

Downshire Hill Residents' Association

Sunday 12 November 2017, 7pm

8 Downshire Hill

Present: Stephen Ainger (chairman), Margaret Rodgers, Nicola Sinclair, Redding Thompson, Sally Minto, Sophie Marple, Mark Dennis (treasurer), Nigel Steward, Andrew Neale, Patricia Morison (secretary).

1) Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2) Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan

The plan is now out for consultation, as Nicola reported. There is a pronounced business emphasis. Issues raised which could have an impact on Downshire Hill include:

- concern for protecting trees;
- possible changes to parking permits if businesses given more spaces;
- excavating basements; how to restrict damage caused
- potential for improvements to South End Green

3) Update on No Left Turn for traffic at South End Green

Stephen reported that there had been no decision yet and it seemed it will be treated as part of the wider Gospel Oak gyratory plan. Sources at Camden Council suggest that consultation on any plan would take place after the draft plan has been set and changing any small part of it will be very difficult.

When the left turn issue arose before, DHRA commissioned a traffic survey. This time, it might be desirable to involve a traffic consultant again, but this would need to be done soon as once any plan was published there would not be any time for a survey. Such a survey would have to be done professionally if it was to be taken seriously.

Stephen had contacted Councillor Stephen Stark about the residents' strong wish that there should not be a No Left Turn. Councillor Stark would be invited to a DHRA committee meeting at some stage to reinforce this

The committee thanked Nicola for her good work.

4) Basement at 4 Keats Grove

A planning application had been made for a single storey basement. The committee has no issue with single storey basements so long as proper guidelines were followed to ensure that no damage was done to neighbours property.

5) Petrol station demolition/tower block extension to hotel on Haverstock Hill

It was now clear that the lease on the Petrol station had not been renewed and would expire in a couple of years when the hotel would be developed. A planning application was not expected for a year or so.

6) Police Station redevelopment/Abacus School

Andrew reported that the Minister had sent a letter confirming that they will proceed with seeking permission for a 210-pupil school. Yet the headmaster had previously insisted that the school must be for 420 pupils to be viable.

New architects had been appointed. Camden planning department had not yet been approached.

Whether Abacus had actually been trying to find a school within their catchment area was not known.

Andrew considers it could be difficult to defeat this new application because a school for 210 is in the plan. However he had been advised that Fleet Road Primary School will object once again.

Council elections in May 2018 might have an impact. Also, since the Abacus scheme first emerged, awareness of the dangerous pollution levels in London had grown.

Andrew pointed out that, unlike last time, Abacus must produce a scheme for the whole site, including the police house. The planners will be informed that DHRA considers this important.

Fundamental issues remain unchanged. 1. The new school will be outside the catchment area, so there is bound to be an issue about increased traffic, 2. Camden Council has said there should be no more schools in the borough.

Andrew will encourage Camden to look energetically for an alternative site.

Stephen had written to Tulip Sidiq MP to make her aware of the new situation. He had received no reply, nor even an acknowledgement.

7) Crime in South End Green/Hampstead

Margaret and Patricia drew attention to the recent spate of muggings and moped crime. Nigel had attended a public meeting held by the police. There were some 12 moped robberies a week, and Camden was a hot spot. The police claimed recent success in arresting the gang leaders.

Residents should be careful about using mobile phones on the street. The police recommend walking on the pavement facing the traffic.

Date of the next meeting: January 2018.