

*Bickenhall Mansions Management Limited*  
2 Hills Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom, CB2 1JP

2 November 2023

Dear Lessee,

We are writing with an update on the Bickenhall Mansions Refurbishment project.

**Background**

We have just completed Phase 1 of the essential refurbishment works at Bickenhall Mansions.

This project, involving extensive consultation with residents, has been developed from inception to completion over the last decade. Clearly living on a building site, and for the builders working in an occupied building has been a challenge, but everyone has worked hard to make it a success and your forbearance and support in the process has been much appreciated.

When we started this project Bickenhall was in a sorry state; the common parts were tired and even more importantly did not meet current building regulations - with a particular concern in terms of fire safety. Similarly, the exterior of the building had not been properly maintained; roofs were leaking, brick walls and terracotta detailing were crumbling and there was concern that there was serious internal damage to the building fabric as well as individual leaseholder residences.

Following the extensive consultation and the section 20 notice of 2018 – we embarked on Phase 1 which was to install new fire alarms and life safety systems, new fire compliant front doors to all apartments, new panelling and decorations, automatic opening vents at the top of each staircase, new low-voltage lighting and emergency lighting, new intercoms, new CCTV, new data cabling, new automatic entrance doors and to generally improve the appearance and function of the common parts. As a result, the building looks, feels and works better – and has been approved by Building Control as meeting current regulations.

With the works effectively complete, we have brought forward some essential early Phase 2 works including, some abseil repairs to the North Block roof, steel work surveys of all fire escapes and gantries, works to North Block Galleries and Skylights, emergency lighting to external fire escapes and new landlords' electrical supplies. We are now completing the snagging (the post practical completion issues being dealt with under contract, including some internal lighting issues) and are embarking on panelling to the penthouse levels; and new railings, lighting, and tread details to the entrance steps throughout.

As part of this first phase of works we also carried out full external repairs to one block to establish a specification and scope for the repair of the roofs, external walls, rainwater goods and pavement vaults at Bickenhall.

Despite disruption to the contract caused by Covid and the impacts of the Ukraine conflict on energy and materials and general inflation – which has been particularly magnified in construction - this has been carried out in accordance with the Section 20 requirements. In summary the original estimate for the internal works – dated 2016 as communicated to all was circa £6 million + VAT and as below, despite the above challenges, we are pleased to confirm it came in on budget. For those leaseholders who haven't visited for a while we have included some before and after photos of the completed project at the bottom of this letter.

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### **Major Works Phase 1 Completed and costs summarised below**

Internal Communal Areas (Blocks 2 – 8) and Externals (Block 7)

### **Major Works Phase 1 Completed**

#### **Internal Communal Areas (Blocks 2 – 8) and Externals (Block 7)**

- Budget £7.3m
- Actual £7.3m

### **Additional Expenditure from the Reserve Fund**

- General Maintenance £0.3m  
(Block 7 Valve works and corroded pipes/asbestos removal all blocks/bin store/resin flooring to basement/etc).
- Building Control Additions £0.2m  
(Additional Fire safety requirements re doors/etc).
- Early Phase 2 £0.6m  
(Abseilers to patch high level issues on all blocks/low level work for roofs that were leaking/light well communal area electrics/etc).

### **Reinstated Contract Item**

- Paneling to Penthouse communal areas £157k  
(Originally not requested).

### **Additional Items to be Undertaken Now**

- Front steps and improved handrail to block 8 (as test) £11k  
(In response to resident requests to further improve visibility on steps).

### **Major Works Phase 2**

With this done we are now planning for Phase 2. This will be the repair of all front elevations, lightwells, courtyards and roofs applying the lessons learned from the works carried out to Block 7.

We originally obtained Tenders for this work in 2018 and as communicated to residents in December 2018 we anticipated 'a total project out-turn cost of circa £6 million'.

As noted above, construction costs have increased significantly since then so we will need to go back to test the market again to establish a new budget.

We are therefore, currently reviewing the costs/phasing for this (currently we have £2m+ in the Reserve Fund and are collecting £750k per annum) and our ambition is to test our cash flow against an appropriate, efficient, economic sequencing of works. Once we have a proposed cost and program in place we will be updating and consulting through a Section 20 in 2024. Following that we will be going to tender.

- These works will comprise Externals (Blocks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8)
- An updated Cost Model is required
- In addition, we need to allow for Rising and Lateral Mains to all Blocks – cost will likely be in the excess of £1million

Phase 3 – once those works are complete the next stage will be to review the appropriate replacement of the North Block boilers.

### **Service Charge Outlook**

As we had no finance allowance to carry out the works as you will all be aware Service charge increased 2015 from earlier unsustainable levels with commitment to maintain through project schedule. Operating costs have since increased >30% through inflation, utility, costs and insurance premiums but BMML continues to pursue market prices through competitive tender.

We are delighted that Phase One came in on budget and we will update you as above when we know more of Phase 2 and the costs and programme implications.

Very best wishes,  
Directors of BMML Board.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





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