

<b>Item No. 5</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date: 3 December 2021</b>	<b>Decision Taker:</b>
<b>Report title:</b>		New council homes on existing estates — Kingston Estate	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		North Walworth	
<b>From:</b>		Stuart Davis, Director of New Homes, Housing and Modernisation	

1. The New Homes programme was originally established in January 2015 when the council agreed its new long-term housing strategy for the borough including specific commitments to increase housing supply, this included building 11,000 new council homes for social rent by 2043.
2. The council's vision for housing in the borough is to provide a fairer future for all by developing new high quality council homes and provide affordable housing that addresses the deficit in truly affordable housing being delivered in the private sector. The New Homes programme embodies the councils mission through four key principles:
  - The Council will use every tool at our disposal to increase the supply of all kinds of homes across Southwark
  - The Council will demand the highest standard of quality, making Southwark a place where you will not know whether you are visiting homes in private, housing association or council ownership.
  - The council will support and encourage all residents to take pride and responsibility in their homes and local areas
  - The council will help vulnerable individuals and families to meet their housing needs and live as independently as possible

### **Context: Kingston Estate**

3. The Kingston Estate site currently comprises of estate amenity land and 8 lock up garages. It is part of the larger Nelson, Portland and Kingston estate and is located within the North Walworth ward. There are three blocks within the Kingston estate – Everett House, Marshall House and Richmond House, totalling 89 homes. A site map has been provided.
4. As part of the new homes proposal, the existing garages will be demolished to make way for 8 new high quality council homes for local people, improved landscaping, seating within the new communal gardens, raised beds for growing vegetables and a new children's play area
5. Under our current local lettings policy, at least 50% of these new council homes will be let to residents in housing need in the immediate area. However as part of the review of the allocation policy, an increase to 100% of new council homes let to local residents is being

considered. The new homes will be built in accordance with the councils' New Homes Design Standards and provide high quality, energy efficient homes.

6. At present the residents in the existing council owned blocks who are in housing need are eligible for at least 50% nominations in the new block thus maintaining the existing sense of community.

The table below sets out the proposed unit numbers for the new development

Unit Type	Number of Units	Area
1b2p Flat	1	61.9
1b2p Maisonette	2	52.7
2b3p Flat	2	67.6
2b3p Maisonette	1	76.8
2b3p Maisonette	2	75
	8	

### **Charter of Principles: Consultation Process and Principles**

7. In November 2014, Cabinet agreed the Charter of Principles , which outlined the framework for the consultation with residents for schemes within the 11,000 homes programme
8. The Charter of Principles made six key pledges;
  - How we will work with you on developing the principles for housing
  - investment and renewal of our estates
  - How we will work with you on the development of the new homes on your estate
  - How we will involve you in ensuring that the new homes are delivered to a high standard
  - Giving you a real say in how the new homes are managed
  - We will demand high standards for the quality and affordability of new homes
  - Your housing options if you are affected by redevelopment of your estate
9. Then in September 2017, the then deputy leader and cabinet member for housing received a report reviewing the Charter of Principles. The report noted the success of the council's engagement from tenants and leaseholders and also suggested changes to the way the council delivers community engagement on the new homes programme. These included preparing engagement plans and use of the consultation hub.
10. In June 2020, the then cabinet member for social regeneration, great estates and new council homes approved a further review of the consultation process for New Homes schemes. Most notably, approved interim modifications to the engagement process whilst government restrictions on social distancing were applied. Noting the use of the Consultation Hub and broadening the range of consultation and engagement tools. Principally this involved moving to on-line consultation, through use of Zoom or MS Teams rather than face – face consultation.

### **Initial Consultation**

11. Prior to the inclusion of the scheme within the New Homes Programme, initial consultation was carried out to the Nelson, Portland and Kingston T&RA and local residents.
12. On the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the New Homes Team attended the Nelson, Portland and Kingston T&RA meeting. The residents that live in the three blocks on the Kingston Estate were not active members of the T&RA and did not attend the T&RA meeting. Overall, the residents at the meeting were in support of the scheme.
13. Although there was no specific feedback on the proposed development, the following issues were raised at the meeting:
  - 13.1. Issues of security, anti-social behaviour
  - 13.2. Problems with parking
  - 13.3. Improved refuse strategy
14. In regards to potential wider estate improvement, some residents mentioned:
  - 14.1. Door entry system for existing blocks.
  - 14.2. Restricted access to the car park and improved security in the area
  - 14.3. A better interaction with the East Street Market in terms of the waste strategy
15. Following the T&RA meeting a letter was hand delivered to all the residents of the three blocks on the Kingston Estate and a copy of the letter provided to the Chair of the T&RA. Residents on the estate were provided with a link to the Consultation Hub and given the opportunity to respond to a survey between 25 October to 11 November 2019. Two residents within the three blocks on the Kingston Estate responded to the survey hub questionnaire.
16. On the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019 there was an estate walk about of the Kingston Estate, Nelson and Portland areas with a member of the T&RA, and two members of the new homes team. Ward councillors were invited to the walkabout but were unable to attend.
17. The then cabinet member for social regeneration, great estates and new council homes in December 2019 approved the inclusion of this scheme along with 11 others in the New Homes programme.

### **Kingston Estate Consultation**

18. Following IDM approval in December 2019, residents within a 100m radius of the site were advised the scheme would be taken forward following IDM approval. The first resident meeting took place on 8 October 2020, following appointment of architects for the scheme. The meeting was attended by 2 residents, one LBS and another non LBS resident. We received interest from 5 residents to join the Project Group. 1 resident was from Aylesbury Estate, 1 from East Street Estate, 2 from Everett House, 1 from an unidentified address.
19. New Homes Team on the Kingston estate project worked with the local T&RA to develop the local engagement strategy. The T&RA on the Kingston estate represented the whole area and were invited to all consultation events.
20. . The first Project Group meeting was held on 15 December 2020, and was attended by 2 Project Group members. One attendee was from Everett House and second attendee was a non-LBS resident. A presentation was given at the Project Group (Appendix 2) which outlined the proposals for the new homes on the Kingston Estate. Residents were

concerned about improving the security of the existing estate. Their feedback was captured.

21. A Resident Group Meeting was held on the 1 February 2021 with the aim of presenting the design options. The presentation showed the proposed strategic approach, scale and potential impact on the estate. The agenda included a general discussion, feedback from residents and an opportunity to agree the priorities. The event did not have any attendees on the day.
22. Due to the low engagement from residents on the estate and wider community, the Project Group was disbanded with the aim of continuing more targeted consultation to build trust among residents. We used the digital platform Common Place to ensure residents were kept informed about how the proposals were developing and allowing opportunity for further feedback. In addition, the New Homes Team wrote to all residents and created bite-size consultation boards providing an update on the scheme on 13 April 2021, Appendix 3
23. In addition two consultation boards were erected on the estate on 23 April 2021 inviting comments. One board was located on the amenity land where the proposed development would be located and the second board at the entrance of the estate on East Street.
24. At a key milestone in the design development residents were invited to a virtual drop-in event via a newsletter and invitation which was sent to residents on 5 April 2021. A day before the virtual event a New Homes Project Officer walked around the estate handing out flyers and encouraging residents to attend the virtual event on 25 May 2021
25. The virtual event took place on 25 May 2021. Despite the newsletter, posted letter and New Homes Project Officer walking the estate handing out flyers no residents attended. Participation in Kinglake Estate drop-ins were poor and although residents nearby expressed an interest in belonging to a project group, no one turned up to the meetings held in May 2021.
26. A Ward Councillors Briefing was held on 26 June 2021, where Councillors shown the proposed scheme and briefed on the resident consultation to date.
27. To explain how the proposals had evolved to reflect residents' views, an open-air event was held on Kingston Estate on 27 July 2021. Approximately 20 residents visited the stand and shared their concerns about the proposed development. The overwhelming feedback from the residents was to 'save our green space'. The majority of those residents attending expressed concern about the proposed development and in particular about the proposed loss of green space would have an impact on the estate. However, four residents supported the development and said there is overcrowding and homelessness that are issues that can be resolved with new homes and another said that it should be the right of every citizen to have an affordable place to live.
28. Below is a table showing how officers addressed the concerns raised by residents throughout the consultation process :

You said	We did...
<b>Redesign the residents bin areas</b> The current bin area is overflowing and untidy. <b>Minimise opportunities for fly tipping.</b>	We are relocating the existing refuse and recycling bins to an area in the estate courtyard agreed

The current bin area attracts people to dump the refuse outside of the bins.	during Project group meetings
<b>Provide recycling bins</b> - Residents would like to recycle their food waste as there is no facility in place. Suggestion to also include a bin for clothing and materials	The improved bin enclosure will include adequate recycling bins and allocation for bulk waste for the estate.
<b>Green Space</b> This has the potential to introduce diverse planting (for example planting fruit trees) and biodiversity in the area.	We have provided new trees and increased planting to the corner landscape adjacent the new build and to the existing estate courtyard
<b>Layout of play space</b> - Review the current layout the play space to ensure that the amenity is utilised to its best potential. <b>Update existing play equipment</b> - The current play equipment is well used by the residents and its currently outdated and worn.	We will improve the existing play within the estate

### Commonplace & Consultation Hub (estate websites)

29. An initial questionnaire was made available to residents on the Consultation Hub on 25 October 2019.
30. Common place was then used as the main forum, the Kingston Estate common place site is : <https://kingstonestate.commonplace.is/>

### Current Position & Next Steps

31. On Tuesday 16 November 2021, the Kingston Estate planning application was presented at the Southwark Planning Committee. Two residents from the estate attended the Planning Committee meeting to voice their concerns and objected to the scheme. During the proceedings the committee rigorously tested and challenged all aspect of the consultation with Cllr Seaton confirming that he too had visited the estate and door knocked homes and also received little engagement. The view of the committee was that we had fulfilled our obligations in terms of consultation. Considering all the aspects of the scheme, members of the committee approved the planning application for 8 new council homes.
32. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021, a newsletter was issued to all residents of the estate notifying them of the successful planning application and the Councils commitment to provide more quality council homes across the borough. The newsletter confirmed the pledge to continue resident consultation on the potential need for a door entry systems to the existing estate. Appendix 4.
33. Acknowledging the concerns of resident about the proposed scheme, an Independent Tenants and Residents Advisor (ITRA) has been appointed to help with the consultation

process. On 1st December 2021 a letter was sent to all residents on the estate confirmed the appointment of the ITRA and they will contact residents in the New Year to discuss how the council can meet resident's needs and ensure residents comments are reflected in the scheme as it develops.

34. In addition a letter was sent to one of the residents that attended the planning committee thanking them for their attendance and proposing to meet with them in the New Year to discuss their ongoing concerns about the development.
35. A resident engagement event will be held in the New Year for all the resident on the estate and further consultation for new Project Group members will be progressed which will be led by the ITRA.

### Considerations

36. The Kingston estate has demonstrated the need for the New Homes team to consider the engagement strategy for each site and tailor it to the needs of the residents, in line with the aims of the Charter of Principles. Recognising that one size does not fit all and on some occasions we should consider individual in modifications the way in which it works on specific scheme to attempt to increase resident participation. For example although the some engagement did not succeed in attracting residents, despite the variety of methods used and reasonable steps taken. Noting the open air event proved successful. In addition the employment of an ITRA on certain schemes to work closely with residents can have a positive impact and help to break down barriers and build trust. Overall there needs to be a sensible balance of time employed in engaging local communities, acknowledging as in this case, despite extensive efforts, this might not prove successful.
37. The New Homes team recognise that importance of being visible in the community is an effective way of engaging with residents. Following the slight lifting of covid 19 restrictions residents are slowly coming out of their homes and engaging in their community again. This is the perfect opportunity for officers to engage with residents as part of the direct delivery of new homes.
38. Tenants and homeowners are at the heart of the council's decision-making on housing investment and renewal on its estates. The T&RA and Project Group play a key role in setting out the framework which the council can engage with residents.

### Appendix Table

Appendix No.	Title	Date
Appendix 1	Project Group Presentation <a href="#">\\bsth-hou-ns1\Housing_Shared\Asset Management\New Homes Delivery Team\Programme\Phase 5\Kingston Estate\8 Project Administration\Scrutiny Committee\Appendix\Appendix Project Group presentation</a>	15 December 2020

Appendix 2	Bite-size consultation Board <a href="#">\\bsth-hou-ns1\Housing_Shared\Asset Management\New Homes Delivery Team\Programme\Phase 5\Kingston Estate\8 Project Administration\Scrutiny Committee\Appendix\Appendix Bite Size Consultation Board</a>	March 2021
Appendix 3	Planning Approval Newsletter <a href="#">\\bsth-hou-ns1\Housing_Shared\Asset Management\New Homes Delivery Team\Programme\Phase 5\Kingston Estate\8 Project Administration\Scrutiny Committee\Appendix\Appendix Newsletter Planning Approval</a>	November 2021

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Stuart Davis, Director of New Homes, Housing and Modernisation		
<b>Report Authors</b>	Margaret Burrell, Project Manager    New Homes		
<b>Version</b>	Final		
<b>• Dated</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2021		
<b>• Key Decision?</b>	No		
<b>• CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / • CABINET MEMBER</b>			
<b>• Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>• Comments Included</b>	
Director of Law and Governance	NA	NA	
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	NA	NA	
Development Manager Housing & Modernisation	Yes	NA	
<b>• Cabinet Member</b>	NA	NA	
<b>• Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team</b>		3/12/21	