

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Barbican Residential Committee	16 th June 2014
Subject: Barbican Estate – Concrete Investigation and Repairs	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Decision
<u>Summary</u>	
<p>The following resolution arises from the Wardmote for the Ward of Aldersgate, which took place on 19th March 2014:</p> <p>“That Aldersgate Wardmote notes that testing has revealed areas of concrete on the Barbican Estate which are insufficiently compacted and with less than 4 cm of coverage of reinforcing. These defects have led to the need for extensive inspection and repair. The Wardmote believes that these original construction defects should be the responsibility of the City. The Wardmote understands that this is the subject of discussions between the City and the Barbican Association. The Wardmote urges that the City actively engage in these discussions and report its resolution promptly.”</p> <p>Your committee has been asked to receive officer’s response to the Wardmote.</p>	
Recommendations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Committee considers the comments in this report in addition to those already stated in the report to Barbican Residential Committee dated 17th March 2014 and reiterates its earlier decision that the concrete testing and repairs works are of a general repairs and maintenance nature, and that the lease stipulates that such work is recoverable through the service charge. 2. That the Committee notes that the City of London’s Comptroller’s department has provided full access to original design and construction information requested by the Barbican Association’s representatives in this matter and will continue to provide access and information as necessary. 	

Main Report

1. Background

Your Committee received a report on 17th March 2014 (Appendix 3) following an earlier Wardmote for the ward of Cripplegate as stated below:

“Since the recent testing and remedial works to the concrete in the three Barbican Tower Blocks relate to structural matters, Barbican residents take the view that the costs for these works should be borne by the Landlord i.e. the City of London Corporation and not Long Lessees of the Barbican Estate. Does the Corporation not agree that this is a reasonable and correct assumption of Barbican residents? On what basis does the Corporation arrive at a different conclusion to residents and furthermore, what provision of the lease would justify charging Long Lessees for these works?”

Your Committee resolved that “the works are not the rectification of a structural defect, but rather general repairs and maintenance, and that the lease stipulates that such work is recoverable through the service charge”.

2. Wardmote for the Ward of Aldersgate

The Wardmote for the Ward of Aldersgate, which took place on 19th March 2014 refers to the following matters:

- 2.1 That Aldersgate Wardmote notes that testing has revealed areas of concrete on the Barbican Estate which are insufficiently compacted and with less than 4 cm of coverage of reinforcing.
- 2.2 These defects have led to the need for extensive inspection and repair.
- 2.3 The Wardmote believes that these original construction defects should be the responsibility of the City.
- 2.4 The Wardmote understands that this is the subject of discussions between the City and the Barbican Association.
- 2.5 The Wardmote urges that the City actively engage in these discussions and report its resolution promptly.”

3. City of London's Response:

Response to 2.1 – The Bickerdike Allen report dated 16 March 2012 provides full details of the findings of the concrete testing, including areas of low compaction. Further clarification regarding low compaction is provided in Appendix 1. This clarification was sought following receipt of the letter from W J Marshall, Appendix 2 (Barbican Association appointed consultants).

Response to 2.2 – It is accepted that all elements of a building will deteriorate over time, and it is reasonable to expect that periodic inspection and maintenance work of this nature will be required to keep the property in good condition for the future. The concrete testing was instigated following an incident of concrete spalling from one of the Tower blocks.

Response to 2.3 – It is the opinion of Dr J Broomfield that the analysis by W J Marshall is fundamentally flawed in so far as it has taken readings of the tested areas and applied these to the overall structure, whereas the surveys concentrated on problem areas. It is therefore the opinion of Dr J Broomfield that the areas of low compaction is “likely to be 1% or less of the total structure” and “a few isolated problem areas very much in line with the expectations and site practices of the time”. The City of London maintains that the works are not the rectification of a structural or construction defect, but rather general repairs and maintenance.

Response to 2.4 and 2.5 – City of London's Comptroller's department has provided full access to original design and construction information requested by the Barbican association's representatives in this matter.

4. Corporate & Strategic Implications

The works contribute to the following aims of the City Together strategy: “supports our communities” and “protects, promotes and enhances our environment”.

5. Legal Implications

The Comptroller and City Solicitor have been consulted in the preparation of this report and his comments are incorporated in the report.

Background Papers:

Report to Barbican Residential Committees: 17th March 2014.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Additional Information – Bickerdike Allen Partners

Appendix 2 – letter from W J Marshall

Appendix 3 – Report to BRC 17th March 2014 and Appendices

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