

**Notes of Hillcrest Estate Public Meeting  
Held at All Saints Church  
Thursday 18 September 2014 at 7.00pm**

**Attendees:**

Panel:

Cllr Strickland- Lead Member for Housing and Regeneration, Haringey Council  
Paul Munday- Housing consultant, Haringey Council  
Bhupinder Singh- PRP Architects  
Parinaz Mirzaei- PRP Architects

In attendance:

Oisin Kelly- Arboricultural expert  
Tim Chaudhry- Project Manager, Haringey Council  
Chantelle Barker- Programme Manager for Communities, Homes for Haringey  
Peter Purdie- Head of Operations Clienting, Homes for Haringey

Hillcrest residents and local residents, Highgate Society and Neighbourhood Forum representatives as per attendance sheet

Welcome

Cllr Strickland welcomed the residents to the meeting.

Introduction to the meeting – Cllr Strickland

Cllr Strickland explained that the council was considering new build housing because of the high demand in the borough. The council has made the commitment to build 250 council properties in the borough- one of the sites identified in Haringey where some housing could be built is on Hillcrest estate, which will provide more affordable housing in the west of the borough.

The Design Process and Team- Bhupinder Singh, PRP Architects

PRP delivered a Powerpoint presentation explaining the number of surveys completed and mentioned that there are still more surveys yet to complete.

Consultants have been appointed to look at Rights of Light, but further consultants have yet to be appointed. An Arboricultural and Ecology consultant will look at more detail of the SINC.

The Council has identified 3 areas within the estate for possible new build. No design has been currently developed for the project- this will take a further 10-12 weeks and residents would be involved in developing a concept.

The next stage is to look at the sites closer i.e. the prospect, history of the sites, conservation etc. The architects seek to engage with the residents throughout the process and understand impacts on the environment.

Council has decided that there is potential to build and will proceed with detailed design with the intention of working towards a future planning application. Residents will be engaged in working with the council in that process.

The list of consultants working as part of the PRP team were listed on slides.

## Haringey Council's Engagement Process- Paul Munday, Consultant at Haringey Council

There will be one-to-one door knocking conducted with individual households with a questionnaire to enable input into the infill proposals. The council would like to find who wants to be a part of the Resident Steering Group, which will have proportionate membership to the tenure mix of the estate for leaseholders and tenants. The Steering Group would work closely with the council on design principles.

Likely to be at a time between November and early New Year there will be a series of workshops held to enable estate residents and the wider community to give their thoughts and suggestions on design of new blocks and the estate environment. This would provide the opportunity for knowledge and insight from the estate to influence design to enhance the estate.

There will be a drop-in exhibition and workshops at the key stages. Further information about the workshops and events will be provided nearer the time.

Currently, on the evidence of the surveys and the views of professional advisers, there is a reasonable likelihood that a Planning application would be successful.

The target for a planning application to be submitted is likely to be March 2015 at the earliest- this is a fluid timeframe as surveys could impact upon this and what residents say in the design workshops.

The Resident Steering Group will appoint an Independent Advisor for the estate. The Independent Advisor will support the residents through the process and provide impartial, expert guidance. (Costs will be paid by the council.)

Section 105 consultation will be conducted with council tenants as there is a duty to consult regarding the management of the estate.

There is no definite certainty on the number of new housing units, but potentially it is anticipated between 40-90 units could be built.

### Impact and Benefits- Parinaz Mirzaei, PRP Architects

A slide indicating the possible impacts on the existing estate was presented - less open space, some trees removed, rights of light, population increase on the estate.

A slide showing possible benefits to the estate was presented - additional trees, car parking or a car club option, Pedestrian link to the North (Tube station), new outdoor play space, possible community facility, improved lighting and security.

There is an opportunity for the community to work with an expert on design of play space and green areas. Survey data and information from workshops will help develop a concept design for the estate which could provide solutions for overcrowding, rubbish and estate management.

It was confirmed that a hard copy of the slides would be provided if requested at the end of the meeting.

### Questions from the community

Q. If you are going to build, where are you going to put it – on our open spaces?

A. PRP response: The council has identified 3 viable places around the estate as areas 1,

2 and 3 on the display for new build. The exact place will not be known until we put a concept together. We want the residents to work with us on the design. It is important that the research stage is not rushed and small steps are taken, the research phase is what is currently being worked on.

Q. If you are going to build up to 90 homes, how high and what size are the buildings?

A. Paul Munday response: We do not expect the buildings to be higher than the existing blocks that are 7 storeys.

PRP response: There are policies and guidelines that the council would have to adhere to in terms of design and size e.g. distances between blocks, room sizes etc. These guidelines will be followed. In 10-12 weeks we will be looking to show some ideas to get feedback from the community.

Q. Excavation of the site and construction will cause disruption and have an impact on health.

A. PRP response: Development takes places at sites more inconvenient in proximity to existing housing than what is proposed at Hillcrest, but it is recognised it will cause some inconvenience to Hillcrest residents for a period of time, just as Decent Homes works does.

A. Paul Munday response: Noise and building issues are monitored and there are controls put in place, such as restricted hours of work and noise levels are measured, however it will not be easy but the process is needed to bring about additional affordable homes in the borough.

Q. Can you clarify, is it 40-90 homes proposed for Hillcrest estate or in the borough as a whole?

A. Paul Munday response: For Hillcrest estate.

Q. Where are the residents who live in the extra homes going to park?

A. Paul Munday response: Planning requirements in London aim at reducing parking spaces because the public transport is so good now. We will provide parking spaces required by planning regulations. Basement parking has improved over the past 10 years, to overcome security and ASB issues. Door knocking will identify the current car use on the estate (there was some discussion with the audience regarding transport connectivity, PTAL rating and safety of basement car parking). Safety concerns will be looked at through gated parking and secure entry.

Q. What you are doing will destroy the architectural feel of the estate, why don't you leave it as it is?

A. Paul Munday response: The main purpose is to provide additional homes that are so much needed in the borough but we will do that taking account of what is there at the moment.

Q. Be cautious about what you are building but don't max the space out.

A. PRP response: We understand the value of the estate. Whatever we build must work with the landscape, but we think there are merits in exploring this and we will work with the residents to achieve the best design.

Q. Worry about parking and children play areas – it seems you are using the spaces for building?

A. Paul Munday response: Nothing has been decided yet, this is just the initial stage. We don't know at the moment if all the sites will go ahead. We are exploring what opportunities there are.

Q. How many untenanted properties are in the borough – there is a reason to believe that there are thousands of empty properties?

A. Paul Munday: I believe on average less than 2% of council properties are vacant per year and the Void team bring these back to use within a benchmarked target number of days. The specific figure is something that can be provided once checked with the relevant department.

Q. What are Cllr Strickland's personal views on architectural integrity?

A. I previously had the Cabinet portfolio for Planning and the council is keen to ensure good design in the borough. The council has a design panel of independent architects who challenge design. There is a target with regard to empty properties and private homes that are empty will be threatened with CPO.

Q. Why was the decision made to sell off the old Magistrate Court site to Bellway at a commercial price instead of council developing it to create the affordable housing?

A. Cllr Strickland response: The Magistrates Court site was not owned by Haringey Council, so the council did not have power over its sale. Planning policies apply to the number of affordable homes.

Q. Why is the council targeting to build affordable housing in the Highgate area alone?

A. Paul Munday response: Development is across the borough. There is significant proposed development for the east of the borough for affordable housing and it has been important to identify sites in the west that are also suitable.

Q. Have you found anyone living on the estate who wants a new building there?

A. Paul Munday response: From the survey conducted by the Hillcrest Residents' Association of a proportion of the estate, only one said yes and there were some maybes, but there are some interesting comments which deserve further discussions to understand more about what the community may want as part of the design process.

Q. Current car parking on the estate is minimal.

A. Paul Munday response: Parking control could be brought in such as estate parking permits to ensure that non residents can't park on the estate.

Hillcrest Residents' Association response: People have already considered that and decided against it happening on the estate.

Q. Site no 2 seems to be on the SINC which is ecologically protected.

A. PRP response: We are aware that a small part of the SINC area may need to be moved but it can also be improved. There are SINC standards. We have conservation experts in house. Conservation area is equally important to us.

Oisin Kelly response: The existing SINC management plan needs to be looked at to see how overall enhancements in biodiversity across the whole of the estate can be achieved.

Q. Have you sought the opinion of the Conservation and heritage experts regarding these sites?

A. PRP response: We are working with the council's Conservation Officer and we have in house experts. It is important that local historical groups and conservation groups get involved with workshops.

Q. What is the timeframe of building the blocks?

A. Paul Munday response: The estimated time of completion is between 12 - 24 months - it depends on the design.

Q. What will the design be like? You are not showing anything here tonight.

A. Paul Munday response: Architects will be coming up with some draft designs in the next 10-12 weeks for discussion with the community at workshops.

Q. How many empty properties are there in the borough?

A. Paul Munday response: It is less than 2% of council housing stock on a revolving basis. The council has a target of bringing empty properties back to use very quickly which is about 20-25 days turnaround. The full details will be provided to attendees of the meeting.

Q. What ecological survey has been done so far?

A. Oisin Kelly (Arboricultural expert) response: Phase 1 – to identify potential of protected species and habitats of the areas, and phase 2 will look at reptiles and bats survey, this is currently taking place.

Q. Archaeological and historical records is poorly dispersed in Haringey. Prehistoric earth works and potentially a historic monument may be in the area. The Conversation Officer at Haringey Council and in the architects practice may not know these details. You need a Conservation expert from outside.

A. PRP response: We would encourage local historical groups and conservation groups to get involved with workshops and work with us.

Q. The proposed site no.2 is quite close to the tree bank. If the development goes ahead, it may impact the trees adversely. Can you give a guarantee that a significant amount of A-grade trees will not be touched?

A. Paul Munday response: We cannot guarantee that all the trees will be kept. The significant ones, those identified as A-grade, we will aim to keep.

Q. If the Council is proposing to build 250 units in the borough, why are you proposing to build 90 of these in Hillcrest?

A. Paul Munday response: It could be 40 units. We do not know the exact number yet.

Q. Cllr Morris: My understanding from the meeting held yesterday with the Council, a representative from the Hillcrest Residents' Association and Ward Councillors was that the design would be modern.

A. Cllr Strickland's response: There is no design yet and although it would not be appropriate to copy an older building, elements could be incorporated into the new build design so that they would be 'in-keeping' with existing blocks.

Q. Cllr Morris: There needs to be a commitment to retain affordable housing so that they are not sold under the Right to Buy process.

A. Cllr Strickland's response: It would be looked at to remove new build from the Right to Buy process.

Q. The Residents Association has requested copies of the survey reports which the council are using to make their decision under the Freedom of Information Act, but have been denied these on the basis that the surveys reports are not finished. Why can't we have the reports?

A. Oisin Kelly response: We are in the process of writing the trees survey, and it is yet to be completed. These are part of a process for the council to make the final decision.

Paul Munday response: As part of the 'blue sky thinking process' we are unable to share them at this point but they will be made available as part of a planning application. Relevant parts will be available at the workshops. There are also incomplete surveys, such as the tree survey.

Hillcrest RA and Cllr Hare's responses: By not providing the surveys it is undermining the trust in the relationship with the council. Cllr Strickland agreed to discuss with officers if it was appropriate for the surveys to be released.

Q. Why was only one member of the Residents' Association able to attend the meeting last night?

A. Paul Munday response: This was rectified but we were unable to provide more notice to enable more than one representative to attend. The meeting was intended originally to be just for Ward Councillors.

Q. What are the steps you are taking to improve HfH performance with regards to anti-social behaviour on the estate?

A. Paul Munday response: We have a dedicated team who will be working with the residents to carry out one to one discussion, liaising with Homes for Haringey's housing management team. You can put on the survey any issues that you want addressed by Homes for Haringey. The intention is to draw out responses from residents who do not usually have a say or attend meetings. The resident was asked to speak to Chantelle Barker at the end of the meeting to discuss specific issues.

Q. How do you intend to keep the affordable housing?

A. Cllr Strickland response: Officers are looking at ways of doing that. There is no direct intention by the council to make profit or surplus from this development. The council is looking everywhere across the borough for suitable sites to build houses not just Highgate.

Q. Cllr Morris: New pavement work – what was the thinking behind that? Won't it be damaged during the decent Homes work?

A. Paul Munday response: It was a long term programme and was required for Health and Safety reasons, but if any pavement is damaged by the contractors of Decent Homes etc, they have the obligation to put it right.

Q. Will people on the estate get the first consideration to be moved to the new building? There is poor disabled access housing currently.

A. Paul Munday response: Allocation will be based on the highest needs in the borough on the Housing Register, but it presents the opportunity for consideration for estate residents who are overcrowded, or have mobility/disability issues, to potentially benefit from those homes. We cannot guarantee those in Highgate will be placed first. 100% would be built to the 'lifetime homes standard' and 10% to disability standards.

### **Any other business**

Q. Will there be compensation for the leaseholders for disruptions if the development is going to go on for 2 years and the property devalues?

A. Paul Munday response: Compensation has not been considered and in my previous experience, it has not been given elsewhere. We can't comment on the value as we are not professionals in that field. We would advise you to take professional advice if you considered it to be necessary.

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### **Post-meeting actions:**

#### **1) Percentage of empty homes in Haringey**

The current percentage of general needs\* council-owned homes that are empty is 0.41% (60 no); the average turnaround time between tenants is 23 days. (figures from 3 October 2014)

\*The 'general needs' figure excludes hostel accommodation (21 no.) and private-sector leased properties (29 no.)

## 2) Site Surveys

CLlr Strickland spoke with officers who have taken legal advice on the release of survey reports. The following surveys will be made available on the council's website:

- Topographic survey
- Elevation Surveys
- Ecology Survey Stage 1
- Ground Condition and Contamination
- Statutory Services Survey

They will also be forwarded to the Hillcrest Residents' Association.

The following survey is not being released because it is incomplete:

- Tree survey

## 3) Members of the council's design panel of independent architects:

### **Sam Appleby**

Sam has 20 years experience as an architectural and built environment photographer for a wide range of clients. He has more recently qualified as an urban designer and has gained experience primarily in the public sector.

### **Ruth Blum**

Ruth is a qualified architect and planner with many years experience in the public and private sector mainly dealing with urban design issues. She is also a Haringey resident.

### **Stephen Davy – BSc (Hons), Dip Arch, RIBA**

Stephen Davy is an award winning chartered architect and has been a director of Stephen Davy Peter Smith Architects since 1995. He has extensive experience of working in the residential sector and has been working closely with the RIBA and is a Civic Trust assessor.

### **Deborah Denner - BA (Hons), Dip Arch, MArch, ARB**

Deborah is an architect specialising in design management, working with Fortismere Associates. She is project manager for the London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel, and has experience of writing design briefs, supporting architectural competitions, design advocacy and giving design evidence at public inquiries.

### **Lewis Eldridge – BSocSc (Hons), MA MSc**

Lewis is a planner and urban designer with twelve years experience in private sector consultancy focussed on placing new design into the historic environment. He is currently working on the development of heritage, design and environment related policies in Thurrock Council's LDF.

### **Michael Hammerson – BSc, MPhil, MRICS, MIFA, FSA**

Michael has practised as a chartered surveyor and archaeologist, and from 2000-2009 was Policy Officer for the Civic Trust. He is a Vice-President of the Highgate Society, and an Executive member of the London Forum of Amenity and Civic societies.

### **Leo Hammond – BA (Hons), MUD, MPhil, MRTPI**

Leo is an urban designer and town planner with nine years experience in the public, private and academic sectors. He currently works as a freelance Urban Designer.

### **David Kells – BSc, Dip. Arch, ARB**

David is a registered architect who has worked for architects including Gollifer Langston, Nick Evans and Union North. He has over 15 years experience designing and running projects in the sports, education, residential and leisure sectors.

### **Chris Mason – RIBA, MRTPI, Access Association**

Chris is a qualified architect and town planner and has 23 years Urban Design experience having specialised in public realm and accessibility for the disabled issues. Prior to that he had professional experience working as a historic buildings and conservation officer and access officer in a central London authority and has worked as an architect and town planner in the private sector.

### **Phyllida Mills MA RIBA**

Phyllida is an architect and director of Mills Power. She has over 20 years experience designing for public and private sector clients, most recently as a partner with Penoyre & Prasad. She believes in the value of good design and is a regular judge of design awards.

### **Claudio Novello, Diploma Arch. MA Arch.**

Claudio is a freelance architect at Novello Architects, working mainly on residential projects in North London. He previously worked as a project architect for different German offices including: Bangert, Berlin (including the Headquarters for Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Potsdam and the Entrance Hall for Concert Hall, Freiburg) and Prof. Behnisch (Entrance Hall for the German Parliament Buildings, Bonn), as well as lecturer in architecture and interior design at TU Darmstadt and supervisor for the diploma course at Thames University, London.

### **Peter Sanders**

Peter Sanders is a chartered architect who, having retired from Levitt Bernstein Associates, is now a consultant to that practice. At LBA he worked on a wide range of projects, a number of which were award winning. The most recent that he was responsible for from inception until final detailed design, with LBA being lead consultants, was the Heating Infrastructure Project for the University of Liverpool, which gained an RIBA Award and Civic Trust Award in 2011.

### **The Panel's Terms of Reference and avoiding conflict of interest**

The Haringey Design Panel was set up in 2005 and follows principles established by CABI; it is currently in the middle of a process to reform it to bring it into line with their revised document of last year (written in association with RIBA / RTPI / LI) as attached. The panel exists to provide *expert, impartial and objective* advice to applicants, planning officers and the Planning Committee on the design of proposals at their pre-application stage. Panel members provide their services for free in the public interest. They are experts and professionals in the built environment; the panel does not exist to represent local interests; there are other occasions such as Development Management Fora for that purpose.

Bearing in mind the purpose and function of the panel, **it is important to avoid creating a conflict of interest by lobbying.** If panel members were lobbied by local residents prior to considering a scheme, they might not be able to review the scheme. Therefore we do not provide contact details for panel members and they would not expect to be contacted.

