

### **Appendix 3**

## **Summary of engagement with the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estate Residents**

### **Summary**

This report aims to outline the purpose, process and the outcome of the engagement that has taken place to date with residents on the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates.

Since 2008, the Council has undertaken extensive consultation with residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates. Consultation has centred around the future of the estates and specifically the opportunity that the proposed comprehensive development of the Earl's Court buildings, Lillie Road depot and the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates offers.

From the outset, the council has been committed to meaningful and extensive engagement and has placed the residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates at the heart of the engagement process. The Council's engagement strategy has aimed to be as inclusive, truthful and as transparent as possible and has allowed the Council to continually work with residents to-

- Understand their aspirations for their estates,
- Understand their concerns and their needs
- To assess the potential benefits and dis-benefits of the potential comprehensive redevelopment scheme,
- To agree a detailed set of assurances that will protect and assure residents.

The Council has attempted to engage with as many residents as possible throughout the engagement process. Understandably, there is a clear mix of views, opinions and aspirations amongst West Kensington and Gibbs Green estate residents about the future of their estates, with some residents being supportive of regeneration and the possible benefits it could bring, whilst others believing that regeneration of the estates is unnecessary. This report aims to summarise and group the various responses together to extract key resident views, concerns and aspirations.

Throughout the engagement process there has been two key strands of consultation running in parallel – consultation with residents about the inclusion of the estates in the comprehensive redevelopment centring on the development of assurances for Tenant and Leaseholders/ Freeholders, which has been led by the Council and consultation on the Masterplan for the proposed comprehensive regeneration area which has been led by Capital and Counties.

A third strand of consultation has been led by LBHF Planning Authority and has been centred around the development of a Supplementary Planning Document for the proposed development area.

Engagement with estate residents is ongoing. Should the Council wish to include the estates in the proposed comprehensive redevelopment of Earl's Court, the Council will continue to work with residents to ensure that they remain at the heart of any engagement and regeneration plans.

## **Background**

An opportunity exists to include the estates in a comprehensive regeneration scheme spanning 77 acres across the West Kensington and Earl's Court area. This opportunity exists as the Leaseholders of the Earl's Court buildings, Capital and Counties (CapCo), and Transport for London (TfL) the freehold owners of Lille Bridge Depot and the Earl's Court buildings, would like to develop their land after 2012. The potential development of this land offers an opportunity to pursue intervention of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates.

In recognition of the potential benefits of this proposal and its capability to accommodate substantial sustainable growth in housing and employment the comprehensive site has been identified as an Opportunity Area within the draft replacement London Plan. As a result the LBHF Planning Authority are working with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to produce a SPD to give planning guidance to exemplify the policy framework for development of the site.

In light of this, the Council has been keen to fully explore and understand the potential benefits that could flow from the inclusion of the estates within a comprehensive regeneration scheme and in October 2009 signed a Collaboration Agreement with Capco and TfL. The Collaboration Agreement provided the legal framework for the three landowners to establish whether comprehensive redevelopment would bring sufficient benefits to justify to resultant change.

Whilst there had been engagement with residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates during 2008 and early 2009, it was after the signing of the Collaboration Agreement in October 2009 that the Council launched an extensive process of engagement with residents.

## **Engagement Strategy**

Over the past 18<sup>th</sup> months the Council's engagement strategy has adapted to meet the needs and requirement of residents on the estate. Rather than dictating a timetable and process for engagement, the engagement strategy has grown organically and has been shaped by the residents of the estate.

To ensure engagement with as many estate residents as possible the council engaged through various forms and mediums throughout the process. This included:

- **Dedicated Regeneration Officers**

Two Officers have been available at all times to engage with residents. These Officers have completed numerous house visits, drop in sessions and surgeries with residents on the estate.

The Officers are directly involved in aiding the Council make a decision on whether to include the estates. This has allowed issues raised during the engagement process with residents to be fed directly into any eventual regeneration plans.

- **Regular Newsletters**

Regular newsletters have been distributed to the estates to update each household with any news with regards to the estates. These newsletters are distributed to every door through the Council's delivery contractor.

- **The West Kensington and Gibbs Green Steering Group**  
A key method of engagement with estate residents has been through the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Steering Group.

The West Kensington and Gibbs Green Steering Group has been established by the residents of the two estates for residents of the estates. In 2010, a group of residents, expressed a wish to set up the Steering Group of local residents, in order to talk to the Council about the potential development proposals, to counter rumour and misinformation and to further develop the Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder assurances. The Group has received independent legal advice in order to negotiate with the Council.

Membership of the group is open to all estate residents and the group has been advertised extensively by the Council in its publications and at events on the estates. The group has continued to meet and grow and now has a membership of over 100 estate residents. Until recently the Group has acted as a consultative group but has recently formalized and has created a Limited Company. The Steering Group have agreed the Company's objectives.

The Council works with the Steering Group as a part of its communication strategy for the Earls Court development as this enables access to a wide range of local residents and facilitates the type of engagement the council is keen to undertake.

- **Dedicated Website**  
The Council has a dedicated West Kensington and Gibbs Green website which is updated with all recent information and documents relating to the potential redevelopment project.
- **Surgeries and drop- in sessions**  
At key points in the engagement process, the Council has held drop in sessions and surgeries at the Holiday Inn Express on North End Road and at the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Tenant Halls. At these events Officers have been available to engage with residents about regeneration, answer questions and determine residents concerns and aspirations for the future of the estates.

### **Engagement Timetable**

The engagement process has been broken into 9 stages of engagement, which are described below:

Stage	Summary of engagement	Form of Engagement
<p><b>Stage 1</b> 2008/2009</p> <p>Estate Regeneration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To carry out a major 'listening exercise' to understand if/how residents felt they could benefit from major investment from the Earls Court and TfL depot redevelopment.</li> <li>To encourage as widespread an involvement of residents from the estates as possible in the programme, and give everyone the opportunity to take part and respond.</li> <li>Provide a clear summary of issues and feedback to LBHF to help them plan for the future to ensure that residents benefit from the investment opportunities around them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter</li> <li>Drop Inn Sessions</li> <li>Surgeries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 2</b> Winter 2009/10</p> <p>Collaboration Agreement Introduce Capital &amp; Counties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reassure residents of current position (no decisions made)</li> <li>Reassure residents of nature of the long term engagement process</li> <li>Introduce Capital and Counties</li> <li>Listen and understand resident concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter</li> <li>Drop Inn Sessions</li> <li>Surgeries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 3</b> Spring – Summer 2010</p> <p>First Draft of Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder Assurances</p> <p>Place making Consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult on initial safeguards for residents</li> <li>CapCo introduced Terry Farrell &amp; Partners as the Project Masterplanner &amp; explained the masterplan process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council produced a detailed newsletter giving assurances to Council Tenants, Leaseholders and Freeholders.</li> <li>Surgeries</li> <li>Drop inn sessions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 5</b> Winter 2010/11</p> <p>Detailed Tenant and Leaseholder Assurances</p> <p>Initial Masterplan Concepts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation on the first detailed Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder assurance documents that had been produced collaboratively between the Steering Group, the Council and CapCo.</li> <li>First meeting of the wider Steering Group</li> <li>CapCo introduced the concepts informing the production of the masterplan for the site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drop ins</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 6</b> Spring 11 Launch of Masterplan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch of the masterplan</li> <li>Understanding estate residents views, aspirations and concerns with the proposed masterplan</li> <li>Continued Consultation on the Detailed Tenant and Leaseholder offers</li> <li>Consultation on the design and size of proposed replacement homes at Seagrave Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 day exhibition</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 7</b> Summer 2011</p> <p>Pre application Consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre planning consultation for the main site application</li> <li>Pre planning consultation for the Seagrave Road detailed application</li> <li>Understanding estate residents views, aspirations and concerns with the proposed applications</li> <li>Continued Consultation on the Detailed Tenant and Leaseholder offers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 day exhibition</li> </ul>

<p><b>Stage 8</b></p> <p>Winter 2011/12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditional Lease Sale Agreement consultation (S105 of Housing Act for Secure Council Tenants)</li> <li>• Engagement with residents on the estates on key issues with the CLSA, including tenant/leaseholder and freeholder offers</li> <li>• Wider consultation across Fulham on CLSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information pack send to residents on the estate and wider area</li> <li>• Three consultation reminder newsletters to the estate</li> <li>• One consultation reminder newsletter to wider area</li> <li>• Publicity in Fulham and Hammersmith Chronicle</li> <li>• 4 drop-in information days on the estate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 9</b></p> <p>Winter 2011/12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on Earls Court Supplementary Planning document on the estate and the wider area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletter for the estate and wider area promoting consultation</li> </ul>

## Resident Feedback

The Council's engagement strategy has been shaped by the residents on the estate. It has been a reactive - responding to what residents have wanted. Early into the engagement process, it became clear that what residents wanted most from the engagement process was to gain a better understanding of how the inclusion of the estates in a comprehensive scheme would affect them, and how they would be protected. They also wanted to ensure that any promises made to them about the redevelopment would be guaranteed by the council.

In response, the council has, over the last two years attempted to capture all of these concerns and aspirations and ensure, where practicable that they are fed into any Land Agreement with Capital and Counties.

The concerns and aspirations that were common amongst residents of both estates, and are summarised below:

- **Security of tenure**  
From the outset, residents made it clear that they wanted to remain secure Council tenants. Residents were nervous that any redevelopment on the estates would lead to a change in landlord, which was deemed to be unacceptable by the majority of residents the Council engaged with.
- **Security of rental levels**  
Residents were nervous that regeneration would lead to increased rental levels. Residents emphasised that they required comfort that any regeneration would not cause them to be financially worse off.
- **Demolition**  
Whilst some residents are extremely supportive of regeneration, specifically the potential inclusion of the estates in the comprehensive regeneration scheme, other residents are clearly opposed to any regeneration that includes the demolition of the current properties on the estate.
- **Re-housing**

A key message that residents have iterated throughout the engagement process is their strong connection with the West Kensington and North End Road area and the strength of their existing community.

Residents emphasised their anxiety that redevelopment would lead to them being forced to move from the area or outside the borough. Residents iterated that any development should allow them to remain within the area, allowing them to continue to use the same schools, services and facilities as are currently used.

Residents also wanted to ensure that any redevelopment would allow them to maintain their sense of community and that any re-housing would happen in a way that allowed support networks to be maintained.

- **One move only**

Residents made clear that should they have to move due to any redevelopment, they would only want to move once.

- **Affordability**

Leaseholders and Freeholders on the estates wanted certainty that should they would be fairly compensated and be given the opportunity to purchase an affordable property within the same area as they are living.

- **Process**

Residents expressed anxiety around any regeneration process. They wanted to understand how regeneration would work in practice and how they would be supported throughout the process. Residents wanted a clear understanding about what was being proposed, how it would affect them and the likely timescales. Residents wanted reassurance that they would be adequately supported, specifically if any re-housing would be required.

- **Jobs and employment**

There is a strong desire amongst residents to increase employment and training opportunities for local residents. However, residents made clear that they had been disappointed by previous regeneration schemes, failing, in their opinion, to bring the employment benefits for local people that had been promised.

Residents emphasised that it should be local people who reap the employment opportunities that regeneration could bring. They wanted an understanding of how this will be achieved and how the necessary skills training would be put in place to allow residents to be trained to allow them to benefit from any employment opportunities.

- **New Homes**

Residents were concerned over the size and type of new properties that regeneration may bring. Residents emphasised that it was important that any new housing should have comparable room sizes to existing properties on the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates. Residents also raised concerns over the types of new homes to be provided, specifically residents living in houses, wanted to ensure that any regeneration would provide houses and not only flats.

- **Parking**

Residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estate currently benefit from a high number of parking spaces on the estate. Residents raised concerns that regeneration may reduce the number of parking spaces available to them and may increase the cost of parking within the area.

- **Layout of the estate**

Residents had mixed views about the estate. Some residents felt that the estate was poorly laid out and lent itself to anti-social behaviour due to its closed nature and that the green space was poorly designed and under used. Other residents felt that the lay out of the estate resulted in the estate being quiet and peaceful.

## **Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder Offers**

To ensure that the Council addresses the issues that had been raised and that are outlined above, the Council has been working with residents to jointly produce Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder offer documents which outline what would happen to residents should the estates be included in the comprehensive redevelopment scheme proposed by Capital and Counties.

The offers have been negotiated with residents of the estate, primarily with the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Steering Group. The Steering Group have had legal advice throughout the negotiation of these offers. It has been agreed that the assurances within the Tenant and Leaseholder/Freeholder offers are developed into Individual contracts, for each resident on the estate, setting out their individual position. These contracts have now been produced and are currently being agreed with the Steering Group. Once agreed they will be issued for information to all residents. In summary the main assurances to both groups of residents are as follows:

### **Tenants**

- Secure Council tenants will remain as such with rents set by the Council in line with other existing Council rents.
- All tenants will be made an offer to move into a new home on the new development which suits their housing needs.
- Tenants will be entitled to a Homeloss payment to compensate them for the move. This is currently set by legislation at £4,700 per household.
- Tenants will have a dedicated re-housing officer to help them through the process and access to free independent housing advice.
- The development will be phased to allow tenants to be re-housed with only one move with no compulsory use of temporary accommodation. Existing groups who wish to remain together will be moved together.
- Tenants who are under-occupying will be offered a new home with one additional bedroom above their need.
- Tenants moving into the new development will be offered new household goods included a fridge/freezer, washing machine/dryer, dishwasher, oven/hob and new carpets and curtains. They will also be compensated for any reasonable costs as a result of moving, such as removal expenses and re-routing of mail.

### **Leaseholders and Freeholders**

- Resident homeowners will receive full market value plus compensation of 10% of its value.
- Resident Homeowners who wish to move into the new development will receive a discount of 10% of the value of their new property.
- If after receiving a discount Resident Homeowners still cannot afford to purchase a home in the new development the Council will hold any outstanding equity, at no rent, up to the value of the new home that should be an equivalent size to their existing home. Homeowners will not be expected to increase borrowing on their mortgage to afford a home in the new development.
- Resident Homeowners who wish to be bought out and leave the area will be offered the value of their home plus 10% Homeloss Compensation unless they move under the Early Purchase arrangement.
- Homeowners will be able to choose the time when they wish to be bought out and move away, up until the time when their property is required for development.
- Homeowners will be entitled to free independent valuation and legal fees for the conveyance.
- Reasonable costs of moving will be funded.

The Council has made a commitment to the residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates that should decision be made to include the estates in the comprehensive redevelopment proposals, the Tenant and Leaseholder and Freeholder Contracts will form part of any agreement with Capital and Counties.