

## **Draft Minutes of the meeting of Pimlico Neighbourhood Forum**

Tuesday 24th October 2023, St. Saviours Hall

### **Present**

Steering Group: Peter Ruback (Chairman), Andrew McCarthy (Secretary),  
Simon Clark (Treasurer), Sarah Moncrieff

31 members of the Forum (including Cllrs Liza Begum, Robert Eagleton, Jim Glen, Ed Pitt Ford, and Jason Williams)

By invitation as observers: Richard Harden Chairman Vincent Square Residents Association; Angela Forrester and Richard Beville, Churchill Gardens Forum.

1. The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.35pm and welcomed members and guests. The agenda (copy attached) had previously been made available to Forum members.
2. The draft minutes of the meeting of 5th October 2021 were taken as approved.
3. There were no matters arising not otherwise covered by the agenda for this meeting.
4. The Chairman spoke to his report which had been made available before the meeting (copy attached). He drew particular attention to the process by which the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) had been approved in the referendum in September 2022, the situation regarding the planning permission obtained by Vitcorp for its property on Wilton Road and the situation in relation to Westminster City Council's (WCC) adjoining property at the site of the Queens Mothers Sports Centre (QMSC) and the situation relating to WCC's proposal for traffic management and public realm improvements in Warwick Way and Churton Street.

Three members of the Forum spoke emphasising the importance of the QMSC as a community asset, enquiring about WCC's plans, the relevance of the Plan and the apparent interest of Vitcorp in a scheme involving its site and that of the QMSC. The Chairman acknowledged the QMSC's strategic importance as a significant community asset and also as a potential development site. It is understood that the leadership group in WCC has indicated that its capital commitments for sports centre development do not permit it to give any consideration to redeveloping QMSC at this time. However, it is also believed that the continued provision of a sports centre is understood by WCC. PIM 23 sets out the Plan's policy in relation to QMSC, in particular about the requirement for continued provision of a sports centre, and the steering group, in partnership with FREDA and its affiliated residents' associations, will continue to keep this closely under review.

A member of the Forum recognised the high quality of the Plan and asked about the process by which the Forum membership had been engaged in its development in the context particularly of its constitution requiring 2 general meetings a year which had not taken place. The Chairman and the Secretary set out the process through which consultations with the community and Forum members had identified the key elements necessary for a plan for Pimlico, the publication of the 2 main iterations of the draft plan as it was developed, the

complicated, technical and lengthy discussions with WCC's planning officers and the complications of the pandemic restrictions. The meeting agreed by spontaneous acclamation that the absence of bi-annual meetings had not interfered with the production of a Neighbourhood Plan that was widely regarded within the community.

A member of the Forum asked if public realm and traffic management schemes in Churton Street were expressly mentioned in the Plan. The Chairman told the meeting that they are not, but nothing presently proposed by WCC is in conflict with the Plan which supports proposals to enhance the public realm, particularly where this rebalances the space in favour of pedestrians (see PIM 18).

A member of the Forum asked if anything was being done to deal with the long running eyesore of the works at 74 Lupus Street. The history of planning application, enforcement proceedings and negotiations between the owners and WCC were outlined by the Chairman and 2 of the councillors in attendance as far as they were aware. The present situation is unclear, but the sense of the meeting was that it is unsatisfactory, and the steering group were asked to look into this and press for action.

A member of the Forum asked if WCC had approached the Forum in relation to its apparent decision to appoint an architect to develop plans for social housing on the playground area on Sussex Street. The Chairman advised that the Forum had not been approached. The Plan favoured this being kept and improved as an open space play area and WCC will be asked to explain and consult on their intentions.

A member asked if the Plan addressed the status of Pimlico Gardens. The Chairman advised that it is identified as an open space that should be maintained as such with any development of a scale which enhanced public access and enjoyment as such.

A member of the Forum enquired about the status of a WCC draft Development Opportunity Framework (DOF) of 2016 on the future of the QMSC on which there had been no prior consultations. One of the councillors present responded that the DOF was to all intents a dead letter.

**5.** On the proposal of the Chairman seconded by Deborah Findlay Forum members voted, with no vote against, for Peter Ruback, James Ingham, Andrew McCarthy, Simon Clark and Sarah Moncrieff to remain in office in the steering group. Clive Aslet was thanked for his significant contribution in the development of the Plan.

**6.** Simon Clark spoke to the accounts for the year ending 30 April 2023 (copy attached). There were no questions from Forum members.

**7.** The status of Pimlico Neighbourhood Forum Limited was noted.

**8.** The next meeting would be convened as necessary.

**9.** The meeting closed at 8.20pm