

Ebury Bridge Community Futures Group – Meeting 40

3rd November 2020, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

via Microsoft Teams

Members Attendance:

- Tom McGregor [TMc] – Chairperson
- Tammy Dowdall [TD]
- George Panayioudou [GP]
- Joanna Winterbottom [JW]
- Cristina Pasantes [CPa]

Apologies:

- Mohammed Eisa [ME]
- Charlotte Pragnell [CPr]

WCC Officers and Consultants:

1. David Thompson [DT] – Project Director Ebury Bridge
2. Gelina Menville [GM] – Ebury Bridge Regeneration Manager
3. Martin Crank [MC] – Communications & Engagement Manager
4. Louis Blair [LB] – Communities First (ITLA)
5. Millie Morrissey [MM] – Project Support Officer (Meeting notes)
6. Judy Flight [JF] – Non-Residential Project Manager
7. Hayley Branston [HB] – Maynard (Wayfinding Consultant)
8. Simon Lee [SL] – Maynard (Wayfinding Consultant)

Notes: *This document provides a summary of the discussions which took place during the meeting including questions and respective responses that were raised during the session, action points and key decisions.*

1. Welcome

TMc welcomed all members.

2. CFG Standing Items

Action List Review:

(Item 5): MC confirmed Friday 16th October, he and his team met with the Westminster Community Homes (WCH) and Louis to review the customer journey, and assess the relocation experience of leaseholders and tenants at Ebury, with a focus on leaseholders. The exercise covered the various processes currently in place and what decisions and appointments a leaseholder would need to make during the overall process. The outcome of this session was a process map, which is now being turned into a resident friendly document which will help guide residents through the processes more effectively. A first draft has been created and should be ready to share with CFG for feedback in the next few weeks.

Action: Circulate draft to the group for review before discussing it as an agenda item at the next meeting [MC]

Matters Arising:

No matters raised.

Rumour Buster:

No rumours raised.

3. Wayfinding – Presentation by Maynard

HB introduced herself and her colleague SL - Maynard are a wayfinding and design practise based in London. HB explained their aim is to develop an overarching wayfinding and signage strategy for the new Ebury. The wayfinding design, whilst focusing on Phase 1 (including the public realm and the first square) will also apply to the entire masterplan of the scheme.

Visual identity can communicate the cultural identity of the site and community. Maynard were brought on board at the beginning of October and familiarisation has now been completed. The design concept will be worked on over the next month.

SL explained the signage audit was undertaken recently. The 4 key points taken from the site analysis were to;

- name the neighbourhood,
- highlight the retail offer,
- activate green spaces and
- add a landmark facility.

SL added there are 6 key design principles which need to be considered as part of the process. These are;

- less is more,
- establish a hierarchy,
- ensure it is consistent and predictable,
- characterise the space,
- connect the spaces and finally
- be inclusive to all.

HB proposed that the way to address to new blocks would be to give each squares a distinct name and associate the block with the square closest. HB gave examples of themes that could be chosen to name the squares.

MC added the history and heritage of the estate is very important to people and should be considered in any re-naming/naming process.

TD explained there are a few people who are well thought of from the estate or who hold significant importance to residents, whose names should be considered for block names. CPa asked that residents of the estate were involved also in this process as they may have suggestions for names to use.

SL explained during research, themes for squares or building names were discussed. Having a vote would be favourable and could decide one theme to be used throughout the estate. TMc added it would be brilliant for residents to be heavily involved. MC added he is happy to involve any members who are interested in the process and include them in meetings going forward. GP added there is so much history in the area and it is important not to overlook that.

Action: Invite residents to get involved with the exploration of names/themes for the naming of the new blocks [MC]

JW asked how the 2 blocks on Ebury Bridge Road, which are not part of the estate, will be distinguished from the estate. SL explained building names, when designing buildings now, are seen as secondary, whereas numbering system attached to a street name tends to be preferential. SL confirmed that recommendation for Ebury would be to introduce named streets and squares within the masterplan. Every building will then have a number and a designated square or street name associated with it. JW suggested that square names should be in alphabetical order, for sequential purposes and ease of access for visitors. TMc agreed this is helpful and a good base to begin from. GP stated he preferred blocks to have a name and not just a number, CP agreed.

Action: Upload the presentation to the CFG SharePoint site [MM]

4. Project Update

DT reiterated the historic objectives of the scheme; viability, desirability and deliverability and confirmed that any new scheme had to meet each one.

DT presented a conclusion of the Soft Market Testing exercise. Tenure separated by blocks and vertical tenure mix were not viable or desirable. It is being proposed that both horizontal and pepper potted distributions will continue to be assessed, although the emerging position for tenure mix was horizontal. A fully pepper potted distribution would mean WCC would need to subsidise the scheme to a significant extent which would make this option very difficult.

The Phase 2 delivery route was due to be made as a recommendation to the Cabinet Member in September, this has been postponed until December. The Cabinet Member decision on the Phase 2 delivery will be made in December.

DT explained Phase 1 (226) homes are to be delivered by WCC. Phase 2 delivery will be recommended to be delivered by Westminster Builds (WB) and not a private developer. This direction of travel has come following engagement with the market sector through the latest soft market testing. CPa asked if WB are involved in Phase 1. DT confirmed Phase 1 is completely WCC and council funded.

WB is a wholly owned company, of the Council. TMc added there is commercial risk with Phase 2 that wasn't there with Phase 1. DT – There are borrowing mechanisms that Westminster Builds can utilise that can enable the delivery of Phase 2. Further due diligence will be completed on the delivery routes over the coming months.

DT explained in relation to the future manager of Ebury, the Council currently do not have the multi-tenure experience nor the capacity to manage the new Ebury, therefore it will procure a manager to run the estate. GP asked how the manager will be funded. DT explained the funding will come from the service charge that all residents of the new Ebury will pay. DT added before any procurement, WCC will have a very good idea of how much that will cost. Services charges will be discussed in further detail at the next CFG.

DT explained that the Soft Market Testing showed that Market Rent units should all be contained in one block. There are many factors for this including the significant turnover of Market Rent tenants. Block 9 could hold all Market Rent homes with no Market Rent homes scattered in any of the other blocks.

5. Ebury Edge Tenant's Update

JF explained the soft opening of Ebury Edge took place on 6th October in muted way due to Covid-19 restrictions. Fat Macy's are the confirmed Community Café operators and are about to sign the lease and begin to fit out. JF thanked the CFG for their time in the menu tasting process.

JF added there is a lot of interest so it is likely Meanwhile Space will be able to let all of the retail units and workspaces.

The team are looking to work with the community to run smaller events, possibly on a slot basis. For example, relieving loneliness amongst the elderly through crafts, although a 2nd lockdown has slowed this down. There is work to be done after lockdown to follow this through. JF will update the CFG at the December meeting on how things are going.

Action: Send out a list of confirmed Ebury Edge occupants to the CFG to get a taste of who will be occupying the space [JF]

JF elaborated on Christmas ideas. One of which is to part fund a Christmas hamper/food parcel, this would be aimed particularly to more of the elderly people in isolated blocks. GM suggested a zoom/virtual gifting session to give the sense of community and togetherness throughout the festive period. TD suggested different activities for different ages, such as a virtual Christmas programme. JF welcomed any ideas the group have for cheering people up and welcomed members to get in contact with any ideas. MM will circulate JF email address along with the Ebury Edge tenants list. JF added there will be a Christmas newsletter. The Christmas hampers could be packed in the community hall by volunteers. JF added it has also been suggested that past neighbours who have moved away could send messages to their old neighbours via the Christmas newsletter.

JF explained there is the possibility of a light installation in the courtyard. This is something festive for people to enjoy, visit and take pictures with. JF added Fat Macy's are still going to be preparing to open and would like to make some sort of seasonal food offering/specialist menu. People could be brought into the courtyard or the hall, for a micro/slot-based Christmas event. Westminster Connects could support with the marshalling and all necessary precautions will be taken to make it safe. JF added there is a lot of good will from contractors and retailers. All activities will be considered in line with the latest government guidelines on Covid related restrictions

6. AOB

JW explained following a chat with the archaeologist, it would be helpful to piece together the history and stories from the Ebury Bridge Estate. MC added a full page of the archaeologist's findings is going in the newsletter. JW suggested this could somehow be combined with the Christmas event. For example, residents of the estate both past and present write a small paragraph and submit any photos that they would like to share. JF will work with MC to pick this up and will consult the CFG and wider residents about how they would like to contribute their memories. LB added he is happy to help with any historical work on the estate.

LB asked has there been any update with the planning application. DT explained it is unlikely there will be any update on the application this side of Christmas. DT added we are currently at 24 objections and the majority of the objections are from a distance, not close proximity neighbours.

7. Date of next CFG meeting

Tuesday 1st December