

Appendix 2

Bates Estate Tenants and Residents Association

General Meeting – Wed 9 September 2015, Moulsecomb Hall

Attendance: Peter Togneri (BHCC, Architect), Jo Thompson (BHCC, Project Manager), Terrence Hill (Chair of BETRA), 3 other BETRA Committee members, Caroline Penn (Ward Councillor) and approximately 6 local residents (some of whom were from 25-30 and 31-36 Selsfield Drive)

Summary of issues raised by residents at the meeting concerning the Selsfield Drive Housing scheme

Issues raised	Response
Extent of consultation with residents on Feasibility Study development.	The council's Estate Regeneration Team commissioned Fielden Clegg Bradley Studio (Architects) to undertake a Feasibility Study which would explore a number of development options for the former Housing Office site in Selsfield Drive. The results of this initial Feasibility study were shared with ward councillors and BETRA at two of its meetings held on 12 February 2014 and 3 December 2014. At these meetings, BETRA members and local residents were updated on the progression of the project and were also shown the initial design concepts for the site, emerging from the architects. It was never intended to carry out a formal consultation with residents at this stage because Housing Committee Members may have decided to have withdrawn their interest in the site. It is only at the detailed design stage that residents, tenants associations, ward councillors etc. are formally consulted.
Site selection/ justification - is it the right site? Has the neighbouring Library and Community Hall been considered as a potential development site?	The council are looking at all potential development sites in the city and continue to review our land and buildings for potential opportunities to build much needed homes. We do not have current plans to redevelop the library and community hall. However, the new homes on the former housing office site will be built to fit with any future development in the vicinity of the site.

Issues raised	Response
	<p>The New Homes for Neighbourhoods Programme is the council's programme for building much needed homes on council land, as well as bringing about the wider regeneration of council estates in Brighton and Hove. Following the closure of the Housing Office, Housing Committee agreed that the site would be used to develop new homes. Given the current scale of the housing crisis, it is important that Housing owned sites like Selsfield, which are in need of regeneration are brought forward as quickly as possible into our house building programme in order to meet our target of building at least 500 new council homes across the city.</p>
<p>Concerns raised relating to the condition of the environment and housing stock of the existing Bates Estate. Are we being forgotten in this? Are we being hidden behind new development?</p>	<p>The council is currently undertaking an Asset Review of its Council Estates across the city. This review will be assessing which estates are a priority for investment and improvement. The Bates Estate will be part of this process and is definitely not forgotten. The council has an ongoing programme of capital works and improvements to existing council homes, which is £31 million for this year alone.</p>
<p>Has the council considered improving and/or replacing the existing housing stock on Bates Estate before spending money on new development?</p>	<p>The council is committed to improving its existing stock of council housing as well as building new homes to meet the acute housing shortage in the city. Expenditure on our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme (approx. £11.8M per annum) represents approximately a third of our current expenditure on capital works and improvements to the existing stock (approx. £31M for 2015/16).</p>
<p>Immediate neighbours raised concerns over perceived impact on daylight/ sunlight and loss of views.</p>	<p>The preferred design option emerging from the Feasibility Study used the change in levels (varying between 2- 2.6 meters from Lewes Road to Selsfield Drive) to minimise the impact on daylight and sunlight levels in neighbouring blocks. This reduced the height of the proposed development by the equivalent of almost one storey at the rear of the site. A Daylight and Sunlight Assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed design stage and will inform any changes to the design of the scheme prior to the submission of the planning application.</p>
<p>Could the new development be restricted to 3 storeys?</p>	<p>Restricting the development to three storeys would significantly reduce the number of units which we can get on the site and would make the scheme unviable to build. It is important to remember that a 3 storey building will be equivalent to 2 storeys at the rear of the site on Selsfield Drive, which is less than the existing three storey blocks that surround the site. Since leaving the site vacant is not an option during these times of acute housing need, a compromise will need to be struck between the height of</p>

Issues raised	Response
	development and the number of units.
Noted that existing Beech Tree T44 is to be retained. Some residents attending the meeting expressed concern that this tree currently blocks light and voiced their desire to see its canopy reduced.	<p>The beech tree has been identified as a Grade A category tree in a survey carried out by consultants at the Feasibility Stage.</p> <p>Category A: <i>Retention most desirable. Of high quality and value and in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution to the landscape (minimum of 40 years is suggested).</i></p> <p>The council's Arboriculturist agrees with this assessment and has stipulated the retention of this tree in any future redevelopment of the site. However, if residents believe that the tree is blocking light they can submit an application for a crown reduction of the tree which will be assessed by the council's Arboricultural Team.</p>
Parking - some residents were concerned about the proposed demolition of garages? What would replace them? Why not retain them and continue to generate a rental income from them?	The proposed demolition of garages is intended to make more efficient use of the existing site. It will allow for surface parking to increase parking provision in the area. The loss of rental income from the garages has been taken account of in the business case for the scheme. The rental income from new housing units far outweighs that generated from the garages.
Residents were convinced that the development of the site was going to happen anyway, no matter what they say.	Following, the closure of the housing office, Housing Committee agreed that the site would be redeveloped for much needed new homes. Residents will have the opportunity to input into the design process and lodge objections to the planning application if they have concerns about the proposed scheme.
Residents wanted to know whether they can petition against development proposals for the site?	We would seek to avoid this happening by consulting and listening to the concerns of residents at the detailed design stage. However, if residents were not happy with the outcome then they would be able to petition against the development proposals at Housing Committee and Planning Committee.

