

DOWNSHIRE HILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 6 March 2016 at 7pm

Present: Stephen Ainger (chairman), Bob Buhr, Doreen Mitchell, Andrew Neale, Nicky Sinclair, Nigel Stewart, Redding Thompson, Patricia Morison, Peter Tausig, Peter Freedman

1. The Old Police Station: Abacus Primary School

Committee members had attended the Camden Forum school consultation meeting on 24th February. They reported on the well-attended meeting. Traffic, size of the school and the damaging effect on amenity/heritage, had been the main concerns. Various points had emerged:

- **Traffic.** The school currently has 95% of pupils transported by private bus to the King's Cross site; only 2% go by car. The committee felt this was not a reliable guide as to the situation once Abacus moves to DH as the school made it clear that no private buses would be provided for the Downshire Hill site.
- **School entrance.** The school intends the primary entrance to be on DH. The committee considers this highly undesirable. It should remain at the front, on Roslyn Hill. Adapting the present main entrance sympathetically for disabled access should not be a problem. Disabled access was the reason the school gives for making DH the main entrance.
- **Education Funding Agency (EFA)** insists the school must grow to 420 pupils, i.e. double entry, not 210 pupils – which the committee and school responded to, favourably.

Andrew had sent a critique of the architects' designs to Maddox Consultants. His many criticisms include:

- Massing on site too big. The building, designed for 420 pupils, will be too high, 2 stories plus 1 ½ stories of wire netting around the rooftop playground.
- Quality of the design throughout is clumsy, insufficient quality for alterations to a Grade 2 building in a conservation area. Yellow and grey bricks in the extension entirely wrong for DH; only red brick is in keeping.
- Unacceptable loss of amenity to no.52 next door
- Electricity sub-station badly sited
- The small house next door is to be demolished. The scheme to redevelop the site as private house or flats needs to be submitted for planning at the same time as the school.

Andrew's objections will be put to the client.

DHRA still does not know their timetable for submission for planning.

Traffic:

The committee fears the school will result in a big increase in DH traffic at school-run times. The road is unsuitable, being too narrow. Surrounding roads will also be affected. The proposed Swiss Cottage cycle super highway will have a big impact on the whole area. The school's traffic plan must be assessed in that context.

Stephen has data from March 2015. It was thought that more data might not be needed, but too early to say but traffic consultants need to analyse it. Cost could be several thousand pounds.

Funds will need to be raised for consultants. In the past, DH has responded generously. Residents in other affected streets should also be asked to contribute.

Pollution. Bob commented on high particulate levels on Roslyn Hill. The school proposal should be seen in the context of the urgent need to reduce London's vehicular pollution.

Nigel will meet Tulip Sidiq MP and ask her view of the scheme. Councillors' views will be sought.

An Extraordinary General Meeting of DHRA to be held on Wednesday 9 March at Keats Library. Adjoining streets to be invited.

2 Rubbish at the top of the street

Rubbish on the pavement is as bad as ever. The Everyman office continues to be the main offender, putting out rubbish sacks. Andrew continues to document with photographs which have been sent to them. The case for video monitoring will be considered

The meeting ended at 8.15pm.