



Notting Hill Gate Consultation,
RBK&C,
Hornton Street,
W8 7NX

Re: Notting Hill Gate Redevelopment Proposals

Dear Sirs,

I attended your workshop on September 18th and filled in the questionnaire which you handed out. I want to make a few more points than was possible granted the restricted nature of this questionnaire.

The area is a mixture of residential and office property with world renowned antique shops in Church Street, a world renowned market in Portobello Road, two traditional and important cinemas, and a very high quality pub theatre.

Notting Hill Gate should be, and will be, redeveloped. The challenge is to achieve this without destroying the very specific character of the area and replacing it with yet another complex of huge soulless high rise flats and offices with no integrated traffic system, and no relationship between the new buildings and the existing residential streets. I

It was difficult to make sensible proposals in the Workshop. It was generally agreed that some of the 1960s buildings are both ugly and ageing, but how to answer the specific question as to whether we would agree to the demolition and re-building of Newcombe House? The answer was probably 'yes' but entirely dependent on what is chosen to replace it. It is essential that all plans are subject to a further round of more intensive consultation with the public. ✓

The area is run down and needs substantial refurbishment. At present the balance of offices, shops and residential is about right, although more affordable housing would greatly benefit the mix of residents. I

We do not need fancy shops, boutiques etc; we do not need to compete with what has happened in Westbourne Grove or with shopping centres such as Westfield just down the road.

We need neither more height, nor more density of population.

We do need a mix of shops for local residents – not specialist shops to attract more visitors.

We have enough visitors already with Portobello and the antique shops.

However we do need all new buildings to be of quality and with an integrated overall layout.

I have lived in or near the area since 1944 and have seen its character, and its population change subtly but organically. As with all local residential areas in London its essence is difficult to describe, easy to damage, and important to preserve.

Please ensure that all the plans put forward by the various property development companies are subject to meaningful and timely consultation by the people who actually live and work here.

Yours faithfully,



Notting Hill Gate

A few thoughts:

- A. This East-West road is a major thoroughfare and traffic should not be obstructed any more than necessary so as to avoid even worse congestion than is already experienced. ✓
- B. This factor must, however, been balanced against the need to make NHG more user-friendly for locals and visitors. ✓

Specific Aspects:

1. Strengthening identity as town centre

- a. Does NHG need to have a gallery / museum in order to do this? Its identity as a 'centre' has never principally been associated with museums, etc., so I suggest rather building on existing strengths, rather than trying to create new ones. Other areas (e.g., South Ken) of London must be allowed to enjoy their status as 'cultural / educational' centres, and NHG should be re-created as a broader 'retail / entertainment' hub. ✓
- b. The focus of NHG has to my mind always been **retail** (including 'local' stores such as hardware and pharmacies) and **restaurants**, with an interwoven **residential** component, also providing good **office space**. ✓
- c. Therefore, the strengthening of the identity of NHG as a town centre, should be driven by the projects falling under street / public space improvement, and improving the architectural environment. Success in those two areas will have the result of cementing NHG's reputation as one of London's great town centres. ✓

2. Improving streets and public spaces

- a. A good idea to re-design the entrances to NHG station. ✓
- b. Suggest that ground-level station concourses be created within buildings, as has already been suggested, but the concourses should be lined with shops and restaurants. ✓ ✘
- c. Expansive lifts, stairs and escalators should take pedestrians one level down from the road to the station, where there will be spacious, air-conditioned, shop-lined concourses, which will lead not only to / from the station, but which will also be a subway under NHG facilitating the movement of pedestrian traffic north and south. Here, pedestrians will be safe from the traffic at road level. (Similar to what there is at present, but properly and expansively designed, to be more than just a walkway; it should in itself be a delightful retail and ambulatory experience.)
- d. At road level, wider pavements with good shops and restaurants, which will cater for 'wanderers' rather than especially for (local) people just going about their daily lives

only new
points added
from this submission

- (who may prefer to use the bright, light, air-conditioned station-level concourse, to cross the road and to do their shopping *en route* to or from work).
- e. Visitors to Portobello Road Market should be guided to the market via exits placed off NHG itself, situated perhaps in building/s on Pembridge Gardens. Perhaps the top end of Portobello Road, just below Pembridge Gardens, should be pedestrianised on a Saturday (is it already??)?
 - f. Vast empty-looking office-block foyers should be avoided, as they are alienating. Office foyers should be of a sensible size and should be placed within a rhythm of restaurants and shops at road- and station concourse levels.
 - g. The Hong Kong subway system is worth looking at as a precedent. Also, in London, look at Bond Street station (but better designed).
 - h. Trees down the centre of NHG.
 - i. To manage the flow of people crossing the roads, I think that barriers should be maintained (perhaps raised planters?), save at crossings of course, which I agree should be straightened.
 - j. Of course better, intuitive, signage, above and below ground.

3. Improving buildings and architecture

- a. A host of taller buildings clustered around the main NHG intersection (especially the stretch between Kensington Church Street and Campden Hill) should be avoided, so that its present light, bright and airy feel can be maintained.
- b. Existing tall ("ugly") buildings, especially Newcombe House, David Game House, Czech Embassy, Campden Hill Towers could perhaps be enhanced by one additional floor each. Maybe also the other smaller buildings. But a forest of tall buildings (taller than 4 – 5 storeys, depending on the bulk and design) would detract, I think. What about vertical gardens up the sides of the tall buildings? Or giant artworks? Or artworks in annual or semi-annual rotation? The old terraced houses on NHG (*e.g.*, around Campden Hill, and just above, could benefit from being allowed one 'sympathetic' extra floor each, perhaps slightly set –back from road line of sight.
- c. Just a thorough clean-up of all of the buildings would in itself enhance the area but would not be sufficient as a sustainable improvement programme taking the area forward into the next 20-30-40-50 years.
- d. In considering re-development of buildings, of course, necessary wide entrances into the concourses would have to be designed-in. See my comments under 2 above.
- e. An additional thought: if a building owner was permitted to put on an extra floor, it might more easily be persuaded to re-develop its ground floor to facilitate the creation of the required public spaces and concourses.

my new
points added
from this
submission

366.

19th September 2013

Notting Hill Gate Consultation
TRBK&C

Dear Sirs

I went to your consultation in Astley House on Saturday.

I have lived in NHG very happily for the last 22 years.

I have a number of suggestions, which cannot be summarised in the three approaches you offer. These suggestions vary from the expensive to the trivial. No doubt several (including the trivial ones!) are outside your powers.

General

You seem to want to cater to yet more people, as well as residents, to be about the place in NHG. Having struggled through other pedestrians so frequently in some of the streets at some of the times, I wonder if this is wise! ✓

Certainly some better signs for access to Portobello Road, so heavily frequented by visitors at the weekends, should be provided. It is presumably impossible to change one or two road names so PBR ran directly into Notting Hill Gate. Could not the first signs (at right-angles to NHG) say "Pembridge Gardens (for Portobello Road)", and further much larger signs saying "straight ahead for PBR" and "turn left for PBR" on both sides of PG as appropriate? ✓

I think most of the road barriers are necessary. The main east-west road is necessarily frequently used by very fast vehicles (Police, Ambulances, Fire engines). ✓

One particularly dangerous place for pedestrians is crossing the road at the southern end of Pembridge Road. There should at least be a fifth exit further west of the existing exit three from the underground station, which passengers emerging from the Tube (and people merely wishing to cross the road eastwards or westwards) could use. It should surface well down NHG, towards Campden Hill Towers; there is a wide pavement in that area. I appreciate this would be rather expensive! |

Trivial expense would be to have address numbers compulsory for all shops etc. For example, there are hardly any between Linden Gardens and Pembridge Gardens. Surely you could make some by-law to enforce that? ✓

Major buildings or rows should have canopies to keep of the rain as far as possible. |

Architecture

I am tolerant of most forms of architecture (though I do not like the dignified long rows - now usually flats - being spoilt by a single one being painted on an originally brick facade - cannot you ban that in conservation areas?). I certainly disagree that because art deco is now very out of fashion, the few examples in this area should be scrapped - eg the higher stories of Broadwalk Court, as someone was suggesting(!), or the building slanting from the main road with the bookshop beneath (although it should be cleaned up). If it has to go, the building lines around should be cut back much further, as this is on a particularly busy corner. ✓

I quite like the multicoloured rectangular panels on the building to the west of Apsley House - but the occupants should not be allowed to have anything (except curtains) in or on the windows. What is rather disagreeable in some places is where airconditioners have been added to such buildings (eg Apsley Place). Finally the shabby shops, with particularly grotty goods on the west side of Pembridge Road should be scrapped, allowing much wider roads and pavements - this would help the PBR problem.

If major buildings are altered or replaced, canopies as now (eg outside Apsley House) should continue to be provided to keep the rain off as far as possible. ✓

If more very tall buildings are to be built (even if some others are to come down) can some expert be brought in to minimise the strength of the winds which some of them cause. ✓

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

only new
points
from this
Submission
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Nottinghill Gate Consultation
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
The Town Hall
Horton Street
London
W8 7NX

18th September 2013

Dear Sirs

Further to your recent questionnaire, please see my comments list below:

1. If we had a lot of small shops it would attract people rather than a load of small offices. ✓
2. Tall buildings increase the draught in the street considerably. For example I was crossing the road from the 'Coffee House to the Coronet Cinema' on a windy day, with a shopping trolley when a gust of wind blew up the canvas lid of the trolley to make a kind of sail which then blew me suddenly across the road (I was already over half way across the road) a bus driver then accelerated when he saw me (disabled) as a sort of game? Two American tourists pulled me hurriedly onto the pavement therefore saving me. The updraught was increased because the area is on top of the hill above Holland Park Road when it hits the tall buildings in Nottinghill Gate. ✓

Question 1:

Section A:

- The preferred approach would be to refurbish. However, to promote the evening economy could be very disturbing to local residents if this means the increase in bars and clubs. This needs to be clarified. ✓

Section B:

- The Saturday farmers market SHOULD be in a central place - its current location allows easy access to all local residents. ✓
- We do not want the shops to become foyers for offices. We need our smaller shops in this area to remain as they provide a vital service to us residents. ✓
- The Coronet building should be retained as a historic building. The Cornet and the Gate Cinemas both provide evening entertainment which is not rowdy. ✓

Section C:

- no.
- It is already so close to the central area for museums and galleries that it seems to be a substantial waste of money to move these to this area. ✓

Question 2:

Section A:

- Refurbish – to improve the number of signs to Portobello Road would be a good thing. ✓

Section B:

- To widen the pavements the impact of traffic would be more intense and this is already an extremely busy road. ✓

Section C:

- Why is there a need to improve the underground station entrances?
- To improve the number of signs to Portobello Road would be a good thing ✓

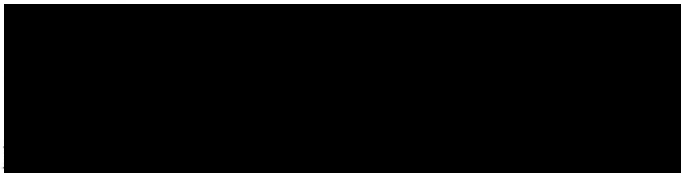
Question 3:

Refurb

- Why can't the external facades of all historical buildings be retained? ✓
- Newcombe House gives historical architecture to the street – why not retain the original facade. ✓

I hope you find these comments helpful.

Yours sincerely



A resident of over 30years at this address