Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Harriott, Apsley, Pattison Houses Regeneration Scheme

February 2024

1) Introduction

This document sets out the approach for stakeholder engagement for the proposed new development on the southern side of Stepney Way, which is known as Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses (HAP). It follows the principals of the borough wide SCI which guides teams on best practice methods of keeping residents informed of Council proposals, detailed below.

The HAP SCI documents the methods used to engage with our residents from summer 2019 when we held our first engagement event with residents to February 2024 when the project team held the final pre-planning consultation with residents for the amended scheme planned for submission in March 2024

Following submission of the original planning application in December 2021 the Council's new administration (May 2023) requested the location of the community building (be moved to accommodate a stand-alone structure to accommodate the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque, being relocated from the north of the site to the southeast corner of the site. This also allowed the design to be updated to reflect the emerging standards expected from the Building Safety Act 2022, with the inclusion of secondary means of escape for the 9 (of 12) buildings over 18m.

Consultations were held with the RCCM, HAP residents as well as residents of the wider area in respect of these changes to the design with the latest resident consultation held in February 2024.

The guiding principles in the pre-application phase of consultation are to:

- Inform HAP residents, those living in the surrounding area, councillors and relevant stakeholders of the proposals the Council would like to develop
- Understand what residents and stakeholders' views are, identifying concerns and opportunities and work with these throughout the scheme design where possible
- Demonstrate to residents how the team has incorporated their ideas where possible (see below).

The Council and project team have identified areas of engagement that will continue after the planning application. The team has sought to embody best practice methods, listed below and these are described in more detail throughout this report.

- Conduct appropriate engagement for the community.

- Conduct accessible and visible engagement.
- Use Plain English or otherwise have interpreters or means or interpretation for all.
- Explain clearly the scope of the consultation; what can and cannot be changed and explain why this is so.
- Analyse the results from consultations objectively.
- Publicise collective responses, with due regard to the Data Protection Act.
- Summarise how these responses have affected the proposals.
- Ensure feedback is available to the public and consultation participants.

The Project Team

The team that has brough the project forward over the last two years comprises:

- LBTH (the Applicant) – Officers from the Housing Regeneration & Capital Delivery Teams
- PRP Architects – appointed to the scheme in early 2019
- Renew Planning Ltd – Planning Consultants
- PPCR Resident Liaison – appointed in October 2019

Resident Ballot Requirement

From 18 July 2018, the Mayor of London requires any landlord seeking GLA funding for estate regeneration projects which involve the demolition of social homes to show that residents have supported their proposals through a ballot. This is to make sure that GLA funding only supports estate regeneration projects if residents have had a clear say in plans and support them going ahead. The requirement applies to projects that involve the demolition of any social homes and the construction of 150 or more homes of any tenure (further detail below).

Covid-19 Impact

The HAP project was impacted by the Covid-19 spread and the resulting lockdown. The actual lockdown day for LBTH was the 23rd of March 2020. This was a crucial time for the HAP programme as officers had intended to do door knocking and be visible on the estate to encourage residents to vote in the ballot that had been launched on the 16th of March 2020. However, when the voting options were considered (postal, telephone, online), it was realised that the options were accessible and not hindered by the lockdown imposed on the country. For the remainder of the post ballot (pre-planning) period digital communications became a prominent method of keeping in touch.

2. Planning Policy Framework and Local Context

National Context

The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021 and supersedes previous national planning guidance. The NPPF set out the

Government's planning policies and how they should be applied. It advises that local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the social, economic and environmental conditions of the area. The NPPF adds that "early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties" which has been distilled down to the London Plan for the greater London area. The NPPF and national planning legislation are clear the Local Plans should be created in consultation with the local community.

Regional/London Context

Collectively, the London Plan 2021, Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 form the statutory development plan against which the planning application must be determined. They all encourage the principles of inclusive stakeholder engagement in the community in respect of new development proposals.

Local Context /Borough-Wide Housing Need

Tower Hamlets population is expected to grow by 50,000 in the next ten years. There are more than 24,000 households on the housing register in need of an affordable home and over 2,000 households living in temporary accommodation. But each year, only 1,800 homes become available to let to applicants on the housing register. As per the Strategic Plan (2022-2026), the Council intends to work with developers and housing associations to deliver a minimum of 1000 social homes for rent per annum.

2) Summary of Proposed Development

The Current Site

The red line area shows the site as it is now. The three blocks on the south side of Stepney Way were built in the 1960's and sits opposite the Clichy estate which stretches to the north of Stepney Way; it is only the area shown below, which consists of the three blocks, Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses (HAP) and surrounding area.

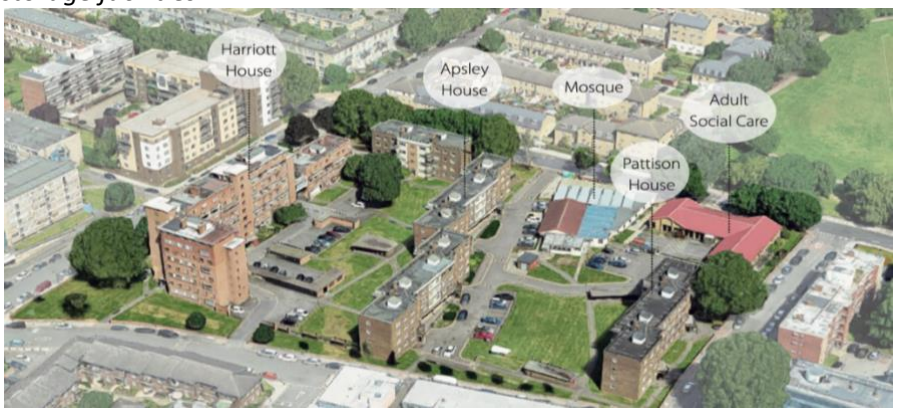
The current layout comprises Harriott House (largest) with 48 units, Apsley House (middle) 36 units and Pattison House (smallest) with 16 units.

The Proposal

The proposed site was identified as a site that can yield a higher density, better-quality homes with modern amenity space and landscaping designed for varied community use. As part of the redevelopment, the council will be providing replacement community facilities alongside new and improved landscaping and lighting, to benefit residents and the wider community. The new development will be entirely 'car free', which is part of the council's planning policy. Parking spaces will be available for adapted/wheelchair accessible homes only, enabling the creation of more green and open spaces. Secure cycle storage will be provided.

The proposed development description for the amended scheme is:

Redevelopment of the site comprising the demolition of existing buildings (including Harriot House, Apsley House, Pattison House, The Redcoat Centre and Redcoat Community Centre) to provide 407 residential units (Class C3) and 1,075m2 GIA of community use (Class E (e-f), Class F1 (e-f), Class F.2 (b)) provided across buildings ranging in height from 4-8 storeys, together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities".



Latest scheme design as shown to residents on the 22nd and 24th February 2024.

4. The Consultation Process

This section is divided into two; the first, pre ballot phase, describes the methods employed for both pre and post ballot and the second describes further consultation after the ballot results.

First Stage Consultation (pre-ballot)

Drop-in events

The launch of the engagement programme with residents began in July 2019 with a letter of introduction and an invitation to initial drop-in events at Stepney City Farm. It was very well attended by residents of the estate and by a local councillor in favour of the scheme. The first event elicited a lot of concern from residents who feared the proposed scheme would not be a positive change for the community; however, it must be noted that a significant number who attended did not express how they felt. This could be as a result of confidence to speak in front of others, intimidating experience for the first consultation etc; however, it gave the project team a baseline for starting communications with residents and identifying different approaches to ensure the scheme programme information could accessed by all estate residents.
Further meeting dates, resident attendees etc can be seen in the table below.

Newsletters
Newsletters were an important part of the initial consultation as it was a regular communication about the proposed scheme and helped build momentum and keep in touch. These were produced pre and post ballot as a standard of communication. The team produced regular newsletters throughout the process, and these were dispatched usually after a scheme consultation to summarise the latest design proposal, resident attendance, feedback on the scheme and an updated timeline for the project. In total six newsletters were sent with design, important project updates/timelines and project team details, with more planned for next year.

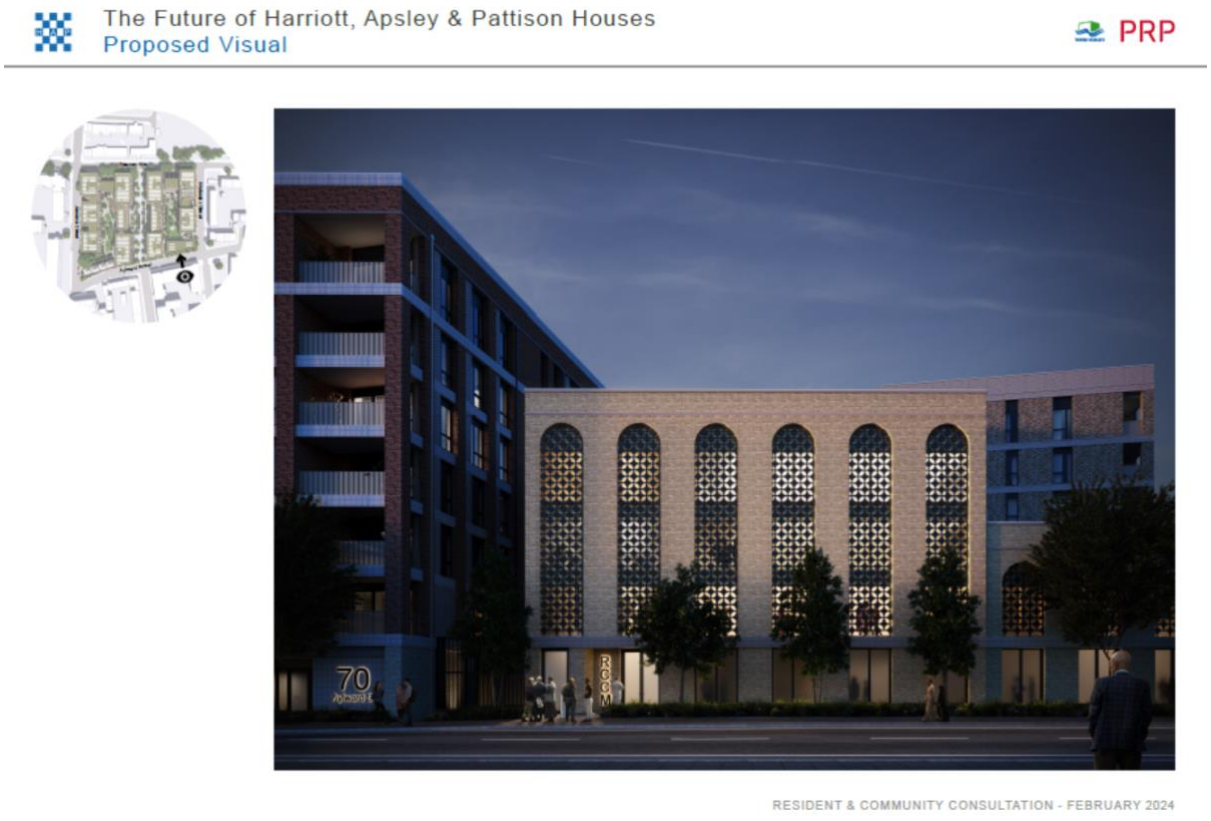
Website
The HAP website was created and is located at: Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses | Let's Talk Tower Hamlets. This proved a good resource during the lockdown period as residents could be easily directed to the page and encouraged to leave feedback. Indeed, the website came into its own when PRP created video presentations that received a very positive response from residents. Each presentation was approximately 15 minutes long, clearly demarcated designs and clear vocal descriptions and once they were presented at online consultation meetings, they were uploaded to the website.

Consultation Bus
The Tower Hamlets community bus was enlisted by the project team just before lockdown period in March 2020. The bus had two officers onboard from 10am – 4pm on each Tuesday and Thursday parked on a central location on the estate. Officers were on hand to talk through aspects of the proposed scheme that residents were being asked to vote on; namely if they were up for a

transformation through the process of regeneration of their estate and all that would entail. As it happens the bus consultation dates in March coincided with the start of lockdown which meant that our time on estate was cut short by one week.
NB It should be noted at this point that some officers speak Bengali and are available at each event to help with interpretation. In fact, all materials, letters, newsletters etc could be translated if needed into a number of other languages and all communication came with details of how this could be accessed.

Mosque
The community building in the approved scheme is a single storey building located under a residential building for delivery in the first phase of build. LBTH officers had many meetings with the Redcoat Community Centre (RCCM) Mosque members to discuss what the reprovision of the space might look like. There were negotiations ongoing for nearly a year to agree a definitive plan on space requirements including the height of the ceilings in the building.

However, in the summer of 2022 the mayors requested that a standalone mosque design should be explored. Three design options were explored looking at potential locations, and the final design below to be constructed in the South-East corner of the site was consulted upon with the RCCM and will be submitted as part of the planning application.



Resident's Panel
It's been recognised for some time on regeneration schemes that convening resident steering groups or panels are a best practice approach to estate representation, although residents will sometimes be cautious about 'representing' others or having influence more than non-engaged residents. However, the recruitment process brought forward up to sixteen people initially with a pretty even split of

leaseholders and tenants. As time moved on six people decided they could no longer commit, so the panel comprises of eleven residents who have been with us since October 2019.

The inaugural meeting comprised the residents and officers from both the Council and PRP. The meeting focussed on what the team needed from residents, essentially time, interest and input.

The first task for the panel was to take part in the interview process to appoint an Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Association. The Council tendered for the work and three organisations were shortlisted for interview. One organisation pulled out of the process leaving two organisations that attended. The residents panel were invited to interview the prospective organisation. For this we needed the following:

- Four volunteers to ask one question each
- Work with the residents to compile questions
- Advise on how to score each organisation on each question
- Discuss score, interview process and come to a decision on the organisation to appoint

PPCR was the successful organisation. They chair the panel meetings, attend consultation events, have independent communication with residents and in general support mutual and open communication between the residents and the project team. Residents understand that the ITLA can support them with their experience working on other schemes, in different boroughs and will readily offer this up to help discussions. They organised a RIBA training session to further help the panel understand the approach and steps involved and highlighted where we were at and how we would proceed on the scheme.

Below are some reasons why panel members got involved…

I joined the HAP Residents' Panel because I want to make a difference and be part of something that helps our community flourish.

I am passionate about our estate, as it is the place, I can truly call home.

It is our goal to influence positive change within the estate and the community, and to ensure that the future of our estate is resident focussed and that our voices are heard.

I want to be part of the team that contributes to improving our estate, but also want to ensure that the views and needs of residents are considered and put first.

Landlord Offer

To gain approval from the GLA to go ahead with balloting of the estate for the purpose of regeneration the Council must produce a comprehensive 'Landlord Offer' document. This document is key in the process as it tells everyone from the residents to the GLA what is proposed. The Landlord Offer document must be easily accessible. Offer documents must contain sufficient information for eligible residents to make an informed decision about the future of their estate. As a minimum, the Landlord Offer must include the following:

- The broad vision, priorities and objectives for the estate regeneration, including information on:
- Design principles of the proposed estate regeneration.
- Estimated overall number of new homes.

- Future tenure mix.
- Proposed associated social infrastructure.
- Details of the full right to return or remain for social tenants living in homes that are to be demolished.
- Details of the offer for leaseholders and freeholders of homes that are to be demolished. Commitments relating to ongoing open and transparent consultation and engagement.

The landlord document consultation started soon after the ITLA was appointed. As described above PPCR was appointed by the resident's panel. There were many questions from the panel and meetings were held to give residents' independent advice on what the draft offer entailed. The document went through a number of iterations in order for residents to feel they could properly contribute with the support of the independent advisors; meetings were held without the Council or project team in attendance in order to give assurance to residents that their views could be considered in a meaningful and considered way. Responses to their opinions were on the agenda for the monthly/six weekly meetings with the resident's panel. The main crux of queries brought up the mainly leasehold members of the panel described below.

Tenant offer: the tenant offer is for Council tenants who have lived on the estate for 12 months or longer, so will have a right to a new property at a 'social rent' level and are eligible for compensation in the form of home loss payments and disturbance allowance. Separate booklets were printed to explain what each tenures offer was entitled to.

Leasehold offer: the leasehold offer was the most queried and discussed, quite naturally. Debate and discussion were had about the need for leaseholders to put the whole of their home loss payment into the scheme as well as the full market value of their current homes. A way forward was agreed and documented in the leasehold offer sent to each leasehold household.

Further discussions were had about 'hidden' households; families who typically had adult family members with their own families, and members of the family over 18 years of age who had registered on the Council's waiting list one year prior to the ballot so long as they were in housing need. The Council engaged on families in this situation on a 1:2:1 basis so that all household needs were understood.

Resident Ballot

The Council was keen to use best practice methods developed by the Greater London Authority (GLA) to allow residents to have a genuine say over where the live now and what they would want for the future for their estate. The approach also demonstrates to the GLA that a scheme is compliant for the purposes of future funding applications.

"The Mayor's vision for estate regeneration in London.

The core of the Mayor's vision for estate regeneration in London is to deliver better homes and communities for local people. To underpin this vision, he believes any proposals should include the right to return or remain for social tenants, and a fair deal for leaseholders and freeholders. The Mayor also wishes to see the level of affordable housing – particularly homes where rents are based on social rent levels – maintained and, wherever possible, increased through estate regeneration schemes. He believes plans must be developed through full and transparent consultation and resident involvement."

The council employed Civica Election Services (CES) to administer the ballot. CES is an independent service who wholly support the democratic approach to the ballot process. They managed the confidential data of those who were eligible to vote, including writing to households explaining their role and giving those with eligibility rights the options to vote, which included postal, online and by

telephone. As mentioned earlier it was just at this time that the national lockdown was imposed. The options of voting proved very beneficial to the circumstances as everyone could vote without leaving their homes and residents did so in very high numbers, voting overwhelmingly for regeneration.

Table 1 – Resident Consultation & Engagement Programme

Consultation Date	Purpose	Attendance
10th & 13th July 2019	Initial design consultation with local residents.	70
28th & 31st August 2019	Design consultation	45
25th September 2019	Women's 'session	15
26th September 2019	Old People & Vulnerable Adults	9
28th September 2019	All resident's consultation	15
2nd & 7th November 2019	Residents' feedback on infill or regeneration as preference	32
5th & 7th December 2019	Design consultation	33
3rd,5th, 10th, 12th, 17th and 19th March 2020	Ballot engagement events (bus)	20
April 2020	Ballot	
	Covid Lockdown	
9th & 12th September 2020	Design consultation	40
1st, 3rd & 5th December 2020	Design consultation	22
18th & 20th March 2021	Online consultation	25
20th & 22nd May 2021	Online consultation – first face to face consultation since the pandemic	34
22nd & 24th July 2021	Children's event – play & landscape	16
30th September & 2nd October 2021	Planning submission design exhibition	37
3rd & 5th February 2022	Design Consultation	22
22nd & 24th June 2023	Revised Mosque Design - 1	18
6th & 8th July 2023	Wider estate mosque relocation design	16
14th & 16th December 2023	Design consultation	19
22nd & 24th February 2024	Final Design consultation	25

Second Stage (Post Ballot Consultation)

Ongoing Consultation to December 2021

Post ballot consultation employed all methods as previously described. The estate comprises of one hundred homes so over the last three years of engagement, the team has got to know residents a lot better, and this has enhanced trust between the project team and residents.

Just after the ballot results were known it gave the green light for the scheme design to become more detailed. There was a natural hiatus within the scheme while PRP started to work on the scheme which did concern some residents. However, once there was further work on design the team planned the first estate-wide online consultation in September 2020. To support the online design consultation officers hand delivered invite letters and print outs of what was going to be presented at the online meetings. Further online consultations continued until May 2021 when the team could hold events outside on the estate.

Newsletters continued to be sent as designs evolved, along with an updated timeline and project officers' details. A newsletter describing the overall scheme was sent to the wider Stepney area to keep residents informed. It was not surprising that the only feedback and one of concern was the impact of a 'car free' scheme. This is an issue London wide as boroughs have implemented 'car free' policies to support carbon reduction and parking spaces are reduced.

The website has been updated with the designs submitted for planning. Any further information other than design changes will continue to be uploaded as the site is kept up to date by the team.

HAP resident panel meetings continued and indeed increased in late autumn 2020 up to early spring 2021 as the pace of design changes were happening more frequently.

In August 2021 a special event was held for children on the estate. This was to encourage them to talk about what play equipment and other family friendly designs they would like to see. The landscape architects produced colourful images along with choices of play equipment that they could choose from. They were encouraged to draw their favourite outdoor plant, activity, animal etc and a prize was given to the winner. These ideas and suggestions will be incorporated within the landscape design.

The last estate wide consultation before planning submission took place on the estate. The project team put extra effort into inviting residents through hand delivered invites and door knocking to encourage residents to attend and explaining why this particular event was so important for everyone. Resident panel members were asked to come along and encourage their neighbours. A booklet was produced by PRP to easily demonstrate provision of the new homes, including clear layouts and colour coding for ease of identifying different size layouts. The big hit on the day was the inclusion of a QR code that displayed a 3D effect of the living space.

Revised Scheme Consultation December 2021 – March 2024

However, in the summer of 2022 the mayors requested that a standalone mosque design should be explored. Three design options were explored looking at potential locations, and the final design below to be constructed in the South-East corner of the site was consulted upon with the RCCM and will be submitted as part of the planning application.

Since the revised scheme there has been a lot of communication with the local and surrounding residents. The Redcoat Mosque and Community Centre was to be relocated into a purpose-built facility. Also, with the government's changes to the inclusion of a second staircase to buildings which are taller than 18 Metres meant the scheme required a re-design. All of this meant that we had to update and keep residents informed. This was done through newsletters, update to the webpage and consultations. The consultations were used to inform all residents on the changes made to the scheme. The consultations were all well attended and received mixed comments which was captured and formed part of the new designs.
Resident Panel meetings continued at two monthly intervals. The panel meetings proved an invaluable in advising the council on scheme design, internal design and general feedback on council communications concerning the buy-back scheme, decant letters etc.

Key Resident Influences on the Scheme

Below is a summary of particular areas of positive engagement and the building of trust with residents and the project team but particularly with building trust with the Council. These are demonstrated visually within PRP's 'Community Engagement' submission.

Tall building: the first phase initial designs had an 11-storey block in the northeast corner of the site. Residents were unsure about such a tall building in the area; it was thought that it was too much like a tower block and would impose on the new estate. In addition, the 'Tall Building' policy which guides on the height of buildings in the Stepney area had to be adhered to. It is worth mentioning that a lot of debate was had with the resident panel on the height of this block in particular; from the project team point of view at that time it appeared to help with reducing the scheme phasing which would ultimately mean all residents could move in the first phase, while reduced phasing would mean less construction disruption. Panel members came to understand how a taller building would in fact help lessen disruption, but policy dictated otherwise; all this discussion culminated in increasing trust between the team, testing design with residents and panel members. It helped demonstrate a transparent and honest approach to why and when things might work and why they may have to change.

Landscaping: ASB is an issue on the estate at the moment. The estate is open and allows for people and to gather and cause noise and intimidation in the open areas. This has been a consistent message throughout communications with residents. Through this input at consultation and from the residents panel the design has developed, keeping the enlarged communal open spaces secure. The bigger communal landscape has proved very popular with residents.

In the summer of 2021, the team held an event specifically focussed on children's input as described above. Their chosen play equipment will feature on the new estate.

Internal layouts: residents were keen to see that they had options around open plan kitchen/diners or separate spaces as per occupants needs. The design team had lots of communication to ensure that needs were met. As mentioned already residents were pleased to see an updated easy to read new layout booklet that was distributed at the last pre planning consultation.

Townhouses: the presentation of the townhouse design was not a popular option as residents felt that they were not in keeping with housing typologies that were being proposed elsewhere on the site. These were eventually redesigned to be double stacked maisonettes which are more in-keeping with the overall design of the existing estate.

Scheme phasing: scheme phasing has been a subject that arose early on with consultation, particularly with the residents panel who were the representative group for the wider estate. Leaseholders, appreciably, had a concern that their future investment was where they could choose within the new estate design and particularly because they will be moving into the first phase. They queried other phase outline proposed designs before the ballot. However, consultation with the panel and the wider estate gave the project team enough feedback to realise that the majority of residents preferred a reduced construction/phasing over five and a half to six years rather than phasing over eight years. This means less choice but equally less disruption and the leasehold offer has been recognised as a secure way forward for those who wish to remain. In addition, through in-depth consultation it meant that additional homes of the right typology (e.g. maisonettes, adaptable homes on the first floor etc;) were ensured for residents who wanted to stay on the estate.

Mosque Negotiations: Between April 2019 and October 2021 more than 15 meetings took place with the project team and the committee of the RCCM. The introductory meeting was with the mayor and subsequent meetings discussed their current occupancy needs and lease costs.

As mentioned previously the design and the height, in particular, were part of the negotiations. The ceiling height originally designed was 3.5m but RCCM members wanted 5.5m; after mayoral consultation it was agreed that the height should be 4m.

Revised Scheme Consultation December 2021 – February 2024

Since the revised scheme to provide a stand-alone 3 storey facility there has been a lot of communication with HAP residents with consultations also taking place with the surrounding neighbours. The RCCM were consulted on the proposed layout and specification and their feedback fed into the design. Also, with the government's changes to the inclusion of a second staircase to buildings which are taller than 18 Metres meant the residential scheme required a further re-design. Consultations were held to inform and obtain feedback from HAP residents and surrounding neighbours about the changes to the design particularly in respect of the new mosque location and changes to Block B2 facade where the community space was previously located on the ground floor. This was done through newsletters, updates to the webpage and face to face consultations. The consultations were all well attended and received mixed comments which was captured and formed part of the new designs.

Post Planning and Further Engagement

Post planning will look to imbed the discussions, negotiations and agreed way forward that has been achieved to date. As described above the residents panel is an established link of mixed tenures and from an initial starting point of 16 residents two years ago, there is now a regular group of eleven who attend regularly. A programme of meetings will be set up so that momentum is not lost within the hiatus of the planning decision time frame. The negotiations with the RCCM are ongoing throughout the planning consideration period and beyond.

More detailed consultations in the form of 1:2:1's with households will start in earnest. These will include home visits by a member of the project team and an officer from THH. All residents have had at least one home visit to understand their needs and potential needs in the future. The visits to date have brought all records up to date as far as possible in order for the design team to finalise a scheme to submit for planning. However, the meetings will continue in order to establish ongoing financial and personal situation of residents. It is recognised that homes and families will change and evolve, and the Council and project team will constantly stay in touch with residents to find solutions to overcrowding, assess for provision of aids and adaptations, assess those with a need for ground floor homes.

Leasehold engagement has commenced as the Council 'buy back' programme started in June 2023. These negotiations have taken place through meeting in residents' homes, in the Council offices, online and by telephone.

Contractor Procurement: the project team and the Council are keen to keep the residents panel working with us during and after the planning submission and once works begin in 2024, right through to when all residents are in their new homes.

- Members of the Panel will be invited to be part of selection process of the main contractor, with a focus on the quality sections of the evaluation.
- Training will be provided to enable the Panel to know what to look for in a bid in terms of quality and how to score accordingly.

Once a developer has been awarded the contract there will be a Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) onsite who residents will be able to contact day to day. The officer will be responsible for building good relations on the estate, report on their contact with residents, report concerns or issues, amongst a host of other engagement activities for the duration of the programme.

The project team will continue to engage with the community and will constantly look for methods to keep up the momentum and rapport that's developed over the previous two years. The next newsletter has already been planned and will be distributed before Christmas 2021.

Summary and Conclusions

The main stakeholders for the scheme were residents of the estate and the Mosque committee. Non-resident leaseholders were kept up to date on progress of the evolving designs and local Council members were update with regular briefings. A wider neighbourhood engagement was held online earlier in 2020 and at points where there has been a significant change in the design such as the introduction of the stand-alone mosque ensuring the wider communities were kept informed of the proposed plans for the HAP area.

The above methods were engaged and overall, the turnout of residents was high, helped with door knocking to encourage all to attend particularly as the scheme was nearing a fixed design just before the planning submission.

The Statement of Community Involvement demonstrates methods used including auxiliary support such as interpretation, translation, ensuring accessibility whether through the introduction of online consultation or practical access for the physical needs of residents.

As described above engagement with all stakeholders happened in the pre-planning phase of the scheme. This has set the precedent for more detailed engagement in the future.

ENDS