

Darwin Construction Liaison Group – Meeting 10

22nd March 2023, 6pm – 7pm

Darwin House

Members Attendance:

- Robert Burgess [RB]
- Julia Smith [JS]
- Ron Gorman [RG]
- Iris Warwick [IW]
- Graham Kedde [GK]

Apologies:

- Dick Cole [DC]

WCC Officers:

1. Brian Arscott [BA] – Development Delivery Manager (Chair)
2. Millie Morrissey [MM] – Senior Engagement Officer (Notes)

Wates Team:

3. Sinead King [SK] – Resident Liaison Officer (RLO)

1. Introductions

BA welcomed all members of CLG and introduced himself to the group. Apologies received from DC & RH.

2. Standing Items

a. **Complaints** – Nothing raised.

b. **Action Tracker**

Proposed landscaping design plans to be revisited at the appropriate time.

Concerns were raised at the previous meeting about construction traffic congestion. TMO has been updated following several comments around congestion and diversions.

Darwin House/Maitland House path query – BA to present landscaping drawing and explain proposals later in the meeting.

Piling Rig Query – Pictures and drawing of this specific rig included in the project update.

c. **Rumour Buster/Resident Queries** - Nothing raised.

d. **Noise and Dust Monitoring** – No breaches reported.

3. Project Status Update

BA updated approval has been received from the Cabinet Member for the main build contract. BA explained we are currently in a 10-day standstill period. Contracts due to be signed by 29th March. BA outline this is a fixed price contract with Value Engineering options subject to planning.

BA outlined November 2024 for Block A build completion, followed by decant. Darwin House is then due to be demolished. Block B is due for completion September 2026. RG queried will there be penalty clauses. BA explained there are clauses to this effect.

GK queried if residents will have choice of location of new flats and which level they will be on. MM explained work will be done with all current DH tenants including Housing Needs Assessments, as well as liaising with the relocations team to decipher which homes are let to which people. There will also be a local lettings plan created in the coming months.

BA explained early works will transition smoothly into main contract works. IW noted it was extremely noisy on Monday 20th March. SK explained this was potentially some breaking out and trial excavations which includes breaking up brick. MM explained once we reach piling and other considerably noisy & disturbing stages of work, respite spaces will be made available and offered to neighbouring residents as well as Darwin House who may be affected. IW suggested having respite breaks when noisy works are taking place. **Action: To raise the idea of respite breaks with the project team for Piling stage of works.**

JS queried if residents will be given prior notice to piling work beginning. MM confirmed when piling is due to commence, the first letter will be sent around 3-4 weeks before starting date. Followed up with a letter detailing respite space and exact dates for works to allow residents to prepare and take up the offer of alternative working/respice space for the duration.

RG asked what type of heating will be in the new blocks. BA explained the new homes will use air source heat pumps. BA added for all new buildings, the aim is to get carbon usage down by 70%. Each flat will have its own exhaust ASHP. Meaning the PDHU will not be required once the temporary boiler is in place for current Darwin House. In the new block the PDHU will not be used to heat homes or for hot water. SK added the new blocks will be built to a higher standard and be more insulated therefore will have a lesser energy usage. BA added mid-April is the expected date for the temporary boiler to be in place and the change over should take one day.

IW asked if block B will still be council homes. BA confirmed they will all be affordable WCC homes. BA explained in April a new taxi drop off and emergency access road will be complete and opened.

BA explained changes made to construction traffic diversion. Safety signage has been installed for the benefit of cyclists turning left on to Claverton Street & the TMO has been updated. BA added on occasion anything big will come via Lupus Street down Churchill Gardens Road with traffic marshals.

BA presented the Maitland House path is being maintained and a new pathway will be formed via Grosvenor Road. BA presented diagram of the piling rig to be used on site.

4. Darwin Ground Breaking Event

MM invited the CLG to join the team for the Ground Breaking event on 18th April. Celebrating a huge milestone in the project.

5. **Any Other Business**

IW raised question around what white goods will be provided in the new Darwin House Flats. **Action: The project team will take this away and bring a high-level programme as well as flat specification to the next meeting.**

6. **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 3rd May 2023.