

## **STNF response to CIP consultation: key points. 23.04.2015.**

- **General**

- STNF propose a (possible first phase) minimum impact development to realise the finance. (previously estimated at £8 million). to rebuild Edith Neville School. Such an option should be included within the 3rd round of CIP consultation
- STNF support a local lettings policy linked to the provision of new affordable housing in the Neighbourhood . For that policy to be effective, the new housing has to be genuinely affordable to those living in the Neighbourhood.
- STNF support environmental improvements and the early designation of Local Green Space as defined in paras 76 - 78 of the NPPF
- Valuable Public assets are being sold to provide public services. Therefore the public has a right to fully understand the costs and benefits associated with this proposal. STNF request an open book policy.
- Somers Town is a complex mosaic of places and people – it is not one homogenous neighbourhood. The implications of this, at both the strategic and very local scale should be recognised in planning new development.
- This is a developer's master plan not a local planning framework. There is no reference to adopted planning strategies e.g. for green spaces, housing etc.
- A copy of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan was sent to Camden Planners in December 2014. The basis of the Neighbourhood Plan is that, rather than be "squeezed out", people want to stay in Somers Town and be able to help themselves. This is a bold and intelligent vision . The CIP can provide a mechanism to realise that vision. As such , a rare, high profile model opportunity is opened up for innovative ways and means of planning , delivering and managing sustainable inner city regeneration in London

- **Central space / community hub**

- The reinstatement of a community hub / active space, St Aloyious Nursery School and Plot 10 in the centre of Somers Town is welcomed.
- Proposed housing block adjoining 'community hub' proposals is too high blocking views through and open aspect to the green space. Suggestion that the buildings could be 'flipped' over so that the taller building continued the line of the school sports hall on the Chalton Street edge of the development.
- Is there a need for additional 'community hall' space in this development? A new central hall will not fulfil the same needs currently met by spaces and facilities like estate courtyards, tenants halls etc, especially for people with limited mobility.

- **Coopers Lane / Purchase Street Park**

- Coopers Lane appears to be shouldering the greatest burden of development without any obvious gains. Residents have already suffered many years of construction work which has had significant impacts on health and well-being.
- A 20+ storey building on Brill Place is unacceptable. Although focussing on lower buildings along the Brill Place boundary may be a solution to raise the finance to rebuild the school without building on other areas of the park or elsewhere within the CIP area.
- The demolition of Coopers Lane Tenants Hall and Community Garden is unacceptable. The central hub will not fulfil the needs currently met by the Hall and money and time can be saved by avoiding the need to rebuild both of them. It is factually incorrect and unhelpful to describe Management of these facilities as a "threat" .
- As a semi Radburn style layout, Coopers Lane and Purchase Street Park are part of one development concept and should not be not treated separately now. It is a 6 acre site comprising 4 acres of housing and 2 of corresponding open space. The proposals for flats on the park will separate existing residents from the open space.
- Purchase Street Open Space is described by the consultants as "In daytime, a pleasant leafy park. Good tree cover provides plenty of shade in the summer." This accords with the proposed role assigned to this open space within the Neighbourhood Plan .There would therefore seem to be little need for major additional landscaping investment here, apart from that required to address some concerns about the nighttime environment , particularly in the vicinity of the Brill Place / Purchase Street junction.

- **Housing**

- 50% affordable housing – and assurances that this will not be reduced as in the Argent / Kings Cross example.
- Local allocations policy is welcomed.
- 80% of market rent in Somers Town is not affordable to local people in real need of such housing- Affordability needs to be re-assessed against average Neighbourhood household income.
- Empty investment properties and pied a terre uses are not acceptable.
- Alternative delivery models should be thoroughly explored to achieve greater housing equality and security for local people.

- **Edith Neville Primary School / Intermediate Zone**

- The rebuilding of the school through selling and developing public assets is largely accepted but should not result in flooding Somers Town with market value properties unattainable for all but the very wealthy.

- The increase in public space for park is welcomed. However, the existing defined pedestrian and cycle routes recently restored above the combined heat and power system, plus proposed Educational Play area , might well suggest it be designed , laid out and managed as an Intermediate Zone between Purchase Street Park and the Polygon Road Community Hub . Every opportunity should be secured to provide additional planting in this area.
- There isn't anyone who doesn't agree that the school needs to be rebuilt but there are other ways of doing this. Given the precedent set at St Mary St Pancras PS and at the Kings Cross Academy currently being built on the Kings Cross Railway Lands, STNF considers it logical to have housing over at least part of Edith Neville School – no convincing opposing reason has been given for this to date . Such housing could wholly or in part , incorporate an element of Key Worker eg Teacher, accommodation. It might well be located at a point above school buildings which maximised orientation and security within the Intermediate Zone , at the School entrance and at the intersection of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on Purchase Street .
- **Opportunities for Hard and Soft Landscaping**
  1. Characterise and enhance the use, enjoyment and beauty of each Public Open Space
  2. Provide safe and clear connections between them
  3. Recognise / indicate that some of these connections serve a wider purpose assisting strategic north - south and east - west pedestrian movement within Somers Town and beyond eg to St Pancras Gardens and the Regents Canal
  4. Contribute to Greening / Environmental objectives set out in National , Regional and Borough policy.

MSP 24.04.2015