Mill Hill Residents' Association

Founded 1909
21 Hammers Lane, Mill Hill, NW7 4BY
E-mail: millhillresidents@gmail.com

Mill Hill Residents' Association Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 10th May 2016
St Paul's CofE Primary School

Welcome and Introduction

Richard welcomed all attendees and ran through the agenda:

Election of Officers
Summary of Accounts for 2015 – 16
Update on Activities currently on MHRA radar
Hasmonean Secondary School
Barrett Development at Medical Research site

Election of Officers and Committee

The following individuals were re-elected as officers:

President: Chelle Paice
Chair: Richard Logue
Secretary: Kris Jiwa
Treasurer: Paul Edwards
Honorary Auditor: Hank Waxman

Joan Ellis remains the association's President Emeritus.

The following individuals were elected to the Committee: Jasmine Brown, Tracey Costin, Caroline Farleigh, Mike Fisher, Claire Fox Baron, Jon Klaff and Donna Rispoli.

Chairman Update

1. Mausoleum

Monument Properties continue to pursue planning permission to develop a Mausoleum in Mill Hill Cemetery as well as a new entrance and car park off Milespit Hill. Barnet Council rejected their last planning application. Monument has appealed the decision and the Planning Inspector will hear their case on 31st August. All local councilors, Andrew Dismore, MHPS, Mill Neighbourhood Forum and MHRA all oppose the application.

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2. Secondary School

Richard raised the need for additional secondary school spaces in Mill Hill particularly for boys. Whilst there may be a possibility of expanding Mill Hill County High School, Richard believes there is a need to explore that possibility creating a new Open Secondary School in Mill Hill and is looking for volunteers to join a special committee focused on this topic.

Asked if he has identified any sites, he said no. He confirmed that Saracens' Free School is being built in Colindale across from the RAF Museum. Given that Wren Academy are opening a primary school onsite, it is likely that the number of space available for entry in Year 7 will be reduced thus compounding the current shortage.

When asked, members present support the idea of a special committee. Richard requested that anyone interested should email MHRA.

3. Pentavia Retail Park

Developers of the Pentavia Retail Park site declined MHRA's invitation to attend this evening's meeting. They will be holding their own meetings at Hartley Hall on the 24th and 25th May. Comments from the discussion on MHRA's Facebook page regarding the proposed development have been forwarded to Four Square who is managing the interface with our community on behalf of the developers. MHRA representatives will be attending the exhibition. Our preference is for the site to be used for leisure and retail facilities as opposed to housing. No proposal have been submitted to Barnet Council at this stage

4. Thameslink

MHRA continues to engage with senior management at Thameslink regarding overcrowded and infrequent trains. Whilst Thameslink acknowledge that the current service is not adequate, their answer remain that new trains coming in 2018 will solve all the issues. We do have another meeting scheduled with Thameslink in the next couple of weeks.

5. Mill Hill Broadway

Bins and litter on Mill Hill Broadway needs to be addressed. Feedback has been sent our environment contract at Barnet Council. We will also be raising the issue at the next Hendon Area Forum in June.

6. European Union In or Out Hustings Meeting

Richard asked attendee whether or not they find a Hustings Meeting on the topic of the European Union useful. Members present indicated they would welcome a meeting.

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Accounts for 2015 – 2016

All attendees received a copy of the accounts which have been reviewed by our honorary auditor, Hank Waxman. Richard pointed out that we have seen a big increase in resident subscriptions this year and reiterated our preference of members paying their subscription by standing order. Members present requested that we circulate the standing order form via email which we will do.

Richard briefly explained the reason for the larger balance in our Deposit account – we are using the MHRA account to process funds received for the NW7 Hub, e.g., contributions to the Hub are deposited in the MHRA and then subsequently withdrawn as required.

Hasmonean Secondary School Proposed Development

Andrew McClusky (Executive Head Teacher), Barry Ackerman, Jane Locksmith (lead architect) and Andrew Beard (environmental specialist) presented the development proposal for Hasmonean Secondary School.

Background

Currently, Hasmonean Secondary School has two campuses – a girl's campus on Page Street and a boy's campus on Holder Hill Road. The Boy's School was built in the 1940s to accommodate 200 pupils. With an increased intake of 100 boys planned for next year, the campus will be accommodating 600 pupils. The site is fit to accommodate 300 – 350 pupils so the need to move to a larger site is long overdue and really required from a health and safety point of view.

Site

Barnet have supported Hasmonean in looking for suitable sites across the borough and the only suitable site identified Copthall Playing Fields along Champions Way. Department of Education guidelines (bulletin 103) set down minimum and maximum acreage required for school provision. An 8-form entry requires a 21-acre site.

One member questioned how thorough Barnet's search for alternative sites has been, e.g., was consideration given to Medical Research site or Pentavia Retail Park. Mr. Ackerman explained that a building committee was formed in 2014 to look at suitable sites. He confirmed that the Medical Research site was considered but dismissed due to The Ridgeway's inability to handle traffic generated by 1400 students (8-form entry). Also, landowners went for the highest value for land e.g., housing developers. The search for a site was extending to Hertfordshire; however, Barnet Council were keen to keep the school within the borough as they have to increase the provision of orthodox Jewish secondary school places by two forms (60 pupils). Barnet have given a letter to Hasmonean confirming that there is no alternative suitable sites for their secondary school.

The presenters acknowledge that there are two key issues with the proposed development: use of designated green belt land for educational purposes and increase in traffic to the area.

They are producing an environmental impact statement to be submitted along with their planning application that will outline the special circumstances that they believe justify the use of green belt land for the school's expansion as well as actions they will be taking to minimise the impact on the land. Special circumstances justifying the land's use include: educational provision requirement for additional orthodox Jewish secondary school spaces, lack of available alternative 8 hectare sites, development of additional sporting facilities available to the community (tennis / netball courts and all weather pitch accessible by community footpath) and return of Holders Hill Road site to council for another primary school.

The existing site on Holders Hill Road will be handed back to Barnet Council. It is already designated as land for educational purposes and Hasmonean will ensure covenants are put in place to secure this status. The site is not large enough to accommodate a secondary school but could be used for a two-form entry primary school.

A member queried why all weather as opposed to grass Pitch. Ms. Locksmith explained that set guideline exist for playing pitches and that all weather surfaces count as double the area of a grass pitch which helps meet the overall land requirement for the school.

Another member asked how confident the presenters are that members of the community will actually use the sporting facilities on the site. Ms. Locksmith indicated that she had experience of putting in place successful community use agreements enabling members of the community to use facilities, e.g., JFS. There is direct access to both sporting facilities. These facilities would be available to the community all day Saturday and Sunday.

New Building

The site is just under 20 acres of which the girls' school currently occupies 6 acres. 30% of the site is trees and landscape leaving 14 acres of usable land. The school building will be situated in the centre of the site. It is a two-story building with a three-story frontage; however, given its positioning into landscape it will appear as a1 ½ story structure, e.g., you loose a story into the ground. It will be a university style building made with high quality materials and will have a green 'planted' roof. The existing entrance to the girls' school on Page Street will be removed. There will be one entrance for girls and a separate entrance for boys both on Champions Ways. These entrances will be between existing breaks in trees and landscape and will be manned by security pods. A 1.8m fence will enclose the site with every attempt made to loose fencing into the landscape, e.g., set into trees.

There will also be a 26 FT (52 PT) space nursery on the site. It will not be operated by the school but by a separate vendor and will have a separate entrance on Champions Way.

A member asked of school staff would have first call on nursery spaces. Presenter's answer was non-committal.

Transport

A traffic survey has been completed (survey sent out to parents) – the results were only delivered today so still need to be compiled. Initial findings include: 60% of students travel by public transport (girls take 113 and boys take 240); high % of boys cycle to school (the new site will have 270 spaces for cycles); number of siblings reduces traffic (1091 students currently equates to 757 families); elimination of staff and families traveling between current sites will reduce some of the current traffic and only a small number of students are from outside the borough.

Presenters clarified that Copthall's Development Group not the school introduced the one-way system proposed for Champions Ways.

The school has spoke to the Mill Hill Rugby Club about using their car park to extend the school's drop off facility.

A resident pointed out that if numerous boys are going to cycle to the school, improvements will need to be made to the slip road on the south side (back route to A41/A1) as well as possible cycle lanes on Pursley and Devonshire Road.

A resident of Tithe Walk indicated that traffic and parking is alright a huge issue on their road as it is the only exit to the A41 from Page Street and has car parked either side which are potentially belong to staff and students of the existing girls' school. The Team indicated that studies of parking, drop off and pick up on Page Street would be undertaken to ensure the a problem is not transferred to Champions Ways.

Given staggered drop off for boys and girls, a member asked where parents and siblings would wait once the first child had been dropped off. Presenters indicated that there would be the possibility of a sibling being dropped off at a similar time although it was not clear how this would happen in practice.

Another member mentioned the issue of lorry traffic. The team acknowledged that a construction statement would need to be submitted to address concerns.

Next Steps

The proposal has gone through a pre application process. The intention is to submit a formal planning application and environment impact statement by the end of June with the hope of a decision by September or October. If planning permission is granted within these timescales, the new school would open in September 2019.

To view the full presentation, please click here

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<u>Medical Research Site (Barratt Homes Development)</u>

Presenting on behalf of Barratt Homes was Seth Rutt, Julian de Mets (architect) and Simon Hall (transportation specialist).

Barratt Homes' proposal for the Medical Research site is a residential lead, mixed-use development. It will include: 12 4 or 5 bedroom homes; 18 3 bedroom flats and 350 1 & 2 bedroom flats plus a café, gym and office space. There will also be a public space in front of the Cruciform building.

Preservation of Landscape

A planning brief has been established for site working with Barnet Council. The intention is to 'rewild' the site linking Burton Hole Lane to the valley thereby establishing almost a settling boundary which protects the green edge. There will be no net loss of trees on site and all Category A trees will not be touched. Heathland will have green edge – not fencing (e.g., a haha). A new pond will also be created as part of the water irrigation plan.
Roads will be built in line with contour of the land. Step free access will be maintained throughout the development. Pedestrian access will be stepped in line with contours of land.

Overall, the development will open up views to the Totteridge Valley and improve access to the Green Belt.

Cruciform Building

Julian is local to Mill Hill and acknowledges that the Cruciform is a landmark seen from multiple locations. Experience of the Ridgeway is limited views of the valley - swells and contacts with green spaces intermittently. Removal of the wings affords the opportunity to view the much more of Totteridge Valley.

Following a thorough analysis to understand what would be required to renovate the building, e.g., 50% of the building's façade and the green roof would need replacing, developers have decided to reconstruct the building as opposed to renovate it.

The first three floors of the building will be for non-residential use, e.g., café and gym overlooking the valley giving the new building a much more open and welcoming façade than the current institutional feel. The brickwork will be similar but paler in colour.
Windows of the new build will be sympathetic to window proportions of the current building.

A resident pointed out that a rebuild would enable more flexibility of use to the lower floors of the building, e.g., for open plan office space for local businesses.

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Transportation

Key issues for the development in relation to transportation are: parking, access, The Ridgeway and construction traffic.

Parking: Barnet, GLA and TfL all have parking criteria based on house type and parking spaces (arrangements) for the site must be set in line with these. The parking proposal affords the maximum parking allowance per house type and therefore accommodates all residents' parking onsite. There is a separate allocation for visitors parking - 50 to 100 spaces - again in line with guidelines. This allocation includes parking for visitors to the café, gym and public space and is dispersed appropriately throughout the site. Finally, there is commercial parking in addition to visitors parking.

Traffic: A survey has been carried out which showed a total of 808 vehicles (two-way) associated with the site (between 0700 and 1900). Based on this survey, presenters suggested there will be only a slight increase in traffic along The Ridgeway. Ideas they are working to mitigate this include:-

- Assessing key highway links and junctions
- Providing junction improvements where needed
- Tackling any existing accident hotspots
- Implementing car parking restrictions where needed
- Opening up existing and proposed pedestrian links around and through the site
- Provide contributions/improvements toward existing and proposed public transport infrastructure
- Accommodate all servicing and delivery vehicles within the site

They have also set up a Transport Working Group to work with local residents on transport and parking.

A resident pointed out that any proposal to put parking restrictions on the northern side of The Ridgeway would add more posts and street furniture to the street with limited impact to traffic issues particular and school drop off and collection times.

A member asked whether or not affordable housing would be included on the site if the new mayor dictated 30% affordable housing in all new developments. Obviously, it would depend on the timing of such a decision in relation to the planning permission cycle for the development.

To view the full presentation, please click here