

# Progress on the building works to the Noel Park Pods

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Noel Park Estate is part of a conservation area due to its' architectural significance in the Borough. The Council owns the majority of the properties on the Noel Park Estate. There is also a significant homeownership presence on the estate both freehold and leasehold through residents who exercised the right to buy.
- 1.2 The properties on the Noel Park estate currently do not meet the Decent Homes Standard. On 19 January 2021, Cabinet approved the award of a contract to Engie Regeneration Ltd, for the first phase of the works. These works will be delivered in line with the holistic approach outlined in the approved Asset Management Strategy, 2020. The works include replacing windows, roofs, front doors and where the extensions are being replaced upgrading electrical installations, replacing kitchens and bathrooms.
- 1.3 242 properties have their kitchens and bathrooms in prefabricated extensions, known as the Pods, which were installed in the 1970s and within their construction is Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM). The replacement of these Pods has been the most challenging aspect of this project, as they are integrated in the properties and provide essential facilities (kitchens and bathrooms) which make the properties uninhabitable whilst these works are completed. The solution is to replace the pods with factory manufactured modular extensions as this reduces construction time on-site and minimises the disruption to residents.
- 1.4 As the Scrutiny Panel is aware this is resulting in large leaseholder costs and a considerable amount of work has been done by the Council to lessen the impact of these costs on leaseholders.

## 2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Works on Noel Park were due to start on site this financial year, however, they have been delayed due to additional information being requested by planners due the properties being in conversation area which included how the design proposals maintain the heritage characteristics of the estate. A specialist contract needed to be procured to provide this support.
- 2.2 The formal leaseholder consultation was also reissued, after wider informal consultation had been completed to have a greater understanding of any hardship issues which may be experienced by leaseholders as a result of the high costs.

- 2.3** It has been agreed with the planners that the planning application will be submitted in phases, and the first planning application has now been submitted. This has included a heritage statement (attached) and a design and access statement. Once planning is granted for the first stage, subsequent phases will be submitted to enable the programme of works to smoothly follow on and maintain the manufacturing slots within the factory.
- 2.4** Work has started on the manufacture of the elements of the pods which will not be impacted by the planning application. This was to ensure that the factory slot which had been booked was not lost and the agreed price was maintained.
- 2.5** As the pods were not being completed this financial year, condition surveys have been undertaken of the pods and enabling asbestos removal works have been brought forward to avoid further delays once planning is granted for the works. These works are programmed to complete by the end of April 2022.
- 2.6** The team have been using the delays in the programme to undertake further resident engagement and the consultation with the residents on the design proposal for the houses completed at the end of January.
- 2.7** The decanting policy has been reviewed to ensure that the residents who need to be decanted for works to be undertaken have the minimal level of disruption possible. We have started engaging with residents to identify any special requirements including disabilities and schools attended by their children so when the decant is required the most appropriate accommodation is allocated.
- 2.8** Internal works to kitchens on Gladstone Avenue, without the Pod extensions will be starting in March 2022, as these works can be completed in advance of the planning consent being granted.
- 2.9** The team are also undertaking any other statutory consultations or notifications which will be required prior to works starting, including issuing party wall notices.
- 2.10** The contract team are in place, and this has included the recruitment of an apprentice Resident Liaison Officer who started in Autumn last year and further trade apprenticeships will be offered once the works timetable is finalised.
- 2.11** The contractor is creating a microsite for residents to provide an interactive forum for them to be informed about any project related issues.
- 2.12** The contractors are working with the Homes for Haringey Team to look at ways in which they can provide wider support to the residents on Noel Park including an energy advice initiative.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 Although, the overall programme for the external works on Noel Park have been delayed, the team have been undertaken as much enabling work as possible to lessen the impact once planning has been granted.**