

Your New Town Hall



Introduction

The purpose of the meeting was to update residents on changes to the proposals since the last meeting.

Arlington Lodge Residents' Update Meeting

Attendees:

YNTH project team

Jo Sintern – GL Hearn (JS)

Thomasin Renshaw – Muse Developments (TR)

James Pickard – Cartwright Pickard Architects (JP)

Councillor Paul McGlone – Lambeth Council (PM)

Mike Pocock – Lambeth Council (MP)

Dan Murray – Lambeth Council (DM)

Polly Green – Lambeth Council (PG)

Date: 16th February 7pm - 8pm

Venue: Room 8, Town Hall

Meeting notes

TR explained that a couple of the units from Hambrook House had been relocated to improve the daylighting to Arlington Lodge. Two apartments had been removed from the 5 storey block at the western end of the development to reduce the massing at that point. Two apartments had been added as asset back additional floor on top of the 3 storey link block immediately to the west of the 10-14 storey block.

Following discussions to explain the above, residents proceeded to discuss the following concerns:

- Lack of sunlight to properties/ rooms on the back of Arlington Lodge that were already partially restricted but had good morning sunshine.
 - **Action: JP suggested that the loss of sunlight may not be as bad as suggested by the residents but this would be scientifically checked using sunlight/shadow projection software. As soon as this was done the results would be shared with the residents.**
- Development would remove views of the Town Hall and this could lower the value of properties.
 - *Response: Unfortunately with this being in urban London, this undeveloped site was always going to be developed. Any building on this plot would have been at least the same size as Arlington Lodge which would have always blocked this view from most*

of the properties. Our proposed massing does allow some views from the central courtyard at top floor level (4th floor). However, with the deteriorating state of the current buildings on and around the YNTH sites, it was felt that high quality residential development on this site would support or improve, not lower, surrounding property prices.

- Residents will be looking at the back of a building.
 - *Response: Residents would be looking at a high quality residential development, far more attractive than the current Hambrook House with the design of the back of the development as carefully considered as the front.*

- Balconies on the new Hambrook House would overlook balconies and outdoor spaces at Arlington Lodge.
 - *Response: Balconies are required to provide amenity space to residents however the balconies are not large and therefore not many people could fit on them at any one time. The distance between the proposed building and Arlington Lodge is considered in planning terms of to be acceptable between residential buildings in a town centre location.*

- Hambrook House is considerably taller than the Town Hall and query over whether Lambeth has considered the appropriateness generally of this building in this location.
 - *Response: the designs have been through a detailed assessment process whereby the Muse design team has presented the proposals at various stages throughout to planning, heritage and design officers at Lambeth as well as councillors. The proposals are also being presented to the Greater London Authority. Lambeth believes that the development is appropriate as it utilises a previously developed site to deliver high quality housing including 40% affordable housing. The scale of the building has been reduced in response to previous concerns about the height.*

- Residents had concerns that affordable housing still wasn't affordable to local people and that 40% was not a lot.
 - *Response: Cllr McGlone confirmed that they were working towards having a considerable number of these at the 'social rent' level which was supported by residents. He also confirmed that many other London boroughs have only 15% as an upper limit for all types of affordable housing and that Lambeth was in the top three London boroughs for delivering affordable homes. It was explained that there is very little or no government funding now for building affordable housing and the value doesn't cover the costs of construction so the affordable homes have to be paid for by private housing – i.e. by the other 60%.*

- Construction noise and vibrations particularly from pneumatic drilling. Concerns were for the elderly/ ill/ frail who do not go to work in the daytime and whose health could be affected by construction.
 - ***Action: Muse to liaise with contractors to understand to what extent modern construction practises would cause this sort of noise – when and for how long***
 - ***Action: Lambeth Council to review if they might be able to provide temporary alternative accommodation for the vulnerable during these particularly noises stages of work; part of this will be reviewing whether other properties in AL become available as well as other options***
 - ***Action: Residents (through Alex Frayne) to come back to Muse on the Construction Management Plan headings to confirm if there is anything else***

they would like to see in this document to control how construction is carried out

- Query over appropriateness of residential in this area – one resident considered that there were other areas within Lambeth that would be better suited to building new homes; especially of this height.
 - *Response: Cllr McGlone confirmed that homes were needed throughout London and throughout Lambeth and it was seeking to facilitate the delivery of some of these through properties it owned; whilst also saving the taxpayer £4.5m a year.*
- One resident said he would appreciate being able to see how the council had calculated the annual cost saving being promoted as the reason for this project. Another said she would be interested in seeing the cost benefits of building Hambrook House so high over what would be saved if it was built at a lower level e.g. a similar height to AL.
 - *Response: The figure of £4.5m is the difference in running costs between the existing fourteen offices and the cost of running just two offices; this included savings achieved with the larger office being a new energy efficient building ; along with energy efficiency works to the Town Hall and the demolition of other older, inefficient buildings. The current cost of running offices (heating, cleaning, rents, rates, etc.) is taken from Lambeth's accounts and the estimated cost of running the new buildings is based on conservative estimates of comparable data.*
- AL residents are due to be getting new double glazing through Lambeth Living this year and residents felt that if this materialised (as nothing more had been heard about this) it would help the situation.
 - ***Action: Lambeth to liaise with Lambeth Living on this to see when this would be happening. Post meeting note from Lambeth Council 10/03/2015 - the project officer is Ibronka O'Peters and they say that tentative dates are September/October for the double glazing in AL to start.***
- On timescales, it was asked if residents would be notified of when the planning application had been submitted.
 - *Response: TR confirmed that the Council's planning department would write to them as immediate neighbours as part of the statutory planning process. The planning committee, at which the application would be determined, would also be an open meeting so residents would be able to attend this.*
- Residents said that they accepted the council's objective to make savings on the basis of national cuts and to deliver affordable housing through this project. However, they wished it to be known that they were upset about the height proposed for Hambrook House and the impact this would have on their long-term quality of life and the health of some of the older residents.
 - *Response: the team as a whole did not wish for anyone's quality of life or health to be affected and would seek responses to the queries raised above as soon as possible. TR confirmed that the team would try to respond on points before the application was submitted if at all possible but noted that some aspects may take a little longer. TR was keen to point out that the planning application submission was not a cut off for further engagement on these matters.*