

Downshire Hill Residents Association
Minutes of Meeting, Sunday October 7th, 2018, 7 pm
at 8 Downshire Hill

Present: Stephen Ainger (chairman), Margaret Rodgers, Andrew Neale, Mark Dennis, Christobel Dennis, Sally Minto,

1. **Minutes** of the meeting of 1st July were approved.

2. **Garden Party**

SDA thanked Margaret and Christobel for hosting and organising the event which again went very well. About 45 attended. A good evening for everybody and the committee all thanked Christobel and Margaret

3. **Redevelopment of The Old Police Station**

Stephen reminded the committee that at the 2017 AGM, the majority of Downshire Hill residents had said that a smaller school with 210 pupils would not be acceptable, not least as they believed the site was fundamentally unsuited to becoming a school and it would grow in time to a 420 place school with all the problems that entailed.

SDA spoke about School consultation meeting.

At the Police station consultation a few points came up as below as stated by the EFA.
Points in italics were subsequent DHRA comments:-

- 1) **They say that they will only need a bus once a year for school trips** etc and they will use the Heath Carpark for this so do not need a dedicated space. Only residents' places to change for dedicated use for school will be on main road for disabled parking and deliveries. *All doubted that a good school only needs one bus a year!*
- 2) **The "community" space is** now on two floors and they say totals 300sq m and they say will be let on long leases (unspecified length) for social enterprise etc. The plans that show an entire floor empty were old plans that have been revised. *However on the plans this space could only be accessed thru the school corridors and stairs so unlikely to be used in the way promised as this would not be safe.*
- 3) **The catchment area for new joiners (reception) is 75% in catchment area** round Belsize Park so this is more reflective of the need in catchment rather than later classes where student locations are more wide spread. *Because of recent Camden figures some Camden schools are suffering because of this.*
- 4) **Catchment area does not include local streets** they said as residents did not want it they said. *This is just not true, at not stage have we said we do want residents to be able to use school if built.*
- 5) **When I said there are empty spaces in schools in Hampstead** they said well people are choosing their school as outstanding. *"They must be bad schools" The other schools are good schools but there is a drop in children wanting places as Camden has shown.*

- 6) **They said they will put sale of police house in s106 agreement** on Completion to confirm that they will not expand to 420. Trust us they said. *Really difficult to believe when they now lambast their previous application for school as wholly unsuitable for pupils. What has changed?*
- 7) **All the stables block is now used** for school
- 8) **They state that school play will be staggered and total 1hr 45 mins** each day plus end of day activities
- 9) **They appreciate that overlooking and noise** will be an issue with Stephen's home and one's next door and are working on bushes and sound barriers but appreciate it is a real issue.

Points discussed at the DHRA meeting on the school apart from above points included:-

- National Audit Office, MP, Public Accounts cttee were aware and now looking at application seriously
- Research on school showed that cost was 8 times per place more expensive than next most expensive primary school in the UK.
- Camden recently published information on school places which showed that Belsize had 271 spare primary spaces over the years 2018-28 and Camden had 171 places surplus. This was a big change from recent past when places in Hampstead were scarce. Some schools such as Fleet would be in serious trouble.
- Lots of activity was going on the net which Sally was following. Andrew would give her info she could use.
- Intended to publish flyer and distribute

Work preparing for planning application continued.

Agreed that in all communication need to stress that we are looking at alternative sites even though till now EFA have not considered other sites

Fundraising was continuing with a target of £15 k and working with HCRD.

4.ERUV

SDA told the cttee that he had attended the Camden planning meeting that had approved the ERUV but had not felt able to say anything. The cttee noted their disappointment.

SDA

Chair

October 2018