

Minutes - Mill Farm Close Residents Steering Group Meeting

8 December 2009

Steering Group representatives in attendance:

Jackie Fineman (Chair), Mrs R Uthayakumar, Michael Gant, Mariam Yabou, Phil and Olive Balch, Tilman Marsh

Advisors:

Alison Pegg – Harrow Council, Louis Blair – First Call, Elaine Slowe – Harrow Council

Catalyst Housing Group:

Murray Crawford, Les Warren, Michael Simms

	Action
<p>1. Matters arising from the previous meeting</p> <p>MC stated that Higgins is considering funding the football sponsorship. AP confirmed that it is up to Higgins/CCHA to make a final decision and that the Council's position is always that opportunities should be offered equally to all residents.</p>	
<p>2. Planning update</p> <p>MC confirmed that the planning application was submitted on October 19th and has been validated, but that it has been met with some concerns from Planners, in that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the buildings are too close to boundary trees in many areas. Catalyst are reviewing and modifying the design tree by tree to address these concerns.The relationship of the various blocks to each other is not satisfactory as they are too close together. Catalyst are checking measurements and reviewing the design to meet Planners' concerns. <p>Catalyst is meeting with Planners again on 17th December, so more should be known after that meeting.</p> <p>MC stated that the resulting issues that affect residents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The design of the 3 bed houses. Whereas the existing design has a large ground floor footprint that 'steps up' through the storeys, the design may have to be changed to be straight walled all the way up with two bedrooms on the top floor. This is the same design as seen by members of the Steering Group on a visit to Page Road. MC circulated a revised plan of a 3 bed house for information and comment. It may be that the 3 beds are built out as a mix of the original and the revised design as required to meet Planners' concerns. Although the design of the 3 beds has changed, the space standards remain the same. MC confirmed that the 3 bed properties would be the subject of a workshop with residents in order to fix the design.Parking spaces. The Planners consider that there are too many parking spaces and the design may need to return to 1:1 parking. MC confirmed that Transport for London would not approve anything above 1:1 parking. AP stated that government policy dictates lower levels of car parking on new developments now and that it is impossible to make a case for more than 1:1 provision. The Planners are concerned that there is a lot of 'hard' landscaping in the estate design which includes the areas of parking. AP raised the possibility of having a	

<p>car sharing club on the estate, as this has been provided on other developments as part of the Travel Plan requirements. MC confirmed that Catalyst's intention is to secure the maximum number of spaces they can for Mill Farm Close residents.</p> <p>JF queried the position with parking spaces for residents of Miller Close who currently park on the roadway near the entrance to Mill Farm Close. MC confirmed that any parking spaces on the transferred land would be for Mill Farm Close residents only and that parking permits could be issued to Mill Farm Close residents if necessary. Catalyst are happy to work with Miller Close residents if Mill Farm Close residents wish them to do so, but Mill Farm Close resident parking is the priority for Catalyst.</p> <p>MC confirmed that the Planners are looking to reduce the number of units in the design proposal as a result of the above two concerns. Catalyst's approach is to work with the Planners to find a compromise position to address all concerns if possible.</p> <p>The Planners are aware of the consultation that has taken place with residents and this carries weight e.g. residents' preference for parking provision above green space.</p>	
<p>3. Transfer progress report</p> <p>AP confirmed that the above planning issues impact on the transfer timetable. The exact level of impact will be clearer after the meeting with Planners next week. AP will check the offer document to see if there is anything which affects any of the details in the offer and will report back to the Steering Group at the next meeting in January. It is hoped that the offer document will remain unchanged and that reconsultation will not be necessary.</p> <p>The original timetable was for the planning application to go to Planning Committee in January 2010 and then a report has to go to Cabinet for approval to the transfer. The earliest Planning Committee achievable in terms of timescales is now February although AP advised that it is more likely that the Committee on 10 March is the more realistic date to work with. In this case, the following Cabinet meeting is on 18 March, with submission to the Secretary of State for approval toward the end of March. Six weeks is required for a decision from the Secretary of State, which means the earliest the transfer to Catalyst could take place is the end of April or early May 2010.</p> <p>MC suggested that the above revised timescale may not delay the physical construction works on site. For example, the demolition of the garages was planned for the end of April anyway so it might be possible to pull back some lost time on site. MC also felt that some of the amendments required by Planning would have a beneficial effect on residents' enjoyment of their new homes e.g. moving buildings further away from boundary trees.</p> <p>AP stressed that the above revised timetable is based on the current amendments proving to be enough to meet all the planning concerns and there being no conflict with the offer document. If required amendments to the design constitute a material change to the offer, reconsultation will be required. There will be more certainty on this point after the meeting with Planning has taken place next week. Feedback on the results of the meeting will be brought back to the Steering Group at the January meeting, along with a presentation on the amended design from the architect, Judith Marshall.</p>	<p>AP</p> <p>Catalyst and JM</p>

<p>AP stated that the first drafts of the legal documentation had been received today, and that these will be reviewed at the January Steering Group meeting.</p>	<p>AP</p>
<p>4. Update on Estate Forum plans</p> <p>LB issued a revised draft constitution to the meeting and went through the changes that had been made as agreed at the last meeting. Further amendments were made and agreed, and a further revised version will be brought back to the January meeting for discussion or agreement.</p> <p>LB also suggested that the process of transferring the Steering Group to an Estate Forum could be started by arranging an open AGM.</p>	<p>LB</p>
<p>5. Any other business</p> <p>MC confirmed that Catalyst's Neighbourhood Manager would attend the January Steering Group meeting and would give a presentation to the group. It was also suggested that a community day could be arranged for residents to meet the Neighbourhood Manager.</p> <p>MC queried when the tenants would be required to sign a new tenancy agreement. LB confirmed that this would be done after the transfer had taken place.</p> <p>MC also confirmed that there would be two presentations at the next meeting in January – one from the architect about the amendments to the design and one from the Neighbourhood Manager.</p>	
<p>6. Date of next meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 12 January 2010 6pm – 7.30pm</p> <p>Further meeting dates:</p> <p>Tuesday 09/02/10</p> <p>Tuesday 09/03/10</p>	