

# Minutes of the meeting



Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm  
in St John's Community Centre.

Present: Candida, Arthur, Mike, Maggie, Jill, Jackie, Tracy, Jenny, Daniel, Maureen, Jenny,  
Apologies received from: Pam, Kim, Peter, Lesley, (Eliza)  
Tower Hamlets Local Planning Team: Tom, Anna

## **Local Plan Update:**

1. Statutory Requirements say it has to be updated every 5 years. "The only constant in TH is that it is always changing".
2. Regulation 18 (proposals for the plan) is nearly complete and the next stage, Reg 19 is the actual plan out for consultation in the Summer '24.
3. Rents (service charges) may be higher for newbuild social housing as some of the costs may be higher eg lifts etc. There have not been many objections to this.
4. As there will be larger 3–4-bedroom properties in the plan, this will produce fewer properties. This is unpopular with developers who want more properties.
5. In the consultation there was a lot of concern about increasing the tall building zones but Cllrs are more in favour because they need to increase the number of properties.
6. Under-occupiers should be a top priority to rehouse as that frees up larger properties, but decent accommodation needs to be lifted and good quality. This is up to the HAs rather than the plan.
7. Samuda has been taken out of the local plan.
8. It is difficult for the local plan to specify what is built eg open spaces, low rise/max 6 stories, in regeneration where residents want to stay on their estate. Words like "co-design" are difficult to put into the plan because there will be arguments about what it means. They will try to put working in the local plan that encourages this approach.
9. The opposition to tall building zones may "sandpaper" them down a bit.
10. "Poor door" entrances will probably not be an issue these days, that is more of a historical issue.
11. Cyclists and pedestrians need to be encouraged but they need to be separated, and need to be uncluttered.
12. Disabled property provision at 10% is a bit controversial. They are sometimes hard to let. How do you fix the proportion to be built? Project 120 in TH converts properties as required according to need.

13. St John's Community Centre is included in the Crossharbour development, and they are concerned that they will be at the mercy of developers rents and service charges. They would prefer to stay part of OH. St John's need to make a formal representation to this effect.
14. CIL – this is allocated by the mayor's team.
15. Some training could be provided by TH about CIL, 106, LIFF, how the planning system works etc. The word "training" can be perceived as a red flag.
16. Carbon emission reduction programme: small grants are available for boiler upgrades etc in community Centres.
17. Summary – TH seem to have listened carefully to what we had said in our previous submission.

**Mikes Update** (report attached to the minutes or sent by email.)

18. Mike has been in touch with Jehan (OH MD) about concerns that OH staff are giving out conflicting messages about what is going on. OH are going to ensure that all OH staff are informed about the regen details.
19. Samuda RSG is going to continue to meet with Mike and Ray even if the regen team doesn't. (This has been offered to Kingsbridge as well). The Samuda RSG is only from the 4 blocks but now needs to include all 9 blocks.
20. How is Samuda going to be maintained in the mean-time.

**We will have an extra meeting next month and invite Paul to this to update us on the new teams etc.**

## **TH Power Point Text**

Local Plan - Update

Between regulation 18 and 19

26 March 2024

### **Agenda**

- 1 Project Plan
2. Reg 18 submissions
3. Site allocations
4. Questions & discussion 5. Moving to Reg 19

### **Need for a new Local Plan**

- Reflect the ambitions of the elected Council.
- Respond to changes in new national and regional guidance.
- Be informed by new information gathered and released, e.g., Census.
- Meet the needs of an increased population.

- Plan for the parts of the Borough being brought back from London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC).
- Statutory requirement to review the Local Plan.

### **Engagement to date**

#### **Early Engagement**

You're helping us understand the issues we need to tackle, and finalise the vision and SUMMER 2024

Regulation 19

We'll ask you for your thoughts on our proposed plan

An independent planning inspector will examine the plan, evidence and the comments made, to test if it is 'sound'

AUTUMN/ WINTER 2023

Regulation 18

We'll ask for your thoughts on the options we've identified to tackle the issues, along with potential locations for future development

WINTER 2024/2025

Plan Submitted

The plan will be

submitted to the Secretary of State

WINTER 2025

Adoption

The plan will be adopted and used to inform decisions on planning.

## Report of the Independent Advisor 26th March 2024

### Regeneration Reorganisation

- The regeneration team at Riverside has been restructured leading to a number of voluntary redundancies.
- This week Chris Hageman, Leila Arefani and Soundous Serroukh will be leaving.
- The team membership has therefore changed for the two projects that are progressing, with no named officers for the two that are delayed.

### RH Loan Portfolio

- You will recall in my report last month that at the Alice Shepherd and Oak House RSG we received a report from Saba who is a member of the procurement team, on why there is such a delay. Her comments were illuminating, one of which was that too many of Riverside's loans were unfixed, giving financial uncertainty; so as part of the financial review they have agreed a number of new 12 year fixed rate loans, which will commence at the end of February.
- I had asked Saba to let us know what is the comparison between fixed and variable. Saba has responded that based on loan drawings as of 28th February 2024, Riverside's debt mix was 80% fixed / 20% variable rate loans which is within their policy range.

### Kedge House, Starboard Way & Winch House

- Summary
  - Ballot date – May 2021
  - Ballot result – 88% in favour, turnout 94%
  - Architect – PRP
  - Developer – Mount Anvil
  - Homes to be demolished – 72 homes
  - Homes to be built – 341 homes
  - Planning application outcome due – Early 2025
  - Anticipated start on site – 2026
  - Anticipated completion date for Phase One – 2028

- Overall anticipated completion date – 2031
- One Housing Officers
  - Jessica Caruth – Regeneration Manager
  - Mynul Islam – Project Manager
  - Shaun Simpson – Regeneration Officer
  - Sophia Chekdouf – Regeneration Co-ordinator
- There are now 8 out of 12 properties in Winch House that are empty. There are 14 out of 40 properties in Kedge House that are empty. There is 1 out of 20 properties in Starboard Way that is empty. 9 adult children have also been rehoused. Negotiations with the remaining 1 leaseholder in Winch and 3 remaining leaseholders in Kedge are ongoing, with one buy back at Kedge being imminent.
- As a result of the dampness and leaks issue at Kedge House, Riverside have asked the Common Housing Register Forum to move Kedge households into band 1a from band 1b.

In response to this, Riverside have advised Council Officers are still to visit the block to see conditions for themselves, before a decision is made. In the meantime Riverside are offering temp decants in their stock for the worst cases.

- The recommencement of the consultation will begin in April with an event with Mount Anvil in the second week of the Easter holidays.
- The drop in venue is at 4 Winch House every Wednesday with a session between 4 and 6pm where the ITLA is available for advice.
- The next meeting of the RSG is on Thursday 4th April 2024.

### **Alice Shepherd House & Oak House**

- Summary
  - Ballot date – March 2022
  - Ballot result – 82% in favour, turnout 88%
  - Architect – PRP
  - Developer – To be confirmed – April 2024
  - Homes to be demolished – 84 homes
  - Homes to be built – 347 homes
  - Planning application outcome due – Late 2025
  - Anticipated start on site – Late 2026
  - Overall anticipated completion date – 2031/2
- One Housing Officers
  - Paula Huzjak – Regeneration Manager
  - Rhys Jones – Project Manager
  - Ayla Cakirca – Regeneration Officer
  - Monika Holder – Regeneration Officer
- Phase One will be on the site of Oak House. Tenants from Oak House have decant priority to move and so far two tenants have moved and an adult child has moved.
- The drop in venue is at 31 Alice Shepherd House every Wednesday with a session between 1.30 and 3pm in the afternoon and 6.30 and 8pm in the evening where the ITLA is available for advice.
- You will recall that has there has been a delay in the scheme, I have asked Riverside whether they will be able to use any vacant properties for overcrowded tenants in phase 2. I have still not had a response to this request.
- The final three candidates for the JV partners are:
  - Hills
  - Lovells
  - Countryside

- Resident interviews for the 3 short listed JV partners took place on 4 and 5 July 2023. The interviews were scored by the residents and subsequently residents have visited schemes completed by the developers. The appointment has still not been completed as it was held up by the financial review and we have been advised that the outcome will be known about by the end of the financial year.

- You will recall that at February 2024 meeting of the RSG we raised

- Riverside staff telling residents that the blocks were not being demolished. Surprisingly, they do not brief staff on regeneration.
- The lack of clarity on bidding numbers.
- the lack of cooperation from their Riverside colleagues on gaining access to their out of London properties for those that want to move out of London.

I wrote to Jehan expressing my concerns on these issues. As a result, Jehan Weerasinghe rang me and arranged a meeting. Jehan has agreed to take up these issues internally. Jehan supported the idea of the staff briefing sessions. Jehan Weerasinghe, asked me to reiterate to residents that RH are committed to completing the new homes for the blocks that have had positive ballots.

## **Kingsbridge**

- Summary

- Ballot date – November 2022
- Ballot result – 85% in favour, turnout 76%
- Architect – Haworth Tompkins
- Developer – To be confirmed
- Homes to be demolished – 134 homes
- Homes to be built – 323 homes
- Planning application outcome due – 2026
- Anticipated start on site – 2028
- Anticipated completion date – 2034

- The Riverside Officers that were working on this scheme have now been moved to other projects.

- The scheme will be delayed until 2025, but there will be some events in 2024 which will involve 3 site visits and 2 interactive design workshops. The first site visit went ahead on 3rd February 2024 to a scheme in the Millenium Village in Greenwich. The aim of the visits is to get a sense of the sizes and quality of newly built homes and environment. The design workshops will look at what residents liked and disliked of what they saw, such as home layouts, sizes and the overall estates.

- I have asked Riverside about using vacant properties for overcrowded tenants in phase 2 and 3, given the delays and still awaiting a response.

## **Samuda**

- The project has been expanded to include all nine blocks but the recommencement of the consultation is postponed. Riverside have promised it with start again by the end of the 2024/5 financial year.

- Summary

- Developing a vision – 2025
- Developing Options – 2026
- Ballot date – 2027
- Ballot result – Not applicable
- Architect – BPTW
- Developer – To be confirmed.

- The Riverside Officers that were working on this scheme have now been moved to other projects.
- The Resident Steering Group has not met since July and the dates for early 2024 have been cancelled. The ITLA and myself have asked that we meet with the Steering Group without Riverside being present.

#### **4EF Newsletters**

- The newsletters for February 2024 finally went out at the end of last month. They can be found on the 4EF website.