

1 August 2023

**Michael Gove MP**  
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Michael Gove MP

**Residents of Central Ladywood Let Down by Failing Birmingham City Council**

Residents of Central Ladywood in Birmingham feel let down, undervalued, and demeaned by Birmingham City Council (BCC) due to its actions in relation to The Ladywood Regeneration Project. Despite the well documented efforts made by residents to seek clarity about the benefits of the Project as purported by BCC, the Council has refused to provide the necessary details.

The Regeneration Project involves in excess of 5000 residents and includes a number of businesses and community organisations. BCC has turned a blind eye to the concerns of its residents as it pushes the project forward without any consideration of the potential detriment that such an ill-thought out venture will have on its residents.

It is our belief that BCC has breached its contractual duty to consult with residents in accordance with its own consultation procedures and 8 Principles as set out in 2019, and in doing so has violated the right for residents to voice their opinion.

There are three interrelated areas of concern:

1. Birmingham City Council did not adhere to its own well documented consultation procedures [Appendix 1]
2. The *Report to Cabinet 27 June 2023 – Full Business Case and Contract Award* does not reflect the initial regeneration concepts as the project now provides only 11% social housing and 5% affordable housing. There was no involvement from residents as set out in the 2019 consultation literature. There is a sense of shock from residents - who have been ill-informed throughout the process - that apart from seven towers that the Council had spent considerable funding replacing cladding, all homes, businesses, places of worship and public builds are to be bulldozed. The developers will be handed over 60 hectares of Ladywood Estate for which about 50% is Council owned and the remainder privately owned. [Appendix 2]
3. Procurement procedures lack transparency and there is a lack of competition due to two bidders pulling out leaving one [Appendix 3].

Residents of Central Ladywood are very concerned that the terms of the developer in the *Report to Cabinet 27 June 2023* are more in keeping with backdoor gentrification than a well thought out regeneration plan, which certainly does not put residents at the heart of the process as promised by the Council and Labour Party. Feelings are very high amongst residents that enough is enough and that new intervention is needed due to BCC yet again failing the people of the City.

Birmingham Mail has published several apologies from BCC about their shambolic approach to consultation. The Council promises to get it right and that "lessons have been learnt". However, most questions and queries directed to BCC by residents in relation to the project are ignored. Most recently, two letters written to John Cotton Leader of Birmingham City Council are still awaiting a response. The first is in relation to concerns raised by residents of Central Ladywood by Shabana Mahmood MP [Appendix 4] and the second a letter on behalf residents [Appendix 5].

We feel that we have exhausted all routes of enquiry with Birmingham City Council. Their rhetoric keeps changing which is very disconcerting. Residents of Central Ladywood no longer trust the intentions of the Council. We have two outcomes:

- Residents wish for the *Report to Cabinet 27 June 2023* to be recalled and then put out to tender once a full and proper consultation with residents has been conducted. The outcomes from the current report provide little means of opportunity to ensure a resident-driven regeneration project. Residents want to retain their communities and to be actively involved in all decision-making procedures to regenerate the area.
- Residents wish that the 8 principles, and in particular principles 7 and 8 that do not feature in the *Report to Cabinet*, are reinstated to become an integral part of the procurement process and therefore the Report.

We therefore respectfully ask your assistance as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to look into this matter. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

George Smith

CC Appendices 1 - 5