

The national planning situation has been thrown once more into the melting-pot with the publication of the Government's revised **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, intended to set a policy framework for planning decisions. However, far from taking a holistic look at the planning environment, it seems to be little more than a front for the government's aims of weakening planning still further to promote housebuilding over other aspects of the environment and economy, and has received a very mixed reaction (see <<https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/mixed-reaction-to-new-nppf/5094795.article>>). While we can only touch on it here, some of the main criticisms include:

- its emphasis on housing over employment is a "critical oversight;
- the government took on board few of the 29,000 responses to the public consultation;
- "No amount of tweaks to planning policy can make up for the lack of public funding for public housing";
- there is concern that larger sites will be sub-divided to avoid affordable housing contributions (as is already happening, not least in Highgate);
- the CPRE says "Rather than delivering 'what communities want' as it claims to promise, it will result in almost all local plans becoming out of date within two years. It is a speculative developers' charter and will lead to the death of the plan-led system. Without a local plan, councils and communities have little control over the location and type of developments, [resulting]in the wrong developments in the wrong places";
- however, the requirement for increased transparency in viability tests, from which Highgate has also suffered badly, is welcomed, as is the higher protection it gives to ancient trees and woods ";
- a new test places greater responsibility on local authorities to deliver target housing numbers and includes sanctions on those failing to meet targets in their local plans, rendering its local plan policies out of date and, alarmingly, triggering a presumption in favour of development;
- it allows for residential development on brownfield Green Belt sites if it contributes to local affordable housing and doesn't cause substantial harm – sensible, perhaps, but at risk of exploitation by developers who have already speculatively bought up huge tracts of Green Belt;
- by seeing the NPPF as primarily to boost housing, planning for jobs and businesses has taken a back seat; housing delivery must be allied with sustainable commercial development."
- there is little policy for helping town centres to respond to the great changes they face. Local authorities must have the backing of a supportive planning policy to boost the vitality of town centres. In particular, it does not enough protect key sites nor address the huge damage caused by allowing conversion of offices to housing without planning permission. While local authorities are under huge pressure to increase housing, a balanced approach to planning is vital, but overall, there is less on delivering employment floorspace, a critical oversight in the face of Brexit.
- the definition of social rents is not clear enough in separating 'social' from 'affordable' rent which is often not affordable, in London being defined as 80% of market rent, and is of no help whatever to struggling renters or homeless families;
- there is huge disappointment that government has not heeded the concerns about nationally set housing targets, and will introduce a test which perversely punishes local authorities if private developers do not implement their permissions. Planning, it has been emphasised, is not a barrier to housebuilding, and 90% of applications are approve. Councils must have powers to ensure homes with permission are built, be able to borrow to build and keep 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts. In the face of this fundamental failing, the increased emphasis on quality of design is of no help; we have never seen any application where the developer has conceded that his design is low quality. Yet with better designed homes, and a focus on placemaking – again completely absent from the NPPF - communities might be more willing to accept necessary development;
- new household projections show a significant fall in line with lower population growth, resulting in a need for 220,000 homes a year, not the 300,000 claimed. This will bring councils' 5-year housing land requirements into conflict with the actual need;
- importantly for us, it fails to recognise the unique needs of London, which is to be treated as any other part of the country.

For a full set of briefings on the changes, by the RTPI – who are clearly not impressed by them – we recommend you go to <http://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1490444/briefing-nppf-revisions-change-system>

On May 8 we attended a Civic Voice meeting at the Houses of Parliament on the **Future of Conservation Areas** – a vital issue for Highgate in the light of the relentless damage being done here through bad development and planning decisions which ignore Haringey's own policies. There are 10,105 Conservation Areas, and a growing number are at risk – currently 512, but we believe Highgate could well be added. Craig MacKinlay MP said that they are a catalyst for regeneration and tourism, 6.8 million people live in them, but the Government doesn't seem to value them, and certainly doesn't listen.

Joan Humble, Chair of Civic Voice, said that Conservation Services have declined by 37% since 2006. 80% of Local authorities have 2 or less than Conservation Officers, and 21% have none - though Westminster has 15. The majority are deteriorating and only a small minority improving. Yet – as we found at the Highgate Fair this year - most people don't know that they live in a CA. Cllr. Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council) described her own battles to protect her CA. They have 800 Listed Buildings, and 1 part-time Conservation Officer. She echoed what we have long said – that Councils *must* rely on Civic Societies and CAACs and, indeed, cannot function without us, yet some remain hostile to civic societies

James Caird of the Conservation Officers' institute said that IHBC Conservation is *not* a nimby thing and quality of design is important. Developers see it as "part of the problem", rather than part of the answer, but some are starting to realise that they need to work with communities to deliver the houses needed, and even Government accepts that they will not be delivered unless developers work with communities.

A review of build-out rates, chaired by former Tory cabinet minister Sir Oliver Letwin, has issued an interim report with some worrying conclusions of which we have all been aware for a long time. It found that build-out rates on large housing sites, once permission is granted, is that at which those homes can be sold "without materially disturbing the market price".

Confirming long-held fears, it found that says "financial investors of a certain kind" "seek to make a business out of holding land as a purely speculative activity. By holding rights over land that benefits from some form of permission, the [owner] obtains a valuable ability to make profit by building on it at whatever time is thought likely to maximise the profitability of doing so," but adding that he "cannot find any evidence that the major house builders are financial investors of this kind" as "Their business models depend on generating profits out of sales of housing, rather than out of the increasing value of land holdings." He was, however, "inclined to believe that this is a serious issue for the planning system."

He further says that "if the major house builders, or others, were to offer much more housing of varying types, designs and tenures (and, indeed, more distinct settings, landscapes and streetscapes, and if the resulting variety matched appropriately the desires of the people wanting to live in each particular part of the country... the overall build out rates could be substantially accelerated".

Solutions would need to ensure that they do not impair the capacity of the major house builders to continue large-scale construction; should overload local authority planning departments already under huge strain; and should ensure that developments should not only be built out more quickly, but be beautiful and ecologically sustainable."

However, according to a GoCompare website, a minimum salary of £140,000 p.a. is needed to afford a house in London; yet the Government has published a **Housing Green Paper** stating that it will tackle the stigma of social housing but which also wants to ensure social tenants can "get on in life" and so "buy their own home" – but that there is no more money for social housing.

Affordable cheating? Another widespread problem, which we have also experienced, is the practice of submitting an application for 10 units on a site, getting permission, and then submitting an application for a further 1, 2 or more units, to avoid the Affordable Housing contribution when more than 10 units are developed. This is immoral at best, and legal cheating at worst. We argue that, if a site has been granted permission for up to 10 units, and the developer, within, say, the next five years, submits applications for more on the same site, the total of units provided should be deemed to be the total applied for and an affordable housing element therefore required.

The Tall Buildings problem: A new study shows that 80% of the 510 tall buildings in the "pipeline" are residential and will provide 106,000 units, little of it affordable. 115 are under construction, though only 18 were completed in 2017, and many are just sitting in the books of the companies who own them, a large part of the 270,000 unimplemented residential permissions in London.

A London Forum letter to Planning Magazine in June argued that there is no evidence that they help to create the kind of city that Londoners want, let alone the housing they need or meeting the need for affordable homes, and that London would be far better served with higher-density, medium-rise developments with a large proportion of affordable housing. Yet the mayor has no excuse for allowing this to continue; every 20-storey+ building is notified to him, and a key test is not only how much affordable housing was included in the consents, but what has actually materialised. Far from having a role in delivering London's housing, few, if any, of the 510 tall buildings in the pipeline would meet the mayor's 35% affordable housing benchmark?

Thanks to reshuffles, we have yet another housing minister, Kit Malthouse - the eighth in as many years and showing what little priority the Government are actually giving to the real housing need. We fear that all it shows is that they are trying to create the sloping playing field which the bulk housebuilders have persuaded them is necessary.

We, and others, have made long submissions to the **draft London Plan consultation**, so it is alarming to see a letter from the new Minister to the Mayor, advising him that it is the Government's view that the draft Plan is not consistent with national policy and will be contested at the Examination in Public. On housing, he asserts that the proposed new housing target of 65,000 pa is inadequate; but to revise this will need a new capacity study which cannot be achieved before the Examination. However, the Government draw the line at arguing for more Green Belt development. Politically, of course, this means any housing deficit may need to be met in the home counties, which will cause major problems for home counties Conservative MPs and therefore for the Government.

In its own response to the Draft plan, **the London Forum** has particularly emphasised the damage being caused by permitted development rights; the urgent need for a 3rd Party Right of Appeal; the Raynsford Report's emphasis on stronger community involvement in the planning system; intensification, and tall buildings.

The Forum also has excellent open meetings for its members; recent ones have been on Trees; Waste and Recycling; and the Aarhus Convention, little known but fundamental for human rights and community participation. It is disappointing that we never see HS members there; details are given on its website.

Historic England's response to the London Plan includes:

- where housing goes should be determined by local authorities, not dictated by developers;
- it must plan more actively for Heritage at Risk, on which the NPPF is weak;
- views policy is tightened, including local views;
- town centres policy encourages more sensitivity in dealing with local identity, while planning for significant growth;
- it has good policies on design and pubs;
- it commends the character-led approach, with Heritage as the starting point for placemaking and design;
- it agrees that key performance indicators should include decisions on heritage and will oblige LPAs to make heritage-related decisions.

However, on the negative side:

- Tall Buildings Policy is not so good;
- the Small Sites policy for housing is weak, particularly in outer London, and on such aspects as garden-grabbing, upwards extensions and subdividing buildings;
- concern about the location of some Opportunity Areas, such as Kingston-on-Thames, an ancient market town marked for major intensification;
- a strategic role is needed for the Mayor on Tall Buildings;
- there are a lot of good intentions as regards plan-led development, but LPAs do not have sufficient policy, design or conservation staff to deliver.

Historic England have also have asked the GLA to consider a Heritage Strategy, to co-ordinate schemes and approaches across the capital. At a meeting with them, I emphasised the frustration of the voluntary sector, its demand for more empowerment in making such decisions, and particularly the importance of the everyday heritage, which on a day-to-day basis is probably of far more importance to people at the local level than the designated national heritage – with which they seemed to agree. I suggested that they should support the Raynsford Report.

“We (and others) told you so?” Transport for London have apologised for their ‘ill-judged’ expansion of the cycle super highways which has resulted in gridlock and increased pollution and made traffic even worse.

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Good news is that Haringey have appointed a new **Conservation officer**, Elisabetta Tonazzi, previously with Kingston-on-Thames and Lambeth. She will start on September 3rd and we are already arranging to have a trip round Highgate with her to acquaint her with the area and its problems.

We continue to struggle with major planning **problems in Haringey**. Foremost is a series of poor decisions, and the revelation that Haringey planners seem to be **ignoring the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan**, even though it is a formal part of the Planning suite. In a particularly bad case in Lanchester Road, they have apologised for failing to reference the Plan when assessing the application, but try to excuse themselves by saying that, in this case, it was in accordance with the plan. However, the issue is that, if it had *not*, it would have been given permission against Haringey's own policy, and it is revealing that, when

the omission was pointed out by an angry local resident, an urgent seminar was held for their Planners on the subject of the Neighbourhood Plan. Other examples have been found of where the Plan has not been taken account of.

By the time you read this, we will have had yet another meeting with their Head of Planning to look at these issues and examine how we can work more closely with them. Other concerns to be raised include:

- the automatic issuing of Certificates of Lawfulness after receipt of proof of four years use, even if the use is not in accordance with the building or fire regulations;
- Enforcement section's failure to require retrospective planning applications when works have been carried out without permission;
- permitting the demolition of an original arts and crafts house which was on our list of candidates for local listing and its replacement by a grossly out-of-scale building; and a general failure to seek Conservation officer input on matters of design;
- permitting rear extensions which are against policy and harm the conservation area and neighbours amenity;
- developers' use of multiple applications to accumulate more development than would be permissible within a single application, thus avoiding Affordable Housing contributions;
- a large number of tree applications are not being looked at due to a shortage of tree officers, and the fact that they are in the Parks, not the Planning, department;
- the relentless degradation of parts of the Conservation Area, particularly in the Bishops sub-area, where streets such as Compton and Courtenay Avenues, Denewood Road, Grange Road and View Road have suffered major damage, while streets such as Broadlands Road, Stormont Road and Sheldon Avenue are now under major threat, and Archway Road, designated as part of the CA for its Victorian architecture, is likewise being undermined by poor decisions;
- The urgent need for Article 4 Directions to control high walls, railings, painting of brickwork, crossovers, etc.;
- concern that bad developments are being conceded at the pre-application discussions stage, making it more difficult for us to argue against them;
- an urgent need for the Conservation Area Appraisal to be updated, as many positive contributors are being lost because they are not specifically identified in it (updating the Local List will help);
- decisions which seem to be made on the premise that, although the design is bad, it is acceptable as it is not visible from the public realm;
- Concern that there is no consultation period for Non-Material Amendments or Certificates of Lawfulness, that the Validation process for new applications is sometimes flawed, and that, in a recent case, we were told, wrongly, that there was no need to consult publicly on an advertisement application;
- Case Officers' levels of skills in Conservation, design,, and trees, and, indeed, how well they actually know Highgate;
- Approval of details should be a part of the permission, not once permission has been given.
- the lack of feedback when we submit detailed objections which are ignored. We understand that Barnet provide detailed explanations when they rejected objections from the Finchley Society;

The much-disputed **Haringey Development Vehicle** has now been overturned by the Council and will now be dropped: a success for the many members of the public and determined Councillors who fought it. However, the report announcing it causes concern where it says that work is under way to find permanent replacement savings from underspends within the Regeneration, Planning and Development directorate's budget. Given the serious under-resourcing of the Planning Department, we cannot see what "underspends" there could have been, and have asked Councillors to find out what "permanent savings" are envisaged.

In our last report, we mentioned that the revised **schedule of Locally Listed buildings**, prepared for Haringey by the Society and the HCAAC, was still outstanding after 18 months. Haringey's Conservation officer has assured us that it was not being "sat on", that they were as keen as we were to see it implemented, and that it will hopefully be finalised and submitted to Cabinet for approval very soon.

Great alarm has been caused, particularly in the Dartmouth Park area, by a **Camden consultation on options for traffic redirection** there, one of which includes directing traffic up Swain's Lane into South Grove and making it perform a wide circular route down Highgate Hill. This clearly has not only traffic, but environmental and liveability implications and is quite unacceptable. It would cause conflict and congestion at the West Hill and High Street junctions with South Grove, as well as introducing extra traffic pollution into residential streets. Equally dismaying is that Camden did not consult in Highgate, nor with Haringey over the implications for traffic in the High Street? The no right turn ban from the High Street into South Grove was to prevent delays from traffic being held up by the few cars wanting to turn into South Grove; what is the point of increasing the amount of traffic turning out of South Grove southward down Highgate Hill, which will be of a much greater volume and will cause even more delays?

This revives memories of when Camden carried out a "consultation" about 20 years ago on

whether to make Swains Lane one-way northbound. The result was 93 votes against and 11 in favour – so they introduced it.

Many of you will have received a circular from Haringey about bulk buying of solar panels. Should you intend to participate, please remember that these are not allowed on front elevations in the Conservation Area regulations, and the rules for Listed Buildings are even more strict. They should be located extremely sensitively in a Conservation Area you anyone intending to install them should seek proper advice.

Regrettably, the abomination going under the name of 69 Highgate High Street did not make the shortlist of six outstanding eyesores competing for the 2018 Carbuncle Cup sponsored by Building Design Magazine. However, we must not be too dismayed; we received many expressions of support, the competition was fierce, and we can perhaps console ourselves – and offer our condolences to the communities concerned - with the thought that the finalists must have been particularly dreadful if they were considered to outdo even 60 Highgate High Street in gaucheness. For the full list of entries, see <http://www.itv.com/news/2018-08-29/the-carbuncle-cup-britains-ugliest-buildings>

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Our **Planning Group**, now ably chaired by architect David Richmond following Elspeth Clements' elevation to Chair of the Society, continues to monitor, and respond to, a huge range of planning applications.

Following a further meeting with the architects for Omved Gardens, an application has now been submitted for the landowners' new house on the site of the old Whistler's Cottage. We have made a number of suggestions relating to such issues as landscaping, boundary treatment and archaeology, but are generally satisfied with what is proposed and anticipate that it should receive permission.

We were also glad to see Haringey accepting our argument that a significant over-development at **2 Woodside Avenue** should be refused. It would take up far too much of the garden, contrary to the presumption against loss of garden land in Haringey Policy DM7, as well as a large basement which could affect neighbouring properties and surrounding trees. It would also have a huge impact on local residents during the long construction period.

We were, however, utterly dismayed by their decision to allow a variation to an existing permission for redevelopment at **6 Stormont Road** – to both of which we strongly objected – to increase the scale and bulk of the already-permitted building, and that they should have allowed such an application to be treated as a “minor amendment”, meaning that there was no consultation period allowed. The original application should have been refused because it projected well beyond the rear building lines and would have an overbearing effect on neighbours. The two bedrooms which will be increased in size as a result are already enormous by any standards, the revised proposal will increase the building's already unacceptable level of overshadowing and overbearing and will harm the character of the conservation area, which, we argued, “should not be ripped apart by greedy developers.”

This is just one of a series of disastrous decisions which are contrary to Haringey's own planning policies and are relentlessly degrading the Conservation area, and we will be raising this at a meeting with Haringey.

Equally to our surprise, Haringey refused an application to provide some hard standing for the Highgate Motors land at **20 Highgate High Street**, with which we had no problem.

Another good decision was at **5A Church Road**, where Haringey have refused an application for a two storey roof extension to this block of flats. A single storey roof extension was granted consent last year, and a further storey would set a dangerous precedent for the rest of the Conservation Area..

Following considerable concerns from neighbours, whom we supported, meeting the applicants to discuss their plans, the application for a new classroom in the rear garden of the **Avenue Nursery, 2 Highgate Avenue** has been withdrawn. The proposals envisaged increasing the number of pupils from 75 to 100, which would increase the number of pupils being delivered by car. A single storey full-width extension has already been granted consent even though against conservation area policies, and while the application maintains that it will meet local need, less than half the pupils actually live in N6. The amount of green space left would be quite small, and this loss of green space is against policy. The 30 dwellings backing onto the area already suffer from playground noise and maintain that they cannot enjoy their gardens during school time. In addition, the proposed classroom is on sloping ground above the gardens of the houses on Highgate Avenue, which it will overlook.

Many residents of **Northwood Hall, Hornsey Lane** have come to us to express their opposition to their landlords' proposals to add a further two storeys of luxury duplex apartments, which would seriously affect their amenities and overshadow adjoining properties. Further, the application directly contravened Haringey's pre-application advice that no more than one additional storey would be acceptable. In the face of such strong opposition, the application has been withdrawn.

The new architects for the owners of the **Winchester Tavern, Archway Road**, met us to seek our support for their proposals for yet another flat on the ground floor in the rear area of the pub, and the conversion of the basement into a function room with ground floor access which would reduce the already-diminished pub area even further and leave it with little storage space. After looking at the proposals, we advised them that the addition of a further flat - already refused by Planners and at appeal - and the loss of any further floor area from the pub would be unacceptable and threaten its viability as a pub. It also concerns us that, having already obtained consent for 10 units, a further unit is being sought which, if applied for at the outset, would have triggered an affordable homes contribution.

We have objected strongly to a retrospective application to retain the garden studio at the rear of **62 Shepherds Hill** as a separate dwelling. The original 2015 permission for this and some garages was specifically given on the condition that the studio was ancillary to flat 1 and the garages to flat 1 and flat 2; but both the studio and garages have nevertheless been sold off separately, and we have argued that this is contrary to planning policy and should be refused.

55 Fitzroy Park

We objected to an extension and deepening of an existing basement at **27 Talbot Road**, including new excavations for a front lightwell and a new rear extension. We consider that the development would result in sub-standard accommodation with poor outlook and insufficient natural light; that the proposed light well would take up a large part of the front garden and be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the street and harm the wider conservation area. Front light wells are not characteristic of the conservation area and to allow it would set a bad precedent. The development would be contrary to a range of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, Haringey's Local Plan and the London Plan as regards local context and character, and the architectural style, scale, proportions, materials and details of the building. The proposed rear extension, which would be 4m deep, contrary to the 3m permitted in Conservation Areas, would be completely out of character with the other houses on the same side of Talbot Road, would be visible to neighbouring properties, and would overlook neighbouring gardens. Thankfully Haringey have refused it, but the owners have appealed the refusal.

Haringey also refused a new 4-storey building at **30 Southwood Lawn Road**, which gathered many objections from neighbours. This refusal, too, was appealed and we have written to the Inspector reinforcing our arguments and supporting the refusal, in a detailed 2,000-word submission citing impact on the Conservation Area; housing need (the applicant is a housing association, but it will be sold as a luxury development); significant over-development and excessive scale; incompatibility with local character; absence of amenity green space and planting for a 250 sq.m. house; overshadowing and overlooking of neighbours; and loss of privacy; impact of the proposed basement on neighbouring houses and trees; and loss of parking space. It represents opportunistic overdevelopment in breach of range of policies, and will have no affordable housing element so there will be no public benefit to offset the damage caused to the Conservation Area.

We have also ascertained that, while a development at the Listed **225 Archway Road** was consented in 2011 and construction started within the 3 years, it appears that the pre-commencement conditions regarding materials, means of enclosure, the Construction Management Plan and Hydrology were not discharged prior to commencement. We have notified Haringey's Enforcement section and they are investigating with their legal department.

We have objected to an application to place a satellite dish on the chimney of **16 Broadlands Road**, a unique Listed neo-Gothic house which has even been used as a location for films. The drawings show clearly that, despite claims to the contrary, the dish will be clearly visible from the street, contrary to national guidelines and Haringey's own policy and advice. The application also proposes railings above stone forecourt wall, which would detract seriously from the architectural integrity of the listed building. It also proposes an air conditioning unit to the roof, but the drawings do not show it and this, too, could be seriously damaging to its appearance.

We objected to an application to build a large fitness studio in the back garden of **85 Priory Gardens**, which would be backland development contrary to Haringey's Policy DM7 against the loss of garden land and would set a dangerous precedent for similar buildings in other back gardens. Dismayingly, it has been permitted.

We had hoped that the details of the works at the Water House, Millfield Lane, had finally been resolved, with the City of London and the developer agreeing a programme of tree protection works and the use of Millfield Lane for construction traffic without obstructing public use of the lane for Heath users. Unfortunately, Camden appear to have approved the vital Construction Management Plan without putting it out to public consultation; this was particularly essential given the long involvement of a range of local groups and residents, and the City of London, in seeking the best possible solution for this long-running saga which is demonstrably one of significant public interest, and where the consultation process had already failed during the application process. The only reason Camden have given is that "timescales" made consultation "unlikely" to be possible? - suggesting that it *was* possible; that their "adopted process for public engagement on CMPs is for the developer to undertake the engagement and highlight to the Council any issues raised" - in which case, why did they not satisfy themselves that this had been done?

There has been another major policy failure in connection with a consent given for a rear extension at **35 Lanchester Road**, to which neighbours had objected strongly as overbearing and damaging to their amenities and taking up garden land. While the proposal appears not to have been contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan, it emerges that Haringey failed to reference the Plan - an integral element of their planning policies - when making the decision. While they have claimed that it did not matter because the application was in accordance with policy, this was only stated retrospectively. Therefore, if the development had not been in accordance with it, they would have missed it and given permission, leaving neighbours with no prospect of appeal.

What is also disturbing is that they claimed that, at the time, the Neighbourhood Plan had not been formally approved and was therefore not a material factor. This is wrong; it had been approved at referendum some time before and was known to be a material factor for several months beforehand; there was therefore no excuse for not referencing it. We understand that local residents are considering making a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Following our discussions with **Channing School** about their proposals for an extension to Fairseat, which we felt could be improved, particularly on the issue of accessibility, they have submitted revised plans which are a great improvement.

Our efforts to persuade Haringey to refuse a major overdevelopment at **65-67 North Road** were unavailing; despite efforts to persuade Haringey's Planning Committee, the scheme was voted through 7:3.

We attended a meeting organised by Southwood Lane Residents Association to discuss the impact of Highgate School's proposals for **Dyne House**. The consensus was that it was major overdevelopment and it is anticipated that the school will issue a revised scheme for comment in the autumn.

We have met Haringey's Highway Engineers to look at their proposed reinforcement works to the retaining wall at the elevated part of **North Hill** between View Road and Storey Road, which is now unsafe. While design and heritage aspects of the works seem to have been addressed fairly satisfactorily, the Hill will unfortunately have to be closed to traffic for several weeks while the main reinforcement work is carried out, and traffic diverted down Archway Road. While the remaining works are being carried over the following 4-odd months, that part of the Hill will be one-way northbound. When full details of the programming and work, which will probably take place in early 2019, are available, we will ensure that full details are publicised.

Transport for London have submitted an application for a rapid charging point for electric vehicles on the pavement at **222 Archway Road**; this appears to be a much larger unit than others in the area. Though public and private charging points will inevitably become a feature of our urban streetscape, it is a major issue nationally and could result in significant damage to Conservation Areas unless design, and location are given careful attention.

We also met the architects for the new owners of the **Newstead Nursing Home, Denewood Road**, who propose three new blocks of flats for the site. Our first impression is that the proposals are a significant over-development, particularly in the scale of the block at the front of the site and could threaten mature trees around the edge of the site.

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Following a very useful meeting with Camden's Tree Officers, we and the Forum had another with **Haringey's Tree Officer**, Alex Fraser, with whom we work well and closely.

It was confirmed that, in the case of applications for work to Trees not protected by a Preservation order (TPO), the only way of refusing is to impose an Order, and, given the number of applications, there are insufficient resources to apply Orders to any but a very few. However it was agreed that it is still important for us to flag up all tree applications with him, as he may not otherwise see them (since he is not in the Planning department) and certainly cannot monitor them all.

27 out of 33 London Boroughs have tree officers in the Planning Department; Haringey do not, and while we have been assured by them in the past they will do so, the situation remains the same. Haringey's Tree officers are in the Parks Dept., and their funding, from Highways and Homes for Haringey, is only for monitoring and maintaining trees in the public realm. Yet Planners expect them, to comment on tree applications but will not meet the costs. Further, though there is a Tree Policy, it has never been adopted, so cannot be implemented, and it is clear that few, if any, Planners have sufficient expertise to assess tree applications.

Further, the list of Trees protection by TPOs was last updated in 1965! While other individual trees were added in the 1970s and 1980s, it is clear that many more need to be added, and we are working with the Forum and the HCCAC to update the schedule for Haringey – though under current conditions, the prospect of getting protection for all those needing it is remote. TPO Schedules are legally required to be updated “regularly”, but very few Local authorities do so and, however anxious we are to see TPOs placed on trees under threat, the staff and resources to do the work are currently not there, as we have found in several disputed cases – for example, a group of mature Sycamores in Shepherds Hill threatened with felling by a developer to allow an extension to a block of flats.

As for new street tree planting, owners of properties outside them are consulted, but not local groups. However, there has been no street tree planting budget for the past 3 years and is dependent on local groups such as ours, or individual residents. Costs are c.£350 to plant a new street tree and water it for two years. The 6 new trees promised for Church Road have been held up because of funding restraints and the need for utility surveys.

To add to their burdens, street tree felling and pruning sometimes brings hostile, and often highly uninformed, reactions from some residents, though they are only done when absolutely necessary. Haringey has a new Nature Conservation Officer, Ed Santry.

It was hoped that the City of London would be able to buy the contentious piece of land next to the Athlone House land donated to the Heath, where Harry “the Hermit” Hallowes lived in a tent, successfully claimed it as his own property, and willed it after his death to charities Shelter and Centrepoint for them to sell to raise funds. The City of London, supported by the Heath and Hampstead Society, tried to negotiate a purchase of the land to add to the Heath, but their very realistic offer of £94,000 - the auctioneers' pre-sale guide price – was rejected and after an auction room battle the site was sold for £154,000 to the only other bidder, a private buyer, who seemed determined to buy it at any price. It transpires that he had never visited the Heath, knew nothing of the site's history, and had not even troubled to ascertain that the land is covered by covenants which preclude any building whatever in order to protect the Heath and Kenwood. The Heath and Hampstead Society and City of London have made contact with him in the hope of reaching a deal with him. They have made clear that the will “

vigorously defend the Heath... we will make sure the covenants on this land are enforced. There will be no vehicle access, no utilities allowed, and no underground facilities allowed at all. Our intentions are to protect it and have public access to it as green space.”

We continue to respond to a huge number of applications for tree works; anyone with some knowledge of trees is very welcome to help. As one example, we were surprised to see an application to reduce an unprotected 20m Elm tree by 30%. We expressed our surprise that there was a mature Elm tree in the area which was not the subject of a Tree Preservation Order, and further investigation revealed that the arboriculturist who had submitted the application had misidentified it and it was, in fact, a Lime. One despairs.

In another example, we learned of a proposal to fell a fine mature Magnolia because “it is too big for the front garden and its root system is pushing up flagstones and is in danger of causing damage to the structure of the house, as well as the drains.” It was clear that the tree was pushing up flagstones because they had been laid right up to its trunk, and that removal of the stones for, say, one metre around it would solve the problem. In addition, Haringey’s Tree Policy is that “Tree removal or pruning will not be undertaken where Trees are perceived to be too large, or there is a perceived risk that subsidence damage may occur in the future.” We have argued that there no justification for felling and have asked for a Tree Preservation Order, but have as yet heard nothing.