

REDINGTON FROGNAL
NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Forum Committee Meeting Agenda
Held at UCS, Phoenix Room, Tuesday 25 October at 7 pm

Apologies: Mojgan, Bill, Linda, Cllr. Baillie, Jessica, Rob, Harlan, Emily

Present: Cllr. Spinella, Rupert, Penny, Dudley, John M-B, Hazel, John F, Val, Nina, Raffaella, Nancy

1. Outstanding issues on draft Policies

CF

This Policy is in its final form, apart from the incorporation of some supporting population projections to 2041, awaited from ONS.

Projections to 2031 for the Frognal and Fitzjohn's ward indicate relatively low total population growth between 2016 and 2021 of just 3.9% and then stabilising from 2012-2031. However, there are marked differences by age band:

- among children, no change occurs in the primary and pre-school groups, but numbers of secondary school children increase by 17% between 2016 and 2021, before stabilising
- the 16-24 age group does not see an increase until 2026-31, when 5.6% growth is forecast
- the population of 25-44 is forecast to decline by -4.8% between 2021 and 2026
- the 45-64 group will see growth of 15% and 6% from 2016-2021 and 2021-2026, respectively, and then stabilise
- after shrinking by 13% between 2016-2021, the 67-74 age band will then plateau until 2026, followed by a 29% surge over the five years from 2026-2031
- the 75 and over group increases by 13% between 2016-2021.

The strong growth among older age groups lends support to the need for retaining existing community facilities and developing new facilities, to include an NHS GP practice. Currently, the Redfrog NP area does not

accommodate a single NHS GP practice and an appropriately large site could best be provided to meet this need along Finchley Road.

BGI

Raffaella is incorporating all the comments that have been received and, at Penny's suggestion, will try to arrange a meeting with Vicki to review the draft.

Veteran trees will also add to the Tree Policy with recommendations for protection, Photographs and grid references will also be included.

For the lighting aspect of the Policy, it will be helpful to include some photographs of local examples of good lighting and harmful lighting.

Dudley noted that the tone of the BGI Policy will need to be modified, to give a focus on how the policy will provide benefit for residents, eg through being able to enjoy garden wildlife.

Recommendations might include a Redfrog Etiquette Code, to cover garden lighting types and hours during which leaf blowers may be used.

HD

The HD and other Policies will inevitably be diluted through the Permitted Development rights enjoyed by houses in single occupation and Article 4 Directions should be sought. A recommendation for an Article 4 Direction has been included in the Plan.

Soggy gardens mapped in the Arup study are to be referenced in the Basement Policy.

Bill had requested the section on roof terraces to be strengthened and Nancy requested that the HD Policy and Design Codes be amended to include DEFRA guidance on incorporating space for bird nesting sites:

"When replacing fascias and soffits on older buildings, try to retain access to existing nest sites. This can be done by making a hole in the replacement material to allow house sparrows to have continued access;

*Internal nest boxes can be incorporated behind soffits and fascias when your house is being constructed. "*¹

It was suggested that this should be included in the policies on Biodiversity.

¹ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/sparrows.pdf>

The greatest harm is derived from large extensions and increases in building footprints, causing loss of green space. This is addressed by the Design Codes.

The Redfrog NP area already has a large number of “mega mansions” with fewer and fewer people occupying ever larger houses, causing certain streets, notably Templewood Avenue, to become depopulated. The Forum should consider identifying mega mansions for re-conversion to flats. Paragraph 7 of HD 1 should note that,

“This Plan encourages the retention of family flats and a range of different units sizes, suitable for families.”

The need for housing for older people should also be addressed.

It was noted that the General Development Order does not prohibit conversions from two flats to one house and that the Plan can do little to prevent such losses, as attempted by paragraph 7 of HD 1 Policy Intent.

3. AECOM Design Codes

The Design Codes should be amended to ensure that chimneys are incorporated into new development, in addition to bird nesting sites.

Some concern was expressed that the Design Codes might be seen to be promoting development.

The Design Codes should provide sufficient evidence for the Plan policy on building heights, including on Finchley Road.

The Design Codes should be indexed.

Aspirational Development Sites

Camden has confirmed that none of the potential development sites identified by Redfrog is capable of being “allocated” and that they can only be considered as “aspirational” sites.

John noted that Camden is in favour of retaining office accommodation and that Hampstead Gate is unlikely to be acceptable for residential accommodation. Instead, the Forum should aspire for it to be redeveloped as workshops. The need for co-working space was also noted, and Hampstead Gate could potentially accommodate a GP surgery and co-working space.

Residents will be able to relate to this aspirational policy.

The Meridian House site is to include space for bicycle parking, in view of the easy access to Finchley Road and Frognal and Finchley Road stations.

It is likely that Meridian House will be developed through re-façading and that it will not be demolished. The aspiration for Meridian House should focus on a replacement building to respect the Finchley Road Design Code.

FR

The Policy is to be re-ordered, to start with a sentence identifying the stretch of Finchley Road covered by the Neighbourhood Plan, followed by the sections on background and character. All photos and references to parts of Finchley Road not included in the scope of the Plan are to be deleted.

Other aspects to include are, above all, greening measures, the number one priority, and:

- the opportunity to secure wider pavements as part of new development,
- the need for new paving surfaces (current pavement surfaces are awful). A consistent surface which is easy to walk on would improve the streetscape no end and a sand-coloured porous resin bonding might be a cost-effective solution, including for Arkwright Road
- replacement of existing street furniture with new heritage street furniture, Conservation Area signage and benches
- removal of acrylic, neon and for sale boards
- safer pedestrian crossings and barrier removal.

The Camden Policy on Street Furniture needs to be checked as it was suggested that this did not support adding to Street Furniture.

The Forum should set out a vision for Finchley Road and state how it is to be developed and improved. It needs to adopt a more positive tone and paragraph 9, for example, is far too negative.

Examples of ways in which Finchley Road could be enhanced and greened are to be provided. Examples given should be of red routes, eg Kensington High Street, and other attractive red routes. This will help to convey the importance of the Plan's message to TfL.

Retail studies commissioned by Camden have noted the failure of Finchley Road retail units to cater for the needs of the local catchment area. It is for the Neighbourhood Plan to provide guidance for new development and Dudley asked the meeting to consider how they would like Finchley Road to develop and meet the needs of the community. There was support for the provision of sites for shops, restaurants and cafés at ground-floor level. It was acknowledged that opportunities are relatively limited due to the low footfall.

Suggestions were: an NHS GP surgery; dentists; affordable housing and a parade of a similar quality to the retail units between Lyncroft Gardens and Parsifal Road. The narrowness of the pavement on the eastern side of Finchley Road is recognised as a problem.

An alternative to restoring front gardens might be to widen the pavement and redesign the entrances to properties, as part of any redevelopment. This would be an exception to the Design Code.

ST

Comments on the ST Policy related mainly to the need for:

- the reinstatement of tiled street names
- maintaining existing heritage street furniture
- replacement of cracked tarmac in Bracknell Way, eg with sand-coloured porous resin bonding.

Agenda items omitted

The meeting then ran out of time and it was not possible to discuss the draft Local Character, Basement and Construction Management Policies. The evidence base (agenda item 2) was also not discussed.

4. Next steps

Eddie Booth, Director of the Conservation Studio, is currently reviewing the draft Policies, thanks to the generosity of Harlan.

The next step will be to book a timescale for submitting the Policies to Nicola Tulley at Camden. Nicola will be on maternity leave for eleven months from 23 November.