

Mr G Smith



Ladywood
Birmingham



10th October 2024

Dear Mr Smith

Ladywood Regeneration

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd September 2024 addressed to The Lead Commissioner, the contents of which have been given back to my team with the responsibilities of responding.

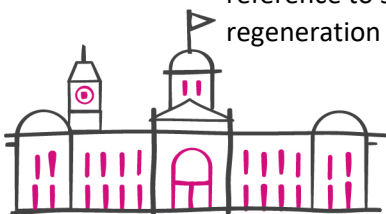
Firstly, we are grateful for you highlighting and showing your concerns as to the increasingly prominent housing crisis in Birmingham. We have an unprecedented need for both the provision of more affordable housing in the City and the genuine relocation needs for those sadly in temporary accommodation. These are significant priorities behind the support for the Ladywood regeneration project.

We should also like to address some of the issues that you have highlighted, as we can confirm the Council is well placed within the Ladywood programme to manage both its financial risks and continue to offer appropriate safeguards in its statutory obligations to the residents of Birmingham.

1. The Council's financial responsibilities to land assembly and any CPO responsibilities are first subject to the development partner attaining relevant and appropriate planning permission and until such the Council has no specific financial risks to the same. Going forward the Council is then indemnified as to their cost, by the development partner on a phased basis, within the provisions of the proposed development agreement.
2. The seven Tower Blocks identified in the red-line project area, are the continued financial responsibility of the Council, whether they form part of the Ladywood Regeneration Project or not. The Ladywood project agreement generates a positive financial contribution to their improvement and repair.

The blocks will also benefit from investment through the Council's capital programme, in which Cabinet approved £1.4bn over the 8 next years to enable Council stock across the city to achieve Decent Homes Standards. We intend to retain the tower blocks because of the significant investment already made to the external structure of the buildings and the considerable investment planned for these blocks.

3. The Ladywood Regeneration Project is a long-term programme of over 15 years. The Council has conducted a robust selection process and sought to work with a development partner in the UK that has the financial ability to see through the inevitable market fluctuations, endured during such a sizeable programme of work. Furthermore, we are actively engaged with National and Regional government agencies external to the council with particular reference to significant additional affordable housing provision delivery through the regeneration project.



4. As we have advised in previous correspondence, homes within the regeneration area could be at risk of being replaced by new homes, however, the 'redline' area is not a demolition plan. Whilst there will be aims in relation to the amount of housing and facilities that must be provided, the masterplan process will start with a blank sheet. There will be full and meaningful engagement and consultation with the community. In addition, as part of the master planning process detailed surveys and Environmental Impact Assessments will be undertaken.
5. We have acknowledged that the level of engagement and communication with residents, in the earlier stages of the project, had fallen short of what should be expected. We have listened to feedback from a wide range of groups and individuals and over the last ten months have undertaken a lot of work to start to rebuild the trust lost with the community. We know we still have a long way to go and are committed to continuing to build and repair relationships.

The Resident and Community Charter will include our commitment to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower in working alongside the community. We have worked collaboratively with the community to develop this and continue to do so and we appreciate the contributions you have made to this.

The feedback on the draft is being collated and used to update the charter. We will also produce a 'you said, we did' document to demonstrate how/where community views on the draft were used.

We, the Council, both within our leadership and its representative day to day officers therefore look forward to working and discussing many of the improvements through the development of the masterplan with all members of the Ladywood community over the forthcoming years.

Yours sincerely,



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