

Regeneration & Planning
6th Floor Town Hall extension
Camden Council
Judd Street
London
WC1H 8EQ

10 December 2012

Dear Camden Council,

I am writing to apply for designation of a Neighbourhood Area and a Neighbourhood Forum.

Neighbourhood Area

1. The Neighbourhood Area predominantly covers the existing council wards of Fortune Green and West Hampstead ([see the attached map](#)).
2. The area has been chosen as it represents a clearly defined community which is widely acknowledged by both local residents and Camden Council. There is an obvious boundary in the north with the Camden-Barnet boundary; in the east with Finchley Road; and in the west with the Camden-Brent boundary/the A5. The two wards are often counted as one area by community groups and residents. An initial consultation of local groups, residents and businesses found strong support for a Neighbourhood Area covering these boundaries. In addition, the council's local Area Action Forum covers both wards and there is also some similarity with the area covered by Camden Council's Place Plan for West Hampstead.
3. After consultations with the Cricklewood Improvement Programme, it has been decided to exclude the Camden part of Cricklewood Broadway, as there are plans to establish a tri-borough Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Cricklewood. Kilburn High Road has also been excluded as there are suggestions that there will be a future bi-borough NDP for Kilburn, covering the Kilburn town centre area.
4. Initial inquiries with residents on the north and west boundaries of the area found no desire for a cross-border NDP going into parts of Barnet or Brent. The borough boundaries are clear and well defined; they also mark the boundary of the inner/outer London zones in the London Plan.
5. In the east, Finchley Road provides an obvious boundary between two distinct areas (NW6 and NW3, mansion blocks and detached homes, and the boundary of two conservation areas); having consulted the RedFrog residents association, we are aware that there are plans for a separate NDP on Froggnal side of Finchley Road.

6. To the south, it proved difficult to establish a clear boundary between West Hampstead and South Hampstead. The ward boundary, the West Hampstead growth area boundary, the South Hampstead conservation area boundary, and the West Hampstead town centre boundary all follow different courses. While the part of the West Hampstead ward boundary which follows the railway lines is clear, the area to the south of the railway lines is not so clear. The Forum received a range of views from people living in the area. After extensive consultations and discussions it was agreed to use the southern part of the West Hampstead ward boundary. The reasons for this are: the boundary was discussed and agreed at Forum meetings between January and March; the boundary has the support of the majority of groups covered by the Area; the majority of responses received by the Forum support using the West Hampstead ward boundary; a show of hands at a public meeting held on 22 October suggested strong support for the idea that the area to the south of the railway lines is part of West Hampstead and should be included in the area covered by the Forum; and all three West Hampstead councillors support using the West Hampstead ward boundary as the boundary for the Forum. A residents association covering part of the area south of the railway line – WHGARA – did express some concerns about the boundary. However, a ballot of their members, carried out in November 2012, found that 75% supported the area's involvement in the NDF. Finally, the Forum has decided to include in its Area the small part of West Hampstead town centre on Broadhurst Gardens which isn't part of West Hampstead ward.
7. The Forum will work closely with neighbouring NDFs, where they exist. The Forum will also work with communities and organisations in neighbouring areas and will co-operate over areas and issues of mutual interest.
8. We believe the organisation making this application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

Neighbourhood Forum

1. The name of the proposed Forum is the Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum (NDF, the Forum).
2. The NDF was established in January 2012 and has been holding regular meetings since then. The past twelve months have been spent establishing the structure of the Forum and consulting people living and working in the area as to how we should proceed and on which issues we should focus.
3. A copy of the **constitution** of the Forum, agreed at a meeting on 26 March 2012, is included with this application ([see separate document](#)).
4. The Area covered by the Forum is outlined above, in Section 1.
5. The **contact details** of a member of the Forum are the elected chair of the NDF: James Earl, ndpwesthampstead@gmail.com.

6. The Forum has also elected other officers: Cllr Keith Moffitt (Vice-chair); Mark Stonebanks (Treasurer) & Nick Jackson (Communications Officer).
7. The NDF is committed to being as open and inclusive as possible – and involving as many people from as many different backgrounds as possible. There is a clear undertaking to this in our constitution. Membership and all our meetings are open to anyone living or working in the area.
8. A list of names and addresses of **28 people** supporting the formation of the Forum is attached. This list includes residents living across the area covered by the Forum; representatives of the main residents associations and community groups in the area; representatives of local businesses; and all six ward councillors representing the area. In addition, the Forum has an ever growing mailing list of members who receive minutes of our meetings and notices of events; there are currently 76 people on this list.
9. The Forum has already established strong links with nearly all the resident, amenity, environmental and business **groups in the Area**, as well as the Area's two community centres. Most groups send a representative to Forum meetings and/or receive minutes of meetings. A full list of groups engaged with so far (January-December 2012) is included with this application ([see separate document](#)).
10. The Forum has a **website** in order to share information with the wider community: www.ndpwesthampstead.org.uk . We have recently set up a **Twitter** account @WHampsteadNDF to spread the word about the Forum and its work. In particular, we hope to use this method to engage those in the 20-39 age group, who form the largest population group in the Area. The work of the Forum has also been promoted by the popular West Hampstead Life Blog www.westhampsteadlife.com and connected Twitter account @WHampstead (which has more than 5,000 followers).
11. While the Forum has been established as a non-political body, it has received support from the main political parties in the area. The six ward councillors have mentioned the Forum, its meetings and its website in recent editions of their **newsletter** - which is distributed to all 10,000 homes in the Area - as well their email update, which goes to around 800 local people.
12. The Forum is committed to a thorough and ongoing process of engagement with local groups and individuals across the whole of the Area. The Forum has already completed an initial phase of consultation to find out what local people want from the plan. This involved having a stall at the annual Jester Festival on Fortune Green on 30 June/1st July and a **paper/online survey**. The survey was completed by 180 people from across the area, from a variety of ages and backgrounds. The backgrounds of those responding broadly match the area's population, as compared with the 2001 census data, in a number of areas - including ethnic background and type of housing lived in. The results ([see separate document](#)) revealed a range of views from a range of people, living across the Area, which will be reflected in the Plan.
13. In order to be clear about the Forum's commitment to inclusivity and engagement, the Forum has agreed a **Community Involvement Strategy** ([see separate document](#)), which forms part of

this application and which will run through all the Forum's future activities. The Forum will also build on and reflect other recent consultations undertaken in the area, such as those for the West Hampstead Place Plan.

14. **Future consultations** will take in organisations such as schools, health services, religious groups and youth organisations. Initial contact with these groups found low levels of interest in planning issues and it proved difficult to explain what impact neighbourhood planning could have on them. It was therefore agreed that an engagement would be more meaningful and useful once an early draft of the Plan was in place and comments on it could be made and amendments suggested.
15. The Sidings Community Centre has recently received a grant for a youth reporting project. The Forum is planning to use this initiative to gather the views of young people living in the Area about current and future development. It's hoped a video and/or newsletter will be produced as a record of this project.
16. The Forum is committed to giving as many people as possible the chance to contribute to drafts of the Plan as they evolve. The Forum will work hard to achieve the widest possible consensus on the Plan's objectives and policies. Members of the Forum will attend public events in the Area to promote the work of the Forum and engage with local residents. Officers will report on the work of the Forum at future Area Action Group meetings. A series of public meetings are planned for the year ahead.
17. In light of all the above statements, as well as the supporting documents provided with this application, it is clear that the Forum has been established for the express purpose of promoting and improving the social, economic and environmental well being of the Area. The Forum also reflects the character of the Area, in terms of understanding the need for sustainable development – particularly in the West Hampstead growth area – and also dealing with the pressures brought by such development. These principles are clearly articulated in the 10 aims of the Forum, as expressed in Article 3 of our constitution.
18. I believe the NDF meets the conditions contained in section 61F(5) of the 1990 Act.

I hope this application can find support from both Camden Council officers and councillors. I would like to be notified when this application has been formally accepted by the council; when the consultation on the application starts; when the consultation ends; and when a final decision on the application is made.

Yours sincerely,

James Earl
(Chair, Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum)