

## **Ham Stakeholder Reference Group Minutes 30.10.23**

**Attendees:** Cllr Frost, Cllr Frieze, Simon Cavanagh (RHP), Rob Cummins (RHP), Tom Crouch (Hill), Hitesh Chouhan (Hill), Sian Rebourg (Hill), Danielle McCarthy (Hill), Anna Sadler (LBRuT) and Emma Kettle (LBRuT)

4 members of the stakeholder reference group on behalf of: Traders on Ashburnham Road, Traders on Ham Parade, Chair of Ham and Petersham Amenities Group and a Ham Close Resident.

### **Introductions**

AS gave an overview of how the meeting would run and introductions were given.

It was also confirmed this is the last SRG, which will be replaced by the Civic Participation Board, which is an agenda item.

### **Project Update**

#### **RHP:**

SC updated that RHP have achieved vacant possession on Ham Close which will allow for Phase 1 of the works to go ahead subject to the necessary planning conditions being discharged.

A CPO has been made in case agreement cannot be reached with remaining leaseholders to purchase their property for future phases. The consultation period ends on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

TPAS have recently completed a review of the Customer Offer. They have assessed the promises made by RHP in 2016 with the permitted scheme and have confirmed that the promises made can be delivered.

RHP are now preparing to formally consult with customers at Ham Close in early 2024 ahead of making offers of a new home.

SC also confirmed that the Regeneration Team continue to work from 141 Hornby House, Ham Close 1-2 days a week.

#### **Hill:**

TC confirmed that Hill will be on site in January/February subject to the necessary planning conditions being discharged. The first step will be to erect the hoarding and hoarding plans. This will be in agreement with LBRuT's parks team.

Demolition will then start in the springtime. There is a construction management plan being finalised which will help mitigate some of the disruption. This will be available to the public soon.

There will also be a meet the contractor event in January for residents and people in the local community.

HC updated that there are currently works going on at Ham Close in relation to the pre commencement conditions. Hill are in contact with the planning office and looking to work through these as quickly as possible. There has most recently been archaeological works going on at Ham Close. 14 trenches have been dug and Hill are currently waiting for the report to submit to the planning department.

There will be further exploratory works with services to ensure these are disconnected and diverted as appropriate. As well as arboricultural and ecological surveys.

Once the ground works are complete. The demolition of Hatch House will take place as well as hoarding to the back lane car park where the new community centre will be located.

SR gave an update on Social Value. It was noted that Hill have an experienced Social Value team and a group level approach including education to employment and business connectivity.

There will be subcontractors working on site who will have Hill's social value commitments embedded into their contracts. As well as social value reporting which will demonstrate the benefits to the community.

DM confirmed that she will be the key point of contact for the project and can be contacted by email or via phone. This is monitored even when DM is on leave.

There was a question of why there is a delay to start on site and what the plans are for construction traffic?

HC confirmed that the construction management plan shows primary and secondary routes. The primary route will be for fixed axel lorries which will be used as far as possible. The secondary route will be for smaller vehicles and will be used sparingly for deliveries. There are preferred times for Hill to avoid using the routes such as school pick up, and these will be adhered to as far as possible. There are no plans to stop up traffic during the construction period. Once Hill have completed the ground works, the disruption will be limited for Phase 1.

Once the construction management plan is approved it will be released and this includes more information on the routes that will be easily understandable and accessible.

Hill clarified that generally, there are no large vehicles on the secondary route unless absolutely necessary. Any vans coming to site, should be using the primary route.

SC added that elements of Construction Management Plan will be presented as part of Hills meet the contractor event.

It was confirmed that any issues residents have during the construction period should be relayed to Danny and Sian's team.

In terms of the delay, AS noted that Ham Close is an especially important project to the Council but inevitably there are sometimes delays with complex projects. There has been a lot of work on the pre-commencement conditions with planners and ensuring there is the right level of detail. As well as the stopping up order which needs to be made. There is one outstanding objection which is being worked through for the SUO but this is taking some time. The archaeological works have also had an impact on the programme.

All parties think that January/February is a pragmatic start on site date.

There was also the question of what the meet the contractor event looks like and how will people be notified of this?

SR confirmed that the event will be face to face. There will be engagement boards including information on the construction management plan. Invites will go out between 2-4 weeks ahead of the event. There will be members of the construction team attending as well as the resident engagement team.

SC reminded the group that there was also the Ham Close consultation website which people could register their details to receive email updates.

One attendee noted that there had been significant anxiety about the project and the CPO. They thought there is a communication issue as for local residents and traders, as the information is not presented in an accessible way and can be intimidating. Especially as there are traders with English as a second language.

There was the request for someone go through the letters with the people that received them, what the process is and what this means for those properties.

SC noted that the correspondence that has gone out has included contact details for anyone that would require clarification. RHP are unable to engage in the way proposed by the attendee as the CPO is a legal process and there are rules that need to be followed. The contact details given in the correspondence can and should be used.

CLlr Frost noted that since the second round of consultation, she thought that the correspondence is much clearer.

It was suggested to the traders attending the SRG that they can point recipients of the correspondence in the direction of the contact details on the letter.

#### **LBRuT:**

AS updated on the community facilities which are part of Phase 1. The Council have been engaging with the end users of both facilities and the detailed design.

One attendee asked for an update on the NHS and their intentions in Ham Close. AS confirmed that there has been no change in their position.

AfC will be managing the new centre and will have a new lease. The Council will start engaging with AfC on their lease shortly. The MakerLab lease will be with HUG.

There was mention of Ham SOS and their need to plan for the future. AS confirmed that the contractors are aiming to finish the work in the next couple of weeks and the Council's project manager for the Woodville has been engaging extensively with Ham SOS.

There was concern that the recycling arrangements from the back lane car park are not sufficient. The location of the sacks and the fact the delayed collections are causing problems for traders. It was agreed that the Council would follow up on this.

There was a question of whether TPAS are still engaged in the project? SC confirmed that they are and will be available for the consultation on the Customer Offer.

One attendee noted that the continued engagement and representation from TPAS is crucial to residents in Ham Close. They requested for TPAS to be engaged for the duration of the project as an unbiased, knowledgeable party.

#### **Civic Participation Board and Next Steps**

AS confirmed this was the last SRG and further engagement will be carried out via a number of channels, including the establishment of a Civic Participation Board.

SC explained that the CPB will be a different way to stay updated on the progress of delivering new homes and community facilities at Ham Close.

Up to this point the SRG was established to provide feedback to deliver planning.

The CPB will commence in spring 2024 once construction has commenced. Its purpose will be to monitor how the 3 partners deliver on their promises and for local people to have oversight on the wider benefits such as the provision of jobs, training and apprenticeships as part of Ham Close's construction.

Cllr Frost asked how much local groups will be involved? SC confirmed that the CPB is not a board that has multiple representatives from all organisations but there would be opportunities for local people to make representations to the CPB. Cllr Frost asked for a clearer outline of how questions could be brought to the board.

There were concerns from one attendee that a civic participation board doesn't provide adequate engagement and information won't get through to residents in a timely manner.

There was some dissatisfaction that residents and people in the wider area were unaware of key information like the start on site date moving. RHP to follow this up with customers.