

Notting Hill Gate issues and options consultation
9-20 September 2013
Summarised by theme

IDENTITY

Character

I have lived in Notting Hill for over fifty years on both sides of Kensington Church Street. It still has a village feel to residents and though improvements are always necessary and welcome I hope any rebuilding will be well-considered - not just another opportunity for property developers to take control in their own interests.

Do you like the area as it is? No

Do you like the area as is it? and if so, why? Yes

Do you like the area as is it? and if so, why? Yes, precisely because it is not high-end

Notting Hill Gate is not a Town Centre. It's a road junction + underground & bus interchange + fast food restaurants + a few tatty shops.

For a start, I would suggest that the developers are constrained to working within the existing envelope and with the current mix of residential, office and retail (which the Officers tell me is "optimal"). Forget about raising Notting Hill Gate to the ground. Bear your residents in mind. There is a whole raft of measures (traffic densities etc) that you can deploy to achieve these ends if you are so minded. But it is the mindset that is currently lacking. All of you have missed the essential nature of Notting Hill Gate which is "Cafe Society". This is what makes it different, attractive and unique in the area and balances well with other "centers" of the Borough and the area. It is this aspect that needs to be encouraged and supported alongside the community aspects.

*Do you like the area as is it? and if so, why? I feel a bit proprietorial about the area. This is because as a young journalist in the 1960s I was part of a movement (initiated by *The Times* Women's Page for which we got huge accolades in 1967) to stop the network of little streets behind NHG being a 'rat run' for taxi drivers and fast sports cars. Children got knocked down: some were killed, so we had certain streets made into play-streets. There were not then so many play-grounds available, and some parts were very much ghettos, so we did a lot for race-relations. The 'bello Rd was a tourist attraction, but not on the present scale! On the first day of Carnival this year, the only people who could even see the floats were little girls perched on their Dad's shoulders. Many residents feel NHG is now too gentrified.*

Shops

There are plenty of shops in the vicinity already – supermarkets, not to mention Westfield, as well as small individual shops.

Do you want more shops and if so, what type of shops? D/K

To meet your daily needs or to serve a wider area? Essentially to meet daily needs of local residents and office workers, but there is scope for development.

Which of the shops that exist are important to you? Chemist (Caldors & Boots), Tyler's Homestore, Rymans, Italian delicatessen, dry cleaners, Oxfam, S&D (paint & builders suppliers), picture framing, Tesco

What shops would you really like to see in Notting Hill Gate? Perhaps more specialty shops.

Do you want the area to become a centre for fashion to compete with Westbourne Grove? No – not appropriate.

Do you want to ensure the antique shops are protected or, at least encouraged, to remain of Kensington Church Street? Yes

How successful do you think Jamie Oliver has been and do you want more of the same? D/K

Do you want more cafes and street life, similar to the South Kensington end of Exhibition Road? No – this rather small commercial centre is not appropriate for the 'evening economy'. There are other areas nearby, including cinema and theatre in Portobello Road, Westbourne Grove, Queensway, and Shepherd's Bush/Westfield.

How else would you like to see the space used? If it is necessary to use this space, it must be a requirement to relocate the Farmer's market to another site in the Gate...but where?

I would hate to lose Tylers and Boots, and am already missing WH Smith, especially as the branch in Kensington High Street has gone, and now the branch in Queensway. I relied on them for birthday cards etc.

The antique shops and galleries should stay and be encouraged to remain in Church Street.

I don't use the Jamie Oliver shop, but think M&S should stay; I know it is used by many people. Perhaps there could be a larger M&S in NHG?

Do you want more cafes, takeaways and a street life? – yes

Do you want to ensure the antique shops are protected or, at least encouraged, to remain of Kensington Church Street? – yes

How successful do you think Jamie Oliver has been and do you want more of the same? – the less Jamie Oliver the better

Do you want the area to become a centre for fashion to compete with Westbourne Grove? NO

Do you want more cafes, takeaways and a street life? YES
Do you want to ensure the antique shops are protected or, at least encouraged, to remain of Kensington Church Street? YES
Would you miss Tylers if it closes? YES, and Boots
How successful do you think Jamie Oliver has been and do you want more of the same? Inappropriate to Notting Hill Gate. No more of it, or of the same

Need local, ideally independent, certainly useful, shops, eg Tylers, Calder Chemist, Video City etc, **NOT** more coffee bars. See Marylebone High Street, Whitstable etc for good examples.

At the workshop it was proposed that rising property prices attract increasingly ultra-wealthy residents who have specific retail needs. We would challenge this. Yes, there are very wealthy individuals who own property in the area, but who, of course, can find their luxury shops elsewhere in London and who, more often than not, are not actually resident very much; no, I would argue that there are far more, long-term, full-time residents in the area, who, despite living in properties which are expensive now, ones which they could not afford to buy at today's prices, are not hugely wealthy and need ordinary, normal shops and services. We have lived in the area for 27 years, in our current house for 20 and often feel like newcomers when we meet people who've lived here all their lives and have no intention of living anywhere else.

Rich variety of shops – size and use
Compare Marylebone area – La Fromagerie and The Ginger Pig...not boring multiples, a distinctive and special centre.

Westbourne Grove is a very short distance away from NHG. Most people who want fashionable boutiques can easily go there. We also have some in Ken. Church Street and many residents of the 'Westbourne Grove Area' are complaining that it has become too much of a fashionistas paradise already. (I have been a fashion writer for most of my grown-up life, ie since 1964, when there was a Fleet St, and currently my job title at the *Kensington Magazine* is 'Fashion Editor' so in London Fashion Week I am competent to comment!)
Do you want more cafes, takeaways and a street life? There are plenty already
ANTIQUA SHOPS? Of course we want to keep and cherish them. Church St is renowned for its supremacy in this field. **MRS CRICK** is said to be the *most famous chandelier shop in the world*. It is also a family business. Ditto **LEV** the jewellers, where Queen Victoria used to shop and **MERCHANT**, the Chinese ceramics shop, where Christie's and Sotheby's go for an expert opinion are world class.

8. would you miss Tylers if it closes? Pass - I don't use it.

JAMIE OLIVER I love it, but do the local residents? Look what happened when Marco Pierre White tried to turn **THE HANSOM CAB** into a gastro pub. It lasted 18 months and the Residents of Edwardes Square rose in wrath and lo, it is reclaimed ! See current issue of *The Kensington Mag*.

Notting Hill Gate is a key town centre for the northern part of the Borough – its role as a place to shop has been reduced by the loss of shops to other uses and has reduced its effectiveness. It needs to strengthen its focus for its catchment area and take advantage of its strength as a public transport interchange. It needs to capture their interest, trade and loyalty.

In its catchment there are competitors for high end shoppers– Kensington High Street, Westfield and Westbourne Grove. There is no point trying to bring in up-market shops – others do it so much better – to do so would alienate the centre's core audience.

Notting Hill Gate needs to improve its offer to its catchment for convenience shopping and local services and become what it should be – the social hub for its local community.

Kensington Church Street has been known for decades as the world centre for the highest quality antiques. This area seems to be totally forgotten.

Notting Hill Gate needs to improve its offer to its core market – local people.

It appears that no one has looked at the area without thinking about the architecture. What is needed first is to define what is successful in the area. NOTTING HILL GATE is successful in many ways and not so in other. The shops which has survived are ones which we all, those of us who live in the area, value. We all love Tylers and use it for out odd things needed (glue, hanging hooks and moth balls). The dog shop and nail bar are very popular. Even with Love Films success, Video City is where we go in a hurry on the one night when at last we can stay home. The newsagent is the best place in Kensington to find international newspapers. The laundry shop which also repairs shoes where I go when I need another year on my favourite shoes. Post Office is our one remaining one in the north. My husband's hair dresser has been there for 20 years or more. Waterstones is better than ever. The banks are well used and a great services to both locals as well as the shop owners. We all rely on both Boots and Calder Pharmacy. Many like the idea of Jamie's and the shop. However, the architecture is like a good tooth in a bad line of bad teeth.

There is no mention of Kensington Church Street and the need for landlord and local encouragement.

Hill Gate does not need to be anything other than what it already is – a central interchange and an area for locals. What we do need is local service shops such as a cheese shop, a good deli.

Farmers' market

I personally don't use the Farmers Market, but know of people who do.

The existence of the Nottinghill Farmers Market is a great draw for people from all around the area. They cycle in from as far away as Hammersmith. The market is big enough to have a selection of both butchers and vegetable stalls. It has Buffalo cheeses, goats cheeses, unpasteurised milk, trout farms, home made pasta..... and this variety is essential to the pull of the market. What ever you do to the rest of Nottinghill, do not diminish the flavour or the accessibility of the market.

Is the farmer's market important to you? YES

Is the Farmers' Market important to you? Very important.

The Farmers' Market is an important local amenity, currently in an excellent location, which we must not lose. *If it is to be relocated then we suggested the Fox School playground where it was originally.*

I would like to register my support for the Notting Hill Farmers Market. I understand they will be relocated soon, and I hope their relocation will be assisted by the Council.

I am a regular user of the Farmers Market and want to continue using it in our area.

Preserve/improve the farmers' market.

We brought the market and it has created a meeting place of great conviviality. It must not be downgraded in any way.

Farmer's Market is regarded by many as one of the jewels in the crown

All of **A. Refurbish** should be done.

However, only some of **B Refresh** should be done. The farmer's market is well loved by the locals, that is the ones who have been able to find it. It needs to be planned into the redevelopment to allow for easy access both for the traders as well as the public. It is actually our "dynamic" opportunity in the waiting.

Housing

Do you want luxury flats? This area has nothing but Lux. Accommodation already – can't see the point.

Do you want more housing? No

Do want high end flats? – not particularly

Do want high end flats? NO

The Councils record in terms of "community" is dreadful. In the last fifteen years we have seen these massive developments ending up as ghost developments of second and third homes for absent wealthy foreigners. Visit Wykham Square, Thornwood Gdns and The Philimores at night and the flats are mostly in darkness. No community at all. Charles House was knocked down and 2000 inner city jobs lost. The developers of the new flats tell me that they have all been sold to foreigners. "As soon as we get planning permission we put sales teams onto planes to Russia, Hong Kong and the Gulf and finance off plan". A cultural scandal. The new flats at the Commonwealth center are the same. And so will the Holland Park School playground flats.

The business model of these developers is first to go for high end residential (at least £3500/ft square), sell off plan, and exit with a huge capital multiple. If

office and retail is forced as a compromise alongside residential, then they recover the capital from residential sales and exit with a huge income flow from office and retail. The Council is failing to moderate this greed. Nor does the Council appreciate just how profitable these ventures are and how determined the proposers are to get their way and manipulate the system. And by the way, I think that the assumptions in the Notting Hill Gate "Viability Update" are flawed. Just across the Park we have No 1 Hyde Park - currently selling at £6000/ft sq and rising. This will be the target for the Queensway and Notting Hill Gate developers if they are given free reign. I have heard that they would be happy with a £4800/sq ft outcome for residential.

If your Department, your fellow Councillors, and the MP, put your heads together I am sure that you can work within the present rules to get a more balanced approach. But are you representing your voters or are you building personal legacies? (which we have seen enough of with Holland Park School and Exhibition Road).

The rich history of Notting Hill Gate is based on the inventive entrepreneurial activities of young artists, inventors and innovating spirits. But they will need somewhere to live: with workshops, small shops and offices. There is widespread anxiety that the developers will seek to create '1 Hyde Park' in Notting Hill Gate. The very rich can often create something as a barren land which is the very antithesis of what we all seek. Affordable development should not be traded off for buildings on the south coast. A mixture of size and type is essential and in the vicinity.

Do you want high end flats? No!

Offices

Do you want the offices retained? Yes.

Would you like more offices? Yes. If so, a large office development or small one?
The area is not suitable for a large corporate employer. Small to medium employers/ businesses would be more appropriate.

Do you want the retention of offices? Would like more offices? A mix of office and residential

Need **offices**, especially small and flexible ones attractive to media, creative and start-up businesses (we know from experience how difficult it is to find these in RBKC), **NOT** more expensive flats which will be bought by overseas investors and remain empty for most of the year. Need to maintain a mix of people in the area during the day and in the evening.

The existing offices must remain, providing genuine employment. Affordable tech and arts spaces are clearly desirable, but will be difficult if not impossible to provide.

We don't *need* more offices; if any more are built, we shall soon be like Mayfair, where the Residents' Association is forever campaigning to restore, retain and

entice residents to the area. I have written a book about it, though sadly it is out of print. (I think the late Queen Mother must have bought up the whole edition. She adored it!)

The advantage to the shops of office worker should be understood – offices should be maintained and increased with special emphasis on meeting the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Definitely not ~~allow some shops to become foyers for refurbished offices above~~ *we can see where this is going and not at the expense of the shops*

Culture

Do you want a “dynamic new museum or art gallery” in the middle of the area?

If one can be found, this would make sense. There are already 000's of day time/ week-end visitors coming to the area to visit the antique markets in Portobello – it would be appropriate for them to have a further attraction and reason to visit.

In the exhibition and at the workshop we attended, there was too much focus on tourists and making Notting Hill Gate a “destination”, and not enough about the needs of residents – there must be a balance. For instance, the idea of locating a museum on NHG – the Museum of Brands was mentioned during our workshop - is an interesting one, provided it's attractive for both visitors and residents, and a facility appropriate to the local environment.

Notting Hill Gate does not need yet another museum. It needs genuinely affordable housing for genuinely average waged local residents. However, if it's the best you can do, the Museum of Brands is great.

The area is already full to bursting. Attracting more people with a Museum and/or Art Gallery is nuts

Eateries are a strong part of the area's offer and along with the cinemas/theatres create the focus for evening economy. It is essential to maintain the quality of the offer, whilst making sure that the balance of uses are not skewed. Increasing the cultural offer may be desirable to some, but in the “nice to have” category, which, when it comes to trading off against other things, such as an improved public realm, will not prove a high priority nor justified against the increase in people coming to the area.

A “dynamic” new museum or art gallery is not needed. **C Re-think** is not acceptable as presented. But what is needed is a re-think + re-refresh but the way the question is written, there is no choice to have re-think + re-refresh without also have a “dynamic” new museum or art gallery. There will be development on these sites so why not ask questions about how to re-development, ask how the area can improve?

Other facilities

We desperately need (regardless of what the NHS says) is another surgery.

PUBLIC REALM

Pedestrian crossings

As a parent of children at both Fox Primary & Holland Park School I cross Notting Hill Gate regularly and believe that it is of utmost importance to develop a safer pedestrian crossing system in this area.

Two especially dangerous crossings that need addressing are:

(1) The small, divided pelican crossing (from Holland & Barrett/GAP to EQ Hair/Video City) on Notting Hill Gate. Cyclists & vehicles drive straight through it, as they often don't even realise it is there.

Also, the crossing light takes a long time to change so many pedestrians end up crossing on a red light.

We believe this crossing needs to be made more visible for road traffic vehicles (cars, motorbikes and cyclists). The signal button needs to make the lights change sooner, especially during school rush hour (8-9am and 3- 4pm).

Ideally, we would like to have a single crossing that would give pedestrians enough time to cross Notting Hill Gate in one go.

(2) The bottom of Campden Hill Road, where there is no proper pedestrian crossing over Campden Hill Road between Metro Pizza (west side of Campden Hill Road) and Valentina's (east side). Children who cross Notting Hill Gate (from Marks & Spencer to Metro Pizza) and want to get to Fox school, are currently forced to jaywalk to get across Campden Hill road despite the danger of three-way traffic.

Holland Park students also frequently use this crossing.

We believe this problem would ideally be solved by installing a single pedestrian traffic light crossing from Marks & Spencer (on North side of Notting Hill Gate) to Valentina's (on South side). If this is not possible then installing an additional pedestrian crossing between Metro Pizza and Valentina's is another option.

Both of the above mentioned crossings currently create a potentially dangerous situation for our children and it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt or worse.

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Also, there should be a pedestrian crossing(zebra) installed on Ladbroke

terrace north side to pass to the other side. I have 2 little children and to cross it is a real problem because of the heavy traffic on Ladbroke terrace. I understand that at the end of Ladbroke terrace at Notting Hill Gate next to "phase eight" boutique it would cause disruptions, but further down towards Ladbroke Walk or Ladbroke Road it would help a lot especially with families with young children (and there are a lot of us!)

I am a parent at Fox Primary School and would like to highlight the following issues that should be considered around Notting Hill Gate refurbishment and were recently discussed within the school.

As most Fox Primary & Holland Park School children cross Notting Hill Gate regularly, we believe that it is of utmost importance to develop a safer pedestrian crossing system in this area. Two especially dangerous crossings that need addressing are:

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Underground station entrances

Do you think that with so much redevelopment the opportunity must be taken to improve the Underground station? Definitely

Do you think that with so much redevelopment the opportunity should be taken or required to improve the Underground station? NO

I would like to see better facilities for disabled and partially disabled to gain

access to the tube station.

Arranging for the underground entrances to go inside the buildings is also a good idea. A total renewal of the underground station is urgently needed.

NHG Tube I think it needs cleaning, but re-development, so soon after the insufferable digging imposed on the poor residents earlier this year by Thames Water, would necessitate more works above ground. This would mean more traffic gridlocks north of the Park, with a tailback into Church St and automatically even worse congestion and bus-re-routing south of the Park and into Bayswater Rd and ultimately around Marble Arch., spilling into Park Lane & Oxford St. Let's face it NHG is a **main artery**.

Notting Hill Gate's key strength is a public transport interchange – it high public transport accessibility. The Underground station should be the main access point to the new Design Museum and Kensington Palace.

Streetscape

Do you think it would improve things if it were easier to cross the roads, such as removing the railings, the central islands or making the road narrower and providing new pedestrian crossings? Possible to remove the railings dividing the carriageways, but caution about narrowing the road. The Gate serves both E/W traffic – which has increased considerably since Westfield – and N/S traffic and nine busy bus routes pass through it regularly. Currently, one of the double lanes between Kensington Church street and Pembridge Road heading west is essentially a turning lane for buses and traffic heading north. Without the second lane, this stretch of road would become a bottle neck.

Widening pavements, repositioning pedestrian crossings and bus stops, retaining and enhancing trees and greenery, removing unnecessary street furniture, improving signage for Portobello are all good ideas which will benefit everyone and not just Saturday tourists. Spending £16m on re-locating the tube entrances is **NOT** a good idea and would be a shocking waste of money compared with the cost of other suggested improvements such as new streetscaping (£3m).

We have one additional comment on the consultation. At the Workshop there was suggestion that the road/walkway running from the end of Farmer Street onto the Gate (eg between the Gate Cinema and Pain Quotidien) might be re-modelled. This would be fine in principle however we hope there's no suggestion and/or implication that this access way be blocked in future to pedestrians which would be a serious inconvenience to many of us in Hillgate Village (also where would motorcyclists park?!)

On a more positive note, on NHG removing the pavement railings and rationalising the various road crossings seems a good idea.

Serious attention must be paid to the quality of new street lighting.

As many authentic London street trees as possible are desirable. The public should be spared yet more pathetic magnolias.

Also spare us Cllr O'Neil's so-called public art. There's no money or room for it. The funds should be invested in trees and their maintenance.

We must have more trees and greenery. There will inevitably be more development so the inclusion of extensive arboricultural elements (green walls) will be vital.

The main worry here in reviewing the boards at the presentation is that the roads are being thought of separately of the development opportunities. Widely the pavement, taking out the railings, more directions signage is all a plaster on a large sore. It is not a solution – it is an opportunity lost.

Again, the answers are a combination of the three presented. What needs to be recognised is that there are more than 14 million people a year go through Notting Hill Gate. It is a major transfer for many people both on the three underground lines (Central, District and Circle) as well as buses from both the north/south link as well as the east/west link. Anyone going to Westfield from the north or south will change to the Central Line. There is of course the concentration of people on Saturdays going to Portobello market but what is often forgotten is the market functions on weekdays too. I would suggest that one of the attractions to market is the crowds.

There is an opportunity to address the condition of the underground but also to celebrate it; to make it part of the Gate. This opportunity is not presented.

A. Refurbish:

- ✓ remove pedestrian guardrails and street clutter
- ✓ make the area more welcoming for visitors and *the locals* by improving signage and way-finding.

B. Refresh: Refurbish, plus

- ✓ improve pedestrian crossings
- reduce the impact of traffic ~~and widen pavements~~
- ✓ reposition bus stops to reduce pavement crowding and address the problems of underground access

C. Re-think: Refurbish + Refresh, plus

- ✓ redesign Notting Hill Gate underground station entrances and possibly reposition
- ✓ create a clearly identified routes to all the local functions including the antique street of Kensington Church Street, the theatres and cinemas, etc. and to Portobello Road (why just Portobello?)
- ✓ radically redesign the street to give more space and priority to pedestrians and cyclists. Good idea but where does the traffic go?

The amount of rubbish outside the back of the eateries is shameful. It has been there since the Carnival.

Public space

Notting Hill Gate needs a public open space, however modest; but it has to be on the sunny north side of the street. Seats round a water feature might be attractive. Foxtons would be the perfect spot!

Create public open space

A place where one wants to stay, to ____?, to rest, or just to sit with a coffee to watch the fabulous and fascinating world walk by. This is the visitor's ____? And Notting Hill Gate is the best of views points because...the place is more of a thoroughfare than anything else. The best place is in front of Newcombe House (the land is dedicated public land). The development must create a larger space to give the whole scheme a centre: create space by going back or down.

Bus stops

Moving certain bus stops also sounds a good idea. Moving the stop at the top of Kensington Mall further south would prevent buses queuing on the main road.

Car parking

Would you be opposed to the loss of the car parking on Notting Hill Gate? (there is a proposal to remove 6 of the short stay spaces) D/K

I never park near NHG, so would not miss parking there.

Removing on street parking on NHG in order to widen pavements is another good idea.

Affordable public parking under existing buildings is also a good idea. It is hoped that the necessary basements already exist.

Pedestrian flow

Do you feel the area can take more visitors and more pedestrian traffic? Not unless the flow of foot traffic can be improved.

If not why? If so why? The pavements outside of the underground station are dangerously overcrowded during peak and holiday times.

The crowds going to Portobello Market/Road, should have better directions and even their own pedestrian road so they don't block NHG and the exit from the Underground for those of us who want to use the main street.

Do you feel the area can take more visitors and more pedestrian traffic? If not why? If so why? – it's unbelievably crowded already!

Do you feel the area can take more visitors and more pedestrian traffic? If not why? If so why? YES, because of the wide pavements

Despite all our efforts, RBKC still fails to grasp that Portobello neither wants nor needs the grotesque horde of tourists currently encouraged by the Council - particularly on Saturdays. Portobello Market needs fewer ... 'customers!'

The unwanted and excessive numbers of tourists damage businesses and the quality of residential life on Saturdays in NHG and surrounding streets. Having said this, demands by those living in the cottages at the top of Portobello Road

The split level pavement on Pembridge Road is very dangerous. The footway should be levelled and the public protected by a railing. This is particularly important on Saturdays.

Do you feel the area can take more visitors and more pedestrian traffic? If not why? If so why? It has plenty of visitors. They perhaps bring marginally more prosperity, but they reduce the amenities and the 'peaceful enjoyment' to which residents are, by the statutes of 'this sceptred isle', theoretically entitled!

Signage

Signage to Portobello Market

Eye catching and include other destinations of note.

Cycling

Don't forget the **cyclists!** Allow for proper cycle lanes on this busy road and proper cycle boxes at junctions. One cyclist has already been killed on NHG – we don't want any more fatalities.

Road user priorities

Do you think that there should be a priority to pedestrians and cyclists? Or for cars and lorries? I think all users of the roads and pavements need to be considered.

Public toilets

An officer said there are existing 1950/60's public lavatories underground, near the station, on the south side of Notting Hill Gate. Priority should be given to refurbishing them for the tourists RBKC insists on imposing on Portobello and NHG.

BUILDINGS

It would be a lost opportunity if blocks like the uninteresting new housing under completion at the Olympia end of Kensington High Street and characterless shopping malls like the complexes at Hammersmith and Shepherds Bush were to replace existing buildings.

The Book Corner and Pembridge Road certainly needs tidying up.

We hope NHG can be improved without the need for large-scale demolition and re-building. If existing buildings were re-clad and repainted that would be a huge improvement.

Any redevelopment **must** deal with the problem area under **Newcombe House**, for too long now a haven for rough sleepers, street drinkers and aggressive beggars. Also what's going to happen with the London Underground sub-station on Jameson Street?

Every square metre of property in NHG is privately owned; rendering the Council virtually powerless to influence the future.

Having had a brief sight of a 'Viability' report, I believe it concludes that none of the current proposals will be economically viable - so will not be built. So what was the purpose of the 'consultation,' except to give the developers the opportunity to claim that it was carried out? I am not expecting an answer.

The current buildings should largely be remodelled and refurbished where possible. Otherwise planning will take decades and building decades longer.

The existing residential tower must presumably remain. I suggest a huge green wall on its blank side will bring some life to the area.

NHG may be "boring 1960s" but it was the LCC who pulled it all down to make way for a three lane highway. Now the idea is to pull it down again and revert to a two lane highway! This is not a train set for bored Officers to play with.. It is a residential support center. And we make too much of ugly buildings. They can be tarted up without pulling them down The new Jamie Oliver's is a case in point.

Planners should insist on Wow Factor iconic buildings and sheer quality that can make us feel proud. We have suffered an environment of profound bland mediocrity for night on 60 years. Above all they must be of a high standard of design and appearance.

Use huge space in multi-storeys on Campden Hill Towers.

The most prominent and ugly building in Notting Hill Gate needs steel and glass extravaganza of 8 penthouses by Foster or someone with style and panache on the top.

Work with the ___? Church. The Rev Colin Dye to complete a statue on the ONLY listed building in the area The Coronet – with spotlights – glorious opportunity to

enhance a striking contrast to the rest of Notting Hill Gate.

Issue 3: Improving the buildings and architecture

Nowhere within the documents or questionnaire is the elephant in the box mentioned. What about the south side of Notting Hill Gate with the second-hand shops, slot machines and shady-looking bureaux de change bringing down the whole estate? Many of us, I included, love the idea of the record shop and the second hand clothes but the appearance of the shops with the half divided ones with a kebab shop on one half and bureaux de change on the other is just sad. This is to some extent inevitable given the tourist attraction of Portobello Road, with demand for attendant money-changing, snacks and souvenir outlets, but an attempt at retail zoning might help. Ultimately there has to be a successful business case if the shops here are to thrive, but given that so much of Notting Hill Gate is in the hands of two or three companies, it should be possible to create more coherence.

It is accepted that major problem with the area is the architecture. But what is not on the cards is a wholesale redevelopment. There are 3 developers and multiple other property owners. A piecemeal approach or a planning brief which does not address the whole area could leave us with the gold tooth situation again – parts look good but as a whole the parts not redeveloped will look worst.

The whole area needs a radical rethink and the Council should be in the position to push for a coordinated master plan and not accept a developer lead piece-meal, patchy result.

Building heights

Do you feel the existing height of Newcombe House should be the set height for future developments? YES – I believe that 10/11 stories is the maximum height that this area should accommodate.

Do you want the more taller buildings? No

No more high buildings - NHG is already a wind trap.

Do you want the more buildings, taller buildings? no definitely not

Do you want the more buildings, taller buildings? Within reason

*If buildings are going to be re-developed then new buildings must **NOT** be higher than existing, residents' right to light and privacy must be strictly observed and disruption from works kept to a minimum.*

An attempt should be made to raise the general height of existing low buildings. This will create more space and lessen the impact of the two existing towers.

No we don't want more, taller buildings.

Density

Do you feel the density of the area is at its maximum or do you feel that the redevelopment can allow for an increase in density/height? An increase in density is possible as long as the current problems with traffic flow are addressed.

PRIORITIES

What do you think there are problems with the area? If so, what specifically are the problems? Ugly dilapidated 50's buildings; over-crowded tube entrance and inadequate/difficult access and directions to Portobello Market.

Since we cannot have everything, what would be your top three priorities for:

- *the role Notting Hill Gate should play?* For future development, it needs an identity different to its neighbours – perhaps capitalising on the successful antiques market of Portobello. This would suggest focussing on a combination of speciality shops (e.g. Jamie Oliver) and small to medium business premises, cafes and restaurants. The Robert Opie Museum which focuses on packaging and brands from the past is an obvious fit – currently located in Colville Terrace.
- *how the streets should be improved?* Remove railings. Somehow provide better access to NHG tube station on the north side of Notting Hill Gate. This is a very overcrowded area.
- *what type of buildings/architecture we should seek?* Good Architecture!

What do you really want for Notting Hill Gate? Restaurants and cafes; food shops, book shops, music shops (with rents allowing for plenty of independents); newsagents; the cinemas; at least one of our pubs reinstated

Priorities should be:

- strengthen Notting Hill Gate's role as the hub for North Kensington for convenience shopping,
- retain its role a focus for employment, entertainment, eating and drinking, and
- improve its function as a key public transport interchange.
-

The worst aspect is the congestion and vehicle traffic.

Issue 2: Improving the streets and public spaces - This is the key priority, even though maintaining the attractions is the prior condition. For Notting Hill Gate to be transformed the public realm needs a major, major rethink.

People need to be encouraged to change their perception of Notting Hill Gate from a place to go through and get out of as quickly as possible to one where it could become the social hub for the community and have a café culture

Having been to see the pop up too I am in general agreement with all.

Notting Hill Gate does not need yet more 'night time economy.' It needs affordable homes, real jobs and affordable shops serving a real community. A healthy economy needs more than homeless foreign kids serving each other drinks.

OTHER/GENERAL

Process

And I hope the residents of Kensington will be consulted (not just at the last minute) about new plans in a genuine attempt to create something worthwhile and of lasting value.

Despite living only about 700m north of the site, I received no notification by post of this major project; yet I was bombarded with endless information about Earl's Court.

The structure of the presentation was baffling to unqualified persons. One can only assume this was intentional. It has been suggested that the developers underwrote the 'consultation.'

When I attended the consultation, locals were highly suspicious of the motives behind this exercise. So when the developers finally produce real plans for real projects, there must be genuine and substantive public consultations on each aspect of the proposals.

RBKC must then listen to residents and respond to their genuine concerns.

The look and feel of the whole Consultation Process is of "legacy excitement". An opportunity for Hornton Street to convert boredom into another regeneration exercise with the chance of architectural prizes. It ignores the fact that this is a functioning community, and not a green field site or a run down and abandoned area. Disparate and ill informed residents are being manipulated by a process that can be used to tick a box and say "we have listened". I understand that 12,000 leaflets were sent out to households in the area and about 250 people visited the consultation. And maybe 300 have emailed comments. But there is a silent majority of perhaps 200,000 residents who use Notting Hill Gate as a transport and supply center (essential shops and services) and are too busy working hard to pay the school fees and the mortgage and the Council Tax to get to grips with this Pandoras box of options and ideas.

Turning the area into some prize winning architectural center (another Exhibition Road expedition) is not what the community needs. Loss of facilities (surgeries, Farmers Market etc) and perhaps fifteen years of construction with three property developers knocking down and rebuilding whole blocks at a time. I visited two consultation workshops and most of those attending will spend the rest of their lives around a building site. I will move house

Part of this may require political action. In the same way that slavery needed to be abolished. Of course market forces should be allowed to operate but sometimes they need to be moderated. A balanced approach can produce the kind of regenerated that we have seen in Westbourne Grove. But massive re engineering in the pursuit of profit without moderation is despicable

(Only a few hundred yards away the Sultan of Brunei has bought up Queensway and Whitelys for redevelopment. Our planning is blind to this "because it is not our Borough". What do Officers and Councillors think is going on?

And finally an observation re process. Consultations should be impartial. I was

shocked to learn that this one took place in a building belonging to one of the developers on a pro bono basis and most of the materials (models etc) were provided free of charge. The optics are terrible. Many of us have become extremely cynical about the purpose and conduct of K&C consultations in recent years.

This is an excellent opportunity to improve Notting Hill Gate, which we can see from this consultation process RBKC is addressing with imagination and energy. Cynics would say that no matter what the council, residents and common sense demand, what will happen in the end is what will make the land owners the most money. We look forward to seeing the development brief and very much hope the cynics aren't proved right this time.

Unfortunately not one of the options addresses the issues as a whole. The questions are written such that there is an obvious direction towards re-think and re-build. What is needed is a combination of A and B and C, but a rewording or redirection of C.