

HAM CLOSE QUESTIONS

Regeneration update meeting 12 November 2020

Questions raised via the 'chat function' on zoom



Construction questions

Response

1. What will be done to ensure the safety of all construction products in the build?

RHP is committed to ensure that all the homes built at Ham Close are safe both during the construction phases and when they are completed and occupied. The new homes at Ham Close will be high quality, modern, energy efficient meeting all fire safety, building regulations and best practice in building safety. RHP's expectation of the developer who is chosen to deliver Ham Close is that they will deliver a new residential community of exemplary quality that will provide a great place to live for both our existing residents and new households. The chosen developer will apply a range of measures to ensure that homes are safe and built in accordance with the latest building regulation requirements. In addition to the developers internal quality assurance processes, RHP will employ specialists to inspect the new homes throughout construction to ensure they meet the necessary safety and quality standards.

2. How will your plans meet the Council's and RHP's declaration of a Climate Emergency?

The chosen developer will be required to build the new homes and community facilities in accordance with both the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Greater London Authority (GLA) planning policies around sustainability and climate change. The chosen developer will be expected to retain the existing village green, retain as many mature trees on the site as possible and provide a strong green link running through the centre of the new Ham Close. Sustainable transport solutions, where reliance on the use of cars is reduced and more sustainable forms of transport are encouraged, will form a key part in the regeneration of Ham Close.

3. Are there issues with cladding on any of your developments. If so, how are these being resolved?

RHP have ensured at both stages of the two stage selection process that we are working with experienced Developers that prioritise the safety of residents in the buildings they design and build. Once selected, there will be opportunities to raise specific issues related to the Developer's previous projects through the consultation process.

4. What are your typical work times around the construction works (ie what time of day do you stop/start, and how many days of the week)?

The work times for construction works on site are normally determined by the local planning authority. These are typically 8:00am to 6:00pm on weekdays and 8:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays with no works allowed on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

5. How long will construction take? A previous estimate was 6 years. Is that still a fair estimate?

Each bidder is proposing their own phasing strategy and programme for the construction of the new Ham Close. We have previously estimated that if Ham Close were to be delivered in three phases, it could take two years to complete each phase and therefore construction of the whole scheme could take a minimum of six years. Once we have chosen and appointed a Developer, we will be able to share details of their proposals including their programme and phasing strategy. These and other details will form part of our consultation with our customers and the wider community. Greater certainty on the length of construction will be available once planning permission has been granted. Any changes to the programme, including the length of construction, will be shared throughout the life of the project.

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Construction questions

continued

Response

6. Is the successful developer also responsible for raising the finance for the Ham Regeneration? How will they do this? Who assumes the financial risk of undertaking the project?

The developer selected to deliver the new Ham Close will be responsible for funding the regeneration. How each developer funds the development will vary. However, RHP will undertake a process of due diligence to ensure that the selected developer has the financial strength to complete the project.

7. Will the contract be awarded to the contractor who quotes the lowest price?

The developers' submissions are being assessed on the basis of 60% quality and 40% price. Whilst this approach does not preclude a developer proposing the lowest price being selected, the quality of the proposed development is more of a determining factor.

Design questions

Response

8. How will you resolve any possible conflicts between estate residents' needs and ideas, and those of the surrounding community?

The chosen developer will be required to undertake a comprehensive consultation exercise which will be open to both residents of Ham Close and the wider community. We will endeavour to balance the possible conflicting needs of different groups and everyone local to Ham Close will have the opportunity to input into the design. There will also be an opportunity to input into the consultation process which will be undertaken by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames planning department.

9. You have said nothing about the development relating to the wider community in Ham, characterised by low rise, low density and more open space than anywhere else in Richmond upon Thames.

Whilst the density of homes will increase on Ham Close in line with the Masterplan document, we are committed to protecting the Ham Village Green, retaining as many mature trees as possible and providing a strong green link running through the centre of the new Ham Close.

10. How high will the buildings be? How many storeys?

The new development will include buildings at a variety of heights up to a maximum of 6 storeys.

11. To Countryside about their parking options, I'll then ask that of each developer as parking is a long term issue I believe.

The selected Developer will work with the planning authority to agree the appropriate amount of parking required for the new Ham Close. Their approach will form part of the consultation ahead of a planning submission.

12. If there is undercroft parking, how will it be managed so it's safe for residents to use?

If there is basement or undercroft parking in any of the proposals, the developers will have to demonstrate to RHP and the planning authority the access arrangements for it and demonstrate how it will be safe for residents to use.

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Design questions continued

Response

13. I firmly believe tree *retention* is crucial to maintaining the feel and character of Ham. It's no good chopping down all the mature trees and then planting a few ornamental cherries to compensate. How can the developers demonstrate their commitment to tree retention?

As set out earlier, it is a RHP requirement that as many of the existing mature trees on the site are retained as possible. In addition to this, the chosen developer will be required to substantially improve the soft landscaping throughout the site, including the planting of new trees.

14. Looking at the future plans, the nursery in Woodville Centre will lose most if not all of their beautiful mature trees to the housing project. And most of its windows will then look onto a footpath and a car park instead of lovely grassy areas. Somehow it does not feel quite right. Any chance that this would be taken into consideration and rethought?

The future plans for Ham Close will be subject to a public consultation so there will be an opportunity to raise your concerns with the developer directly and then again as part of the planning statutory consultation.

15. None of the designs of the 3 bidders are inspiring architecturally, or meet the assurances given by RHP at a previous consultation that the buildings would be in keeping with the local area. They all look the same - identikit new-build social housing. There are examples around page country? of excellent and affordable design, eg Goldsmith Street in Norwich. Why can't we have something that good in Ham? Is it a lack of aspiration or budget?

This question relates to the previous residential schemes which were displayed by the developers as part of their presentations. These were developments in other parts of London and the South East. RHP has an expectation that the new Ham Close will be an exemplar residential scheme which will provide a great place to live for both the existing and new households. Whilst the redevelopment of Ham Close will have to be viable for both the developer and RHP, as mentioned earlier, it is the quality of the submissions which represents 60% or the scoring as opposed to price which is 40%. RHP has a clear vision and aspiration that the new Ham Close will reflect the distinct character of the area and create positive change for the wider community through enhanced open space amenity and community facilities.

16. Although it has been agreed that the green won't be built on, would the developers consider re-landscaping it, for example digging a pond and creating a wildlife area to provide focal points. Ham Common and its pond has lots more use by the community than the green does.

RHP have made it clear that the Developers propose a scheme that does not include Ham Village Green. Any plans suggesting changes to the Ham Village Green to encourage its use is not part of the Ham Close regeneration project to deliver new homes and community facilities. The plans for Ham Close will include extensive and more focused landscaping and we look forward to consulting on those ideas in the future.

17. Since the project started the numbers of housing units has only ever gone up. Why is the very large 452 units not enough?

As part of the 2 stage tender process which RHP is currently undertaking, there is a requirement that the amount of new homes at Ham Close cannot exceed 452.

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Home Numbers / Tenure questions	Response
18. What proportion of the housing units is social housing and what proportion is owner occupied?	Currently at Ham Close there are a total of 192 homes. Of these, 38 are leaseholders with the balance being rented homes at varying rents. The exact provision of affordable homes is to be determined as part of the planning application but it is envisaged that if a planning permission is granted for 452 new homes that 221 replacement and new affordable homes will be provided. The 221 homes would provide 143 replacement homes for the existing RHP tenanted households and the homes being provided for temporary accommodation. The additional 78 affordable homes will look to provide new "London Affordable Rented Homes" Homes as well as Shared Ownership homes and London Living Rent homes for new customers. This means that just under half of the new homes on the regenerated Ham Close will be affordable homes.
19. How many additional properties would there be in your development and what would the breakdown be, eg studio, one bed, two bed etc?	If planning permission for the site is granted for 452 homes then they will be an additional 260 homes at Ham Close. The sizes of the homes at Ham Close will be determined through the planning process.
20. How many social housing units are there currently and how many will there be?	There are 143 affordable homes currently at Ham Close. These homes are occupied under a number of different tenancies with the majority being either original Council tenancies, Keyworker tenancies and Affordable Rent tenancies. If planning permission is granted for 452 homes, this will increase the affordable housing provision on the site to 221 affordable homes.
21. How many privately owned units are there currently and how many will there be?	There are currently 38 leaseholders in Ham Close although this figure is changing as RHP buys back leaseholder properties in accordance with the customer offer. If planning permission for 452 new homes is granted it is likely that the privately owned homes on the site will increase to approximately 231.
22. How many shared ownership units are there now and how many will there be?	There are not any shared ownership properties which RHP own on Ham Close. The number of new shared ownership homes on a regenerated Ham Close will be agreed through planning.
23. I understand there will be social dwellings, affordable dwellings, ordinary rented accommodation, as well as leasehold and owner occupied dwellings. How will these be integrated?	RHP will ensure that the developer promotes a tenure blind approach to the affordable housing so it is integrated and not identifiable from the private sale homes. It is likely that the affordable homes will be located together as it will be necessary to rehouse the existing residents of Ham Close in the first and second phases.
24. Do you plan to put all tenure residents in the same block or will there be a mix of tenures in each block? (not private sale)	There is likely to be some mixing of tenures in apartment blocks and this will largely be determined by the rehousing of the existing residents of Ham Close in the first and second phase.

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Home Numbers / Tenure questions continued

Response

25. Will there be studio flats build on the development?

This will be informed by the planning permission for the site but it is unlikely that there will be any studio flats built as an affordable home. As part of our customer offer, any existing RHP Ham Close customers who possess a tenancy for a studio flat will be given the opportunity to move into a 1 bedroom flat.

26. How can you assure the residents of Ham Close that the number of affordable housing will not reduce in number as the construction phase evolve, as has happened in BATTERSEA power station recently. considering 2 of your preferred bidders is jointly financed by a hedge fund ??

RHP is working in partnership with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to deliver the Ham Close Regeneration project and it will be a contractual requirement that a minimum level of affordable housing is delivered as part of a viable and implementable scheme. This contractual requirement will be in addition to the s106 agreement which is a legal agreement which will form part of the planning permission for the site. The s106 agreement will set out a minimum expectation of the level of affordable housing which will be delivered at Ham Close.

27. IS the like for like still stands as promised on the beginning of this project for regeneration of Ham Close.

The like for like offer is part of the Customer Offer related to existing leaseholders for an offer of a new home on Ham Close. Like for like relates to the same number of bedrooms as existing. The Customer Offer has not changed and therefore the "like for like" aspect of the Customer Offer still stands.

Local Impact questions

Response

28. Given the increased number of homes and therefore local population what is being done to increase local infrastructure i.e. transport, healthcare surgeries and schools.

The impact on local infrastructure will be considered by the local authority as part of the planning application.

29. The last transport survey said Sandy Lane / Petersham Road was at or near capacity at peak times, how will you increase capacity here and will this be included in the planning application?

Up to date transport surveys will be conducted and included as part of the planning application.

30. There has been mention during a number of the presentations of a principle of reduced proportions of vehicle parking to tenancy and encouraging green transport. There is free parking in surrounding areas and with the increase in housing units, how will any potential increase in cars being parked and potential overspill into surrounding areas be managed?

The scheme aims to achieve sustainable transport solutions to assist in reducing the impact of all traffic. These approaches and parking will be worked up as part of the final design.

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Local Impact questions

continued

Response

31. There is potential for increasing the number of primary places available. Grey Court might need to shrink its geographical admissions criteria in the longer-term.

This comment is noted. The potential impact of Ham Close on the local infrastructure including schools will be considered by the planning department at the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames as part of determining the planning application. We have been liaising with the local schools and we will continue to do so once the developer is selected.

32. Has there been an adequate assessment of the impact of a greatly increased population on local amenities (e.g. health, transport, education) in Ham? If so, what are the findings?

The impact on local infrastructure will be considered by the local authority as part of the planning application.

33. Grey Court has over 15 hundred students, there is no way in or out of Ham without passing the immediate vicinity of the school... what plans exist to minimize disruption?

The impact on local infrastructure will be considered by the local authority as part of the planning application. The planning submission and the preceding consultation will address approaches to mitigate the potential disruption from construction traffic.

Leaseholders questions

Response

34. What does the leaseholder rehousing journey look like?

The foundations of the re-housing approach for leaseholders are contained in the Customer Offer. The detail of the approach for re-housing leaseholders will be informed by individual leaseholder consultation ahead of drafting and agreeing a Leaseholder strategy with our Resident Engagement Panel. Individual Leaseholder consultation will be part of our consultation and engagement approach which can commence once a developer has been selected.

35. You mentioned you allowed tenants to feed in to the design of the finished flat. Does this apply to leaseholders too?

Both tenants and leaseholders will have an opportunity to feed into the design of the finished flat. This is usually conducted by having a choice within a range of samples. Each Bidder has its own process of when and how the choices will be made.

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Local Impact questions

continued

Response

36. Questions for all the developers:

1. Do you know what impact your finished redevelopment projects had on the leaseholders? 2. How many (%) of those were able to remain leaseholders on your newly build developments? 3. How the successful engagement with the leaseholders look like for your Company? 4. I am a leaseholder, what I can expect in the end of your project for me? 5. Where homes taken away from the former leaseholders (who were not able to afford a lease on a new development) added to the total number of new affordable accommodation provided on those project?

RHP, not the selected Developer, will manage the options available to Leaseholders, as contained in the Customer Offer and in detailed documents to be provided for individual leaseholders choosing to stay at Ham Close. Once a developer has been selected, they will be jointly consulting alongside RHP on the emerging design for the scheme and there will be opportunities for specific question to be raised with them during that period. Whilst we are many years away from concluding this project, its' impact on the existing community will be monitored. It is our opinion that we have provided, through the Customer Offer, reasonable options to allow current leaseholders the opportunity to be able to afford to purchase a home in the new Ham Close if they choose. We welcome any approach from a leaseholder that has concerns and we will work with them on an individual basis to make sure that they can make an informed decision on the options provided in the Customer Offer.

37. All the Developers and RHP are asking the leaseholders to participate, plan, engage... however, it looks like we will be not part of this party in the end and our homes will be no longer affordable to us. What % increase in the property value do you expect?

It is currently too soon to confirm the exact price of the replacement homes. RHP has promised (in the Customer Offer, Autumn 2016) that Leaseholders will have an opportunity to remain at Ham Close. The value of your current home can be transferred to the new home. Any difference in value can either be purchased by you or RHP will place a Charge in the form of Shared Equity. No rent will be payable by the leaseholder on RHP's Charge.

38. As a leaseholder, I still have a lot of questions and concerns about this process. Can RHP let us know how they plan to address this and how that falls into the process between now and Spring '22?

RHP will hold another meeting for Leaseholders once we have selected a preferred Developer.

39. Will leaseholders still live in the same flats as RHP tenants as is the current set-up?

This is yet to be determined but it is likely the existing customers at Ham Close will move into the homes built in the earlier phases to enable the phasing to be completed and to keep our customer promise of one move wherever possible.

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Tenants questions

Response

40. The phrase affordable has been used, what does this actually mean in comparison to current social housing rents?

The term 'Affordable' is commonly used by Developers to include a variety of different rent structures other than Market Rent. Customers currently at Ham Close are on a variety of different rent structures depending on their tenancy.

41. What reassurances can RHP give that residents will not pay higher rents once the regeneration is complete?

It is possible that RHP tenants will pay a higher rent as the new homes will be bigger and have more services (such as lifts). However customers rents will remain in accordance with their tenancy and will be capped within the local authority Housing Benefit levels. We are very mindful of the affordability of service charges across all of our new homes and we will work to ensure that these are minimised wherever possible at Ham.

42. The West Hendon development led to tenants being made homeless in order to supply more homes for sale, is the same going to happen in Ham

The plan for the new Ham Close is to provide more Affordable housing than there currently is. The plans include the ability for customers to make one move where possible, directly into their new homes on Ham Close.

43. I only moved to Ham Close last week so this is new news to me :).. is a full redevelopment 100% going to happen?

RHP, along with the London Borough of Richmond, have been working on plans for Ham Close for many years. We will be selecting a Developer by Spring 2021 who will work with customers to develop a Planning Application for submission late next year. Subject to an approved Planning Application we are aiming to start works in 2022. Any new and existing residents are encouraged to join the Resident Engagement Panel.

Allocations questions

Response

44. How will flat allocation be organised? Someone has to have first pick and, inevitably, someone will have to choose from what's left. Though I realise that there will be more flats available than at the moment giving more choice.

We will be working with all customers at Ham Close to determine your housing needs which will help allocate the new homes appropriately. Customers required to move first will have priority to ensure that construction works can progress in a timely manner.

45. If you are still doing like for like, if someone is in a three bed flat and lives alone they are obviously under occupied would you really offer them another three bedroomed property

RHP will be carrying out a housing needs survey to ensure that overcrowded households are appropriately housed. We will work with customers at Ham Close who are under occupying, on an individual basis. There will be incentives for underoccupiers to move into smaller homes. The details around these incentives are still being finalised.

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Allocations continued

Response

46. would it not be better to make available more one bedroomed flats for the elderly so that the ones in the community who are living in three and four bedroomed houses can be moved to a new one bedroomed flat and a family can go to the vacant house, this security of tenure is rubbish and one of the reasons we have a housing shortage now

RHP will be carrying out a housing needs survey to ensure that overcrowded households are appropriately housed. We will work with customers at Ham Close who are under occupying, on an individual basis. There will be incentives for underoccupiers to move into smaller homes. The details around these incentives are still being finalised.

47. I cant believe that the redevelopment of Ham Close has been talked about and planned and cancelled and talked about again since 2013. I have paperwork and minutes from meetings about a foot thick, currently we are living in homes on Ham Close that are not fit for purpose and suffer terribly from damp etc. Please as a long suffering resident can we please just get on with it.

RHP recognise this comment as reflective of the majority of the feedback we have received from the community. They want the regeneration to happen and we are committed to progressing it with our partners.

48. Can London Square and Hill Partnership inform us of their preferred architectural consultants ?

It was explained prior to the public meeting that individual developer approaches for Ham Close would not be discussed to protect the confidentiality of the ongoing negotiations. The selected Developer will be employing their own architect who will be part of the future consultation approach on the emerging design for Ham Close.

49. Your video is quite broad, what do you feel are your top strengths for the Ham regeneration project, specifically? And what will be your key areas of focus to ensure resident satisfaction throughout the process?

Once a Developer has been selected, there will be opportunities to ask further questions on what they bring to the project and how they will approach resident satisfaction in greater detail.

50. What do London Square feel they can bring to the project given they are the least experienced in working in partnerships with Housing Associations/Affordable housing

Once a Developer has been selected, there will be opportunities to ask further questions on what they specifically bring to the project. It should be noted that each of the Developers had previously been selected in the first stage of the procurement exercise based on their experience and RHP and our consultants Arcadis are satisfied that the three developers do bring the required experience to deliver an estate regeneration project.

HAM CLOSE QUESTIONS

Questions raised after the 12th November meeting up to 24 December 2020 via the Resident Engagement Panel or via the ham.close e-mail address.



Questions raised	Response
1. Residents wanted assurances that they would not be given open plan layouts without their agreements?	The Customer Offer explains that new properties will comply with the current GLA design guidance and includes indicative apartment designs for 1 and 2 bedroom properties that show open plan layouts. The design of the new homes, including those for our RHP customers at Ham Close will be part of the consultation ahead of a planning submission and we will take account of specific household need on a case by case basis.
2. Now the government is banning the sale of new petrol cars from 2030, will the developers be building in enough charging points in whatever car parking arrangements they come up with?	RHP and the selected Developer will work with Richmond Council's planning department to agree the scope of charging points for electric and hybrid vehicles for the new Ham Close. RHP will consult with residents on their estimated cost as part of a service charge.
3. Will the developers be considering installing solar panels? This will help make the blocks more energy efficient, especially if everyone has to start charging cars.	The developer will be required to meet certain sustainability standards, which may result in the provision of solar panels amongst other measures.