

Consultation Note - Earls Court & West Kensington Local Lettings Plan

1.0 Introduction

Consultation with all estate residents upon the draft Local Lettings Plan took place between 7th March and 11th April 2013 and 61 responses were received.

Consultation occurred in five ways

1.1 Questionnaires

All homes on the Estates received a letter dated 7th March inviting comment on enclosures, which consisted of:

- A newsletter - Let us Know what you think about a Local Lettings Plan
- Earls Court & West Kensington Local Lettings Plan Consultation Draft
- Earls Court & West Kensington Local Lettings Plan Questionnaire

1.2 Website

A site was set up to receive on line responses via www.lbhf.gov.uk/earlscourtlettingsplan. The letter of 7th March advised all tenants that this site was available for consultation responses.

1.3 Email

The Council's dedicated email addresses for this Regeneration project was reviewed for any related enquiries.

1.4 Drop in sessions

Held at the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estate Regeneration Office where four Council Officers made themselves available to answer residents queries and observations on the Draft Local Lettings Plan. These sessions took place from 2pm – 8pm on 21st March and 8am – 2pm on the 28th March 2013. The newsletter sent to each resident contained an invitation to come to the drop in sessions.

1.5 Briefing

On the 11th April 2013 Council Officers met with the Chairs of the two Tenant and Resident Associations and the Chair of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes Ltd.

2.0 Summary of Consultation Responses

2.1 Questionnaires

A total of **15** questionnaires were returned to the Council by the closing date of 11th April 2013, via the Stamped Addressed Envelope provided to each Estate Resident. Two late questionnaires were received but were not included, as they arrived after the consultation closure date.

Tenure of Respondents	Number
Secure Council Tenants	8
Housing Association Tenants	2
Leaseholders	3
Not indicated	2
Total	15

The Council sought comments on seven main areas of the Draft Local Letting Plan. Responses are summarized below.

2.1.1 **Section 5 – Guiding Principles to the Council’s Approach**

- Nine comments were received from tenants and raised the following key points:
 - Two related to clarification of paragraphs in section 5.12 which were in contradiction to table at Appendix 1.
 - One comment related to provision of parking space.
 - One comment related to succession of new re provided property by adult dependant.

2.1.2 **Section 9 – Re-Housing Process**

- Nine comments were received from tenants. The following key points related to the LLP:
 - One tenant commented that tenants who had lived on Estate long term should be re-housed first.
 - One tenant wanted to know if they would be in the first phase
 - One tenant identified that they will require help moving home

2.1.3 **Section 10 – Housing Needs**

- Nine comments were received from tenants and raised the following key points:
 - One tenant wanted clarification as to whether they were an ‘eligible tenant’
 - One tenant commented on not wanting a bedsit.
 - One tenant requested we hold an open evening with models of the new properties
 - Three tenants commented on the property type they would like with one wanting a balcony the other a garden
 - One tenant commented on their status as carer for mother

2.1.4 **Section 11 (a) – Advanced Local Lettings Plan**

- Nine comments were received from tenants and raised the following key points:
 - One tenant considered criteria should make reference to tenants who had rent arrears or had been involved in anti-social behaviour
 - One tenant advised that they would not change the section
 - One tenant advised that they wanted only to move within the regeneration area

Section 11 (b) Advanced Local Lettings Plan

- Seven tenants commented on this area and raised the following key points:
 - One tenant asked how the preference to earlier signing of Contract would be identified.
 - One tenant stated that they would like to move to Seagrave Road

2.1.5 Section 12 - Meanwhile use/short term use

- Eight tenants commented on this section and raised the following key points
 - Two tenants agreed with LLP approach
 - Two tenants commented that the empty properties should be let to working households or those involved in community engagement
 - One tenant commented that homes should be let to tenants who have been on the Housing Register long term
 - One tenant commented on what would happen to the short term let tenants when the properties were due for demolition
 - One tenant was not in agreement with short term lets

2.1.6 Section 14 – Equalities

- Eight comments were received from tenants and raised the following key points:
 - One tenant agreed with need for Equalities Impact Assessment
 - One tenant asked that tenants who paid their rents timeously be treated fairly
 - One tenant did not understand this section
 - One tenant commented that more information was needed
 - One tenant commented that they would like to move with their current neighbours close by

2.1.7 Section 15 - Appeals, Information and Reviews

- Eight comments were received from tenants and raised the following key points
 - One tenant asked that assistance be provided with appeals
 - One tenant required more information on the Scheme of Allocation
 - A tenant wants to remain in the area preferably in Seagrave Road and advised that they understood there was a possibility they would be moved out of London this tenant also stated that the Allocation Scheme was unfair
 - One tenant did not wish to comment as they did not understand this section
 - One tenant was concerned regarding size of new property
 - One tenant commented that they thought it was good that tenants had opportunity to comment.

2.1.8 Tenant Details

Where tenants completed the section “Your Details” the following has been recorded

Male	Female	Employed	Unable to work	Over 60
7	2	4	3	3

3.0 Website

No responses were recorded on the Web Site www.lbhf.gov.uk/earlscourtlettingplan

4.0 Email

Two comments were received via email to the Councils Dedicated email address for this Regeneration Project – westken@lbhf.gov.uk. These queries related to specific individual circumstances, which will be addressed at the point the housing needs assessment is undertaken in relation to the relevant phase, in terms of housing allocation, and reflective of the LLP, once adopted.

The query related to a Notting Hill Housing Association Shared ownership leaseholder who wanted to find out how they would be treated (this is also referred to in the TRA enquiries in section 7 of this report).

5.0 Drop In Sessions

Two drop in events took place on 21st & 28th March 2013 at the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates Regeneration Office at No 1 Mund Street. Four Council Officers were available and each resident was asked to sign in. Notes were kept of each conversation in order to capture observations.

In total 43 people attended the meetings. Attendance at the event was as follows:-

Secure Council tenants	28
Housing Association	1
Temporary Accommodation	1 (temporary on licence)
Leaseholders	13
Total	43

Key comments and questions raised at the drop in sessions by the tenants have been summarised in the table below:-

- I would like to move now from Estate to an alternative address in LBH&F. Will I be given priority under the Scheme of Allocation if so which Band?
- When will policy for compensation for garden/garage loss be established?
- I live in a Temporary Accommodation property on the Estate; will I be re-housed to the Regeneration area?
- I am the carer for an adult relative will I be re-housed with them?
- My household is comprised of a couple where for medical reasons we require separate bedrooms how will this be assessed in terms of bedrooms for the new scheme?
- Can I bring my own white goods to new property?
- I am elderly & will not be able to pack & unpack how will this be done?
- I have an adult non dependent living with me the LLP appears to be contradictory in that 5.11 states that an Eligible Tenant is anyone who has lived as part of the household since one year prior to CLSA signed (23.1.2013). 5.12 bullet point two states that non dependent children must have lived there since the start of the tenancy. Which is correct?
- I currently have a ground floor flat with access to a garden. My children have health needs which require a garden. How will I be assessed to keep a garden in the new development?

6.0 Leaseholder Comments

Consultation occurred with all residents of the Estates. A combination of 13 Freeholders and Leaseholders took the opportunity to make comments. The following is a summary of the leaseholder queries, which will be addressed on an individual basis:

- Concerns relating to property values in new build & whether the leaseholder would be able to access a property which could accommodate entire household

- A leaseholder wishes to move to the new scheme ahead of phase and queried if this is possible
- Concern relating to meanwhile use of empty property and whether this would create further anti-social behaviour on the estates
- Comment from leaseholder that they thought the buy back offer referred to on page 26 of residents information pack was not legal
- Can translators be accessed for those whose first language is not English
- How will a Notting Hill Housing shared ownership leaseholder be dealt with
- When will a buy back policy be available
- Concern regarding blight
- Status regarding resident owner/non qualifying owner in relation to Right to Buy date
- A resident who was involved in an expired scheme Rent to Mortgage requested clarification on how they will be treated in regeneration

6.1 Section 12 of the LLP – Meanwhile use/ short term use

Two additional responses were received from leaseholders via email relating to:

- One leaseholder satisfied with Council approach
- One leaseholder not clear why residents will need to move before demolition takes place

Where the monitoring form was completed the status was as follows:-

male	1	in employment
female	1	retired

7.0 Meeting Held with Chair of Residents Associations and Chair of West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes Ltd

Following the drop in sessions it became apparent that the Residents Associations have detailed responses to the Draft Local Lettings Plan. In order to hear these a meeting was arranged with the Director of Housing Options, Skills and Economic Development – the author of the Local Lettings Plan. A detailed note of the meeting was taken (Appendix 4) and the points made were taken into account in amending the draft Local Lettings Plan

8.0 Amendments to the Draft Local Lettings Plan

Officers have considered the responses made to the consultation and as a result a number of amendments are proposed. These are included in the Proposed Local Lettings Plan at Appendix 1 to the main report. The principal changes are as follows;

- An **additional paragraph (new 4.9) was inserted** into the section on Key Commitments to reflect the proposed cap on service charges for secure tenants moving to the redeveloped site. An equivalent reference was **deleted from Appendix 2 (Resident Homeowners)**. The entry in Appendix 4 (Glossary) relating to service charges was amended to include eligible tenants;
- **Paragraph 5.12 was amended** to make it **consistent with paragraph 5.11** in that non-dependent children will be re-housed with an eligible tenant as long as they were living with the tenant as part of the household for a year prior to the date the CLSA was signed (23/1/2013).
- **Paragraph 5.15 was amended** to clarify that the Local Lettings Plan provision on non dependent children was a variation from Appendix 1 (Size of Homes set out in the Scheme of Allocation.)
- **Paragraph 5.13 was amended** to clarify alternative arrangements for larger households with a need greater than 4 bedrooms;
- **Paragraph 11 (Advanced Local Lettings Plan) was amended** in a number of places to clarify that it applied to eligible tenants;
- **Paragraph 11.2 was amended** to make it clear that the Local Lettings Plan provision for eligible tenants to choose leave the estate would apply in line with the overall phasing of the scheme;
- **Paragraph 11.3 was amended** to clarify the arrangements for eligible tenants choosing not to move to accommodation in the regeneration scheme site. They would be made up to 2 suitable offers elsewhere. (This is consistent with the Council's overall Scheme of Allocation.) If these were both declined, they would be made one offer only of a tenancy in the redevelopment area which met the Council's commitments. If 2 suitable offers were not made by the time the property was required for possession, the position would revert to the general Council commitments to eligible tenants, and in particular paragraph 5.18.
- **Paragraph 11.4 (h) was deleted** to remove the provision that preference would be given to the resident with the earlier date the Tenant Contract had been signed where all other factors were equal in prioritising requests for "out of phase" moves;
- **Paragraph 15 (Appeals, Information and Reviews) was amended to include a new paragraph 15.2.** This clarified that where an eligible tenant requested a formal review of an offer of accommodation on the regeneration site the property would normally and where practicable be held available while the review is undertaken;
- **Appendix 2 (Resident Homeowners) and Appendix 4 (Glossary; Effective Date) were amended** to clarify that the Council signed the CLSA with EC Properties LP