

Gondar and Agamemnon Residents' Association

www.gara-westhampstead.co.uk

GARA newsletter, November 2014

Dear GARA members and supporters,

We would like to update you on events affecting you and our local area. We will give you a full update at our AGM on Wednesday 4th February 2015 at 7.30pm at the West Hampstead Community Centre, 17 Dornfell Street, NW6 1QN. Meanwhile, here are a few key areas in which your GARA committee has been active throughout the year:

- a) We have contributed to the excellent work led by James Earl on the Local Development Plan.
- b) We have provided funding to both the Neighbourhood Forum and Friends of Fortune Green.
- c) We participated in discussions on development policy for Mill Lane, arguing in favour of retail properties being retained and opposing unlimited conversions to private residences.
- d) We were consulted by Camden and affirmed to them the value of the public benches on Gondar Gardens, above the grass bank sloping down to Hillfield Road.
- e) We worked with Camden to address a spate of fly-tipping (sadly, recurring again); and alerted them to deal with problems with refuse collection and street lighting.

Naturally, we continue to be vigilant about Linden Wates attempts to build on the reservoir Open Space and Site of Nature Conservation Importance. As you may be aware, in February 2014 the Camden planning committee refused permission for the latest, modified scheme to build across the reservoir street frontage. We are still awaiting the outcome of Linden Wates' appeal (apparently, so great are the austerity cuts inflicted on the Planning Inspectorate that there hasn't even been an inspector appointed to this appeal in over five months). As you might expect, Linden Wates have not been idle and are working up a new scheme.

A few GARA committee members were invited to a meeting at which Linden Wates and their new architect presented some very basic outlines of a new scheme – our worst nightmare – a block on the Gondar Gardens street frontage and further blocks within the footprint of the reservoir. They failed to offer any details in terms of height of the reservoir blocks, number of units or mix of flats and houses. We know that they are talking to planning officers and local councillors and we made clear our expectation that they consult local residents through a Development Control Forum facilitated by Camden (and not their own controlled 'exhibition'). We will, of course, forcefully oppose the concept of a 'front and centre' scheme which would destroy wildlife, Open Space and views, with no redeeming features.

Finally, our borough police have launched an initiative to build a database of contact details in order to communicate with residents and disseminate any appropriate information. This is totally voluntary. If you wish to participate, please contact our Fortune Green PC, justin.royer-collard@met.police.uk. There are also opportunities to contribute to local policing priorities for those interested.

We look forward to seeing you all at our AGM on Wednesday 4th February 2015.

Yours,

David Yass

Chair, Gondar and Agamemnon Residents' Association

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