

Ekin Road Liaison Group Meeting – Wednesday 6th December 5.30pm to 6.30pm

Notes

Staff Attendees:

Ben Binns (BB), Interim Assistant Director, Development
Jim Pollard (JP), Senior Housing Development Manager
Andrew Johnson (AJ), Regeneration Manager
Molly Savino (MS), Development Officer
Nathan Chapman (NC), Housing Officer
Simon Schofield (SS), Associate Director from Marengo Communications

Councillor Attendees:

Exec Cllr Gerri Bird (Cllr GB)
Exec Cllr Rachel Wade (Cllr RW)
Cllr Naomi Bennett (Cllr NB)

Welcome (BB):

The meeting was well attended with around 20 residents present. BB introduced staff and welcomed introductions from the attendees reminding all treat each other with respect to courtesy. All questions will be answered and attendees to ask questions in a courteous way.

Simon Schofield, Associate Director from Marengo Communications

Simon delivered a presentation which shared the key findings from the recent resident survey. Marengo Communications is a company that specialises in carrying out public consultations on development and regeneration projects and was appointed by JLL to carry out an independent survey. Marengo's role was to listen to residents and report the views expressed to JLL and the Council, they have no policy agenda or preferences.

This survey aimed to reach as many residents in as many ways as possible. They canvassed the estate over a four-week period to encourage participation and answer questions. They also identified people that needed 1:1 meetings with Council officers. In total, valid surveys were received from 63 households. This represents a high response rate, capturing the views of over half of the estate. The final report can be found [here](#).

2x graphs in the report currently have incorrect figures but were corrected for the presentation and an addendum will be provided to clarify the errors.

The graph on slide 3 of the presentation shows that the most common issues experienced by residents concern personal safety, mould/condensation and temperature issues. Anecdotally, from doorstep conversations and comments made on the survey, these issues included crime and anti-social behaviour, conflicts with neighbours, black mould, high energy bills and issues keeping properties warm and well ventilated.

Slide 4 related to the question regarding issues residents were experiencing that impacted their mental health and wellbeing. Please refer to Question 4 within the survey report.

Slide 5 showed a further graph depicting residents' priorities which included improving sustainability, increasing the quality of accommodation and reducing crime and ASB.

Question 7 of the survey was another free-text question to allow residents to tell us about their needs in their own words. Please refer to Question 7 within the survey report.

Question 8 asked residents whether they supported the principle of redeveloping the estate. Responses are broken down by tenure type on a bar graph, including Council tenants, leaseholders, freeholders, and temporary accommodation. 57% of residents responded “yes”, including a majority of leaseholders and council tenants. 41% responded “no”, including a majority of freeholders. A request has been made to produce this data broken down by property type, including houses, maisonettes, bungalows, and flats. We are happy to produce this data and share it publicly and it will also be included in the addendum updating the report subject to GDPR considerations.

Question 9 asked residents which of the proposed redevelopment options on the table (complete or partial redevelopment) they preferred. The questions were phrased this way to allow those who did not support redevelopment to express a preference in the event that refurbishment was deemed not to be feasible. Just under half of respondents supported the complete redevelopment option. Roughly a quarter supported the partial redevelopment option, and another quarter did not express a preference.

Options Appraisal Update (JP):

Jim Pollard presented the resident engagement timeline which can be found [here](#). This timeline sets out that the survey has now completed and JLL continue their work on the Options Appraisal final report. The survey is important to the process but there are lots of considerations to take into account. The 3x options previously set out will continue to be reviewed by JLL and further information will be shared at the next Liaison Group meeting in March. Further consultation exercises will take place in March and April 2024.

Regeneration – What it means for residents (AJ):

Andrew Johnson presented a slide which summarises the rights of tenants and homeowners if relocation was required. AJ reminded the group that individual, confidential appointments are available upon request to discuss any personal circumstances. Please ring or email the team if this is of interested.

Tenants would be given the highest banding on Home-Link. An initial payment of £1,250 paid to the tenants to help with moving costs. Other incidental costs could also be covered by the Council. A further compensation payment of £8,100 would also be paid.

Homeowners would benefit from an independent market valuation of the property. If the homeowner doesn't agree, a second valuation can be arranged and if there is still no agreement, a valuation will be arranged by a district valuer. Compensation would be payable at 10% of the property value for resident homeowner. Further payments are made to cover legal costs, stamp duty land tax, mortgage redemptions fees and other moving costs. The full Council's Regeneration policy can be found [here](#).

Website Update (AJ):

The website was created prior to the first consultation in 2022, since then a lot of information has been added and there has been a recent upgrade to ensure the website is easy to navigate. The team welcome any suggestions to this new layout.

Questions (chaired by BB):

For clarity and transparency, it was noted, again, that the council will be issuing an addendum to the Survey Report which will include:

1. Change made to the conclusion due to a typo
2. Correction to one of the graphs due to an error as stated above
3. Further information on the breakdown of data as requested by a resident as stated above and subject to GDPR considerations.

Resident: On question 9, some residents didn't answer because they didn't think they had to. Does this result represent the estate?

Response: (SS) Some that said no to redevelopment, did also want to indicate which redevelopment option they would prefer and some chose not to which was also fine. This question does not indicate what their first choice was.

Resident: For those that have spent a lot on their home, would the compensation payment be the same?

Response: (AJ) Please book in a confidential appointment to discuss personal circumstances

Resident: The survey needs to be clear that the responses represent households and not 'residents'

Resident: The results will favour flats as there are more flats than houses

Response: (SS) The survey was one per household, there is also a breakdown in the charts. (MS) Noted that JLL will have the raw data and will know the breakdown between house type.

Resident: Redevelopment needs to happen, there are properties with black mould and damp, the gas and electricity bills are high. An estimate was done which showed that houses may pay about £260 per month on energy bills, whilst a flat pays £460 per month. Something needs to be done before it is too late. There is a resident present with children in a flat that has black mould.

Another resident noted that they have been coughing since living in their property. Another resident noted that they have reported this to the Council and nothing was done. The cavity wall insulation hasn't been done.

Response: (BB) Please report this to the Council, this is something we are aware of and is being reviewed.

(JP) Added that these comments remind us why we are all here. We are looking into the cavity wall insulation opportunities and have already found that some cavity spaces are narrow. The challenge is to find the right solution for the majority of the estate. We acknowledge this means going through another winter before a decision is made.

Resident: Was this survey a vote?

Response: (SS) No, this is a survey, not a referendum – it was designed to give an idea of where people are leaning

Resident: There is obviously substandard living for some on the estate whereas the house dwellers want to stay. How will this be considered?

Response: This is a question for JLL which will be addressed in their report. They now have all the raw data from the survey and feedback received during canvassing.

Resident: When the decision is made, how will people be decanted? Will East Barnwell development be an option?

Response: (AJ) Yes, other new developments may be an option. It will be a choice-led process for residents' and they will be able to bid on new properties as well as older Council stock that is available at the time. There may be the option to bid on homes outside of the City boundary but may require a local connection to that area and will be at the discretion of that Council.

(Cllr NB): Some comments from individuals that couldn't attend the meeting. Will there be phases or stages to redevelopment? Some people are desperate to move and will want to know when they can.

Response: (AJ) We still need to review the phases and consider potential strain on the housing register.

(Cllr NB): Some residents suffer from Asthma and COPD They will want to know if they can move in the first tranche or will need to wait. We are aware of a household with a new born baby and residents whose health has been impacted by mould.

Response: (JP) JLL will consider all of this and will review the potential phasing plan.

Resident: Can the residents liaise directly with JLL prior to the preferred option report being released?

Response: (BB) There may be chance to liaise directly with JLL in the next Liaison Group meeting in March 2024. Marengo have managed communications on JLL's behalf.

(JP) We've had to consider how all views are fed back fairly. JLL will not want to only respond to the most vociferous voices.

A concern was raised by a resident at the meeting about a person's inappropriate behaviour towards other residents when undertaking Save Ekin Road petitions on the estate. All residents are reminded to report any unusual or concerning behaviour.

(Cllr GB) added that community safety comes first and advised the resident with concerns to email her directly about these accusations.

Resident: There is tension on the estate between residents. How will the Council alleviate this tension?

Response: (BB) There has been a lot of engagement so far, this will continue. We encourage anybody with concerns or questions to speak with the Council officers.

(Cllr RW): All residents are asked how can this move forward in a positive way – please discuss this amongst yourselves.

(Cllr NB): Ward councillors have met the police about reported ASB and drug dealing in the area.

Meeting closed at approx.. 6.40pm