A: The Council has a go-to person whose specialism is to manage and coordinate surveys, the Gurnell survey being one such event.
 - ii. Q: How was the survey circulated?
A: On the intranet and via Ealing's weekly newsletter to residents.

5. UPDATE ON LEISURE VISION

- a. Mark Gowdrige presented the feedback from the Leisure Vision Workshop held in the Queens Hall, Ealing Town Hall on Tuesday 17 May 2022, 5pm – 7.30pm. During the workshop the following emerged as key functions of the leisure centre that the participants wished to see:
 - *Universal Design within the community*
 - *Carbon Neutral / Passivhaus Principles to be adopted*
 - *Flexibility to meet demand (not just sport)*
 - *Social hub destination for meetings and flexible working*
 - *The landscape and green space is essential*
 - *New Technology should be embraced*Further details can be found on **slide no.22** of the attached presentation.
- b. MG further expanded on the recent visits to other facilities and individual stakeholder engagements which highlighted a desire for the following activities:
 - *Flexible Café Space with 'zones' including library space*
 - *Activity space to link with the café and create external entrance dynamic*
 - *Large gym with connections to roof space for private outdoor exercise*
 - *Studios with a difference, embracing new technology*
 - *A flexible sports hall for sport and non-sport events. Include Rhythmic Gymnastics*
 - *Swimming Pool design to target a range of age groups, abilities, race and need, including 'spa zone'*
 - *Reduction in energy and water use*
- c. Further details, including photographs, visuals and graphic comparisons can be found on **slides no.21 – 27** of the attached presentation.
- d. It was noted that in order to accommodate all requested activities and space requirements, the leisure centre briefed area currently stands at circa 13,000sqm although it is thought that the area could be optimised closer to 10,000sqm.
- e. Questions were invited on the leisure vision and the following raised:

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- i. Q: What is being done to avoid mistakes of the previous scheme of height, massing and residential numbers?
A: It was confirmed that a different approach is being taken, starting with the base requirement to provide a new leisure centre and that the scheme would not necessarily be built by a developer, as had been the previous intention.
- ii. Q: Querying the facilities mix of the new leisure centre and as an example the inclusion of a library when libraries are being closed elsewhere in the Borough. There is a belief that what residents want are swimming and cinema facilities.
A: It was confirmed that a detailed analysis has been undertaken across the Borough to determine demand and inform the facilities mix.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

- a. James Parker explained that a detailed exercise had been undertaken to compare the baseline Gurnell facility before it closed with the long-term sustainability attainable from both refurbishment/retrofit and a full rebuild of the leisure centre. In approaching this key piece of the feasibility study, the following key metrics were considered and compared across new build and refurbishment / retrofit options:
 - i. Fitness for purpose
 - ii. Accessibility
 - iii. Flexibility
 - iv. Revenue generation
 - v. Operating cost
 - vi. Maintenance cost
 - vii. Timescales
 - viii. Capital funding
 - ix. Operating carbon
 - x. Embodied carbon
 - xi. Lifespan
- b. In considering the above, it was articulated that a full rebuild of the leisure centre provides the only sustainable option.
- c. A detailed analysis and comparison of each of the above is set out on **slides no.28 – 32** of the attached presentation.
- d. Mark Gowdrige went on to explain that in light of the leisure brief which had been developed at the initial stage of the process, the considered view that new build would be the only way of suitably meeting this brief and the limited availability of capital funding, an enabling development of some description is considered the most likely route for facilitating the project at this stage.

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7. PLANNING

- a. Jennifer Ross of Tibbalds (planning consultants) explained that, having considered the previously proposed development, rejected at the March 2021 Planning Committee, it was important to fully understand the reasons why it was compromised and listen to what the public had to say at the time. That being the case, the team had gone back to basics to determine what is possible under current GLA Planning legislation within the broad footprint of the Gurnell site and in the context of a Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) site. JR then set out some three general options which might be considered for orientation of the sports centre and any enabling development necessary.
- b. Further details, including aerial photographs, visuals and graphic representations and options discussed can be found on *slides no.33 – 46* of the attached presentation.
- c. Various points were raised by Sounding Board members during the course of this section of the presentation including:
 - i. The Council does not have an updated Local Plan and has not published Authority Monitoring Report which undermines the principle of enabling housing as there is no overarching strategy in place which supports this.
 - ii. There is a further option not being considered which is to build the enabling housing elsewhere other than this site.

8. MEMBERSHIP OF SOUNDING BOARD

- a. SB asked those present if they felt the make-up of the Sounding Board was appropriate and whether it was felt the group would benefit from the introduction of other members. It was noted that the Chair had previously been written to regarding the cultural diversity of the Sounding Board members which SB undertook to discuss with the Chair.
- b. No further groups or individuals were nominated to join by the sounding board at this stage.

9. ANY QUESTIONS / CLOSING REMARKS

- a. In discussion an enquiry was made as to whether space could be made available within the building for a local philanthropist and it was agreed that a provision could be considered.
- b. It was noted that it was helpful for the group to hear the rationale behind the decision to rebuild as opposed to remodel the existing leisure centre and that there might be benefit in more widely publishing these findings.
- c. It was asked that the Council bears in mind the demographics of the local area when committing to the facilities mix of the leisure centre.
- d. It was reiterated that the architectural team are holding back on progressing the design of potential housing in order that the team first focusses on the priority of the leisure centre provision.

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10. NEXT SOUNDING BOARD MEETING

- a. The consensus of those present was that an in person meeting is preferable to an online meeting and agreed to arrange the next session mid / late July. Invitations to follow in due course.
- b. Items to be included on the agenda for future meetings:
 - i. Transport
 - ii. Sustainability
 - iii. Finance and funding

11. MEETING CLOSE – CHAIR – 7.45pm

Distribution list

Name	Organisation / Role
Adam Towle	London Borough of Ealing Housing Team
Adam Whalley	London Borough of Ealing Assistant Director Capital Investment Programme
Alex Jackson	London Borough of Ealing Development Planning Manager
	Pitshanger Community Association (PCA)
Cllr Ben Wesson	Council Member (Pitshanger Ward)
Chris Bunting	London Borough of Ealing Assistant Director Leisure
	Save Gurnell
	Ealing Swimming Club
David Mikhail	Mikhail Riches Group
	PCA

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	Gurnell Grove Residents Association
	GLL (Operator)
Cllr Ilayda Nijhar	Council Member (Pitshanger Ward)
James Parker	Expidition
Jennifer Ross	Tibbalds
Jessica Tamayao	London Borough of Ealing Assistant Director of Strategic Property & Investment
	Pitshanger Village Traders Association
Julia Robertson	London Borough of Ealing Sports Development Manager
	Featherstone School Sport Partnership
	Drayton Community Association / Stop The Towers
Katrina Duncan	Mikhail Riches Group
Laura McCarthy	London Borough of Ealing Leisure Contracts Officer
	Ealing Matters
	Save Gurnell
Luke Willett	GT3 Architects
Maria Gull	London Borough of Ealing Research and Performance Officer
Mark Furnish	Sport England (Sports Planning)
Mark Gowdrige	GT3 Architects
	Everyone Active (Operator)

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	Gurnell Grove Residents Association
	GLL Leisure Operator
	Empowering Action (EASE)
	Brent River & Canal Society
Pauline Lawrence	London Borough of Ealing Leisure Operations Manager
Richard Lamburn	Swim England (Facilities Development)
Richard Sims	London Borough of Ealing Lead Project Manager - Projects Delivery Unit
Cllr Rima Baaklini	Council Member (Pitshanger Ward)
	Ealing Skatepark
Sandra Fryer	London Borough of Ealing Interim Director of Growth and Sustainability
Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles	Chair of Sounding Board

Appendices:

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