

Gondar Gardens reservoir

Gondar and Agamemnon Residents' Association (GARA) is a formally constituted organisation with members drawn from all of the streets surrounding the (disused) reservoir site.

Our principal aim is *“To preserve and improve the quality of life and amenities in Gondar Gardens, Agamemnon Road and the surrounding area”*. We have been involved with the reservoir site since 2002. It is home to one protected species (Camden’s only known population of slow worms) and several ‘red listed’ bird species. We have consistently supported the application of Camden policies which protect this designated Open Space and Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

GARA believes that the recently approved ‘frontage’ scheme represents the best solution to allowing some form of development whilst preserving 93% of the Open Space and SNCI as a nature reserve in perpetuity. This fills in the street frontage between existing mansion blocks with 28 homes including 10 affordable flats, and gifts the remaining green space to the London Wildlife Trust to manage as a wildlife site with local involvement and some managed access.

This is a far better scheme than the previous ones that have been proposed – either 16 large houses in the green reservoir space (with a financial contribution to Camden in lieu of affordable housing), or an outline proposal for 79 flats across the frontage and extending deep in to the reservoir site. This last idea generated immediate local outrage, and was quietly dropped by the developer.

We are extremely concerned that the site has been sold on to a developer of luxury retirement homes (who are exempt from providing affordable housing). We don’t know what their plans might be – we have been happy to enter in to discussion with every owner of the site so far – but we do believe that the Gondar Gardens reservoir site is and should remain an important undisturbed green space for wildlife.

Gondar Gardens reservoir – recent history

2005: Protected as Open Space and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance

2010: Linden Wates purchased the site and cut down all trees on the street frontage

2011: Centre only



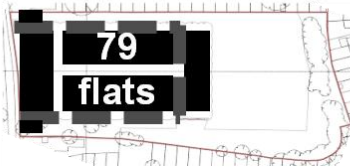
Allowed on appeal, low-level, open from street, no affordable housing

2013: Frontage only



Approved, December 2015
93% Open Space preserved

2015: Front-and-centre
5.5m above reservoir roof



Excessive and greedy, caused local outrage, scheme quietly dropped

2016: Sold to LifeCare Residences



Luxury retirement homes

