


Decision Maker	Cllr Kemahli , Lead Member for Planning & Public Realm	 THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
Date of Report	06 November 2023	
Forward Plan ref:	KD1007219	
Report title	Designation Of St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum and Change of Name to 'St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum'	
Reporting officer	Amanda Reid, Director for Planning and Place	
Key decision	Yes	
Access to information classification	Public	
Ward(s)	St Helens and Dalgarno	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum ("the Body") approached the Council with a request for designation as a neighbourhood forum for The St Quintin Neighbourhood and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area. This is necessary as the designation to act in relation to that neighbourhood area granted to the Body ceased to have effect in July 2023. The Body also seeks to change its name to The St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum.
- 1.2. The Council has published the designation request (including details of the name change request) on the Council's website and has publicly consulted on this for the statutory six weeks.
- 1.3. Having had regard to the relevant legislation and guidance, and the results of the consultation, officers recommend designating the Body to act in relation to the St Quintin Neighbourhood and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area under the new name The St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum.
- 1.4. The Body has requested that The St Quintin Neighbourhood and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area be amended to "The St Quintin Neighbourhood Area" to better reflect the geographic nature of the area and the Body name change. Officers consider this will aid clarity. This does not form part of the key decision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Lead Member for Planning, & Public Realm is recommended to **approve** the application made by the Body for designation as a neighbourhood forum for The St Quintin Neighbourhood and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area pursuant to section 61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to approve the name change to The St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1. Officers have assessed the application for the designation of the Body as a neighbourhood forum and have found it to be in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance. In making this recommendation, officers have had regard to the responses to the associated public consultation.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. The concept of Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. It provides a mechanism to enable communities to develop their own plans for their own neighbourhood areas. These neighbourhood plans (if adopted), would become part of the development plan against which planning applications are assessed.
- 4.2. There are two main elements, or structures, associated with neighbourhood planning. If a neighbourhood plan is to be drawn up it must be done by the relevant neighbourhood forum, for the named neighbourhood area.
- 4.3. Whilst a neighbourhood area designation is an indefinite designation, a neighbourhood forum must be designated every five years.
- 4.4. The purpose of this paper is to consider the application made by the Body for designation as a neighbourhood forum, following the expiration of its designation in July 2023.
- 4.5. The various Acts, regulations and guidance set out the role and responsibilities of local planning authorities in relation to neighbourhood planning, including the requirements to be met when deciding whether a neighbourhood forum should be designated.
- 4.6. The principal legislation and guidance to be considered are:
- [section 61\(F\)](#) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as applied by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
 - Part 3 of [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) (“the Regulations”)
 - The National Planning Policy Guidance, “[Neighbourhood Planning](#)”
- 4.7. The Body produced the neighbourhood plan for the area. This was adopted in 2018. The status of the neighbourhood plan is unaffected by the proposed designation of the Body. The neighbourhood plan will remain in place whether or not a neighbourhood forum is designated.

5. OPTIONS, ANALYSIS AND PROPOSALS

Link to neighbourhood area

- 5.1. The neighbourhood planning legislation only allows the designation of a neighbourhood forum if linked to a neighbourhood area.¹ The Body is linked to the St Quintin Neighbourhood and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area ('SQW Neighbourhood Area'). This area is shown in figure 5.1 below.

SQWN Area

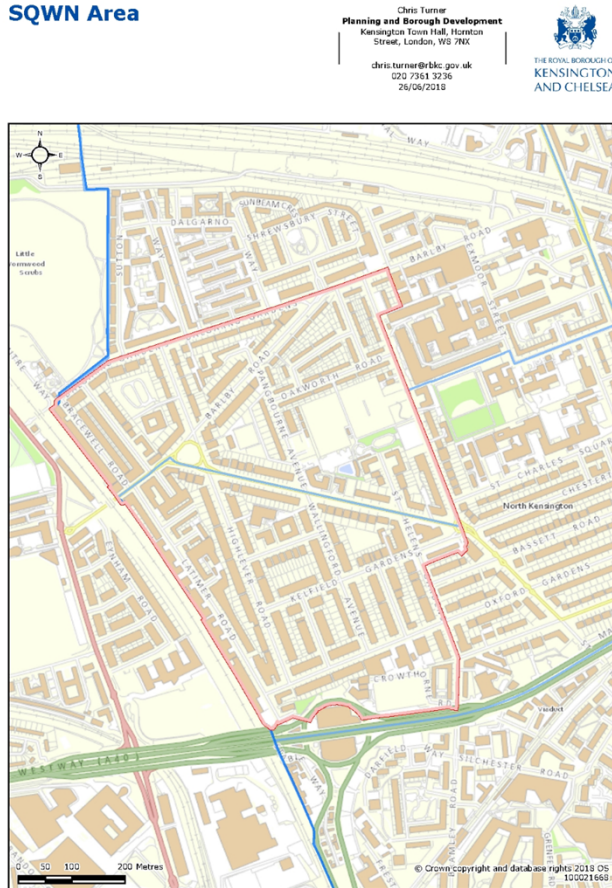


Figure 5.1: The St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area.

- 5.2. Officers note that this area is not being reviewed.
- 5.3. Once this first hurdle is passed the Council is required to consider s.61F(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (annex 1) which sets out the criteria with which a Council must use when deciding whether or not to designate the Body as a neighbourhood forum. These are:
- is the body established to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area;

¹ [section 61F\(5\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)

- is the membership of the body open to those that live, work or are elected in the area;
 - does the membership of the body include at least 21 people who live, work or are elected in the area; and
 - does the body have a written constitution?
- 5.4. The application letter from the Body, and the associated constitution, dated July 2023, forms the basis for determining whether to grant neighbourhood forum status to the group. This report will consider each requirement in turn.

Purpose of the forum

- 5.5. The submitted constitution explains that the purpose of the Body is to, *“improve the economic, social and environmental well being and quality of life of those living and working in the area.”* The submission notes that this is not merely a theoretical ambition but has been achieved through the development and implementation of the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan for the area.
- 5.6. The Body states that whilst the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2018 the Body remains an active body in the area. Ongoing activity includes:
- Ongoing engagement with the Council on the development of the New Local Plan Review;
 - Active involvement with the formulation of the 2021 London Plan and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation’s Local Plan;
 - Responding to consultations on relevant planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area;
 - Working with the Council on the Design Codes for units 1-14 Latimer Road;
 - Lobbying for a new London Overground Station at “Westway Circus;”
 - Lobbying for the building of the pedestrian/ cycle underpass between Wood Lane and Latimer Road; and
 - The group also holds regular public events and activities and has a long established website.
- 5.7. The Council is satisfied that the function of the Body has been, and will continue to be, to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. This is not just an ambition but has been demonstrated since the Body’s inception in 2013.
- 5.8. Officers note that a small minority of consultees take a different view and suggest that the members of the Body act in their own interest rather than for the wider community. These comments are set out in more detail in the next section.
- 5.9. Officers are of the view that this reflects the inherent difficulties associated with anybody attempting to work in the interest of a group of people, a group with myriad views and ambitions. Officers remain satisfied that the purpose of the Body is to, *“improve the economic, social and environmental well-being and quality of life of those living and working in the area.”*

Membership

- 5.10. From the application letter and submitted constitution, officers can determine that membership is open to elected representatives and to all people who live or work in the proposed area. The Body has confirmed that the current membership is 380 members. It has provided the addresses of 25 members who live or work within the Neighbourhood Area. This demonstrates that the membership is well spread across the proposed Neighbourhood Area and includes both residents and business owners in the area.
- 5.11. The Body has confirmed that three of the current ward Councillors are members of the body.

Written constitution

- 5.12. The Body has a written constitution. This confirms that it, “*will operate to principles of equal opportunities and shall not discriminate against any persons on grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, or age.*”
- 5.13. Officers are satisfied that the Body meets the necessary statutory requirements. It is a long established body with a history of active community involvements and a body which has brought forward a Neighbourhood Plan. Officers note that the stated intention is that the Body shall continue to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being and quality of life of those living and working in the neighbourhood area.
- 5.14. The constitution allows for the election of new members onto the Body’s committee. This provides the mechanism for a wide range of views to be represented in a democratic manner.
- 5.15. Officers recommend that the application to designate the Body is confirmed.

Name change

- 5.16. The Body proposes to change its name by omitting the “Woodland’s” element, so that in future it is known as “The St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum”
- 5.17. The original name reflected the original application for designation in 2013. This initial application was to encompass a wider area spanning two boroughs, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (‘LBHF’). “St Quintin” lies within the Council’s administrative area and “Woodlands” entirely within LBHF.
- 5.18. However, in 2013 LBHF declined to designate the “Woodland” element of the neighbourhood area, creating a mismatch between the name of the area and its geography.
- 5.19. Officers welcome the name change. It adds clarity as it is more geographically accurate.
- 5.20. It is important to note that the area or status of the neighbourhood area has not changed.

- 5.21. The name change does not form part of the Key Decision. It is raised within this report for completeness.

6. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 As required by the Regulations, the Council has consulted on the designation. This consultation ran for six weeks, running between 25 August and 6 October 2023.
- 6.2 The Council contacted all those on its planning policy consultation database as well as displaying a number of site notices to ensure that local people were fully informed.
- 6.3 75 representations were received from individuals or organisations who wished to make a comment. All the responses received have been attached as appendix A.
- 6.4 Of these 75 representations 72 supported the redesignation.
- 6.5 Reasons for support included the view that the Body does valuable work, it provides invaluable expertise, it addresses issues of interest to the community and helps protect the local area.
- 6.6 Three respondents do not support the designation. This includes a comprehensive objection from the newly formed St Helen's Residents Association. The reasons for the objection for the designation include:
- the Body does not represent the interest of residents of the area, being focused on the interests of a few rather than of the wider community;
 - the Body is opposed to any progress in the neighbourhood;
 - the Body has a lack of knowledge as to the demographics of the area;
 - the chair of the Body has not acted as requested by all members of the body;
 - the objectors do not agree with some of the planning actions/representations made by the Body; and
 - the street improvements to St Helens Gardens organised by the body are entirely inappropriate.
- 6.7 As noted in paragraph 5.9 of this report, officers recognise that it may not be possible to represent the views of all who live within the area. This is a consequence of people having different views. However, the results of consultation are telling in that the overwhelming number of people who took the time to respond did support the designation of the Body. Officers are satisfied that the over-arching ambition of the forum is, as required by the regulations, to promote the well-being of the area.
- 6.8 The Body asked the Council to consider renaming the Forum (and therefore also the Neighbourhood Area) to the St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum/Area. Respondees were asked to comment on this suggestion. Very few comments were received, with just three objections. No reasons were given for two of these objections, with the remaining, (a consultees who supported the proposed

designation) stating that the Body was “good” and that there was “no reason to change anything.”

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Under the Act, as amended, every local planning authority must consider valid applications to designate neighbourhood forums for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. The Act and the Regulations set out the Council’s responsibilities when considering the designation of bodies/organisations as neighbourhood forums.
- 7.2. The Council must publicise applications for neighbourhood forums and allow for a consultation period of at least six weeks. In relation to the application for the designation of the Body as a neighbourhood forum, the consultation ran from between 25 August and 6 October 2023.
- 7.3. If the Council refuses to designate a neighbourhood forum, it must give its reasons to the applicant. There is no right of appeal against these decisions.
- 7.4. As soon as possible after designating a neighbourhood forum, the Council must publish details of the designation on its website and in such other manner as it considers is likely to bring the designation to the attention of people who live or work in the neighbourhood area.

8. FINANCIAL, PROPERTY, IT AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities provides financial support to local planning authorities where neighbourhood planning is being progressed. The support available is £5,000 for each neighbourhood area or neighbourhood forum designated.
- 8.2. However this grant is only available for up to five designations (each). No grant will be available as the Council has already designated five bodies as neighbourhood forums for the neighbourhood area.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no human resources implications as the designation of or refusal to designate a forum/area is a procedural process. The designated neighbourhood forum may require support from officers were it to choose to amend its neighbourhood plan. A neighbourhood plan can only be made where there is both a neighbourhood forum and a neighbourhood area in place.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Officers are satisfied that the recommendations to designate the Body as a neighbourhood forum will not have any significant equality implications. An EqIA is included as Appendix B.

Amanda Reid
Director Planning and Place

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Background papers used in the preparation of this report

[Note: Please list only those that are not already in the public domain, i.e. you do not need to include Government publications, previous public reports etc.]

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