Golden Lane Estate
Crescent House Residents' Liaison Group (RLG) Meeting

Date: Thursday 30 April 2026, 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Venue: Sir Ralph Perring Centre (in person and online via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Greg Wade (GW)	CoL Head of Major Works (online)
Dan Bewley (DB)	Concilio (Chair)
Bunmi Ali (BA) (online)	CoL Project Manager (Interim) – Major Works Team
Gabby Robertshaw (GR)	Cripplegate ward member
Pablo Abellan (PA)	Resident, Crescent House (in person)
Sue Pearson (SP)	GLERA (in person)

Agenda:

1. Welcome, housekeeping and introductions
2. Actions from the previous meeting
3. Programme update
4. Planning application – Crescent House
5. Questions
6. AOB

1. Welcome and Housekeeping

DB welcomed attendees and noted apologies from regular attendees, Pavels and Roddy. DB acknowledged the split format of the meeting, with some attendees present in person in the Sir Ralph Perring Centre and others joining online via Microsoft Teams, due to availability.

2. Actions from Previous Meeting

Decanting – committee paper

DB noted that an action from the previous meeting related to the City of London's policy on decanting at Crescent House. GW confirmed that a paper on the requirement for two Resident Decant Officers to be recruited for the Golden Lane Estate Programme has been prepared and is due to go to committee. A question was raised by attendees as to whether the paper would be in public or private session, as the committee agenda appeared to list it as private, meaning residents would have no sight of the content in advance. GW undertook to clarify the public/private status of the paper, explaining that because it involved financial information relating to pay grades and salaries, it would be presented in the non-public section of the Committee Meeting.

There was an understanding that where papers are required to be private, it would be helpful to explain it's content, in order to avoid confusion. GW acknowledged.

Technical reports – sharing with GLERA

DB noted that a previous action related to which technical reports could be shared with the GLERA technical team. Since the last meeting, a dedicated session was held with the

GLERA technical team to run through the proposed scope of works for the maisonette blocks in particular, with some limited reference to Great Arthur House. That meeting was private, but a summary note has been prepared for publication so that all residents are aware of what was discussed at a less technically detailed level. This summary is currently being reviewed and approved through the GLE Major Works Renewal Programme Board. DB confirmed that Crescent House was not on the agenda for that session because it is already at planning stage and is shortly due to be tendered, so there is no available window for a meaningful technical review without threatening to disrupt the programme; it was agreed that a separate meeting would be held for Great Arthur House, which presents quite separate and distinct technical challenges in terms of the proposed works.

3. Programme Update

Overall programme and tender

GW provided an update on the overall programme for Crescent House. The project team is working towards issuing the tender on 6 July. Consideration had been given to pushing the tender back to September in light of issues around the planning committee timetable, which would have had a significant impact on the overall programme. However, following further review and a successful attempt to bring Planning Committee forward from 30 June to 8 June, the team is now working towards issuing the tender on 6 July, but with an extended tender period to mid-September in order to accommodate the summer holidays. This approach absorbs the month of August, during which contractors are routinely expected to request extensions of time due to the unavailability of staff, without unduly delaying the overall programme.

GW confirmed that the Stage 1 Section 20 Notice of Intention, originally issued approximately two to three years ago, needs to be updated and reissued. The legal team is working on this, with the notice targeted for issue being towards the end of May. The associated 35-day consultation period is timed to expire before the tender is issued on 6 July. GW noted this is a tight timetable and that hitting the milestone is important.

Subject to this programme being maintained, the project team has targeted being in contract by early 2027. Enabling works, which include the construction of a new electrical substation enclosure would then commence in early 2027. This would take place concurrently alongside the process of making a Gateway 2 application to the Building Safety Regulator, which is expected to take at least 8 months. The main programme is then expected to commence in early 2028. GW noted this represents a delay of a few months in relation to what had been reported in April of the previous year, but acknowledged that, given the significant challenges encountered, the project is performing well to be at this stage in relation to Crescent House.

Post-contract professional services

GW confirmed that the project team is in the process of appointing a post-contract professional services consultant to administer the contract, manage valuations, and carry out quality inspections as clerk of works. Approximately seven or eight firms are tendering, having been shown around the estate. Appointment is targeted for autumn 2026. GW noted this is the final consultant appointment for the project and signals the move into the delivery phase.

Planning application – expiry

A question was raised as to whether the existing windows planning permission could expire before works commence. GW understands that this is not the case as the works have been commenced in the form of the pilot properties.

4. Planning Application – Crescent House

Context

GW introduced the planning application as the principal item for discussion. The application has generated a number of objections from residents and stakeholders, including detailed technical queries relating to the proposed electrical services installation. GW confirmed that written responses to the formal objections have been submitted via the planning portal.

Electrical services routes – horizontal ceiling trays vs vertical conduit

PA and SP raised detailed concerns regarding the proposed approach to electrical cable distribution within the building. The specific concern is the use of horizontal ceiling-mounted cable trays on the first and second floors, which residents consider to be at an industrial scale and disproportionate to the domestic character of the building. Residents noted that the third floor retains the existing vertical conduit on the walls and asked why the same approach could not be used on the lower floors.

Residents observed that as cable distribution rises through the building, the number of dwellings served from each section reduces, and therefore the physical capacity requirement of the trays should also reduce. They questioned whether proportional sizing had been considered and whether a smaller, more domestic-scale installation could be used, particularly for the shorter horizontal runs from the central core.

GW acknowledged the concern and noted that the design team – comprising Studio Partington as lead architect and Watkins Payne as mechanical and electrical engineers – had conducted extensive discussions on services routes, including an options appraisal covering heritage sensitivity, resident disruption, cost, and programme. GW noted that Watkins Payne has specific experience of working in listed buildings. GW accepted that the written responses to the planning objections had not provided sufficient explanatory detail and committed to ensuring fuller, clearer responses would be provided.

Existing services to be removed

PA raised whether the design team had been fully briefed on all services due to be removed as part of the works – specifically the gas pipes, underfloor heating pipework, and existing door entry cabling – and whether the removal of these services had been factored into the options for routing the new electrical installation. PB noted that the removal programme would free up significant space in existing service routes, particularly on the lower floors where the underfloor heating pipes are at their largest. GW confirmed that the design team had produced as-built survey drawings of existing services and had factored in the removal of existing redundant pipework. GW accepted that the fuller technical responses should demonstrate this clearly.

Request for a technical walkabout

SP proposed that a member of the design team carry out an on-site walkabout with residents so that specific design decisions could be explained in context. GW noted that any meeting or walkabout involving the technical consultants would require a City of London representative to be present, and that given current workload pressures he could not commit to this at the meeting. GW was not opposed in principle but could not make a commitment on behalf of the consultants' availability within the current timeframe.

Agreed approach: written technical responses

GW proposed, and members agreed, the following approach:

- Residents to prepare no more than five or six specific written technical questions relating to the services design – principally covering cable routing, tray sizing, and the rationale for not using existing conduit routes.
- Questions to be submitted through the RLG.

- GW to arrange for detailed, clear, and explanatory responses to be prepared by the design team (Watkins Payne and Studio Partington) with access to supporting technical documentation provided as necessary.
- GW to review all responses before issue to ensure they provide the level of clarity and rationale that members are seeking.
- Responses to be provided within two weeks of receipt of the questions, subject to the questions being submitted promptly.

GW noted that the previously held technical group meeting had been a useful forum.

Listed building consent and design changes

PA raised a concern that if the cable tray design were subsequently revised following the grant of planning permission – for example if a smaller tray were found to be sufficient – a further listed building consent application might be required, causing delay. GW noted that the detail of tray design would be subject to a planning condition. This point will be addressed in the technical responses.

City of London crest

GW provided a brief update on the question of the City of London Corporation crest currently on Crescent House. The crest is not the original; the original circular crest is believed to be displayed elsewhere on the estate. GW has raised the matter with the City's corporate communications team to ascertain whether there is a corporate policy on crests. GW confirmed he is personally ambivalent about removal of the current crest and that the matter remains open pending a response from corporate communications. Members noted that the existing crest appears disproportionately large relative to the scale of the building compared with smaller crests elsewhere on the estate. GW undertook to report back once a position has been received.

5. Questions

Video screen for residents without mobile phones

GR raised the question of provision for residents who do not have mobile phones: specifically, what device or mechanism within the flat would allow them to open the front door without needing to go down to the entrance. GW confirmed this question had been raised previously but that a clear answer had not yet been obtained. GW undertook to follow this up and report back.

6. Any Other Business

No further items of other business were raised.

Ends.

Post meeting Appendix: Responses to Residents' Technical Questions

The following questions were submitted by residents of Crescent House following the RLG meeting of 29 April 2026. Responses have been prepared by the project team, drawing on input from Watkins Payne (mechanical and electrical engineers) and Studio Partington (architect).

Question 1: Trunking and Service Trays

1a) What size cables are used in what locations?

Residents asked for clarification on cable sizes, noting an apparent discrepancy between the Grade document (describing feed cables as 25–32mm) and the Electrical Distribution Document (referencing some as 50mm).

Response: The figures of 25mm, 32mm and 50mm refer to the cross-sectional area of conductors within the cable (measured in mm²), not the physical outer diameter. In physical terms, these cables range from 25–32mm in outer diameter. It is the physical diameter – not the conductor cross-section – that determines cable tray sizing.

Additional factors that influence tray size include cable crossovers, heat build-up, and bending radii. As a rule of thumb, the bending radius of a cable is six times its overall diameter: a 25mm-diameter cable therefore requires a bending radius of 150mm. Space must also be provided for cables to drop from the horizontal trays and enter individual dwellings.

At planning stage, not every cable has been individually sized. Modelling was undertaken at key locations, examining the shortest, median and longest cable runs. For example: flat 122 requires a 25mm² cable; flat 250 requires a 35mm² cable; and flat 338 requires a 50mm² cable.

1b) Will the planning conditions cover dimensions, colour, drainage and individual flat connections in sufficient detail?

Residents asked whether the proposed planning conditions relating to service trays, ceiling panels and trunking would be wide in scope, covering dimensions, colour, water drainage, and connection to each individual flat consumer unit. Residents also noted that drawings should be to the standard expected for a listed building consent application rather than described as 'typical'.

Response: The precise wording of planning conditions is determined by planning officers and is outside the project team's control. However, the suggested wording has been forwarded to the planners for their consideration. It is anticipated that draft condition wording could be circulated within the next week.

On the specific point about lift core ceiling coverage: the lift cores contain the vertical service risers, and all electrical distribution passes through these risers. The soffits to the lift cores are therefore the most congested area for electrical cabling. To illustrate the scale:

7. Level 1 southern lift core – 49 electrical supplies, plus telecoms and landlord's power
8. Level 1 northern lift core – 22 electrical supplies, plus telecoms and landlord's power
9. Level 2 southern lift core – 52 electrical supplies, plus telecoms and landlord's power

10. Level 2 northern lift core – 24 electrical supplies, plus telecoms and landlord's power

The coordination of services in these areas requires considerable space, which explains the extent of ceiling coverage at lift core locations.

1c) Approach 4 – could wall-mounted trunking be made slimmer and deeper?

Residents noted that Approach 4, which uses increased wall-mounted trunking, appeared considerably less obtrusive if it could be made to work, and asked for more detail on dimensions and content.

Response: Approach 4 was not developed to detailed design stage as it was considered unworkable for several reasons:

11. It would require both vertical and horizontal wall-mounted trunking at a larger size than the existing installation.
12. The trunking would in most locations clash with bathroom windows.
13. Ceiling trunking or a suspended ceiling would still be required throughout the entire southern end of the building to distribute landlord's power and telecoms.
14. New mains supplies to flats 101–106, 201 and 206 would require cables and containment across the ceiling soffit regardless.

Additional design work has since been carried out. For a typical section of vertical trunking containing six mains cables, double-stacked cable trays would result in a boxing approximately 250mm wide and 210mm deep – which would still clash with bathroom windows. For the larger sections handling 18 cables, the boxing would be approximately 500mm wide and 210mm deep. Double-stacking reduces width but increases depth due to the need for spacing between cable runs to avoid excessive heat build-up. The previous allowance of 650mm-wide trunking for a single bank of 18 cables is also now considered likely to be insufficient.

Additional considerations include penetrations through concrete slabs (requiring either 150mm diameter holes at 300mm centres, or single larger holes likely to need structural steelwork) and fire stopping.

The chosen approach – stripping away piecemeal services and aggregating everything into a single contained location concealed above the ceiling – was therefore assessed as the best available option.

1d) Can the commissioned reports justifying tray sizing be provided?

Residents asked for the technical justification underpinning tray sizing decisions, which they considered was not provided in the Electrical Distribution Document.

Response: Watkins Payne's Design Note (ref. 5691-WPL-XXX-DN-CS-18001, Design Note 1: Electrical Proposals, Rev 2), together with their Stage 3 Drawings and Report, has been provided to residents as a measure of goodwill. These documents discuss the sizing of trays and cleats and provide the rationale underpinning the design approach. Technical documents of this nature are not ordinarily issued outside of the project team; they are provided here in the interests of transparency and not for adversarial review.

Question 2: Lighting

2a) Why is corridor and balcony lighting integrated into the service trays rather than using independent fittings?

Residents suggested that independent stand-alone luminaires would enable shallower trunking, mitigate overheating, and facilitate replacement of failed or damaged units.

Response: The recessed luminaire is only 60mm deep – no deeper than the ceiling structure itself. Surface-mounted fittings would need to be significantly larger to accommodate additional housing and cable entry arrangements, and would require drivers to be either incorporated into the housing or mounted in a separate surface box, adding clutter that the current design avoids.

A good-quality luminaire with appropriate thermal management will not overheat in the proposed configuration. Maintenance can be carried out from below the ceiling. Motion sensors can be mounted within the ceiling void; surface-mounted alternatives would require additional housings and wiring.

Using wall-mounted lights throughout would be contrary to the heritage aspiration of replicating original installation techniques, would reduce corridor width and create a potential hazard in narrower walkways, and would require additional surface-mounted cabling. The space below the cable trays – where light fittings are housed – is also required for distributing cables into individual homes; with careful coordination, light fittings can be co-located in these spaces. Removing the fittings is unlikely to result in any meaningful reduction in ceiling depth.

2b) Can the number of different light fitting types be reduced?

Residents noted variability in fitting types and raised concerns about glare, particularly from handrail spotlights.

Response: Luminaires have been selected carefully to control glare and tailor optical performance to each location. Reducing fitting types would compromise the design. Final installation detail for some fittings will be informed by site tests – for example, the rotational placement of handrail luminaires will be adjusted to eliminate glare. The overarching aspiration is simplicity of lit effect in keeping with the original design intent. Achieving this using current LED technology may appear technically complex but results in a simpler and better-quality outcome.

Question 3: Paint Finishes

Why do the paint colour sample analyses not support either the strategy in the Listed Building Management Guidelines or the decorative scheme outlined in the LBC application?

Residents asked why the commissioned paint analysis did not appear to support either the original finishes strategy recommended in the Listed Building Management Guidelines or the alternative colour approach outlined in the listed building consent application.

Response: Significant testing and expert advice has been provided by Patrick Baty, a specialist with extensive experience of paint analysis in historically important listed buildings, including work at the Barbican, Ethelburga Estate and the Royal Festival Hall. Two reports have been produced: one from 2003 and one from 2025.

The analysis aimed to identify: the original colours used to decorate Crescent House; which surfaces were decorated at the time of completion in 1962; and, for surfaces not originally decorated, what the first or most frequently applied colours were.

The working hypothesis is that the original colours were drawn from BS 2660: 1955 Colours for Building and Decorative Paints. Where original colours have been identified through testing, the closest contemporary equivalents are then specified to ensure consistency across the decoration works. In summary:

Surfaces likely to have been painted at completion in 1962:

15. Ground floor columns (western elevation): original red (likely BS 2660: 0-006); proposed Red 04YR 11/537

16. Flat front entrance doors: original olive (likely BS 2660: 4-050); proposed Olive Green RAL 7008 (frames to remain white)
17. Upper floor columns and slab edges: original dark grey/black; proposed Black (subsequently changed to Red 04YR 11/537 following discussion with planners and residents)

Surfaces not originally painted, subsequently decorated:

18. Internal render, external render (party walls and balconies), and internal corridor walls: first colour Pale Stone Grey (likely BS 2660: 4-047); proposed Pale Stone Grey 2010 Y10R

The project team considers this approach – using original colours where surfaces were decorated at completion, or first applied colours where they were not – to be consistent with the Listed Building Management Guidelines.

Question 4: Concrete Testing

Why is the concrete testing trial patch identified in the LBC atypical of the building's concrete surfaces? Can additional or revised locations be specified?

Residents noted that the trial patch identified in the listed building consent application does not include areas affected by the 2017 repairs, making it an artificial test, and asked for revised or additional locations to be formalised.

Response: The project team always anticipated that additional trial areas would be required as works progress and concrete conditions vary. The team is happy to formalise additional trial locations on a drawing to be attached to the planning condition; a suggestion has been provided to accompany this response.

Question 5: Buildability

Can the project team confirm that the proposals in the Design and Access Statement are practically buildable in an almost fully tenanted building without a method statement?

Residents raised concerns about the complexity of delivering works in an occupied building, citing the need to run dual electrical supplies during the works, the need to disconnect gas before electrical installation can begin, synchronisation of roof works with elevation works, continuous 24/7 access and safe escape for non-decanted residents, and residents' entitlement to quiet enjoyment of their flats.

Response: The works are certainly complex and detailed phasing will be required. However, one of the critical factors in the selection of the proposed electrical routes is precisely that they allow new electrical cables to be installed independently of the removal of the current supplies. Alternative approaches – such as using existing routes – would make sequencing significantly harder or impractical.

The broad sequence of works within a typical decanted set of flats will be as follows:

19. Remove gas heating equipment, allowing for the safe phased removal of gas pipework from the corridors and eventually the gas meters.
20. Install new electrical services progressively along the corridor, working from the riser towards the centre of the corridor, or from the riser towards the end of the building for the northern and southern ends.
21. Connect the new incoming service to the consumer unit within each home.

22. Swap the mains supply to the flat from the old distribution board in the switch room to the new live supply within the dwelling.

Much of the work in the switch room can be carried out with minimal disruption to services. It is likely that the electrical works will determine the overall sequence across the building, with works proceeding on six flats at a time along a corridor. This represents a change from the previously proposed approach of working in vertical stacks.

Consideration of sequencing will continue to be developed through the detailed design stage and will ultimately be set out by the Principal Contractor in their Construction Phase Plan. The project team also acknowledges that the building services are over 60 years old and must be replaced to maintain safe operation.