

## **Response to planning application 2014/4270/P (Grafton Road Corners) from Elaine Grove and Oak Village Residents' Association**

### **Attention Eimear Heavey**

Elaine Grove and Oak Village Residents' Association (EGOVRA) represents everyone who lives in Elaine Grove, Oak Village and Julia Street (the Village) irrespective of who owns the house they live in. Grafton Road runs to the south of Oak Village and site A lies just across Lamble Street from the gardens of long Oak Village.

EGOVRA would like to thank our neighbours in Barrington Court and Lamble Street TRAs who invited us into the work on developing these sites and also Council staff for arranging drop ins.

That said, the development of ideas for these sites did not run as smoothly as for other small Council- owned small sites in the immediate area. These sites are not obvious development sites and although two out of three have been partly neglected until very recently, they do provide a softening edge to Grafton Road.

The initial plans for 4-storey developments and the sacrifice of the magnificent beech tree was greeted with dismay. Although the current plans are more modest they lack the careful integration we saw with the plans for the Lamble Street Pram Sheds and 'Lamble End' and came forward later in the consultation process and hence were subject to less scrutiny during it.

### **Site C**

We oppose the plans for developing this site. (Full details of the treatment of the tree were not available at drop in stage.) A copper beech with a full crown is a rare sight in Gospel Oak and 'lifts' the rather dismal west side of north Grafton Road. To 'contain' it in a house reduces both its amenity and diversity value. There is no way of watering the tree in particularly dry weather if the 'run off' should prove insufficient.

It also sets up a permanent conflict between the tree and the residents in the new house. The canopy, unless cut back to 'bog brush' dimensions, will totally overshadow the courtyard and block light getting into the house. Leaf fall will present problems, not just in the courtyard, but on the brown roof and the gutters.

The tiny house planned does not justify the risk to the tree during construction and afterwards nor its containment. This is overdevelopment.

### **Sites A and B**

Others have raised objections to the development of these sites, the size of the houses and the lack of integration with the existing terraces.

EGOVRA will therefore restrict itself to saying that **should** these developments go ahead, planting and maintenance planning condition on the roof top terraces are necessary to prevent overlooking.

**Other issues**

We draw your attention to the problems experienced with sewage and drainage infrastructure in this area (several major leaks in recent years) and ask for the state of the sewers and drains to be checked and any necessary repairs made a planning condition.

Given the amount of construction in the immediate area, we would like to be fully involved in the construction management plan and any monitoring group set up.

We believe the whole community should be involved in decisions on any 'community gains' resulting from the granting of any planning permission for these sites.