



Crouch Hill: on the up or down?

Issues Identified

03.03.12

Funded by the Building
Community Consortium

UNITED
KINGDOM &
IRELAND



Attended By:

(27 names removed)



Prepared for:

Crouch Hill
Community Park
Association
CHCPA



1

INTRODUCTION

On Saturday the 3rd of March, 2012 a group residents from the Crouch Hill area gathered together to discuss the future of their community. Under consideration was the opportunity to create a neighbourhood plan, through which the community could influence development in the area. The meeting was facilitated by (name removed) from URS/Building Community Consortium (BCC) with the issues residents identified taking centre stage. These were discussed collectively and in a number of group workshops. The issues identified can be grouped into three major themes: Boundaries & Communication; Economic opportunities; and Lifelong Neighbourhoods.

How we can affect & influence the decisions about planning that change our lives...

- Local Resident

A large number of issues and processes were identified in the workshops, leaving the meeting to ponder in a general session after lunch which ones were planning related and indeed what neighbourhood planning was all about and how powerful an instrument of change it might be. The meeting concluded with agreement that more discussion was needed before the community could decide on whether to begin to create a neighbourhood plan, particularly in terms of the geographical focus and need to draw a boundary for any plan.

Section 2 below is summary of the key issues raised under each major theme, and the relationship of these concerns to the planning process. Section 3 draws together these thoughts to help provide foundation for future discussion.

2

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

| MAJOR THEMES | KEY ISSUES RAISED | RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Boundaries & Coordination | The problem of artificial boundaries between different boroughs and communication across them | To plan for the future there will be a need to coordinate with the areas across these boundaries – could use the evidence bases of local development frameworks to inform neighbourhood planning |
| | How can we join together to coordinate the best use of resources | Better communication and links between groups and individuals will help to boost the number and diversity of voices having a say on the future of the area, so increasing the legitimacy of any plan – it will also bring an increase in available skills and resources. |
| | Networking will be vital, currently there is a lack of coordination between groups – could begin with a list of forums and networks that are out there. Suggestion that we can start a mailing list; newsletter; website | |
| | Can we offer extra support to those who are already fighting to improve the area – e.g. our councillors? | Could a neighbourhood plan help to consolidate connective landscapes, which help people to gain access to open space and community facilities, in neighbouring borough. E.G. Parkland Walk. |
| | Recent severe decline of the manufacturing sites that were previously | Can community planning ensure that economic development and |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Economic Opportunities | in the area, in the face of pressure for housing land | employment results from new developments |
| | Densification of population on 'infill' sites in conjunction with a loss of local employment | |
| Economic Opportunities (Cont.) | Poverty and deprivation in the area – particularly around the Old Dairy | Through community influence, can new and appropriate developments be concentrated or better linked to those areas that need them most |
| | Inequality in the area – can we narrow the gap between the rich and the poor | |
| | How can we address the issue of child poverty | |
| | A key focus is the need to tackle the problems that stop people from working | Can the community use planning to increase the number of economic opportunities, and access to those opportunities for those most in need – e.g. use ward profiles to guide development |
| | Can we protect and increase the variety of high street shops and the quality of the high street environment – e.g. small traders | By influencing the planning of new developments can the community protect local traders and small businesses |
| Lifelong Neighbourhoods | Can we have 'lifelong neighbourhoods'? In other words neighbourhoods that provide everything you need as you move through life | Could the area help to guide development in a direction that promotes social cohesion – to create an area with the identify, facilities and opportunities to hold people |
| | Insidious effect of population and economic mobility on continuity and stability (i.e. people don't stay long enough) – implications of this for local sense of identity and social responsibility | Can plans for the area help to create a sense of place and identity and protect its current cultural and heritage assets - e.g. a conservation area to protect local distinctiveness |
| | The problem of poor health in the area | In future, can the area plan for health improvements through improved access to sports facilities, health facilities and open spaces |
| | Design of places can help to change a neighbourhood and encourage people to take responsibility – e.g. Packington Estate sets a good example | Could the community call for higher design standards and more involvement in detailed design for new developments through the planning system as well as leading on public realm improvements to encourage more people to walk and use the shops |
| | Need to challenge poorly designed new developments | |
| | Poor quality appearance of the streets in the area – e.g. paving, proliferation of street furniture and signs, road surfaces | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Lifelong Neighbourhoods (Cont.) | The problem of social exclusion – how can we engage and empower people | Through a neighbourhood plan could the community give voice to a greater diversity of people (e.g. the elderly, young people, ethnic minorities) – and so create more inclusive neighbourhoods where people will stay for life |
| | Concern over new housing developments and their impacts on community infrastructure | Will it be possible for the community to encourage a better balance between the provision of new houses and the creation of new community facilities, particularly by pushing for a share of the new Community Infrastructure Levy paid by developers Could a neighbourhood plan help identify and protect locally valued open space, in housing amenity land. |
| | Overdeveloped sites – dense residential development leading to a lack of space | |
| | People are jointly using schools and other community infrastructure – can this be done more effectively | Could a neighbourhood plan help to create connective landscapes, which help people to gain access to open space and community facilities – e.g. Greenways, ‘homezones’ and ‘daylighting’ watercourses. |
| | Green space should be used for public benefit, such as the growing of vegetables and herbs | Can the community ensure that there is greater access to green space, that its condition is improved and it is well managed Opportunities identified in the borough Core Strategy on open space enhancement may be realised, through a neighbourhood plan. |
| | Green public spaces need to be improved and better managed – e.g. lorries parking on the green, control of dogs | |
| | Traffic problems – rat runs, speeding, need for lorry bans | Through a neighbourhood plan, could the community choose new developments which improve the traffic conditions in the area Could neighbourhood plan prioritise traffic management plan, and pedestrianisation, to ease transport problems |

3

CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DISCUSSION

This first meeting very much focused on the ups and downs of life in the area. It provided important insights into the thoughts and opinions of the local community. From this three major themes have emerged. The first of these, ‘Boundaries & Communication’, concerns some of the practicalities involved in creating a neighbourhood plan. The community noted that it would be important to setup lines of communications, both between those involved and to those not yet engaged; some plans were made to begin this.

How can create a community where we can live for the rest of our lives?

- Local Resident

The matter of the community boundary proved difficult to address, due to the variety of local identities. For instance, when asked what they called their neighbourhood, four place names received more than four votes (see Appendix A) However, those who attended lived relatively close to each other (see Appendix B) and through wider discussion it may be possible to see local connections and borders in a clearer light, whilst further meetings may also strengthen a single identity.

The second major theme, ‘Economic Opportunities’; and the third ‘Lifelong Neighbourhoods’, addressed some of the issues that local people would like to see addressed in the planning system. There was a much greater sense of agreement here and a real sense that the community could be changed for the better. The number and type of issues to be addressed is likely to grow as the group increases its diversity. The visions, concerns and potential solutions raised by local people can be the focus for, and the motivation behind, a community plan

Possible subjects for discussion in the next meeting:

- The town (e.g. spatial) planning issues that can be taken forward through a new style Neighbourhood Plan Work from Islington Council’s Local Development Framework evidence bases and policy, including, Ward Profiles and Ward Improvement Plans, should be taken into account.
- How interested parties communicate internally; identify the steps that have already been taken and also how the group embraces a wider range of people within the neighbourhood in the future
- Agree on a draft neighbourhood plan boundary for the community liaising with other groups such as Finsbury Park and Stroud Green
- Agreeing a working name for our community that will unite us all. E.G. *Hornsey Rise Neighbourhood Forum*
- Agreeing how non-planning issues and ideas can be communicated to the ward partnerships as recognised partner where desired.

Agreeing upon draft neighbour area options and submitting ‘Letter of Intent’ to the Council to set the ball rolling. Aim is to gain further recognition, advice and assistance from Islington Council, Ward Partnerships and others, where applicable.

Document reviewed with agreed additions by Adam Cook CMLI, on behalf CHCP 14-16 March 2012

APPENDIX A

Response of participants to the question: ‘What do you call your neighbourhood?’

| WHAT DO YOU CALL YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD? | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS |
|---|-----------------------|
| Hornsey Rise | 8 |
| Crouch End | 6 |
| Crouch Hill | 5 |
| Stroud Green | 5 |
| Archway | 1 |
| Upper Holloway | 1 |
| N19 | 1 |
| Finsbury Park; Harringay; Highgate; Hornsey | 0 |
| | Total: 27 |

APPENDIX B

Yellow dots placed by participants in response to the question: 'Where do you live?'

