



Sian Berry AM
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
LONDON SE1 2AA

To Tom Copley
Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development
Via email

25 September 2020

Dear Tom,

Lambeth estates and GLA grant funding

I'm writing to you for clarity, and with some urgency about the situation at South Lambeth Estate, following your recent exchange of letters with Councillor Jonathan Bartley, the leader of the opposition on Lambeth Council.

I am pleased that it appears residents of Cressingham Gardens, Central Hill, the Fenwick Estate and now the Westbury Estate have the assurance of a binding ballot on any new plans brought forward, either because no exemption has been pursued or because the schemes have been withdrawn from the funding programme by Lambeth Council.

However, it is not completely clear from the letter the status of each of the estates, and whether Westbury was removed from the funding programme by your action or that of the council. Could you please provide for clarity a table summarising a) the funding status, and b) the current ballot exemption status, including whether this was granted and then withdrawn, for each of the six estates, including Knight's Walk and South Lambeth Estate?

It was reassuring to see from your reply to Councillor Bartley that you will be rigorous in your application of the funding conditions set out in the Mayor's strengthened Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration when any future plans come forward for four of these estates.

However, this still leaves residents I have been supporting on the South Lambeth Estate without any of the same reassurances. In your correspondence you said: "South Lambeth is still funded by the Mayor and if the project goes ahead in this programme with the same number of demolitions, that exemption would also continue."

Residents from this estate have contacted me very concerned that their voices are still not being heard, and that they have been left behind facing further demolition without a say, and without having had the detailed landlord offer and that estates with the right to a ballot are now able to scrutinise.



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These residents have spent too long living with the uncertainty and worry that a flawed process left them with. It is now more than 21 months since the funding contract was signed and 12 months since the ballot exemption was granted by your predecessor.¹ Although phase 1 has progressed, only outline permission is granted for phase 2,² and the future of the rest of the estate has been subject to major changes in the management of the development plans, as highlighted in Councillor Bartley's letter.

The residents have also been told that construction work on the first phase of the plans will begin within days, with contractors already preparing to demolish the caretakers room, which is adjacent to a family who are shielding from the coronavirus and who have a profoundly disabled daughter.

From their reports it appears that the residents have not only been denied a ballot to have a say on the future of their homes and estate, but also that Lambeth Council are not engaging with them about the 'pre-building' works that are already beginning or the management of construction, .

I would therefore like to ask you to visit the estate and meet the TRA and residents to:

- discuss with them the earlier consultation work and hear their arguments for why their exemption from ballots should be rescinded for phase 2, and
- see the impact that the upcoming building works will have on them, including the proximity of these works to vulnerable residents, and consider intervening to ensure major works at this location are delayed until the end of any coronavirus-related restrictions that could trap residents in their homes with constant noise and dust for months, if the planned timetable is maintained.

In addition, following up on questions I put to you at the Housing Committee, please can you urgently update the information provided on the GLA website about ballots and exemptions, which is still only giving information up to January and February 2020.

Yours sincerely,



Sian Berry
Green Party Member of the London Assembly
cc Councillor Jonathan Bartley, Lambeth Council

¹ Estate regeneration data spreadsheet, Estate Regeneration Projects approved before July 2018, accessed 24 September 2020 <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/estate-regeneration-data>

² Borough application reference 17/05993/OUT, GLA case number 4251 <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/planning-applications-and-decisions/planning-application-search/south-lambeth-estate>

