

Ebury Bridge Community Futures Group – Meeting 3
15th November 2017, 6pm – 8pm
Ebury Youth Club, Edgson House Basement, Ebury Bridge Estate

MEMBERS ATTENDANCE:

- Fiona Quick [FQ]
- Mike Smith [MS]
- Mohammed Eisa [ME]
- Stephen Rusbridge [SR]
- Tammy Dowdall [TD]
- Waleed Shaath [WS]
- Carly Taplin [CT]

APOLOGIES:

- Rachel Riley [RR]
- Kari Haslam [KH]
- Rhoda Torres [RT]
- Shaista Miah [SM]

ABSENT:

- Ian Brelsford [IB]

WCC OFFICERS:

- James Green [JG] – Senior Development Manager
- Chris Le May [CLM] - Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team
- Ian Simpson [IS] – First Call Housing (Independent Resident Advisor)
- Martin Crank [MC] – Ebury Bridge Community Engagement Team
- Tom McGregor [TM] – Director of Housing
- Sophie Camburn [SC] – Associate Director, Arup (Lead Design Agency)
- Jo McCafferty [JM] – Levitt Bernstein (Architects)
- Nick Gazanis (NG) - AStudio
- Giorgia Sharpe [GS] – Engagement Advisor (Arup)

NOTES:

This document provides a summary of the discussions which took place during the meeting including questions and respective responses that were raised during the session.

Welcome and Introduction

TM - opened the meeting by welcoming everybody. Group Members and Officers provided introductions. TM - explained that the meeting will take the shape of an interactive session with the Ebury Bridge Design team (Arup, Levitt Bernstein and AStudio).

Review meeting notes from 8 November 2017

TM - Asked the group to review the minutes from the CFG meeting on 8th November 2017. Apologies were given for the late issuing of the minutes.

FQ – The minutes from the last meeting on the 8th November should make reference to the request of a resident ballot on renewal options to be added to the ToR. The notes should detail the response provided by WCC.

MC – The previous minutes will include this discussion and the response to the request for a ballot

TM – This is an important addition to provide transparency of the group's discussion to fellow residents.

MC – In relation to the appointment of an independent chair we have received notification that there is interest in the position. Closing date is 30th November 2017.

TM – The timetable for leasehold consultation should be included (this will be included in the agreed minutes from the 8th November meeting 2017).

FQ – At the last meeting there was a discussion about the number of people engaged through the listening period and this should be included (this will be included in the agreed minutes from the 8th November meeting 2017).

Design and Engagement Process

SC – Provided an introduction to the WCC and design teams working on the Ebury Bridge project. Arup will take the lead on the design engagement and will be supported by Levitt Bernstein and AStudio architects.

SC – The three key areas of focus for the design team are; Financial Viability, Deliverability and New homes / affordable homes (and their desirability).

SC – As part of this process it is important we fully understand the challenges and we have commenced detailed analysis. In December, we will begin to talk about the scale of the change through analysis of themes. By January we will start the process of working up design proposals. In February, we will feedback an update on designs to the Community Futures Group.

SC – This is with a view to making a recommendation to WCC Cabinet in March to progress a preferred renewal option. Throughout the process the design team will have a collaborative dialogue with the CFG and the group will see design information before the wider community. Wider community engagement will follow on from CFG meetings.

FQ- The impact significant change can have on residents should also be included in this delivery programme.

FQ – The group would benefit from a clear explanation as to why the previous scheme failed.

SC - The original plan could not progress because it did not:

- Provide enough affordable housing to meet the Council's requirements
- Generate a reasonable potential income to attract commitment from a development partner
- Outline a clear plan of how best to carry out the work in the least disruptive and most cost-effective way (phasing and sequencing)

- Consider the practicalities and extra time and cost involved in residents continuing to live in properties while they were refurbished

As a result, continuing to progress with this scheme would have put both the council and any potential contractors at significant financial risk. It was therefore decided to revisit how the Ebury Bridge renewal project should be taken forward and soft market test options with contractors throughout the design development to ensure options are deliverable.

JG – Westminster’s objective is to deliver more homes – this is the driver for Ebury Bridge.

WS – The sustainability of any scheme should also be taken in to consideration particularly from a housing management perspective.

SC – Desirability aspects will include sustainability and the code for sustainable homes, reducing the perception of crime and producing more affordable homes.

SC – Deliverability will focus on minimising disruption, whether a scheme will receive planning consent and how the phasing and sequencing should be carried out. Further detail can be provided about viability and thresholds.

SC – We are right at the beginning of the design process. Today’s session it is about sharing with you our understanding of the site and the local context.

JM – We want this process to be a full listening experience with the CFG providing feedback. We have set about getting to know the site and the changing context in the surrounding area.

JM – As a design team we have looked at the widest possible boundaries and the space and facilities around you.

FQ – What is your experience and credentials of estate renewal?

JM – Levitt Bernstein was established in 1968 and has a long history in creating places people want to live in. We are involved at the beginning of projects and throughout. We are here for the long haul. Recent projects have included 1000 property estate renewal in Tower Hamlets, Holly Street in Islington.

SC – Arup have been involved in the High Road Tottenham masterplanning

Wider Area Connections

JM – As part of our analysis we looked at both pedestrian and vehicular movement around Ebury Bridge. Many people have told us Ebury Bridge feels like an island and there are issues with community safety and vehicular routes on to the estate. We looked at how the estate connects with the routes in the area and the river.

TD – We would like a main route in to the estate – a more welcoming focal point.

FQ – Delivery drivers have a nightmare finding our homes.

SR – There is easy access for residents of Doneraile to the river, the Grosvenor estate and elsewhere.

CT – Residents from the Grosvenor estate come to use our playground.

TD – I access the waterway by walking past Sainsbury's, I would like better access.

WS – There is a definite barrier between the two estates.

Open Space

JM – Outlined the open spaces and the quality of gardens on the Ebury Bridge estate. The estate has a higher degree of green space than the rest of the locality.

FQ & T D – Ebury Bridge residents take pride in looking after their particular gardens and the gardening club is the pièce de résistance; it's an amazing space and carries out charitable activity.

JM – Private but open spaces could be opened up for the benefit of the estate. We will also look closely at the boundary edge of the estate along the railway line.

MS – We tackled ASB through the management of the open spaces with Youth Club involvement. The club has been running for 10 years.

TD – Expand the green areas and reduce the concrete heavy jungle, and look at installing security gates.

Land uses

JM – Introduced the discussion around land uses and community facilities. Are there specific things that Ebury Bridge residents would like to see?

TD – We would like Bike Lockers, an individual stand-alone community centre, a space for childcare provision on the estate, A dog park, Separate youth centre (so teenagers have their own space), Private communal space. The community facility could be named after Captain Raymond Towers "Ray" Holmes.

TD – There is currently not much use of the Grosvenor facilities by Ebury Bridge residents with no one using the Grosvenor nurseries.

TD – Ebury Lodge needs to be added to the planning board.

CT – Definitely a need for a state-run nursery in the area.

TD – The estate needs better recycling facilities in dedicated areas about three sites would be ideal.

JM – There will need to be a clear plan as to where refuse is collected from and discussion with WCC.

JM – We will look at all the community assets in the locality as part of the design development process but we will not propose providing new community infrastructure where the existing infrastructure is working well.

Height of Buildings

JM – It is important to understand the locality and the scale of spaces. There are a number of ways that the estate could provide gateways in to the area. The grain and history of the estate are also important factors to bear in mind.

Constraints

JM – Talked about the boundaries of the estate and the local conservation zones. There are listed building to one side and the railway footprint to the other.

CT – The railway has a real impact because of the noise. People can't open their windows.

SR – In Doneraile we really appreciate the space and the dual aspect. Thought should go in to the planning of space and ventilation. There is also a lot of development of homes in the area but little amenity space for all the new residents.

JM – We understand that buildings without proper ventilation can get very hot. We will consider this throughout our analysis.

CT – Important that the social housing homes are as desirable and liveable as the rest.

JM – We are fully aware that the estate should be somewhere people want to live.

CT – There is generally a lack of character with new build properties. We'd like to retain much of the character of the existing buildings.

TD – Important that neighbours can socialise and get to know each other.

JM – We also observed that sun light does not reach every property on the estate.

CT – Many of the ground floor homes of the railway blocks suffer from cold and damp due to the lack of sunlight.

TD- I like the fact that you can see and meet your neighbours along the external corridors in the current blocks on the estate.

SR – The lack of sunlight really impacts peoples' well-being.

TD – Is there any way to open up the bridge end of the estate to improve access.

FQ – The noise from the trains is terrible.

Other developments in the area

JM – Highlighted some of the other on-going developments in the area and asked group members to comment on what thought of them.

SC – As can be seen in the local area, London is changing at a rapid rate. This is an opportunity for Ebury to play a part at the centre of the changing face of London.

FQ – Does all of the options still include refurbishment?

JM – The analysis carried out over the past months encompasses options for full refurbishment. This process of research would be carried out for every possible scheme from full refurbishment through to full demolition.

TD – It is very important that Ebury Bridge retains its identity; the red brick is part of the estate's identity.

Consented Scheme

JM & SC – The consultation around the previous scheme provided a useful insight in to issues from residents at that point in time. 74% of residents wanted to see the space between buildings improved

TD – It is likely that the issues identified as part of the previous scheme would have increased.

SC – It is important that the market is involved at an earlier stage to feedback on logistics, deliverability etc

Design Principles

JM – Explained the design principles as a framework for how design work would be conducted moving forward and the thresholds.

CT – Important that designs are used as an opportunity to drive out ASB.

Beyond the Site

- Create a scheme that responds to and respects existing and future surrounding neighbourhoods
- Incorporate active, vibrant street frontages
- Maintain east-west views through the site
- Link into to north-south desire lines and connections to the wider area
- Introduce a legible hierarchy of accessible routes leading to the community heart
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the conservation area and grain of Ebury Bridge Road
- Provide adequate, accessible and secure amenity space that encourages regular and consistent use by the residents of Ebury Bridge Estate and the wider area

Within the Site

- Develop a fine grain of existing buildings
- Optimising daylight in internal and external spaces
- Achieving a predominance of dual aspect homes
- Creating moments of height to frame views and mark key nodes of activity
- Create a sequence of high quality green spaces of different characters and scales for different functions
- Optimise parking provision in order to prioritise private/secure open green space
- Reduce the impact of vehicles (private and servicing) on the public realm
- Positively respond to noise constraints from railway and adjacent roads
- Drawing work space and community facilities into the heart of the community
- Create a development that is designed to the highest quality, and which promotes low energy consumption and environmental sustainability
- (CfSH Code 4)
- Address issues of safety and security through legibility of routes, clarity of public/private spaces, lighting and passive surveillance

ACTION – Arup to provide a shortlist of potential regeneration schemes to visit and dates for January / February.

AOB

SC&JG – Explained to the CFG that a renewed Ebury Bridge Estate would remain a WCC owned estate with WCC retaining the freehold. Leaseholders would be issued a lease from WCC.

SC – Reminded attendees that there are public drop in sessions on 22/23 Nov where the information shared at tonight’s meeting would be presented to the wider community.

SC – Dates for the next CFG meeting were discussed and agreed. The next CFG meeting would be held on 5th Dec with a drop-in design sessions for the wider estate on 6/7 Dec. The provisional dates for CFG meetings on the 29 Nov and 13 Dec were cancelled.

CLM – Issued copies of the Leasehold consultation document to interested group members and reminded attendees of how to respond.

GS – Introduced herself and the engagement role she will play supporting the design team.

Dates of next meetings

Tuesday 5th December 2017 – CFG Meeting

6th and 7th December 2017 – Open invitation drop-ins

20th December – Christmas event / launch event 15-19 Ebury Bridge