

# **FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD**

## **Haringey Local Plan: Sites Allocation DPD, 2015**

### **Comments on Site SA46: Summersby Road, Highgate**

The Friends of Queen's Wood are a group of local residents with about 200 families in membership who work closely with the council to protect and enhance the wood, and provide educational and social events in the wood. We are therefore concerned that any proposed development bordering the wood will not damage its environment or amenity value as a much loved piece of ancient woodland.

This development site is based on Site HG5 in the 2014 consultation document. In spite of comments then that the proposals were excessive and would dominate and spoil the wood, the site for development has been increased by 250%, and now includes a section of the open space itself. We are therefore objecting strongly to the proposals, and note that they are contrary to the council's policies as described elsewhere in the consultation document.

The basic description of the site is wrong. It states that the current use is as a builder's yard, and that ownership is a single private freehold. In its new area, the builder's yard is less than a third of the total, and is owned separately from the housing that occupies a larger area.

In addition, the site is stated to be in N8, when it is completely within N6.

#### **Compartment M**

The extension of the site to the north and east now includes the area of open space considered to be part of Queens Wood, and known as Compartment M in the council-approved Queens Wood Management Plan. It is now proposed to be developed for high-density housing, with the statement here that this is the place for higher development of up to seven storeys. Such development would be highly visible in a large area of the wood, and would be within a metre of the Capital Ring path.

The proposed Development Guidelines add the caveat in referring to this area by saying: *There is a section of heavily wooded Metropolitan SINC-protected land in the north east corner of the site. The impact on this woodland, and Queens Wood, of removing any of these trees will need to be carefully considered in any decision to remove trees in this SINC area.*

In fact the area is clearly marked on the Local Plan map as not only a SINC of Metropolitan Importance, but also Metropolitan Open Land. Queens Wood is also listed as a Historic Park and a Local Nature Reserve.

Section SP6 – Open Space and Biodiversity – of the Local Plan: Strategic Policy includes the following.

*6.3.3 The Council will protect the Borough's designated and other open spaces as well as other suitable land with the potential to be used as an open space. Development will not be permitted on these open spaces...*

*6.3.11. Metropolitan Open Land is defined as open land within a built-up area which has wider than borough significance. It receives the same presumption against development as Green Belt land.*

*The council will protect existing MOL and resist any inappropriate development.*

The details within Policy DM25 Nature Conservation and Policy DM26 Open Space make it clear that new housing development will not be permitted on MOL or SINC land.

From all of this it is clear that development on Compartment M is against the policy of both the Council and the London Plan.

#### The rest of Site SA 46.

It is not only open spaces that are directly protected from development, but ADJACENT areas have additional limits placed on them. This will affect the rest of the proposed site as it is adjacent to Compartment M and the rest of Queens Wood.

Para 6.3.3 of the Local Plan: Strategic Policies notes that:

*'The council will only allow development ....adjacent to an open space that does not detract from the overall openness and character of the site.....or harms the public enjoyment.'*

The guidelines for SA46 do not respect this. Instead they say:

Higher development may be possible at the eastern side of the site, taking into account the impact of the slope. Seven stories may be possible here.

The suggestion is thus that the highest buildings of all should be next to the Wood. This would seriously affect the amenity value of the open space, being visible from a considerable distance and looming over the trees. They would destroy the value of the wood as being away from the built environment and providing a relaxing contrast.

Such high development to the south and west of the wood would also seriously affect the ecology, by creating shadows and reducing the sunlight for a considerable distance into the wood. As such it is not acceptable next to a designated Nature Reserve and SINC.

Any development should be of low height, no more than three storeys near the Wood, but could be higher further into the site.

David Warren  
Friends of Queens Wood

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