

Re: THR2: TOTTENHAM DELIVERY OFFICE & back of Bruce Grove (BRUCE GROVE WOOD – designated a site of local ecological interest in the UDP)

From a Resident in Sperling Road who stands to be adversely affected by the LBH's proposals both financially and in terms of enjoyment of my property.

First principles:

- This site is the only open space in the Bruce Grove Ward.
- The Bruce Grove Ward is the smallest Ward in LBH and has by far the highest population density at 155 persons per hectare.
- Bruce Grove Ward consists mainly of 2 and 3 storey Victorian and Edwardian terrace houses which are very efficient in providing high density housing and gardens with clearly defined boundaries.
- The result is that the Bruce Grove Ward is almost fully built up and has very little space for any further small scale development.
- This site, THR2, is in the highest category of open space deficiency (see UDP map).
- THIS SITE IS IN THE BRUCE CASTLE CONSERVATION AREA.

The present/recent usage of the Site:

- There will be a continuing need for the Post Office Sorting Office for the foreseeable future. It will not be possible to transfer the operation to the PO site at Mount Pleasant in Clerkenwell in view of the plans for redevelopment in that location. There are no other alternative sites for this operation.
- The timber yard next to it should not be closed down/CPO/relocated just to make a larger development site.
- The area to the north of the site, north of Champa Close, has been designated as "Bruce Grove Wood", a site of local ecological interest and was supposed to have had a management plan by the LBH under the UDP. In the past it was used as a nature reserve by Bruce Grove Primary School in Sperling Road. In recent years there has been a loss of

trees from storms and from illegal felling. Japanese knotweed started to grow on the illegally cleared parts.

- Champa Close was formerly an area of workshops which were the subject of complaints from residents about night time metal grinding noises which led to Council enforcement action (shutting down the illegal activities which were going on there) and the redevelopment of that site for housing only. The use of pile drivers in the construction caused damage to properties in Sperling Road as well as to the Grade 2 listed building at No7 Bruce Grove. Despite the site being levelled the pavement of Champa Close is not flat and is unnecessarily undulating and is too narrow for prams. The appearance is amateur and looks like a Toy Town development. I am very surprised that LBH allowed the developer to get away with such shoddy work. It is incorrect to say that this road was carved out of the land at No.5 Bruce Grove for Champa Close as it was done decades earlier for access to the workshops.

In the unlikely event of the PO and timber yard sites becoming available:

- Any new buildings should be low rise – 2 storey only to match the surrounding residential houses and prevent overlooking.
- Either a change of use for housing or stay as light industrial but not to be mixed. Quality housing never incorporates workshops. (Health and safety issues and noise and pollution and fire risk - especially with informal, unregulated workshop activity and higher insurance premiums for residents because of the risks associated with the workshops)
- Design and layout/pattern of development should respect the surrounding area (Conservation Area and woodland site of local ecological importance) and the quiet enjoyment of their properties by existing residential neighbours :
 - Woodland ecology (bird, butterfly and plant varieties being woodland ones)
 - Avoid overlooking existing residential properties or blocking their light
 - Low heights
 - Low density given the existing pressure on social and transport infrastructure

Permeability

- Generally this may be a good thing for many sites but here is unnecessary and undesirable.
- Both the PO site and the timber yard have vehicular access for HGVs on Moorefield Road. This is more than adequate to serve the proposed development. There is no need to access Bruce Grove or Sperling Road directly even by pedestrian access.
- To have a variety of entry points does not lead to security for the residents on the site. Nor for the neighbours whose gardens back on to it. Such a provision would lead to this becoming a crime hot spot and a new access to get over the wall into back gardens in Sperling Road where those residents will be extremely vulnerable to burglary. The burglars may not be noticed by neighbours unlike any attempt to break in from the front in a street with a high footfall day and night and regular passing traffic. The present high security fencing attached to the PO wall is likely to be dismantled should the site become residential with disastrous results for Sperling Road residents. Many insurance companies no longer insure car owners in N17 and that is likely to affect properties if the LBH proposals are brought into effect.
- Far from creating a nice place to live the proposals are likely to destroy a nice place to live.
- “Designing in crime” and loss of security for residents whose gardens back on to the PO site with its high security fencing. In recent years the alleyways in Sperling Road running along the end of the gardens in Moorefield Road up to the PO boundary wall, originally for coal deliveries, were gated and locked which led to a dramatic reduction in burglaries. Now the statistics produced for Safer Neighbourhood Policing meetings in the form of a Ward street map with symbols for specific crimes entered at the exact location of each crime show that burglary is a rare crime in Sperling Road. This situation will be reversed if “permeability” is insisted upon.
- Also compromising the security of those who would reside in the proposed development. Ignoring a fundamental principle of English law that “an Englishman’s home is his castle”.

- I am concerned that the proposed access to Sperling Road (through the school playground and part of Bruce Grove Wood) is really a “code” for CPO opportunities for demolishing houses, without alerting the public to this possibility and thus avoid objections on the ground. I was disappointed that at a public meeting (17/02/14) senior officers from the Planning Department were unable to allay my fears on this issue when this point was put to them in plain terms.

Personal statement

- I came to Sperling Road from Buckinghamshire to reduce my commuting time. It has good public transport to the City and to mainline railway stations which I use frequently in the course of my work.
- It is a great amenity to have a house with a long garden backing onto woodland and with a fine view of majestic mature trees and long enough to have sunlight all the year round in the rear half.
- An early Google Earth ariel photograph shows the triangle of backland between Sperling Road, Woodside Gardens, Bruce Grove and Moorefields Road to be densely wooded, as were many of the gardens backing on to it including Sperling Road.
- Many of the gardens in Sperling Road backing on to it were filled with scrubs. This wood plus gardens supported an abundance of bird life and insect life. Owls, woodpeckers, wood pigeon, jays and nightingales were present in addition to the regular garden birds – blackbirds, robins, wrens and sparrows. The sound of birdsong in the back garden was a welcome respite from the local sterile streets. The area was quiet and calming after the long hours of the professional working day.
- Over the years there has been a loss of trees due to both natural events – storms and late ariel frosts just as the leaves were opening – and from the illegal felling of trees – particularly on the land designated as Bruce Grove Wood. There was also a clearance of lower level vegetation around the semi derelict workshops on the land now occupied by Champa Close prior to them being used for illegal purposes. The loss of

trees and scrubs led to an increase in traffic noise and the loss of many birds – owls, woodpeckers, nightingales as their habitat was destroyed. The great flocks of sparrows also disappeared but for no obvious reason.

- One of the very recent additions to the bird population is the arrival of Blackcaps in the last three-four years in Sperling Road back gardens which is due to the group of well stocked mature gardens mid terrace which together give these song birds the habitat they need. This is based entirely on 4 or 5 gardens so it is just large enough to be viable but is fragile and could be destroyed very easily by development works on the proposed site or by further neighbours exercising permitted development rights to an abusive extent and concreting over their back gardens and building sheds for beds.

Natural light, space, greenery and birds singing.

These are the qualities which led to me moving into Sperling Road and which I do not want to see being destroyed.

ALISON ARMOUR

This submission is endorsed by my neighbours

JOEL and KATHARINE JARDINE

6th March 2014

Confirmed 4th March 2016