



**Sutton
Housing
Society**



**Development consultation:
additional questions and answers**



Introduction

This booklet has been prepared to share with you all the questions asked at the consultation meetings held last month, together with the queries we have received so far during the consultation process.

We hope that you find this of use.

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General questions – construction

Question: How long with the development take?

Answer: Subject to planning, we are hoping to build the five scheme extensions over the next 5 years, starting in 2020. Each site is different, but for the smaller sites like Ronald House, we would expect the works to take about 12 months. For the larger sites like Griffiths Close this would be around 18 months.

As an approximate summary:

- Ronald House: 12 months
- Norman House: 15 months
- Griffiths Close: 18 months
- Trickett House: 15 months
- Cloverdale Court: 24 months

Question: Would you start the build in January 2020?

Answer: No. This is far too soon. We need to obtain planning permission and then tender the works and appoint contractors etc. We would anticipate it being about a year or so before we start on any site (from now).

Question: Don't we have to have the right foundations in place first to build on top of existing flats?

Answer: Yes, we do need to ensure the foundations are suitable. Typically one additional floor can be added to an existing building. Those blocks where we are adding two new floors will have an independent steel frame to support the new floors, which will then be clad in brickwork. An engineer will be undertaking a full structural assessment of all sites.

Question: What part of the development will be built first?

Answer: We cannot confirm this until we understand the type of build etc. As mentioned earlier, each scheme is also very different.

Question: Does Sutton Housing Society plan to upgrade the existing flats?

Answer: There are several improvements proposed to the scheme as a whole, such as the new lifts and the new communal lounge etc. We are looking to ensure that where works are required, that we carry out improvements to individual flats at a similar time to minimise disruption. Our stock condition survey will inform these decisions.

Question: Will the laundry rooms be fitted with industrial / commercial washing machines?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Will the new flats have sprinklers installed?

Answer: As part of compliance with building regulations, including fire safety standards, all schemes will be reviewed as a whole by the fire authority to ensure that the latest required standards are satisfied. If sprinklers are required, then these will be installed.

Question: Will Sutton Housing Society obtain new fire risk assessments?

Answer: Sutton Housing Society obtains fire risk assessments every 2 years and this will continue. If development is underway, a new fire risk assessment is carried out at the completion of the build. On completion, the schemes will be certified to be fully compliant with the latest fire safety standards of the building regulations.

Question: What happens about the aerials on the roof (satellite dish etc.)

Answer: There will be a roof survey carried out once the build design is known and a specialist will look at the current and future needs of aerial provision. We will aim to install a communal aerial system as part of these works if costs are not prohibitive.

General questions – Planning

Question: What is the current legislation about maximum height of builds?
What's to say you're not going to build higher in the future?

Answer: The London Borough of Sutton planners assess and advise what is the most suitable height for each scheme on a site by site basis. The architects have designed the schemes to be in accordance with the planners' advice. It is not our intention to extend these buildings higher in the future. Given each sites surroundings, additional floors are unlikely to be supported by planners in the future.

Question: Will there be a mixture of 1 and 2 bed flats?

Answer: No – the flats are all planned to be 1 bedroom; the majority are designed to be suitable for occupation by 2 adults (known as 1 bed 2 person flats). However a small number of flats will be smaller and suitable for one adult (1 bed 1 person).

Question: When do you think you will make the planning application?

Answer: Whilst we cannot confirm, should we make an application it is likely to be October 2019.

Question: What is the timescale for planning permission?

Answer: We would expect the London Borough of Sutton to review our applications and to decide within 12 weeks of our application being made. Assuming we proceed in October 2019, this would mean we should know whether we have the various permissions in place by around mid-January 2020. Although, the planning process has been known to take longer.

Question: Are we confident we will get planning permission?

Answer: We have had 2 pre-planning application meetings and discussed the plans with the London borough of Sutton. Whilst we cannot be sure, the pre-app meetings have provided us with a certain degree of confidence.

General questions – rent levels

Question: Will the rents on the new homes be the same as the existing homes?

Answer: The rents for the new flats may be different, although we do not know for certain just yet. They are likely to be set at the London affordable rent level. This is not a social rent like our existing homes; it is lower than market rents and is set by the Mayor of London.

Where residents are required to move by Sutton Housing Society, these individual residents will have a 'rent guarantee'. This means that for the lifetime of their tenancy, they will pay the same rent for their new homes that they would have paid had they not moved (unless it is cheaper of course).

General questions – resident related

Question: As the flats are mainly 1 bedroom / 2 persons does this mean there will be more couples moving in?

Answer: Not necessarily; it just means that the homes are large enough to accommodate a couple.

Question: If residents have to move, will they get compensation?

Answer: Yes, we are required to comply with the government's Home Loss scheme if we need to move someone to enable the development to happen. Anyone *choosing* to move will not be entitled to financial assistance.

Question: Can we stay in a newer / different flat if we like where we have temporarily moved / decanted to?

Answer: The answer is likely to be 'yes' assuming you have moved to another Sutton Housing Society property and we haven't carried out specific works to meet your individual needs, at your home whilst you have been living elsewhere temporarily.

Question: Are current residents entitled to transfer to one of the new flats?

Answer: If you apply to our housing waiting list and are accepted, you may well qualify for one of the new flats. (Please note that at Cloverdale Court we are not anticipating the new flats as being extra care).

Please remember, if you move voluntarily you will have to pay the new and potentially higher rent for the flat. If you move because we need you to, to accommodate the development you will have a rent guarantee.

Question: Is the new accommodation still to be for over 55's only?

Answer: Yes

Question: Will residents receive a disruption allowance?

Answer: There is likely to be a disturbance allowance to compensate residents for any noise and disruption during the works. We don't know how much this will be yet. Residents that are required to move will be covered by our 'decant' policy; the premise of this is that no resident who is asked to move as a result of our plans is out of pocket.

Question: Whilst the work is taking place will we have to move out or stay put?

Answer: This will depend on the amount of disturbance likely to be caused. A full health and safety assessment will be undertaken to establish how residents are impacted. We will discuss this with you nearer the time.

Question: There will be a lot of dirt and dust; quite a few residents have health issues.

Answer: We will do our best to keep this to a minimum. However, we are aware that there will be dust etc. Any resident who is concerned can discuss this with their Housing Officer and / or the Operations Director.

Question: Can SHS invite local councillors to the next meeting?

Answer: The council will be informed as part of the planning process. We also held two meetings with local councillors to make them aware of our proposals.

Cloverdale Court:

Question: Will the flats be the same size as the existing flats?

Answer: No, not exactly the same. We need to meet the space standards as laid out by the GLA, which is grant as well as a planning requirement. The minimum space requirements for a 1 bed 2 person flat is 50m²; for a 1 bed 1 person flat the minimum space requirement is 39m². We are trying to design above these figures where possible.

Question: Will the entrance to Cloverdale Court still be at the front of the building?

Answer: The entrance will remain in a similar position with re-configuration in order to accommodate the new day centre adjacent to the entrance, with new flats above. A covered pedestrian route is proposed to improve access to the building from the car park.

Question: Would we lose any parking spaces? Will you install an automatic barrier as parking can be quite bad due to unauthorised visitors parking?

Answer: Parking will be reconfigured to accommodate the new day centre at the front of the building. Provision for 15 parking bays will be maintained. The ambulance bay moves towards the fence boundary line. We know that parking can be an issue and are reviewing the success, or otherwise of the permit parking scheme. We may well need to look at another remedy.

Griffiths Close:

Question: Is there to be a new 3rd floor at Griffiths Close?

Answer: Yes, to the front of the building, which has 2 additional floors planned.

Question: Are you going to be building on top of the rear block?

Answer: No.

Question: Where will the new car parking go?

Answer: Parking will be increased by adjusting some of the garden areas. We have kept to the same parking percentages as 1 space for every 2 properties.

Question: In the middle block, what will happen to the hot and cold-water supplies whilst the construction is taking place?

Answer: We will ensure that all utilities are considered ahead of any work starting on site. Residents will be made aware of any changes that are needed as a result of the proposed work.

Question: In the middle block, will you add / remove the fire escape route to the current top terrace area?

Answer: All new proposals will be reviewed by the fire authority to ensure the required standards are satisfied at the time of construction. It is proposed that the existing first floor external terrace and escape route between front and central blocks will be removed. Two new flats will be constructed in their place.

Question: Is there to be a new / additional laundry room / facility?

Answer: Yes, there are 2 new laundry facilities proposed at first and second floor adjacent to the new lift.

Question: Are the flats going to be larger than the ones currently at Griffiths Close?

Answer: It varies; we need to meet the space standards as laid out by the GLA, which is a grant requirement as well as a planning requirement. The minimum space requirement for a 1 bed 2 person flat is 50 m²; for a 1 bed 1 person flat the minimum space requirement is 39m². We are trying to design homes larger than these figures where possible.

Question: Will it be darker when the middle block is built on top of? Right to light?

Answer: All the proposed designs will have a daylight and sunlight assessment, which is a planning requirement.

Question: Will the proposed new car parking between the blocks affect the windows of the ground floor flats?

Answer: We are required to provide additional parking as part of the proposed scheme. The architects have carefully considered the parking arrangement and the design proposes planting & shrubbery between the windows and the new parking spaces where possible to minimise impact.

Norman House:

Question: With 13 new homes there is every chance that the new residents will possibly have cars and parking will become an increasing issue.

Answer: We do recognise this; however, the London Borough of Sutton has advised that due to the proximity of the scheme to Sutton town centre and the lack of space to the front of the building, no additional parking can be included in the proposals.

Question: Would SHS consider increasing the eligible age of new residents as they are less likely to have a car?

Answer: We did not really answer this at the meeting. However, having considered this we are mindful that our aim is to provide new homes for people in need and must take account of the planners' feedback, which in this case was not to include additional parking spaces. We may need to consider a permit parking arrangement to ensure people with disabilities etc. are more able to park.

Question: Are there any particular security concerns for the extension nearest to Cheam Road?

Answer: No. There will still be boundary fencing as there is now and there will be no change to site access than at present.

Question: Are we doing anything about the current bedsits? Will the residents currently in bedsits get a chance to transfer to a larger flat?

Answer: Residents can apply to our housing waiting list and if accepted, may well qualify for one of the new flats. Please remember, if you move voluntarily you will have to pay the new rent for the flat. If you move because we need you to, to accommodate the development, you will have a 'rent guarantee'.

Question: Are any of the new flats larger than the current largest flats at Norman House?

Answer: The minimum space requirement for a 1 bed 2 person flat is 50 m²; for a 1 bed 1 person flat the minimum space requirement is 39m². We are trying to design homes larger than these figures where possible

Ronald House:

Question: Will all flats have Juliette balconies?

Answer: It is part of the development proposal to include Juliette balconies to the lounge and bedroom windows of the flats facing on to Carshalton Road. However, this can be reviewed depending on feedback from residents.

Question: What is the new cladding / façade proposed? Does it envelope the whole building?

Answer: The new brick façade applies to the exterior walls fronting on to Carshalton Road and Carshalton Grove.

Question: How will we access the communal garden?

Answer: You will be able to access the garden via a ramp from the ground floor, which is to be located at the end of the corridor near to flat 5. The existing access from the basement will remain. There will also be access to the garden from the rear parking area and ground floor communal lounge.

Question: Will you only fit a new lift if you get planning permission?

Answer: The current lift is too small for the number of flats. Any lift of a suitable size would need to form part of a new extension e.g. lift tower, which would require planning permission. The scheme extension makes the new 8 person passenger lift more financially viable. However, we would still consider a new lift if planning permission is not granted, but it may make it less financially viable.

Question: Will the new lift be wheelchair accessible?

Answer: Yes.

Trickett House:

Question: Is there a front elevation view of the plans available?

Answer: Not on the display boards as the main change relates to the roof level of the lower block, creating a continuous roof line. The entrance will be redesigned to accommodate a new lift as well as landscaping to the front of the building. A front elevation can be made available.

Question: Can / will we install roof solar panels as a way of recouping our costs of the build / development?

Answer: We will need to consider a number of energy saving initiatives as part of the planning process; solar panels may be one way of these.

Question: How close will proposed new parking bays be to the front bay window of 2 Trickett House?

Answer: We are unable to answer this exactly at this stage.

Question: Can we not then move bays from under 2 Trickett House window to alongside the perimeter hedge?

Answer: Yes, we can review this and perhaps leave a disabled bay in the area near to flat 2.

Question: How many cars is each flat / tenant allowed to have?

Answer: There is no prescribed number.

Question: How will we decide / manage who uses the newly provided disabled parking bays?

Answer: All parking is on a 'first come, first served' basis. The disabled bays are for the blue badge holders.

Question: Can we provide an additional scooter store / space at rear of scheme for those who live at the back as they won't be able to access the proposed new scooter room?

Answer: This is included.

Question: Have we looked into / taken into consideration how we will increase sewerage / water provision for the number of new flats / residents?

Answer: This forms part of the planning application, as well as various studies that need to be carried out prior to any work on site starting.

Contact details to feedback your views / observations:

There are several ways to provide feedback. They are:

- In person or via email or telephone to your Community Housing Services Officer, Martin Reddick / Lise Mellors
- For Cloverdale Court residents, in person via the Housing with Care Manager, Lynn Goodman
- In person or via email or telephone to the Community Housing Services Manager, Ray Alder
- In person or via email or telephone to the Operations Director, Glynis Gatenby
- Via email to info@shsoc.org.uk
- Via our website at www.suttonhousingsociety.org.uk
- In writing to the office at Pat Shaw House, 13 – 19 Ventnor Road, Sutton SM2 6 AQ
- Over the telephone by calling 020 8642 1500 and speaking to a member of our team.