

Hackney Update

WDCO Board Meeting

November 2023

This paper provides an update on projects and work streams within Woodberry Down.

1. Vacant Possession Phase 4

As at the end of October 2023 there were 30 secure tenants, 110 temporary tenants and 35 leaseholders. Vacant possession is programmed for Spring 2025.

Leaseholder buy backs

There were 41 leaseholder owned properties at the point of making Phase 4 'in Phase'. We have now bought back six properties, and agreed terms on another seven, and have made fifteen offers additional to that.

Resident leaseholders may be eligible for shared equity, and over the summer we held some drop-in marketing sessions. We are in contact with individuals who have expressed interest and are working with Berkeley Homes and Notting Hill Genesis to provide information. Two leaseholders have visited the site to view some of the shared equity units currently being fitted out. If people wish, they can reserve a property now, ahead of, or in the very early days of the general marketing (which starts in early November)

Private tenants and homeless tenants placed in temporary accommodation

There are currently 110 non secure ('temporary') tenants in Phase 4. Where properties are bought back, and therefore 'void', the team may continue to use the properties to house homeless residents in temporary accommodation. The Downsizing and Rehousing Team is in touch with all residents in temporary accommodation, to advise about the timescale for rehousing, and to discuss re-housing options/next steps.

A number of the leasehold properties are occupied by private rental tenants.. Within the buy back process it is the responsibility of the landlord to keep their tenants informed, discuss timescales and serve relevant notices. However contact details for the Council's housing team has also been sent directly to private tenants, via the 'request for information' process (see below) and if private tenants have questions or concerns, they are encouraged to make contact with the Council via the Regeneration Team, Housing Options and Advice, (<https://hackney.gov.uk/housing-options> / 020 8356 2929) or the ITLA.

Council Secure Tenants

All of the Phase 4 tenants and most of the Phase 5 tenants have now been pre-allocated new homes in Phase 3. As the re-housing requirements for Phase 4 and Phase 5 tenants have been assessed and largely met, the Decant team have now offered pre-allocations to tenants in future Phases.

A tenants choice exhibition will take place on 29 November 2023 for pre-allocated tenants to make their choices on bathroom and kitchen colours, as well as tiles for their new homes.

The numbers of new homes, allocations to date, and homes still to allocate and are set out in the table below.

	New Units in Phase 3	Phase 4 tenants allocated	Phase 5 tenants allocated	Homes still to allocate in Phase 3
Phase 3A	75	30	33	10
Phase 3B	42	0	19	23
Total/balance	117	30	52	33

2. CPO Phase 4

The Council continues work on preparation of a CPO. We aim to seek Cabinet authority to make a CPO in Spring 2024 (after approval of the Planning Application for Phase 4). A further detailed update letter, with information about the timings of the CPO, and re-providing contact details, is due to be sent to all residents currently living in the blocks.

The Council progresses a CPO as a fall back position, to make sure the regeneration can go ahead. However we would always prefer to agree terms with all residents, supporting residents in finding the best rehousing option for them; active engagement in this way is, in any case, a requirement of a CPO process, to show that the Council has done everything it can to avoid having to rely on use of a CPO. We have kept in touch with residents to make sure they are aware of what is happening, and will continue to do so.

3. Local Lettings Policy and Split Households

As part of the decant and allocations process, the Decant Team has received a large number of split household requests from out of phase residents..The Decant Team's priority is to work through the decant cases for Phases 4 & 5 alongside the split households associated with them. The next priority will be to tackle the split household cases associated with the expression of interest.

For the remaining out-of -phase split household requests, the Council is working on a set of guidelines to give greater clarity in the determination of priority. Once the guidance notes to the LLP for Woodberry Down has been approved, the Decant Team will refer all the cases to the Council's Downsizing and Rehousing Team who will look at all the applications received so far and assess them case by case before any offers are made.

4. Cultural Strategy Phase 4 and Cultural Programming

A Cultural Strategy Delivery Plan for Phase 4 was prepared by D-P-Q consultants for the planning application for Phase 4. It was based on extensive local engagement, and aims to bring the community together to embed the rich heritage of Woodberry Down into the buildings and public space in Phase 4. The exact features are to be developed but might include bespoke benches, a focal space within the square or a mural, etc. Going forward the plan will identify events which will animate the Central Square.

The Council has now completed a successful recruitment process to appoint a Cultural Officer to support the further development and delivery of the strategy, working with residents and local

artists. The new Officer, is due to start in post in late November, and will be introduced to WDCO as soon as possible. The role is part time (2.5 days/week) for three years.

5. Library feasibility study

The options for this continue to be reviewed, with work underway to establish options for bringing forward a new space. Next steps are to review the options considering findings from the ground floor strategy research, and mapping of local social and economic projects and activity.

6. Block D

The Council continues to work with Berkeley Homes to establish costs involved in fitting out the space. Mill Co. is hoping to subdivide the space into a number of smaller units, to enable a mix of different subtenants. Firming up the costs will enable the Council to finalise the terms of the agreement with Mill Co., and gain authority to draw down the head lease. We have updated the Working Group and will continue to share information with them as the work progresses.

7. Masterplan Review

The Delivery Partners and the Design Committee are working on the Masterplan Review. A more detailed update will be provided by Berkeley Homes.

8. District Heat Network (DHN) and Energy

The Council is still reviewing the draft feasibility study prepared by Arup. An update will be brought to the Working Group as soon as possible.

9. Seven Sisters Road

A Steering Group meeting took place on 21 September with partners TfL, Berkeley Homes and Hackney Council (Regeneration and Streetscene). There were clear commitments from all partners to progress the plans for Seven Sisters Road. Partners will review the timeline for triggering the S106 payment. A further meeting has been scheduled for January.

10. Planning Update

	Description	Date Received	Status
52 Woodberry Grove, Hackney, London, N4 1SN	Excavation of basement and formation of rear lightwells, to provide additional bedrooms and playrooms.	21 Aug 2023	
Woodberry Down Early Years Centre Springpark Drive, Hackney,	Submission of details pursuant to condition 6 (Roofs to the existing buildings) of planning permission 2020/3596 dated	13 Sep 2023	Consultation/Publicity

London, N4 2NP	15/01/2021		
Erection of a two storey infill extension at first and second floor levels [reconsult due to change in development description]	Erection of a two storey infill extension at first and second floor levels [reconsult due to change in development description]	5 Sep 2023	Consultation/Publicity

11. West Reservoir

The public consultation on the proposed improvements for West Reservoir is complete.

The council has reviewed and worked with the design team to amend the designs following the feedback from the consultation responses. The updated designs have been presented to the Improvement Board and Stage 4 designs have commenced. We anticipate that the Planning Application will be submitted in November. The Council will be looking to go out to tender at the start of 2024 with a proposed plan to start work on the West Reservoir in Spring 2024.

All the background information, proposed designs and feedback questionnaire can be found on our consultation website: hackney.gov.uk/west-reservoir-improvement