

BENHILL RESIDENTS' STEERING GROUP (RSG) Meeting notes (No.19)

Venue: Salvation Army, Benhill Avenue, SM1 4DD and on Zoom

Date: Monday 24th February 2022 **Time:** 7pm to 8.30pm

Attendees: Residents from Benhill Estate

Officers: Michael Hunte (LBS), Chelena Logan-Millainaise (LBS), Geeta Le Tissier (LBS), Paul Maddock (HTA), Caroline Dove (HTA), Jamie Doak (HTA), Phil Rankin (Savills), Jane Cranitch (Savills), Ian Simpson (CF), Louis Blair (CF), Christine Wytiahlowsky (SHP)

Observers: Colin Hawkins (Sutton Federation of TRAs), Cllr David Bartolucci, Bev Brigden (Sutton Leaseholders Association)

1.	Introductions	Action
	<p>Ian and Michael welcomed everyone to the meeting adding that this was the first face to face RSG meeting for some time after the recent change in Covid guidance.</p> <p>Michael added that HTA have now been appointed as architects to lead on the Option Appraisal which is a major development in the Benhill regeneration project. In addition, he introduced Chelena Logan-Millainaise who has joined the Council team on Benhill.</p>	
2.	HTA – Benhill Architect Team	
	<p>Paul introduced himself and the HTA Team and provided a short presentation for the meeting covering their role and experience. HTA are architects with over 50 years experience with a focus on community architecture and estate regeneration.</p> <p>They are already working for Sutton on Beech Tree Place since 2019 where they have completed an Option Appraisal. Paul detailed some of the experience of the team on estates which include Sutton Estate (Chelsea), Clapham Park (Lambeth), Ravensbury (Merton), Winstanley/York Rd (Wandsworth) and Aylesbury Estate (Southwark).</p> <p>These projects have ranged from refurbishment to partial and full redevelopment subject to the condition of properties and resident feedback.</p> <p>HTA also have a strong focus on sustainability in all of their work with communities.</p>	

3.	Option Appraisal Process - HTA	
	<p>Paul briefly outlined the Option Appraisal process and potential activities on Benhill Estate. The options to be considered are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do Nothing 2. Minimal Interventions 3. Refurbishment 4. Partial Redevelopment 5. Full Redevelopment <p>As a starting point, HTA and the Council will work with the RSG to draw up agreed objectives for the Option Appraisal and plan a project of engagement activities likely to include a series of walkabouts, workshops and exhibitions. The intention would be to develop potential options which would be tested and consulted on with residents. Over time a preferred option would be arrived at on which residents would be balloted if it involved redeveloping existing buildings.</p> <p>There are no set timescales as yet for the Option Appraisal but it is likely to take place over the remainder of this year.</p>	
4.	Questions and Contributions	
	<p><i>Q – How would building contractors be selected ?</i> A – The selection process would be led by the Council with scope for resident involvement as with the architect selection. However, prior to any contractor selection the Option Appraisal would need to be completed with a ballot on any redevelopment option. Planning approval would also be required for any redevelopment.</p> <p><i>Q -How many extra homes would be built ?</i> A – This would depend on the outcome of the Option Appraisal and the preferred option. The Council’s Local Plan had identified that up to 3 times as many homes could be located on the site. However, in the Option Appraisal, likely planning policy and viability would need to be considered alongside the need to gain resident support in a ballot.</p> <p><i>Q – Which buildings would be refurbished or demolished ?</i> A – This may depend upon the constraints of the site in terms of existing services and planning policy in addition to resident feedback. Housing need and any rehousing programme required on Benhill Estate would also need to be factored into considerations.</p>	

	<p><i>Q – How would the ballot work ?</i></p> <p>A – The ballot would take place based on rules set by the Mayor of London. All secure tenants and resident leaseholders would be able to vote along with any residents on the Council’s Housing Waiting List for at least 12 months. Only those named on the tenancy or lease would be able to vote. There are no set requirements for turnout with only a simple majority required, although a turnout of above 70% is normal.</p> <p><i>Q – How is disruption dealt with in a construction programme ?</i></p> <p>A – Contractors would have set working hours to minimise disturbance and would also meet regularly with the RSG to discuss programme and activities.</p> <p><i>Q – Will purdah before the local elections impact on consultation ?</i></p> <p>A – It would not. Consultation will continue and would not have an impact as no Council decisions are required at this time.</p> <p><i>Q – Will the architects talk to everyone ?</i></p> <p>A – Yes, a range of activities will be developed to engage with all residents on the estate. HTA will also visit residents at home on request and are interested in seeing inside existing homes. Geeta added that HTA will be developing a Resident Engagement Strategy.</p> <p><i>Q – Will tenants have to move away from Sutton ?</i></p> <p>A – No, in any redevelopment secure tenants would have an option to move to a new home on Benhill Estate or move away from the estate within Sutton on a temporary or permanent basis as preferred.</p> <p><i>Q - Many residents like their homes, what about them ?</i></p> <p>A -If there is any redevelopment, HTA would want to incorporate features that residents like about their current homes and blocks where possible.</p> <p><i>Q – What can be done about anti-social behaviour on the estate, young people do not feel safe ?</i></p> <p>A – In any redevelopment, HTA would want to design out crime and anti-social behaviour where possible through improving overlooking and passive surveillance in all areas.</p>	
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	<p>Q – <i>What will be done about overcrowding in flats where children need their own rooms ?</i></p> <p>A - Secure tenants would be rehoused based on their housing need in any redevelopment with additional bedrooms where required.</p> <p>Q – <i>Will HTA organise their own meetings and activities ?</i></p> <p>A – Yes, but they will also report regularly to the RSG on progress and feedback.</p> <p>Q – <i>Will minutes and reports be provided for residents ?</i></p> <p>A – Yes, Sutton Council email meeting notes to all residents on the Benhill regeneration page on the Council website Benhill Estate Regeneration - Sutton Council</p>	
5.	Any Other Business	
	<p>Ian added that Communities First are available to meet residents at home at a time that suits them in addition to being contactable by Freephone or email. A schedule of Drop-ins at the Salvation Army will also be planned with the Council.</p> <p>Monthly RSG meetings will be taking place in future with the next meeting to be organised on a Thursday in late March.</p>	

Links to helpful websites:

Mayor of London - Better Homes for Local People, Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration (February 2018)

<https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/better-homes-for-local-people-the-mayors-good-practice-guide-to-estate-regeneration.pdf>

GLA Capital Funding Guide, Section 8 - Mayor of London - Funding Conditions that require Resident Ballots for Estate Regeneration Projects (July 2018)

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_cfg_section_8_resident_ballots_-_18_july_2018.pdf

GLA Housing Standards - Minor Alterations to the London Plan (March 2016)

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing_standards_malp_for_publication_7_april_2016.pdf

HEB Report - Estate Regeneration Rehousing and Compensation Scheme (15th October 2018)

<https://modern.gov.sutton.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=40537&PlanId=0&Opt=3#A139427>

Estate Regeneration Good Practice Guide (December 2016)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/estate-regeneration-good-practice-guide>

Benhill Estate Regeneration Webpage

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200502/housing_advice_and_options/1781/benhill_estate_regeneration

Sutton Link

https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/trams/sutton-link/user_uploads/sutton-link-consultation-report.pdf

Report It (Sutton Council)

https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200447/report_it or telephone: 020 8770 5000

Report It (Sutton Housing Partnership)

<https://www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk/report-it> or telephone: 020 8915 2000 or contact Lara Amota (SHP Housing Manager) on 202 8915 2181

Housing Regeneration Team Email: estateregeneration@sutton.gov.uk

Communities First (CFF) Email: benhill@communitiesfirst.uk.com