

Minutes of Ledbury Estate Residents Project Group Meeting 16 January 2018

Attended	Resident members		
	Mike Tyrrell	MT	LBS
	Sharon Shadbolt	SSH	LBS
	Abigail Buckingham	AB	LBS
	Ferenc Morath	FM	LBS
	Charles Hingston	CH	Calford Seaden
	Dan Pescod	DP	Calford Seaden
	Neal Purvis	NP	Open Communities - ITLA

Apologies for Absence Glenn Holmes, Duke Odiachi, Val Taylor, Jeanette Mason

1.0 Notes of the Meeting 5 December

1.1 The notes of the meeting of 5 December were agreed as accurate.

2.0 Option Appraisal

2.1 AB reported that following the RPG meeting on 5 December, Calford Seaden had been appointed to provide cost consultancy to develop information on refurbishment options to be used as part of the option appraisal process for Ledbury Towers.

2.2 Provisional information was circulated on the specification of 4 refurbishment options. AB asked RPG for comments on whether the options included everything that is needed. There will be consultation with Ledbury Towers residents and a public meeting on 1 February to get input from residents' on the options.

2.3 CH explained each of the options. Option 1 includes the works that Arup have set out that have to be done to make the towers safe and compliant with the current regulations and guidance, and to make the Heating and Hot Water system permanent. Option 2 includes all of the work in Option 1, plus more. Similarly Option 3 includes the work in Option 2 plus more work.

2.4 Option 1 includes:

- Structural reinforcement works to include all stripping out and reinstatement of affected areas including floors, ceilings, sanitaryware, mechanical and electrical installations, fixtures and fittings etc .
- Permanent fire stopping
- Making good cracks / gaps between external wall panels and intermediate cross-wall panels.

This would include:

- Installation of new kitchens, bathrooms and WCs
- Removal of plaster and screed to floors and ceilings in order to complete structural fixings
- Re-screed all floors
- Install plasterboard and skim walls and ceilings
- Removal and reinstatement of old heating pipework and radiators
- Electrical remedial works (which may include rewires)

- 2.5 The Arup report included a recommendation to fit wall ties to replace the existing ties that are almost 50 years old. The wall ties fix the outside concrete wall slab to the internal concrete wall slab. The wall ties would be drilled and fixed from the outside of the building. LBS has used this method at Portland Estate.
- 2.6 There are three options to provide permanent boilers for the Heating and Hot Water in the blocks. With either one energy centre (boiler) for all four blocks, one for Bromyard and another for the other three blocks, or a boiler for each block. CH to work with LBS Engineering to look at the feasibility of each option.
- 2.7 PC asked whether electric underfloor heating could be included? DP replied that it was rare to see electric underfloor heating in refurbishment or newbuild in social housing or homes for sale. DP to consider the long term cost of electric underfloor heating compared to a wet system. AB to look at whether there are any fire safety implications for electric underfloor heating.**
- 2.8 There is an allowance of £1000 per flat for asbestos removal.
- 2.9 PG asked why contractors would get a 6% design fee. DP replied that the contractor would have some design responsibility, and would have to guarantee the structural works, along with the heating system.
- 2.10 PG asked whether 10% contingency allowance is sufficient. DP replied that it was suitable at this conceptual stage with the information available on the blocks.
- 2.11 PG asked if there would be penalty clauses for the contractor? AB explained that this would depend on the procurement route chosen. This would be considered when a specific option is chosen.
- 2.12 SB asked if kitchen and bathroom units could be reused as they had been fitted in the recent past. DP replied that the costings assumed all would be replaced. Refitting removed units often meant it was difficult to get a good finish. AB confirmed that the Council could use removed units for other purposes, such as training apprentices.
- 2.13 Option 2 includes the work in Option alongside:
- Renewal of all service pipes, waterproofing to WC and bathroom floors, renewal of existing soil stacks and renewal of communal cold water tanks
 - Improvements to ventilation to stairways and landings where cold bridging, condensation and ingress of rainwater causing trip/slip hazards
- 2.14 SS reported that there was water coming in through the vents on the landings in Bromyard when it rained and this caused a slip hazard. CH to check this and consider and include a solution.**
- 2.15 There is also a problem with condensation on the communal stairs that made the smoke detectors unreliable in (which block?)
- 2.16 The RPG proposed that sprinklers should be included in Option 2. **CH to update option 2.**
- 2.17 Option 3 includes the work in Option 2 plus:
- Renew existing lifts
 - Provide improved insulation to the flats and communal areas

- Repair/renew key building components such as roofs and windows
- Improve illumination to stairways and communal areas
- Improve water pressure to upper floors (booster pumps)

2.18 CH explained he was looking in more detail at the amount of insulation that would be needed, and how this would work with new plasterboard covering straps increasing the structural strength of the blocks. Insulation could be provided inside flats or on the outside of the block. Insulation on the inside would reduce the floor area of the rooms. TE asked if this would affect fire stopping. CH replied that Fire Insulated plasterboard could be used. DP said the cost included at this stage is for internal insulation.

2.18 JD suggested internal safety was more important than insulation. AB explained fitting wall ties would increase cold bridging in the blocks.

2.19 There was a discussion about the life of a flat roof. The current flat roofs are 12 years old now. AB reported that the Council now gets 30 year guarantees for new flat roofs. 12 years ago the expected life of a flat roof was 20 years. Doing works like this when the contractors are on site and scaffold is in place is the most economic way to deal with the problem.

2.20 Residents reported wind noise through the window vents and gaps around the window frame.

2.21 PG asked whether the widow design, which had been changed in 2006 could be returned to the original design with a smaller pane below a larger pane. This had changed the appearance of the blocks significantly.

2.22 Option 4 includes the works in Option 3 plus:

- Improve refuse disposal provisions to the four tower blocks
- Consider environmental improvement and landscaping to the wider estate
- Consider improvement to the refuse areas, garages, and lighting to the wider estate.

2.23 There was a discussion about the problems with the rubbish chutes. They are not large enough for residents to get a black sack of rubbish into the chutes. There is limited space to store recycling in each flat and the collection points for rubbish and recycling are not easily kept clean and safe.

2.24 MT reported that other blocks he had worked on had chutes removed and underground refuse storage introduced successfully. **CH to investigate whether refuse collection in LBS can deal with this.**

2.25 AB reported that two blocks had Front Entry Doors replaced in 2011/12.

2.26 SD asked for options to reduce energy use, and renewable energy generation to be included in Option 4. **CH to amend specification and costing.**

2.27 There was a discussion about how landscaping could be improved between blocks. SS reported that the TRA had tried to get funding for an open air gym above the garages.

2.28 SB explained the current pathway between 3 blocks does not work well.

2.29 SD suggested using space for residents to meet, with garden or food growing space.

- 2.30 RPG members to send ideas to NP to collate and forward to CH/DP.
- 2.31 Option 5 will be a demolition and newbuild option. DP has provisionally priced the cost of demolition of existing buildings replaced with the same number and size of flats in 4 towers. The Option Appraisal consultants will provide more options for demolition and newbuild.
- 2.32 Appointment of Option Appraisal Consultants – AB explained that the work done by Calford Seaden work be used by the Option Appraisal Consultants to compare each of the options, taking into account a variety of factors.
- 2.33 AB circulated a very early draft brief for the Option Appraisal Consultants. Tenders will be invited in Mid February and the process will have to follow the Council’s Standing Orders for tendering. The tenders can be assessed on quotations for the work.
- 2.34 AB explained that the Option Appraisal Consultants will compare with weightings the costs and benefits of each option, including demolition and new build. The information they produce will be used as the basis for wider estate consultation in July.
- 2.35 MT explained that the RPG would have a view on the content of the options for consultation with residents, and then the Council’s Cabinet would, following recommendation from residents, make a decision on the preferred option.
- 2.36 Circulated an example of a option appraisal model that the Council had used to decide on priorities across its estates, on where Asset Management resources should be prioritised. The selected Option Appraisal Consultants would need to develop a Ledbury specific model to compare options for Ledbury Towers.
- 2.37 The new build options would be developed using the LBS Design Guide for New Homes, and other local information such as planning guidance.
- 2.38 AB explained that part of the specification would be for the Option Appraisal Consultants to provide training for the RPG in the Option Appraisal Process.
- 2.39 AB invited the RPG to nominate RPG members to be part of the selection panel for the ROG members of the panel will have to sign a *Confidentiality Agreement* to see commercially confidential documents. Option Appraisal Consultants. The selection process will take place during the working day. **AB to identify the time commitment and when the input will be needed. Interested RPG members to contact NP.**
- 2.40 RPG made comments on the sample Option Appraisal Model circulated. It needs to include consideration of environmental sustainability.
- 2.41 SS asked how and when residents across the estate would be consulted as refurbishment would effect residents elsewhere on the estate, with large scale works nearby, and demolition would have even more of an effect. AS recognised this and suggested as the options are developed the RPG and LBS would work on the information to consult both towers residents (and ex residents) alongside other Ledbury Estate residents.
- 2.42 FM reported that the Council were considering inviting 6 organisations to express interest. Each of them have the experience to do this and were on an approved list of the Housing

Regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). He asked RPG members to forward any views, through NP, by 22.1.18. The six organisations are:

- Hunters
- Capita
- Savills
- Quad
- Carter Jonas
- Grant Thornton

2.43 Organisations would be asked if they were interested, and if they were would be invited to quote, giving details of their experience, qualifications and approach. This would be assessed, alongside the cost by the Tender Evaluation Panel.

2.44 MT reported that there will be a meeting for Towers residents on 2 February to find out residents views on whether the specification of the options includes all relevant items. MT circulated a letter, that explains the Option Appraisal process, and survey form and asked for RPG comments by 5pm on 18.1.18. The letter will go to Towers residents on Friday 19.1.18.

2.45 JD suggested the survey mentions improving the communal staircase.

3.0 Update Report from LBS

4.1 MT reported that the fire alarm system had been changed, the number of wardens had been reduced to two per block from 8 January.

4.3 There had been a joint inspection with LBS and residents to identify what is needed for the deep clean across the towers and estate. There are a couple of doors where parts were ordered to bring the door entry system back into use. When fitted the deep clean will take place.

3.27 PG asked whether voids would be used for temporary accommodation or guardians. AB replied that normally the Council would use voids for temporary accommodation, but because residents were moving out to facilitate safety works, voids on Ledbury Towers would not be used for temporary accommodation at present.

3.28 The group working on the hoardings project will meet on 24 January.

4.0 Resident Issues

4.1 TE asked had the Council considered how to deal with the need to regularly check the fire stopping inside homes in the towers in the future? Was there a way to reduce disruption to residents so there would not need to be frequent internal inspections and possibly refilling of gaps and cracks? AB confirmed that this had been raised with Tony Hunter, the Council's Head of Compliance.

4.2 SD asked about compensation from the Council to be able to re-decorate following the fire safety works. AB responded that LBS had made good following Heating and Hot Water works, and at present would not re-decorate, or reimburse redecorations for the fire safety, gaps and cracks work, until the future of the blocks is clear. Residents could redecorate, but AB has no authority at present to reimburse the costs of any redecoration. JD commented that the works had damaged the decorations and the Council should redecorate or pay for redecoration.

5.0 Council Decision Making

6.1 NP drew RPG members attention to information and decisions that Councillors were expected to make on Ledbury:

- Update Report Ledbury – to be considered by Cabinet 23 January
- Ledbury Update Report – to be considered by Scrutiny Committee on 31 January
- Ledbury Leaseholder Update Report - to be considered by Scrutiny Committee on 31 January

7.0 Matters Arising from Minutes 5.12.17.

7.1 **SSh to issue resident satisfaction surveys following the hot water and heating works by 26.1.18. to identify any post works issues.**

7.2 (3.9) up to date FRA reports were on the Council's Ledbury Website.

7.3 (5.1) NP had received no further comments on Council's Offer to Tenants and Leaseholders. NP to review and forward to MT for a decision by Cabinet Member for Housing.

8.0 Future Meeting Dates

- 6 February
- 6 March
- 10 April (to avoid Easter week)
- 1 May
- 5 June
- 3 July
- 7 August