

**RedFrog was formed in 1988 as an umbrella association for the individual street associations (which maintain their own identities) to carry greater weight and to be better able to participate successfully in planning battles.**

**Below are the main topics addressed over twenty years of meetings, the themes recurring over the years. Very few achievements and continued degradation of the Conservation Area character led to the formation in 2012 of the Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Forum for the purpose of developing a Neighbourhood Plan to guide the Area's future development. The Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan was formally submitted to Camden in May 2020.**

**1987-88** Threats to the Redfrog area arose from a combination of aggressive development often including demolitions masquerading as conversions, and a weak under-resourced planning dept at Camden.

During this period the CA only extended as far as Heath Drive. There was no CA Plan (nor for any other CA in Camden).

Residents' voices were very weak. A number of mainly one-man band road associations with little expertise or councillor involvement.

Rosecroft RA had a significant and unexpected victory in court against a developer by invoking the original restrictive covenants against building flats which had long been assumed to be obsolete.

**1988-89** A number of RA's get together to pool resources and the idea of an "umbrella association" to cover the whole CA gains traction. Various meetings are held and eventually most are persuaded. The Redington Froggnal Association is formed. First chair is Neville Cousin of Lindfield Gdns., vice – chair Dudley Leigh of Rosecroft Avenue.

The decision is taken from the start to involve ward councillors as much as possible. Cllr Dawn Somper attends most Redfrog meetings.

Very early on the CA is extended to cover the "Crofts" Kidderpore Ave, Platts Lane, Briardale Ave and Clorane Gdns.

**1990-92** Early targets for Redfrog are development of a council approved CA Plan and oversight of planning applications within the CA.

The CA Plan takes an age because of the chaos within Camden's Planning Dept. Eventually Redfrog members end up writing most of it themselves and then have to persuade the officers that its really their work ! Eventually a CA plan is adopted by Camden in 1992 – the first CA Plan approved in Camden for many years. Other CA's catch on and the work becomes normalised in Camden through the 1990's coinciding with an improvement in Camden's management.

Redfrog joins in the HCAAC Planning inspection process and sends three representatives. Lilian Brafman of Hollycroft works hard on this.

**1993-95** Dominated by the Westfield saga. Westfield College merges with KCL who put the southern (teaching) part of their campus up for sale. It's bought by developers who want to build high density flats. Redfrog fights the scheme in great detail, wins many improvements to the design but ultimately loses as the modified scheme gains permission.

Residents parking arrives in Redfrog. Redfrog consults widely and finds that residents do not want all day restrictions. It persuades Camden to introduce limited hours restrictions, the first break from Camden's "one size fits all" policy.

The Redfrog Magazine is introduced (editor Ann Eastman of Chesterford Gdns.). Produced each six months it runs for over ten years.

**1996-99** Traffic calming and school run problems prove divisive. Everyone can agree about the need to reduce school traffic but local traffic calming measures create winners and losers.

Most of the ambitious traffic ideas don't win approval, although humps are introduced on several roads.

Redfrog joins a panel to develop policy for schools traffic. Eventually the limited permit scheme is approved for schools, and later green plans become required in case of any school extensions.

**2000-02** Redfrog joins Camden's Development User Panel, working with Camden's planning officers to comment on policy and practice. Dudley Leigh is Redfrog's representative on the panel.

Redfrog produces a road and pavement survey to identify which areas most need maintenance and repair. This is communicated each year to Camden's road maintenance team.

## **2002-2004**

### **Finchley Road**

Between 2003 and 2007, the Finchley Road Community Forum (FRCF) attempted to address the problems resulting from the widening of Finchley Road from 4 lanes to 6 lanes which, together with the installation of central railings, created a speedway and bisected the town centre.

FRCF provided input into Camden's *Finchley Road Streetscape Study* of December 2000 and subsequent versions. It developed many ideas to reverse the long-term decline of Finchley Road/Swiss Cottage town centre and to work with others to improve its amenity and environment in ways that will achieve a sustainable town centre, that is prosperous, attractive and healthy.

An amenity and architecture survey undertaken noted the village-like character at the northern end, leading to the report *Thinking the Unthinkable*. This set out potential solutions, eg building out kerbs and crossings to allow for limited parking for access to shops. It also proposed returning Finchley Road to a 4-lane carriageway, with buses accorded priority. This would be viable, creating a traffic flow reduction of just 10-15%. Other proposals included reduced traffic speed limits through the town centre areas.

The intersection of Netherhall Gardens had been designed in Spanish Steps format (i.e. steps and ramps) but, although the money was spent, the project was never completed. It had been intended that routes of entry to and from Finchley Road should be attractive. Instead, entry from the "Spanish Steps" is blockaded by recycling bins.

The underpass is in need of a facelift and could be filled in or leased out (eg as at South Kensington).

The road needs to become walkable once again and to refocus on serving the immediate local community, providing facilities for a pedestrian catchment area within a one-mile radius. Many of the retail outlets appear inconsistent with such an affluent catchment area and the road could be regenerated in the way that Marylebone High Street has.

## **School Run**

### Camden School Run Scrutiny Panel

Following public meetings in October 2000 and June 2001, Camden is to address the problem of school run traffic in the Hampstead area and is taking evidence from interested parties with a view to making recommendations.

The 2002 report of Camden's School Run Traffic Scrutiny Panel recommended that the unofficial parking permit scheme operating in Camden should be formalised and run by Camden, with a view to gradually reducing the number of permits being issued until the scheme is phased out. However, the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel were not endorsed by the Council Executive.

Expansion in pupil numbers is continuing, despite aims by Camden to limit the growth of schools in the area. RedFrog expressed concern that Camden lacks adequate data on pupil numbers and has little effective control over the growth in pupil numbers.

School parking dispensation schemes are not enforced.

RedFrog's suggested solutions to school run traffic congestion include:

- remote drop-off points from where children can be transported to the various schools by either minibuses or 'walking buses'. Sainsbury's at the O2 Centre had already expressed an interest in utilising its car park for such a purpose
- shuttle buses on Finchley Road between Golders Green and Swiss Cottage
- phasing out of the parking dispensation scheme.

## Green Travel Plans

Camden are developing Green Travel Plans for primary and secondary schools etc. About 20 plans have already been approved.

## Safer Routes to School

2002: RedFrog proposed the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in residential roads around schools and deterring heavy goods vehicles from using residential roads. Traffic calming measures in Fitzjohn's Avenue were also noted as a priority.

## *Presentation from Natasha Brown, Senior Traffic Planner, March 2004*

Aim: promotion of walking and cycling to school. Following surveys of school children and their parents, area traffic management schemes were under consideration for areas including Fitzjohn's Avenue and around St. Margaret's School.

RedFrog sought information on the proportion of children walking to St. Margaret's, compared with the averages of 40% for private schools overall and 85% for state schools.

RedFrog drew attention to the value of pre-consultation exercises with residents' associations, prior to publishing (expensive) consultation documents.

## **Traffic calming**

Traffic calming measures are introduced on the basis of accident statistics and the presence of children.

## Restriction of traffic speeds in RedFrog

RedFrog expressed concern that speed humps, cushions and raised entry platforms (believed to cost about £30,000) are often being installed unnecessarily.

Experimental "slow down" signs, such as those in Mill Lane have been found to be largely ineffective in reducing traffic speeds. The signs in Mill Lane are reducing average speeds by just 1 mile per hour.

## Proposals for pedestrian crossings

RedFrog again raised concerns over the lack of pedestrian crossing facilities at the dangerous junction between Froggnal Lane, Finchley Road and West End Lane, where accidents have already occurred.

RedFrog raised with Camden officers the need for a zebra crossing at the junction of Platt's Lane and West Heath Road (in the London Borough of Barnet) to provide a safe crossing to Sandy Lane.

Camden Highways Engineering Department question and answer session on carriageway and footway works in the RedFrog area, September 2003.

Camden's policy is to re-expose original granite sets and other heritage features. Appreciation was expressed over the quality of recent works and attention to detail.

Residents are requested to provide evidence, including photographic evidence, where contractors cause pavements to sustain damage. Contractors are liable to make good any damage which occurs within twelve months of completion.

## **Conservation Area**

### Conservation Area Statement and Guidelines

The Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Statement and Guidelines was published in 2003.

RedFrog had contacted Camden's Conservation and Urban Design team about the feasibility of issuing Conservation Area Guidelines at the time when prospective property purchasers undertake local land charge searches. The enquiry was forwarded to Camden's legal department, but Council resources are unlikely to permit this additional administration.

### Blue Plaque scheme

The idea of a commemorative plaque scheme was proposed for the RedFrog Conservation Area in order to lend identity and interest and promote awareness of the RedFrog Conservation Area.

Home-owners could be invited to meet the cost of installing about 4 plaques a year.

## **Representations to major planning applications**

### Devonshire House expansion PWX0103367

Planning approval had been granted in 2000 for a rear extension provided it would not be used to increase the school's pupil numbers. The proposed rear extension would most likely be used to increase pupils. Camden are unable to keep regular checks on pupil numbers in private schools.

### UCS expansion PWX0202724

RedFrog objected to over-development of the site, including staff flats, and loss of green space.

### HCAAC updates

HCAAC advised that Camden intends to destroy all planning records after five years, except those that have been transferred onto its website. The chair of HCAAC has objected.

## **2005-2009**

Camden officers attending RedFrog meetings included:

Martin Reading, Highways Engineering Department

Natasha Brown, Public Realm Manager.

Liz Hendry, Customer and Business Support Manager, and Helen Burke, Business Analyst

Liz Hendry and Helen Burke demonstrated the use of Camden's new planning website. It has been designed to be easier to use, enable residents to seek information on specific planning queries, apply for planning permission on-line, and respond to planning applications directly online.

Other officials attending were from the Frognaal & Fitzjohn's Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

### **Traffic calming**

A number of London boroughs are working to impose borough-wide speed limits and this may eventually be introduced across the whole of London. Speed restrictions are generally enforced by humps and bumps at intervals of 150-300 metres or average speed cameras, but 20 mph signs painted onto the road surface can also be very effective. Speed measures in Belsize Lane have had no or minimal impact.

Tree planters (secure boxes planted in the ground) could be used at selected locations for traffic calming.

### Fitzjohn's Avenue 20 mph Zone

Fitzjohn's Avenue receives 12,000 vehicle movements per day in one direction, due to the high concentration of schools in its vicinity, and speeds of up to 159 mph have been recorded. Fitzjohn's Avenue has been offered the 20mph scheme by central government.

In 2009 consultation proposals were being drawn up for a new 20mph speed limit in Fitzjohn's Avenue, supported by average speed cameras.

The need for improvement to the junction of Arkwright Road and Frognaal was raised with Camden Highways.

### Rat running

Virtually all of Hampstead suffers from corridors of rat-running and, in the Redington Frognaal area, Briardale Gardens and Ferncroft Avenue are particularly affected. It is hoped that the introduction of average speed cameras will reduce the number of vehicles travelling through Hampstead.

The raised tables in Heath Drive and Arkwright Road appear to be very effective in slowing traffic speeds and there may be an argument for installing a raised table in Redington Road at the junctions with Heath Drive and Chesterford Gardens.

The installation of a 20 mph flashing speed warning sign in Redington Road was considered a good idea to deter speeding by motorists seeking to avoid the speed cameras on Finchley Road.

Mobile police units would be required to enforce the restrictions.

### Engagement with TfL and Cycling on Hampstead Heath

Maryam had been attending the TFL meetings but the committee was disbanded in 2009.

There have been proposals to convert Finchley Road into a one-lane route for private vehicles, although this would have a detrimental impact on RedFrog roads unless counter measures are introduced.

Residents expressed concern that the TfL / Sustrans campaign to facilitate cycling, through the proposed introduction of "Network Routes" and shared paths across Hampstead Heath, will inevitably result in more off-path cycling. It would also be impossible to enforce the restriction to cycle only on designated cycle routes.

It was felt that the Heath should be reserved for walkers and not be turned into a cycle route. The ability to stroll on the Heath without having to think and be on one's guard (against being knocked over) must be preserved: this is central to the quality of life.

Cycle routes across the Heath would also present problems for cyclists coming to the end of these routes. It is considered that Camden has a poor record on aids to cycling on its roads, whereas Kensington and Battersea have developed cycle trains and motorists there are generally more aware of cyclists.

### Controlled Parking Zones

RedFrog prepared responses to Camden's parking enforcement survey and to its questionnaire, "A Public Consultation on Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) Arrangement in Camden".

### **School run**

Camden's policy to offer schools free parking permits effectively encourages parents to use their cars. Following the change of Government at Camden Council, to Liberal Democrat and Conservative, the intention to proceed with the 20% school parking permit reduction in September has been reaffirmed.

The large concentration of schools (predominantly independent) within NW3 results in school run traffic that accounts for around 50% of rush hour volumes (against a 20% national average). 3,500 children attend schools in Fitzjohns Avenue alone and, during school run times, the Fire Brigade would be unable to attend an emergency.

By 2007, The number of parking vouchers issued to parents of children at Camden primary schools had been reduced to 40% of the original allocation. Camden's policy has been reviewed and officers are likely to recommend that Camden continue with the original strategy to reduce the number of vouchers to zero.

It was noted that, by autumn 2009, more children were walking to school, since the ending of school parking vouchers. However, attention had been focussed on primary schools, while many parents are continuing to drive pupils to UCS secondary school.

The presence of parking attendants is being stepped up where the school run is creating a particular problem (eg parking on corners) and attendants are being asked to provide advice. For example, as a result of problems at St. Christopher's School, the finishing times of after-school activities have been staggered.

#### School Bus Project

Proposals for a school bus service for the 15 private schools in the area, were launched in October 2009, with a view to commencing a pilot in January 2010, if supported by the consultation outcome.

The pilot project would envisage 22 buses serving five routes, each bus saving some 22 to 30 car journeys per day. Parking bays for the school buses were to be located in streets including Fitzjohn's Avenue, Eton Avenue, Maresfield Gardens / Nutley Terrace and, possibly, Arkwright Road.

Depending on an assessment of the desirability of Camden's involvement in the scheme, Camden may tender to supply Council minibuses and drivers from Camden's own transport provider, Camden Transport Services (a commercial operation). The 33-seater buses will be operated by two companies: Busy Bus Company and Transport4Schools, one for the school run and one for extra-curricular activities. Parents will pay a fee per child per day to cover costs.

#### Air quality

Air quality is also affected by large, hired coaches (eg for P.E.), which are rarely filled to capacity and park with their engines running. This problem will be compounded if the proposed school buses also leave their engines running while parked and it was requested that this is looked at as part of the proposals.

## **Basements and hydrogeology**

Springs generally occur at the boundary between Bagshot sand and clay, as at St. John's church, where there is subsidence, and in Kenwood.

It is noted that Frognaal, in particular, has suffered flooding problems as a result of basement excavation, causing the road to be closed and adjacent houses to be flooded. Such excavations may in themselves cause subsidence.

The Heath and Hampstead Society (HHS) is concerned about the geological impact of the current spate of basement development applications, particularly those planned for sites situated on Bagshot sand. It has consulted the geologist, Prof. Eric Robinson of University College London.

While sites on London clay are not affected by the existence of a water table (as it is impermeable to water), they are affected by the expansion and contraction of the clay. Where foundations for a housing terrace are excavated to differing depths, the terrace will be adversely affected.

HHS has been advised that, where deep excavations on Bagshot sand come into contact with the water table, liquefaction will occur. If there is liquefaction near to the toe of a hill, the entire hill becomes liable to collapse. The proposed developments at 5 Telegraph Hill and Sarum Chase, 23 West Heath Road, for a total of 8 swimming pools and excavations to a depth of 20 metres for new basement floors are placing Telegraph Hill at risk of collapse. Ancient trees in the groundwater flow will also be put at risk. HHS is therefore seeking expert advice on the impact of these applications on ancient trees and the stability of the hill.

## **Representations on planning applications**

### King's College south site

The site, of 2.5 acres, includes 17a - 25 Kidderpore Avenue and 328 / 338 Finchley Road as well as the seven-storey Caroline Skeel Library (5,300 sq. ft.) and two halls of residence providing 220 bed spaces. The site is to be sold freehold with the existing tenancies in place and subject to a number of restrictive covenants, which may no longer be enforceable.

RedFrog would be concerned about the density of any redevelopment and the potential for any developer to encroach on existing undeveloped space. In addition, traffic access to any new site is more likely to be from Kidderpore than Finchley Road.

It was noted that, as a result of the excavation to build the underground car parking at Westfield, parts of Kidderpore Avenue are subject to flooding and any additional underground parking may exacerbate this problem.

The site was acquired by Barratt Homes from King's College in early 2007 and, following drop-in public consultations in July 2008, it emerged that a massive over-development was planned. Residents raised their concerns at a Development Control Forum on 28 October 2008.

### Other planning applications

RedFrog does not systematically monitor planning applications and its general practice is to submit representations when asked by residents to do so. It has been heavily involved in discussions with both Camden Council and the Planning Inspectorate on a number of applications, mainly for the extension of properties or conversion back to one family occupancy.

Because of its status as a statutory committee, Camden is required to take note of HCAAC's comments.

It is important to ensure that all development is consistent with ensuring the preservation of the conservation area. Whereas the trend previously had been for developers to buy family dwellings for conversion to flats, the tendency now is to enlarge family dwellings by as much as planners will permit.

The general trend towards enlarging properties is still being observed, and several planning applications have involved the excavation of basements and construction of swimming pools. HCAAC is concerned about the impact of such applications on the Conservation Area and is writing to Camden to express its concern.

The application for the demolition of an existing house and its replacement by a significantly larger property (eg in the Vale of Health) is in contravention of Camden's own guidelines. The Heath and Hampstead Society have applied, unsuccessfully, for a judicial review and are currently considering the best course of action.

RedFrog needs to pool information and ideas in order to establish a coherent picture of the developments proposed in the area.

RedFrog is seeing a number of large-scale applications for very substantial dwellings of 1,500 – 2,000 sq. m., eg at Sarum Chase, 23 West Heath Road. Such extensive and prolonged construction works are having a damaging effect on roads and pavements, notably in Templewood Avenue and Bishops Avenue. Pavements can be blocked off and roads disrupted for several years, while re-developed buildings may never be occupied. The length of time for which a pavement is blocked off could be regulated under the applicant's Construction Management Plan.

It was suggested to Cllr. Knight that Camden might initiate a local policy to limit the size of an individual home to 1,000 sq. m. as part of its Conservation Area policy.

### HCAAC

HCAAC covers four conservation areas: Fitzjohn's / Netherhall, Hampstead, South Hill Park and RedFrog. It holds twice monthly inspection panels, at which it reviews about 20 planning applications and meets monthly to review planning issues and specific problems.

HCAAC is concerned about the impact of basement and swimming pool construction on the Conservation Area and is writing to Camden to express its concern.

### Planning enforcement

The perception of the Heath and Hampstead Society is that Camden's planning officers are not making decisions in accordance with the Conservation Area Guidelines and that it is very rare that applications are rejected. HCAAC focuses on the applications which have not yet been approved and reports on why applications which are passed have been approved. They perceive that Camden is riding roughshod over residents' objections. The Development Users' Committee looks at how officers apply planning policy and enforcement priorities are high agenda for the next meeting, which will be attended by RedFrog.

Generally, when an application has been lodged, it is advisable to make telephone contact with the case officer and discuss the application prior to writing. Camden has a policy of not invoking criminal action in the case of illegal development, as it is unwilling to finance such actions. It is important that successful enforcement should be widely publicised.

### **Tree felling**

Trees are often felled because of reported damage to the foundations of nearby properties. Camden often appears over-eager to fell trees on its land.

In the case of street trees, if a tree is felled, Camden's policy is to replace it with two trees, although they will not necessarily be native trees. The felling of plane trees in Fitzjohn's Avenue has been shown to be unnecessary and subsidence is generally not due to tree roots.

Residents expressed serious concern about the impact of replacing the leaking Victorian water mains with non-leaking pipes on water availability for street trees and their future health and the incidence of subsidence.

It will become all the more important to prevent the paving over of front gardens, and Article 4 Directions will be key to this.

### **Camden Biodiversity Action Plan**

The compatibility of Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan with the grant of planning consents for tree felling, rear garden extensions and front garden car parking was queried.

Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan is a requirement from central Government, since the UK is a signatory to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity. The UK list of priority species and habitats was published in August 2007 and Camden has exceeded the Government target on bat boxes.

## Article 4 Direction

In 2009, Camden proposed to apply to the Secretary of State to implement Article 4 Directions for the Hampstead, Belsize and Swiss Cottage Conservation Areas but only in respect of alterations to the fronts of properties.

There is a trend in the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area for dwellings to be converted back to single occupancy. Among such owners, there is a feeling that they are within their rights to carry out any work they wish in rear gardens and, as a result, the amenity of rear gardens is being seriously eroded.

Residents were urged to complete an online Consultation before 7.12.2009 and to seek the extension of Article 4 to RedFrog and rear gardens. Evidence and photos to support the case for extending Article 4 Directions to the RedFrog Conservation Area, rear garden views and infill development should be submitted to the online discussion group.

Cllr. Knight suggested that residents should push for Camden to extend Article 4 Directions to Redington Froggnal and to rear gardens.

## RedFrog website

To facilitate RedFrog's future development, the first priority should be to develop a website. Work to develop a website began in 2009.

## RedFrog organisation

It was suggested that a rather more effective method of operation would be to assign members to smaller working groups with specific responsibilities, reporting on progress at RedFrog meetings.

Volunteers were sought for roles including:

- **Street tree warden:** to keep informed of proposals for works to street trees, encouraging replanting, flowers etc. The position was filled (November 2009).
- **Private tree warden and wildlife officer:** to work alongside Alistair Smith, Camden's Corporate Services Manager for Arboricultural Services, and private trees, in conjunction with Dr. Vicki Harding. It is important to monitor applications for pollarding and felling. This role was filled by Noel Brock of Froggnal Gardens
- **Planning:** Two volunteers were sought to monitor planning applications. One of these roles was filled (September 2009); the other remained unfilled.
- **Planning Policy Officer:** to keep informed and comment on Camden's Local Development Framework and any updates of Conservation Area Statement. Some planning knowledge and experience needed.
- **Traffic calming.** Two volunteers were sought to develop suggestions for traffic calming. The roles remained unfilled.
- **Monitoring of pavement and road surface conditions.** The role continued to be filled.

- **Street furniture officer:** to be concerned with design and conservation issues including, for example, painting and campaigning to change lamp posts to a design which is appropriate for a conservation area. The role as filled (November 2009).
- **Membership Secretary:** email database of members, updating when needed, email notification of meetings and minutes, booking rooms for meetings. This role was filled from January 2010
- **Roadworks officer:** to keep informed of proposals for temporary closures, reinstatements, etc. and maintain contact with Camden's highways officers.
- **Website development.** The role was filled from November 2009.
- **Web editor:** to supply and approve website content. The role was shared by four residents from February 2010.

## 2010-2014

### **St. Luke's Church Free School**

Department for Education approval was granted for the school (part of the Anglican Evangelical Church) in September 2010 and a planning application was submitted to Camden in July 2010.

The admissions criteria for the school will be as for state schools:

1. Children with a statement of Special Educational Needs
2. Children in local authority care
3. Children with a sibling at the school (effective from September 2012)
4. Distance from the school. This will vary year by year, but is hoped that it is not likely to be more than 500 metres.

It is hoped that the school population will be predominantly drawn from the local area and that most parents will walk their children to school. The school will produce a Green Travel Plan and a traffic survey will be conducted.

The Church will grant the school a 25-year lease, which will incorporate a 5-year break clause for either party.

### **Traffic calming**

Camden is one of four boroughs to have been selected by TFL for an average speed camera pilot. Speeding is a particular problem in Fitzjohns Avenue, where speeds of 70 mph have been recorded during the school run and where there have been numerous accidents.

### School run

Local schools continue to issue parents with parking permits, contrary to the agreement to allocate permits to disabled parents only. School offices issue more permits than they are supposed to and it was reported schools had been photocopying the permits, so that many more are in circulation than Camden had intended. Some schools did not prepare Green Travel Plans.

Concerns were raised over air pollution levels around schools and whether this is monitored by Camden.

### Finchley Road

Camden has started to review and update its Core Strategy and Local Development Policies. It will be essential to have an input into the review and also to lobby for human-scale development and feed this into Brian O'Donnell, Head of Strategic Planning and Implementation Team.

With the planned construction of Cycle Superhighway 11, the opportunity to take forward the ideas of the Finchley Road Community Forum (FRCF) should be pursued, including to ensure that the road becomes walkable once again, a refocus on serving the immediate local community and providing facilities for a pedestrian catchment area within a one-mile circumference. Many of the retail outlets appear unsuited to such an affluent catchment area and the road would lend itself to being regenerated.

RedFrog would also like see the reinstatement of trees on the central reservation along Finchley Road. The issue of tree planting had been raised with TfL in 2000, but TfL was resistant to the idea because of the need to clear leaves.

A hedge might be less problematic, but could reduce the scope for pedestrians to cross Finchley Road outside designated crossing points.

#### Meeting with TfL Arboriculture and Landscape Manager, 26.6.14

RedFrog convened a meeting with TfL's Arboriculture and Landscape Manager. This was attended by ward councillors (Hampstead and Fortune Green), Camden Cyclists; representatives from the Finchley Road Community Forum; Chair of Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum and Child's Hill Neighbourhood Forum. The eleven attendees walked from Swiss Cottage to Hendon Way to identify potential sites for tree planting.

Few sites are available due to the presence of utilities and narrow footpaths, but a couple of sites were identified outside JW3 and trees have since been planted. Additional trees could be accommodated into Finchley Road, if the pavement is built out into the carriageway.

#### **Update to Camden Conservation Area Appraisal for Redington Frogna**

The Redington Frogna Conservation Area Statement 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.

Camden suggests that the update should take account of all aspects of RedFrog's Article 4 work and a careful examination of the gardens (front, side and rear) issue. It should note the extent of the threat to RedFrog and the justification for an Article 4 Direction.

RedFrog has been proactive in highlighting the need to analyse and list the buildings and features which make a positive, a negative or a neutral contribution to the area. Revised streetscape audits will also be required, along with Sub Area descriptions and consideration of the boundaries forming the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area is being compromised by several different issues and Red Frog needs to persuade Camden of the need for:

- single dwelling houses to seek planning permission for developments which are currently classified as permitted development
- 50% of front garden areas to be retained as green space
- discouragement of treeless paved gardens.

It now requires updating, but Camden has no officer resources and expects that residents will undertake this task.

Members of RedFrog, HCAAC and HHS participated in an English Heritage training workshop on 23 June 2014. Following this, RedFrog volunteers, with the assistance of two architectural students, undertook a physical inspection of Sub Area Three (King's College and environs). The pilot appraisal was presented to the Borough Conservation & Heritage Advisor, on 11 August 2014, where Camden agreed that RedFrog could begin redrafting the CA Statement and Guidelines for submission to English Heritage and Camden by Christmas 2014. This is the most immediate strategy to protect the RedFrog Conservation Area.

Costs incurred of £1,050 in updating the pilot of Sub Area Three were met by Locality grant funding.

### **Continuing campaign for an Article 4 Direction for RedFrog**

The aim of an Article 4 direction is to minimise the erosion of green space, eg from concreting front gardens and through over-large rear extensions. The cumulative result has been a considerable loss of green garden space.

Under permitted development rights, houses in single ownership are not required to apply for planning permission for minor changes, such as extensions and driveways. It is against this background that planning applications for such developments are submitted. RedFrog is simply seeking to remove this householder right and require single dwelling owners to seek planning consent for such developments.

Following public consultations, Camden succeeded in its application to the Secretary of State to obtain Article 4 Directions and withdraw some of the permitted development rights in the Belsize, Swiss Cottage and Hampstead Conservation Areas. This will protect them from harmful development. Camden did not seek an Article 4 direction for the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area.

The aim of seeking protection through an Article 4 direction varies by conservation area and RedFrog's motivation is concern over the loss of green garden space.

A meeting was held with a Senior Planning Officer at Camden, on 20 July 2010.

The RedFrog Conservation Area has been adversely affected by the large-scale loss of greenery, largely as a result of planning consents granted to owners of single-occupation dwellings. Valuation Office Agency data indicate that 106 dwellings have been lost over the past seven years, as dwellings in multiple occupancy have been converted to single occupancy (thereby acquiring permitted development rights). This has been accompanied by considerable loss of garden space and, in the last three years alone, planning consents granted are estimated to have resulted in losses to 140 gardens.

Planning consents for development activity now relate mainly to rear gardens, with losses to 76 rear gardens having occurred between 2008 and 2010. Of the planning consents granted for rear extensions, 71% were for single dwelling houses; of those granted for side extensions, 95% were for single dwellings and all consents for decking, terraces and other rear garden construction related to single dwellings.

RedFrog's 2010 presentation incorporates photographic evidence of the conversion of front gardens to hard-standings (the "unacceptable" diagram on p.100 of Camden Planning Guidance 2006) and is contrasted them with the "acceptable" diagram (also on p.100 of Camden Planning Guidance 2006) with a minimum of 50% landscaping.

Camden recognised that RedFrog does indeed have a need for an Article 4 direction, which would necessitate the owners of houses in single occupation to apply for planning permission for proposals entailing the loss of green space.

RedFrog's presentation would need to be followed up with further research, including:

- a street-by-street photographic survey of the front gardens, roofs, windows, doors and gaps between the buildings;
- verification of the loss of residential units from analysing planning applications (Camden's Senior Planning Information Officer, might offer guidance / help with this);
- scrutiny of aerial photos to determine if the loss of garden space can be detected;
- a consultation with RedFrog residents, to include letters and public meetings. Questionnaires should use the same wording as for the Hampstead Town Article 4 survey;
- a wildlife audit. This would be a very substantial undertaking and RedFrog might start by carrying out a survey among residents and obtaining a copy of an existing Hampstead Plant Survey from Heath and Hampstead Society.

A copy of the presentation was retained to show to Ed Watson, Assistant Director for Planning and Public Protection, in the expectation that he may be receptive to the idea, given the amount of work which RedFrog had already carried out and its willingness to undertake further work.

A copy of RedFrog's presentation should also be provided to the Chair of all the Conservation Area Advisory Committees, as he has is in close contact with Sue Vincent. RedFrog should additionally enquire about obtaining funding for its endeavours from Councillor Angela Mason, Deputy Leader of Camden Council and the Member for Sustainability.

The Vice Chair proposed that RedFrog should now decide for itself what further research would be relevant and send copies of its presentation to councilors and relevant Camden officers.

In early 2011, Camden's Senior Planning Information Officer provided lists of planning consents granted between April 2005 and August 2010. A RedFrog analysis of 432 planning consents, indicated that more than 300 of these, if implemented, would have caused serious losses to the conservation area's green space, both individually and cumulatively. Of the consents granted, 59% were for rear garden development, 18% entailed development impacting on side gardens and 24% were likely to have involved front garden development.

The analyses of these data was incorporated into a revised draft presentation in place of the previous data from the Valuation Office Agency. The trend of garden losses is the same for both analyses.

Camden's Senior Planning Information Officer considers that the data are sufficiently robust and that the presentation is complete. RedFrog should now present its case for an Article 4 Direction to Council officers and seek meetings with the Conservative and Labour members' groups. The revised presentation should also be sent in hard copy format to the three ward councilors. Cllr. Trott offered support and help to set up a meeting with the Conservative members.

It will be difficult but important to convey a message to residents about the damaging cumulative impact of planning consents on RedFrog's green character.

The impact might become apparent through the purchase of aerial photographs, taken at five-yearly intervals. These could then be compared with the aid of a digital overlay and filtering out the trees.

It was agreed in April 2011 that the campaign for an Article 4 direction should proceed to the next stage and, on 22 June, a follow-up meeting was held with Joanna Ecclestone, Conservation and Historic Buildings Advisor at Camden. She had been impressed, appeared to react positively to Red Frog's proposals and advised that front garden surveys should also include information on the loss of the front boundary walls, which were constructed when the properties were built between 1890 and 1914.

RedFrog has a copy of the original CHB Quennel book of the area containing many photographs. The photographs could be electronically photographed and digitised to provide a digital record of Red Frog's original front gardens.

Camden officers again expressed full support for an Article 4 direction in 2013 and have received the 2,000 photos taken by RedFrog, which had been advised as essential for Article 4, along with a biodiversity survey.

Camden officers are fully aware of the need for Article 4 and the need was considered at a meeting to discuss the conservation areas in October / November 2013.

RedFrog will need help from local councilors to lobby Camden to introduce an Article 4. Success with an Article 4 direction would change the planning climate within Red Frog.

### **RedFrog Area Action Group and Permitted Development**

Area Action Groups have replaced Area Forums, whose purpose had been to attract Camden officers into local areas to hear about local issues at first hand. The aim of such a group would be to highlight themes around specific issues, with the aim of driving policy at Camden.

Much development continues to take place 'under the radar' through Permitted Development rights, which could be revoked through an Article 4 direction. RedFrog 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.

### **RedFrog wildlife survey**

A wildlife survey will form an important part of RedFrog's bid to gain an Article 4 direction. A survey of all RedFrog gardens would be too big an undertaking, but a limited survey of a number of specific sites could be carried out instead, perhaps beginning with school grounds.

Residents might also be requested to report sightings of particular birds and amphibians. Cllr. Trott proposed that the wildlife survey be extended to include trees, and the importance of trees emphasised. She also suggested an on-line tick-box survey to facilitate reports of sightings by residents.

Private gardens form an important part of London's landscape but, as undeveloped land has become scarcer, gardens have come under pressure for development. Garden design and approach to management has a profound effect on the wildlife associated with gardens. A garden that consists largely of lawn and hard surfacing, or is constantly replenished in a bedding scheme style, will support far fewer species.

In 2011 and 2012 RedFrog met Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) to consider ways in which RedFrog might co-operate with GIGL for data collection, entry and analysis of the biodiversity of a sample of private gardens in RedFrog.

Private gardens in Red Frog are a large gap in GIGL's records. It was agreed to develop a biodiversity survey of RedFrog's gardens to put RedFrog onto the conservation map. This would be neither difficult nor require a large sample.

The RedFrog Biodiversity survey was formally launched at the RedFrog website celebration in December 2012.

A stall was taken at the 2012 Hampstead Fair to promote the survey, but this was not particularly successful as most visitors were not local. The questionnaire was demonstrated to pupils at the Hampstead School of Art, St. Luke's School and St. Anthony's School expressed support. Survey participation rates remained minimal.

RedFrog attended the Wildlife Gardening Forum conference held at the Natural History Museum. The event focused on the importance of gardens to London's diminishing wildlife and insect populations. Residents can help to provide wildlife habitat by: planting wild flowers and indigenous species; not using chemicals, not cutting lawns to below 1 inch high; ensuring that gardens are not too tidy / manicured in order to be able to be of value as wildlife habitat; incorporating piles of dead wood (preferably indigenous) and also a water supply – even a bucket filled with water.

## **Input into Camden Biodiversity Action Plan**

Camden chooses to have a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), but it carries no weight in planning terms and nor does the designation Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Owners may destroy a SINC without any consequence.

RedFrog was invited to a 2012 meeting by Camden's Nature Conservation Officer to consider the content of the new Biodiversity Action Plan.

The remaining veteran trees in RedFrog are under increasing danger. Tree officers are inclined to grant consent for felling if the tree cannot be seen from a public footway.

Greater weight could be accorded to the Camden BAP if the policies relevant to RedFrog are incorporated in the RedFrog Neighbourhood Plan. A follow-up meeting was arranged with Camden's new Conservation Officer on 10.9.14.

## **Representations on planning applications**

Concerns were raised that, over many years, RedFrog had been losing its focus on conservation. Although much conservation work is being undertaken by HCAAC, RedFrog also needs to educate residents about the importance of conservation.

At present RedFrog does not have sufficient exposure to enable it to fulfil this role.

## **Barratt development of King's College south site**

In 2012, RedFrog attended a public consultation and two meetings with the developers and commented extensively. The plans represent a significant over-development of the site, and entailed the loss of Hampstead School of Art, a key educational and cultural asset within RedFrog.

Following adverse comments from RedFrog, Barratt decided on a change of direction and instructed a new firm of architects, Allies & Morrison. The firm has a reputation for high-density brutalist architecture.

Underlying issues remain: notably the lack of soft landscaping, excessive density, parking and the depth of the buildings proposed for Kidderpore Avenue. The development will entail considerable loss of green space and biodiversity. RedFrog maintained pressure for the greenery to be maximised, particularly in view of its proximity to the north site, a designated Site of importance for Nature Conservation Importance (SINC) and its importance as a part of a green corridor along with the private gardens in RedFrog.

Local residents have major reservations about the scheme; in particular the density of the development, the lack of public green space and the ugly modern architecture proposed for Platts Lane, which utterly fails to mirror the Vosyey House and its green aspect. RedFrog has been able to persuade Barratt to make changes to the street frontage and to incorporate hedging.

RedFrog campaigned hard for the on-site retention of Hampstead School of Art and provided considerable support to the School.

A section 106 agreement will form a condition of the planning consent between Camden and the developer. It is possible to comment on the s. 106 condition about ten days prior to consideration of the application by Camden's Planning Committee.

Camden holds a register of section 106 agreements.

#### Basement planning applications

A double-depth planning application has been submitted for a property in Kidderpore Avenue. Residents of neighbouring properties might be advised to urge their insurers to write to the developer's insurers, citing subsidence concerns. Although Camden is reluctant to object to such applications because of the cost of appeals, it is important not to set a precedent which would make it harder for other, similar applications to be rejected.

Camden officers should be made aware of the cumulative impact of basement excavations and disruption caused to residents of adjacent properties.

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.

HCAAC normally objects to basement applications if they deprive the area of green space, take up garden or are outside the footprint of the building.

#### Sliding gates applications

It is important that Camden should enforce its Local Development Framework, which requires front gardens to incorporate 50% of soft surface.

#### St. Margaret's School expansion

St. Margaret's School may previously have signed a section 106 agreement limiting its school roll to 150 pupils and undertaking not to seek to extend this limit.

#### Devonshire House expansion

HCAAC has objected to any application to increase the pupil roll beyond the current level of 650 pupils, on the basis of Devonshire House's non-cooperation with Camden's Green Travel Plan.

### St. Luke's School expansion

In 2012, concerns were raised over traffic levels generated by St. Luke's School. The school had previously provided assurances that all pupils would walk to school, but this did not appear to be the case in 2012.

St. Luke's has applied to double the pupil roll, including through building in the rear garden. The proposed expansion would generate further increased traffic volumes.

### **Input into Camden's 2010 Local Development Framework (LDF) and Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)**

In her capacity as a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, Lillian had recently participated in a consultation on a new Planning Policy Statement covering planning for the natural environment, green infrastructure, open space, sport, recreation and play, which will replace earlier PPSs and PPGs.

Camden submitted the first LDF documents, Core Strategy and Development Policy, to the Secretary of State on 28 January 2010.

The Department for Communities and Local Government is proposing to increase the "material considerations" which may be included in a local Development Plan and there might be an opportunity here for RedFrog to influence these. [Examples of material considerations might be: layout and density of a development; loss of privacy; daylight/sunlight; access arrangements and impact on local traffic; design/appearance of development; noise/smell caused by proposal; landscape; cumulative Impact of development; previous similar planning decisions.]

### HCAAC

HCAAC is a semi-statutory body which has the right to comment on all planning applications and its observations must be listed in planning officers' reports. It is chaired by Martin Humphery and has representatives from Hampstead Town, South End Green, Netherhall Neighbourhood Association and RedFrog (Lillian and John).

Disappointment had been expressed over the scant regard perceived to be paid to applications within the RedFrog area and the primary focus on Hampstead planning applications. RedFrog must be vocal in obtaining HCAAC representation and it may be that this will need to be raised with councillors.

### **Roads and pavements monitoring**

Generally, it is more effective for RedFrog to submit an annual inspection for prioritised repairs to roads and pavements to Camden Highways than to complain on a case-by-case basis.

The EDF upgrade to electric cables in Rosecroft Avenue was postponed pending a solution to prevent damage to the tree roots beneath the pavements. National Grid may also upgrade the gas supply network.

## **Camden's Local List**

Camden sought nominations of features in Camden to be assessed for inclusion in Camden's Local List. The online nomination period ran from 22.11.2012 to 21.1.2013. to 21st January 2013 and is available at:

RedFrog encouraged residents to make nominations, under three categories:

1. Building or group of buildings
2. Street feature or other structure that is not a building (e.g. cattle trough at the junction of Platts Lane and Hermitage Lane, post box, street signs)
3. Natural feature or landscape.

To be considered for inclusion in the Local List a minimum of two criteria must be satisfied, with at least one of them being either criteria 1 or 2:

- Criteria 1 - architectural significance
- Criteria 2 - historical significance
- Criteria 3 - townscape significance .
- Criteria 4 - social significance.

Camden has started to review and update its Core Strategy and Local Development Policies. It will be essential to have an input into the review and also to lobby for human-scale development and feed this into Brian O'Donnell, Head of Strategic Planning and Implementation Team.

## **Camden shift from paper to online planning notifications**

In 2011, Camden had faced budgetary cuts of 20%, leading to the loss of four planning officers. Planning enforcement is not affected by cut-backs.

The system of publishing the "yellow lists" of planning applications is being replaced by online notifications, whereby residents sign up for email alerts for planning applications within specified streets or areas.

Conservation Area Advisory Committees are encouraged to scrutinise planning applications in pdf format, requiring access to an A3 printer in order to be able to compare applications, and to submit comments to the local planning authority electronically.

## **Development of First RedFrog website**

Topics to be included on the RedFrog website include:

- History of the Area. This should include a reference to Hampstead Heath's role as a green lung for London. The aim in writing a history of the RedFrog area is to try to enthuse residents about Hampstead's history.
- Hall of Fame. This will include blue plaques in RedFrog, famous gravestones and other features of historical interest. English Heritage has been unable to assist with information on blue plaques, so it will be necessary to photograph them all.

The RedFrog area incorporates 22 English Heritage blue plaques.

Other notable residents have included Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, founder and first President of Czechoslovakia (Platt's Lane), who lived in exile in Platts Lane; Tobias Matthay, the pianist and composer (21 Arkwright Road) and Tamara Karsavina Diaghilev (108 Frognal).

Users of the website might be asked to supply information on any other famous residents.

- **Wildlife.** A description of the wildlife value of RedFrog gardens is to be included, along with how to care for and provide habitats for wildlife, to encourage the maintenance of wildlife habitats.

In mid 2012, a marketing specialist was commissioned to begin work on recruiting local businesses for advertising on the Red Frog website. Commission was awarded for each advert placed. But, the website received little traffic.

The official launch of the website was celebrated by a party at La Gaffe, to which the Deputy Mayor of Camden, the Editor of the Ham & High and local councillors, representatives from Greenspace Initiative for Greater London and the London Wildlife Trust were invited.

In order to make the website more interesting and to add new content and delete dated content regularly, it will be necessary to employ some help. The website will need to be lively and also to serve as a local resource; for example through the inclusion of local issues, eg RedFrog meeting reports and agendas, King's College meeting updates, the planned Hampstead Police Station closure, schools information, updates on the RedFrog Neighbourhood Plan, reports on parking, traffic problems, Hampstead walks etc.

The object is to maximise the site's hit rate and constant small changes will be necessary and an on-line buzz created.

### **Neighbourhood Forum Sub Committee**

Under new legislation from the Department of Communities and Local Government, Neighbourhood Plans can influence the type, design, location and mix of new development.

A working group was set up in February 2012 to consider planning objectives for the Red Frog area and define the boundaries for the area. Camden has accepted that Red Frog is likely to be representative of the area.

The education tradition of Sub Area Three will be important for the Neighbourhood Plan.

RedFrog will undertake this in close contact with Netherhall Neighbourhood Association and Heath and Hampstead Society.

A separate website will be needed for the Neighbourhood Forum.

The failure of RedFrog to obtain concessions on the Barratt buildings in Platt's Lane and Finchley Road and the success of the developer in obtaining consent for virtually everything that it has sought has reinforced the urgent need for a Neighbourhood Plan to control future development, notably in relation to the Kidderpore Avenue north site.

Following RedFrog's attendance at a meeting with Imagine Places and Camden (14 January 2014), work commenced on organising and publicising a public consultation on the proposed boundaries for the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan

Approximately 80 people attended the very successful public consultation, held at University College School on Sunday 2 March 2014.

## **2015-2020**

### **Lillian Brafman (d)**

At the 2015 AGM, special tribute was paid to Lillian Brafman on the anniversary of her death. She had been a stalwart of RedFrog from the outset, and an energetic representative on Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee. A memorial was proposed and a street oak tree subsequently planted close to her last home in Oakhill Avenue.

### **Update to Camden Conservation Area Appraisal for Redington Frognal**

Volunteer attempts to complete the entire update proved unsuccessful and, in 2017, it was agreed by Camden that Frognal & Fitzjohn's CIL funds could be utilised to pay a consultancy to undertake the work for both the Redington Frognal and Fitzjohn's Netherhall Conservation Areas.

RedFrog were concerned to ensure that the project should be awarded to the consultant whose appraisal will yield a robust study, enabling the Guidelines to be enforced, rather than to the lowest price tender. Urban Vision Enterprise was commissioned in 2019 and draft reports were being finalised in the second half of 2020.

### **Continuing campaign for an Article 4 Direction for RedFrog**

In 2017 and 2018 RedFrog made further attempts to press for an Article 4 direction, having secured agreement for Frognal & Fitzjohn's CIL funds to be used to update the two Conservation Area appraisals, thereby relieving pressure on Camden resources and potentially enabling funds to be reassigned to Article 4 directions for the two Conservation Areas.

In February 2020, the Chair of Camden's Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee invited RedFrog to make a deputation on the need for an Article 4 direction. RedFrog's Vice Chair successfully presented the case to the Committee on 9 June 2020 and was asked to share details of data sources with Camden, with a view to considering an Article 4 direction for the entire borough.

### **Representations on planning applications**

#### Mount Anvil development of King's College north site

The planning application was submitted prior to determining an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for residential use. The Certificate of Lawfulness was contested by RedFrog and a deputation made to Camden, having obtained witness statements from former students and teachers at Kidderpore Hall.

Particular concerns were damage to the Borough Grade II Site of Interest for Nature Conservation, to be excavated for two storeys of underground parking, the desirability of retaining Queen Mother's Hall for St. Luke's school and Kidderpore Hall for continued community use.

RedFrog sought and obtained interest from prospective tenants wishing to take space in Kidderpore Hall, and formed an alliance with St. Luke's School and St. Margaret's School, which both wish to preserve Queen Mother's Hall.

Other steps taken included:

- alerting Historic England
- alerting HRH Prince Charles
- alerting the Green Party (which resulted in an objection)
- representations to Camden's Manager Advice and Consultation Team
- emails to Tulip Siddiq, MP
- emails to Sir Simon Jenkins (acknowledged)
- development of a petition "**Don't Trash Our Site of Interest for Nature Conservation**":

**SINC to be reduced from 0.65 ha in 2005, to 0.59 ha in 2015, and to ZERO in 2016:** <https://www.change.org/p/london-borough-of-camden-don-t-trash-our-site-of-interest-for-nature-conservation> The petition attracted almost 500 signatories from far and wide and was presented to the Development Control Committee.

**SINC to be reduced from 0.65 ha in 2005, to 0.59 ha in 2015, and to ZERO in 2016.**[Petition details](#) [Comments](#) [Updates](#)**SINC to be reduced from 0.65 ha in 2005, to 0.59 ha in 2015, and to ZERO in 2016.**

 [Redington Froggnal Association](#) started this petition to [Cllr. Heather Johnson \(Chair of DCC\)](#) and 16 others

Q. When is a SINC not a SINC?

A. When it is a 97-space car park surrounded by town houses and "pavilions".

The SINC has been a wildlife haven for more than a century. It is situated in close proximity to an area classified as green space deficient. The development will NOT result in the loss of the 903 sq. metres of the green space, as claimed. **According to Redfrog's calculations, the loss will be significantly higher, at 0.1 hectare (as much as 20% of the SINC), along with the felling of at least 36 trees.**

**The biodiversity has taken longer than a century to become established.** On Thursday (25.2.16), DCC members will consider this application, which will see the SINC excavated to construct two storeys of private underground parking for 97 cars. The car park will be re-landscaped above as gardens for town houses and "pavilions", with housing building blocks squeezed onto a historic courtyard. **The biodiversity will be obliterated and the site will inevitably lose its SINC status!**

It was never the intention that SINC's should be viewed as development opportunities.

Please urgently sign our petition to request Camden's Development Control Committee to reject this application, which is in breach of twelve of Camden's own policies: **CS10, CS14, CS15, DP16, DP24, DP25, DP27, DP18, DP19, DP28.**

**🔒 Petition Closed**

This petition had 477 supporters



[London Borough of Camden: Don't trash our Site of Interest for...](#)

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Demonstrations outside the SINC on 10 and 15 January 2016. The press attended on both occasions, resulting in good coverage in the Ham & High, Camden New Journal and to be covered in depth in the next Village Voice. Dame Esther Rantzen and Sir Tom Conti also attended to show their support.

## Esther Rantzen and Tom Conti join protest to save wildlife haven

14:29 19 January 2016 | Emily Banks



*Tom Conti and Esther Rantzen oppose plans to build an underground car park on a nature site*

Television presenter Esther Rantzen and actor Tom Conti joined a protest against plans to turn a Grade II-listed Hampstead wildlife oasis into an underground car park and housing development.

## Green light for scheme which will turn Hampstead into 'rich ghetto'

12:18 26 February 2016 | Emily Banks



*Tom Conti & Esther Rantzen at a demonstration against the plans for the former Kings College site*

Plans to build a luxury housing development with a two-storey underground carpark on the site of a grade II-listed wildlife haven in Hampstead have been given the go ahead.

## Anger as new homes in controversial Hampstead development are touted overseas



Esther [Bantzen](#), and Tom Conti were among opponents to the Mount Anvil development

Published: 7 October, 2016

By [DAN CARRIER](#)

A CONTROVERSIAL luxury housing development in Hampstead has caused further uproar in the area after it emerged that the developers are sending sales teams on globe-trotting marketing missions with the aim of selling the properties to overseas investors.

The scheme, called Hampstead Manor, is in [Kildeerpace](#) Avenue on a site that for more than a century had been used for educational purposes.

Last year the land and listed buildings were sold by the University of London to developer Mount Anvil who sparked protests with plans to build 165 homes and a two-storey underground car park carved. That's Life host Esther [Bantzen](#), actor Tom Conti and Reverend Alistair [Trosidder](#), from nearby St Luke's Church, were among the objectors.

Now Mount Anvil are busy selling the new houses through luxury homes estate agents Knight Frank – and campaigners say the marketing strategy underlines why the project should not have been passed.

Documents seen by the New Journal from a marketing brochure show that representatives have arranged marketing pushes in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Bangkok, Singapore, Bahrain, Dubai, Israel, India and Turkey. The document also describes the way the homes are pitched, ranging from "one to one private dinners" in Shanghai to what is described as "an evening seminar with cocktails" in Israel, through to more traditional exhibitions at property fairs.

Fay Walter, who was one of dozens who formally objected to the scheme and lives in the area, said the marketing process showed the homes would not help lessen London's housing crisis and would simply encourage investors from overseas to "park" money in expensive bricks and mortar, with many homes potentially then remaining empty.

She added: "We are surprised and disappointed to see this marketed around the world, and we do not understand why Camden Council did not specify in a Section 106 agreement that the houses should be marketed in the UK. It is not helping solve London's housing crisis. Instead, we are losing precious green space that is a site of nature conservation to overseas investors who want an underground car park."



(<http://www.ourcity.london/case-studies/kings-gold/>)



(<http://www.ourcity.london/author/georgeturnerme-com/>)

**George Turner**  
(<http://www.ourcity.london/author/georgeturnerme-com/>)

Full time  
investigative  
journalist.

## King's Gold – How King's College London Is Profiting From The Housing Crisis

Case Studies (<http://www.ourcity.london/Category/Case-Studies/>)

In this latest case for ourcity.london, I look at a battle between King's College London and the local community in Hampstead, who want land to expand a popular local school.

The case has revealed some of the tactics used by developers to use recently enacted government legislation to get around affordable housing obligations. It also shows how the lure of offshore cash is driving King's to play the luxury housing game rather than help local residents expand the school, despite King's chartered purpose to promote education.

### The demand for education

In Camden last year, 60 children were left without a primary school place. The biggest problem was in the Frognal area, where hundreds of new homes are being built.

RedFrog made a deputation to the Development Control Committee, preceded by a further protest on the steps of Camden Town Hall on 4.2.16. The deputation was supported by Frognal & Fitzjohn's ward councillors.

Development proposals entail the felling of 38 trees and the replacement of green space by:

- a two-storey subterranean car park for 97 cars
- 156 flats and town houses
- unsympathetic modern architecture in a "mish-mash" of designs
- an open space loss of 941 sq. metres (equivalent to an Olympic swimming pool).

#### Other planning applications

Other major planning applications to which RedFrog submitted objections included:

- 24 and 25-26 Redington Gardens
- 317 Finchley Road
- Esso Petrol site
- demolition of 28 Redington Road
- 41 Frognal
- 35 Templewood Avenue
- copse to the rear of 17 Frognal
- rear garden development 29-31 Arkwright Road

#### **Air pollution**

RedFrog surveyed NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at 13 locations over a period of three months from November 2015 to January 2016. The survey was undertaken using Gradko diffusion tubes and conducted in accordance with DEFRA technical guidance.

NO<sub>2</sub> levels were found to be in excess of EU maxima at seven locations, with the highest concentrations occurring in Arkwright Road (>70µg per cu. metre at the junction with Frognal) and in Platt's Lane at the junction with Finchley Road.

The results were publicised at the Castle debate on air pollution (26.4.16) and Camden Area Action Group (16.5.16)

#### **Cycle Superhighway 11 (CS11)**

RedFrog organised a meeting with TfL in February 2015 for residents to pose questions about TfL's plans for CS11 between Brent Cross and Swiss Cottage. The meeting was attended by ward councillors (Frognal & Fitzjohn's and Hampstead) and chaired by RedFrog's transport specialist, a former senior official at DfT.

Residents impressed upon TfL the need to see benefits accruing not just for cyclists, but also for pedestrians, with improvements to the urban realm and greening measures. Finchley Road is also a social space where residents and shoppers enjoy sitting and visiting coffee shops with outdoor seating.

Street trees on Finchley Road are essential for greening, cooling, filtering vehicle particulates and reducing traffic noise. Most are now nearing the ends of their lives. Because of underground utilities, succession planting is possible only by installing expensive specialist tree pits (eg from GreenBlue Urban).

Tree planting will be facilitated if a common utilities duct is excavated between the kerb and the road at the time of constructing CS11. Through the installation of a common utilities duct, along with sensors to identify the sources of leaks with far greater precision and less cost, utilities companies would have easy access to carry out repairs and co-ordinate the upgrading of the utilities infrastructure, thereby greatly reducing the need to dig up the road. Most importantly, it would additionally enable trees to be planted along the footway.

TfL's engineers consider this would be very difficult and expensive.

Given the current difficulty of crossing Finchley Road safely, TfL's objective should be extended to improve pedestrian safety, as well as cyclist safety. Existing pedestrian crossings do not allow sufficient time to cross Finchley Road. TfL is aware that Finchley Road needs additional pedestrian facilities and countdowns on traffic lights. The northbound direction of Finchley Road, in particular, is a race track.

Residents are greatly concerned by the scheme's likely impact on traffic in side streets. It can be expected that the scheme will create severe problems for side roads leading off from the southbound lane. TfL will need to address this problem and consider how to prevent rat-running.

Key wishes summed up are:

1. Removal of the railings which bisect Finchley Road
2. Tree planting along the central reservation
3. The cycle lane to be in the centre of Finchley Road
4. Greater attention to pedestrian safety in an area characterised by a movement pattern of families with children, mostly crossing from West Hampstead to schools on the eastern side of Finchley Road.

The development of CS11 presents both a threat and an opportunity.

14.3.16 a meeting at Portcullis House on was attended by RedFrog, along with Tulip Siddiq, MP and TfL.

In 2017, RedFrog made an FoI request to obtain TfL's traffic modelling data for:

- traffic movements and flows on Finchley Road and in side streets,
- models used to predict likely CS11 impacts.

An analysis of TfL's raw traffic counts showed that the heaviest traffic in the RedFrog area is on Arkwright Road and West Heath Road.

The other roads included in TfL's data are Heath Drive, Platts Lane, Redington Road Ferncroft Avenue and Frogna Lane. In these roads, the 20mph limit is universally ignored. On West Heath Road, Heath Drive and Redington Road 80-90% of traffic is above the speed limit, with 15% over 27-30 mph. On the other roads around 50% is over the speed limit.

## **Traffic calming**

From the TfL traffic speed data, it can be concluded that speed humps are totally ineffective eg in Heath Drive.

One possible use of CIL money would be to take out all the speed humps and replace them with average speed enforcement cameras. These are widely used on motorways where there are roadworks and have been trialled in Camden on local roads. This is likely to be more effective than other traffic calming measures, although ;pavement build-outs at junctions are beneficial too.

### Ferncroft Avenue and Briardale Gardens

It is considered that a zebra crossing on Ferncroft Avenue outside St. Margaret's School is unnecessary and unjustified, as the school's pupils are driven to school and do not need to cross a road in order to walk from Finchley Road to the school.

A lollipop lady could be a possible compromise. There is a strong desire that Ferncroft Avenue should not be turned into a main road.

The school's advertising signage is also unacceptable in the conservation area and should be removed.

Residents in Briardale Gardens had sought to restrict entry from Finchley Road, but this would have generated additional traffic in Pattison Road and residents there encouraged Barnet to mount a legal challenge. Barnet is pressing ahead with traffic reduction measures, but Camden has objected because provision has not been made for Briardale Gardens

## **Hydrogeology**

### Underground rivers

Meetings were held in April and May 2015 with Dr. Stephen Myers, water engineer, and author of *Walking on Water* to consider a project to map unidentified underground rivers.

Having already prepared the *Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study* of November 2010, Arup was commissioned to research the hydrogeology of the Redington Froggnal area as evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan Underground Development policy. The *Red Frog Sub-Surface Water Features Mapping Report* was completed in April 2016.

### Branch Hill Pond

The source of the underground River Westbourne is generally considered to be the green space below Whitestone Pond, close to Branch Hill, where marshy ground is observed at certain times of year, where another pond used to be, before this dried up. This pond was recorded to be present in the lowest area, in the north west of the sites. It was the subject of several paintings by John Constable.

In 2018 Redington Frogmal Association attended seminars to complete applications for to apply for funding from the Mayor of London's Greener City and the City of London's Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment. Applications were submitted to reinstate the former pond at Branch Hill as a natural wildlife / dragonfly pond. Both applications were successful, resulting in funding of £25,000.

Initial project meetings with the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, Heath and Hampstead Society and Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum began in February 2019.

A planning application submitted to Camden received outline consent and a hydrogeologist and landscape architect were appointed in autumn 2019 to undertake exploratory work to assess the size and location of the restored Branch Hill Pond.

Soil profiles from boreholes, excavated on 25 June 2020, indicate a mix of sands, gravels and clay and a neutral soil pH of 5.5.

## **Biodiversity**

### Participation in ZSL Hedgehog Survey

In March 2020, RedFrog was invited to participate in a survey by the Zoological Society of London to monitor hedgehog populations. Wildlife cameras were set up at six natural gardens between March and June 2020. No hedgehogs were detected.

### Bat recordings

Bat recordings, taken at various sites during June and July 2020, were submitted to to Greenspace Information for Greater London, ZSL and London Bat Group. The records confirm that the area is heavily utilised by several species for foraging and commuting and that habitat retention is key.

### Greening of cattle trough triangle in Platt's Lane

During June 2020, a group of RedFrog residents submitted an application to the developer of Brent Cross South to transform the triangle into a planted green area. The application was unsuccessful and alternative funding sources will be sought.

## **Website development**

Work commenced on a new Redington Frogmal Association website in 2018. The aim is to provide a planning-related information resource for residents of the Conservation Area and in streets nearby.

During coronavirus lockdown, from 23 March to 14 June, focus shifted to the development of a list of home delivery and other service providers:

<https://www.redfrogassociation.org/uncategorized/covid-19-local-home-deliveries-and-other-help/>