

SUB-STATION SITE, NORTH SQUARE

Please let the Trust have your views



As seen from North Square



As seen from Northway



The sub-station and interior of the site

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

1 The purpose of this statement is to seek the views of Suburb residents on the possible development of the sub-station site. The site is on the corner of North Square and Northway, opposite the Free Church Manse on its North Square frontage and adjacent to the Tea House on its Northway frontage. Its freehold belongs to the Trust. It is held on a long lease by EDF Energy Networks. It has been occupied for many years by an electrical sub-station. In early plans for this part of the Suburb, which were never implemented, the site was to be used for a building facing the Free Church Manse.

2 The sub-station could be re-housed in a way that would free up the site for other uses. The development of the site to the advantage of the Suburb and its residents has therefore been considered over a long period. The proceeds of any development that might take place would be shared between EDF and the Trust. The Trust's share would probably not be less than £300,000 at present values, which could be used for the benefit of all residents of the Suburb, in ways that are summarised in paragraphs 6-9 below.

3 The Trust received planning permission from the London Borough of Barnet in 1990 for a single house to be built on the site. The application made at that time was a necessary part of the process of ascertaining the value of the site, because planning law did not permit an application for outline planning permission in a conservation area. An application for full planning permission, including building plans, was therefore submitted. A copy of the plan approved in 1990 is shown on page 3. The permission obtained at that time has subsequently been renewed on two occasions.

4 In order to explore the possibility of development and to clarify the options which may be open, we recently asked EDF to apply for

the Trust's consent for a house to be built on the site in line with the planning permission which had been granted. Local residents and organisations were asked to comment on EDF's application in the usual way, and on this occasion we also asked the Residents Association for its comments. The views that were received in response are summarised in paragraph 9 below. Given the implications of possible development for Suburb residents as a whole, we are now seeking views more widely.

What the Trust would do with the proceeds of any development

5 Any gain arising from the development of the site would be used by the Trust to provide enhanced amenities for Suburb residents, to deal with applications for alterations more effectively, and to take more vigorous action against residents who carry out unauthorised alterations. Action needed under these heads is summarised in paragraphs 6-8 below.

6 The Trust regularly contributes towards the cost of amenities for residents like the Garden Suburb Gallery, Proms at St Jude's and the grants and donations made through our Grants Committee. The Trust Council would like to contribute on a larger scale to these and other similar amenities, to provide improved meeting and recreational facilities for residents, to enhance the Suburb environment, continue street tree planting and to help fund activities celebrating the forthcoming centenary of the Suburb.

7 We need to invest more in the guidance we offer to residents and their architects on the way in which applications for alterations should be made. 'Design Guidance', published jointly by the Trust and the London Borough of Barnet, needs to be revised and updated for that purpose. More

effective use needs to be made of computerised records in assessing and processing applications.

8 Considerable costs can be incurred by the Trust in taking action against residents who carry out unauthorised alterations. The Trust needs increased financial resources for this purpose, particularly in the current increasingly litigious climate.

Views received on EDF's application

9 Residents living nearby, local organisations and the Residents Association have been invited to comment on the application. In their responses they have expressed concerns about the size and style of the proposed house, the loss of some mature oak trees, a potential increase in traffic congestion and parking problems, the loss of a potential amenity space, the creation of a precedent for the infilling of other sites on the Suburb, and the alteration involved to the appearance of Central Square (which has remained unaltered since it was completed in the 1930s).

Some background information

10 At our AGM in 1995, the Trust's then Chairman explained that discussion had taken place over several years about the possible development of the site as a community centre, or the sale of the site in order to finance a centre elsewhere in the Suburb. The Trust had applied for permission for a house to be built on the site in order to establish its development potential. It was the view of the Trust Council at that time that no development should take place without widespread consultation and consensus in the community.

11 The Trust is a registered charity which is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. Its main object is 'to maintain and preserve the present character and amenities of the Suburb. Its

resources can only be used for that purpose. The members of the Trust Council, who are its Trustees and the directors of the company, can receive no remuneration or other personal benefit from the Trust or from the development of the North Square site. Our sole concern is to do what is right for the Suburb and its residents, and in doing so to carry out effectively and conscientiously our duties as charitable trustees. We shall consult the Charity Commission if necessary on those duties in relation to the sub-station site.

12 The Trust Council is considering the possibility of initiating the preparation of new plans, for a house of more modest size, allowing the retention of most of the trees. These plans would be submitted to the local authority for planning permission and to the Trust for consent, in which case residents and interested organisations would be asked to comment on them. As a preliminary to possible further action in this context, we are obtaining independent expert advice on the current condition of the trees and the restrictions on development required to protect them.

How to let us have your views

13 We are inviting Suburb residents to let us have their views on the possible development of the sub-station site by completing the form below and returning it, no later than 1st June 2005, to the Trust Manager, Jane Blackburn. Before doing so you may wish to look at the site, the interior of which can be seen most clearly from the boundary of the site in Northway and from the drive at the side of the site in North Square. Please detail any queries on the form below or contact the Trust Manager by phone or letter (details below) or by e-mail to: janeblackburn@hgstrust.org

Mervyn Mandell Chairman,
on behalf of the Trust Council



862 Finchley Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6AB. Telephone 8455 1066 or 8458 8085

To: The Trust Manager, Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, 862 Finchley Road, London NW11 6AB
(Please complete this coupon, fold and tape it and return it to the Trust by 1st June 2005)

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF SUB-STATION SITE, NORTH SQUARE

Please tick the appropriate box below to indicate your preference:

- ☐ I/we would like to see the site developed in line with the existing planning permission
- ☐ I/we would like to see the site developed with a smaller sized house, allowing the retention of as many of the existing trees as possible
- ☐ I/we would like to see the site stay as it is

Please make any further comments below, if you wish, to explain your preference or your views on the possible development of the site

Comments: _____

NAME(S) _____
(block capitals please)

ADDRESS _____
(block capitals please)

SIGNED _____

DATE _____