

35% Campaign

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Elephant Amenity Network

21 September 2015

Kate Davies

Chief Executive Officer

Notting Hill Housing Trust

Re: Aylesbury estate redevelopment - rent level concerns

Dear Ms Davies,

I am writing about the prospective rent levels of new social housing in the Aylesbury estate redevelopment.

Members of our network have expressed concern that throughout the public consultation for the redevelopment plans there has been a great deal of confusion about the tenure and rent levels of the replacement 'affordable' housing to be provided by Notting Hill Housing.

Concerns have been compounded by the fact that Notting Hill's funding for the redevelopment is linked to the provision of **affordable rent** rather than **social rent**. During the April 2015 CPO Public Inquiry for the Aylesbury redevelopment, your representative Rosemary Houseman assured the public that "*there is not a massive difference*" between social rent and the rent levels of the new 'affordable' homes Notting Hill plans to build.

We are writing to seek detailed clarification on this difference, i.e. what exactly will the new prospective rents be?

We believe this information was specified as part of Notting Hill's bid submission for the Mayor's funding ([2015-18 MHC Affordable Housing Programme](#)). Page 21 of the [IMS bidding guidance](#) for this funding programme shows that prospective rent levels would have been entered for each unit type of every new home receiving funding under this programme:

Unit Type Entry - [NOT SAVED]

Offer Line SP ID: 6885 Name Affordable Rent Firm Proposal

Unit Id

Unit Detail Supported Housing Revenue Funding Client Groups Rent

Rent type: Discounted Expected market value (£):

Service charge per week (£): Discounted Capped

Prospective rent per week inclusive of all charges (£):

Market Rent pw (£):

Prospective rent as % of Market Rent inclusive of all charges:

Target rent plus service charges exceeds 80% of the market rent.

Save Cancel

We are therefore writing to request the following information:

1. How many new affordable rented homes on the Aylesbury estate did Notting Hill bid for under this programme?
2. How many of these were bid for at 'discounted' affordable rent? and how many were bid for at 'capped' affordable rent?
3. Please provide the data that was entered in the field 'prospective rent per week' entered by Notting Hill under each category for each unit type, as well as the corresponding 'prospective rent as % of market rent'.

The Aylesbury estate at 2,759 council homes, is by far the largest council estate regeneration scheme in the country. Given the growing concern that existing tenants will be unable to afford the replacement 'affordable' housing and given the vast sum of public funds being allocated to the scheme, we believe that it is in the public interest to disclose this information.

We also believe that it is in Notting Hill's interest to disclose this information, especially at a time when the role of Housing Associations is being called into question. Being open and transparent about the funding arrangements and prospective rent levels of replacement social housing on the Aylesbury, will help to allay fears and improve the public's perception of the scheme.

Please note that we have made a similar request for this information to the Greater London Authority and the Homes and Communities Agency under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Our request to you is primarily an appeal to you personally to provide this information in the first instance, without us having to go through the process of referrals to the Information Commissioner or the Information Tribunal.

Should you decide not to disclose this information at your discretion, then please treat this as an information request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. (We understand that the confusion about whether Housing Associations are public bodies and therefore subject to such information requests, has recently been addressed by the Prime Minister and Office for National Statistics.)

In either case we look forward to hearing from you and please don't hesitate to contact me should you require any further information relating to our request.

Yours sincerely,

Jerry Flynn

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