

## April newsletter from StQW Forum and St Helens RA

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### St Helens Residents Association

### St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum



No newsletter was circulated in March, so you have not missed one. We held a well attended open meeting at St Helens church hall on March 6<sup>th</sup> and the slides from this session are on the StQW website at this [link](#).

We discussed the proposals for this region's NHS Patient Care Networks to introduce **a new system for making appointments** at our local surgeries. StQW committee member Stephen Duckworth updated the audience with the news that the PCN had deferred these changes, previously scheduled to start this month. The reaction from residents in RBKC and LB Hammersmith & Fulham (LBHF) to these over-hasty NHS plans had been swift and effective.

StQW committee members Tania Martin and Kim Evans gave an update on the members working group preparing a new chapter on **Greening and Sustainability**, for the revised draft of the 2018 StQW Neighbourhood Plan.

We also reviewed the latest plans and images for the **Ballymore/Sainsbury's planning application** for their joint development at Kensal Canalside. An objection from the StQW Forum/SHRA was submitted back in January, focused on the excessive density for a site with poor public transport. There are now some 1,400 responses to the application on [the RBKC online planning system](#) (reference PP/23/06575).

The Council is obliged to take into account all comments up until the decision on the application. It now looks as if a decision will not be made until early 2025, after the RBKC new Local Plan is formally adopted this summer/autumn.

## OPDC consultation on biodiversity plans for Wormwood Scrubs

The Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust has submitted a planning application to the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation for a set of proposals for works on the southern part of the Scrubs. **These proposals do not involve any new buildings, but include some elements which require planning permission.**

The charitable trust (WSCT) is a LBHF committee in which ownership of the Scrubs is vested for "*the perpetual use thereof by the inhabitants of the metropolis for exercise and recreation*". The Friends of Wormwood Scrubs (FOWWS) has two trustees with observer status on this committee.

Although a series of consultations has taken place on plans to enhance the ecological and biodiversity value of the Scrubs, FOWWS trustees say that the detailed content of the planning application was not consulted on with the public. The proposals have been worked up by landscape consultants LUC in conjunction with LBHF and the Charitable Trust.

FOWWS trustees have circulated their membership (over 500) with a formal objection and a letter to LBHF councillor Alex Sanderson (who chairs the charitable trust). Those StQW/SHRA members who are also FOWWS members will have received a copy.

Apart from the lack of consultation, FOWWS trustees are objecting to the following aspects of the proposed scheme:

- The location of the planned 'wetland feature' (a pond shown in blue on the map below in the south-west part of the Scrubs) and the resulting need for a borehole.
- The provision of excessive hard standing adjacent to the pond.
- The provision of excessive paths, and the risks of cycles etc on all the proposed paths.
- The design and location of swales blocking the pedestrian route from LCS to the playing fields ('swales' are shallow ditches for drainage).



*(only the southern part of the Scrubs within the red line is the subject of the planning application)*

The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation has been the planning authority for the Scrubs since April 2015. OPDC has long accepted the principle that the Scrubs, as 'common land' accessible by the public 24/7, should retain its character as an open space that is '*more wild than tamed*'.

The whole of the Scrubs has been specifically excluded from new 'policy guidance' in a recent OPDC Draft Supplementary Planning Document on *Public Realm and Green Infrastructure*. As of now, there are no plans for creating a northern access point onto the Scrubs from the part constructed Old Oak Common station (although such a connection was envisaged back in 2015-19). OPDC are however known to support more paths and 'connectivity' across the Scrubs.

In deciding the planning application, a big issue will be the extent of 'parkification' that the Development Corporation would still like to see. Previous plans for bridges from the Cargiant land were abandoned in 2019 along with this landowner's masterplan for 6,500 new homes and at town centre at 'Old Oak Park'.

You can see the WCST application documents at <https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/opdc/application-details/10329>. Comments can be emailed to [planningapplications@opdc.gov.uk](mailto:planningapplications@opdc.gov.uk) with the heading 24/0036/FULOPDC.

Unless we hear of many views to the contrary, StQW/SHRA will send in a response to OPDC saying that we support the FOWWS concerns. We will add a request that OPDC sorts out the current failure to plan for any adequate road and pedestrian cycle access to the eastern end of Old Oak Common station. This particular saga is ongoing and shows no sign of being resolved.

## **The Kensington Society celebrates its 70th anniversary**

The Society was established back in 1953 and since then has campaigned to ensure that the heritage of the Borough is conserved and that new development is of the best possible quality. Geographic coverage is that part of RBKC north of the Fulham Road (there is also a Chelsea Society which undertakes similar role).

As a body with close to 700 members and 40 'affiliated' residents associations, the Kensington Society has helped to shape development in the borough from the days of the 1960s debates on London's 'motorway box' to more recent proposals for major new buildings. It works hard to engage early with major developers, and with officers and councillors at RBKC. The plans for Earls Court and Kensal Canalside are current major issues.

In a London development market where an army of professional consultants are applied to every aspect of a major application, these planning battles are increasingly David versus Goliath. But overall the Society has a track record of several successes, and is listened to and taken seriously by developers and by the Council.

As an 'affiliate' organisation, and with chair Henry Peterson also a trustee of the Society, StQW/SHRA has benefited over the past decade from the advice and expertise shared across the Society's planning committee.

The Society has fewer members in North Kensington than those living south of Notting Hill Gate. It needs more members from the northern part of the Borough. Membership costs £20 a year and gives access to a newsletter, e-bulletins, events, talks and tours of interesting buildings (old and new). If interested, see at [Home 2 - The Kensington Society](#) for how to join online.



The 2024 70th Annual Report of the Society is free for new members. This is special edition featuring an account from StQW committee member Kim Evans on fifty years of the music scene in Ladbroke Grove and under the Westway. Painter Susan Wilson illustrates the charms of Garcia's in Portobello Road, and Christopher LeBrun writes on the murals he has painted for the neighbourhood's new arts venue at [Ladbroke Hall \(Carpenters Workshop\)](#).

### **The new developments in Scrubs Lane**

The CGI image below is one of several which we discussed at our open meetings back in 2017.

Once Cargiant began consulting on their plans for developing 'Old Oak Park' speculative developers began buying up sites in Scrubs Lane. They hoped to piggy-back on the proposed new Overground station at Hythe Road and the 'major new town centre' envisaged at that time.

The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation was more than keen to grant planning consents, to show that things were happening in the Opportunity Area for which they had taken over planning powers in 2015. Several high rise residential towers were given planning permission and are currently under construction. We argued at the time that these decisions were 'premature' but to no avail. Scrubs Lane is now becoming a canyon of tall towers as shown below.



North Kensington Gate on left, Mitre Yard scheme on right, looking south on Scrubs Lane

The proposed building on the left of this image was given the misleading brand name of North Kensington Gate (North). Shown standing behind it is the 22 storey tower at North Kensington Gate (South) now nearing completion. The 2018 planning consent for the northern site was not implemented and has since lapsed.

Linkway Developers acquired the site from the previous owners Aurora and submitted a fresh application last year. These new plans do not change the proposed building significantly, but offer a lower level of affordable housing, well below the 35% level sought through policies in the London Plan and OPDC Local Plan.

Hammersmith & Fulham's Planning and Development Control Committee has last week objected to this latest application, as has Andy Slaughter MP for Hammersmith. This council is finally indicating that it not happy with the way in which OPDC has gone about plans for the north of the Borough – an area in which planning controls will revert to LBHF as and when the Mayoral Development Corporation is wound up.

The abandonment of plans by Cargiant in 2018 tore a large hole in the OPDC Draft Local Plan. As of now, there are still no workable proposals for eastern road access to the £1.7bn rail interchange being built at Old Oak Common, now destined to act as a terminus for a much shortened HS2 line to Birmingham.

The questions on whether private finance will fund an extended tunnel and terminus at Euston look to be being left to the next Government. StQW has submitted a further objection to this application from Linkway, supporting LBHF views. We wait to see what OPDC's Planning Committee will decide.

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