

Ongoing Consultation

Since our last newsletter there has been a tightening of the lockdown restrictions which has severely impacted on our ability to continue with the consultation to decide the preferred option for what happens to both of the blocks. There is little we can do about this, and you will have received a letter from One Housing to say that they are delaying further engagement work on the project until there has been some lifting of the restrictions.

It is the aim of everyone to get the face-to-face consultation up and running as soon as possible but, we're also aware that some residents find the ability to get involved through virtual means easier. With this in mind, future consultation will combine both methods to ensure that as many residents as possible are able to express their views.

Consultation over the past year has largely taken place through printed brochures and telephone interviews. Following the last round of consultation you should have received a letter confirming the details of your discussion, and the views you expressed, in order to ensure an accurate record is made.

If you have any concerns over the way in which your views have been recorded or if you haven't spoken to One Housing, please contact us so we can make your views known.

Remember, there are a number of options on the table for the future of the two blocks. One Housing have made it clear that it will be YOU – the residents, who decide what will be the chosen option.

The options include:

- Do nothing
- Refurbish the blocks
- Infill development
- Partial demolition and new build
- Full demolition and new build



Option Designs

The Resident Steering Group (RSG) met with the Architects (PRP) and the One Housing regeneration Team to discuss the proposed options.

It was a useful meeting where a number of questions were asked by the RSG and PRP were able to explain the reasons behind some of the design decisions they had taken.

These covered issues such as:

- why the design showed blocks facing in different direction to the current blocks?
- Could there be three new blocks instead of four? How would this affect proposed heights?
- Could the proposed blocks have external communal walkways (like Alice Shepherd House does now) rather than internal corridors?
- How far apart the blocks would be?
- What sort of green / play space is proposed?
- How much car parking will there be?



There was a good discussion around these issues and PRP explained why they had enclosed corridors generally have better energy efficiency and security but will look at if external walkways can be included in the design and report back to the RSG. They also said they'd look at if the four new blocks could be reduced to three and what this would mean in terms of how tall the blocks would need to be to make up for the 'lost' block. One Housing and PRP explained that whatever is designed must also meet the Council's planning policies and must build enough new homes so that some can be sold to fund the whole development (see 'Viability' below). As you might expect, much of the discussion was around what a new block could look like as this would see the greatest change to the area.

The Resident Steering Group

The Resident Steering Group have been continuing to meet throughout the project but, as the lockdown tightened, this has become more difficult. Our January meeting had to be cancelled but we hope it will continue to meet monthly in the future.

What makes a scheme 'viable'

You may have come across this term but what does it mean?

In deciding which schemes should be move forward the most 'viable' (or likely to succeed) 4 areas are taken into consideration.

- Popularity with residents
- Affordability for One Housing
- Likely to get planning permission from the Council
- Will bring economic benefits to the area (shops, jobs, community facilities, etc.)

The current designs have all made assumptions about the number of homes to be built, the likely price to be achieved for sales and how many will need to be sold in order to fund any of the options. Obviously the higher the cost of the project the more homes will have to be sold in order to fund it. Where there are no new homes it becomes whether or not One Housing can afford to fund the work?

These assumptions may need to change to make a scheme viable.

Timetable

This has now changed due to the lockdown restrictions.

However, it is unlikely that any ballot will be held until there can be some form of face-to-face meeting.

Let us know

We are interested in your views on the number of blocks that should be built if Option 6 (full redevelopment) were chosen?

- A. Four blocks (current design – below)
- B. Three (taller) blocks

IF the same number of homes (349) were to be built?



How you can contact us



Lee Page
Lead Independent
Advisor

Please call or email us with any questions or concerns you might have. If you call, we will get back to you within 48 hours. If you write or email, we will get back to you within 3 days.

Freephone 0800 731 16191619 (if you call from a mobile you may be charged, so please leave your name and number (and say you live at Alice Shepherd House or Oak House) and we will call you back.

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