

Haringey Planning Policy  
River Park House  
225 High Road  
London  
N22 8HQ

27 March 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Harington Scheme's response to the Local Plan consultation (Site Allocations Development Plan Document) is attached.

Yours faithfully,

TONY BAKER  
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES



*learning to grow, growing to learn*

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## HARINGEY SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD CONSULTATION DOCUMENT –

The Harington Scheme wishes to offer comments on SA 45: Highgate Bowl.

We are glad to see that the Highgate Bowl is to be redefined as Significant Local Open Land. We had hoped that this would protect the whole of our site from rapacious developers, but the SA 45 suggests that only the lower part of our site, where we undertake a large part of our horticultural training, and the locally listed walled garden which we also use for horticultural training, will be classified as Significant Local Open Land. The map is less clear what designation is to be given to that part of our site where we have our main classrooms and offices.

The introduction to SA 45 talks about “limited redevelopment of Townsend and Duke’s Head Yards”. The upper part of the Harington Scheme where we have our main buildings (indicated by a circle in Fig.1 below) is not and has never been part of Duke’s Head Yard, yet it appears to have been excluded from the proposed Significant Local Open Land.



**Fig. 1 Map section showing upper site**

The Harington Scheme operates under a one-year rolling agricultural lease. We have been negotiating for some years with the NHS, most recently with NHS Property Services Limited, to acquire the freehold at an affordable price related to its agricultural use. This would give us the demonstrable security of tenure that would enable us to raise funds and proceed with our plans to improve our facilities, increase our intake of learners and so provide greater public benefits.

NHS Property Services recognise the value of the work of the Harington Scheme and accept that it has to be accommodated on its existing site. However, they have felt it necessary to check that there is not some potential for residential development which would enable them to sell the site to a developer. They, therefore, commissioned architects to produce development proposals that would provide some housing while meeting the Harington Scheme’s need for more office and classroom space.

We have had to tell NHS Property Services that their proposals are wholly unacceptable for a number of reasons:

- The current mixed use of the upper part of the site “Plot C” is very well suited to working with young people with learning disabilities/difficulties. It comprises useful horticultural areas that are accessible for people with mobility issues interspersed with educational facilities (classrooms/offices). This creates an ‘open’ feel to the site which many learners find an attractive alternative to dense classroom accommodation as found in colleges. The layout and nature of the outdoor areas also allows several groups to work in relatively close proximity without feeling confined or distracted by others;
- We would lose the walled garden to the residents. The walled garden is an essential resource for Harington – used to train our horticultural students in how to maintain a formal garden (it provides the only possible area on the site for mowing practice); and for various Harington events (it is the only place where we can erect a marquee and hold our prize-giving);
- We would lose our glasshouse, also a valuable teaching resource, and a particularly valuable asset during wet weather when students cannot work on the plots on the lower site;
- Losing all of the existing courtyard would leave us with severely inadequate external space in the area of the classrooms for social interaction in breaks;
- Residents’ flats would be immediately above classrooms. This could make it difficult to safeguard our vulnerable learners;
- The whole upper site would effectively be a building site for a long period. This would deter parents and learners from joining the Harington Scheme. We would then lose funding and have to lay off staff. (We are now a significant employer, employing 40 staff.)

We hope that we have persuaded NHS Property Services Ltd that the upper part of our site is simply too small to be able to accommodate residential development without a very significant detrimental effect on the operation of the charity.

The Harington Scheme has been successfully providing education and training to young adults with learning difficulties for 35 years. We are an established part of the State educational system. We ask Haringey Council to recognise the public benefit that we provide and make it clear that they do not wish to see any commercial and residential development on our site; and either to include all of the upper part in the Significant Local Open Land or to “zone” the area where we have our main buildings and the glasshouse as being for educational use.