

**Minutes of Meeting of Redington Frog Conservation Neighbourhood Forum**  
**held in Skeel Room, Kings College Campus, Kidderpore Avenue on**  
**4<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

Present:

Gio Spinella,	Ward Councillor
Siobhan Baillie	Ward Councillor
Andrew Mennear	Ward Councillor
Farokh Kharooshi	Chair Red Frog Residents Association
Dudley Leigh	Vice-Chair Red Frog Residents Association
Nancy Mayo	Secretary Red Frog Residents Association
John Malet-Bates	Ferncroft Avenue
Hazel Finn	Bracknell Gardens
David Sumray	Finchley Road
Ajay Jain	Finchley Road
Leyla Ahramian	Redington Road
Steven Baruch	Rosecroft Avenue
Emily Brettle	Platts Lane
Sir Stanley Burnton	Kidderpore Avenue
Linda Chung	Langland Gardens
Vera Coleman	Westfield
Jonathan and Jacqueline Gestetner	Oakhill Avenue
Isabel Langtry	Principal, Hampstead School of Art
Zsuzsa Majo	Finchley Road
Rupert McNeil	Briardale Gardens
Raffaella Morini	Finchley Road
Alan Rodger	Lindfield Gardens
Pamela Rodger	Lindfield Gardens
Peter Sharp	Bracknell Gardens
Dani Singer	Kidderpore Avenue
Nicole Socher	Briardale Gardens
Gill Tyler	Head Teacher, St. Luke's School

### **1. Introduction and apologies**

Apologies were received from Maryam Alaghbad, Laurence Bard, Noel Brock, Jules Burns, Martin Collis, Sir Tom Conti, Jan Etkin, Siobhan Ezra, Janet Gompertz, Bill Granger, Richard Klein, Rev. Donald MacArthur, Val Russell, Susan Salmanpour, Ralf Schoepfer, Stephanie and Andrew Wood, Irving Yass.

Cllr Spinella kindly agreed to chair the meeting and gave a short resume of recent developments and progress. He thanked the committee for all their hard work and special thanks were extended to Nancy.

### **2. Minutes**

Approved

### **3. Neighbourhood Forum application**

Camden officers have submitted a recommendation for approval of both the area application and the Forum designation. Red Frog is very grateful to everyone who emailed Camden in support, without which we should not qualify for designation. Cllr. Phil Jones is to take the decision on Friday 5 September.

Dudley explained that the process is not straightforward and, to have reached this stage, is quite an achievement, while Farokh observed that the success rate is just 7%.

#### **4.Planning applications**

i. John Malet-Bates introduced this topic and noted that the KCL is engaged in pre-application discussions for change of use from educational to residential for the east site. David Sumray explained that KCL has applied for, and been granted, a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the planning permission granted on appeal in 1997 (and confirmed by Camden Planning in 2002), for the building of student accommodation at the rear of Old House and Bay House. The ostensible reason for the application was to receive confirmation that the 1997 planning permission is extant, by virtue of the minimal works completed by 2002. It is therefore possible for development to take place without requiring student use. We know that we shall be faced with another large and contentious planning application and that we shall have to mount a persuasive case to deal with traffic, green space and massing. The existing Conservation Area Statement will form the backdrop to any proposal.

The planning consent for the west side of Kidderpore Avenue is likely to be marketed as a means of attracting a buyer for the east side. It is likely to be difficult to agree a mix of buildings for the new site.

A Construction Liaison Management Group has been arranged for 7 October at 7 pm at 21 Kidderpore Avenue. Those interested in attending are requested to email Cllr Spinella.

ii. John Malet-Bates spoke about 38 Heath Drive, where an application has been submitted to demolish the existing house and construct a block of 21 flats. Camden has rejected the application, but the decision has been appealed. The next phase of the appeal, on 30 September, is a conditions hearing, which will consider conditions to be imposed, if the scheme were to be approved.

iii. The application for 264-270 Finchley Road was recommended for acceptance at the recent Development Control meeting.

iv. Camden's Local Development Framework policy on basements appears weak and ineffectual. The grant of consent often hinges on the developer's Basement Impact Assessment and whether this indicates that the basement will impede the passage of underground water. Camden's basement policy is flawed, because of the way in which the policy is interpreted and the inadequate Basement Impact Assessments which are submitted. Camden is in the process of preparing a new consultative document.

The case at Quadrant Grove, Kentish Town, where it is proposed to excavate a basement under Permitted Development rights, was discussed. A Lawful Development Certificate for a basement under section 192 does not trigger a Basement Impact Assessment if the work is deemed Permitted Development. At the Development Control meeting on 11 September, Camden will decide whether to grant a Lawful Development Certificate for Quadrant Grove under Permitted Development and this will establish a precedent.

Linda Chung drew attention to the Residents Against Basements Group, which has been formed in Hampstead, and suggested that Red Frog may wish to join.

Heath and Hampstead Society has also been active in this area and had raised funds to support a residents' group fighting a basement application. The case was lost on appeal.

v. 50 Redington Road. This is a modern house in a green setting, designed by Ted Levy, and an example of a significant house of this period. It is to be replaced by a “pick ‘n’ mix” pastiche.

vi. Tree felling in Briardale Gardens. Residents expressed concern that Camden pays scant attention to trees. For the scheme at 14 Briardale Gardens, it had been agreed that no trees would be damaged, but this has been disregarded and five trees have been illegally felled, with no reference to any replacement.

Red Frog still has a number of veteran trees and these are under increasing danger. It would appear that tree officers are inclined to grant consent for felling if the tree can not be seen from a public footway. Red Frog hopes to give greater protection to trees in the locality and aims to ensure that no developer benefits from cutting down trees.

## **5. Camden Core Strategy and Area Action Groups.**

It was noted that much development is taking place ‘under the radar’ through Permitted Development rights and that such Permitted Development rights could be revoked through an Article 4 Direction. However, Red Frog invested much time and effort in campaigning for an Article 4 Direction to remove Permitted Development rights in respect of off-street parking between 2010 and 2013. This was all to no avail, as Camden does not have the funds, or officers with sufficient experience, to drive this forward.

Cllr Spinella is planning a further Area Action Group with Camden for October, to discuss issues such as this.

## **6. Working group progress reports**

**a) The Redington Frog Conservation Area statement (CA)** was written in 2003. It carries little weight in planning and does not take account of gradients, water run-off and the cumulative impact of trees and gardens. It now requires updating, but Camden has no officer resources and expects that residents will undertake this task. Members of Red Frog met Caroline Welch, Camden’s Borough Conservation and Heritage Advisor Camden on 11 August. As a result of the work which Red Frog has already undertaken, Camden has asked Red Frog to prepare a draft update by December 2014. David has begun to update the existing Statement, but assistance will be needed from volunteers. **This is the most immediate strategy to protect the Red Frog Conservation Area.**

**b) Finchley Road Enhancement.** A very useful working party walk was organised on 26 June by David and Nancy with John Parker, TfL Arboriculture and Landscape Manager, and several local councillors and other interested parties. This led to the promise of two new trees outside JW3, where pits have recently been excavated. Farokh stressed the importance of regular watering of newly-planted trees.

It is speculated that the proposed cycle highway will probably not be a cycle super highway.

The Hampstead 2020 Vision includes a scheme to return Swiss Cottage to its original state.

Bill Granger, who previously headed the Finchley Road Community Forum (now defunct), drew up many policy documents between 2003 and 2006 and would be

ideally placed to lead Red Frog's work on enhancing the environment of Finchley Road.

**c) Biodiversity**

Camden has a Biodiversity Action Plan, but this does not carry any weight in planning terms; for example KCL is likely to receive planning consent to build on the Borough Grade II Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

If Red Frog receives designation as a Neighbourhood Forum, a policy on biodiversity should be formulated. It was observed that Camden's policy has not been tailored to particular neighbourhoods and that it has not developed a method of assessing whether biodiversity, overall, is being maintained.

A meeting has been arranged for 10 September at 7 pm with Caroline Birchall, Camden's Nature Conservation Officer.

**d) Pro-growth ideas**

Neighbourhood Plans are required to incorporate a policy on growth and Red Frog will need to develop a positive strategy for growth.

However, this will present Red Frog with an opportunity to consider growth creatively and to provide for growth on its own terms; for example including Pocket Parks, green verges and maintaining a community balance in an area which is becoming increasingly depopulated. Many flats have been converted to single dwelling houses; a significant proportion of properties is unoccupied; 200 students have been lost from the KCL west site and 300 students from the east site.

It was also noted that people are increasingly working from home, that educational usage is being lost and community space is disappearing.

Ideas for growth are welcome and should be emailed to: **redfrogemail@gmail.com**

**e) New working groups needed**

**i) Input into Camden's Core Strategy and Local Development Policies**

Volunteers will be needed to help with this.

**ii) Community engagement and funding.**

Community engagement is a prerequisite for developing a Neighbourhood Plan and Red Frog must demonstrate that it has engaged widely at all stages.

David is attempting to organise a Christmas Bazaar. It is likely to be held on Sunday 7th December at Hampstead School of Art. Items which might be offered for sale include: home-made produce, books, hand-made Xmas decorations, CDs. He is grateful to Barratt, which has donated £250, and to Isabel for offering Hampstead School of Art as a venue.

The following members have kindly offered assistance with working groups:

Red Frog CA update: Rupert McNeil, Ajay Jain, Jonathan and Jacqueline Gestetner, John Malet-Bates

Finchley Road: Rupert McNeil, Ajay Jain, Raffaella Morini, Zsuzsa Majo,

Linda Chung, Emily Brettle, Leyla Ahrastian

Biodiversity: Rupert McNeil, Isabel Langtry, Nancy Mayo

Pro-growth: Rupert McNeil, Vera Coleman, Leyla Ahrastian, Isabel Langtry,  
John Malet-Bates

Community engagement: Raffaella Morini, Leyla Ahrastian, Isabel Langtry

LDF: Rupert McNeil, Vera Coleman, Leyla Ahrastian, Jonathan Gestetner,  
John Malet-Bates

Website: Ajay Jain

- 7. Date of next Forum meeting.** TBA, but will be sometime in January.