

MINUTES

The Marylebone Forum committee meeting

Tuesday 25 May 2021, 8.30 – 9.30

Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees

1. Penny Alexander (PA)
2. Guy Austin (GA)
3. Michael Bolt (MB)
4. Sarah Buttleman (SB)
5. Kay Buxton (KB)
6. Sheila D'Souza (SD)
7. Canon Stephen Evans (SE)
8. Amanda Feeny
9. Rosa Han (RH)
10. Ann-Marie Johnson (AM)
11. Christian Lock-Necrews (CL)
12. Simon Loomes (SL)
13. Andrea Merrington (AM)
14. Yael Saunders (Chair) (YS)
15. Steve Wong (SW)

Apologies

1. Alan Bristow
2. Hanna Corney
3. Mark Gazaleh
4. Ian Macpherson

MINUTES:

Welcome, apologies, thanks – Recording of meeting

YS welcomed all to the meeting and announced apologies. Confirmed that the group were happy for the meeting to be recorded.

Minutes of 28 April 2021, updates

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Neighbourhood Plan (Andrea Merrington)

AM presented an updated version of the draft neighbourhood plan, with a simplified layout and clearer structure. A ten year plan date has been added along with a foreword and executive summary. There is also a page set aside for current planning frameworks, making it clear that the neighbourhood plan fits within these and the existing policies set out in the Mayor's London Plan and WCC's new City Plan.

AM is open to comments and discussion on the wording - the aim was to create more clearer foundations for the plan. There is a page set aside for each of the following draft policies along with an additional page for justification (for most, this is yet to be confirmed):

1. Open Spaces and Trees – outlining support for protecting and enhancing existing open spaces, seeking opportunities to improve accessibility and usability, and creating new opportunities for greening and tree planting. Also sets out requirements for new developments in terms of landscaping and greening.
2. Play Space – needs reframing and expanding on. Currently highlights the need to enhance provision of play space and requirements for new developments.
3. Basements – needs more discussion to ensure that there is sufficient evidence base and that it fits in with policy already set out in the adopted City Plan. AM has updated the draft in line with Class E requirements.
4. Car parking – Car Club membership has been added to the previous draft as well as a point seeking to reduce kerbside parking areas to improve public realm, greening, charging points, cycle parking and pocket parks.
5. Small business use – three draft policies have been suggested by Gerald Eve. These need to be checked against new Class E policies as well as the adopted City Plan to see if there is space within these existing frameworks. Justification for this policy includes small business premises contributing to Marylebone's character and the recent loss of these spaces to larger open plan units. This policy will need checking against market trends and City Plan changes.
6. Small retail use – draft policies suggested by Gerald Eve include a requirement for a range of unit sizes to be incorporated into larger developments as well as meanwhile/ temporary uses within vacant units to be encouraged. As above these need to comply with Class E and City Plan policies.
7. Edgware Road – placeholder for policy to be determined by insight study.
8. Sustainability in Marylebone – this could be broken down to multiple policies. Needs to conform with WCC's new Environment SPD that is out for consultation until the end of June

2021. Suggested policies include support to alterations of existing buildings that reduce energy demand and improve environmental sustainability.

Monitoring & Review pages will outline continuous review of policies to ensure that they continue to comply with changing frameworks.

Discussion points:

- YS thanked AM for turning the draft plan into a more manageable document that can be taken forward. SL, PA, CLN, also add their thanks to AM for the work putting this together.
- AJ spotted some grammatical errors – will email to AM.
- KB explained that feedback from WCC on Edgware Road insight study has been received. They are currently working through the comments but there has been some concern noted over the lack of sustainability and acknowledgement of the climate emergency as a common thread throughout the study – eg. green transport, air quality data. WCC are keen for this to be included although it wasn't in the original brief. SL commented that while sustainability is becoming a focus for WCC, with the Environmental SPD currently out for consultation, this wasn't the case when the Edgware Road insight study was commissioned. However, greening and sustainability is a very common thread within the draft neighbourhood plan so it is possible to bring this together in response to WCC's comments.
- SE congratulated AM and commented that the draft has a positive feel to it and very succinct. SE's concern is that the plan has been in draft for many years and progress hampered by external plans and policy changes. Is it possible to now get a realistic timeframe in place to ensure that this momentum isn't lost? There is always the option to add to the plan as time passes. SL agrees. YS also agrees – the committee can now get behind these agreed policies to move forward. While the scope may be smaller than some had initially wanted, it is now clearer that these draft policies fit within existing constraints and frameworks. AM suggested September to have a public consultation on draft plan. KB expressed concern that WCC's approval of the Edgware Road insight study may not have been received by September. SE responded that this should not hold up progress. YS agreed that we should aim for September and see where we get to.
- SD added thanks to AM for making the plan real and manageable. Keen to see air quality feature as part of the Edgware Road policies.
- AM asked about next steps. At what point should Gerald Eve be asked to step in? It was agreed that GA, SL, PA, SL, SW and SE will join AM in forming a planning sub-committee to take forward.

ACTION:

- **Neighbourhood Plan sub committee to meet to discuss progressing the plan with an aim for public consultation in September**

Accounts

The committee approved the accounts up to August 2020.

PA asked about directors' insurance as there was no mention of this on the accounts. Those representing businesses and corporate bodies are already protected by their organisation's insurance, however this isn't the case for those residents that have a director role and this leads to

concerns about liability. SL thinks that this insurance is essential and would be worth exploring costs. SL will investigate and come back to the group at the next meeting.

MB agreed and commented that this has been discussed a lot in the past. This leads to questions about the need to source additional funding for this along with for other outgoings. For example, who will pick up the cost of Gerald Eve's input into the Neighbourhood Plan? SL confirmed that The Portman Estate is happy to fund Gerald Eve. The cost of this will be determined by how much of their input is required which will need to be discussed by the Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee.

ACTION:

- **SL to investigate directors' insurance and come back to the group at the next meeting.**
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Website draft text and update

YS circulated the latest draft of the website text prior to the meeting. Comments as follows:

- PA suggested that there needs to be a cross check with AM's draft neighbourhood plan to ensure that the text is up to date.
- MB asked about the photos – would those included in the draft be used on the site. The image of busy alfresco dining will be unpopular with some residents. YS confirmed that those in the draft are solely there as place holders and that new images will be sought, for example from some of the successful CIL funding projects.
- SD suggested that the word 'all' be removed from the sentence 'we identified the following core themes which underpin all of the work we do and projects that we support' as this may limit future projects and activities.
- KB asked where the store of photos that was collated when the old site was created has gone. Could these along with previously drafted profiles not be used to save time and effort? YS there is a google drive with photos and profiles but they may be out of date – this will be looked in to. There is a need for uniformity with the profiles so KR will edit to ensure they are written in a standard voice. SE agreed with the need to update profile pictures.
- PA requested that committee members that have banks of photos get in touch. It is important that all areas are represented in the images used on the site. SE noted that the church has a cache of photos that are available.

ACTION:

- **Committee members to respond to KR with their profile information.**
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Process for CIL applications

YS explained that the process of submitting CIL applications, as set out by WCC, requires that the Forum completes and submits the forms. This requires a person to commit to taking on this role within the committee. If not, then the process will need to be looked at and amended to allow for projects to apply themselves with approval from the Forum.

SE commented that the entire process for applying for CIL funding has been changed by WCC. There is no longer the opportunity for larger applications to be made to the Strategic CIL funding pot as this is now limited to WCC initiated projects and as such, this may mean that these larger

applications target the Neighbourhood CIL pot instead. Does this mean that the current cap, applied by the Forum, should be removed to allow for these larger applications? SB expressed concern that this may lead to the Neighbourhood CIL pot being cleared out by one or two projects rather than be shared out amongst multiple smaller applicants. SD would like a more extensive discussion on this cap.

KB noted that council ward members are now able to submit applications on behalf of neighbourhood forums, as has recently occurred in Hyde Park Paddington. KB ran through the CIL funding application process in place at Hyde Park Paddington forum, featuring agreed themes – area gateways, green infrastructure and linkages between old and new – on which the steering group suggest projects and the committee go out to prospect. Ward members are then consulted and the application put out to public consultation followed by the final application going to committee for approval. KB agreed to circulate this process to committee members.

MB commented that every application so far has come from a member of the committee. The CIL funding needs to be more widely promoted to attract more applicants and to appear more inclusive to the community. Marylebone Association's newsletter is coming out next week and MB is happy to add a small article on CIL funding if a draft is sent over.

SB appealed to all committee members to put forward suggestions of projects from the community. KB commented that for many smaller size groups and organisations, the application process can be challenging, particularly with regard to pricing up infrastructure projects. Support will be needed for those applying as it may put these smaller applications at a disadvantage. PA offered to speak to Baker Street Quarter's Smarter Giving Manager regarding the possibility of getting volunteers from the business community to support smaller groups with pricing up applications.

SE wanted to make clear that the CIL fund pots should not be viewed as 'our' money. It belongs to WCC.

YS suggests that CIL sub-committee get together to discuss further.

ACTION:

- **CIL sub-committee to meet to discuss the process for submitting CIL applications.**
- **KB to circulate Hyde Park Paddington's CIL funding application process.**
- **PA to speak to Baker Street Quarter's Smarter Giving Manager regarding the possibility of getting volunteers from the business community to support smaller groups with pricing up applications.**

Any Other Business

SL explained that new air quality monitoring is taking place in Edgware Road in relation to The Portman Estate's new development in the street – to assess the feasibility of having windows that can open. SL wondered if there was a possibility to apply for CIL funding to install air quality monitoring across the rest of the area. It would help to measure the effectiveness of initiatives such as the wider ULEZ as well as provide data for to support the advocacy for future air quality improvements. KB and SD agreed that this would be useful. SD added that WCC previously contributed to a Breathe London air quality monitor at end of Edgware Road so there should be information already available to help. There were also previous attempts at requesting WCC consult with residents on other monitoring stations. SL will explore further.

ACTION:

- **SL to explore the possibility of installing air quality monitors across the area for a future CIL funding application.**

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 13 July

8.30 – 9.30

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