

New Road, Rainham

Notting Hill Genesis and The London Borough of Havering

Residential Relocation Strategy

February 2019

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In line with the Land Acquisition Strategy for the New Road (A1306) Regeneration Project, it is Notting Hill Genesis' ("NHG") intention to acquire residential properties by agreement wherever possible. NHG will only request that the London Borough of Havering (the "Council") use its compulsory purchase powers in the event negotiated agreements cannot be reached and as a last resort.
- 1.2 However, because of the potential use of compulsory purchase powers, when engaging with owners and residents of residential properties at New Road, NHG and the Council will have regard to government Compulsory Purchase Order Guidance (the "CPO Guidance"). Therefore NHG, the Council and the appointed Property Agent, Ardent Management Limited ("Ardent") will:
- Make offers to property owners and residents which reflect their entitlement to compulsory purchase compensation and the 'value for money' the acquisition may provide to the project as a whole.
 - Engage proactively and constructively with residents over relocation issues where relevant.
 - Work with residents to mitigate the risk of loss, as far as it is able to do so.
 - Where disputes over compensation arise, give consideration to settlement of those disputes through the early use of Alternative Dispute Resolution.
- 1.3 It is NHG's and the Council's aim to provide owners and residents with greater certainty in terms of when their properties will be acquired, their entitlement to compensation and how relocation could be achieved and funded.
- 1.4 Of the 32 residential properties that have been identified as requiring acquisition to implement the New Road Regeneration Project 31 are occupied by private tenants. As such this Residential Relocation Strategy (the "RRS") has been developed to provide information on housing options, financial compensation and the practical support that can be given to private tenants. A bespoke RRS will be developed for the one owner occupier.

Summary of assistance for Private Tenants

- Be offered timely re-housing advice from Ardent and the Council's Housing Advice and Housing Options Team including entitlement to housing benefits, through a housing needs assessment interview
- Be entitled to claim for a Home Loss payment and for the costs of moving out of the affected property providing specified criteria is met; and
- Subject to eligibility, apply for financial assistance to help secure a home in the private rented sector.

Rehousing Options

- Move to alternative private rented accommodation with a private landlord (within or outside the borough)
- Purchase a property elsewhere within or outside the borough through a low cost home ownership scheme
- Purchase a new affordable home in the regeneration area once the development is completed and ready for occupation

1.5 A key commitment of the RRS is the principle of 'on-going consultation', and NHG and the Council will continue to provide clear communication to ensure residents are informed and involved throughout the acquisition process in addition to the required periods of formal statutory consultation. This process will be led by the Council and Ardent who will contact owners and residents, and who will seek to arrange face-to-face meetings and follow up correspondence. In addition, the process will be supplemented by a series of periodic mail-outs and consultation events that will be arranged by the Council.

1.6 The Council will publish, on its own dedicated website (www.rainhamandbeampark.co.uk), details of support available to residents, in particular residents requiring extra assistance, such as Government and Council initiatives. The Council will review these details over the life of the project.

2 Review of the Occupiers

- 2.1 There are 32 residential properties that have been identified as requiring acquisition to implement the New Road Regeneration Project. The existing residential dwellings are largely a mix of freehold bungalows and two storey houses, as well as flats above commercial premises.
- 2.2 Of the 32 residential properties along the A1306 31 are occupied by private rental tenants, the majority with Assured Short-hold Tenancy agreements in place. The only owner occupied property is 187a New Road.
- 2.3 Where possible the Council, NHG and Ardent have sought to engage proactively and constructively with the private tenants occupying the residential properties.
- 2.4 The Council is undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to fully understand how the redevelopment proposals may disproportionately affect occupiers with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. Information gathered during the EqIA will be used to establish where residents with protected characteristics have housing needs, requiring specific provision. The EqIA will make recommendations for measures to manage any disproportionate effects, and for monitoring the effectiveness of those measures, which will be implemented by the Council to supplement this strategy.

3 Residential Relocation Approach

- 3.1 NHG and the Council have no formal statutory obligation to rehouse private tenants of freeholders who are currently living in property affected by the New Road Regeneration Project. This includes lodgers of tenants who are not considered to be part of the tenant's household. However, NHG and the Council are committed to offering appropriate support to enable affected tenants to find a replacement home. The level of support available will differ according to the requirements of each individual resident.
- 3.2 As a last resort, if the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order is needed to acquire residential properties which NHG cannot acquire by negotiation, this will have the effect of terminating any private tenancy agreements in affected properties.
- 3.3 The Council and Ardent will endeavour to visit all affected private tenants to offer assistance in finding suitable and affordable alternative accommodation. A bespoke rehousing plan will be agreed with all private tenants who are visited to include the following:

- An analysis of rehousing requirements in respect of tenure, size, location and budget;
- An analysis of any special needs and/or requirements particularly for older residents, families with children, BAME residents, residents who are disabled and any other residents requiring extra assistance through the process;
- Ardent will put forward details of local letting agents operating in and outside the Borough and potentially suitable properties on the open market having regard to identified residents requirements and needs. This may include accommodation within the private rented market and depending on timing and need allowing nominations to affordable rented properties being developed for NHG as part of the regeneration proposals.

3.4 Should vulnerable and/or residents with special needs be identified the rehousing options for these residents will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The Council will carry out a formal Housing Needs Assessment to determine eligibility for Council/ Social Housing and where eligibility is confirmed support will be provided by the Council to source suitable and affordable rented accommodation.

3.5 The Council and other social landlords are building new Council and affordable homes across the Borough including the new homes to be provided as part of the New Road Regeneration project. A low-cost ownership home can be purchased through the Government's 'Help to Buy' initiative. The Council and NHG will provide information on the types of new low cost home ownership properties that will be available and the location of these new homes, whether within the Borough or elsewhere. The purchase of new homes will depend on the scheme type and individual financial circumstances of the affected resident. low cost home ownership may be an attractive option for private tenants who wish to get on the housing ladder.

4 Financial Assistance and Compensation

4.1 Based on individual circumstances, the Council and NHG will consider providing financial assistance to affected residents under the terms of the Council's 'Find your Own' scheme, the benefits of which are:

- Financial help for affected residents to rent a property in an area of choice
- An opportunity for affected residents to find a property which is affordable and meets their needs
- A one off cash incentive payment equal to two month's rent made directly to the agent/landlord of the property on behalf of the resident

- The landlord will be required to provide the following:
 - Proof of property ownership
 - An Energy Performance Certificate
 - A Gas and Electrical safety certificate
 - A carbon monoxide alarm (if appropriate)
 - A copy of the signed tenancy agreement

Home Loss

- 4.2 Qualifying private tenants who are being displaced as a result of New Road Regeneration Project have a statutory entitlement to a basic Home Loss payment to cover the loss of their home, as well as disturbance payments to cover any costs reasonably incurred in moving and/or purchasing a new property.
- 4.3 A Home Loss Payment is made where qualifying residents are required to leave their home due to a Local Authorities plans for regeneration. The payment is a sum in recognition of the inconvenience of having to move out of an existing home. While the basis on which a Home Loss Payments can be made is set out in statute, the Council has undertaken to make a Home Loss Payment to all qualifying residents displaced as a result of its regeneration proposals.
- 4.4 Home Loss Payments made where there is no Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) in place on the property are made at the discretion of the Council. This is because the Council is not obliged by law to make a payment unless there is a CPO in place and it is only under such circumstance that there will be a statutory requirement to make a payment to affected residents.
- 4.5 Where there is no statutory requirement to make a Home Loss Payment the Council will therefore offer qualifying residents a Home Loss Payment on a voluntary basis.
- 4.6 In order to qualify for a Home Loss Payment a resident should:
- Have lived in the affected dwelling, or a substantial part of it, as their only or main residence for a period of at least 12 consecutive months. Proof of residency is required to support an application for a Home Loss Payment, for example, Council Tax receipts, bank statements and utility bills; and
 - Have an interest or right to occupy the property that is freehold, leasehold, statutory tenancy (including Assured Shorthold Tenancy) or restricted contract under the Rent Act 1977, or a right to occupy under the terms of the employment or under a licence where secure tenancy or introductory tenancy provisions apply.

- 4.7 The level of Home Loss compensation is set by the Government in accordance with the Planning and Compensation Act (1991), the Land Compensation Act (1973) and Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) (England) Regulations (2017). The level is reviewed annually. A qualifying private tenant is entitled to receive the minimum Home Loss payment which is currently £6,300.

Disturbance Compensation

- 4.8 Disturbance compensation is paid where qualifying residents are required to leave their home to compensate for reasonable financial costs associated with moving to a new home. The aim of the payment is to cover the expenses of moving so that the resident is not financially better or worse off as a result of the regeneration programme.

- 4.9 Disturbance compensation subject to eligibility can be claimed for:

- Expenses related to arranging own removal or the Council would arrange removals and pay for these directly;
- Re-direction of mail for each authorised surname living at the address (for one year only);
- Alterations to furnishings, e.g. uplifting, refitting and alteration of carpets and curtains;
- Disconnection and re-connection of services e.g. broadband, phone line and domestic appliances;
- Moveable fixtures and fittings e.g. light fittings;
- Special adaptations previously assessed as required, for accessibility/disability purposes in the new property;
- Refitting of special locks and alarms;
- Costs of new school uniforms if being rehoused in a different area and children need to change schools;
- Replacement carpets, curtains white goods or furniture (reasonable costs allowed if residents can demonstrate existing furnishings, white goods or furniture will not fit in their new home or be modified);
- Agents and legal fees arising from the grant of a tenancy for a replacement property.

This list is not exhaustive and other reasonable additional costs incurred by residents may be met. Residents will however be expected to limit their costs where it is reasonable to do so. The Council's advisor, Ardent, will be able to advise whether an expense will be considered reasonable in advance of it being incurred.

