

Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 29th November at 7.30pm at Emmanuel Church

Present: James Earl (Chair), Nick Jackson (Communications officer), Harry Stobart, Pauline Swindells, Joan Moffatt, Jonathan Turton, Janet Crawford, Brigid Shaughnessy, John Eastwood, Carole Burton-Fairbrother, Carlton Johnson, Virginia Berridge, Cllr Nancy Jirira & Father Jonathan Kester.

1. Welcome & apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Keith Moffitt (Vice-chair), Mark Stonebanks (Treasurer), David Richards, Abi Wood, Mike Bieber, Linda Sluys, Angela Ellison & Cllr Gillian Risso-Gill.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – 18th September:

There were no corrections; other items dealt with below.

3. Public meeting – 22nd October:

James thanked WHAT for jointly organising the meeting; he said it was a useful, well attended and largely positive event. The powerpoint presentations had been circulated.

4. Update on NDF application:

The four officers of the Forum had met Camden Council planners on 2nd October and discussed the boundary; consultation and engagement; and other Neighbourhood planning issues. It was a positive and productive meeting. A new application has been agreed by the committee and has been on hold pending final agreement on the southern boundary. If and when the application is accepted by CC, there will be a six week consultation.

5. Southern boundary & WHGARA:

The Forum had agreed earlier in the year to use the ward boundaries of Fortune Green & West Hampstead council wards as the boundary of the NDF (with the exception of Cricklewood Broadway & Kilburn High Road). However WHGARA, which represents residents of part of WH ward to the south of the railway lines, had raised a number of concerns. They carried out a ballot of their members during November, which showed that 75% wanted to part of the NDF. James thanked WHGARA for carrying out the ballot and said it was clear that the application should now proceed on the previously agreed boundaries; there were no objections.

6. Second draft of the NDP:

This had been circulated in advance of the meeting. James said the document took on board and incorporated comments on the first draft. The main change is the introduction of policies, including 12 proposed core policies at the beginning of the Plan.

John raised the issue of height and setting a maximum; he said he would prefer one figure for the whole area, rather than a separate figure for the WH Growth area. He said it was clear people didn't want more tall buildings, but said it could be dangerous to put a specific figure as developers could then building to that height everywhere. He said the overall figure should be modest in scale and suggested 4-5 storeys.

Nick said new buildings should not be above building lines – with the exception of existing buildings such as Ellerton on Mill Lane and the new student block on Blackburn Road. He said any limit would have to be legally accurate in its wording.

There was a discussion about the varying impact of sight lines, ground levels, relative elevations and roof lines. Jonathan said the need for larger units may require large developments

James said there would be no rush to a decision on this issue and further discussions would take place.

Brigid raised the issue of businesses and jobs; she said businesses were losing out in the new developments, which were predominantly housing. She suggested the Council should offer 'affordable business space', especially for small businesses and entrepreneurs; this could be included in the Plan. It was pointed out that

the 'village feel' of the area would disappear if there were no businesses and wouldn't exist if there was just housing in the area.

A question about small sites and infill developments was asked. There is currently nothing about this in the Plan; they should have to fit in with existing developments.

The issue of basements was raised; there are concerns about drainage and how Camden Council inspects such developments.

Virginia said there should be community access to open spaces, such as Gondar Gardens. James said he thought GARA would object to this, so it would be difficult to include; the new nature site at the 1 Mill Lane development is also restricted access.

The issue of pedestrians in the WH interchange area was raised. James said the proposal in policy 9 was up for debate; it's clear the current layout of the area is failing motorists, cyclists and pedestrians; he said having one crossing (rather than three within 50 metres) could be an improvement.

7. Bank account & Funding:

James said an NDF bank account was now open; he would circulate the details. It was previously agreed that there would be no fee for membership of the Forum, but donations would be welcome from individuals and groups. Jonathan suggested having a PayPal account and a link on the NDF website.

James said a number of funding sources were being looked at; the most promising is the Big Lottery Fund 'Awards For All'. The officers will discuss this further; other ideas/suggestions are welcome.

8. West Hampstead Interchange planning framework:

James said that during the discussions with Camden Council planning officers, they had mentioned that they wanted to draw up a new planning document for the WH interchange/growth area. There was surprise at why this was being proposed now and whether this was too late. A document was written in 2004, but was never adopted by Camden Council. James said he would seek further clarity about the plans and possibly invite a planner to the next NDF meeting to discuss further.

Virginia said WHAT had arranged a meeting to discuss s106 payments. This will take place on Thursday 21st February; Cllr Valerie Leech will speak; Council officers Ed Watson & David Morrissey will attend.

The Council is also consulting on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Camden. It's not clear how much the CIL will replace s106 and where CIL money will go in the borough. More details here:

<https://consultations.wearecamden.org/culture-environment/camden-cil-preliminary>

9. Plans for 2013:

James said next year would require more detailed work on further drafts of the plan. There will also need to be a continuing process of consultation and engagement to spread the word about the Forum and the Plan.

Nancy that there was a concern that Council planning officers were putting too much time into other projects elsewhere in the borough, such as the Fitzrovia Plan, which suggested that planning resources were being directed away from our area.

10. AOB:

There are plans for the development of the Midland Crescent site on Finchley Road; the proposal is for more student housing. The site of the Accurist building on Blackburn Road is likely to be redeveloped.

Camden Council is inviting applications for buildings to go on a new Local List. James said he would recommend WH tube station on behalf of the NDF; Gillian had recommended the ENO rehearsal rooms on Blackburn Road. The deadline for suggestions is 22nd January.

More details can be found at: www.camden.gov.uk/locallist

11. Next meeting:

The next Forum meeting will be on **Monday 28th January 2013** at 7.30pm, venue tbc.