

**Minutes of Ledbury Estate Residents Project Group Meeting
5th November 2019**

Attendance

RPG

Sue Slaughter	SS	Alex Hedge	AH
Patrick Goode	PG	Eileen Basson	EB
Jeanette Mason	JM		

LBS

Mike Tyrell	MT	Abigail Buckingham	AB
Sharon Shadbolt	SSh	Paul Thomas	PT

Others

Charles Hingston	CH	Calford Seaden
Jonathan Hutton	JH	Calford Seaden
Dan Pescod	DP	Calford Seaden
Alice Blair	ABI	Arup
Andrew Lawrence	AL	Arup
Neal Purvis	NP	Open Communities – ITLA

Observer

Danielle Gregory DG

Apologies for Absence:

RPG Members: Toby Bull, Shelene Byer, Glenn Holmes, Nicole Bailey

Others: Ferenc Morath

1. Introductions

1.1 Those present introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 2.1 The minutes of the RPG Meeting of 3 September were agreed as accurate.
- 2.2 With the change of the date to 24th October 2019, the minutes of the RPG Meeting of 24 September were agreed as accurate.
- 2.3 With the change in Ferenc Morath's Job Title to *Head of Investment*, the minutes of the Estatewide Meeting of 24 September, were agreed as accurate.

3. Report from Estate Meeting 24.10.19. Cabinet Meeting 29.10.19.

3.1 MT reported that residents at the estatewide meeting wanted further opportunities to question Arup on the Bromyard Report, and Arup were present tonight to allow this.

3.2 Councillor Kieron Williams had made commitments at the estatewide meeting that were followed up in the response to the RPG Deputation to Cabinet. They were to be published in the Ledbury newsletter of 8.11.19. These included no change to the red line around the area that will be considered in the option appraisal since 2018 and full

consultation with residents on the updated costs developed by Calford Seaden following the Arup Report on Bromyard. These are expected at the end of November 2019.

3.3 MT will bring a paper to the December RPG Meeting to outline a consultation process with residents on the options when costs are received. The aim is to consult the same group as before, the residents and former tenants with the Right to Return to Ledbury Towers.

3.4 MT circulated a written response to the RPG from Councillor Kieron Williams the Cabinet Member for Housing. **NP to include a map of the Red Line for the Option Appraisal with these minutes.**

3.5 There will be at least as many Council rented homes at the end of this process as there are now. There were 190 Council rented homes in the towers, and the Council have bought back 13 leaseholders, so there will be at 203 Council rented homes at the end of refurbishment and newbuild.

3.6 Councillor Williams agreed to look at rent and service charge levels for returning to new homes at the same level as rent and service charge levels in the towers.

3.7 There will be a right for tenants and leaseholders to stay on the estate, and there will be information on likely Council Tax levels at the time of the consultation with residents on options.

3.8 MT is meeting the Council's leasehold management team to develop a response on the concerns of leaseholders about loss of floor area if the works suggested by Arup are implemented.

3.9 The Council will extend the time for the right to return to the date of homes on the Ledbury Towers site completed. This will update Councillor Cryan's letter of 23 April 2018.

3.10 The council will consider the cost of refurbishment compared to new build, and will take into account what residents want in coming to a decision on the option for the towers.

3.11 All options will be reconsidered, with 203 new Council rented homes the minimum provision. Tenure mix will be discussed as part of the consultation on the options.

3.12 MT made clear to JM that the low rise blocks on Ledbury are not part of the Option Appraisal process.

3.13 PG contrasted the position of tenants, who have the Right to Return and may be charged the same service charge for a new home or a refurbished home, whereas leaseholders could get refurbishment works that reduce the amenity in their existing home. What would they be offered if they moved to a new home on Ledbury. MT explained that if the block was refurbished, leaseholders would keep their lease in their existing home with 100% ownership. If resident leaseholders moved to a new home on the estate they would be offered this on a shared equity basis. MT noted there was not yet a commitment to charge towers rent and service charges to tenants in new build homes on the estate.

3.14 DG noted that her research had shown a wide variety of divergence between the rents charged by Councils on new and older homes of the same bedroom size of as much as 143%.

3.15 NP circulated the draft minutes of the Cabinet Meeting on 29 October. The Deputation had the effect of amending some of the recommendations accepted by the Council's Cabinet. The Resolution of the Cabinet made clear that the red line for the Option Appraisal would not change from 2018 and that there would be a further report to Cabinet responding to the issues raised by the Deputation.

3.16 RPG asked **MT to invite Councillor Kieron Williams to the January RPG Meeting.**

4.0 Refurbishment of the Towers and New Build Homes

- 4.1 ABI circulated a written response to the questions residents had raised with Arup following the estate wide meeting on 29 October.
- 4.2 Insulation between inner and outer leaves of external wall panels will be dealt with during final design if refurbishment is the chosen option.
- 4.3 AL confirmed that except for a single joint packed with sand, the Arup investigations had not found in general the standard of workmanship on Bromyard was decent.
- 4.4 ABI explained that the strengthening required was more on the top 8 floors because the weight of the building on the lower 8 floors meant they were strong enough to meet the standards set for resistance to an explosion and progressive collapse. PG asked what could cause a problem of the pressure set out by the regulations. AL replied an explosion of a calor gaz cylinder or 2m depth of water. The regulations set the pressure that buildings have to withstand.
- 4.5 The location of the steel strengthening would have to vary in blocks with different layouts. The diagrams in the report were for Bromyard.
- 4.6 AL explained that to encase the shear wall in a 4" reinforced concrete jacket would reduce room sizes in the bedroom. Holes would be drilled through the bedroom walls for reinforcement at 8" centres and through floors and ceilings.
- 4.7 CH reported that the Fire Risk Assessment requirements had been taken into account in the specification used in the original option appraisal. He noted that increased the screed depth on floors would improve fire integrity.
- 4.8 AL explained that the top eight floors, all rooms would have steel strengthening inserted. SS asked if this meant flats on lower floors would have larger internal room space than upper floors. AL confirmed this. ABI noted that all floors would have a lower floor to ceiling height, and all floors would lose 4" on each side of the wall in the hallway.
- 4.9 AL confirmed that door openings could be increased in size to allow doors the size required by regulations to be fitted.
- 4.10 PG noted that when the buildings were built there was little provision made for inspection and maintenance. AL replied that the plan was to leave the steel strengthening beams exposed with a galvanized finish and paint.
- 4.11 AB reported that LBS Major Works would meet LBS Planning Officers on 29 November to discuss whether planning would view this as refurbishment works, subject to historic regulations, or a new build project that would mean rooms would need to meet current standards for new homes.
- 4.12 The design of external wall panels will be dealt with during final design if refurbishment is the chosen option. JH noted that removing wall panels made it easier to get building materials into the building. DG asked what % of the building would be dismantled as part of refurbishment. AB responded a considerable amount.
- 4.13 There was a discussion about the size of the windows. They will remain the same size.
- 4.14 AL explained that the strengthening using steel beams added to the existing weight of the building, and that removing non load bearing walls was a way to reduce weight to offset this.
- 4.15 It will be possible to mount kitchen units on non load bearing walls between the kitchen and living room.
- 4.16 Space will be lost in the second bedroom of two and three bedroom homes.
- 4.17 The design of separate kitchens and bathrooms will be part of the final design, as will the rebuild of the stairs and lift shaft. It is likely the stairs and lift shaft will be built on a steel structure.
- 4.18 There was a discussion about the levels on each floor of the block. CH confirmed there would be level access from the lift, through the lobbies, into each flat.

- 4.19 JH explained that the outline programme for the works showed the lift and stair core being built first and then works to the residential area to follow.
- 4.20 PG asked why it was necessary to rebuild the lift shaft. AL replied that the standards required by regulations were the same for the lift and stair cores as the residential part of the building. It had not been possible to do investigation works as part of the previous Arup reports. Other options for strengthening had been considered and they reduced the size of the lift shaft and stair width, and would fail requirements for fire escape, and rebuild was likely to be cheaper.
- 4.21 Installing steel strengthening should not affect wireless connection but could affect the use of mobile phones in the building. **CH to check with specialists.**
- 4.22 MT explained any residents having difficulty returning to the same flat with furniture that does not fit would be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- 4.23 PG asked where else this solution had been installed. AL said that all elements had been used on other buildings but not together. MT noted that a tower in Shadwell had the same system on the upper floors to tie in the walls at Winterton House.
- 4.24 JM asked whether the proposed works would affect the TV signal to the low rise blocks. Some of Pencraig is in a TV signal shadow from the towers. MT suggested this to be considered during the detailed design.
- 4.25 MT will bring a paper to December RPG meeting outlining the Consultation Process for discussion. There will be costs from Calford Seaden at the December RPG meeting.
- 4.26 NP noted that LBS had declared a climate emergency and asked how the aspiration for carbon neutral homes would be taken into account in the option appraisal process. AB explained that all elements would be taken into account, including costs, residents' views, planning considerations. JH noted Calford Seaden are meeting Engie to discuss approaches to construction in week beginning 11 November.
- 4.27 A final decision on the preferred option will be taken by the Council's Cabinet, taking into account all the information including residents' views. There will be an Officer Recommendation and Councillors will make a political decision.

5.0 Update Report from LBS

- 5.1 MT circulated an update report. 21 leaseholders remain and 3 are in negotiation with the Council.
- 5.2 All 4 bedroom households had been rehoused. Due to age of children there is now one further household that has qualified for a four bedroom home. There had been a fire brigade spot check with no concerns raised by LFB. LFB are carrying out risk assessment internally before carrying out training exercises in Bromyard starting in February. They will test new fire tenders with a ladder that reaches the 10th floor.
- 5.3 There had been 2 reports of leaks since the meeting in September.

6.0 Resident Issues

- 6.1 EB reported damage due to hyperoptic cable installation in Pencraig Way. **PT to inspect.**
- 6.2 PG noted a large discrepancy in the estimated and actual service charge for electricity consumption in 2017/18 service charge bill. **MT investigating with Home Ownership.**
- 6.3 PT reported that painting to bollards in Pencraig Way will start on 6.11.19.

7.0 Matters Arising from the minutes of meeting 3.9.19.

- 7.1 (3.5) AB had reported to RPG on action taken with Engie where work had taken place adjacent to an occupied flat.

- 7.2 (3.5) Arup report had been received and RPG met with Arup the same day.
- 7.3 (3.9) MT had briefed the press office on the Arup Report. A statement had been sent to the local press. Only one press enquiry had been received. PG suggested Arup may want to contact the trade press about their findings and recommendations.
- 7.4 (7.7) **SSh to provide soil surveys when they are complete.**
- 7.5 (7.8) PT reported that windows have been renewed in the TRA Hall. Door and shutter work is programmed.

8.0 Matters Arising from the minutes of RPG meeting 24.10.19.

- 8.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting 24.10.19.

9.0 Any Other Business

9.1 NP to send articles on Ledbury in Inside Housing to RPG Members.

- 9.2 NP reported that there is space for up to 8 Towers residents and tenants with the right to return and 6 low rise residents on the RPG. Currently there are 10 RPG members. **NP to check whether members who had not attended any recent meetings wished to remain as members of the RPG.**

- 9.3 DG had asked to rejoin the RPG. Members asked why DG wish to rejoin now. DG explained that she had stepped down during the time there was a class action disrepair claim against LBS. Now that claim was settled there would not be a potential conflict of interest in being a RPG member. DG agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct of RPG.

- 9.4 DG outlined the Ledbury Action Group as a group she is part of that includes Ledbury Towers residents and former tenants. It campaigns for Council Tenants on Human and Social Rights issues and has around 100 members who communicate through facebook.



- 9.5 DG becomes a member of RPG and NP to send Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to all RPG members.

N. Purvis 6.11.19.

Red Line Boundary for Option Appraisal

hunters

AGREED SITE BOUNDARIES

-  Boundary and extent of Option Appraisal Area
-  Boundary of wider Ledbury Estate (excluded from the Option Appraisal Area)

