

MINIUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTHGATE GREEN AND BOWES WARD FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 2016

Councillors in attendance:

Alan Sitkin (Chair), Daniel Anderson (Minutes), Yasemin Brett, Achilleas Georgiou, Alessandro Georgiou, Claire Stewart and Bambos Charalambous (Associate Cabinet Member, Enfield West)

Officer in attendance:

Neeru Kareer (Senior Planning Officer)

Approximately 40 residents were present.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Sitkin welcomed everyone present to the meeting, which was there for two specific reasons, namely to discuss the Development Brief for the Ritz Parade and the Council's Local Plan consultation.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None, but Cllr Brett apologised for lateness.

3. INTRODUCTION

Alan explained that the purpose of the meeting was two-fold. The first is development brief for the Ritz Parade, whilst the second is to discuss the consultation on the Council's Local Plan, which maps out options for development across the borough.

4. RITZ PARADE

Neeru outlined the purpose of the development brief, which is to provide planning, design and development advice for the Ritz Parade site, which is almost entirely owned by the Notting Hill Housing Trust (NHHT), to help guide future development proposals as they come forward. In essence, there are two viable options.

Option A is a partial redevelopment, which retains the existing assembly hall and car park as well as maintaining a continuous retail parade along the North Circular Road. It would create around 71 residential units and 86 parking spaces.

Option B, the 'Courtyard' option, is a comprehensive redevelopment scenario predicated on the former assembly hall being demolished. Under this scenario 115 residential units would be created, but that parking will be limited to just 34

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places. It is assumed that parking can be accommodated at grade along the routes.

Both options would have an element of community space, the nature of which is up for discussion. The assembly hall complicates matters in that the occupiers have a long lease and it would cost to buy them out, which would be prohibitive.

Discussion covered the following areas:

- The challenges of engaging with the Notting Hill Housing Trust (NHHT)
- The importance that any development reflects the character of the area and is of high quality design standards, but recognising that any design needs to be commercially viable
- Concerns about inadequate parking provision and the possibility of underground parking. This is technically possible, but prohibitively expensive
- Ensuing right of way access to schools across the Ritz Parade
- The definition of a 'community hub', no clear consensus, though noted that Ladderswood will itself have a community element
- The need for supporting infrastructure, such as a medical/walk-in centre, schools and nursery provision. Noted that Garfield School is being enlarged and will be open in the near future. Discussion on medical provision required with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Congestion on the A406 of which this development will surely aggravate it further and further diminish air quality
- Problem with crossing the A406, bridge, which is still not fully accessible after 2 years. Option of an underground walkway? Unlikely as it would also be prohibitively expensive. Nonetheless, would expect this to be addressed as part of the planning process
- Representatives from the Southgate Green Association believe that the assembly hall is distinctive both inside and out and would like it retained. They had concerns about the height, even with 5 stories. A steeped design would be better otherwise the look of the assembly hall could be undermined even if it is retained. Option B density is a concern. Brief provides framework that will help confront any development proposed by NHT.
- There was a suggestion that the cinema should be brought back into use. A good idea, but only if commercially viable. Again, any development needs to be realistic and we have to work with external bodies, such as Transport for London (TfL), CCG, NHHT etc. Aim here is to take into account residents' views before we proceed in discussions

5. LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

Neeru explained the purpose behind Local Plan consultation, which is a strategic document looking at potential development across the whole borough over the next decade. Enfield's population is growing and growing fast. It has grown by over 40,000 in a decade and the rate of increase is itself growing and predicated to exceed 400,000 by 2032.

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The options are:

- A) Continue with the existing plan, though some of the options below present problems, it is nonetheless also important to consider the consequences of not acting
- B) Concentrate development within town centres and existing built-up areas through better use of this space
- C) Focus development within the growth corridors such as Upper Lee Valley and around transport nodes such as the Piccadilly Line and other rail routes
- D) Consider the potential of development at existing green belt settlements such as Botany Bay, Bulls Cross, Clay Hill, Crews Hill and Hadley Wood
- E) Development of redundant or poorly sited industrial land or locations where regeneration benefits outweigh alternatives
- F) Your alternative?

Discussion covered the following areas:

- The impact of Crossrail 2. The Council is already engaging with ministers and favour the Hertford Loop option via Alexandra Palace
- Sustainability? If we don't build within existing Green Belt settlements, then development will continue in already dense areas like Bowes/Southgate Green. Do we really want parts of the borough to resemble Hong Kong? Nonetheless, any further development in areas with lower density will be controversial
- What about the health needs of the local population? As noted with the discussion on the Ritz Parade above, there is already insufficient healthcare facilities, won't this simply exacerbate them?
- Is the consultation simply going through the motions? Can residents really effect the likely impact? True, the Council is not omnipotent, but it does have influence
- Debate over the confusion between brownfield sites e.g. Ladderswood, and existing Green Belt settlements, the latter of which exist, but that this isn't itself synonymous with development of the Green Belt. However, concerns
- that developers will seek exclusive, non-affordable housing in the Green Belt, which doesn't solve the problem
- Reality is that London is growing, and the population is expanding impact of migration and immigration. We have to respond. Support though for the lobbying of government to encourage new town developments/northern powerhouse to relieve the pressure on London otherwise we have no but to develop

The meeting ended at 9pm with the Chair thanking Neeru for her attendance and residents for engaging.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Southgate Green Ward Forum will take place on the 8th March at Beaumont Nursing Home, Cannons Hill.

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The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.