Lambeth Estate Option Appraisals

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MARTIN ARNOLD

Martin Arnold has been appointed by the London Borough of Lambeth as Project Manager for three significant post-war estates — Central Hill, Cressingham Gardens and Fenwick Estate — comprising nearly 1,100 homes across a mix of council-owned social housing, void properties and privately owned leasehold dwellings.

These estates are central to Lambeth's long-term housing strategy, which seeks to address properties that no longer meet the Decent Homes Standard and to explore a variety of options to provide quality, compliant and comfortable homes. Martin Arnold's involvement supports a complex and long-standing options appraisal programme. Our role has brought renewed structure, oversight and momentum to this sensitive and multifaceted initiative.

Our Project Management team has led the collation and review of extensive existing data to assess the development and financial viability of a range of retrofit and regeneration scenarios. We have also provided strategic programme planning — covering planning, construction, and project team coordination — while enabling the targeted procurement of essential surveys. This strategic approach has supported the design development process by the Architectural and Engineering teams and reduced unnecessary expenditure. As Project Managers, we have also closely overseen the timely delivery of consultant outputs to ensure high-quality submissions are made in line with Council requirements and programme deadlines.

Recognising the socio-political sensitivity that often surrounds estate investment, retrofit and regeneration, Martin Arnold has delivered comprehensive risk management services. These include identification and mitigation of risks related to development feasibility, financial viability, programme delivery and stakeholder engagement.

A key component of our commission has been the delivery of condition surveys and cost plan analysis across all three estates. Our Building Surveying team has undertaken internal and block-level inspections, working in close collaboration with Council caretakers and resident liaison officers to gain access wherever possible. All engagement has been conducted in strict adherence to GDPR guidelines to ensure respectful and compliant contact with residents.

Martin Arnold also attends regular resident engagement meetings alongside the client team to support clear, transparent and professional communication with residents and stakeholders. Our teams have received dedicated public engagement training to uphold professionalism and build trust within the community.

In addition to our Project and Building Surveying services, Martin Arnold's Quantity Surveying team is providing specialist Cost Consultancy. This includes integrating condition survey data with current and forecasted market trends and developing bespoke cost models for multiple regeneration scenarios — including new-build, retrofit, maintenance and demolition. Due to the complex tenure mix of the estates, our cost modelling has also accounted for leaseholder buyback strategies and other financial variables to support comprehensive and accurate scenario planning.

Client
Lambeth Council

Duration
1 year 2 months

Address
Central Hill, Fenwick Estate, Cressingham Gardens

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Critical Challenges

Two key challenges have shaped the delivery of this project. First, access to properties for internal condition surveys has proven difficult due to resident fatigue and sensitivities arising from a potential regeneration process that has spanned more than a decade. Many residents have grown wary of repeated surveys and consultations, contributing to a lower access rate. To address this, Martin Arnold has worked closely with estate caretakers, issuing letters, making phone calls and conducting door-to-door visits to explain the importance of survey access in shaping the future quality of people's homes.

The second challenge has been fluctuating deadlines and shifts in strategic direction. In response, we have maintained a flexible but focused project strategy — prioritising data collection and resources for estates where more information is required to support key decisions and maintain momentum. Our absolute focus has been on an evidenced-based approach, ensuring the eventual preferred solution stands up to the strictest scrutiny and provides transparency with respect to decision making for existing residents.

Martin Arnold continues to play an integral role in this complex programme. Through our coordination of surveys, data management, consultant deliverables, stakeholder engagement and strategic advice, we are supporting Lambeth Council in making informed, forward-looking decisions that will determine the future of these communities.

Services Provided

- Building Surveys
- Cost Planning & Cost Management
- Development Appraisal
- Feasibility Estimating
- Maintenance Planning
- Measured Surveys
- Procurement Advice
- Project Management
- Project Programming
- Quantity Surveying
- Regeneration
- Residential Liaison Services
- Risk Management
- Stock Condition Surveys
- Whole-Life Costing