

HAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025-2040



Foreword

This is the second version of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan. It results from revising and updating the previous Plan, which had been in effect since 2018. The new Plan will have effect from 2025 until 2040 unless it is again revised during that time.

Decision makers must have regard to its policies when determining planning applications within the Plan area.

In 2022, the committee of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum decided that it was time to make sure that the 2018 Plan was up to date and still reflected the wishes of people living in Hampstead. In particular, we thought that it should reflect the intensification of climate change, which makes it even more essential to reduce the use of fossil fuels and to encourage sustainable development.

Just as with the previous Plan, the overall aim is to promote Hampstead's future as a lively and contemporary neighbourhood with an exceptional heritage and unique open spaces. Among the changes are new policies to promote sustainability in the design and construction of buildings, and to enhance the biodiversity networks that are so important to a green area such as Hampstead.

The Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum consists entirely of volunteers. Since 2014, we have consulted repeatedly and extensively with residents, businesses and other stakeholders in Hampstead. This document is thus the product of a decade of work by many volunteers, and is based on the input of hundreds of local people.

The Forum would like to thank everyone who has helped produce this new Plan, including committee members and advisers past and present, and our local Councillors. Deborah McCann and Clare Hamman made important contributions. We are very grateful to Andrew Triggs, Brian O'Donnell and Nicola Tulley at Camden for their guidance and support.

Alexander Nicoll
Chair, Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum

www.hampsteadforum.org

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Supporting documentation

The following documents are submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Statement on modifications from 2018 Plan
- Appendices
- Consultation statement
- Basic conditions statement

List of Appendices

- 1: Evidence Base
- 2: Open Spaces, Biodiversity Corridors and Ecological Networks
- 3: Hampstead Local Green Spaces Evidence
- 4: List of Veteran and Important Local Trees
- 5: List of Important Local Views
- 6: Additional Evidence for Local Green Spaces and Biodiversity Corridors

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Our vision is to conserve and foster Hampstead’s charm and liveability by protecting the distinctive character of buildings and open spaces, the Heath, healthy living, community spirit and the local economy, while also increasing sustainability, mitigating climate change and enhancing the natural environment.

1.2 The main aims of our Neighbourhood Plan, which we also refer to as the Plan, have consistently received strong support in community consultations since the Neighbourhood Forum was established in 2014. They are to ensure that Hampstead is:

- Lively and contemporary, while safeguarding the fine heritage of streets and buildings.
- Promoting sustainability and energy efficiency, in order both to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency.
- Enduringly green, with the Heath, open spaces, trees and landscapes well protected.
- Safe and walkable, with good public transport and alternatives to use of cars.
- Business-friendly – to meet needs of residents, workers and visitors and back local enterprise.
- A community with good amenities, a sense of belonging and mutual support.

1.3 To meet these aims, the Plan sets out policies in the following areas:

Design and Heritage

a) Development must respond to the history and distinctive character of Hampstead’s different areas. It must contribute positively through good, sustainable building design and environmentally sound landscaping. These norms apply to new developments and retrofitting of existing structures, as well as to the streetscape. However, it is recognised that the demands of sustainability and energy efficiency may sometimes challenge considerations of heritage, and that a balance or synthesis may then need to be reached.

Natural Environment

b) The Plan supports development that fosters strong ecological networks, biodiversity and the environment, helping to mitigate the impact of climate change. Development on the fringes of the Heath must be sensitive to the setting of the Heath.

Basements

c) The Plan requires basement proposals to demonstrate that neighbours and the local environment will be protected from harm.

Traffic and Transport

- d) The Plan supports development that reduces motor vehicle traffic, improves public transport and promotes alternatives such as cycling and walking. The Plan seeks to limit the environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles.

Economy

- e) The Plan supports development that encourages a healthy retail mix. This means broadening the range of shops and eating and drinking places and supporting the retention of business premises and small and independent shops. Shopfronts and signage should reflect the heritage, and their designs should be sensitive to the streetscape.

Housing and Community

- f) The Plan supports the improvement of community facilities, particularly those that serve older people and those with disabilities. It backs development that promotes affordable housing and resists loss of housing units. It supports local cultural activities.

1.4 This plan contains 20 policies on the following topics:

Policy DH1
Policy DH2
Policy DH3
Policy DH4
Policy DH5

Design
Conservation areas and listed buildings
Sustainable development
Clean and considerate construction
The urban realm

Policy NE1
Policy NE2
Policy NE3
Policy NE4

Supporting biodiversity
Ecological networks and biodiversity corridors
Local Green Spaces
Trees

Policy BA1
Policy BA2

Basement Development
Construction Management Plans

Policy TT1
Policy TT2
Policy TT3
Policy TT4

Traffic volumes and vehicle size
Pedestrian environments
Public transport
Cycle and car ownership

Policy EC1
Policy EC2

Healthy retail mix
Contributing positively to the retail environment

Policy HC1
Policy HC2
Policy HC3

Housing mix
Community facilities
Enhancing street life through the public realm

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INTRODUCTION



2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This is a Neighbourhood Plan created by the people of Hampstead. Our area is unique in terms of its history, its astonishing variety of buildings, and its open spaces. By creating a Neighbourhood Plan, Hampstead's community gained greater influence over the area's future development. This Plan can help to ensure that changes will address the community's needs while also preserving and enhancing Hampstead's special character as a place to live and work.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

2.2 A Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for local people to have greater influence over the management of change. Hampstead has been changing constantly since its first farm was established more than a thousand years ago. It will continue to do so. How do we want our buildings to develop in the future? How do we make sure that our amenities are protected and improved?



figs 2.1 - 2.4
Launch consultation
meeting, January 2023

2.3 The Localism Act of 2011 established the authority for local communities to develop a shared vision “to deliver the sustainable development they need”. They could do this by setting up a Neighbourhood Forum, which would then write a Neighbourhood Plan. Each forum was required to consult widely to ensure that its policies reflected local wishes and aspirations. It had to show that it had done so, and that its plan was based on robust evidence. Each plan must pass a series of tests, including scrutiny by an independent examiner, before being “made”, or adopted, by the local authority – in this case, the London Borough of Camden.

What is the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum?

- 2.4 The Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum is made up of volunteers from the local community. The idea grew out of a series of meetings that culminated in our first annual general meeting in March 2014, when a constitution was adopted and a committee elected. Our application to Camden Council to be designated as a neighbourhood forum was approved in October 2014, and again in October 2019 after the end of the first five-year term. The Forum's committee and advisers wrote the Neighbourhood Plan with the help of many local people and businesses who offered their thoughts and expertise. The Forum has also undertaken projects that are in accordance with the Plan's policies, such as testing air quality.
- 2.5 After the Plan was approved in a referendum and formally accepted in 2018, the Forum adopted a mission statement that involves monitoring the relevance and performance of the Plan, preparing revisions and fostering discussion on issues of importance to local residents. Subsequently, the Forum's committee felt that some elements of the existing Plan could be strengthened, and so began a new process of public consultation. This revised Plan is the result.

Why did we need a Neighbourhood Plan for Hampstead?

- 2.6 Hampstead is an attractive place to live in and to visit. Its centre retains the character of a historic village even though it is just a few miles from the centre of London. The area's extensive development since the 17th Century has managed to retain harmony with the beautiful landscape of Hampstead Heath. In short, Hampstead is flourishing, and is loved by its residents.
- 2.7 However, it faces a number of pressures. A strong property market brings constant demand for development, which requires careful management if the aspects that residents love about Hampstead are to be maintained. As in other parts of London, property owners wish to expand available space and enhance values. This can challenge preservation of the area's unique heritage. Excessive traffic is a concern, especially because it worsens air quality in an area with many schools and green spaces. So too is the lack of facilities for cyclists. Residents are keen to protect green spaces, and especially Hampstead Heath itself. They want to be sure that their area has a strong sense of community, in particular ensuring that there are proper services for all, including senior residents.
- 2.8 Meanwhile, the need for sustainability and energy efficiency has intensified significantly as government and local planning policies have put increasing emphasis on ways of mitigating and adapting to climate change. The urgency of reducing dependence on fossil fuels was highlighted by the 2022 jump in energy prices following the invasion of Ukraine. Flooding has occurred more frequently within the Forum area and to areas that receive both surface run-off and groundwater from the Plan Area.
- 2.9 All these priorities are reflected in the development policies in this revised Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.10 The area is fortunate to be supported by a network of planning controls that help it to flourish while keeping its unique nature. It has strong Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies. Hampstead Heath itself is well cared for by the Corporation of London and is safeguarded by Metropolitan

Open Land legislation. A vigilant community has done its best over more than 200 years to ward off efforts by developers to encroach upon the Heath. Camden itself has strong planning rules and the London Plan sets forth a vision for the whole of the metropolitan area. Underpinning all these plans is a robust National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF).

2.11 However, the Forum’s public consultations since 2014 have revealed particular concerns that this Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address in the policies set out in the sections that follow. They revolve around the demands created by climate change, and the need to combat, mitigate and adapt to it. While traffic is not in itself within the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan, it should be noted that consultations have consistently shown that it is top concern of Hampstead residents. The Plan therefore needs to take into account public desire to reduce car traffic and promote alternatives.

How was the Neighbourhood Plan prepared?

2.12 The Neighbourhood Forum held a series of public meetings in 2014. Clear themes emerged in the opinions that residents expressed. These views helped the Forum’s committee to draft a widely distributed vision statement including broad aims and objectives. The hundreds of responses that we received helped shape the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Further consultations continued over the next three years. The Plan was supported by 91% of voters in a public referendum in June 2018 and was then adopted, or ‘made’, by Camden. The Plan proved effective in influencing planning applications and decisions. Since 2022, the Forum has engaged in further consultations and held public meetings to ensure that the Plan still reflected the wishes of residents. The result in this revised Plan was the strengthening of policies to put greater emphasis on sustainable building design, energy efficiency and biodiversity networks.

fig. 2.5
Year 6 children at Christ Church school in a 2023 workshop on what they do and don't like about their area



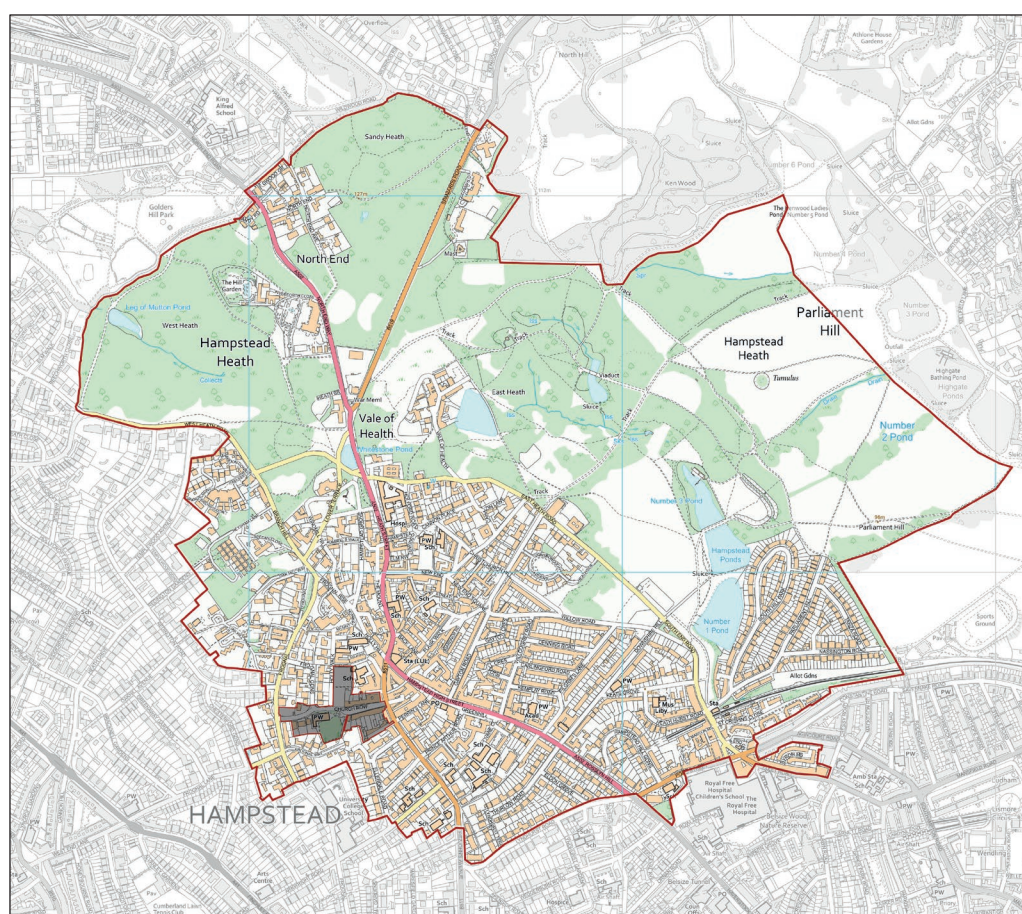
What force does the Plan have?

- 2.13 The Plan has the same legal status as the Camden Local Plan. It is part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Our neighbourhood: what area does the Plan cover?

- 2.14 The area covered by this Plan (see Map 1) includes Hampstead Town ward and a significant part of Frognal ward. It includes most of Hampstead Heath and a small part of Gospel Oak ward. It does not include Church Row and Perrin's Walk.

Map 1: Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan Area



Note: the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan area does not include Church Row or Perrin's Walk, as shown in grey

- 2.15 The Plan Area contains about 10,600 residents in about 4,800 households. About 8,700 residents are over 16, of whom about 3,350 are over 60. About 66% of residents are economically active, and about 15% are retired. About 45% of households have no car. About three-quarters have gas-fired central heating. About half of residences are owned, about 40% privately rented and about 9% are social rented. (Note: These figures are not directly comparable to those in the Neighbourhood Plan of 2018. They are derived from the 2021 Census. However, they represent the addition of figures for Hampstead Town ward to an estimate by the Forum of households in other wards that are within the Plan area – essentially, about one-third of Frognal ward.)

What must the Plan do?

- 2.16 A Neighbourhood Plan's policies must address the development and use of land. A Neighbourhood Plan can also include a vision, priorities, recommendations and information aimed at improving the neighbourhood going beyond development and land use issues, but these will lack the statutory force of the Plan's policies.
- 2.17 Neighbourhood Plans must meet basic conditions set by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. They must:
- Have regard to national policy and guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the development plan for the area.
 - In our Basic Conditions Statement, as well as in our Evidence Base (Appendix 1), we have outlined how each policy meets these basic conditions and conforms to the NPPF, the Camden Local Plan and other relevant strategic policies.

What have we changed from the existing Plan?

- 2.18 Government guidance requires the Forum to make a statement about the modifications to a Neighbourhood Plan that is already in force. The Forum must state whether it believes on the one hand that the modifications are significant but do not substantially alter its nature – and therefore require inspection by an independent examiner; or alternatively, that the changes are large enough to alter the fundamental nature of the Plan – and therefore require both inspection and a public referendum. The Forum is required to state reasons for its opinion. The Forum's statement on modifications is submitted as an accompanying document.