

**Minutes of Ledbury Estate Residents Project Group Workshop with Hunters
15th May 2018**

1.0 Attendance

RPG Members

Sue Slaughter	SS	Thomas Ennis	TE
Glenn Holmes	GH		

Residents

Toby Bull	TB
Danielle Gregory	DG

LBS

Mike Tyrrell	MT	Ferenc Morath	FM
Sharon Shadbolt	SSh	LBS	

Hunters

Mark Baines	MB	Graham Acus	GA
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Neal Purvis	NP	Open Communities - ITLA	
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Apologies for Absence Val Taylor, Shelene Byers, Patrick Goode, Serife Dervish, Jeanette Mason, Abigail Buckingham

2.0 Introductions

2.1 NP welcomed all to the workshop with Hunters to outline the Option Appraisal Process for Ledbury Estate.

3. Options Appraisal (OA)

3.1 MB Hunters role as OA Consultants. They were currently collecting information and developing ideas that they would ask RPG and LBS to comment on. This would lead to further ideas that would be tested against information on the site and area, with residents across the estate, and with Planners. The report on the OA would be presented to the Council in September to make a decision on the what happens next on the estate. Hunters would look at costs, but it would be up to the Council to consider how any options would be funded.

3.2 MB identified areas on a map (attached) that would be considered for possible demolition. This is the areas around each of the tower blocks, the garage block at Hoyland Close, and the TRA Hall.

3.3 MB identified areas on a map (attached) that would be considered for extension and or refurbishment. This was the low rise blocks. There could be infill development in the areas around the low rise blocks.

3.4 MB was clear that there will not be demolition of any of the low rise blocks on the estate.

3.5 Options looked at for new build could include a different frontage onto the Old Kent Road (OKR), and a taller building at the corner of Commercial Way and OKR. New build would have to take account of the existing buildings, such as at the rear of Bromyard with a block that is three sides of a square.

3.6 Residents asked questions about what refurbishment/extension for the low rise meant. MB replied that this could include looking at extending on the roof, with more floors above. This would depend on what is structurally possible, and would mean considering means of escape.

3.7 SS expressed concern that proposals and options to sort out problems in the four towers now meant that there would be a considerable effect for residents living in the low rise blocks. FM replied that the Council were looking at what options were possible but demolition of the low rise was off the table. Councillors had given a clear response on residents questions that there would be no demolition of low rise blocks. This process would look at other options for the low rise.

3.8 TB echoed SS concern and asked that the Council make the ground rules clear. He had previously asked when the Council would carry out works on the low rise blocks and had been told it was programmed for 10 years' time. This process suggested that work could be done sooner than that. Changes in the proposals and the effects were unnerving for residents.

3.9 FM replied that there had been costing carried out on four options to refurbish the towers. This was the beginning of the process to find out what is possible, and what residents' views are, on the demolition of one or more tower blocks and to look at the low rise blocks.

3.10 DG raised concerns that the commitment to no demolition of low rise was not Council policy and residents had asked for a commitment from the Leader of the Council on this. FM replied that Councillor Cryan had responded that there would be no demolition of the low rise blocks and this was 100% clear.

3.11 GH commented that the concern that had been caused by the first explanation of the Option Appraisal process on 1.5.18. Had not been well managed. Communications needed to improve to address residents' concerns.

3.12 There was a discussion on the information that the Council had made public on the Option Appraisal Process. MT confirmed that there would be an Open Book approach and the Council had published 4 documents so far on the website and would publish further documents as they develop.

3.13 NP to circulate section of RPG Minutes that set out what the Council would publish on the Option Appraisal process.

3.14 MB explained that the RPG is part of the delivery team. Hunters will bring ideas to the RPG, and when those ideas were developed they will carry out wider consultation across the estate.

3.15 MB circulated draft questions for wider consultation.. NP asked how the questions would be addressed to residents. MB responded that the bigger the sample the better and they were open on what method to use to deliver and collect responses that Hunters would then analyse.

3.16 There were separate questions for tower blocks and low rise, with some questions for all estate residents.

3.17 MB explained that Hunters will need to find out about the level of car ownership and what level of car parking is needed on the estate. SS explained that the system to manage parking spaces was first come first served for everyone with an estate parking permit. SS suggested the Pempeople who were about to provide community development and training activities in the car park under the podium should be consulted as part of the Option Appraisal process. **MT confirmed that the Council had found them alternative accommodation and they would be consulted.**

3.18 Alongside the existing Ledbury residents, and former tenants of Ledbury towers, non resident leaseholders, **LBS to identify other stakeholders who need to be consulted in the process and when.**

3.19 TE asked whether the OKR Area Action Plan would set the context for parking. MB replied that it would be the current Planning Guidance and that the Planners would be consulted when early stage ideas for building had been drawn. The result of the consultation with Planners would be fed back to the RPG. It would have an influence on the next stage of the design. OKR AAP is currently a draft and is not full Planning Guidance.

3.20 SS asked if there was an extra storey added to low rise blocks, would leaseholders be charged. FM replied that leaseholders would not be charged for the cost of works. If a roof renewal was needed they would be charged the cost of a new roof, divided between more flats in the block, so the cost per leaseholder would be less. LBS to provide more information to leaseholders on what the financial effect of them would be of different options before canvassing estatewide opinion on options.

3.21 There was a discussion on what information LBS needed to provide to residents in the low rise, and how and when this should be done. In addition to newsletters there should be a clear notification to all residents about what options are to be considered, what the process is, and what impact this could have on residents, along with timescales for decisions.

3.22 There was a discussion on whether looking at options for the low rise was relevant when the problems that needed to be fixed were in the towers. FM responded that in looking at long term options for the towers the Council needed to consider whether the low rise could be improved and whether better use could be made of the land on the estate.

3.23 TB asked if the tower blocks were demolished, whether resident leaseholders would have the Right to Return. MT replied that any option for demolition would need to involve the option for leaseholders to be rehoused.

3.24 MB explained that the brief Hunters have is to reprovide the number and bedroom size of the homes in the existing tower blocks irrespective of tenure.

3.25 . DG said that Ledbury Action Group strongly objected to the Options Appraisal Brief in its current form because the scope had been widened outside of the four tower blocks without permission or a mandate from the wider estate to do so and asked whether the timescale was sufficient to allow residents time to understand and be properly consulted. FM replied that there was a need to make a decision to end the uncertainty on the towers. The timetable set by the Council was for a September/October Cabinet decision. If residents felt they needed more time this would be taken into account

3.26 Amendments to the questions were; question five needs to include reference to new homes, questions 9 and 10 need to include examples.

3.27 TB asked how many new build homes will be needed to pay for 224 new Council homes? MB explained that the Hunters OA would provide costs, and outline what is possible, but the Council would need to decide on how to fund the options.

3.28 MB that Planner will give their view on what could be built, and that would take account of the neighbouring homes to any new build.

3.29 TE asked if the low rise homes would be refurbished free of charge to leaseholders. FM replied that they would not. If a new roof was not needed now, they would get one for free if there was building on top. In future for any major works the costs for scaffolding and block costs would be divided between more homes. This should also reduce some service charges for day to day works. SS asked what would happen if leaseholders could not afford the works. FM explained the Council has a variety of repayment options for leaseholders with major works bills.

3.30 There was a discussion about whether the low rise residents can opt out of the option appraisal or works. FM replied that if this view was expressed it would be reported to Councillors in the Cabinet Report at the end of the Option Appraisal.

3.31 TB explained he was a freeholder and has had great difficulty getting a clear answer on how to sort out a problem in his flat roof that covers the whole of the block he lives in.

3.32 DG suggested that the works previously suggested had been to refurbish or rebuild the tower blocks. This felt like a significant change with building on top. FM replied that the process was to consider options, look at what is possible and consult residents across the estate on their views.

3.33 MB explained the four refurbishment options would be considered with RPG and then put forward to the wider estate consultation.

A1 4 tower blocks refurbished with landscaping.

A2. Refurbishment of Tower Blocks with new build, new community facility and additional homes

A3. Demolition and new build of Tower Blocks with new build, new community facility and additional homes

B4. An addition to any of these options could be refurbishment of low rise buildings within the red line, which could include building on top.

3.34 MB made clear that Hunters were interested in how popular and unpopular each option is.

3.35 FM suggested that there needs to be options with part refurbishment and part demolition and new build of tower blocks. Hunters to provide ideas on this as the design ideas are developed. This will include some phasing.

3.36 TB asked when there would be a political input into the proposals. MT replied that the report from Hunters will go with a written report from Council Officers, to the Council's Cabinet for a decision in September/October.

3.37 NP asked that the timetable shows where the social impact will be considered. MB replied in Month 3 - July.

3.38 SS asked when the refurbishment options will be narrowed down. MB replied around the end of June.

3.39 TE asked whether there would be any different treatment of social housing and homes for sale. MB replied that the OA would look at how many homes of what size could be provided in the space available, with the planning regulations in place, and would not distinguish between tenure.

3.40 MB showed the meeting an example of consultation materials that Hunters had developed at Copley Close in Ealing. He explained how the consultation materials would include drawings that showed buildings in 3 D rather than just plans. At Copley Close the estate was treated as different areas with different issues such as landscape and parking in each area. The materials showed different storey size and heights compared with the homes next to new buildings to see how any new homes could fit in.

3.41 The materials would be provided to all residents and displayed, with residents asked for their comments on the ideas. MB suggested that the first estate wide consultation should start with open questions and then present ideas and ask residents to comment on them.

3.42 TE asked about fire safety and how and when that would be considered. MB replied that new build blocks proposed would take account of the fire safety requirements, and at this stage that would involve looking at the distance from each front door to the secure fire escape route. Providing two secure escape routes is necessary in blocks with longer corridors on each floor.

4.0 Next Meeting

4.1 NP to organize a residents only meeting before RPG meet with Hunters again around end May beginning June.

Neal Purvis 18.5.18.