

GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MARK ANDERSON

I, MARK ANDERSON, WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS:-

1. I make this statement voluntarily to assist the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.
2. I understand that I may be called to give evidence to the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry. I hope to be able to assist the Inquiry team in its task of understanding how the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017 began and how it spread in the manner it did, leading to such devastating loss of life.
3. The matters in this statement cover the period during which I worked for the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation ("TMO"). While some of the matters discussed are within my direct recollection, I have been provided with documents which I have used to prompt my memory in respect of other matters.
4. I would like to start by giving my most sincere condolences to all those affected by the fire. The loss of life and the impact on the area is one of complete devastation.

Background and role

5. From 2010 to January 2013 I was the Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering at the TMO (the job title was subsequently changed during my time at the TMO to that of Director of Assets & Regeneration).
6. My background is as follows. I studied architecture at university and worked in private practice in London until 1992 when I accepted a role with Sanctuary Housing. I have worked in the social housing sector ever since, in both fixed employment and consultancy roles.

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7. In 2010 I accepted a consultancy role at the TMO having been approached by Robert Black, the Chief Executive, and Sacha Jevans, the Executive Director of Operations. I had previously worked with Sacha at the London Borough of Havering and at Hyde Southbank Homes.
8. I worked at the TMO for just over two years, from 2010 to 2013. As the Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering, I was responsible for the strategic planning and delivery of the TMO's business, capital investment, planned maintenance and asset management in respect of the property assets, to meet existing and future needs. I reported to Robert Black and Sacha Jevans.
9. About 18 months into my time at the TMO I was asked if I would be interested in a permanent role however I made the decision not to pursue this opportunity and subsequently left. I am aware that Peter Maddison was recruited into my role.
10. Since leaving the TMO I have continued to work in the social housing sector and currently hold the position of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Property Services at East Kent Housing.

Grenfell Tower's original design, construction and composition

11. I was not employed by the TMO, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council ("RBKC") or any other organisation with an association to Grenfell Tower and the Lancaster West Estate in 1974 when the construction of Grenfell Tower and the Lancaster West Estate was completed. It follows that my knowledge of the design, construction and composition of Grenfell Tower and the Lancaster West Estate is limited to what I learnt during my involvement in the very early planning stages of the proposed refurbishment project in 2012.
12. Because I was not employed by the TMO, the RBKC or any other organisation associated to Grenfell Tower and the Lancaster West Estate in 1974, I would not be able to comment on whether Grenfell Tower and the Lancaster West Estate, as originally constructed, complied with all relevant regulations, legislation, British Standards, guidance and industry practice. I have no knowledge of what assessments and decisions were made about such compliance and by whom.

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Subsequent modifications prior to the 2012-2016 refurbishment

13. With the exception of a pre-existing fire door replacement programme that had been agreed between the TMO, the RBKC and the London Fire Brigade (“LFB”), for which I had no direct responsibility, I have no detailed knowledge of any modifications to Grenfell Tower that took place prior to the 2012-2016 refurbishment.

Modifications to the interior of the building between 2012 and 2016

14. During the time I was at the TMO, the RBKC undertook the detailed design and procurement of a project which resulted in the construction of the Kensington Academy and Leisure Centre (“KALC”) within the Lancaster West Estate and immediately next to Grenfell Tower.
15. The TMO was not a regular provider of regeneration services however during the time I worked there I recall that stock condition surveys were carried out by a company called Savills which were aimed at identify underperforming assets within the RBKC housing stock and their anticipated investment needs.
16. Among the properties identified by these surveys as having significant investment needs was the Lancaster West Estate and in particular, Grenfell Tower, which had not been substantively modernised, beyond that of cosmetic improvements, since it was originally constructed. In addition to this, the construction of the KALC had created tensions in the Lancaster West Estate community and it was felt that it would be fair to those residents to improve their living conditions by regenerating the Lancaster West Estate starting with Grenfell Tower.
17. These factors led to conversations between the RBKC and the TMO as to whether the Lancaster West Estate and in particular Grenfell Tower could be regenerated alongside the KALC project. Significant benefits of bringing the two projects together was that there could be a sharing of consultancy work, minimisation of any periods of disruption to residents and the community and the potential for greater efficiency through a combination of the project scope and scale.

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18. In January 2012 I presented a report to the Operations Committee about a regeneration funding opportunity available for the TMO in respect of the Lancaster West Estate and in particular Grenfell Tower (**MA/I, January 2012 Operations Committee: Grenfell Tower Report': TMO10001001**). This Report noted the RBKC had secured funding for the construction of the KALC to the North and East of Grenfell Tower.
19. The Report also advised the Committee that the RBKC had recognised that the KALC project would have a significant impact on the residents of Grenfell Tower. Consequently the RBKC requested that the TMO develop a detailed proposal for the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower as a "Legacy" project to be procured in tandem with the KALC Project (**MA/I: TMO10001001**). The proposal included over-cladding Grenfell Tower and providing additional residential properties to the lower levels of the Tower. The funds for the project were to be generated from the disposal of void basement areas at the RBKC property within Elm Park Gardens.
20. As the Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering, I was involved in the very early stages of the planning of the refurbishment, from the introduction of the project in January 2012 through to my departure from the TMO in January 2013. This may be summarised as RIBA Work Stages A to D of the RIBA Outline Plan of Work 2007 as amended November 2008.
21. My primary involvement in the Grenfell Tower refurbishment project was seeking the necessary approvals from the RBKC, securing the funding, consultant team appointment and management, community and resident communication and engagement, integration of the proposals with the KALC project, developing the planning application and securing planning permission and obtaining the TMO Board approvals required to commence the project. In those early stages I attended consultant team project meetings, programme board meetings, design team meetings, evening meetings with community groups and residents, the RBKC KALC project meetings, the RBKC finance team meetings and meetings with the RBKC Cabinet members regarding funding requirements.



22. I do recall leading several meetings relating to the project however in the latter stages of my engagement by the TMO and once Peter Maddison was appointed, my involvement in the consultant team project meetings, community and resident meetings reduced. Paul Dunkerton was employed as a project manager within the Asset, Investment and Engineering team and he provided support to the consultant team and attended some community and resident meetings. His involvement was to be reviewed by Peter Maddison in advance of a contractor being appointed to carry out the refurbishment work.
23. The project team and priorities for the refurbishment were presented to the TMO Board on 8 January 2012 (**MA/2, '08 January 2012 TMO Board: Grenfell Tower Regeneration Project': TMO10001898**). In identifying the priorities for Grenfell Tower, we engaged with community and resident groups and residents generally about what they wanted. The priorities emerged as including improvements to the heating and hot water system, external insulated cladding, new windows, the enclosure of the open lower level corner and the provision of additional residential units (**MA/1: TMO10001001**).
24. In the same meeting on 8 January 2012, I presented an outline budget proposal to the RBKC which at that time was estimated to be £9.768m (**MA/2: TMO10001898**).
25. Because the TMO was a housing management organisation, it did not employ the expert designers and contractors that would be required to refurbish Grenfell Tower. To achieve this, it needed to procure those experts externally. I have endeavoured to set out the extent of my involvement in this procurement process below.
26. The Grenfell Tower refurbishment project was able to piggyback the OJEU notice and procurement process which had been used by the RBKC to procure the consultants and contractors for the KALC project. While this satisfied the RBKC and EU legislation in terms of procurement, the TMO standing orders meant that we had to obtain the TMO Board approval for a waiver for the consultants as we had not been through an open competitive tender process.



27. The project team used for the KALC project included Studio E Architects as lead consultant with Appleyards Cost Consultants and Employers Agent, Max Fordham Services Engineers and Leadbitter Group as the principal contractor, all of which had been procured using the EU and UK Central Government compliant IESE Framework (MA/2: TMO10001898).
28. I recall attending meetings throughout 2012 at Appleyard's offices in Holburn to discuss the Grenfell Tower refurbishment project. Initially these meetings took place on a monthly basis however as the volume of work necessary to progress the project increased and planning submission deadline approached they subsequently increased to fortnightly.
29. On 29 January 2012 I emailed Bruce Sounes of Studio E Architects advising him of the RBKC and TMO's intention to enhance Grenfell Tower while undertaking the KALC project and requesting fee proposals for the involvement of Studio E and its sub-consultants (MA/3, '29 January 2012 Email RE: FW Grenfell Tower adjacent to KALC': _____). I advised him of the principal objectives of the project and noted that the project was still subject to the TMO Board and the RBKC Cabinet approval.
30. On 8 March 2012 I attended an Operations Committee meeting in which I provided a verbal update on the Grenfell Tower project, specifically advising them that matters were progressing at a slower pace than anticipated and that meetings were being held with the RBKC and Studio E to discuss the project and its progression (MA/4, '08 March 2012 Operations Committee, minutes of meeting': TMO10001245).
31. On 13 March 2012 I attended a Hidden Homes Meeting in which I advised those in attendance that the use of Studio E Architects for the Grenfell Tower regeneration project has been agreed and that I had met them on site to discuss the proposals (MA/5, '13 March 2012 Hidden Homes meeting minutes': TMO10001122). I also advised that I had met with the Lancaster West Estate Management Board ("EMB") to explain the proposals and that they were generally supportive of the project and indicated what their priorities were.



32. On 29 March 2012 I presented a confidential report to the TMO Board on the regeneration bid that we wished to submit to the RBKC in respect of the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower (MA/6, '29 March 2012 TMO Board: Confidential - Grenfell Tower': TMO10001095). In this meeting the TMO Board unanimously agreed to the submission of an HRA Regeneration Bid to the RBKC for the external over-cladding, open area enclosure, hidden homes provision and communal area rationalisation for Grenfell Tower. This funding was to be supplemented by funds from the annual capital investment programme as managed by the TMO on behalf of the RBKC and would include bathrooms, kitchens, electrical installations, heating and hot water, windows and doors.
33. Then on 18 April 2012 I attended a Joint Management Team Meeting with the RBKC in which it was decided that a project manager would be appointed for the Grenfell Tower project in order to free up some of my time (MA/7, '18 April 2012 Joint Management Team meeting with RBKC minutes': TMO10001160).
34. In a TMO Board Meeting on 10 May 2012 the TMO Board were advised that the RBKC Cabinet had agreed to invest £6.2m in Grenfell Tower with the TMO acting as the developer (MA/8, '10 May 2012 TMO Board minutes of meeting': TMO10002720).
35. I recall that around this time we were discussing the brief and scope of the project with the EMB, Lancaster West Estate Residents' Association, Grenfell Action Group and the Leasehold forum and that we continued to do so throughout 2012. We also regularly provided Grenfell Tower Regeneration Project leaflets and newsletters which informed the community and residents of the background to the project, project team members, dates of community engagement events, the proposals, progress reports, updates, feedback we had received from them, responses to these and contact details.
36. Early on in the project we hosted an open day session with Studio E Architects for residents to provide feedback on the outline proposals for the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower. This event was well attended and the project was received favourably by residents.

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37. I recall attending evening meetings, such as the one on 29 May 2012, in which I briefed residents on how the project was to be developed and funded and introduced them to Bruce Sounes, who gave a presentation on the proposed design elements (MA/9, '29 May 2012 Notes from Grenfell Tower evening meeting': _____). During these meetings we also answered residents' questions, addressed concerns relating to the project, updated them on progress and provided them with a questionnaire about how they wanted to be consulted moving forwards. Throughout these I do not recall ever receiving anything other than positive feedback on the proposals we presented.
38. I have been shown a document which records that I attended an Operations Committee meeting on 10 October 2012 in which I advised the Committee that following a six month long community, resident and stakeholder consultation process the design for Grenfell Tower had been finalised and a planning application had been submitted (MA/10, '10 October 2012 Operations Committee: Assets & Regeneration Department Update Report': TMO10001698).
39. I have also been shown a document which records that at a TMO Board meeting on 15 November 2012 I presented a paper to the TMO Board on the regeneration project (MA/11, '15 November 2012 TMO Board: Confidential - Grenfell Tower': TMO10001766). This paper noted that the total budget for the regeneration project was by then £9.4m, excluding consultant fees, statutory fees and non-standard construction contingencies. During this meeting the TMO Board agreed that the project should progress to the detailed design and tender package phases and that Leadbitter be appointed to undertake the Pre-Construction Agreement functions detailed in the IESE Framework Agreement.
40. When I left the TMO in January 2013 the project had recently progressed to the detailed design and post planning application stages. I recall that at the time of my departure it had been decided that Leadbitter would not be the principal contractor. The primary reason behind this was because the TMO and Leadbitter were not able to agree acceptable terms for the progression of the project. However no new principal contractor had been appointed before I left.

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41. I do recall that we were very much looking at a design and build arrangement. This was the general approach within the sector at that time and it was also the approach upon which the IESE Framework Agreement was based. At the time I left the TMO in January 2013 the focus was very much on costings and viability rather than appointing any specialist contractors.
42. I have been asked to set out my knowledge of the modifications made to the inside of Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016. However, as stated earlier, I left the TMO in January 2013 and my departure was soon after the submission of the first planning application for the refurbishment. Detailed design was at a very early stage and material specification would form part of a subsequent phase of the project. I recall that around the time I left this application had yet to be approved as there were several issues that the RBKC's Planning Department required clarification on. It follows that no final decisions had been made about the design or materials used in the refurbishment project.
43. For this reason I have no knowledge of the modifications made to the inside of Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016. I also have no knowledge of whether these modifications were compliant with such regulations, legislation, British Standards (including testing requirements), guidance and industry practice, and to what extent. Nor do I have any knowledge of the extent to which the design and construction of the modifications to the interior of Grenfell Tower took into account the design and construction of the modifications to the exterior of Grenfell Tower.
44. I have no knowledge of what assessments were made, about the components that comprise the interior of Grenfell Tower, its fire safety, fire resistance and compliance with safety standards. I also have no knowledge of whether specific consideration was given to the combination of the interior components and the fire safety, fire retardancy and compliance with safety standards of the same.
45. I have no knowledge of what final decisions about the interior of Grenfell Tower were made, or by whom and when. Other than the matters outlined above I have no further knowledge of what factors or motives influenced decisions about the interior of Grenfell Tower.

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**Modifications to the exterior of Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016
(including cladding and insulation)**

46. I have also been asked to set out my knowledge of the decision making regarding the cladding/insulation to the exterior of Grenfell Tower.
47. By the time I left the TMO we had concluded the feasibility study, community and resident engagement, developed a design proposal and submitted this as part of the planning application in October 2012, the external construction was not designed in detail and the planning application only related to the appearance and aesthetic of the proposals. The over-cladding of Grenfell Tower was a priority for the project as one of the primary goals was to improve the thermal efficiency of the building for the benefit of the residents.
48. I recall attending a Design Meeting on 22 November 2012 in which the façade was discussed (**MA/12, '22 November 2012 Design Team Meeting no.11 minutes': _____**). There had been preliminary feedback from the RBKC Planning Department and I recall questions being raised about the colour and finish of the zinc specified for the façade. These questions resulted in Studio E drafting options for differing, more prominent, colours for the cladding.
49. I can recall noting in this meeting that feedback from residents during consultation was that there was no appetite for bright colours to be specified. It was agreed that Studio E would explore possible compromises to satisfy both resident and the RBKC Planning Department Architectural Review Panel requirements with a replacement material of equivalent standard in lieu of the self-finished zinc rain screen cladding.
50. I also recall attending a Planning Application Progress Meeting on 20 November 2012 in which the cladding colour and design was discussed (**MA/13, '20 November 2012 Planning Application progress meeting minutes': TMO10001138**). I recall colour options were still being explored at that time as was increasing the size of the windows.


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51. At the time that I left the TMO, no final decisions had been made about the cladding. My recollection is that at the time the overall concept for the cladding construction was an inert insulation material and zinc rainscreen system with a self-colouration finish. I have since learned that a different cladding composition was used to the one described above. I have no knowledge of why this change was made as the decision was made after I left the TMO.
52. I do not recall any specific conversations about the compliancy of the cladding taking place during any of the design meetings that I attended. However this does not surprise me as compliance with planning, building regulations and other legal requirements would have formed part of the work to be carried out under our contract with designers and the principal building contractor, the latter of which had not yet been appointed at the time I left the TMO.
53. I recall that at the time that the outline design for the regeneration was ready to be submitted, the overall concept for the window construction was aluminium framed double glazed and possibly triple glazed for those on the KALC face to reduce noise levels. I also recall there was to be a ventilation strip incorporated down one side of the window.
54. I have been shown an email chain dated 25 October 2012 which records that I queried with Bruce Sounes of Studio E Architects how an unauthorised design change had been made from centre pivot windows to tilt and turn windows in the initial planning application. (MA/14, '25 October 2012 Email chain RE: Design Comments for Grenfell Tower': _____). I recall asking him how he intended to address this design change given that we had advised residents, the EMB, the RBKC, the Executive, the Operations Committee and the Board that the windows were centre pivot following a six month consultation process. My recollection is that there were technical constraints that necessitated this change which were to be explored further and communicated by him to the design team at a future date. I do not know how this was finally resolved as it had not been concluded when I left the TMO.



55. In the Design Meeting referred to above that took place on 22 November 2012, questions were raised in respect of the dimensions of the window proposal (MA/12: _____). I recall Studio E Architects responding that they would enlarge the proposed windows by way of lateral dimension, with the changes to be included in Stage D submissions.
56. At the time I left the TMO, Max Fordham were having discussions with window manufacturers about whether the type of arrangement incorporating the ventilation grille outlined above could be incorporated in Grenfell Tower. I also recall Appleyard's questioning if the existing structure of the building would restrict the amount of ventilation that could be achieved. I have since learnt that it was not, although I did not know this at the time as the decision was made after I left the TMO.
57. Because I left the TMO in January 2013 I have no knowledge of the extent that the design and construction of the modifications to the exterior of Grenfell Tower took into account the design and construction of the interior of the building.
58. For the same reason I have no knowledge of whether the exterior of Grenfell Tower was compliant with relevant building regulations, fire regulations, other legislation, British Standards, guidance and industry practice. I also have no knowledge of what advice or information was available, and what assessments were made, about the components that comprised the exterior of Grenfell Tower, its fire safety, fire resistance and compliance with safety standards.

The fire and safety measures within Grenfell Tower at 14 June 2017

59. I have been asked to set out my knowledge of the fire safety measures in place at Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire.
60. I do recall having discussions about fire safety arrangements at Grenfell Tower however because the detail of the design had not been finalised when I left the TMO in January 2013, I would not know what arrangements were ultimately put in place.


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61. From my knowledge of construction projects and as a matter of common sense I would imagine that all design and construction details would have had to be finalised before the final fire safety arrangements were put in place, that these would have to comply with fire safety legislation and that they would be subject to scrutiny by the relevant Building Control body and Fire Authority.
62. I do recall that one of the proposed changes to Grenfell Tower was to continue the internal staircase to the ground floor. The original construction of Grenfell Tower had both an internal staircase that descended from the top of Grenfell Tower to the mezzanine floor level and a separate second external staircase which descended from the mezzanine floor level to the ground floor.
63. Because it was recognised that the proposed changes impacted upon the fire safety strategy for the building this would need to be revised, to address this we decided to employ an external consultant, Exova Warringtonfire ("Exova"), to review and develop the fire safety strategy and approve its implementation. My understanding is that Exova were initially paid directly by the TMO, which provided the TMO with a direct contractual link to them. I believe this direct link was important as the fire safety strategy and advice was going to be quite crucial to the success of the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower and the on-going management of Grenfell Tower.
64. To the best of my knowledge the fire safety strategy had not been finalised by the time I left the TMO.
65. Because I left the TMO in January 2013 I have no knowledge of whether the fire safety measures at Grenfell Tower were compliant with relevant building regulations, fire regulations, British Standards and other legislation, guidance and industry practice.

Inspections

66. I have been asked to set out my understanding of fire and other relevant inspections (including building control inspections) carried out during the 2012-2016 renovations.

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67. As Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering I had a responsibility for ensuring that systems were in place to assess TMO properties for health and safety risks. An example of this is that I would need to be satisfied that there was a system in place for assessing properties for fire risk.
68. However, it was not my role to undertake those assessments or indeed to manage the process for their preparation. I would need to know that fire risk assessments were being undertaken but it was for the TMO health and safety team to actually procure the fire risk assessments and to ensure that the inspections were carried out correctly.
69. I relied on the reports produced by the TMO health and safety team on the fire risk assessment programme, which also went to the Executive Team. It was not my role to review the findings of these fire risk assessments, nor was it my role to check that the actions arising had been undertaken. However if I had concerns that properties were not being assessed for fire risk or became aware of a risk, I would have had to take action in relation to this issue.
70. For these reasons I have no knowledge of the relevant conclusions/reports arising from those inspections, nor do I have specific knowledge of the criteria used to carry out the inspections, how frequently they were carried out or by whom.

Governance/Management

71. I have no knowledge of any fires that occurred at Grenfell Tower, LWE or other buildings under the authority of RBKC in the time that I worked for the TMO.

Communication with residents

72. I have been asked to set out my knowledge of what systems there were for Grenfell Tower residents to express their concerns and views about fire safety.
73. The TMO had a formal complaints process which was handled by the Complaints Team based at the Network Hub in Kensal Road. I was not involved in the complaints process in any way.

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74. We conducted extensive community and resident engagement during 2012 and beyond concerns about the disruption that may be caused by the KALC and Grenfell Tower projects the general desire from residents was to understand the detail of any refurbishment proposals. I do not have any knowledge of any concerns, warnings or other statements being expressed about the fire safety of Grenfell Tower by its residents or any other person during 2012 when I worked on the regeneration project or before my departure from the TMO.

Fire advice given to residents between 2012 and 14 June 2017

75. As Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering it would not have been my role nor would I be qualified to provide advice to residents about fire precautions. It follows that I have no knowledge of what specific advice was given to residents and by whom. I also have no knowledge of the basis of any advice that may have been provided.

Conclusion

76. I was the Interim Director of Asset Investment and Engineering (subsequently changed to that of Director of Assets & Regeneration) between 2010 and 2013. I was never employed by the TMO on a permanent contract, nor was I a statutory Director, Board member or Executive Team member.

77. While I had a high level of involvement in the Grenfell Tower refurbishment project in its early stages, I had left the TMO before the first planning application for Grenfell Tower was determined by the RBKC Planning Department.

78. My most sincere condolences are with all those that have suffered a loss or been affected by the fire. The loss of life, disruption to people's lives and the impact upon the community is deeply distressing and is often in my thoughts.

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