

F. COMMERCIAL CENTRES

POLICY 15: Fortune Green Road Neighbourhood Centre

Development (including change of use) shall preserve or and enhance the character of the neighbourhood centre and provide for a diverse range of shops, businesses and economic activity.

- F12.** The retail area of **Fortune Green Road** is also designated by Camden Council as a Neighbourhood Centre. Like the Mill Lane Neighbourhood Centre, this area has a notable and distinct character - reflecting its proximity to the West End Green Conservation Area and the open space of Fortune Green. The Centre would benefit from: better signage; improvements to pavements and shop fronts; and other measures designed to encourage footfall and use.
- F13.** The western part of **Finchley Road** includes a small neighbourhood centre around the junction with West End Lane. A number of the ground floor units are empty and boarded up. If no commercial use can be found for these sites, a change of use to residential could be considered.
- F14.** The Area also includes a small part of the **Finchley Road Town Centre**. As most of the Centre is outside the Area covered by this NDP, it is not considered appropriate to draw up policies for this Town Centre. The main interest for this Plan is the area covered by the O2 Centre site (see B8). In terms of the west part of Finchley Road north of the O2 Centre, there is an urgent need for improvements to enhance this part of the Centre. There is a lack of community space, social space, green/open space and trees. There is an opportunity to regenerate the character of this part of the Centre, with a much improved public realm and new businesses. Efforts should also be made to improve the pedestrian crossings across Finchley Road (see D14 & Policy 9) and to improve conditions for cyclists (see Policy 8 & recommendation).
- F15.** There is strong support for the development of regular **open-air markets** in the Area. The NPPF (23) says local authorities should “retain and enhance existing markets and...create new ones”. Adequate space needs to be found to accommodate such markets, particularly in large new developments. Traders, especially those from the local area, should be able to sell a range of products including food, crafts and seasonal products. The existing farmers’ market – which takes place outside West Hampstead Thameslink station on Iverson Road on Saturdays – is popular and well used, and should be protected and encouraged.
- The provision of space for markets and short term ‘pop-up’ shops is welcomed in appropriate locations.

(For general comments about Finchley Road, see 6.5).