



## Democratic Services

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**To: COUNCILLOR SUSAN O'BRIEN  
CABINET MEMBER FOR FAMILIES, EDUCATION  
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**COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY  
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT,  
HOUSING AND REGENERATION**

**COUNCILLOR JONATHAN BIANCO  
CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY &  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

c.c. All Members of Executive Scrutiny Committee  
c.c. Dan Kennedy, Director – Planning, Environment,  
Education and Community Services  
c.c. Chairman of the Residents, Education and  
Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee  
c.c. Ward Councillors for Botwell and Townfield  
c.c. Conservative and Labour Group Offices  
(inspection copy)

**Date:** 2 March 2021

## Non-Key Decision request

## Form D

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF CYCLING FACILITIES AT MINET COUNTRY PARK AND LAKE FARM COUNTRY PARK

Dear Cabinet Member

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Wednesday 10 March 2021** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Liz Penny  
Democratic Services Officer

**Title of Report: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF CYCLING FACILITIES AT MINET COUNTRY  
PARK AND LAKE FARM COUNTRY PARK**

**Decision made:**

**Reasons for your decision:** (e.g. as stated in report)

**Alternatives considered and rejected:** (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed .....Date.....

*Cabinet Member for Families, Education and Wellbeing / Cabinet Member for Environment,  
Housing and Regeneration / Cabinet Member for Property and Infrastructure*

# PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF CYCLING FACILITIES AT MINET COUNTRY PARK AND LAKE FARM COUNTRY PARK

<b>Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Councillor Susan O'Brien Councillor Eddie Lavery Councillor Jonathan Bianco
<b>Cabinet Portfolio(s)</b>	Families, Education and Wellbeing Environment, Housing and Regeneration Property & Infrastructure
<b>Officer Contact(s)</b>	Priscilla Simpson, Residents Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix 1 - Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment Report: Lake Farm & Minet Country Park (London Sport/Sporting Assets, April 2020) Appendix 2 - Hillingdon Council School Travel Road Safety Team Cycling programmes update

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	<p>Hillingdon Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its residents. The Hillingdon Local Plan (A Vision for 2026): Part 1 – Strategic Policies is consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy and outlines a number of priorities: Improving Health and Wellbeing; Strong and Active Communities; and Protecting and Enhancing the Environment. Alongside this sits the Hillingdon Open Space Strategy (2011 – 26) which highlights that Lake Farm Country Park and Minet Country Park are considered two of the four key natural and semi-natural spaces in Hillingdon. The recommendations will increase the quantity and quality of accessible open space for residents to enjoy recreation and leisure. Lake Farm and Minet Country parks with their cycling facilities offer such an opportunity.</p> <p>Cycling, as a form of recreational activity, active travel and sport, offers a significant opportunity to enable residents of all ages to live an active lifestyle and take control of their own health and wellbeing.</p> <p>This report asks Cabinet Members to consider the summary and options suggested in the Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment Report at Lake Farm and Minet Country Parks and agree to implement the preferred options as supported by British Cycling.</p> <p>The preferred options from the Report are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Option 2 - Enhanced community use, testing the potential for a multi-discipline cycle and community hub at Minet Country Park.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 3 – Constructing a multi-discipline cycle and community hub at Minet Country Park.</li> <li>• Option 7 - Retaining the BMX track at Lake Farm for informal use, whilst co-locating Hayes Hawks to an enhanced multi-discipline Hillingdon Cycle Circuit.</li> </ul> <p>The options would be subject to a review by officers, with support from British Cycling, of the financial opportunities available now or in the future, proposed planning or any possible restrictions on the sites, and current licensing and lease arrangements with Minet Cycle Circuit and Hayes Hawks who utilise the facilities.</p>
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People; Our Natural Environment; Strong financial management.</i>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	To deliver options 2, 3 & 7, additional funding will be required. British Cycling is supporting the Council to access external funding opportunities from s106 and Sport England grant to enable the project to be delivered within existing resources.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Residents, Education and Environmental Services
<b>Relevant Ward(s)</b>	Townfield and Botwell

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**That the Cabinet Members for Families, Education and Wellbeing, Environment, Housing and Regeneration and Property and Infrastructure**

- 1. Agree the summary outline of the Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment at Lake Farm and Minet Country Parks and suggested options;**
- 2. Approve the proposal to agree to implement the preferred options (Options 2, 3 and 7) as supported by British Cycling; and**
- 3. Approve the proposal for the development of a Hillingdon Cycling Strategy Management Plan which would incorporate and contribute to more informed decisions on where to target investment.**

### Reasons for recommendations

To consider progressing a report to implement Options 2, 3 and 7 of the Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment completed in April 2020, in a staged approach. Supported by British Cycling, these options focus on a greater proportion of the local community making better use of the underutilised cycling facilities and park at Minet and Lake Farm Country Parks.

The Cycle Circuit at Minet Country Park and the BMX track at Lake Farm are popular destinations for all forms of cycling activity for riders from across the country making cycling communities the

most active users of these parks. Whilst free and open to public use, the cycling facilities at Minet are primarily used by cycling groups and clubs for training and competitions which means casual use by local residents is limited. A significant proportion, 79%, of these cyclists come from outside of the Borough to use the cycling facilities at Minet.

Implementation of the proposed options will help to increase the proportion of local residents using these local cycling facilities which could improve levels of cycling activity in the Borough and deliver a wide range of benefits in terms of physical and mental health. These opportunities for cycling will further support and enhance the Council's School Travel Road Safety Team Cycling programmes for residents of all ages.

Enhanced facility provision as suggested in these options, could help shape a wider cycling strategy management plan for the Borough that could exceed the levels of cycling participation currently seen in other areas of London.

Delegated authority to Cabinet Members is recommended to give effect to the proposed Options and the development of a Hillingdon Cycling Strategy Management Plan.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

The existing facilities could be left in place. This is not recommended as a significant proportion of cyclists using the racing track facilities come from outside the Borough. Local residents are not utilising either of the cycling facilities to their maximum potential nor making use of the park. A new cycling participation management plan is required to improve resident engagement and access to the local cycling and park facilities.

### **Democratic compliance**

This matter cuts across a number of Cabinet Member portfolios, significantly sport & leisure, the use of the Borough's parks and also relevant licenses in respect of property and land.

### **Policy Overview Committee comments**

None at this stage.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

1. Increasing adult physical activity through improving health and reducing obesity levels within the Borough's population is highlighted in Hillingdon's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2019). The Hillingdon Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 - 2021 also identifies the need to focus on the reduction of childhood obesity and an increase in adult physical activity in the resident population. The Council's Sport and Physical Activity Team will be setting out a new plan of action in 2021 to improve physical activity across all ages as well as reduce inactivity rates amongst Hillingdon residents.
2. This proposal to Cabinet Members seeks to improve resident utilisation of the cycling facilities and park at Minet Country Park and Lake Farm Country Park as well as to consider how the success of these facilities can sustain cycling as a sport and develop talented riders.

3. The Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment Report was completed in April 2020. It assessed the closed road circuit at Minet Country Park and BMX track at Lake Farm and considered the impact of the facilities on cycling participation, provision and opportunities.
4. A detailed review was undertaken of local and national policies and strategies, as well as consultations and interviews with strategic stakeholders and local community groups. These views were collected and included in the research findings.

300 online surveys were completed and 23 people representing 15 different organisations were interviewed.

5. Key points made in the report are as follows:

- The Cycle Circuit and BMX track deliver a great deal of value for cycling groups;
- There has been a huge volunteer effort over the past 15 years from respective cycling communities who organise activities at both the facilities;
- Both Minet and Lake Farm Country Parks are underutilised in an area that is already deficient of green space and undergoing intense development;
- Cycling communities are the most active groups at these parks;
- Consideration is proposed to explore how specialist/niche cycling communities can evolve, and their facilities better used and enhanced to benefit the needs of the wider local community;
- The Cycle Circuit is primarily a destination facility with over 79% of users travelling into Hayes from outside of Hillingdon;
- The Hillingdon Cycle Circuit Users Group indicated the key developments for the site included 'track lighting', 'increased car parking space', 'track refurbishments/improvements.' Survey respondents also indicated the construction of an outdoor velodrome as a development opportunity;
- Hayes Hawks BMX track users indicated the key development for the facilities included 'track refurbishment/lighting', 'bathroom and changing rooms' and 'track lighting';
- Both cycling communities would like to see the facilities increase engagement and recruit more users from local communities.

6. Key points made by British Cycling, who part funded the study, are as follows:

- British Cycling is a key user of both facilities for competition (working with affiliated cycling clubs), coaching and education;
- Hillingdon has a wide-reaching reputation as having cycling facilities that have helped develop riders that have competed at national, international and world and Olympic level;
- Hillingdon has an opportunity to build on this reputation through an enhancement of its existing cycling facility provision;
- British Cycling would like to work with Hillingdon to become a pre-eminent cycling destination in the UK;
- Working with British Cycling, Hillingdon Council can identify how to improve and maximise the potential of the cycling facilities in the Borough. This would result in the provision of a facility that would produce more cycling talent, encourage more people to cycle as a sporting activity, enable more people to enjoy the benefits of cycling recreationally, and be of wider appeal and interest to residents;

- British Cycling views outdoor velodromes as very costly and comment they could not support the construction of such a facility in Hillingdon when the reality of such facilities in other parts of the country shows a decline in participation levels over the past few years. Consideration of resident appeal for such a facility should be more of a priority especially as outdoor velodromes require specialist track bikes which can make them seem elitist and expensive for many lower socio-economic groups;
- Options 2, 3, and 7 as cited in the Hayes Facility Needs Assessment Report are suggested for Hillingdon to consider further, with the support of British Cycling.

Hillingdon Council also has a commitment to improve the quality of, and accessibility to, the heritage value of the Borough's parks and open spaces, including rivers and canals as areas for sport, recreation, visual interest, biodiversity, education, health and wellbeing.

Across the Borough there are formal gardens, town parks, informal nature conservation, country parks and children's play areas.

Hillingdon Council continues to win Green Flag Awards for its parks and open spaces, bringing its current collection to 60 - the highest in the UK. Hillingdon also has a National Nature Reserve at Ruislip Woods, and over 40 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), all of which are open to the public. Focussing on improving the access and enjoyment of green spaces in Minet and Lake Farm where these cycling facilities are located, could significantly help to increase resident interest and engagement in the parks and their wider offer.

7. The report recommended 7 options, highlighting advantages and disadvantages of each, on how the cycling facilities at Minet and Lake Farm and surrounding areas could be developed. The options are as follows:

**Option 1 – Remain a road cycling facility at similar level, alongside improvements to the park**

Whilst the suggested improvements would make the facility safe for park visitors and cycle circuit users, this option would stop short of addressing the aspirations of existing users for an enhanced road cycling offer, such as a velodrome. There is also unlikely to be much in the way of change from local resident use with the offer primarily for existing road cyclists run by road cyclists.

**Option 2 – Enhance community use – testing the potential for a multi-discipline cycle and community hub**

A range of different activities would be offered such as: Learn to Ride activity; Mums and kids' sessions; BME specific cycling groups; cycle maintenance courses; coffee and cake rides; core body physical training; and investment in off road trails around the park.

A period of testing would be the proposed course of action. Officers would work with British Cycling to develop options for successful community engagement to enable a proper testing programme.

**Option 3 – Construct a multi-discipline cycle and community hub at Minet Country Park**

A variety of ride options would have more appeal to residents such as recreational trails, access to bikes and support, safe and fun areas to get started and practise.

A more relevant and open facility could build a greater attachment from local residents and provide more opportunities for young people in particular. This would also help open up a new

pathway into road cycling to the benefit of the existing clubs and competitions that use the Cycle Circuit at Minet.

#### **Option 4a – Construct a national standard road cycling facility**

Advantages would include improved safety if the track was not publicly accessible and there would be greater income generation opportunities by restricting access. This would help to manage users and have commitments to certain types of usage including the development of an outdoor velodrome (supported by the current cycle circuit users at Minet Cycle Circuit).

The challenge lies in access to the track being restricted to local residents, and if the dominant cycle offer is road cycling it would likely lead to more car journeys as more people (non-residents) would travel further to the facility, particularly for competitions.

There is also a general view in cycling that use of outdoor velodromes is decreasing and they do not offer value for money compared to other cycling facilities and the number of uses and new users they attract. There are significant barriers to maximizing usage, particularly that they become dangerous in wet weather and need specialist bikes.

#### **Option 4b – Construct a national standard cycling facility in the north of the Borough**

The suggestion of creating a national standard road cycling facility in the north of the Borough (for example, locating it at Hillingdon House Farm) is based on the fact that there are already considerable traffic and parking problems at Minet for current users, and that of the 21% Hillingdon residents using Minet Cycle Circuit, 14% come from the north of the Borough.

The challenge would be the significant cost to build or relocate such a facility in another part of the Borough.

#### **Option 5 – Remain a BMX facility at Lake Farm at a similar level**

Hayes Hawks would continue to run their activities from the site and ensure there is plenty of casual use for residents.

The challenge, however, is that there is not much of an offer for wider activation and use of Lake Farm and therefore presents a long-term risk for Hayes Hawks for income opportunities, a lack of diversity with their offer and continued reliance on the Chairman. This also does not meet with Hayes Hawks ambition for an enhanced BMX facility.

#### **Option 6 – Create an enhanced cycling and sporting hub at Lake Farm**

By co-locating more sports and activities at this site, this has the potential of creating a revenue generating community sports business and would include an updated BMX track, a pump track and tarmac areas, plus a permanent building or extended indoor space. This would help create a base for a wider recreational cycling, more BMX track training and competitions, as well as create links to the cycle network, linking the canal and cycle paths.

This, however, would fall short of a national BMX facility (which is what Hayes Hawks would like to see), as well present a risk that the extra indoor community space is not properly utilised by Hayes Hawks, other groups and residents. A further challenge would be that as Botwell Leisure Centre is in very close proximity to Lake Farm, footfall and usage of another sports indoor facility could be limited and difficult to maintain.

#### **Option 7 - Retain the BMX track at Lake Farm for informal use, whilst co-locating Hayes Hawks to an enhanced multi-discipline Hillingdon Cycle circuit**

There would be unlimited casual use of track time at Lake Farm for residents whilst Hayes Hawks would contribute to and benefit from the advantages as highlighted in option 2 for Minet Cycle Circuit including creating a community sports business with multiple income streams through hire of equipment, instruction, and ancillary facilities.

Co-location at Minet could enable a national standard BMX track which would be easier to offer a closed access facility as well as a value for money investment as part of a wider cycle hub. A further benefit would be better use of the park space and clubhouse which could help with secondary spend (e.g. café, coaching) and maintain the club culture by keeping the track close to ancillary facilities.

8. This proposal to Cabinet Members seeks to progress the following three staged options as being the most relevant at this time:
- **Option 2** - Enhanced community use, testing the potential for a multi-discipline cycle and community. If successful, a proposal would be made for a move towards this;
  - **Option 3** – Constructing a multi-discipline cycle and community hub at Minet County Park, and;
  - **Option 7** - Retaining the BMX track at Lake Farm for informal use, whilst co-locating Hayes Hawks to an enhanced multi-discipline Hillingdon cycle circuit at Minet.
9. Hillingdon has an opportunity to build on its excellent national reputation through an enhancement of its existing cycling facility provision and continue to seek further investment in cycling as a sport and recreational activity.

### **Financial Implications**

The report lays out options for enhancing cycling facilities at Lake Farm & Minet Country Parks through the implementation of options 2, 3 & 7 which are supported by British Cycling. A further review will be required by officers and British Cycling which will include identifying financial opportunities to facilitate delivery with minimal financial impact to the Council.

### **Site 1: Minet Cycle Circuit and Clubhouse:**

A five-year licence between the Council and trustees of Hillingdon Cycle Circuit Management Group 'Club' was agreed with effect on 1st April 2013. The licence provides for the club to use the cycle track for 190 designated sessions per year, the Club can request additional designated sessions with the Council's consent on a pro rata basis at an additional charge (agreed by service department).

This licence agreement has since expired and the Club are holding over the terms of the licence. Green Spaces have instructed Estates to agree new terms with the Club on similar arrangements in accordance with the Council's standard commercial terms.

In addition to the above, the Club has a Voluntary Sector Leasing Policy (VSLP) lease with the Council for Minet Park Cycle Circuit Clubhouse. The lease was agreed on a 25-year term from 29 June 2010 (expiring 28 June 2035). Estates have triggered the rent review notice for 29 June 2020 rent review and are currently in discussion with the Club to agree a new rent.

Additional license income and rent is unlikely to be material and will be used to offset maintenance costs including the upkeep of the circuit and track including repair to the circuit tarmac, weed control, general vegetation cutting and boundary fencing repairs.

### **Hayes Hawks BMX track, Lake Farm:**

The licence agreement between the Council and Hayes Hawks allows the use of a dedicated area at Lake Farm Country Park. The income supports maintenance costs such as resurfacing the limestone track and grass cutting.

### **Delivering Options 2, 3, & 7**

To deliver the options supported in the report further funding will be required. British Cycling will support the Council to pursue external funding options to enable the investment to be cost neutral to the Council through:

- S106 agreements relating to Minet Country Park and Lake Farm
- Accessing Sport England 'Return to Play' funding

Sport England has opened a new £16.5m 'Return to Play' fund comprising three parts, these being:

- Community Asset Funds Grants of between £10,001 and £50,000, from a total pot of £5m;
- Small Grants between £300 and £10,000, from a total pot of £10m;
- Active Together is a crowdfunding initiative that can match fund, up to £10,000, successful Crowdfunder campaigns from a total pot of £1.5m.

These funding options have been extended with all three now focusing on a safe return to play and narrowing the inequalities gap in sport and physical activity.

## **RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION**

### **The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities**

To improve the quality of life for our residents and those living near and using the Borough's parks and open spaces. That these local cycling facilities will be used more by residents to increase levels of cycling activity and deliver a wide range of benefits in terms of physical and mental health.

### **Consultation carried out or required**

Consultation has taken place with cycling groups and individuals as part of the Cycling Facility Needs Assessment where recommended options were presented.

## CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

### Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above, noting that there are no financial implications arising from the report recommendations, with all costs and income being contained within existing resources.

### Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### Infrastructure / Asset Management

This report sets out options for enhancing the existing cycling facilities at Lake Farm & Minet Country Parks through the implementation of options 2, 3 & 7. These sites are currently subject to the following lease and licence agreements.

#### Minet Cycle Circuit and Clubhouse

The Trustees of Hillingdon Cycle Circuit Management Group (the Club) has a Voluntary Sector Leasing Policy (VSLP) lease with the Council for Minet Park Cycle Circuit Clubhouse for a 25-year term from 29 June 2010 (expiring 28 June 2035). The 29 June 2020 rent review is currently being negotiated with the club and will be reported to cabinet for approval in a future Voluntary Sector Leasing Policy update report.

The Club also holds a licence from 1st April 2013 to use the cycle track for 190 designated sessions per year and can request additional designated sessions with the Council's consent on a pro rata basis at an additional charge (agreed by service department). This licence agreement has expired and the Club are holding over on the terms of the current licence whilst terms for a new licence are progressed with the club.

#### Hayes Hawks BMX track, Lake Farm

The Council granted a further licence to Hayes Hawks BMX Club to use a dedicated area of Lake Farm Country Park for 156 sessions per year. This licence runs from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 year to year until terminated by either party on giving 3 months notice.

The implementation of options 2 & 3 may require relatively minor amendments to the existing agreements and if the Hayes Hawks club was to be relocated to Minet, a new agreement would be required to replace their current licence at Lake Farm.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

# Appendix 1

## Hayes Cycling Facility Needs Assessment Report: Lake Farm & Minet Country Park (London Sport/Sporting Assets, April 2020)

### 1.1 The closed road cycle circuit facility at Minet Country Park – summary

#### 1.2.1 Current use

Hillingdon Cycle Circuit is a well-run and well-regarded facility.

Closed road cycle circuits particularly appeal to both beginners and elite cyclists – either a safe place to learn to ride or a safe place to compete given they are free from traffic. Although casual users of the circuit would only be captured if they were involved in a club that received the survey it is unsurprising that approximately two thirds of respondents highlighted competition as the most important benefit of the cycle circuit, with the learn to ride offer much less developed.

Slipstreamers is a fantastic long-standing youth cycle club, which can provide a pathway for young people once they are cycling but as we have seen from the consultation there are challenges with getting young people from the local community on to their radar. Similarly, there are other pockets of activity in the Borough to get new people into cycling that don't appear to be co-ordinated with the cycle circuit, which give the impression the majority of the users of the circuit are already cycling enthusiasts.

The survey reinforced the views of many from the consultation that the Hillingdon Cycle Circuit is primarily a destination facility with over 79% of users travelling to use the facility from outside of Hillingdon. A closer interrogation of the 21% of users who live in Hillingdon, show that the two thirds were from the north of the Borough, or to put it another way only 7% of the users (based on the survey responses 17) live in the south of the Borough of Hillingdon which is important given the demographic discrepancies between the north and south of the Hillingdon Borough. The outcome is the typical users of the current facility don't reflect the local community evidenced by 92% of respondents to the survey classifying themselves as white or Caucasian whereas 73% of local catchment is classified as BAME.

Like many other closed road cycle circuits, usage at premium times (e.g. weekends and summer evenings) is primarily taken by clubs and groups for racing and training for existing committed cyclists. There is an impressive number of private bookings for the circuit (307) in 2019 covering a range of age and gender specific groups, alongside more moderate use of the classroom evidenced by 55 bookings. This represents a small decrease (7%) on bookings in 2018, but the number of private bookings compares well to other closed road cycle circuits. Unfortunately, we don't have data on the number of individual participants at the sessions, or an estimation on casual users but through the consultation we were given the impression that there are other circuits that attract more visits (e.g. York with circa 12,000 P/A). The conclusion we would draw is that overall, the facility is not at capacity, particularly the ancillary facilities and the cycle circuit during off peak hours.

Alongside a small amount of maintenance support from Hillingdon Council these private bookings cover the modest costs to contribute to running the facility, and there is little incentive from the volunteers to generate extra revenue from non-traditional club use. In addition, we've not seen any evidence of a sinking fund for long term replacement.

### 1.2.2 Workforce & operational model

That 44.5% of users of the cycle circuit that responded to the survey have volunteered there in the past 12 months, shows the staggering volunteer effort involved to organize the various activities and clubs and run the facility. Without these volunteers the cycle circuit wouldn't be able to offer the activities at comparable levels. Whilst there are clearly significant benefits to volunteer resource, there are also significant challenges, in particular when managing a large facility.

If it is important to the Council that a greater proportion of the local community make better use of the facility, then we should be realistic to recognize that the ambitions for a volunteer run facility are likely to be limited by the availability of volunteer resource and interest and experience of those in the volunteer group. It is no surprise that most volunteer run closed road cycle circuits focus on their core market as there is little incentive to market the facility further, with the extra resource needed and potential of creating users/groups that would compete for peak time track and clubhouse use.

Depending on the importance of local community use, this might mean considering alternative models and ideas.

### 1.2.3 Development/enhancement of facility and activities offered

Firstly, it is difficult to consider any enhancements to the current offer until there is confidence that satisfactory traffic and parking arrangements are in place. Although we understand parking solutions were being looked at during the feasibility study, it became evident that the current arrangements don't meet the needs of the existing operation. Although there is the potential of increasing the proportionate number of visits to the facility by bike, it's highly likely all the options will still see the number of visits by car increase, therefore adequate plans for visitors arriving by car need to be in place before they can be properly considered.

There are a range of views from different stakeholders on how the facility and surrounding area could be developed which can be broadly categorized as:

- increase the appeal to the current core offer of road cycling;
- enhance the learn to ride offer and potentially introduce other cycling disciplines; and/or
- open up the ancillary facilities to be more relevant to the local community

## 1.3 The BMX facility at Lake Farm Country Park – summary

### 1.3.1 Current use

The current track is not at capacity although club sessions run primarily by Hayes Hawks mean there are busy periods, predominantly on Saturday's during summer hours.

The primary users of the track, Hayes Hawks, are a long-standing BMX Club with a comparatively high membership compared to other London BMX clubs with approximately 120 active riders, of which roughly half competed in competitions for the club in 2019.

In addition, there is the casual track use, and although there was no data on number of users it is clearly a valued asset for the local community as this open access was mentioned in the consultation positively by a number of people, including the Council who said they'd retain it even if it was found to be beneficial for Hayes Hawks operation to relocate.

The primary users are young people, so the winter evenings aren't the ideal time to use the track and although it involved a temporary labour-intensive floodlight solution, when they were trialled, floodlights were deemed to have had mixed results. The facility would definitely benefit from signage to increase awareness of the track, and the improvements to the canal network linking Hayes with Lake Farm Park provide another opportunity to increase use.

The BMX facility at Lake Farm is proportionality used much more by the local community than Hillingdon Cycle Circuit, with 42% of those surveyed living in the Borough of Hillingdon. In reality, the overall percentage of users from Hillingdon is likely to be much greater as informal users who ride the track wouldn't have been captured in the survey.

### 1.3.2 Workforce/operational

Like with the cycle circuit, there is a huge volunteer effort to run BMX at Lake Farm with 61.9% of the respondents to the survey stating they had volunteered at the facility in the past 12 months. Despite the number of volunteers, the club has benefitted greatly from the passion and hard work of the current Chairman, so it is important to ensure that the future continuation of competitive BMX in the area isn't overly dependent on one person. As well as a challenge for the club to resolve, an enhanced cycling/sporting offer and better facilities at Lake Farm; or co-location of Hayes Hawks at a multi-discipline Hillingdon Cycle Circuit could both help mitigate that risk.

The track benefits from a relatively small amount of paid support to maintain and prepare the track surface, with materials provided from the Council's parks budget.

### 1.3.3 Development/enhancement of facility and activities offered

Outside of the Hayes Hawks, there was not a great deal of interest or support for a more enhanced BMX offer, which is partly because of the likelihood that access would need to be restricted to the track for that to happen. There was however interest in other enhancements that could help Hayes Hawks in other ways, for example respondents to the survey were keen on further recreational enhancements to the park with 69% interested in a supplementary sporting offer. Hayes Hawks as the most active organisation using the park, could also benefit from improvements to ancillary facilities offered at the park, notably toilets, which limit the potential of both the cycling and other sporting offers.

Through a combination of nearby development in and around Hayes, the improvements to the canal network linking Lake Farm with the town centre and other parks, there is the opportunity for the park to play a much more important role in the lives of Hillingdon residents.

## Appendix 2

### Hillingdon Council School Travel Road Safety Team Cycling programmes update

1. **Cycling training for schools:** free school-based bikeability, delivered at three levels over a total of 4 days. Undertaken on school playgrounds and nearby roads. Schools book on with the STARS team (with parental approval). There are on average 20 children per session with up to 40 on the course/week.

Generally, visits are made to the same schools but now accessing newer schools. There are 84 primary schools in the Borough and on average over the past 3 years we deliver Bikeability Level 1&2 to 42 schools. Bikeability Level 3 is primarily delivered to those in year 7 and above, with 34 schools/colleges in the Borough.

2. **Cycle skills training for adults, 16+.** Free to residents. Includes the following:
  - NEW\* Family Ride - for residents who have young children and who want their kids to learn to ride and/or cycle on the road. Family rides include both parents and children learning to ride together, so the parent can also understand the rules on the road for cyclists.
  - Beginner sessions for adults only: focus on balancing, pedalling and preparation for cycling on the road.
  - Refresher training: assistance around confidence for cyclists who have not ridden in a while.
  - NEW\* Commuter training (TfL funded): meet the person at a tube station to take them to a place of work (primarily to Uxbridge) via a planned bike route specified by the cycling team. This new offer has not started yet due to COVID. Currently 4 routes have been planned and advertised to assist cyclists with their journeys. An Instructor from the team will meet organised groups and ride the route (straight return) stopping, discussing and advising at key junctions.
3. **Dr Bike** - free facility offered at various places across the Borough. Involves bike safety checks and basic maintenance. Locations for this service are at the leisure centres, The Closes park, two hospitals (Harefield and Hillingdon), South Ruislip library and adjacent car park.

Good uptake; on average 15- 20 people attend these sessions with their bikes, with positive opportunities to talk to people about cycling in general at these sessions.

4. **Liaise with businesses:** Cycling instructors promote their cycling services in local businesses for example, Charter Place, Metro-line for buses. To also include company/employee pop-up Dr Bike and promotion events for company organisations at Stockley Park.
5. **Bikespiration** (summer campaign, normally held in June/July time): cancelled this year due to COVID but the campaign has been running for 6 years. Usually held on the Civic Centre forecourt; Hayes Family Fun Day; Pinn Meadows and Dowding park. The event is a promotion of cycle groups, has games and activities that enable residents to try out cycling on cargo bikes, tandems, e-bikes; deliver talks to people about their training needs
6. **Smaller campaigns:** piggyback onto community fetes, school fayres, local activities such as PlayDay, Hayes canal event. More of a promotional event.

7. **Secure bike-marking:** incorporated into some Dr Bike sessions. The Met Police were previously involved but not any longer so the Hillingdon cycle team now provide the service to security mark cycles which is generally undertaken at promotional events.
8. **Mum's on Bikes** in Hayes: set up by two cycling instructors with the aim of the group to become self-sufficient: The mums are continuing with the programme. The group received a grant to purchase bikes, with the Cycle Team loan as a start-up, bikes provided from our Adult Cycle Skills Training program.
9. **Cycle training:** once training has been completed participants are offered bike maintenance, route planning advice and support. This is done on an invitation basis.
10. **Travel plans:** to include cycle parking work with, for example: Intu, Brunel, Stockley Park. This involves monitoring them and making sure we're in it.
11. **PENDING: Balance-2-Cycle (B2C)** for Primary School's KS1&2 and **'Road Stars'** for school aged children in YR 7-9: on hold.