

Safety in your building

17 May 2022

Vantage Point,
Berger Road,
Homerton,
E9

Dear residents,

Planning decision rejected – next steps

We wrote to you advising that we had expected a planning decision from Hackney Council in February. This did not happen as the planning department had a number of questions for us in relation to the replacement of the green wall with a suitable non-combustible alternative.

We're disappointed to tell you that the council has rejected our planning application to replace the green wall. This is based on several factors, noting that the loss of the green wall would result in:

- The loss of a feature that makes a positive contribution to biodiversity
- The loss of sustainability and climate change mitigation due to the removal of a feature that contributes to the carbon offsetting of the site
- The loss of a visually attractive feature that is prominently visible from the surrounding area.

What happens next?

Our fire engineer and the design team on the Vantage Point building safety project are adamant the green wall cannot remain on the building. The rejection of our planning application means we will now have to consider alternatives which will satisfy the council's concerns. This may involve designing an innovative solution or to redistribute the biodiversity in other ways in the area.

Updated EWS1 form guidance

Given the above, this will produce an inevitable delay to being able to begin the project. I know this will be incredibly frustrating, especially for those of you who are waiting for an EWS1 form in order to be able to sell, remortgage or buy more shares in your home. I'd like to apologise to you for this, but I hope you understand we must reach an agreement with Hackney Council before we are able to begin. We cannot move forward without planning approval.

There has been some new guidance released about EWS1 forms. Some lenders have agreed to lend on a property once a costed plan is in place and there is a confirmed start/finish date. We're not there yet as we won't have a start/finish date until we have reached agreement with the council and worked out a plan for the scaffolding with National Rail. But it does mean that once we're close to the start date, you may be able to sell your home, rather than having to wait until the project is complete.

Check all the updates for your building on our dedicated page: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/vantagebuildingsafety/>. Or email us on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Kind regards

Raj Gandecha
Head of Resident Management (Building Safety)



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A summary of this letter

The council has rejected our planning decision, based on the loss of biodiversity to the scheme, carbon offsetting and change in appearance. We need to design another solution for the green wall with our design team.

A reminder

Your building's fire strategy is **simultaneous evacuation**, which means you must evacuate if you hear the fire alarm, even if you think it is a false alarm.