

## Tustin Estate Project Team Meeting

Thursday 23 July 2020 by Zoom

### DRAFT MINUTES

Present	Initials	Present	Initials
Andrew Eke	AE	Neal Purvis (Open Comms, Chair)	NP
Andy Chaggar	AC	Ian Simpson (Open Comms, minutes)	IS
Anna Ginsberg	AG	Mike Tyrell (Southwark Council)	MT
Amelia Leeson	AL	Neil Kirby (Southwark Council)	NK
Francis Phillip	FP	Sophie Hall-Thompson (Southwark)	SH
Juliette Wodzicki	JW	Aaron Elliott (Altair)	AaE
Paulette Kelly	PK	Cassidy Curls (Altair)	CC
"OnePlus"	-	David Hills (Common Grounds)	DH
		Sarah Marshall (Mott MacDonald)	SM

#### 1. Introductions

1.1. Neal took the Chair and invited all participants to introduce themselves. He apologised for the large amount of papers that had been necessary for this meeting.

#### 2. Minutes of the Estate Project Team meeting of 9 July

2.1. The minutes were accepted as accurate with one correction:

2.1.1. Juliette Wodzicki from Manor Grove was also present at the meeting.

#### 3. Southwark progress contacting individual residents

3.1. Mike's team has been 'phoning residents for several days, including last weekend. Most of the residents' questions have been on (a) the ballot process and who can vote; (b) the sizes of any new homes; (c) rents for new homes; (d) parking; (e) the Right To Buy and (f) general management issues including repairs and moves.

3.2. **ACTION:** *send statistics on number of calls to date to Neal for distribution (Mike).*

3.3. Paulette said some residents are confused about the two-ballot process, and asked if Southwark staff can attend TRA meetings to explain it. **ACTION:** *LBS staff to attend TRA meetings to explain 2 ballot process.*

3.4. At this point Neal asked if the meeting could be recorded. No one objected.

3.5. Andrew asked how long the telephone interviews last. Mike said a typical call lasts 15-20 minutes; to date the longest had been one hour long. Andrew reported that some residents felt rushed during the calls and felt staff were following a script.

3.6. The meeting agreed Southwark should send a short letter or leaflet to all residents clearly explaining the whittling down and ballot processes. This could include graphics and give a clear timetable for the process. **ACTION:** *a leaflet to be prepared ready for mailing out to residents next week (Mike and Neal).*

3.7. Neal noted an increase in Freephone calls to Open Communities, especially from homeowners asking about the implications for service charges.

#### 4. Responses from the Block Meetings

4.1. Sophie noted two amendments to the draft response in the meeting papers:

4.1.1. at 1.6, a clarification that houses will be built in options 2, 3, 4 and 5, and

4.1.2. at 1.73, a note that service charges for cyclical and responsive repairs also need to be taken into account.

4.2. Mike said the Council wants to share these responses with all residents on the estate. He was aware that the document is 14 pages long, but residents had asked a lot of questions and the answers had been grouped by topic for convenience.

4.3. The newsletter will also highlights the second round of block meetings, which will be held on the Zoom platform because of the COVID-19 restrictions.

4.4. Anna thought most residents did not realise 50% of the additional homes would be for private sale. Neil said Council staff had always been clear that all options included council rented homes for the existing Council tenants. New homes proposed above that number would include 50% private homes. This had been set out at public meetings. Andrew noted this highlights the need for clear explanations and simple language to ensure everyone understands the issues.

4.5. Amelia asked if the re-provision of homes for displaced homeowners would come from these new private dwellings, and Neil said they would.

**ACTION:** *Neil to check the tenure split and report back RPG to when the design is developed in more detail. (Neil)*

4.6. Neal noted that this could be a topic at next week's Homeowners' Meeting.

4.7. Andrew said it was important for residents to understand the tenure split being discussed only applies to any extra homes, not replacement homes for tenants.

#### 5. Information for the Whittling Down ballot

5.1. Neal drew members' attention to the three key documents for this item:

5.1.1. a draft ballot paper for consideration;

5.1.2. an outline description of the process, and

5.1.3. the Common Grounds options briefing.

5.2. Mike explained the ballot paper will ask residents to rank the options in order of preference: 1 as their first preference, 2 as second preference, etc. Paulette felt the ballot paper was clear but would benefit from an example to explain the process to the voter. Amelia said it was a good idea to include a comments box on the slip.

5.3. Andrew wondered if the scoring system would confuse people who were used to using ranking scales where higher scores are better. Sarah suggested changing the wording from "rating" to "ranking" might make this clearer. Other residents suggested alternative scoring schemes, including a suggestion that voters are asked to write in "My first preference is option \_\_\_\_".

**5.4. ACTION:** *test the ranking options with a small pilot sample of residents (Mike).*

5.5. Sophie explained that the guide to the options and the ballot paper will be hand-delivered to every eligible resident on the day before the ballot begins. Each pack will have a unique voter number, so replacement papers can be requested.

5.6. The Guide will have two main parts: (a) a section describing the options and (b) Southwark's commitments to tenants and owners, including the Residents' Charter. It will explain the likely impacts for council tenants, leaseholders, freeholders and private tenants on the Council's Housing Register, covering the common questions about the homes, the financial implications, the wider estate, etc.

5.7. David said Common Grounds is also considering an online question-and-answer sessions and/or webinars.

**5.8.** Amelia said the maisonette floor plan for Bowness House was slightly wrong; they are not completely rectangular. David explained Hunters had not carried out a 100% survey so some details may be different. **ACTION:** *check and amend (David).*

**5.9. ACTION:** *send comments or suggestions on the draft to David and Sophie (all).*

## **6. Draft Offer Document**

6.1. Neal explained a second guide (the "Offer Document") will need to be prepared for the final ballot when the preferred option has been chosen. This will go out to residents in January if the preferred option is either option 2, 3, 4 or 5.

6.2. Mike explained the current draft of this Offer Document will need to be amended as the other options are rejected in the whittling down process. For accessibility, he has tried to place key information at the beginning of the draft, with greater detail given later in the document. He asked residents if they felt his approach was correct, and whether any more information should be included.

6.3. Several residents explained they had not had time to read through all the papers that had been sent out in the last few days. Most felt they would need 2-3 weeks to fully read and comment on all the material. Andy said in his case this related to this document and all the previous agenda items also. There is a need to have a framework that will allow them to prioritise the most urgent or time-critical pieces of work.

**6.4. ACTION:** *prepare a timetable / work programme for comments (Neal and Neil).*

6.5. Andrew noted the Council's "Putting Residents First" policy suggests a response time of 10 working days on resident consultation.

6.6. Paulette asked if other Tenants Association members can make comments on the documents, and Neal said they will.

## **7. Consultants' Updates**

### **(a) Cost-Benefit Analysis**

7.1. Cassidy summarised Altair's assessments of social costs and benefits that can be monetarised. This analysis shows Option 4 has the highest Net Present Social Value,

followed by Option 5, then Option 3 and Option 2. This is because these options provide more homes as well as the associated extra jobs and apprenticeships.

- 7.2. Items that cannot be monetarised have also been assessed in Section 3 of “Appraising the Options for the Tustin estate” and they are summarised in Table 12 She said a “light touch” approach that explains issues has been taken at this stage.
- 7.3. She agreed that Altair do not have firm figures for the carbon-neutrality of new homes. In general new homes should reduce carbon emissions through better design, but demolition and construction will create some emissions. Andy noted that in the summary table the environmental sustainability of options 3, 4 & 5 was presented as identical and challenged the accuracy. He felt he and other residents couldn’t make an informed choice as a result. **ACTION: revise section 3.4 and Table 12 to explain this in more detail (Cassidy).**
- 7.4. Sophie explained Southwark is now beginning an assessment of building and design technologies, which will help in estimating the lifetime carbon balance of the preferred option. For example a central heat and power link could have a big impact on the carbon budget. This information will be available in time for the final ballot.
- 7.5. Cassidy added she will be happy to discuss her work with individual members.

#### **(b) Equality and Health Impact Assessment**

- 7.6. Sarah highlighted the visual representation of the assessment at Section 6.2 of “Appraising the Options”, which uses a colour code to assess the potential impacts.
- 7.7. Her recommendations for the Council on mitigating adverse impacts will be set out in the Stage 2 report, which will be produced when the preferred option is known.

#### **(c) Financial Viability**

- 7.8. Aaron explained the financial appraisal looks at all income and costs over 60 years. All options show a funding gap after income from sales is taken into account:
  - 7.8.1. Option 1: minus £22 million at Net Present Value
  - 7.8.2. Option 2: minus £33 million
  - 7.8.3. Option 3: minus £39 million
  - 7.8.4. Option 4: minus £71 million
  - 7.8.5. Option 5: minus £61 million.
- 7.9. Neil added that Southwark Council is comfortable with these shortfalls.
- 7.10. Francis asked if tenants’ rents will have to rise to meet the funding gap, and Neil assured him it will not affect rent levels. If the Tustin estate is regenerated the rents will be calculated in the same way to other new homes built by Southwark.
- 7.11. Neal can arrange a Zoom meeting or telephone call for members who want to go through the financial projections in more detail. Aaron added he will be happy to discuss them with members of the Group as well.

### **8. Matters Arising**

- 8.1. (2.10) Francis had received a hard copy of the papers for this meeting.

- 8.2. (4.6) Newsletter had been updated following TEPG comments.
- 8.3. (4.8) Andy confirmed he has now received an email reply to his concerns from Sophie.
- 8.4. (7.1) Draft Offer Document in papers for this meeting.
- 8.5. (7.2) Responses to Questions raised at Block Meetings in papers for this meeting.
- 8.6. (9.1) Options information for residents before whittling down ballot in papers for this meeting.
- 8.7. (9.3) Response to questions raised by Manor House Freeholders on Whittling Down process included in papers for this meeting. AE asked that this is included in the Action Plan for residents showing the process of whittling down, further work on the preferred option and ballot on final option. (See action in 3.6)
- 8.8. (9.11) Viability Assessment Information in papers for this meeting.
- 8.9. (9.12) Cost Benefit Analysis report in papers for this meeting.

## 9. Any Other Business

- 9.1. Andy asked about translations: is it appropriate to give details on translation services in English? Sophie explained this is a Council-wide approach, with all communications produced in English. The option for a translation and an interpreter remains open. This has not been taken up to date. Mike added his team has a good understanding of residents' language needs following two rounds of individual consultations. He added that literacy is an important an issue as language.
- 9.2. Andy challenged the Council's claim that the whittling down vote "enables opinions of all residents to be represented" because only eligible residents can vote in the ballots. Mike said this was because of GLA guidance. Andy then said the GLA guidance applies to the final ballot, and it is Southwark's own choice to exclude other residents from the whittling down ballot. He was concerned that some residents are being unnecessarily excluded from decisions on the future of their estate.
- 9.3. Mike explained that having different groups of voters for each ballot could cause confusion. Andy said even if this is true what he takes issue with is the Council initially claiming the chosen process was solely because of GLA requirements rather than its own decision. He feels statements like these are what has led to the breakdown in trust. Mike noted the Council was doing its best to consult in a fair and consistent way, and he thought it was outrageous to suggest that the Council was acting improperly.
- 9.4. Anna felt Mike should be more aware that homeowners are feeling under stress at the moment, and that he should have been more measured in his reply to Andy's point. Mike replied that he thought his comments had been perfectly reasonable.
- 9.5. **ACTION:** *bring Code of Conduct to next meeting (Neal).*

## 10. Next meeting

- 10.1. The next meeting will be held at 6.00 p.m. on Thursday 13 August.

The meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

Note: Juliette then complained about what she felt was the unsympathetic tone of Mike's reply to Andy. Neal pointed out that the meeting had closed.