

# **Minutes of a meeting of the Resident Steering Group for Alice Shepherd House & Oak House held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## **Meeting held via Zoom**

### **Residents Present:**

Sharon Holmes – Oak House  
Sameena Raouf – Alice Shepherd House  
Sulfa Begum – Alice Shepherd House  
Cynthia Owusu – Alice Shepherd House  
Darren Brown – Alice Shepherd House  
Nadia Mahmoud – Alice Shepherd House

### **Others Present:**

Lee Page – Independent Resident Adviser – TPAS  
Mike Tyrrell – Residents Advocate  
Mynul Islam – One Housing  
Emma Leigh Price – One Housing  
Paul Handley – One Housing

### **Apologies:**

Abdullah Bourne – Alice Shepherd House

It was noted that Jane McGregor and Ashley Lowther of Alice Shepherd House are opposed to the Steering Group continuing to meet on a virtual basis. Noel Redmond is unable to attend as he doesn't have online access

## **1 Welcome & Introduction**

1.1 The apologies that were given are noted above.

## **2 Notes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

2.1 The notes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were noted but couldn't be approved as the meeting was not quorate.

## **3 Matters Arising**

3.1 No matters arising

## **4 Attendance**

4.1 LP has been unable to contact Alia Begum who has not attended for a number of meetings. He was asked to write to her to formal give notice regarding her position on the group.

**LP**

4.2 PH re-stated the position of One Housing in that they are working through the internal processes to try and enable

them to hold physical meetings again but there are a number of H&S considerations to be addressed as well as seeking the agreement of Trade unions etc. It was possible that there could be some limited drop-in sessions as early as October/November 2020 (limited attendance).

He advised that even when physical meetings can be held again there would need to be a parallel option to enable those who wanted to, to partake virtually. Nobody wants to hold the same meeting twice so a method needs to be found to allow people to take part physically and virtually at the same time. This may need a level of investment from OH in order to supply the hardware and sufficient internet bandwidth etc. Conversations will be held with the IT team at OH. It's not anticipated that physical meetings will be held until at least the New Year.

PH

## **5 Consultation Document – OH Update on telephone contact**

- 5.1 EP fed back on the work she and MT had been undertaking to speak to residents in Alice Shepherd House and Oak House. The target was to reach a minimum of 75% of residents and they had achieved an 80% contact level (60 of the 75 homes).
- 5.2 Following on from this exercise, where conversations about the consultation exercise lasted 30-40 minutes on average, each resident who was spoken to will receive a summary of the record views and will have the opportunity to correct any errors. NM asked if LP had undertaken a 10% check of the conversations? LP responded by saying he hadn't but that he would be attending 10% of the conversations at the next stage. He felt that giving every residents the opportunity to change what has been recorded was sufficient for this exercise.
- 5.3 MT queried if any resident had proposed alternative options to those in the brochure? PH said there hadn't been alternative options proposed but the majority had wanted to see the option developed more fully. There was a small minority who didn't want to see anything happen, and there was support for both refurbishment and the full redevelopment, but no clear preference had been expressed at present.
- 5.4 DB stated that infill seemed to offer nothing to anyone apart from OH so didn't see why it would be attractive as current residents wouldn't be able to move to any homes built?

5.5 MT asked if there was consideration for building taller on the current footprint (and retain the parking) rather than having the 3 blocks at a slant? MI&EP said they hadn't heard this view expressed. PH said it was something that can be considered. He felt 20 storeys was probably the maximum that planners would accept for the site. He also stated that having 3 blocks at an oblique angle would actually increase daylight/sunlight and enable more homes to have views of the river etc.

## **6 Update on emerging options**

6.1 This item blended with the previous discussion. SB enquired as to how realistic it was to build up? It was noted that the proposal was for a taller new build rather than building extra storeys on the current structure.

6.2 SH expressed the view of a couple of tenants she had spoken to in Oak House in that even if they voted for no development it was likely that the community centre/housing office site would be built upon leaving Oak House overlooked. Some residents still not believing that this will go ahead given the history of proposals and others are seeking a move so don't feel they should pick an option. NM had also spoken to residents who want to move and asked what had happened regarding the previous mention of a OH development in Essex? PH said that after the ballot, if there was to be demolition, anyone wanting to move could be helped via an assisted transfer (not returning) or a decant (returning). OH don't have properties in Essex so would have to have discussion with local authorities and housing associations in the area – this conversation was returned to as MT said that LA had previously talked about the possibility of small development? PH said he was unaware of this as OH don't own land in Essex so would have land purchase as well of building costs so anything on the Island site would be unlikely to fund this.

6.3 MT asked what would happen if only one block came down, would residents in the other block be entitled to any new homes built? PH it was possible but would need agreement from the Council.

6.4 SR asked about leaseholders. If option 3 was voted for would leaseholders be able to sell back to OH? PH said that this option already existed and they would be purchased at market value. SR said there was very limited information as to how leaseholders might be affected. PH said he was

aware that more information needed to be developed for leaseholders.

- 6.5 NM asked about the ability to move within the blocks? PH said that the council was always worried about people 'jumping the queue' so there would have to be some justification for any moves.
- 6.6 MT had 3 questions
1. Will there be a light study? PH – yes.
  2. Returning to DB's question/view re infill, doesn't the Social Register allow for a local lettings scheme in the event of a regeneration scheme? PH stated that OH would have to demonstrate that others weren't losing out. In terms of a local letting plan OH would still have to demonstrate that any applicants weren't already adequately housed.
  3. Returning to the question from SH about the Essex option (see 6.2)
- 6.7 There was a discussion around the timetable as it currently stands. The ballot would not be before March 2021.
- 6.8 There was some feedback from the No vote at the Camden Goods Yard scheme. PH stated that, with hindsight, there were some gaps in the offer document which were exploited by a No Campaign. They were able to door knock and OH weren't. Very small margins involved. The timing may also have been an issue as it was delayed from March 2020. The Board of OH are now a little nervous about conducting another ballot under the current restricted conditions. The project at Kedge House, Starboard Way and Winch House is due for ballot in November and residents very keen to progress. If this was to also return a No vote then very unlikely this project will go to ballot in March.
- 6.9 LP asked if this was a case of continuing to go back until the result OH want is achieved? PH said that there was still a need to find a way to remedy the problems faced in the blocks. Feeling residents in Camden not opposed to regeneration but weren't happy with the scheme proposed.

## **7 Update on next Event/round of Consultation**

- 7.1 The viability information will be published in the next couple of weeks. There are four strands to this
1. Resident views (what are the most popular options)
  2. Planning (what will be able to get permission)
  3. Finance (can OH afford the scheme)
  4. Economic Benefits (wider community)

- 7.2 PRP will then publish the full feedback from the consultation in late October before the 3<sup>rd</sup> consultation event in November.
- 7.3 NM asked how the 20% of residents not contacted following the last round would be approached? PH said they will always prioritise the residents who haven't previously responded and records are kept of all residents who are spoken to at various stages of the process. Whilst choosing not to take up offers of contact is valid there will be every attempt to consult all residents with a minimum of 75% to respond at each event. In Camden 93% of residents were spoken to and at Bellamy & Byng there was 100% contact with residents.
- 7.4 DB asked who decides what option gets dropped? PH said that options may be dropped if they are not viable (usually due to financial or planning reasons) or if residents are strongly against an option.
- 7.5 SH stated that at the last meeting she had asked about those not able to engage virtually and whether there was support that could be provided. Has anything happened? PH said that OH would contact SG members to see if tablets etc. could be provided. **OH**
- 7.6 Agreed to send hard copies of agendas/minutes of recent meetings to SG members **EP/MI**
- 8.0 Date of Next Meeting**
- 8.1 Next meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- 9.0 Any Other Business with OHG Officers present**
- 9.1 None
- 10.0 Any Other Business without OHG Officers present**
- 10.1 Disappointed with the response to the questions asked by MT. Issue re Essex was felt to have been raised previously and that there was scope within the allocations scheme in Tower Hamlets to allow some movement between homes in a regeneration area. MT to check and pass to LP **MT**
- 10.2 Agreed to circulate the offer document from Kedge House **LP**

**Meeting closed at 9.00 pm**

