

29 February 2020

Authority to act on behalf of a neighbourhood area

Purpose of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum

1. The Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Area (KNA) was designated on 27 March 2014 and the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum (KNF or Forum) was designated on 21 July 2015.
2. The KNF was established with the purpose of making Knightsbridge the most desirable and attractive residential and cultural area in London in which to live, work, study and visit. The focus of the Forum is on the following priorities:
 - a. Pursuing at least once all the Knightsbridge Management Plan actions listed.
 - b. Commenting selectively on significant planning applications or consultations relating to the Area e.g. proposals to develop the Hyde Park Barracks land.
 - c. Commenting on emerging planning policies that could affect the Area.
 - d. Seeking to ensure that the neighbourhood portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (and other planning obligation monies where possible) are utilised fully in line with the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan (KNP or the Plan).
 - e. Monitoring the application of policies in the KNP to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications.
 - f. Reporting annually or biennially on outcomes e.g. in 2020.
 - g. Reviewing the policies and updating the KNP from time to time, subject to resources.
 - h. Bringing the KNP and neighbourhood planning to 'life'.
3. The Forum prepared the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2037 which passed referendum on 18 October 2018 with 93.0% of those voting supporting the Plan on a 19.2% turnout. The content of the Plan and the support for it, including as demonstrated through the referendum result, have both been considered a great success. The Forum is keen to 'bring the Plan to life' in terms of ensuring that its primary objective of making Knightsbridge the most desirable and attractive residential and cultural area in London in which to live, work, study and visit is achieved. Since the Plan was made on 11 December 2018, the Forum's actions have included:
 - a. Commenting selectively on significant planning applications submitted to Westminster within the KNA.
 - b. Pursuing at least once actions listed in the Knightsbridge Management Plan.
 - c. Applying successfully for neighbourhood CIL funds to be used to restore and improve the 'Hole-in-the-Wall' which is identified in Policy KBR5 in the KNP as a 'Structure of Merit'.
 - d. Submitted representations on the emerging Westminster City Plan – both the informal consultation draft (November 2018) and the Regulation 19 Publication Draft (June 2019).
 - e. Promoting neighbourhood planning to other neighbourhood forums in the City of Westminster.

It is important to highlight also that having a 'made' neighbourhood plan means that the neighbourhood portion of CIL has increased from 15% (capped) to 25% (uncapped).

Intended future activities of the Forum

4. Whilst the KNP will remain part of the development plan for determining planning applications within the KNA, it is considered that the re-designation of the Forum is important so it can continue to inform how the neighbourhood portion of the CIL is spent in the KNA and update the KNP in response to changes in the London Plan and Westminster City Plan as necessary, subject to resources. This importance has been heightened by WCC's declaration of a climate emergency in September 2019 and its commitment for the Council to become carbon neutral by 2030 and across the borough by 2040. The Forum considers that its support and expertise are important to ensure that the activities of businesses, developers, cultural institutions and residents in Knightsbridge make the necessary contribution towards meeting these ambitious targets.
5. Over the next five-year period, the Forum intends to pursue the following aims:
 - a. Continue to ensure that the neighbourhood portion of CIL (and other planning obligation monies where possible) are utilised fully in line with the KNP.
 - b. Continue to monitor the application of the policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications.
 - c. In light of this, to monitor the effectiveness of the KNP in achieving its stated objectives. Review the KNP with a view to updating it, as necessary and subject to resources, in light of the final adopted Westminster City Plan and new London Plan. This review may take two forms:
 - i. Non-material amendments to the KNP, therefore not requiring examination or referendum.
 - ii. Subject to resources, a fuller review of the KNP with the understanding that this may result in material modifications to the Plan which may in turn necessitate an examination and/or referendum.
6. More generally over the same five-year period, the Forum intends to pursue the following broader aims:
 - a. Seek to ensure that the Westminster City Plan is compatible with the objectives of the KNP.
 - b. Appear and give evidence to the Examination in Public of the Westminster City Plan if invited to do so by the Planning Inspectors.
 - c. Continue to report annually or biennially on outcomes, both to the members of the Forum and, as appropriate, the residents, businesses and cultural institutions in the KNA.
 - d. Engage constructively with the ongoing development of one or more proposed Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the International (Shopping) Centre of Knightsbridge.
 - e. Continue to engage constructively with the existing businesses and cultural institutions in the KNA.
7. In line with the preceding intent and such other matters as may from time to time arise, the Forum will continue to assess its Articles of Association and where deemed desirable, will modify them to ensure that they are appropriate.

Forum Constitution and membership

8. The Forum prepared Articles of Association and these were approved by the membership. The Articles have been reviewed, updated and approved from time to time, most recently at the AGM on 26 June 2019 (latest copy attached).

9. The Articles of Association clearly state the purposes of the Forum in Section 3:
 - a. to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the KNA for its residents, businesses and institutions;
 - b. to ensure that any development in the KNA is sustainable and appropriate to the distinctive and historic character of the KNA;
 - c. to promote high standards of city planning and architecture in the KNA; and
 - d. to develop a neighbourhood plan that: is appropriate having regard to national policy; contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the KNA.

10. The Forum has continually grown its membership, which stands at 79 members (as at 29 February 2020). This membership is widely drawn from across the neighbourhood and a range of people in the community including businesses, residents and cultural organisations. Councillor The Lady Robathan, an elected member and Leader of the Council, has also been a member and Director of the KNF since it was formed in 2015. The breakdown of members is as follows:
 - Resident Members – 61 members
 - Business Members – Four members
 - Cultural Members – 13 members
 - Elected Members – One member

11. Of particular importance has been the consistent support of the Knightsbridge Association (KA). The KA supported the Forum when it applied for its original designation and continued to support the Forum through the preparation of the KNP. We are particularly pleased therefore that the KA has confirmed its support for this application for re-designation. Please note that a particular concern of the KA and the Forum is to encourage Westminster to refer to the KNP more frequently and explicitly in its planning decision notices, delegated reports and any pre-application advice.

12. Pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 Schedule 9, 61F(5), and in order to facilitate further membership, a website (www.knightsbridgeforum.org) was developed that contains information about the KNF, Articles of Association, details of current Directors and the KNP and associated documents. It also explains that anyone who demonstrably lives, works or studies in the KNA and local councillors can apply to join the KNF and provides periodic notices of Annual General Meetings.

Simon Birkett
Chair

For and on behalf of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum Limited