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St Helens Residents Association St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum

The Borough's new Local Plan - what we intend to say in response

This newsletter for March covers how the StQW Forum/St Helens Residents Association intend to respond to the current public consultation on the new Draft Local Plan for Kensington and Chelsea. The consultation ends on **March 23rd**.

A dry subject. But the Local Plan impacts on every planning application across the Borough. The joint StQW/St Helens management committee has reviewed this 'Regulation 18 Draft' and has put together a response. A copy of this draft can be downloaded from the StQW website at <https://stqw.org/wordpress/2022/03/15/the-new-local-plan-for-kensington-and-chelsea/>. If you have any problems email sthelensassn@aol.com to be sent a copy.

There will be a further stage of public consultation in autumn 2022 on a 'Regulation 19' version of the Local Plan but this stage is the main chance to influence the content of the new Local Plan. .

For this small part of North Kensington, we also have our own StQW Neighbourhood Plan with a set of planning policies specific to our part of the Borough. This neighbourhood plan was supported at its local referendum in 2016 by 92% of residents who voted (on a 23% turnout).

One of the most important statements in the Council's new Draft Local Plan is the commitment that all the policies and site allocations in the StQW Neighbourhood Plan will continue to be supported and implemented. The neighbourhood plan has as much legal force as the Local Plan when planning applications are decided. Because the Local Plan will be a newer set of policies, these could have overridden and replaced what we chose to put in the neighbourhood plan. But this will not be the case. The current StQW policies should therefore apply for the next 5 years at least, unless we choose to do revise the neighbourhood plan.

Our full response to the Local Plan runs to 40 pages, so takes time to read and digest. **The main points that we are making are summarised below:**

- The new Draft Local Plan includes the three pieces of land designated as 'Local Green Space', as introduced via our neighbourhood plan. These cover the backland sites at Nursery Lane (off Highlever Road), the site behind Kelfield Gardens with the Pre-school Playgroup, and the West London Bowling Club. These three green spaces will remain strongly protected from any form of new development.
- The future of Latimer Road remains an important part of the neighbourhood plan. The Council has come round to the idea that new development in Latimer Road should combine housing and commercial spaces ('mixed use' in planning jargon). RBKC policies will be amended to give more opportunity to introduce new housing in those office/commercial sections of the street other than Units 1-14, where mixed use redevelopment is already possible subject to planning permission.
- We are suggesting that the four separate sections of Latimer Road currently defined as an 'Employment Zone' should be 'de-designated'. The 1997 decision to include these sections of a single street as part of the larger Freston Road Employment Zone made limited sense at the time. This was when the western side of the street (with its offices and light industrial/warehouse units) was transferred across from Hammersmith & Fulham to RBKC). Employment Zone designation makes even less sense now, when much of the eastern side of Latimer Road has become part of the Oxford Gardens Conservation Area.
- The 2021 DEisgn Code drawn up by RBKC with StQW, building owners and residents in the street will remain as a Supplementary Planning Document to the new Local Plan.
- The Draft Local Plan includes a chapter of new policies on climate change. RBKC aims to become a 'zero carbon' Borough. These policies have implications for the refurbishment and 'retro-fitting' of the 19th and early 20th century housing in our streets. We are generally supporting these new policies, and others which cover subjects such as restricting impermeable surfaces in gardens, light pollution, and noise nuisance from e.g. air conditioning. If you feel that RBKC are becoming too prescriptive on these issues (or not prescriptive enough) now is your chance to comment,
- Taking a wider perspective, we are continuing to oppose the site allocation for as many as 3,500 new homes at Kensal Canalside (over-developing the available land). We are asking for a clear policy on housing density, and challenging the Council's proposed new policy on building heights.

This consultation by RBKC is open to all. Details and the response form are on the RBKC website (search via Planning/Local Plan/Consultations). Anyone can send in their own comments.

The StQW/SHRA management committee tries hard to reflect majority views from across the neighbourhood and to respect the policies and ideas included in the neighbourhood plan. **If you feel that changes should be made to our draft response, then please email sthelensasn@aol.com by March 22nd.**

Development at the 'North Acton Cluster'

The 55 storey residential tower of One West Point at North Acton is nearing completion. It dominates the skyline from Wormwood Scrubs (and is reputedly visible from Windsor Castle).

Previous newsletters have covered the threat of proposals from Imperial College to add to the 'cluster' at North Acton with a development of seven new buildings. These include a tower of 56 storeys and two more at up to 50 storeys. The planning application is currently being assessed by the OPDC. The Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum has submitted three sets of objections. Our campaign website from a decade ago at www.imperialfolly.org.uk has been updated to give background information.

Hammersmith & Fulham Council is now objecting to Imperial's proposals. H&F has questioned the claims from the applicants that views from Wormwood Scrubs and the Old Oak Estate will suffer no serious harm to their views, with three more buildings above 50 storeys added at North Acton.

Hammersmith MP Andy Slaughter has been attending meetings of the Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum, and objecting to these very tall buildings on several grounds (including the fact that the Fire Safety strategy is based on a single stairway and a 'stay put' policy for residents).

A number of StQW/SHRA members and those from the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs have already submitted objections to Imperial's proposals. To date there are 43 objections from the general public on the OPDC website (along with those from 'consultees' such as neighbourhood groups).

There is still time to send in a brief objection by email to planningapplications@opdc.london.gov.uk. All you need say is that you support the concerns of Hammersmith & Fulham Council that these proposals will cause significant harm to views from Wormwood Scrubs and the surrounding area. You need to include your name and address and the application reference number 21/0181/OUTOPDC.

There are signs that the OPDC is beginning to wobble over approving this application, which also needs GLA approval on behalf of the Mayor of London. Refusal or withdrawal of the proposals could add welcome impetus to a

growing public feeling that London has had enough of very tall buildings.

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