

## **Basements Working Group**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 10.00 – 11.45, Kensington Town Hall**

**Present:** Councillor Pascall, Councillor Holt, Kevin O'Connor, Simon Haslam, Julian Williams, Sophia Lambert, Dr. James Thompson, Marina Murray, Michael Bach, Terrance Bendixon, Clive Wilson, Penelope Tollitt, Preeti Gulati, Emily Marriott-Brittan

**Notes of the last meeting:** had not been circulated

**Actions from the last meeting:** none

### **Policy Discussion:**

#### h. Carbon

- Concern that it could be unreasonable if a dwelling had recently been refurbished and had complex wiring and sound systems, and if it required plaster to be removed
- Is the principle justified? The policy has been in use since 2009
- General support that the policy was correct in general, but concern that the specifics – to be set out in the SPD – would deal with all matters: the policy was about carbon, but the various BREEAM tools covered more than this – unclear if the intent of the policy was to deal with other matters separately, or under this policy, if so the policy was not quite correct, and did not address all the matters in the London Plan.
- Agreed BREAMM related systems were not just cosmetic, and were a useful tool. The critical thing was to ensure the points were used to secure the benefits that the council was seeking – was it carbon or a wider suite? It should focus on the things that are less easily changed
- Waste recycling etc is controlled through the considerate contractor scheme.
- Do the mitigation measures have to be on site, or could off-set schemes be used?
- Feeling that off-set measures need to be local to the development, and certain of actually delivering the off-setting – actual measures being carried out.
- Concern that BREAMM assessments for domestic properties would not include car lifts, hydraulic pumps for swimming pools, pumps for drainage and other 'non-standard' but energy hungry installations.
- Need to have a single assessment document – don't want to end up with an energy statement and an eco homes statement and a waste management statement etc etc.

#### Policy CE2 (flooding)

- General support

#### **Article 4s**

- General support for a borough wide measure.
- Concern that we needed to think through the 'additional basement' policy in relation to PD. Currently an additional basement is PD, whether the existing

building has an existing basement or not. The policy was proposing to refuse a further basement if one already exists. If this policy is taken forward, it would not be right to say, therefore, that the Article 4 is only to impose controls on construction impacts, and not remove the rights for those basements, as it would be removing a basement under an existing basement.

**AOB:**

- Deeper (commercial) basements need to ensure ground water etc issues are properly addressed in the engineering report – surface and ground water, hydrology and geology.
- SL tabled feedback he had received from an architect in relation to listed buildings. The group noted that the comments were anonymous.
- Concern that Thames Water's comments should be taken very seriously.
- Next steps: a revised paper to be taken to Cllr Ahern on 20<sup>th</sup> March. At that time a decision will be made if a further round of consultation will be merited or not. If so, consultation will start on 21<sup>st</sup> March for 6 weeks. After that, the finalised policy is reported to Council in June, issued for 'soundness' consultation over the summer, submitted to PINS in the autumn, with the examination taking place hopefully before Christmas. Adoption would therefore be in the new year.

**Actions:**

- None

Thanks were expressed to all those who had participated in the working groups – with the number of long meetings in a very short space of time. If the policy is issued for a second round of consultation, the group would be re-convened.