

## Department of Community and Children's Services

### Housing Services

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Director of Community & Children's Services

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Date 23 October 2014

Dear Resident

### **Middlesex Street Estate Development Project – Phase 3**

You may remember that I wrote to you in July this year, giving you an update on the proposals for Phase 3 of the Middlesex Street Estate Development Project. I explained that we had commissioned a final study to look at how the proposed development would affect existing homes on the estate and neighbouring properties and that this would tell us whether the scheme was feasible or not.

We have now received the study, which reveals that the proposed development on the estate would severely affect the amount of natural light in existing homes and in neighbouring properties. We have discussed all possibilities with the City's Planning Department, and they have advised us that they could not grant planning permission on this basis. We have discussed a smaller development with them, but from what they have told us, it appears that even this would not be feasible. A smaller development would also not generate enough money to fund Phase 3.

In my July letter, I said that we planned to consult you about the options regarding Phase 3 before making a decision. However, given what we now know, the only feasible option is to simply move on and carry out the much needed essential repairs and maintenance work on the estate as swiftly as possible. The consultation will now focus on that work.

The Phase 3 proposals were an exciting idea, but there was always a risk that they would not be feasible, and this has turned out to be the case. I know that some residents were concerned about the proposals and will be relieved that the project is not going ahead. However, some residents, particularly leaseholders who hoped to benefit from the scheme by having repairs and improvements to their homes done without charge, will be extremely disappointed, and I can only say how sorry we all are that this will not be possible.

We are now in the process of carrying out surveys to determine exactly what is needed to be done so that we can decide on the order of work, draw up specifications, establish estimated costs and appoint contractors to carry out the work. We will let you know as soon as possible what will be done and when.

Leaseholders will be liable to pay the costs of these works to their homes, but full statutory consultation will take place with them first. There will be a range of measures available to help leaseholders who cannot afford the costs of the work.

Leaseholders on the estate who have already been charged for the cost of installing triple-glazed windows will receive a refund of the extra costs of the triple-glazing. This is because the triple-glazing was closely linked to the Phase 3 proposals for overcladding, and leaseholders may not have chosen this option had it been known that Phase 3 would not go ahead. We will be writing to those leaseholders individually to tell them what the refund will be and to make arrangements for it to be paid before Christmas. Leaseholders will have the extra cost of installing the triple glazed windows refunded to their service charge accounts.

I enclose a question and answer sheet which I hope will be helpful. We would be very happy to meet with leaseholders to explain the position in greater detail, and will liaise with the Petticoat Square Leaseholders' Association to organise this.

We will also be writing to all residents as soon as we have more details of the essential works to be carried out and will be organising consultation over the coming months. Our energy and resources will now be put into making sure your homes are brought up to a high standard as quickly as we can.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacquie Campbell', written in a cursive style.

Jacquie Campbell  
Assistant Director, Housing & Neighbourhoods