

Corporate Watch: Lesnes Estate development

1. Introduction

2. Thamesmead: one of London's biggest development "zones"

3. Who is Peabody?

4. Lesnes Estate / "South Thamesmead"

4.1 What is the timeline?

4.2 What will happen to social housing?

4.3 How much money will Peabody make from the development?

4.4 What will happen to people who own their homes on the Lesnes Estate?

4.5 Isn't this what people want? Criticisms of the consultation and ballot processes

4.6 What will it mean for the community?

4.7 Is demolition the only option? Refurbishment alternatives.

5. What is the Thamesmead Waterfront development?

6. What's next?

1. Introduction

This report investigates Peabody Housing Association's plans for South Thamesmead, with a particular focus on phases three to seven of the masterplan which covers the already demolished Coralline Walk and the Lesnes estate, which is slated for demolition. It examines the timeline and delays to date, the proposed lack of genuinely affordable housing amongst new builds, the financial justifications for the outline plan, the raw deal for homeowners, the flaws in the consultation and ballot of residents, the risk of social cleansing to the community and the alternatives to demolition.

2. Thamesmead: one of London's biggest development "zones"

Thamesmead is an area of South-East London straddling the boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley. Once marshes and ex-industrial land mainly belonging to the Woolwich Royal Arsenal, in the 1960s it was developed by the Greater London Council (GLC) as a massive housing scheme for 60,000 people – heralded by the GLC as a “Town of the 21st Century Town”¹. Its architecture was considered advanced at the time and in 1971 it was the futuristic backdrop to Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*. It was built in concrete but, instead of tower blocks, it largely replicated a low-level neighbourhood with family homes and winding alleys, open green spaces and a lake. Due to flood risk on the marshland, many of the buildings are raised with garages and empty spaces underneath. However, by the early 1970s the initial plans were scaled back and the budget was tightened², and by the end of the 20th century, after years of neglect, Thamesmead had become for many the archetypal crime-ridden ‘sink estate’.

After the GLC was abolished in 1986, Thamesmead was run by Thamesmead Town Ltd, technically a community-controlled housing company but really, with its directors bound to serve the interest of its investors, a private company in all but name³. This was abolished in 2000, after which the area's housing was managed by a newly established ‘social landlord’ called Gallions Housing Association. Then in 2014 Gallions was taken over by Peabody: one of the UK's biggest housing associations and property developers, which has expanded massively in the last decade by buying up other housing associations.

Since the early 2000s, there have been several proposals to redevelop the site. The latest is Peabody's “Plan for Thamesmead”, announced in 2018. Peabody says that it has a 30-year plan for the area, to increase the population to over 100,000 people⁴.

In continuing to develop its plans, Peabody works closely with three local authorities: the Greater London Authority and the Mayor of London, as well as the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich. In 2020 the Mayor declared Thamesmead and Abbey Wood an “Opportunity Area”, and published an “Opportunity Area Planning Framework” setting guidelines for planning permission until 2040. This includes an aim to create 15,000 new homes⁵.

However, despite all this grand talk, Peabody has only actually published its initial plan for 2018-23. And that doesn't give much detail. It seems the development is taking place in phases with no published overarching vision. The 2018-23 plan mentions these housing developments:⁶

- West Thamesmead: 66 homes in “The Reach”

- West Thamesmead Gateway / “Lombard Square”: 1,750 new homes (now increased to 1,900) in partnership with Berkeley Homes⁷.
- South Thamesmead: “Southmere Village” plus The Nest library and civic centre, next to lake, just north of Lesnes Estate. Phase 1 has 534 homes and is now completed. Phase 2 (in progress) will have another 329. Peabody says that 55% of homes in Phase 1 and 42% in Phase 2 are “affordable”⁸ – but these are mostly “intermediate” part-ownership schemes⁹.
- South Thamesmead: Coralline Walk and Lesnes Estate, with demolition and new build. These will be phases 3 to 7 of the South Thamesmead masterplan¹⁰.
- North Thamesmead: a joint venture with Lendlease to create a new neighbourhood on the river called Thamesmead Waterfront. There is little information about this yet.

Some of these projects appear to be majorly delayed¹¹.

3. Who is Peabody?

Peabody was already one of the UK’s biggest landlords by 2018, when it was profiled by Corporate Watch¹². It was recently in the [headlines](#) after the body of one of its tenants, Sheila Seleoane, was discovered two and a half years after she had died. It has almost doubled in size in the five years since, continuing a practice of expansion by merging with other housing associations. The most recent of these mergers was finalised in April 2023 as Catalyst became part of the Peabody organisation. With 4,000 employees, it is now responsible for 104,000 homes and 220,000 residents in London and the surrounding counties¹³. Corporate Watch’s findings from 2018 are relevant still. Whilst Peabody is regarded as a charity and ‘social landlord’, it is a corporate property business. It may be not for profit but they pursue surplus (i.e. profit) from their business ventures and money still goes to executives, investors and partners (such as developers Lendlease on the Thamesmead Waterfront project). In 2018 Peabody had a profit margin of 29%. In the latest annual report, they claim a surplus of £257m with an asset base of £12.7bn¹⁴.

Despite the scale of Peabody’s assets and surpluses, it has failed to achieve its development targets in recent years. In an interview with EG in 2020, Peabody’s then chief executive, Brendan Sarsfield, said the business had cut its development target by a third, with a goal to deliver 2,000 homes a year, replacing targets of 3,300¹⁵. The merger with Catalyst saw more talk of hitting a target of 3,000 new builds but current chief executive Ian McDermott issued further warnings of significant reductions in development in the spring of 2023, citing inflation and high interest rates. in a scaling back expected to last for at least a few years¹⁶.

4. Lesnes Estate / “South Thamesmead”

The next phase in Peabody’s Thamesmead plan involves building around 1,900 homes in South Thamesmead / Abbey Wood. The local authority is the London Borough of Bexley. The land covers Coralline Walk, which is already demolished and empty, and the Lesnes Estate, where there are currently 590 homes. But residents on Lesnes Estate are resisting.

4.1 What is the timeline?

- March 2020: Peabody conducted a ballot among residents which, it claims, shows 70% support for the proposal on a 65% turnout. Crucially, the landlord failed to mention crucial information before the ballot, such as whether residents would be able to afford to live in the replacement homes. There is no explicit reference to demolition in the offer document¹⁷. The question on the ballot paper was: “Are you in favour of Peabody’s proposal to include Lesnes Estate in their regeneration plans for South Thamesmead?”¹⁸
- September 2021: Peabody submitted an “Outline” Planning Application to Bexley Council. This doesn’t give precise details (e.g., exactly how many homes will be built, of what kinds), but a broad plan¹⁹.
- October 2022: Bexley council approved the Outline plan.
- July 2023: Residents stage a day of action, which ended up as a three-day occupation of a voided property to oppose demolition in favour of retrofitting alternatives²⁰.
- October 2023: Residents called on the Mayor of London to intervene, called for a stage two referral²¹, demanding their homes be refurbished rather than demolished²².
- January 2024: When work was meant to have started according to the Outline application, continuing until 2034. This part of the scheme will be divided into five phases (phases 3 to 7 of the overall South Thamesmead masterplan). Phase 1 will start on the already demolished Coralline Walk area with 323 homes, due to be completed by 2026²³.
- April 2024: Residents are still awaiting the London Mayor’s decision²⁴. The Mayor has the power to directly refuse the application or take it over, becoming the local planning authority in place of the council. In any decision to approve the application Peabody would then be required to submit further, more detailed plans for scrutiny and approval before demolition and development could begin.

You can access the planning documents [here](#).

4.2 What will happen to social housing?

Peabody’s plan breaks planning guidelines from both the GLA and Bexley Council.

Bexley’s Core Strategy 2012 guidelines set a target of 50% affordable housing, with a minimum 35%. And at least 70% of that should be “social rented housing”²⁵.

According to the GLA plan 2021, 50% of new homes should be “genuinely affordable”. And if there are demolitions, developers shouldn’t just replace the same numbers but make an “uplift” with extra new affordable homes (London Plan policy H8.)²⁶ Peabody’s scheme doesn’t even replace the numbers of affordable homes demolished.

The current Lesnes Estate has 596 dwellings²⁷. Of these there are:

- 411 social or “affordable” rent
- 173 freehold/leasehold
- 12 rented by Peabody at market rent

The demolished Coralline Walk site had 150 homes. 136 of these were social or “affordable” rent²⁸.

The Outline Plan is for “up to 1,950 homes”. Numbers may be revised as the plan develops, but the current figures in the plan are based on a total of 1,849 homes of which:

- 1,202 private
- 368 “affordable” rent: 307 “London Affordable Rent”, and 61 Social Rent
- 279 “intermediate” / shared ownership²⁹

So:

- Before the demolition of Coralline Walk, there were 547 homes for “affordable rent” on the site.
- Currently, there are 411.
- In the new development, there will be only 368.

And the bulk of those will not be for genuinely affordable ‘social rent’. Peabody’s propaganda claims the scheme will have 35% ‘affordable’ housing: 647 out of 1,849. But ‘intermediate’ part-ownership homes really stretch the definition of affordability as they require substantial deposits and monthly payments. And only 61 homes will be at current social rent levels – what many people consider genuinely affordable.

4.3 How much money will Peabody make from the development?

It is hard to understand how exactly Peabody has been able to claim they stand to lose £35m from the Lesnes development, given that an assessment from Bexley Council itself suggests the landlord will, in fact, profit by almost £100m from the work³⁰.

When they make a planning application, housing developers usually submit a document called a Financial Viability Assessment. Peabody argues that they need to reduce the required amount of affordable housing from 50% to 35% in order to make an “appropriate return”, i.e. their target profit level (and as we’ve seen this includes part-ownership homes which are only affordable to those with financial security). In Peabody’s viability assessment for Lesnes Estate, it sets a blended target profit of 16%; comprising of 20% for market housing, 6% for affordable housing and 15% for commercial property³¹. Though this seems extremely high, it is actually fairly standard in planning applications. London councils accept property developers’ argument that given the risks they are undertaking they need to make extremely high profit margins.

But in its Financial Viability Assessment for Lesnes Estate, written by estate agent CBRE, Peabody goes even further. It claims that, even with only 35% “affordable” and intermediate housing, it will still make a big loss on the scheme. It calculates it will lose £35m on the development³².

The total revenue from the scheme, it estimates, will be £685m. This includes £483m from private property sales, £169m from ‘affordable’ housing, £10m in grant funding from the GLA (for the intermediate properties), and the rest from commercial property and car parking.

It estimates the building costs will be £513m, plus £11m demolition costs. It will spend an estimated £70.5m on ‘decant and buyback’ (moving out residents and buying up existing homeowner’s properties) as well as roughly £60m on ‘professional’ and estate agent fees and marketing costs. Finance costs (interest on borrowing) are calculated at £63 million. Along with other smaller costs, the total cost of the development is calculated at £720m– so £35m more than the revenue.

This £35m loss compares to the £110m Peabody claims it should make according to its “benchmark” target profit rate of 16%. So: it claims it will make £145m less than its “benchmark”.

But Bexley Council hired another consultant, BNP Paribas Real Estate, to carry out its own review of the viability assessment. This comes up with very different figures. It says that Peabody has over-estimated its building, marketing and finance costs. The Bexley Council assessment calculates that Peabody will make a £98m profit. However, this is still below a blended benchmark of 14.26% profit (17.5% for market housing, 6% for affordable housing and 15% for commercial property), which Bexley’s assessment thinks is fair. And so Bexley Council is allowing Peabody to build less than 50% ‘affordable’ housing³³.

The vast difference in figures casts doubt over Peabody’s claims about this being a loss-making venture. In many cases, developers have played the planning system by basing their estimate of profit on current house sale prices. In the viability assessment, Peabody assumes they will sell houses at the same level as current sales in the area. So, if house prices go up in the next ten years they would make a lot more money than they estimate.

4.4 What will happen to people who own their homes on moving out residents the Lesnes Estate?

Peabody is planning to demolish all the remaining homes. In their offer to homeowners, Peabody says it will pay resident homeowners market value assessed by an independent RICS surveyor, plus 10% compensation³⁴.

The big issue is that current market values on the Lesnes Estate are just half the likely costs of the new properties – or possibly even less. A resident with a three-bedroom freehold told us Peabody is offering them £235,000 plus 10% compensation in a flat rate deal which does not take into account the condition of the property or improvements made. The homeowner had the property valued at £325,000 by an estate agent just a few years ago. Peabody’s proposed average price for a new three-bed home in planning documents from October 2020 was £475,000³⁵. The same document shows existing market rates for similar properties on Peabody’s Southmere Village at the time were £550k. Today, those properties are for sale via CBRE (who authored Peabody’s Financial Viability Assessment for Lesnes) for just shy of £600,000³⁶. As leasehold properties, they also have a service charge of £3,664 per year and undisclosed ground rent costs.

Peabody has said it will lend residents the difference when new homes are more expensive, provided the amount represents less than 50% of the total value of the property, under an interest-free “fixed equity” loan scheme³⁷. However, at best this will ultimately push people, who have already worked and saved for years to buy their homes, into massive debt. Homeowners face the prospect of offers for their current homes that are too low to even be able to take up Peabody’s offer of “assistance” and remain in the area.

There is also the issue of a detrimental move from freehold to leasehold. Many homeowners on Lesnes Estate are freeholders, but Peabody is only offering them a leasehold option on new properties. Leaseholders pay ground rent and service charges, on which Peabody has a history of overcharging³⁸. It is not clear if they will be able to pass on their homes to their children. This often puts pressure on homeowners to take the alternative offer and move out of the area. In this instance, the financial terms were more limited – with Peabody’s fixed equity assistance, in the event the new home cost more money, being capped at 35% of its value.

4.5 Isn’t this what people want? Criticisms of the consultation and ballot processes

Peabody point to a “successful” resident’s ballot in 2020, where 65.4% of residents took part and 70.2% voted ‘yes’, as an endorsement of the regeneration³⁹.

Resident ballots, first introduced in London in 2016, have been the subject of an extensive critique by Greater London Assembly Member Sian Berry⁴⁰. Issues raised include a lack of clarity around landlord offers and the imbalance of power between the landlord campaign for ‘yes’ votes and any resident’s efforts to reject proposals. There has only ever been one ‘no’ vote on a regeneration ballot, but that changed to ‘yes’ after a re-ballot.

The offer document for the ballot warned residents and tenants “Please read, do not throw away, your estate, your future”⁴¹. Designed to generate the yes vote Peabody wanted, it presented a glossy case for the regeneration but as we’ll see, it did not adequately inform residents of the actual consequences – , the replacement homes would not be like-for-like, that they would likely to be unable to afford to live in the more expensive new homes without going in to debt and that many would be left with uncertain futures⁴².

There is limited information on the consultation made prior to the ballot, although residents’ feedback is prominently mentioned within the offer document. The main issues with homes were apparently heating, damp and mould, but there was no option to address these through refurbishment.

Residents had no way of expressing via the consultation and feedback process that they did not want their homes to be demolished. Leaseholders and freeholders are bound by the collective vote despite being in the minority and their offer being far less attractive than that made to social tenants.

There are few guarantees in the balloted offer. Residents were shown an example of what a new home might look like and options to stay on in the area or leave were presented without the vital context of which outcome was more likely.

It is not clear that yes voters were sufficiently informed of the risks of being forced out by the regeneration. As a result, serious doubt is cast on the legitimacy of the ballot outcome. ‘Southmere

Village’ is touted as the kind of new housing they will live in if they are fortunate enough to continue living locally and yet the verdict on the new homes is mixed, with one resident needing a white noise machine to sleep because the sound in the new square reverberates so much⁴³.

Peabody incentivised residents in 2020 with a quick turnaround that has failed to materialise for all of them. Moves were meant to be in three phases between 2021 and 2026 with a map showing almost no detail of what the new sites will look like⁴⁴.

The offer was narrow and contained no alternative option for refurbishment or retrofitting. They even made what could be read as a veiled threat, in describing how a ‘no’ vote would mean that Peabody would maintain the estate “as best we can”. Given the complaints of issues such as mould, damp and overcrowding made of the existing homes, ironically acknowledged in their offer document, this can be assumed to mean managed decline while they make a “new proposal”⁴⁵.

Peabody has placed a heavy premium on its alleged commitment to community from the moment it took ownership of Thamesmead in 2014. But the realities of their development plans sit at odds with their promise to put “the people – Thamesmead’s greatest asset - ... at the heart of this regeneration”⁴⁶.

4.6 What will it mean for the community?

Peabody’s choice of partner for the massive and lucrative Waterfront development driving the agenda for the entire regeneration is Lendlease. This should serve as a warning to residents and tenants, given their involvement in past ‘regeneration’ attempts like the Heygate Estate in nearby Southwark or the successfully resisted HDV (Haringey Development Vehicle) in Haringey. Heygate, which was transformed into Elephant Park, is used as a textbook example of the social cleansing⁴⁷ that has taken place under the guise of regeneration across London for decades now. The involvement of charitable housing associations in partnership with local councils does not ensure that the social good will be prioritised above the financial interests of the supposedly charitable housing association. For instance, when the Aylesbury estate in Southwark was demolished, the property developers, and housing association Notting Hill Genesis, were guaranteed a financial return while Southwark council assumed all the financial risk. In addition, the money to fund Southwark council’s contribution came from the account which holds rent collected from council tenants, usually for upkeep and repair. This means that social housing tenants are paying to demolish social housing⁴⁸.

In both the Heygate and Aylesbury regenerations, leaseholders faced paltry below-market offers imposed via CPO⁴⁹ which left them with no hope of living in the properties built over the tops of their demolished estates⁴⁹.

The Radical Housing Network’s writings about Thamesmead paint a grim picture of the prospects for those facing forced home sales:

“The prices they will receive for their 4 bed family homes will never be enough to buy similar homes in the same area. Many who are elderly or nearing retirement are angered by suggestions of taking out a mortgage to cover the cost of a more expensive property. Downsizing is not an option with adult children still living at home, precisely because of the exorbitant cost of renting and buying in the area.”⁵⁰

Early phases of development by Peabody on Thamesmead show the gulf between artistic renditions of their “30 year vision” and what is being delivered. Swiftly demolished blocks have been left as empty lots, with building work delayed. Completed works remain empty of both residents and businesses, such as Cygnet Square in Southmere Village which has been described as a “ghost town”⁵¹ and a “bleak expanse”⁵².

4.7 Is demolition the only option? Refurbishment alternatives.

There is plenty of evidence to support arguments in favour of retrofitting and refurbishment. Examples have evolved from the 2014 UCL study⁵³ which explored the case for alternatives to demolition, to the Architect’s Journal RetroFirst campaign, which started in 2019⁵⁴. It is now a requirement of Mayor Sadiq Khan’s London Plan Guidance that retaining existing buildings be prioritised over demolition to deliver what is typically the lowest carbon option⁵⁵.

Peabody’s John Lewis has made it clear why it favours demolition over refurbishment: to dramatically increase the density of housing over the existing estate design⁵⁶. Economic considerations have trumped any concern for the environmental impact of plans. This means releasing the embodied carbon⁵⁷ in the original estate buildings. Peabody acknowledge that 37% of London’s carbon emissions come from housing and claim to be committed to net zero by 2050⁵⁸. References to embodied carbon in their 2021-24 sustainability strategy focus on new homes being delivered⁵⁹. Despite being at the heart of its development strategy, the word demolition appears just once⁶⁰. Lewis has claimed future phases of development may involve refurbishment, though that might be linked to the near-term financial difficulties that have seen plans scaled back and may not persist should market conditions improve⁶¹. Why is it not being considered for the Lesnes estate phase?

In fact, retrofitting *has* previously been considered for the estate. The “South Thamesmead Regeneration Framework”, published in late 2012, was a compact between the “main partners” to work together to retrofit the homes in the area over the forthcoming 10-15 years⁶². The view in 2012 was that South Thamesmead “should be retained and improved in order to provide healthier, better and more resilient places to live and to develop a stable community”. The area is even touted as a possible “total retrofit neighbourhood” and a “fantastic opportunity to scale-up the retrofitting to whole streets and blocks”⁶³. The framework was meant to retain and improve “most” of the housing areas. This regeneration framework is even referenced in Peabody’s 2021 Planning Statement for Lesnes Estate and acknowledged as “a material consideration” for planning applications pertaining to the area⁶⁴.

Despite this, Peabody determined in the same document that a comprehensive redevelopment be proposed because of the “poor quality and dated appearance” of the buildings, amongst other spurious reasons⁶⁵. It claims to have conducted technical analysis and substantial engagement before testing a range of options that included full refurbishment. Scant detail is provided. Neither is any detail given of the very limited degree of engagement with residents provided in the same section of the document.

Ultimately, Peabody has not provided sufficient evidence to support its decision to abandon the ambition of the 2012 Regeneration Framework to retrofit the existing homes and avoid demolition.

5. What is the Thamesmead Waterfront development?

The Thamesmead Waterfront is a major project that sees Peabody join in partnership with notorious developer Lendlease⁶⁶. The Australian global property developer and construction company was profiled by Corporate Watch in 2017⁶⁷. Peabody and Lendlease formed a joint venture in 2019, valued at around £8bn, to develop the massive greenfield site by the Thames with over a mile of river frontage and comprising 100ha of land. There has been little subsequent news on progress beyond the appointment of a development planning team led by Prior + Partners and Arup in April 2021⁶⁸.

6. What's next?

The remaining residents – homeowners, tenants, and guardians – are continuing a campaign of resistance against Peabody's demolition plans. A community day of action on Saturday 6th April 2024 kicked off a week of activity, centred around another protest occupation of one of the many voided properties on the estate⁶⁹. The residents' campaign is focused on advancing the retrofitting of their homes, using the slogan 'refurbish don't demolish'. A feasibility study is being conducted in collaboration with AAB architects to further the case for refurbishment. The ambition is to present an alternative community retrofit proposal whilst continuing to counter Peabody in future rounds of planning applications. This fight is one to watch – especially for everyone threatened by social cleansing under the cover of regeneration.

- 1 <https://medium.com/@MetLines/thamesmead-a-beautiful-thing-part-1-3a0bfe151beb>
- 2 <https://medium.com/@MetLines/thamesmead-a-beautiful-thing-part-1-3a0bfe151beb>
- 3 <https://medium.com/@MetLines/thamesmead-a-beautiful-thing-2-3-243e4ff5d9f7>
- 4 <https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/the-plan/>
- 5 <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/thamesmead-and-abbey-wood-opportunity-area-documents>
- 6 https://web.archive.org/web/20220601074722/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/4004/final-tm_plan30.pdf p23-24
- 7 <https://www.lombardsquarecommunity.co.uk/>
- 8 <https://www.peabodygroup.org.uk/media-centre/news/corporate-news/new-homes-and-commercial-spaces-for-south-thamesmead-following-council-decision/>
- 9 <https://web.archive.org/web/20230118003856/https://www.radicalhousingnetwork.uk/home/thamesmead-residents-resist-peabody-wrecking-ball>
- 10 <https://www.peabodygroup.org.uk/media-centre/news/corporate-news/new-homes-and-commercial-spaces-for-south-thamesmead-following-council-decision/>
- 11 <https://www.fromthemurkydepths.co.uk/2023/04/08/thamesmead-flounders-as-peabody-cut-back/>
- 12 <https://corporatewatch.org/tidemill-peabody-housing-association-from-social-landlord-to-big-business/>
- 13 <https://www.peabody.org.uk/news-views/2023/april/peabody-and-catalyst-join-together>
- 14 <https://www.peabodygroup.org.uk/media/ltnjq4fo/peabody-annual-report-23.pdf> p10
- 15 <https://www.egi.co.uk/news/peabody-slashes-development-targets/>
- 16 <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/peabody-to-significantly-reduce-its-development-output/5122601.article>
- 17 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf
- 18 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf
- 19 <https://docs.planning.org.uk/20210621/22/QUJ3DGBE00400/c9r0iy49hkoqgr6d.pdf>
- 20 <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/campaigners-occupy-empty-flat-in-protest-at-estate-demolition-plans-82321>
- 21 <https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/letter-mayor-about-stage-2-referral-lesnes-estate>
- 22 <https://web.archive.org/web/20231022115426/https://uk.news.yahoo.com/lesnes-estate-south-london-residents-133452720.html>
- 23 [Outline Planning Statement](#) p28 on phasing.

- 24 <https://planapps.london.gov.uk/planningapps/21-01948-OUTEA>
- 25 <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing-strategy-2020-2025.pdf> Point 7 p 21
- 26 Demolition of affordable housing should not be permitted unless it is replaced by an equivalent amount of affordable housing floorspace. Affordable housing that is replacing social rent housing must be provided as social rent housing where it is facilitating a right of return for existing tenants. Where affordable housing that is replacing social rent housing is not facilitating a right of return, it may be provided as either social rent or London Affordable Rent housing. <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/social-housing-replacements>
- All development proposals that include the demolition and replacement of affordable housing are required to follow the Viability Tested Route and should seek to provide an uplift in affordable housing in addition to the replacement affordable housing floorspace. <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance-and-spgs/affordable-housing-and-viability-supplementary-planning-guidance-spg#:~:text=Policy%20H8%2C%20Loss%20of%20Existing,addition%20to%20the%20replacement%20affordable>
- 27 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400>
PLANNING STATEMENT p 7
- 28 Peabody is not including these in its calculations because “these units are not considered to require reprovision as residents have already been relocated to alternative accommodation and have been considered as part of the Southmere Village application.”
<https://docs.planning.org.uk/20210621/22/QUJ3DGBE00400/c9r0iy49hkoqgr6d.pdf>
Southmere Village 1 contains 534 homes of which 181 are for affordable rent, 111 intermediate (part ownership). Southmere Village 2 (Binsey Village) contains 329, with 92 affordable rent, 123 intermediate. But these homes are on the site of other demolished homes.
- 29 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> PLANNING STATEMENT p 68
- 30 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> FINAL REPORT ON REVIEW OF VIABILITY ASSESSMENT SEPTEMBER 2022 Appendix 4
- 31 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> FVA APPENDED p19
- 32 <https://docs.planning.org.uk/20210621/22/QUJ3DGBE00400/gdwp9o8ywokin2i2.pdf> p19
- 33 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> FINAL REPORT ON REVIEW OF VIABILITY ASSESSMENT SEPTEMBER 2022 Appendix 4
- 34 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf
- 35 <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> FINAL REPORT ON REVIEW OF VIABILITY ASSESSMENT SEPTEMBER 2022 p7
- 36 https://www.zoopla.co.uk/new-homes/details/64218144/?search_identifier=37714f4d1c25b57738e2e6f42aea2858191ceee589267b2d46aec10725f0a4e4
- 37 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf

- 38 <https://www.ft.com/content/473428ab-5be9-467f-ac0c-fa0120027700>
- 39 <https://web.archive.org/web/20220630002612/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/news/residents-vote-to-regenerate-lesnes-estate/>
- 40 https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022_07_12_ballot_research_sian_berry_final_1.pdf
- 41 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf
- 42 https://web.archive.org/web/20210806100915/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media/3337/lesnes-estate_landlord-offer-document.pdf
- 43 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/30/cockney-riviera-botched-regeneration-brutalist-utopia-thamesmead>
“He lives in one of the refurbished towers near the square, where he now has to sleep with a white noise machine at night, as the sound reverberating around the space is so bad, exacerbated by what he perceives as an increase in antisocial behaviour since the square opened... My [previous] flat was bright and spacious. It wasn’t well insulated, so it could get cold, but it certainly seemed to be of a higher build quality than what we’ve got now”
- 44 <https://web.archive.org/web/20221206162614/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/the-plan/people-and-community/> p11
- 45 <https://web.archive.org/web/20230118003856/https://www.radicalhousingnetwork.uk/home/thamesmead-residents-resist-peabody-wrecking-ball>
- 46 <https://web.archive.org/web/20221206162614/https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/the-plan/people-and-community/>
- 47 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673037.2019.1680814>
This article found that after the Heygate estate was demolished, “Just one in five secure tenants managed to stay living in the neighborhood, that is the wider SE17 postcode, the rest were displaced across Southwark and beyond”.
- 48 <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/sep/12/london-council-aylesbury-estate-development-southwark-financial-risk>
- 49 “Leaseholders on both the Heygate (see Figure 2) and targeted blocks on the Aylesbury (see Figure 2 in Hubbard and Lees, Citation2018), who had bought their flats through right to buy, were issued with Compulsory Purchase Orders and the council made them ‘low ball’ offers. Each leaseholder was made an offer on an individual basis (so the same size flats in the same block might be given a different offer), a council ‘divide and rule’ tactic that they hoped would both reduce what they had to pay and stop leaseholders coming together to resist council offers”.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673037.2019.1680814>
- 50 <https://web.archive.org/web/20230118003856/https://www.radicalhousingnetwork.uk/home/thamesmead-residents-resist-peabody-wrecking-ball>
- 51 <https://www.fromthemurkydepths.co.uk/2023/04/08/thamesmead-flounders-as-peabody-cut-back/>
- 52 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/30/cockney-riviera-botched-regeneration-brutalist-utopia-thamesmead>
- 53 https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ad_53_refurbdemo_full_ucl_commissioned_report.pdf
- 54 <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/retrofirst>

- 55 <https://www.dezeen.com/2022/04/21/london-plan-guidance-retention-sadiq-khan/>
- 56 “But the most pressing reason for razing the blocks, releasing tonnes of embodied carbon in the process, seems to have been more hard-nosed. “There’s the density issue,” says Lewis. “Our plans are doubling what was there.” <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/30/cockney-riviera-botched-regeneration-brutalist-utopia-thamesmead>
- 57 <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/engineering-exchange/sites/engineering-exchange/files/fact-sheet-embodied-carbon-social-housing.pdf>
- 58 <https://web.archive.org/web/20220209133748/https://www.peabody.org.uk/media/15147/sust-strategy-summary.pdf>
- 59 <https://web.archive.org/web/20220209133748/https://www.peabody.org.uk/media/15147/sust-strategy-summary.pdf>
- 60 We will work closely with our Development, Thamesmead’s Regeneration teams and developers to complete Whole Life-Cycle Carbon (WLC) assessments for our new homes. This assessment captures a building’s embodied carbon emissions, i.e. those associated with raw material extraction, manufacture and transport of building materials, construction and the emissions associated with maintenance, repair and replacement as well as dismantling, demolition and eventual material disposal. A WLC assessment provides a true picture of a building’s carbon impact on the environment. We will be working with our Development Team to improve Peabody’s sustainable construction requirements in the contractors building specification. <https://web.archive.org/web/20220209133744/https://www.peabody.org.uk/media/15292/final-sust-strategy-21-24.pdf> p15
- 61 “Lewis, who joined Peabody in 2016, after the initial direction had been set, hints that the approach might slowly be shifting. “The carbon agenda has become so much more understood, even in the last few years,” he admits. In future phases, “there might be more elbow room to achieve a long-term improvement and enhancement plan, rather than regeneration through demolition.” The Parkview estate, to the east, is now earmarked for refurbishment rather than rubble, and what remains of the Southmere estate, next to the lake, will be kept as a “heritage island””. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/30/cockney-riviera-botched-regeneration-brutalist-utopia-thamesmead>
- 62 South Thamesmead Regeneration Framework Nov 2012. p5 The South Thamesmead Compact: The main partners - London Borough of Bexley, Gallions Housing Association, Trust Thamesmead, Tilfen Land and the Greater London Authority - in South Thamesmead will work together to 'retrofit' this neighbourhood over the coming 10 to 15 years. This means that rather than wholesale rebuilding, we will work with the local community to improve most of the existing homes, parks, streets and other elements in order to make the neighbourhood more environmentally, physically and socially robust. We believe that by working together and with the local community and stakeholders, and through incremental, targeted change, South Thamesmead can truly become a town for the 21st Century. <https://archive.org/details/south-thamesmead-regeneration-framework-november-2012-1>
- 63 South Thamesmead Regeneration Framework Nov 2012 p15 Place Principles 4.3 Retrofitting the neighbourhood for the future. <https://archive.org/details/south-thamesmead-regeneration-framework-november-2012-1>
- 64 “The framework was prepared by LB Bexley, Gallions Housing Association, Trust Thamesmead, Tilfen Land and the GLA as main (then) stakeholders in the area. It includes a series of coherent neighbourhood strategies to enhance the quality of life for residents and create thriving and resilient communities and identifies projects that can be delivered collaboratively.” <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> Planning Statement p37 Planning Policy Context 7.26
- 65 “Due to the current poor quality and dated appearance of the buildings, lack of public realm and poor legibility, its redevelopment is considered a significant opportunity to improve the quality of life for the residents of the estate and surrounding South Thamesmead area. Therefore, a comprehensive redevelopment approach is proposed for the Site.” <https://pa.bexley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QUJ3DGBE00400> Planning Statement p20 Development Approach 4.6

66 <https://www.thamesmead-waterfront.co.uk/>

67 <https://corporatewatch.org/lendlease-development-creeps/>

68 <https://www.thamesmead-waterfront.co.uk/latest-news/masterplan-competition-winners-announced/>

69 <https://twitter.com/RealMediaGB/status/1777410869342634219>