
From: Constantine Gras <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 18 August 2015 17:44
To: Judith Blakeman
Subject: Re: Eddie's Blog

Dear Judith,

Many thanks for your support. As ever, much appreciated.

Even in those days - young professionals struggling to get on the property ladder! Well done on getting the freehold.

Perhaps the most outlandish suggestion in the first design discussions involved building an office block directly over the railway line and connecting the estate to the station with escalators - Stratford and Westfield East, springs to mind.

Incidentally, the old baths feature in *Leo The Last* as an inspired location for a neighbourhood riot. I think you'll love the surreal grunginess of that film.

It would be good to contact anyone in RBKC from the 1970s. Do you have any contacts with any old associates in planning / housing? They are probably long since retired or dead. The borough architect, Robert Redvers Martin, had taken over co-ordinating the scheme from the original architects (Clifford Wearden and Associates). I wonder if he is still alive.

Here are a few voices from the archive;

9.6.63 Housing Report: Mr Wearden asks does the council want high or low income group development. Warden thinks mixed the best. Replay - we have never built for middle income. The essential thing is to house the housing list.

March 1977, R.R.Martin in letter to Dept of Environment:

"The general planning concept has varied radically from the original conceived 10 or 15 years ago and the completed schemes were part of a grand concept including level segregation of a new road and vehicle parking below ground and a high level pedestrian deck. Since that original concept, the general planning philosophy has turned to lower densities, lower buildings, large dwellings at ground level with private garden and reduced expenditure on road and parking infrastructure.

The problem has been to complete the design in accordance with the new criteria and to integrate this with the parts already built and occupied.

in general terms the main physical changes now incorporated in the latest layout are the omission of the low-level new road, re-allocation of open space area and 2 & 3 storey conventional medium density housing with private gardens and surface car parking on the remaining sites.

Newly formed tenant associations will be pressing to see the present wilderness improved now that the demolition contracts have been completed.

Encouraging residents who opposed demolition of baths to put forward suggestions. Considering design of shopping percent if baths are demolished.

I hope that you will agree that after a considerable period of change and redesign, we have made a successful effort to produce a viable overall plan which will knit together and that you can give your approval to both the overall plan now presented and the layouts of the outstanding phases of the development."

Thanks for the other suggestions. We can talk about locations for displays in due course.

I wonder if LW is 40 years old this year. Some residents mention moving in during 1975. Can't clear this up yet in the archive?

Thanks for contacting Mr Shepard. No rush on that front.

All the best
Constantine.

P.S. I love this image of a shopping centre at the heart of the estate and it appears to be built around Silchester baths.



On 18 Aug 2015, at 16:33, Judith Blakeman <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Constantine

There is absolutely no problem with Beinazir being interviewed, indeed that is quite excellent. And I am happy to be re-interviewed and will certainly speak on the cockroach incident.

Wesley Square and St. Andrew's Square were built as low cost private housing for "young professionals" who could not otherwise afford to buy property locally. I think the intention was to slightly gentrify the area. The Council itself set all three up as co-ownerships which were the in thing in those days (apparently no co-ownership could comprise more than 50 properties. Wesley Square has exactly 50 but the St. Andrew's Square complex – including Bartle Road and part of St. Mark's Road - had more than 50 so had to divide into two). I am not sure if the two co-ownerships were ever actually designated as being a part of the Lancaster West estate itself. Both Wesley Square and St. Andrew's bought their freeholds from RBKC in the 1990s thanks to the Tory government legislation allowing freeholds to be purchased – something we are eternally grateful for having done, now that the whole area is threatened with regeneration. Modesty forbids me from mentioning who led this scheme to buy them up! But it was quite a nightmare procedure at the time and took for ever.

I will send Claire a Notting Dale *Live* application form and ask Mr. Shepherd what has happened to the old Council meeting minutes that used to be in the Members' Room .

I have now got *Leo the Last* on DVD but have not yet watched it. The Academy is the ideal place for screening both. Where will the exhibition be held? How about the Leisure Centre?

I will ask the Town Clerk about also holding it in the foyer at the Town Hall. Really glad to hear Peter Deakins is involved.

Cheers.

Judith

From: Constantine Gras [<mailto:constantine.gras@bt.com>]
Sent: 18 August 2015 11:47
To: Judith Blakeman
Subject: Re: Eddie's Blog

Hi Judith,

Crickey! I didn't quite expect that, but pleased to see that the art work is being appreciated.

I recorded a nice interview with Benazir last week talking about her life experiences on the estate and work as a councillor. Are there any issues with her (as a Cllr) being interviewed for the film? This was something we wanted to ask you.

Also it would be good to do a follow up interview with you. I'm not sure this will appear in the film (as I already have one Cllr who lives on the estate and [REDACTED] which probably doesn't count itself as part of the estate now - shame on you!). But it could appear in the display panels for an exhibition.

Claire wants to talk to you about ward funding for the residency. She's been a tad busy and has probably forgotten.

Do you have any further information about council meetings at RBKC that would provide information about Lancaster West? The paper records in the local studies archive dries up around 1982. I particularly like your account of cockroaches being thrown into the mix at a council meeting.

Peter Deakins who was the original design architect for Lancaster West is working on some display boards. I'm looking to use this as part of a display in Grenfell Tower once the community space is complete. You mentioned the Academy and that would be a good place to screen the film produced. Maybe we can also screen Leo The Last here? You missed this last time round. I'm also wondering whether we might be able to bring a display down to the town hall. The story of the estate is one worth sharing with the wider borough, especially policy makers on regeneration and housing who are making decisions on its future.

All the best
Constantine.

P.S. below are original plans to build a shopping and office complex as part of the development and your house is tucked behind that church piazza. Interestingly, this scheme from the outset had mixed use and the sale of housing for professionals as part of later phases of development (which you know well!). This was the idea of the architect and only with reluctance taken up by the council who at the time had the listing list as their priority.

<image001.jpg>

On 18 Aug 2015, at 10:17, Judith Blakeman <[REDACTED]> wrote:

You have been praised to the skies on Eddie's Grenfell Action Group blog. Well done!

Judith