The Third Masterplan for Woodberry Down: the issue of the loss of social homes.

1. **Resolution for October board**

"While there is much in the Third Masterplan that can be welcomed, the significant loss of social homes means we are, at this time, voting against the proposals.

We ask all partners to reconsider this aspect of the Masterplan. We further ask for talks at the highest level with the delivery partners, individually and collectively, and in accordance with the Partnership Agreement, to try and resolve this issue before the Masterplan goes to the Council Planning Committee. (Berkeley say this will be in Spring 2025). The results of these discussions will be reported back to the Board for a final decision on the Masterplan."

Proposed and seconded:

Andrea Anderson

Geoff Bell

Phill Cooke

Jackie Myers

William Sheehy

(Five of six WDCO representatives on the WDCO Design Committee)

2. **Background Briefing: for information only**

- **"Hackney is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis…The sad reality is that more and more Hackney residents are finding themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness."**
  - Caroline Woodley, Mayor of Hackney, and Cllr Sade Etti, Cabinet member for Housing Needs and Homelessness, November 2023.

- Before the regeneration of Woodberry Down began there were 1,520 social homes on the estate. This was made up of 1,295 secure council tenanted properties, 129 temporary accommodation (Council) properties and 62 void (Council) properties. To this could be added 94 other properties that werecouncil homes at the time but were being "in progress" to right to buy homes. However, we will stick to the 1,520 figure.

- These statistics were provided by Councillor Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor, in a letter to Jackie Myers, chair of Woodberry Community Organisation, dated 15 May 2024, and made public at WDCO Board meeting.
- This letter also recorded that between 2010 and February 2024 the regeneration provided 537 new social homes and promised another 117 social homes on Phase 3 and 90 homes under Phase 4.
- Both these latter two figures were a reduction of the existing number of social homes in these phases. The reduction in Phase 4 was 54.
- Thus, the total number of social homes delivered or promised in phases 1 – 4 is 744.
- The 5 May letter also promised that the Third Masterplan would deliver "an additional 606 new social homes". It did not say how many existing social homes would be demolished.
- This meant that 1,350 social homes would be built during the entire regeneration. This would have been a loss of 170 social homes.
- However, at the most recent Design Committee, Berkeley Homes said there would be 553 social homes in phases 5-8. (In the latest documentation to the board Berkeley said the "up to 583 social homes", but they did not say what this figure could be "down to". So, we will stick with the 533 estimate)
- This now means that the regeneration will provide 1,297 social homes – a loss of 223 homes during the regeneration as a whole.
- This is a loss of just under 15% of social housing throughout.

This is by now a familiar pattern

- In the First Masterplan, 35 % of homes promised were to be social ones, with 7 per cent shared ownership and the rest private. This 35 per cent has now fallen to 18 per cent social homes overall.
- Between the first and the second masterplans there was a loss of c.200 planned social homes, which in the main were reallocated to shared ownership.
- At times Berkeley, Hackney and Notting Hill Genesis have described these shared ownerships as "intermediate"; at other times as "affordable."
- However, as WDCO has shown, on figures provided by NHG, they are not affordable to those earning the average London wage, especially if service charges are taken into account – and Hackney's own definition of affordable says they should be.
- We asked Berkeley to provide its definition of "affordable" for the October board: it is not in their presentation.
- When WDCO discovered the loss of social homes between the First and Second masterplans we were verbally assured by the then Hackney Mayor that this loss would be made up in later phases. Instead, the reverse has happened.
- Throughout the discussions on the Third Masterplan WDCO has argued against the loss of social homes. So, too has the admittedly imperfect public consultation in the wider community, where the demand for more, not less

social homes was a consistent and dominant call. Instead, the most recent proposal is to reduce the amount of these homes further.

Geoff Bell, 12 October 2024