

From: The Minister

**Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont**

Dear Carál,

AQW 46800/22-27– INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

Due to the volume of information provided to answer AQW 46800/22-27, I have arranged for the detail attached in Annex A to be placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely,



**Gordon Lyons MLA
Minister for Communities**

This issue is an operational matter for Northern Ireland Housing Executive; they have advised me as follows;

“Since the early 2000s a number of appraisals, resident surveys and a masterplan have been undertaken in the Upper New Lodge area. The area was previously considered as part of the 2001 Area Survey and Environment Assessment (ASEA) during the early stages of the Upper New Lodge Urban Renewal Area (URA) but was not progressed for redevelopment at that time.

In 2013, the Housing Executive vested lands adjacent to the current study area. These were subsequently redeveloped by Newington Housing, in partnership with Apex Housing, delivering 89 new social homes completed in 2019. The current study area has been widely regarded as a continuation of that regeneration.

A 2018 Housing Executive stock condition survey of 303 properties in Upper New Lodge identified significant levels of unfitness, with 46% of homes failing the statutory fitness standard. Key issues included lead pipework affecting water quality, dampness, inadequate kitchen facilities and drainage problems.

Declaration of Redevelopment Area

Under Article 47 of the Housing (NI) Order 1981, redevelopment powers can be exercised where at least one-third of properties are unfit and the majority of land is in residential use. Following engagement with the Department for Communities (DfC) and Department of Finance (DoF), the Housing Executive Board declared the Upper Long Streets a redevelopment area on 25 August 2021.

The redevelopment proposal excluded 26 properties in good condition. The remaining 277 properties (including 86 Housing Executive homes) were identified for demolition and redevelopment.

A Business Case was approved by DfC and DoF on 22 October 2021. Proposals were formally communicated to elected representatives in December 2021, followed by direct engagement with residents, including surveys, a leaflet drop, a public drop-in event (March 2022), and the establishment of a dedicated advice line.

Statutory Process

In March 2023, the Housing Executive submitted its draft application for a Redevelopment Scheme and Vesting Order to DfC. Statutory notices were issued on 30 May 2024 to over 600 legal interests, with a closing date for objections of 9 July 2024.

Objections and Engagement

A total of 11 objections were received. Each has been individually assessed, with efforts made to resolve concerns. A 2025 planning and architectural review recommended removing six peripheral properties from the scheme; this was approved by the Housing Executive Board in November 2025. Following further engagement, five objections have been withdrawn. Six objections remain, with ongoing dialogue to address outstanding issues. Updates have been provided to DfC through detailed reports submitted in February and April 2026.

Current Position

DfC is currently considering the remaining objections and determining the next steps. This will involve either approval of the Redevelopment Scheme and Vesting Order or referral to a public inquiry.

The Housing Executive continues to engage constructively with all parties to progress the scheme and support the regeneration of the area.”