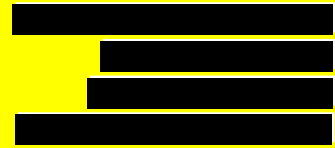


Fui Amevor
Chair
Wood Green Shopping City Estate
Tenants Association



FAO: Beth Kay and Councillor Joe Goldberg
Local Plan Consultation
Planning Policy
Haringey Council
River Park House
225 High Road
Wood Green
N22 8HQ

28 April 2017

Re: Objections to the Wood Green Area Action Plan (AAP)

Dear Beth and Joe,

On behalf of the Wood Green Shopping City Estate (Sky City) Tenants Association, I submit some of our objections to the Wood Green Area Action Plan (AAP).

1. Consultation process

We (Tenants) have not had enough time to look into and understand the effect the plans will have on our local community. There have been two poorly run consultations that did not provide real consultations to local people. For example, the first consultation did not include the correct maps of the AAP area. The second consultation did not acknowledge the faults or shortcomings of the first consultation. Therefore, the same mistakes were made the second time. Especially in relation to not properly informing tenants in of the consultation and biased remarks by some Council Officers. Both poorly run consultations have been rushed, and local people have not had a real opportunity to digest the information, and or provide substantive responses. I have expressed this to Councillor Joe Goldberg, Beth Kay, Pippa Gueterbock, Emma Rawlinson and other Haringey Council (the Council) officers in meetings last month.

We would like the Council to provide additional information about the 1000 or so people who were part of the initial survey, regarding the AAP. We would like to know how many of those people who took part in the survey, live in the AAP area, and whose homes would be demolished if the AAP goes ahead.

There has not been a valid consultation on the AAP, the consultation period has been extended, but only by one month. If the consultation period had been extended by the suggested 3 months. Tenants and residents who are affected would be better placed to enter into a positive and meaningful dialogue with the Council about the AAP if it had been extended for 3 months. We would like the Council to extend the Consultation for an additional 2 months, after the General Election.

With the additional uncertainty of who will be in government on June 9 2017. The Council should provide local people with more time to make substantive responses to the AAP.

On The Wood Green Shopping City Estate (Sky City), we have tenants from a wide range of communities, who speak a range of different languages. English is not the first language for many people who live in Sky City. No information regarding the consultation or AAP was translated in any other languages. We only received one letter, in April regarding a meeting which had two other languages with it. This is not appropriate, and demonstrates the additional shortcomings of the consultation process. Local people, for whom English is not their first language, should have been provided with all the relevant information, in their primary language. On our estate we have at least 5 different languages that are spoken. Without access to the AAP information, many tenants have not had the opportunity to properly make their own individual objections to the AAP.

The Council have not properly communicated the AAP to tenants, the Council have assumed that we should all know what is happening. The Council have not taken into account the cultural nuances when communicating with our tenants. In some cultures where men and women can have very different gender roles and cultural norms.

The Council did not consider this when they brought a translator to the first meeting they had with tenants in late March. At the second meeting there was a different interpreter, a woman who not only understood the culture differences, and also ensured the meeting was slowed down to enable her to translate what was being said to other women.

The lack of understanding of the diverse nature of the tenants on the estate has led to additional confusion about the AAP. This confusion has left tenants very worried, scared and anxious about their homes.

As nothing has been properly explained. Instead there is an assumption that information has been sent out, all tenants have received it, and should know what it means. This is not the case. The Council should spend more time informing all tenants from all backgrounds, in the different languages about the affect the AAP.

2. An Alternative AAP

As the CrossRail2 decision has not been approved, and CrossRail2's own consultation promotes the Turnpike Lane and Alexandra Palace option. Haringey Council should create a new AAP, which uses the Localism Act to involve local people who will be affected by the plans to purposefully contribute to a new AAP.

There is already a popular and thriving community here, demolishing the mall, is likely to lead to similar problems that affected the first development.

Haringey has one of the highest rates of inequality throughout the London, going forward with the current AAP will exacerbate those inequalities further. Working with local people and partners to create a new AAP, can provide a positive solution to the challenges the Borough faces. Without having to demolish the Mall and or the homes in the surrounding area.

This will help secure the homes of Housing Association tenants, as well as residents from Caxton and Mayes Road.

We would like the Council to confirm that they, the Councillors or the Council officers, have not been embargoed with any information regarding the final decision of where the new station will be. In meetings with Council officers in March, some senior Council officers implied they have been given information by CrossRail 2 and the Growth Commission that the Cross Rail 2 station will be in Wood Green.

3. Urban Infill & Brownfields Redevelopment

There are approximately 301 tenants of Metropolitan Housing Trust, and Sanctuary Housing Association that will be affected by the AAP. As well as the homes in Caxton and Mayes Road, who will be displaced if the AAP goes ahead.

Rather than continue with the Council's preferred option, the Council should make alternative plans based on Urban Infill and Brownfields Redevelopment. The Council own substantial plots of land that are worth as much as the amount of money if not more than the investment being sought from developers like Lendlease. The Council should make a new AAP that takes into account the historical significance of the current properties, and recognises it's cultural heritage to Wood Green.

A new AAP which is focused on keeping the Mall, and homes in Caxton and Mayes Road, will enable planners to make use of the land the Council currently owns, and maximise the benefit to Wood Green. A plan focussed on urban infill and brownfields redevelopment, will provide a better environment for Wood Green, and minimise the risk of the Council repeating the problems of the last major redevelopment in Wood Green.

The AAP does not have enough information about promoting the development of urban landfill and brownfield sites. There is too much focus on demolition of businesses that are beginning to thrive again, and local people's homes. This has been a message promoted by Council officers. This is both an unfair and biased message, which has been used to justify the flawed consultation processes.

In recent years, Wood Green has continued to recover and gain more recognition from retailers and investors. The current plan adds further risks to investment to Wood Green as a Metropolitan Town Centre, and creates uncertainty to the area which is seeing positive improvements, growth and confidence.

4. Inequality

The current plan will lead to increased health, housing and employment inequalities. Haringey has long been recognised as one of the London Boroughs with the highest levels of inequality. The current plans will exacerbate the levels of inequality in the area, if they go ahead.

The continuation of rising house prices in an uncertain economy risks putting Wood Green into further inequality, especially amongst ethnic minority communities, as we those who are affected most by this most.

Housing, Health, and Employment outcomes for tenants and residents are already some of the worst in London. If the current plans go ahead, they will make this better only for the professionals who the Council hope to attract, and a lot worse for the current tenants and residents who live in the area.

We would like to see a plan of how the Council will address the key foundational structures of housing, health and employment inequality for those who are most affected by it in the Borough. The current plan makes a lot of promises, however, this was also the case when the Wood Green Shopping City was created. What we saw were Council plans that did not come to fruition. In this plan there is an even greater risk of the Council repeating the same mistakes that were made in the past. Namely, but not limited to the choice of their preferred developer, Lendlease.

Rather than demolish the Mall, and the homes in Caxton and Mayes Road. The Council should look at other ways to improve the Mall site, working with Capital & Regional, Metropolitan, developers and local people to do this. The Mall site and the housing above is in need of improvements. However, the Council should be more proactive in holding local housing providers like Metropolitan to account for the lack of investment in their housing stock. The Council has the power to do this, and improve the local area through urban infill and brownfields site development. The Council should use the powers to promote the ensure the positive development of the area, without causing stress, inconvenience and upset to local people.

5. A Transfer Guarantee

If the AAP is approved we would like the Council and other stakeholders to provide a legally binding transfer guarantee, which guarantees the following:

- A continuation of the current tenure rights of all those tenants affected by the AAP;
- Confirmation of the Council's legal position, Metropolitan Housing Trust and Sanctuary Housing Association's legal position in relation to whose responsibility it is to rehouse tenants.
- A right to return for all tenants affected by the AAP;
- Like for like homes for tenants all affected by the AAP;
- Translated documents in the languages that the local community use;
- Meetings to explain the process (with translators);
- A clear set of relocation costs;
- A clear set of decant costs;

- Confirmation that the Council have the homes available to tenants within their allocation scheme;
- Confirmation of where those homes are in Wood Green;
- Confirmation that we will continue to have open and green spaces;
- Confirmation of who within the Council has the legal authority to make the transfer guarantee;
- Confirmation of the stock management protocols between Haringey Council and our landlord Metropolitan Housing Trust Ltd (Metropolitan) with regards to the referrals of People in housing needs who were rehoused in the stock;
- Confirmation of the allocation policy for tenants of Sky City and Page High;
- A clear set of housing numbers detailing how many homes will be affordable, with target rents;
- A clear set of housing numbers detailing how many homes will be social homes, with target rents;
- A clear set of housing numbers detailing how many homes will be social homes, with social rents;
- A provision for tenants who enter into leasehold agreements, preventing the freehold owner selling their freehold interest to other parties.
- Ring fenced funding arrangements to secure the cost to Haringey Council, to ensure Haringey Council can meet the costs of the affected tenants tenure rights;
- A Community space to replace the loss of the Sky City Community Centre;
- A Play area and open space to replace the loss of the Children's play area; and
- A clear process plan that sets out in detail what will happen, when, and where if the AAP goes ahead.

The lack of guarantees and certainty does not help curb fears, that there will be a repeat of the negative experiences of tenants and residents of the Heygate, West Hendon and many other estates in London. Where promises made to tenants and residents have not been kept.

Haringey Council's marketing literature suggests that £3.5 Billion worth of investment will come to Wood Green. The number of homes we are asking the Council to provide guarantees for, is low in comparison to the number of homes Haringey Council plan on building. This guarantee should be provided to all those affected by the AAP. The Council are driving this plan forward, therefore, if the AAP is approved. The Council should ring fence enough money and resources to ensure the homes of tenants are secured with a Transfer Guarantee.

Haringey has significant land stock, which it can use to better negotiate with developers about the potential redevelopment opportunities in the area. The Council should renegotiate their agreements, and aim to preserve the heritage of the high street, the homes within, and around it. Rather focus on a plan to demolish the area and destroy local communities.

If the plans go ahead, I would like the above guarantees drafted in a legally binding transfer guarantee agreement, which will also be binding on any developer who the Council contract with.

Haringey Council are promoting a very big and ambitious project, we would like more time to meet with Haringey Councillors and Haringey Council officers to voice our concerns, and request the transfer guarantee to be included in the plan AAP if it goes ahead.

I requested a three-month extension to the consultation, however the AAP team have given us a one-month extension. This is not long enough to respond to the AAP. A longer extension would have given more opportunities for local people to be better understand and be engaged with the process. We would like to see the AAP consultation extended.

6. S106 Agreement

The Council have made no mention of the Section 106 agreement that saw the construction of the shopping city in exchange for free land on which the Shopping City was built, in exchange for social housing. We would like to see this provision enforced to secure the homes on our estate.

Please accept my apologies for any spelling and or grammatical errors. I have not had enough time to properly proof read these objections. With respect, in large part due to the rushed consultation.

Yours Sincerely,

Fui Amevor

Chair of the Wood Green Shopping City Estate Tenants Association