

# FORTUNE GREEN & WEST HAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Adopted by Camden Council September 2015





**WEST HAMPSTEAD NDF**  
Neighbourhood Development Forum

[www.ndpwesthampstead.org.uk](http://www.ndpwesthampstead.org.uk)  
 @WHampsteadNDF  
[ndpwesthampstead@gmail.com](mailto:ndpwesthampstead@gmail.com)

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# POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

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# INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This Neighbourhood Development Plan (**NDP, the Plan**) has been drawn up using the powers in the Localism Act 2011. The Plan was written by the Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum (**NDF, the Forum**) which was established in January 2012. The Forum was recognised by Camden Council in May 2013.
- 1.2** The Plan has been written to conform with the policies and objectives of the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*, March 2012. It has been prepared with the aim of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and is prepared in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 1.3** The Plan has also been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan: the London Plan (2011) (as amended) and the relevant Local Plan - Camden Council's adopted planning policies: *Camden Core Strategy (CCS)* 2010-2025 (adopted 8 November 2010); Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (adopted 8 November 2010); and Camden Site Allocations (adopted 9 September 2013).
- 1.4** As well as the three over-arching plans - at National, London and Local level - the Plan draws on and adds to Camden Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance. It also reflects the recommendations in *Camden Council's Place Plan for West Hampstead* (March 2012), and has drawn on the consultations and findings upon which this document was based.
- 1.5** The Plan provides planning policies and guidance at a neighbourhood level. It has been drawn up by people living and working in Fortune Green & West Hampstead, for the benefit of people who will live and work in the Area in the years to come. As demonstrated in the Consultation Statement that accompanies this document, the Plan is based on extensive discussions, engagement and consultation to ensure that it clearly reflects the will of the community and has broad support. It is important that Fortune Green & West Hampstead clearly benefits from development and the challenges it brings.
- 1.6** The Plan sets out policies (**in blue boxes**) for the future development of the Area between **2015 and 2031**. The end date has been chosen as it marks the end date of the current London Plan and the end date of its growth target for part of West Hampstead (the West Hampstead Growth Area). The Plan seeks to provide a framework for how planning decisions will be made in the Area, with clear policies to be followed and applied.
- 1.7** The Plan also sets out recommendations (**in green boxes**), which describe non-statutory complementary action which will help achieve the Vision and Objectives (see 3.1), and which are in support of the Plan's policies. In order to produce a Plan that is clear, accountable and has wide support, these recommendations (or projects) are included next to policies to which they refer.
- For the avoidance of doubt, it is emphasised that these are aspirations and do not constitute or suggest agreement with Camden Council or other relevant bodies to fund or act on them.
- 1.8** Within the policy section of the Plan, the text sets out the justification for the policy. While the policy takes precedence, the text explains the formation of the policies and provides further detail as to how the policies should be implemented.
- 1.9** The mechanism for the achievement of both the policies and the recommendations in this Plan is set out in the **Delivery Plan** (see section 5). It is noted that all eligible development must pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as well as - by way of a Section 106 Agreement - contribute to the costs of any specific site requirements that are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; that are directly related to the development; and which are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. The Plan highlights that development should contribute towards the positive development of the Area in different ways. Contributions may be in the form of both CIL and S106 financial contributions and/or appropriate design measures and 'in kind' improvements.

The neighbourhood portion of the CIL can be spent on a wide range of items, provided that they meet the requirement to support development of the Area.

- 1.10** Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Plan - as well as the NPPF, London Plan & Local Plan - will be approved without delay. Planning applications that conflict with the policies in this Plan will be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.11** While it is recognised that development decisions mean weighing up a number of factors in determining whether to develop sites or buildings, the Neighbourhood Plan requires the application of its Vision, Objectives and Policies in all schemes in the Area. Rather than repeating **viability** as a factor throughout this Plan, it is highlighted here that the viability of development is recognised as an essential element of delivery and will be taken into consideration when proposals come forward as set out in para 173 of the NPPF. Depending on the nature of each development, some objectives may have a higher priority in the circumstances at that particular time than others.
- 1.12** The Plan should be read alongside the three **supporting documents** which accompany it.

They are:

- Statement of Basic Conditions
- Consultation Statement
- Strategic Environmental Assessment



# AREA

## A. HOUSING, DESIGN & CHARACTER DESIGN

### POLICY 2: Design & Character

All development shall be of a high quality of design, which complements and enhances the distinct local character and identity of Fortune Green and West Hampstead.

This shall be achieved by:

- i. Development which positively interfaces with the street and streetscape in which it is located.
- ii. Development which maintains the positive contributions to character of existing buildings and structures.
- iii. Development which is human in scale, in order to maintain and create a positive relationship between buildings and street level activity.
- iv. Development which has regard to the form, function, structure and heritage of its context - including the scale, mass, orientation, pattern and grain of surrounding buildings, streets and spaces.
- v. A presumption in favour of a colour palate which reflects, or is in harmony with, the materials of its context.
- vi. New buildings and extensions that respect and are sensitive to the height of existing buildings in their vicinity and setting. Tall buildings in the Growth Area will need to have regard to their impact on the setting of the two immediately adjacent conservation areas, in order to avoid any negative impact on them.
- vii. Extensions - and infill development - being in character and proportion with its context and setting, including the relationship to any adjoining properties.
- viii. The provision of associated high quality public realm.
- ix. Having regard to the impact on local views across the Area and the streetscapes within the Area (as identified in A11 and Map 2).
- x. Development which aims to fulfil the criteria set out in Building for Life 12 (as detailed in A18).

# CHARACTER PHOTOGRAPHS



## A. HOUSING, DESIGN & CHARACTER DESIGN

**A8.** The **NPPF** states as a core planning principle (paragraph 17) that planning should “always seek to secure **high quality design and a good standard of amenity** for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”. It also states (56) that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”. The London Plan (Policy 7.6) says that “architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and designs appropriate to its context”. These principles and policies shall be clearly and demonstrably applied in Fortune Green and West Hampstead.

**A9.** The **NPPF** (60) states that it is “proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness” and says (58) that development shall “respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials”. As outlined in 2.2 & 2.5 many parts of Fortune Green and West Hampstead have a clear **architectural heritage** – with an attractive character and a distinct local identity. These positive features are strongly supported (as set out in the Consultation Statement) and need to be protected and preserved. New developments in such areas – particularly terraced streets – need to be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area in terms of their proportion, height, scale, massing, materials, storey height and rooflines. Larger developments, while reflecting new design, need to incorporate design features that reflect the character of existing development, using materials (such as red brick) which complement existing buildings. Innovation is not ruled out, however schemes incorporating innovation will need to make a persuasive case for such development and demonstrate the suitability of such schemes.

**(Also see character photographs)**

**A10.** The **height** of existing development in Fortune Green and West Hampstead makes a significant contribution to the overall character of the Area. The **NPPF** (59) recognises height as an important consideration and that design policies “...should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally”. Much of the Neighbourhood Plan Area consists of terraced housing, which is normally two or three storeys high. Mansion blocks tend to be four, five or six storeys in height.

New buildings and development will need to be based on a human scale and efficiently use the site area. High density developments are not ruled out, and it is noted (*see recent reports on ‘Mid-Rise Housing’ from the Prince’s Foundation and other groups*) that high densities can be achieved through high quality design, without the need for tall buildings. In order to promote and reinforce the distinct and widely appreciated local character of Fortune Green and West Hampstead, new development shall respect, and be sensitive to, the height of existing buildings in their vicinity and setting.

**A11.** Also of importance to the character of the Area are the **views** across it, which give a widely appreciated sense of openness and space. **(See Map 2)** Of particular note are the views to the east to Hampstead (in particular the view of St John’s Church) and, from the higher parts of the Area, the views to the south to the skyline of central London. Views of, from, and around the Area’s conservation areas are of great importance to their setting. The railway corridors provide the space for significant views across the Area and an important sense of openness - in particular in and around the West Hampstead Growth Area. In addition, streetscape views are important, particularly in areas of terraced housing and mansion blocks. The streetscapes of the main roads through the area - especially West End Lane, Fortune Green Road and Mill Lane - are also of note.

**(Also see views photographs)**

## A. HOUSING, DESIGN & CHARACTER DESIGN

**A12. Infill developments:** any replacement of a house or houses, or addition of a new house, within an existing terrace should be to the same scale as the terrace, including the roofline. It should be similar in form, materials and details. Replication of particular exterior details is strongly recommended where such details are consistent in streets. Houses should be set back from the pavement and match or fit the building lines of existing properties, with front garden areas remaining unpaved. The same principles should apply to vacant sites in streets where there is already a pattern of existing development.

**A13. Garden developments:** in order to protect the Area's green/open spaces, the development of new dwellings in private gardens should be avoided. If any developments are approved, they should maintain a much lower profile than existing housing stock, usually one or two storeys. (Also see Policy 17).

**A14. Roof extensions** and loft conversions should fit in with existing rooflines and be in keeping with existing development. Such extensions should be in proportion to the existing building and should not block views.

**A15. Basement developments:** there is concern in the Area about the increasing number of such developments. These concerns include the effect on the structural stability of adjacent properties; damage or loss to the character and biodiversity of gardens; the impact on sustainable drainage; and the impact on carbon emissions. Camden Planning Guidance (CPG4) states that the council will only permit basement and underground developments that do not: cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity; result in flooding; or lead to ground instability. The NDP fully supports the requirement for full and rigorous Basement Impact Assessments before any such applications are considered. The Guidance cites West Hampstead, South Hampstead and Cricklewood as areas that have been identified as being subject to localised flooding from surface water due to local soil conditions and topography; it also cites a large number of streets in the Area that have been subject to surface water flooding in the past.

Basement and underground developments in these areas should therefore be normally avoided. Given that some of the existing Victorian and Edwardian housing stock was built with basements and cellars, it is considered that some sites in the Area may be able to accommodate one storey basement developments (subject to the requirements set out in CPG4). However, there needs to be greater caution about basements deeper than one storey to ensure that they do not raise concerns about the stability of existing buildings - many of which were built with shallow foundations - and do not cause problems for surface water drainage.

**A16.** New development should also seek to achieve high **environmental standards** and support the aims of the NPPF (95) in "the move to a low-carbon future". Development should aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support energy efficiency - and, where possible, should aim to exceed national standards. The national target for zero-carbon new homes from 2017 is welcomed and should be applied in this Area before that date. Measures to retrofit existing buildings to make them eco-friendly and sustainable are strongly supported. Such measures have been trialled elsewhere in Camden, including in conservation areas, and would be welcomed in Fortune Green and West Hampstead.

**A17.** All development should provide adequate space for **waste and recycling** bins and containers. Such provision should not encroach onto pavements and should not have a negative impact on the public realm.

## A. HOUSING, DESIGN & CHARACTER DESIGN

**A18.** In line with the policies in this section and other sections of this Plan - as well as the findings in the Consultation Statement accompanying this Plan - the NDF strongly supports the 12 criteria set out in the **Building for Life 12** document - published in 2012 by Cabe at the Design Council, Design for Homes and the Home Builders Association. This sets out “the industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are invited to use to stimulate conversations about creating good places to live”. The NDF urges all those proposing development in the Area to consider these criteria and, where relevant, to seek to apply them. This is particularly important for those proposing large development which will have an impact on a wider area than the immediate site.

**A19.** The NPPF states (207) that “effective **enforcement** is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system”. It suggests local authorities publish information about their enforcement activities. During its consultations, the NDF found concern about weak levels of enforcement (including in Conservation Areas) and a lack of clarity about the processes involved. The NDF would welcome the publication of clear information about the enforcement of planning policies in the Area and greater transparency on this issue by Camden Council.

**A20.** In all development, this Plan welcomes and encourages early, positive and meaningful **engagement** between developers and those living and working in the Area. The NPPF states (188) that “early engagement has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties” resulting in “improved outcomes for the community”. The NDF strongly encourages those planning development in this Area to use this Plan as the basis for positive and constructive engagement. This particularly applies to large developments, and any development in the West Hampstead Growth Area, where early, positive and ongoing consultation with the community is required.

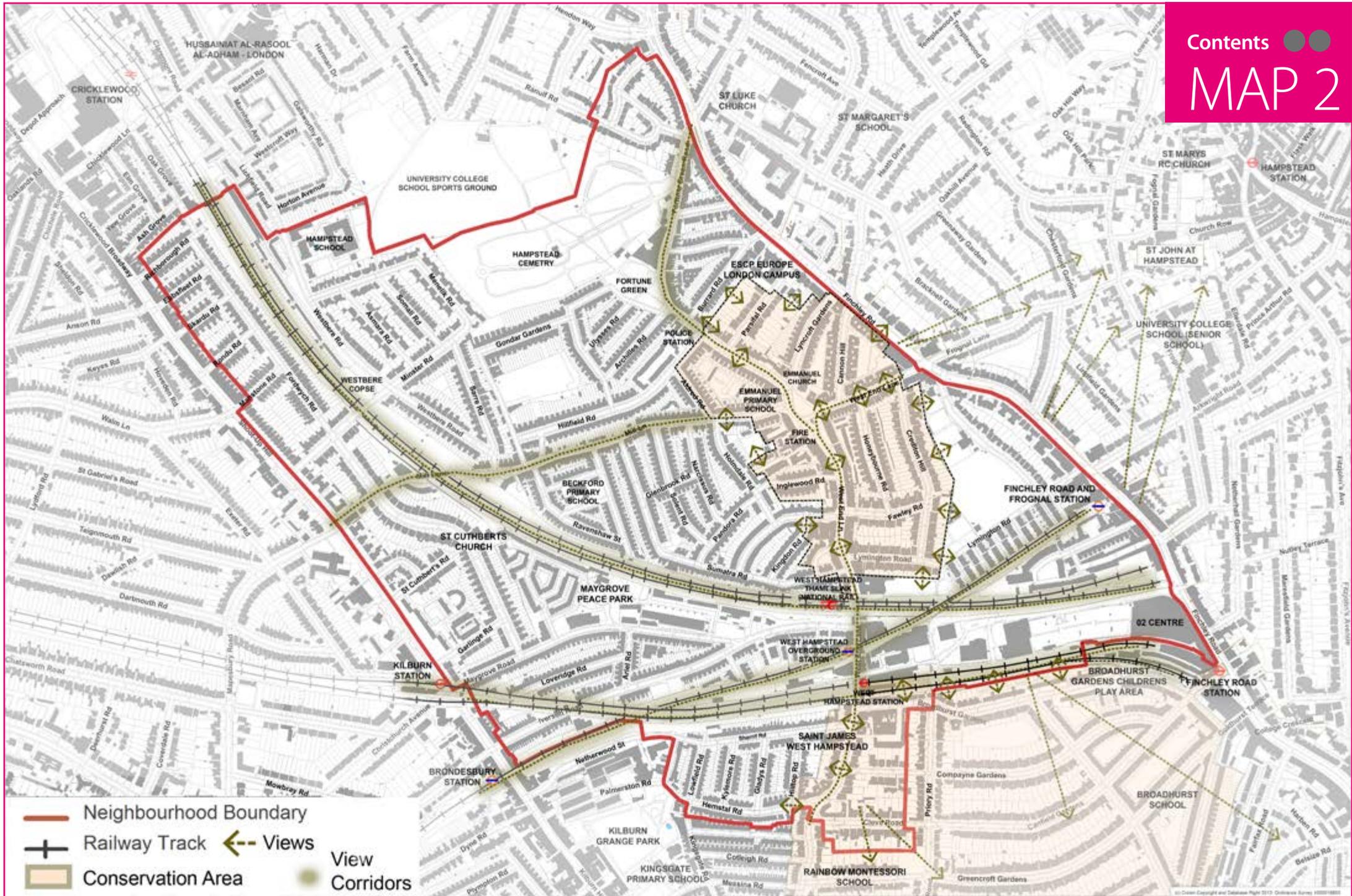
*Complementary action: as elsewhere in section 4 of the Plan, in support of Policies 1 & 2 the recommendations which follow set out a range of actions which seek to complement and support the objectives of the above policies - and which the NDF will seek to promote with the relevant agencies (see 5.1)*

### RECOMMENDATION A: In support of Policies 1 & 2, the following actions are recommended to fulfil and complement the aims of these policies:

- i. That greater efforts be given to monitor and enforce approved planning applications and planning policies in the Area, and that this process is made more transparent.
- ii. That all large developments have - as a condition of their approval - the mandatory formation of a consultation group with local residents and groups, to discuss the development between planning approval and completion.
- iii. That significant schemes aim to retain the proposed architect or architectural practice for the development from application to completion - in order to give a consistent approach to design.
- iv. The introduction of a register of private landlords in the Area.
- v. That consideration is given to the needs of the large and growing private rented community.
- vi. The enforcement of more rigorous controls on HMOs.
- vii. The positive and proactive engagement with the community by those bringing forward plans for development - as plans are prepared and submitted, and as development takes place. All planning applications for development which is likely to have an impact beyond the immediate site should be accompanied by a Statement of Community Engagement.

# VIEWS PHOTOGRAPHS





- Neighbourhood Boundary
- + Railway Track    ← Views
- Conservation Area
- View Corridors

**Map 2: Local Views**  
 Neighbourhood Plan Map

