



# WEST HAMPSTEAD NDF

## Neighbourhood Development Forum

*Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at West Hampstead Library*

**Present:** James Earl (Chair), Nick Jackson, Ruth Baille, Adam Webster, Jill Hood, Mark Hutton, Enyd Norman, Cllr James Yarde, Harry Stobart, Nancy Mayo, Mary Murphy, Susan Kwok, Cllr Lorna Russell, Carlton Johnson, Mike Borgeaud, Nick Grierson, Sue Measures, Linda Sluys, Keith Moffitt, Michael Poulard, Cllr Angela Pober, Jeremy Fernandez & Helena Paul.

### 1. Welcome & apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Mark Stonebanks, Cllr Phil Rosenberg, Cllr Flick Rea, Joan Moffatt, John Eastwood & Virginia Berridge.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> January

- Ballymore Construction Working Party meeting – the tallest of the tower blocks is due to reach its final height around now; the cranes are due to come down in April; the development still needs to be connected to the water main, this will involve closing West End Lane – timings tbc; the development is on schedule to be completed in the autumn.
- Gondar Gardens: the outcome of the 3<sup>rd</sup> appeal is due soon. There was a Development Management Forum meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January to discuss a 4<sup>th</sup> scheme & there was an exhibition at Emmanuel Church on 6<sup>th</sup> March. Details can be seen on the developer's website [www.gondargardens.com](http://www.gondargardens.com) where comments can also be submitted. The deadline for comments is 20<sup>th</sup> March. The developer plans to submit a planning application in mid-April.
- At the same time, a new developer has come forward with an alternative plan for Gondar Gardens. This involves constructing a high-end sheltered housing development on a similar scale to the 4<sup>th</sup> scheme. Fortune Green councilors & GARA are being given details about the plans. It's not clear what the status of this proposal is (the current developer, Linden Wates, could sell the site) or if it will go ahead.
- Iverson Tyres site: there've been complaints that much of the pavement has been taken up by hoardings, making it difficult to pass – particularly those with mobility problems, push-chairs & luggage. Cllr James Yarde has raised this with council officers who were due to have carried out a site visit; he will chase for a response.
- 156 West End Lane: Cllr James Yarde said the Council had now selected a new preferred bidder: A2 Dominion. The target remains to provide 50% affordable housing on the site. Discussions are at an early stage.
- Thanks to those who put green tokens in the NDF box at the Little Waitrose during January; we're due to be sent a cheque.
- Nick Grierson was present.

### 3. Overground Stations & buses

- West Hampstead Overground station – following the discussion with TfL at our last meeting, and the various complaints/objections raised about the scheme, it seems new designs are being prepared. TfL are talking to the Camden planners and there is likely to be a new planning application, possibly as soon as next month.
- Finchley Road & Frognal Overground station – plans are also due to be brought forward for a redevelopment of this station, which is also in the NDF area. It was pointed out that it's an important link for people on Finchley Road. The provision of lifts will be important.

- Bus routes – TfL are also consulting on changes to the bus routes through the area, including Finchley Road, West End Lane & Shoot Up Hill. Details will be circulated with the minutes. If the 139 is extended to Golder's Green, it will hopefully mean the end of empty buses travelling along Mill Lane – which the NDF has campaigned for and which is recommended in the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **4. Liddell Road**

The two planning applications were discussed by Camden Council's Development Control Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> March; both were approved. The NDF spoke against the non-school part of the application, reiterating our concerns about the lack of affordable housing and the height of the tower block – which we believe breach existing planning policies.

It's understood the scheme will now go to the Mayor of London for approval; it's not clear what the process for this is and/or whether people can make further comments at this stage.

Thanks were made to Cllr Lorna Russell for supporting the views of the local community at the meeting.

The height of the tower block remains very contentious – including the impact on Maygrove Peace Park.

For people living on Maygrove Road there will be years of disruption – a meeting with residents is needed before construction starts. The NDF had requested a Construction Working Group be established – this is due to be included in the S106 legal agreement – councillors said they would ask Council officers to see what was happening.

The businesses are due to leave the site by the end of March – so construction could start as early as April, possibly over Easter.

There is a belief that alternative options for the scheme were not explored and that the financial side of the development remains very opaque. It was asked if the finances of the scheme should still be a secret; the data may be market sensitive.

It was claimed that the Viability Assessment (VA) was not commercially sensitive and that Camden Council had no reason to redact all the figures – Camden own the land and the assessment was carried out for their own purposes; a private developer would be required to publish such a document. Others said it was important Camden didn't publish the figures to help it get maximum value from selling the non-school part of the site. But it was pointed out that anyone could get a surveyor to value the site and publish the figures.

Cllr Angela Pober said she had asked to see an unredacted version of the VA, but was refused – it seems neither local councillors nor members of the DC committee saw the figures. Questions were raised about this and whether there was proper scrutiny of the VA.

Many people feel betrayed and alienated by Camden Council's approach to this scheme – particularly as it involved public land and public money; residents want a say and to be listened to.

There was further discussion about the provision of affordable housing. The S106 agreement says if more money is made from the scheme than budgeted, this will go towards affordable housing. At the moment, this will go into borough-wide schemes. James said he had asked the planning officer to amend the S106 to specify that this should be affordable housing within our area – he asked councillors to follow this up.

Separately, a decision is due to be made on the Admissions Point for the new split-site school. The NDF has submitted comments requesting that this is either an equidistant point between the two sites or that the school has two admissions points, at each site. This approach has been supported by local councillors, including those in Kilburn. It's not clear when a decision will be made, possibly in mid-April.

#### **5. Final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan**

Revisions are being made to the Plan following the examiners report. Bar a few outstanding issues, the NDF and the Camden Council planners have agreed on all the changes to be made. The graphic designer is working on the new version of the Plan and the maps are being amended too. It had been hoped to have this work complete by now, but officers have been working on the draft Local Plan so work on the Neighbourhood Plan

got delayed. The changes are now due to be signed off by the Cabinet member on 27<sup>th</sup> March. The changes will then be published in a document called the Decision Statement. After there 27<sup>th</sup> March, there is a five day call-in period on the decision; there's also the possibility of a legal challenge from any parties unhappy with the decision, although hopefully this won't happen.

All being well, it should be possible to publish the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan in early April. This will be the document people vote on in the referendum. James said he would circulate the Plan when it's ready. The NDF will also have a duty to publish it and we will provide printed copies.

## **6. Referendum**

It has been agreed that this will take place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July.

James had a meeting with the Council election officers on Monday, which was also attended by Cllr Phil Rosenberg. The formal process is due to start on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June, with the publication of the notice of the referendum. Polling cards will then be sent out to all those on the electoral register in the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The election will be on the same format as a local election – British, Irish, Commonwealth & EU citizens will be able to vote. Discussions are taking place about polling stations; the Count will probably be either at the Library or Synagogue Hall. There is a limit on spending during the election period.

Publicity materials are currently being prepared and discussed by the NDF committee.

It was asked how people could get involved in the campaign. The NDF committee is due to start work on an action plan shortly, and will then have a better idea. The current plan is to start the campaign in early June – we will aim to deliver a leaflet to every household in the area & be at a range of events in the run up to polling day. The NDF will also be seeking donations to pay for the 'yes' campaign – including from local businesses and companies.

## **7. Lottery grant & workshops**

The grant is for publicising the Plan and for four workshops. It's hoped to have one workshop in May focused on engagement and promoting the Plan – details tbc. The three remaining workshops will be in the autumn – initial ideas include discussing proposals for how the 156 West End Lane & O2 car park sites could be developed. We're also hoping to give local people a better understanding of the planning process and how they can get involved and make effective contributions to consultations etc. Further suggests are welcome.

## **8. NDF accounts for 2014 & budget for 2015**

Paper copies were distributed to those present & Nick Jackson outlined the figures.

The NDF had an income of £15,100.16 in 2014 – including grants from Locality (awarded in 2013); the Lottery (paid on 24 December 2014 for spending in 2015); Camden Council (from S106 master planning money); and from donations.

Total spending during 2014 was £7,659.52 – including meeting venue hire; graphic design of the Plan; professional advice; workshops; printing and leaflets.

There was also a significant amount of 'payments in kind' – including donations for the website, surveys and printing – plus several thousand volunteer hours.

The main spending for 2015 will involve the Lottery grant of £6,030. This does not include the referendum campaign, which will be budgeted separately, and which the NDF will require donations.

The NDF is therefore currently funded for a period of work up until the end of 2015. At the end of the year we will need to review our finances and our future work.

## **9. General Election**

The NDF will have a pause in its public activities during April and early May to allow for campaigning to take

place in the General Election. The NDF is politically neutral, so will not be supporting any candidates during the campaign. We will, however, be asking all those standing in the Hampstead & Kilburn constituency to back the Neighbourhood Plan & to pledge to campaign in favour of a 'yes' vote. Members of the NDF are also encouraged to ask the candidates about their support for the Plan.

## 10. AOB

- Details of the **draft Local Plan** (which will become the main planning document for LB Camden) had been circulated. A consultation runs until 17<sup>th</sup> April. The NDF will submit comments. The Council is holding two sessions to discuss the draft on 18<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> March – contact James for details.
- Our neighbouring Forum on the other side of Finchley Road – **RedFrog NF** – is getting itself established and has a meeting on Sunday (15<sup>th</sup>) at 5pm at University College School. More details on their website: <http://www.redfroghampstead.org/neighbourhoodforum.html>
- A cross-borough Neighbourhood Forum is being established in **Kilburn** – details here: <https://kilburnforum.wordpress.com/>
- The NDF has explained some its work as a **case study** for other Forums: <http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/case-studies/view/505>
- James has given an interview to a local **film-maker** who's making a film about how our area is changing.
- The NDF has supported an application by the **Farmers' Market** for a temporary banner. The response can be seen on the planning website (ref: 2014/7925/A). The NDF is a strong support of the farmers' market and appreciates its need to advertise as a private business. As the banner is temporary, not permanent, the application seems reasonable. The NDF has requested that the metal railings are removed from the Thameslink station forecourt on non-market days. It was suggested there should be a review of how the Farmers' Market, and other markets on the site, carry out their local advertising – with a view to finding acceptable long-term solutions.
- The issue of **dog mess** was raised – particularly around trees – this a hazard for pedestrians and those with push chairs on narrow pavements. The Council is offering a pink spray to highlight the problem. More details, including how to report offenders, are here: <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/clean-streets/clean-streets-in-camden.en?page=4>
- Concerns were raised about a development at **158A Mill Lane** (next to the new Emmanuel School building), which already has planning permission. A Construction Management Plan has been prepared and there was a recent site visit with Council officers – contact James for details.
- A number of **basements** are under construction on Narcissus Road, which is worrying some residents. Unfortunately, the examiner struck out the basement policy in our Plan. However, Camden Council is due to tightening up its basement policy as part of its new Local Plan. Those with concerns about this issue are urged to respond to the current consultation (as above); there's also a Council meeting on the issue on 17<sup>th</sup> March – contact James for details.
- The issue of **traffic management on West End Lane**, particularly around the stations, was raised. It was felt there were too many traffic lights, none of which seem to work in sync. It doesn't appear there are any easy solutions and people have different views. It was suggested the situation could be improved by removing all or most of the traffic lights and having zebra crossings. It is likely the situation will get worse when the Ballymore development is finished and when other developments in the area take place.

## 11. Date of the next meeting:

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May - 7.30pm, West Hampstead Library.