

**Notes of Meeting between Islington Council and residents of Burnhill House  
held 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018  
at St Lukes Community Centre**

**Present:**

Burnhill House residents

**Islington council:**

Cllr Ward, Cllr Webbe, Rosemarie Jenkins

**Keniston Housing Association**

Jonathan Card

**Apologies:**

Stephen Nash, Eshwyn Prahbu

**Introductions and opening statements**

Cllr Webbe welcomed those present and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**Burnhill House Residents**

Residents queried the absence of the other ward councillors and officers who they were informed would be in attendance. Cllr Webbe explained that she was in attendance to represent Burnhill ward.

Rosemarie Jenkins explained that Eshwyn Prahbu was unable to attend the meeting due to personal obligations. Rosemarie was in attendance on behalf of the New Build Team.

**Islington Council**

Cllr Webbe outlined the council's work regarding energy efficiency and her concern about the energy status of Burnhill house. Cllr Webbe stated that regardless of the re-development of the FLC site she would like to see energy efficiency improvements made to Burnhill House. Cllr Webbe has asked council officers to submit proposals for the appointment of consultants able to identify energy options/solutions for improvements to Burnhill House in conjunction with Keniston Housing Association.

**Keniston HA**

Jonathan Card gave an outline of the recent meeting held between Keniston HA and council officers including a member of the council's Energy Team. The objective of the meeting was identify the measures that could be taken to improve the energy performance of Burnhill House. Jonathan explained that the condition of Burnhill House is no worse in terms of its efficiency performance than other buildings of a similar age, however, when compared to new developments, there is a clear case for improvement. Keniston intends to carry out a comprehensive review of the life of the building with a view to making further investments. This work has not been concluded but there would be a benefit in joining forces with the council to make the best use of available resources.

In response to the FLC proposals, residents commented that Burnhill House has been designed to make use of solar gain and that the impact of the new residential block would create overshadowing which they are very concerned about.

Cllr Webbe said that she wants to ensure the council take steps to address the fuel poverty that exists amongst some residents living of in the block and the appointment of consultants to review the options would be the start of that process.

**Questions and Answers**

Residents said that they had a series of questions which individual members of their group took turns to ask.

The responses below do not follow the questions in the order in which they appear but as they were asked at the meeting. A copy of the questions raised is attached as Appendix A.

### **Update on design work, further consultation and planning submission for re-development of the FLC site**

Councillor Ward provided an update on the preparation of the design and planning application. The architects continue to review the design to ensure that it remains affordable to the council. A further stakeholder meeting is proposed, notice of which will be provided when it is clear that much of the design work has been completed to reflect feedback from stakeholders and the Planning Development Management team. This will be followed by a public exhibition. It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted towards the end of the summer of 2018 which would be heard in early autumn of 2018.

- a) Residents pointed out that they have raised several questions with officers over a number of years with regards to the design and proposals for the new FLC site which they do not feel have been adequately replied to. Equally, residents are confused about the number of email addresses their questions are being directed to sometimes receiving no response at all.
- b) The councillors said that they wanted to assure residents that they are willing to have on-going conversations, via email with members of the public including Burnhill House residents about the proposal. In response Cllr Ward said that he would be happy for residents to direct their questions through his PA Katherine McNamarra who would then take the lead in re-directing matters raised with the relevant officers and councillors.

Residents accepted this offer from Cllr Ward.

- c) Councillor Ward said that there have been no final designs as modelling and re-modelling the proposals has been on-going since the last Stakeholder event held in October 2017. The design proposals have to be repeatedly financially tested to ensure that the project remains viable for the council.
- d) Once the council has a planning compliant scheme, i.e. a design which is acceptable to the planning authority, then arrangements would be made to share this with all stakeholders including Burnhill House residents. Councillors expect there to be a further Stakeholder meeting prior to the proposal going out to public consultation ahead of submission of the planning application. Councillors explained that once the project is submitted for planning approval there is a further statutory consultation with the wider community, living and working in the area.

### **Security and safety - during the build**

Residents expressed their concern about the impact on their lives of the building programme and its sequencing, i.e. the order in which the build will be carried.

Rosemarie explained the steps taken by contractors developing in Islington council to ensure that residents are protected from the impact of the build, these include but are not limited to:

- Compliance with the considerate contractor scheme,
- Monthly meetings and frequent contact with the contractor,
- News letters issued to neighbours
- Protection of the public from hazards caused by construction work
- Paying attention to the needs of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

Rosemarie offered to provide examples of schemes which have taken on board the impact of construction on access arrangements for people with disabilities living near construction sites.

- a) Councillor Webbe spoke of the establishment of an EC1 contractors forum which has been set up to better co-ordinate the activities of the range of contractors and developers working in the EC1 area. The first of these meetings will take place on Monday 5th March.
- b) Residents said that they are concerned about access arrangements particularly for people with disabilities around the site which in their view will need to be managed carefully. Residents are unhappy about the lack of consultation on the redevelopment of Iron monger row. Cllr Webbe explained that re-development of the Iron Monger Row site and other recent residential developments were delivered under a different administration within Islington Council and at the GLA.
- c) Residents said that they have a concern about proposals presented to them previously by Eshwyn Prabhu which shows a plan to build defensive space, which would involve reducing the width of Helmet Row. Residents said they see this as a land grab on the part of the council for the new homes which will be provided as part of the FLC re-development.
- d) Councillors said that they do not expect there to be a reduction in the public highway. This would go against the policy of the council. Councillor Webbe asked that officers obtain clarification on this claim, i.e. where these proposals have come from and ensure that a response is given to Burnhill House residents.
- e) Residents said that they felt that access through Helmet Row to Central Street and St Luke's Gardens will also be lost. The councillors said that whilst there might be a need to divert existing routes, every effort would be made by the council to retain through routes that provided safe and secure access and which would be adequately lit and overlooked.

### **Why is the leisure land being sold off for private residential development?**

Councillor Ward explained that Islington Council has a firm commitment to delivering 50% genuinely affordable homes. These homes would be council homes for social rent only. No other type of affordable housing will be built on the FLC site. The councillor went on to explain that as the council is unable to use all of its own resources, and cannot access grant funding from central government to build new homes, it is forced to sell homes (no more than 50%) in order to fund its new council homes programme and also to enable the council to pay for other new facilities. This includes the needed improvements needed to infrastructure in a number of areas around the borough. Bunhill ward is a case in point..

### **Why not make use of Ironmonger Row as the new leisure centre?**

Residents said they felt that the interests of footballers appears to dominate the re-development proposals for the FLC site, and as a result the determination to keep football and its paying customers going before and during the build will extend the re-development of the FLC site for 2 years longer than is necessary..

Rosemarie Jenkins said that consultation with all FL centre users indicated that it was important for a couple of the pitches and the current centre to remain open until the new centre is completed.

Residents said that they had been advised by an officer they were not willing to name that the council is deliberately extending the build time in order to accommodate the football users.

Members said this was not the case and that various studies had been completed by the council's Leisure team and the architects to show that the build sequence proposed would be the most efficient and effective way to tackle the build. Members asked that residents are provided with a detailed explanation which shows and explains why the phasing and timing of the new build would take 2 years to complete.

### **Why doesn't the council build more football pitches in order to improve the current leisure centre instead of houses?**

Cllr Webbe pointed out that EC1 has more than its fair share of leisure facilities, some of these are embodied within the building arrangements of a number of private blocks in the area.

Residents said that many people within their block and others in the area are not happy with the design. Residents said they would prefer to see 100% social rented housing if the site is to be re-developed.

### **What benefit is there to the local community of a new centre and homes?**

Residents said that they would like a guarantee that no less than 50% of the new homes built would be social housing. Residents said that they are also unhappy about the use of separate doors for those people living in social rented and those in private sale accommodation. Councillors said they would ask the officers and the designers to find ways to mitigate these distinctions.

### **Are there conservation orders being breached by the proposals?**

Residents said that they would like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the proposals for FLC address the Conservation area guidelines. Residents said they are confused about which guidelines are being followed when assessing the impact of the FLC site proposals. Cllr Webbe agreed that officers would be asked to provide clarification on which of these guidelines are relevant to the proposals for the FLC site. Residents also asked for clarification on how the Finsbury Plan has changed to reflect the issue of permissible heights around the Bunhill ward. Residents said they would like a response on this matter raised in an email to Eshwyn in June 2017 regarding comments that had been made about conservation impacts on the proposals.

Residents said that they have received notification of draft site allocation for the Bunhill Ward and are confused about the implications of this for the FLC site. Cllr Ward explained that the notice received by residents living in the Bunhill Ward is in response to the London plan listing all sites in London that might be suitable for development.

### **Are the diocese of London a stakeholder in the consultation process.**

Residents wanted to know what if any steps had been taken to include the Diocese of London who are the owners of St Lukes Gardens and St Lukes Church.

Cllr Webbe said that the Diocese of London will be consulted. Although the council had already identified the relevant key stakeholders, the Council will reach out to the Diocese of London to enable them to participate and would not block them from participating.

### **Future meetings with stakeholders**

Members confirmed that there would likely be one stakeholder meeting after the elections and ahead of planning.

### **Scale of new drainage needed - how will these be dealt with?**

Rosemarie explained that as part of the extensive survey work which accompanies any new development, the council has taken steps to learn as much as it can about the existing drainage arrangements. Steps would be taken to ensure that where necessary drains are enhanced and improved to accept discharge from the new homes and the new civic centre.

### **Bin collection- where are these going to be placed including bin dates?**

Rosemarie explained that the design of amenities like bin stores is an important consideration for planners, those responsible for housing management and residents. Bin store capacity is carefully planned and calculated to ensure that there are spaces for recycling as well as general rubbish.

The dates and times for bin collection date will become part of the service plan needed by the planners for the operation of all of the new buildings and would be submitted as part of the planning application documentation.

### **Application of S106 monies**

Residents said that they would like to ensure that the benefit of S106 funds secured for this development would be agreed with Burnhill House residents in advance of being drafted. Cllr Webbe agreed that this would be the case and that officers would be asked to ensure discussions are held with stakeholders and Burnhill House residents ahead of the finalization of the S106 agreement.

### **Tree protection**

Residents asked for assurance that trees in the vicinity of the FLC site would be protected prior to and during the construction phase. Rosemarie explained the steps taken by the council, its consultants and contractors to ensure trees are protected. Rosemarie confirmed that during all groundworks i.e. laying drains, and constructing foundations, root protection is monitored by the council's own tree team and a specialist consultant. Contractors are dealt with harshly if they cause damage to trees.

### **Consultation with English Heritage**

Residents wanted to know if the council would be consulting with English Heritage with regards to the residential building which overlooks St Luke's Gardens. Cllr Webbe confirmed that all relevant consultees would be approached and asked to consider and sign off the project, subject to their acceptance of it.

### **Uniformity of height of the new residential block**

Residents wanted to know whether it is possible to step the building height down at Helmet Row and Central Street in order to create a more equitable spread of height across all of the blocks. Residents are concerned that they are the only residential block which will be exposed to the full height of the building facing St Luke's Gardens and wish to see this lowered at Norman Street. Cllr Webbe said that as part of the feedback to the architects she would ask officers to ensure this message is taken into account.

Cllrs Ward and Webbe explained that the viability of the proposals depends on being able to deliver 120 homes half of which will pay for the new development. All reductions would impact this objective. However, the challenge the council faces is how best to achieve this with limited detrimental effect on the existing community.

### **Landscaping & Place-making**

Residents said that they have a concern that landscaping and place-making would get lost in the drive to create new buildings. Residents said they would like to see equivalency given to these two aspects of the proposals as it would ensure that the design would address the removal of space for crime and anti-social behavior. Current levels of drug dealing and muggings are a concern to residents and all effort should be taken in the design of the buildings and the landscaping including arrangements for access, to avoid dead ends which are not overlooked and which do not give access to the police.

### **Next stakeholder meeting**

Residents wanted to know whether there would be another stakeholder meeting and who would be present. Cllrs confirmed that all of the existing stakeholders and any others identified will be at the next stakeholder meeting.

**Notes by Rosemarie Jenkins**  
**Principal Housing Development Project Manager**  
**New Build Team**  
**8<sup>th</sup> March 2018**