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## The Friends of Finsbury Park

Manor House Lodge  
Seven Sisters Road  
London N4 2DE

Patron  
The Right Honourable  
Jeremy Corbyn MP



### **RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION OF THE HARINGEY LOCAL PLAN - SITE ALLOCATIONS IMPACTING ON FINSBURY PARK**

Many thanks for inviting the Friends of Finsbury Park (FOFP) to comment on the Haringey Local Plan.

This is the first occasion on which we have been formally invited to comment and we are grateful that this previous oversight has now been remedied.

**The three sites relevant to Finsbury Park are site allocation SA 36 : FINSBURY PARK BOWLING ALLEY (ROWANS) , SA 29 : ARENA RETAIL PARK and SA 37 : 18-20 STROUD GREEN ROAD. Our Comments on these follow.**

#### **SA36: FINSBURY PARK BOWLING ALLEY (ROWANS)**

We are grateful to Councillor Demirci and his Planning Department colleagues for meeting with the Friends of Finsbury Park on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 to discuss our concerns over this proposed development.

We were very pleased to receive assurances from Councillor Demirci that the Site Allocations document had been amended to remove all areas of Finsbury Park, (i.e. including all Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and Parkland Walk land), from inclusion in the proposed development.

We were further heartened to receive undertakings from Councillor Demirci that, if the plan to redevelop the Rowans site were to go ahead, no part of Finsbury Park would, even temporarily, be used for access to, or as part of, any construction site.

The Friends of Finsbury Park are concerned about the potential detrimental impact on Finsbury Park arising from any major redevelopment of this site. We consequently wish to formally OPPOSE the proposed development on the following grounds. (Our comments refer to the latest version of the plan)

1. All reference to the height of the proposed buildings has been removed, other than where you state that “taller buildings will be permitted on either side of the new

entrance.....This site may be suitable for a tall building if designed in accordance with DM6”.

It is our view that any building higher than the low-level barrel-roofed Rowans would lead to a loss of amenity to the users of Finsbury Park. A tall building on this site would dominate Finsbury Park. This is the only point on the entire perimeter of Finsbury Park where a building (Rowans) directly borders the park and the replacement of Rowans with any higher structure would clearly adversely affect the park. The markedly increased overshadowing resulting from such a development would be very detrimental to the park amenity and would seriously compromise options for full use of this area of the park.

2. The new vaunted entrance to Finsbury Park is represented as some sort of ‘Champs de Finsbury’. In reality, it would, if the previous plan is anything to go by, be a narrow wind corridor which would predominantly serve as a service/access road to the proposed new buildings. The claim that it would provide an improved and more direct access to Finsbury Park from Finsbury Park Station would only be correct if it was very much wider and if TFL abandoned Station Place and it were turned into a pedestrian piazza. This is a wonderful prospect but clearly one that cannot be realised as TFL have made it clear that they will not be giving up Station Place and that they see it as essential to the smooth running of bus services from Finsbury Park Station. As this is likely to remain the case, the most direct pedestrian route into Finsbury Park from the Station is the existing one via the entrance adjacent to the cycle park. Access via the newly sighted entrance would require a longer walk. There is also a false impression created that, under the proposed development, a greener prospect would confront people as they exit the Station. In fact, the present tree canopy clearly visible above Rowans presents a much greener outlook than the one achieved once tall buildings blocked out most of the tree canopy and it was replaced with just a limited and narrow view at the end of the proposed new entrance. The artists impression (given with earlier designs for the site) seeks to enhance this view by miraculously removing the extensive metal canopy from the front of the station; a most unlikely prospect, and markedly exaggerating the width of the new entrance.
3. The absence of a more detailed plan makes it very difficult to visualise what is proposed and therefore it is more difficult for us to make any detailed or fully informed comment on any design or overlooking issues.
4. The loss of the Rowans leisure amenity (even if only during the construction phase) would be regrettable; particularly as Finsbury Park is lacking many such facilities.
5. Rowans is a ‘Landmark’ building which (with its low barrel-roof) provides a harmonious transition from the built environment to the Park environment. It does not significantly overshadow the Park or intrude sufficiently to have a seriously detrimental effect on the Park amenity.
6. The noise, dust and pollution from construction vehicles immediately adjacent to the park would blight this end of Finsbury Park for its users for a lengthy period.
7. We wonder why the ‘stepping-down’ of height levels (under earlier drafts) was more marked toward Seven Sisters Road than where the proposed buildings would directly overlook the park. The impact of the buildings is clearly greatest where they meet the park perimeter.
8. In an earlier draft of the Site Allocations Document we noted that the site was listed as not having attracted a significant number of responses. We wonder whether this is

mainly attributable to the fact that there is very low awareness of this proposal among local communities. That the site is at the junction of three boroughs is clearly also a factor. The Tri-Borough Regeneration initiative started well, with presentations including representatives of all three boroughs. Unfortunately, this tri-borough approach was quickly abandoned and this must have had some impact on awareness and thus responses. At a recent meeting of the Finsbury Park Station Users Group, it was clear that very few local people were aware of the proposed redevelopment of the Rowans site. We suggest that Haringey consults much more widely with Hackney and Islington residents to establish a better understanding of community feeling.

### **SA 29: ARENA RETAIL PARK**

Our concerns here relate to the inclusion of the corner of Finsbury Park at the junction of Green Lanes and Endymion Road.

Is this for a proposed new entrance? We have ourselves regularly proposed the creation of a new entrance gate near this junction.

Why is Finsbury Park related in any way to the proposed Arena Park Development?

We would robustly oppose any proposed loss of Finsbury Park Land (MOL) resulting from this proposal or any use of park land to facilitate the Arena development.

Please can you confirm that there will be no loss of MOL.

### **SA 37: 18-20 STROUD GREEN ROAD**

Our concerns here centre on the height and scale of the proposed development as it will be clearly visible from Finsbury Park. We would like to see some reference inserted along the lines that 'Any proposed development should consider the impact, in terms of height, scale and massing, on nearby Finsbury Park to ensure that the development does not adversely impact the amenity provided by this Metropolitan Open Land'. A development which harmonised with the height and mass of the recent nearby Jones Bros development would probably be acceptable. We are surprised that Finsbury Park is not mentioned under the 'Planning designations' section. Could 'Adjacent to Finsbury park which is Metropolitan Open Land', or something similar, be added please?

Please provide clarification as to whether the London Plan includes any guidelines on the development of sites immediately adjacent to Parks.

Many thanks for inviting us to participate in this consultation. We look forward to being further consulted at all future stages,

We would be happy to meet with Councillors Demirci and Strickland and their officials at any time to discuss these proposals further.

Yours Sincerely,

Tom Palin

Chair

The Friends of Finsbury Park

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