

**Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate
Area Forum and Committee - Thursday, 15th
September, 2011**

**Agenda Item 1b – Informal notes of discussion on
St Luke’s former hospital site**

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Muswell Hill Area Forum 15.09.2011**Agenda Item 1.b. St Luke's Former Hospital Site****Notes on the introduction from Marc Dorfman, Assistant Director Planning, Regeneration and Economy, and questions raised by residents:****Introduction:**

Camden and Islington Mental Health Trust has declared a large part of this site 'surplus to requirements'.

A planning statement to guide future development has been produced and was circulated.

Index for site plan:

1. Simons House – not released for development as I understand it
2. Roseneath House - locally listed Victorian building
3. Administrative block - statutory listed Grade II building
4. Norton Lees House - locally listed
5. Front gardens - important and historic (local authority would want to be kept)
6. Historic internal garden - enclosed to back and to the North of site
7. Covered Loggia – looks good and quite interesting
8. Tennis court

The aim is to give relevant protection to site but allow appropriate development if it is surplus to requirements

Health Authority (Camden and Islington) say Health or Mental Health use not needed – this needs to be considered as part of overall assessment.

Residential (including conversion) and or community facilities – would be suitable and any developer would need to look at all planning policies and planning standards. In particular if scheme were housing - Key policy on housing with more than 10 units: affordable 50% of units and of that: (70% social rented) (30% intermediate).

Listed buildings - these are key - In particular Grade II listed administration block - planning policy to preserve and enhance those buildings.

Loggia - looks attractive and preference to keep. But demolition acceptable to ensure overall a good scheme on the site.

Historic gardens critical - front and central historic garden to be respected - outside of historic gardens there are some good specimens. In principle if trees were to be felled a new landscaping scheme would look to replace if

possible. Not always possible. Again overall good scheme is what is being looked at with appropriate landscaping/planting

Planning authority being asked to consider a blanket TPO in new year (need a balance between new use for site and appropriate neighbourhood protection and amenity and retention of trees).

Access: Through route North and South pedestrian only and not vehicular through route. Vehicular access mainly from South. From North consider emergency access.

Conservation area: Form and structure and height to respect character of conservation area. Room for some height on development - starting with heights set by listed buildings - three/four storey. Topography important - site slopes down top right to bottom left (two storey at top right much higher than two storey at bottom left - need to take this into account).

Need to remember amenity of existing residents - try and maintain that amenity around site - does not mean no development on outskirts of site but need appropriate distances between development and existing residential.

If part of site remains for health need appropriate screening between uses of site.

Community use/planning policy: Tennis Courts - kept for health or public amenity. Planners need to be sure if site is needed for health use either acute or mental health. Strong community policy in planning that needs respecting - community use protected (Mental Health is community use) to move away from that need to show that this is not needed. Scheme must be viable financially. Not sterilise site for a long period of time to become vacant and vandalised.

Local Authorities consider community infrastructure: e.g. car clubs, cycle facilities, decentralised energy hubs and or contribution to Muswell Hill Playing Fields upgrade.

Questions:

Question: Planning designations - is health under community?

Answer: Yes.

Question: No specific health designation?

Answer: No.

Question: Mentioned trees are very important when mention 'species', did he mean 'specimens'? (If not, might have trouble on appeal)

Answer: Agreed and thanked resident for correction.

Question: Will you be issuing a revised version of this document including numbers he went through and any corrections from discussion? Where will it be available?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Could you give more detail about interim tree preservation order?

Answer: Not much detail, officers have said there is an application to the Local Authority to consider a blanket TPO. Local Authority arboricultural officer will look at all specimens, strength/health and how they look in the landscape. (important not to sterilise the site so nothing can happen on it for years and years).

Question: What about the trees on Woodside Avenue - the ones on Council land?

Answer: Just talking about the trees within the boundaries of the site.

Question: Norton Lees and other house locally listed (not grade II) - what impact does that have on developers?

Answer: Grade II expect to be kept no matter what. High level of protection for buildings 2 (Roseneath) & 4 (Norton Lees). Presumption to retain and preserved and enhanced. Extension to 4 not particularly good. Prepared to look at putting buildings back to what they were or demolition and replace with something equal quality and value subject to looking at whole site.

Question: How does openness of site fit into any green tree/green pathway policy?

Answer: This is not a "green through route" but interested in maintaining appropriate number of good specimens but only to extent that site is not sterilised.

Question: If developer comes forward - is this brown field or development held footprint within existing buildings?

Answer: In my view this is brown field. Room for development on site. Room for residential, room for community. Need to be clear about trees that need to be kept - not in favour of sterilising site.

Question: What if developer thinking of this as gated community? Can there be a presumption against closing the site off to members of the public? Roads on site adopted rather than being private roads?

Answer: Pedestrian access Grand Avenue to Woodside Avenue. Standard vehicle access from South not from North. Might need emergency access from North. Wouldn't be happy with gated community.

Question: Proximity to Tetherdown Primary - section 106 agreements particularly important?

Answer: Standard planning policy for residential development above 10 units - standard contribution to education to support provision of increased classrooms. Standard Section 106 agreement allocated by the education department.

Question: What about how this enhances the conservation area? What about sites getting initial planning and then having got initial permission they then get more?

Answer: Want to encourage appropriate designs and development - not want to lock down site. Through discussion with local community and Mental Health Trust come up with a proposal that most people would agree. Document (revised from this meeting - "specimens and spelling errors") gives appropriate guidance and gives appropriate protection and gives appropriate opportunity for investment to come forward.

Question: Can there be a meeting on site with relevant parties?

Answer: in principle, yes, but lots of meetings will now take place on this subject, and these meetings should take place first to see if there is a strong view on what to do with the site. If there is disagreement, planning would then broker agreement.

Question: Conservation area setting (page 9) 'setting' is superfluous on point 5.

Answer: Noted - should be positive contribution to the conservation area.

Question: Do we have time for community involvement?

Answer: Yes in principle - this is public consultation of a sort. Planning statement is in the public domain and any developer has to take account. In any case, once planning application is made, consultation will have to take place in the usual way.

Question: Do you have in mind density/units on this site?

Answer: Not comment on density. There are density guidelines but most important thing is good design.

Question: Brown field status - does it have to fit within the footprint of existing buildings?

Answer: Yes brown field so in principle would accept development outside the footprint of what is currently there.

Question: Preservation of gardens - does this mean not build on gardens?

Answer: Historic gardens need to be kept. However, development can happen in other places and if a well designed scheme came forward that proposed building on historic gardens this could be considered but starting point is that this would not be acceptable.

Question: Is the council willing to review designation in context of a plan for the site?

Answer: All applications looked at on merit - start with what is in the UDP and Framework and key policies - but if something came up that was different and extraordinary or better - planning authority look at on merit.

Question: Site has considerable archaeological interest, close to major prehistoric site major roman site - how dealt with in context of any development?

Answer: Survey will look at and reveal any critical archaeological findings and these should be appropriately preserved somewhere possibly London Museum.

Question: Local community group interested in site - at a public meeting the most important issue raised was sustainability - does this come under planning?

Answer: All policies in UDP and LDF take into account sustainability - By the time this planning application comes forward, all homes will be required to be Code 4/5 possibly 6 (close to carbon neutral). Any non-residential would need to be Breeam Very Good (not quite requiring Breeam excellent).

Question: What is Council position on offering section 106 obligation (50% affordable) off-site?

Answer: Technically possible - preference would be on site and particularly in West where short of affordable - concerned about off-site. Off-site cost developer more due to purchase of land and development of homes. Will be looking at viability - need to take viability into account can't afford to have site sterilised for long time - there will be opportunity for some negotiation.

Question: Can we stop this being sold to private sector?

Answer: Not a planning matter.

There is opportunity here for development and protection of those things that planning policy supports.

Michael Kelleher – Planning Project Manager for the site.

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