



# WEST HAMPSTEAD NDF

## Neighbourhood Development Forum

*Minutes of meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at West Hampstead Library*

**Present:** James Earl (Chair), Keith Moffitt, Nick Jackson, David Brescia, Hazel Finn, Bridget Dunne, Stuart Drummond, Ian Ferrie, John Eastwood, Thomas Bjorn, Manjit Bjorn, Nick Grierson, Wayne Stully, Stefanie Hoffart, Joseph Black, Helen Walker, Guy Shackle, Jill Hood, Janet Crawford, Sue Measures, Cllr Richard Olszewski, Cllr Lora Russell, Sue Measures & Virginia Berridge.

### 1. Welcome & apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr Phil Rosenberg, Cllr James Yarde, Cllr Angela Pober, Cllr Flick Rea, Ian Cohen, Linda Sluys, Mark Hutton, Enyd Norman, Adam Webster, Brigid Shaughnessy, Nancy Mayo, Mary Murphy & Helena Paul.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting – 12 May

- **Ballymore Construction Working Party:** James attended a meeting on 30 July. The development is behind schedule and is now due for completion in March (it was due to be finished by the end of the year). There have been problems connecting the water supply, causing Thames Water to close West End Lane. More power connection works are due to take place. The cranes are due to go around the end of October. The next meeting in on 30 September.
- **Gondar Gardens:** the inspector's report on the 3<sup>rd</sup> scheme was due last week. To some surprise, Cllr Jones stated that the appeal had been called in by the Secretary of State. The reasons are not completely clear, but the Neighbourhood Plan was cited. There is no news on the 4<sup>th</sup> scheme.
- **WH Overground station:** this was approved by the planning committee in June. TfL previously stated that the work would take place during 2016; the station is due to remain open during the work.
- **Hampstead School:** the planning application for new buildings was approved.
- **Billy Fury Way:** the WH councillors have been following this up. There is a problem with Network Rail regarding funding for the improvements; they appear to have changed their position. Cllr Jones has written to NR seeking to resolve the issue.
- **Workshop:** the slides shown at the workshop on 30 May had been circulated.

### 3. Referendum result & adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan was approved in the referendum on 9 July.

The result was: YES: 2,344 (93%); NO 174 (7%); turnout was 14%.

James thanked everyone who voted and everyone who helped with the campaign, in particular members of the Referendum Working Group.

Camden Council now has to formally adopt the Plan. It was approved at a meeting of the Cabinet on 9 September and will go to the full Council on 16 September. After that the Council will publish an 'adoption statement' and the Plan will formally come into force as part of Camden Council's statutory planning documents.

The final version of the Plan had been circulated; paper copies are still available. There are also summary versions,

with a document containing just the policies in the Plan (these have been circulated and are also on the NDF website).

#### 4. Speaker: Cllr Phil Jones, Camden Council cabinet member for planning

Cllr Jones had been invited to the meeting following the approval of the Neighbourhood Plan in the referendum. He was asked to explain how the Council will now use the Plan and to discuss other planning matters.

He gave a short presentation and made these points:

- He congratulated the NDF on getting the NP approved in the referendum – the first in Camden.
- Camden currently has 10 NDFs – a third of those in London.
- The main planning objectives for the borough are to protect the character of the area, while accommodating the needs for housing and planning for the future.
- London is growing fast – currently at a record level of 8.5m; due to reach 10m.
- There is a housing crisis in the borough – as well as an affordability crisis – and crisis over air quality.
- Camden needs to comply with the policies in the NPPF & London Plan.
- Neighbourhood planning is a way to localise the planning the system; it's still new and needs to be tried and tested to see how it works in practice.
- The Council can't ignore our NP – officers will have to use it and make decisions based on it.
- It's not clear how the NP will be monitored; we need to see how it works in practice.
- S106 money in the area has been a big issue. £470,000 has just been allocated to community facilities in the area – Sidings Community Centre gets £300k; Kingsgate CC £75k; WHCC £45k; Emmanuel Church £50k. There is some leftover and there will be future discussions about its use. James said the NDF would like some of that money to go to the Friends of WH Library to enable them to explore options for the future of the Library. *(For more on S106 – see under agenda item 7).*
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tax on developers and largely replaces S106; the Camden CIL was introduced in April; payments are based on a formula and vary in different parts of the borough; S106 remains for specific site issues & affordable housing agreements. Camden is allocating 25% of CIL payments to each ward; it's proposed the spending decisions will be made by ward councillors. James said that in the case of FG&WH, our NP had been approved in a referendum and contained a CIL spending list – he argued that NDFs should also have a role in this process (not just councillors). Other NDFs across Camden have taken a similar view. Cllr Jones will take a decision this shortly – he said other groups and individuals should also be involved; the importance of NDFs will be emphasised; ward councillors will lead as they are democratically accountable.
- Local Plan (the borough-wide planning document) has had one round of consultation. Existing policies on design, tall buildings, and 50% affordable housing will remain. Main areas of change are: a tougher policy on basements; retention of pubs; more car-free developments (to tackle air quality problems). There will be a second round of consultation and then a public examination.
- Other issues: the difficulty of delivering affordable housing; the government cap on LA borrowing; a lack of transparency on viability assessments; 'buy to leave' investors. The lack of LA control; over centralisation by Westminster – eg Camden Article 4 powers limiting conversion of office to housing come into force next month, but could be overturned by the Secretary of State. 'Land banking' – assessment of public sector ownership of land; currently being reviewed (eg TfL owns an area of land in London equal to the size of Camden borough).

Following his presentation, there was a Q&A session. The following points were raised:

- Social rent: the London Plan says 'up to 80% of market level' – it can be less; Camden challenged the Mayor on this with other boroughs at judicial review, but lost. What happens in practice depends on each development – some are around 60%; Camden housing is around 25%.
- There's a need to protect WH, it's being overwhelmed by development and needs infrastructure.
- Plans for 156 WEL are in breach of Camden planning policies/NP/CA: Camden is facing big cuts in local

government spending – especially schools & housing; it's trying to strike a balance; plans will be assessed at planning application stage.

- 50% affordable: developers try to get round with viability studies; it's very hard to achieve in London; the NPPF can be used to over-rule Camden policy & planning decisions (Camden doesn't have all the power on this); the figure could be challenged and over-ruled during the examination of the Local Plan.
- The target for a minimum of 800 homes in the WHGA by 2030; already around 600; why the rush?; no sense of the impact on the community and amenities; Camden is getting rid of jobs in the area; there's considerable pressure on the interchange.
- Why isn't Camden building new council homes in the WHGA? It's very expensive and Camden can't afford; where they are provided it's done by selling private homes; Camden wants to see more housing the borough.
- Why can't council officers be trained so they can negotiate more effectively with developers? If they can't do it – shouldn't the council employment a private company to do it for them?
- Lack of a Council master-plan for the WHGA; it's been done elsewhere in the borough; we've been let down by the lack of plan to link all the various developments; will the Council really listen to local people in future developments? The NP is part of this – the Council will listen.
- Has the owner of the O2 Centre car park spoken to the Council about development plans? Not aware of any discussions.
- S106/CIL – there is a need for all voices to be heard; should the final decision rest with ward councillors?
- People haven't been consulted about the WHGA; most local residents are unaware of the NP.

## **5. Future role of the NDF**

James said that following the referendum and the approval of the Plan, there will be a discussion about the future role of the NDF. The committee are drafting questions for an online survey, which will be published in October. We're open to ideas and suggestions – and will discuss further at meetings later in the year. A final decision will be made at the AGM in January, where any constitutional changes will be voted on.

John said it was important the NDF works with and incorporates local groups in future. Sue said it was important to consider FG & WH together (as the NP does) – not as two separate areas.

## **6. 156 West End Lane**

The developer had consultation events on 11 & 13 June; the details were circulated to NDF members, who were urged to attend and submit their views. The NDF submitted detailed comments on the proposals; overall we were opposed to what was presented – particularly on height, bulk/massing & design (the full comments can be seen on the NDF website). We also requested a meeting with the architects to discuss the proposals, in particular the design. There were subsequently two meetings.

The first meeting, on 23 July, involved the architects, A2Dominion, their PR firm + James and Keith from the NDF. The main issues we raised related to: the overall design of the development; the design of the WEL frontage; height; improvements to the Potteries Path; the business/retail/community space. Various design work was presented about the frontage on WEL – we felt the proposals weren't very good, particularly the SW corner treatment; there was scope to improve the design relationship with the neighbouring Canterbury Mansions. We also asked for a reduction of the height of the building to a maximum of 7 storeys – at one point the proposals appeared to have grown to 9 storeys – we also suggested the top floor should be set back (as at 1 Mill Lane) and so less visible; we acknowledged that reducing the height would lead to a reduction in the number of units (including the number of affordable units). We welcomed the use of red brick and spent time being shown various other design images and considerations. We discussed the service road and its entrance on WEL; the architects said this would have low-level of use (it's a car-free development). We also raised the issue of the impact on Lymington Road residents and over-shadowing; we were told these issues had been

explained at meetings with residents on 21 July; we were also told that most of the windows on the north elevation would be kitchen or bathroom windows, to prevent overlooking; we weren't shown any detailed designs for the north elevation. On the Potteries Path, there was a discussion about how to remove the 'dog-leg', which is perceived as being dangerous and makes the path unwelcoming.

The second meeting, on 20 August, involved the architects, the landscape architect, A2D and their PR firm + James, Keith & Linda from the NDF. The architects had met the Camden planners, who had raised issues including the scale/height, WEL design, corner treatment & impact on CA views. The design was now 189 units (it was 200) – this has been done by reducing the size of some units; 50% of the residential floor space is affordable. There was more detailed discussion about design and use of materials – there was a new design for the WEL frontage, which we thought was better; there was a curve on the corner, which we thought was an improvement, but the overall transition from the west to the south elevation was still problematic. The landscape architect gave a presentation of their work – including the Potteries Path and the central garden space, which will be open to the public; these would be presented at the September consultation events; there are discussions with Network Rail about the work on the Potteries Path. We also discussed whether the developers would contribute to improvements to the sports area and Crown Close Open Space (both owned by Camden Council); this could be covered by CIL money; they offered design time to look at options. We asked about whether there would be space for a new Library on the ground floor – the total retail space is 800m<sup>2</sup>; the Library is around 400m<sup>2</sup>; it would fit, but there would be a loss of revenue for A2D; the retail space is designed to be flexible, so we asked for them to keep this option open and consider including A+D classes (retail + community) in the planning application. On height, the design was for a maximum of 8 storeys – we asked for this to be reduced to 7. We asked the developer to show detailed designs for the elevations on all 4 sides – as well as setting out how the design would not harm the neighbouring conservation area.

There was a second consultation event on 10 & 12 September; the details had been circulated to NDF members, who were urged to attend. The proposals shown were largely what we were shown at the meeting on 20 August. The NDF will submit further comments once discussions have taken place; NDF members are strongly encouraged to also submit comments.

There is due to be a Development Management Forum (organised by Camden Council and the developer) on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October. There will be a third and final consultation event on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The planning application is due to be submitted in November.

The NDF will discuss the plans at meetings during the rest of the year. We may also use some of the Lottery money we have for workshops to discuss other design options and get professional advice. We could also carry out a survey and/or put on a display of the plans, to invite further comments.

There followed a discussion, during which the following points were made:

- What are the density figures? (are they compliant with the London Plan?); it looks like "a mansion block on steroids"; it should be a maximum of 5 storeys (what the NP said, before it was over-ruled by the examiner).
- The NP says new buildings should be the same/similar height to neighbouring buildings.
- Residents should submit their views during the consultations – otherwise they will be ignored.
- Are the opinions of Lymington Road residents being considered in the NDF's approach?
- The 'Stop the Blocks' group would like to see the existing office building converted to housing.
- They also don't want the NDF to 'rubber stamp' the proposals.
- It was argued that existing planning policies have been ignored in other developments, such as Liddell Road.
- Why can't we see alternative design options? Can we involve different architects?
- There was a call for a meeting involving the NDF, Stop the Blocks, the Conservation Area Advisory

Committee, Lymington Road RA & Crediton Hill RA to discuss the proposals and to see if it was possible to agree a joint approach.

## 7. Other planning & campaigning issues

**Library:** the NDF is supporting the campaign to save WH Library; NDF members are encouraged to fill in the consultation document. At the Friends of WH Library meeting on 10 September, the option of a new Library in the proposed 156 WEL development was discussed. This is only an option and there are mixed views. It was noted that the Library is the last Council owned public space in WH.

**WH Underground station:** the NDF will continue to campaign for an upgrade of the station. The issue was raised at the Camden transport meeting on 30 July. According to TfL the best chance of this happening is to cite the pressures of the Growth Area; funding from developers will be needed. The WHAT petition for a lift at the station is to be presented to the Mayor of London by our GLA representative, Andrew Dismore; it will also be presented to Tulip Siddiq MP at Parliament.

**West End Lane – traffic/pedestrian problems around the station:** this is another ongoing issue; it was raised frequently during the referendum campaign. At the meeting on 30 July, Camden Council officers were urged to bring forward plans for improvements – and to consult the community. James followed this up with an email to officers; no reply as yet. The new Overground station may mean the crossing outside that station has to be moved.

**Finchley Road Campaign Group:** the NDF is working with our neighbouring forum on the other side of FRd. The main aim is to bring improvements to the Road and the street environment; this is linked to TfL's plans for a Cycle-Superhighway long the road. A meeting is being planned for December; more details to follow.

**Liddell Road – Contractor Community Liaison Group:** the first meeting took place on 20 August, involving local councillors and RAs. Work is due to start on the site shortly. The contractor will clear the site and build the school extension (which is due to open in September 2016). The rest of the site (housing & business space) will be sold to a private developer. There will therefore be two phases to the development. Those present at the meeting raised concerns about the impact on Maygrove Road – especially traffic – as well as on Maygrove Peace Park and the Sidings estate. There's also a need to co-ordinate with other developments being built on Maygrove Road, Iverson Road & WEL. Communication with local residents will be very important. The next meeting is on 29 September.

**S106 money:** the NDF has been trying to follow up on the large sums of S106 money due to be spent in the area from local developments. See below – our questions and the figures owing are in blue; the council's responses are in black:

### 1. Mercedes Benz/Student development, Blackburn Road (2009/5823/P)

>Social & Community facilities: £108,000 - in 2013 £50K was given to the Sherriff Centre; what's happened to the rest?  
*An award has recently been authorised by the Director of Culture & Environment, following consultation with both Fortune Green and West Hampstead ward members and agreement from Cllr Gimson as the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder: see bottom of email.*

>Public Open space contribution: £205,000 - what has this been spent on? is any left?

*The use of this contribution is being considered within the Green Space Investment Plan, which is currently being developed and will be signed off later this year. This should provide clarity on the approach to spend on this and all other s106 open space contributions.*

### 2. 187-199 West End Lane (2011/6129/P)

>under construction/due to complete early next year

>£900,000 public transport contribution - can you confirm this was paid to TfL to upgrade WH Overground station?

*TfL have recently contacted us to request the transfer of this money. We are currently awaiting further clarification from the TfL regarding when the works will be delivered, and expect to transfer the funds shortly, once we have received this information.*

>£356,000 for community facilities - what will this be spent on?

An award has recently been authorised by the Director of Culture & Environment, following consultation with both Fortune Green and West Hampstead ward members and agreement from Cllr Gimson as the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder: see bottom of email.

### 3. 163 Iverson Road (2012/0099/P)

>former garden centre site (under construction)

>£75,000 for community facilities

Funds not yet received. I have asked colleagues to look into this.

>£50,000 for public realm improvements around the WH interchange

Funds not yet received. I have asked colleagues to look into this. The funds are intended to be used for pedestrian/cycling improvements in the area. Specifically, the funds are likely to be put towards a cycling 'quietway' (and access to it) which will go through West Hampstead, including pedestrian improvements along the route of the quietway. At the moment the plans are at an early feasibility stage. I understand that there is also funding from the Cycle Grid to help support the cycling aspects of the scheme.

### 4. 159 Iverson Road (2013/7505/P)

>former Iverson Tyres site (under construction)

>£42,000 for community facilities - what is this being spent on?

Funds not yet received. I have asked colleagues to look into this.

### 5. 65-67 Maygrove Road (2012/5934/P)

>under construction/due to be finished early next year

>£170,000 for community facilities - specified for Sidings Community Centre

An award has recently been authorised by the Director of Culture & Environment, following consultation with both Fortune Green and West Hampstead ward members and agreement from Cllr Gimson as the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder: see bottom of email

>£101,000 for public open spaces - specified for Maygrove Peace Park

The use of this contribution is being considered within the Green Space Investment Plan, which is currently being developed and will be signed off later this year. This should provide clarity on the approach to spend on this (and all other s106 open space contributions).

### 6. 1 Mill Lane (2008/3963/P)

>£64,000 for community facilities. £36,000 was paid to West Hampstead Community Centre - the rest was promised to Sidings Community Centre, has this been paid yet?

£27,000 was paid to Sidings Community Centre in July 2013

In relation to community facilities contributions under points 1, 2 and 5 above - I understand that consultation has been carried out with the community and ward members, and out of this process has resulted awards for four community facilities – Sidings CC, West Hampstead CC, Kingsgate CC and Emmanuel Church (each of which, I understand, are mentioned in the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan). The relevant payments will be confirmed with ward members and the relevant community partners in the next ten days or so, and I have asked colleagues to contact you with the agreed details once they are confirmed – so you should hopefully know in the next two weeks.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** this was discussed with Cllr Jones, as above. This remains an important issue for the NDF and we will argue to be fully involved in the allocation of money – as per the spending list in the NP (see *Delivery Plan, Table 3*).

### 8. AOB

None

### 9. Date of the next meeting:

The next NDF meeting will be on *Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October* at 7.30pm – venue tbc. There will be a speaker from Create Streets to discuss their work and how we can work with them.

Meetings for the rest of the year are due to take place on *Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November & Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November*.