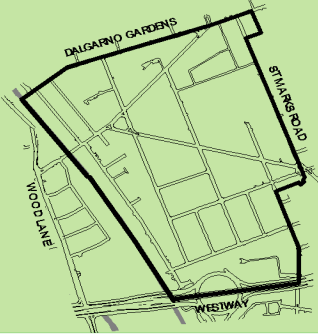


St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum

Newsletter April 2016



London property prices heading downwards?

An increasing number of press articles point to falling prices for London high end property. The CAPCO development at Earls Court is the example most often quoted, along with the glut of apartment towers at Battersea/Pimlico/Vauxhall.

The development at the former BBC Television Centre may fare better, given its niche design credentials (viewings launching 11am, 23rd April from the Pavilion at the Television Centre).

The Panama Papers have exposed examples of money laundering via London apartment purchases. According to Transparency International figures, almost one in 10 properties in RBKC is owned through a “secrecy jurisdiction” such as the British Virgin Islands, Jersey or the Isle of Man (see FT April 6th).

Taylor Wimpey townhouses at the Argyll Place development in Pangbourne Avenue are still not selling. Meanwhile the landowners of Nursery Lane (and Metropolis Property Ltd) continue to throw money at a judicial review application, seeking to quash the RBKC’s decision to support the StQW Plan and the Local Green Space designation for this piece of land (see below).

The High Court hearing for this case has been fixed for 28th/29th June, so not long to wait for the outcome. We hope this will be the final step in calling a halt to ideas of 20 townhouses on this piece of green space.



Electric car charging points

In response to our last newsletter, six households in the StQW area are keen on seeing charging points installed. Hammersmith and Fulham already has 9 points which have gone live across the borough, with 10 to follow, all operated by Source London.

Let us know if more of you would be interested (in principle) before we get back to the Council to encourage them to move faster on installations.

Old Oak and Park Royal Local Plan

The Mayoral Development Corporation responsible for the land at Old Oak (home to the proposed HS2 and Crossrail interchange) consulted the public between January and March on the first draft of a Local Plan for the area.

The Corporation’s agenda is all about ‘driving growth’ for London, and accommodating an estimated increase in population of the capital from 8.6m to 10m in 2030. Proposals for 24,500 new homes at Old Oak are built into the 2015 London Plan, and are treated as an inevitability in the OPDC Local Plan.

This will involve clusters of towers from 40-60 storeys. OPDC policies allow for densities of up to 600 housing units per hectare. This is a ‘super-density’ level that cannot be achieved by a layout of ‘mansion blocks’, even at 10-12 storeys (as opposed to the traditional 5-6).

The existing ‘cottage’ properties of the Old Oak Estate were designed and built at around 100 units per hectare, by London County Council architects in the early 20th century. London planners and developers are now going for high rise with a vengeance - back to the tower blocks of the 1960s.

People forget that the population of Inner London shrank by 20% in the 1970s. Demographic projections for cities have little certainty. An entire younger generation is priced out of living in London. So why assume a 10m population in the near future?

Cargiant have been progressing their proposals, and will be submitting a planning application this summer for 7,000 homes and mixed use development on their 43 acre site. Their proposed densities and heights are not quite as scary as those envisaged by the OPDC.

A forthcoming application from Aurora Developments, on two sites on the eastern side of Scrubs Lane, threatens a 25 storey tower overlooking St Mary’s Cemetery (and visible from Little Wormwood Scrubs).

Local residents groups in and around the Old Oak area have been getting together in recent months, to set up a neighbourhood forum and to propose the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for Old Oak.

With StQW support, this new ‘interim Old Oak forum’ has put together a response to the recent OPDC consultation. This will be considered alongside those from the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs and others. You can see more details in a recent post on www.stqw.org.