

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Decision maker:</b> Strategic Director of Housing
<b>Report title:</b>		<b>2 Linden Grove development – Local Lettings Plan</b>	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		Peckham and Nunhead	
<b>From:</b>		Ricky Bellot - Head of Housing Solutions	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Strategic Director of Housing is asked to approve the local lettings plan for the 6 new homes at 2 Linden Grove where up to 50% of the properties will first be allocated to existing tenants within the local area, with the next 25% of properties allocated to homeless households owed the main housing duty by Southwark, and the remaining properties advertised through the housing register.
2. That the Strategic Director notes the further criteria applied to residents of the local lettings scheme as follows:
  - i. The local area is defined as Southwark Council tenants within 200 metres of where the development is located, as detailed in paragraph 33.
  - ii. Direct Offers will be made to homeless households owed the main housing duty. This will be a final offer of accommodation where refusal of a suitable offer will result in ending the main housing duty and discharge of Southwark's statutory functions in relation to homelessness.
  - iii. Prospective tenants will be required to have rent arrears of less than four weeks or £50 if claiming housing benefit at point of application and point of offer.
  - iv. Households can only move upon successful completion of pre-tenancy inspection and interview as per section 5.26 of the council's published allocation scheme.
  - v. Only households assessed as being in housing need (bands 1-3) will be allocated a property through the local lettings scheme. Households will be prioritised within existing priority bands and awarded priority stars in accordance with the allocations scheme.

- vi. Requests for additional bedrooms above the assessed need will not be considered, unless they are made on medical grounds that are confirmed by a Housing Solutions medical assessment.
- vii. All households will be permitted to move into new homes which are one room less than their assessed bed need for three or more bedroomed properties.
- viii. Households will not be permitted to move into new one bedroomed homes if the property is below their assessed bed need.
- ix. Households on the general register who are not within in the defined local lettings area, or owed the main housing duty, will not be permitted to move into any of the new homes if the property is below their assessed bed need.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3. In line with the council's target to produce 11,000 new homes by 2043, planning permission was granted to proceed with the development of new council homes located at 2 Linden Grove.
- 4. The development at 2 Linden Grove includes six new homes, to be completed in Summer 2024, comprising of one and three bed flats and 3 bed houses.
- 5. All six properties will be listed as social housing tenancies.
- 6. Southwark's Housing Allocations Scheme sets out the criteria by which properties will be allocated. The scheme also provides for the use of local lettings schemes in order to meet the housing needs of tenants within a local area.
- 7. Demand for social housing within the borough continues to outstrip supply where there are 17,926 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 the council received 3,935 applications but were only able to allocate 1,464 homes through either a nomination to a housing association or allocation of a Southwark council property.
- 8. One of the aims of the housing allocations scheme is to enable local tenants in housing need to remain within their communities and not to have to re-locate outside of the area to find suitable accommodation.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

9. All lettings for the new build schemes located at 2 Linden Grove will comply fully with the local lettings provisions in Southwark Council's Housing Allocations scheme.
10. It is proposed that 50% of the initial lettings of the new homes will be allocated to Southwark Council tenants currently living in the properties/buildings detailed in paragraph 33.
11. These lettings will be delivered to maximise the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promises, homes for all.
12. Following the initial lettings, secondary lettings up to 25% of homes will be allocated to homeless households owed the main housing duty by Southwark Council through direct offer.
13. Following the first round of lettings to the local area and direct offers to homeless households, a second round of lettings for all remaining homes will be advertised to the housing register as a whole.
14. The Council also has considered whether there are any residents borough wide that have been affected by developments of shared ownership homes where council tenants have not had or will not have the opportunity to benefit from local lettings. There are currently no past or active shared ownership developments this applies to and therefore no additional residents have been identified to be part of this local lettings plan.
15. Percentages of allocated properties will be rounded up to the nearest whole number. For example, 25% of six properties will be rounded up to 2 properties.

### **Neighbourhoods**

16. The local lettings approach contributes to the council's key priorities to create and support neighbourhoods. It enables those already living and contributing within local communities to benefit from the development of homes in their area.

### **Narrowing the gap**

17. The letting of new social homes, at social rent levels, supports residents on lower incomes to access genuinely affordable housing, improve their housing conditions and support them to narrow the gap in life chances for themselves and their families.

### **People powered**

18. In the longer term it supports residents to put down roots and contribute to local, community powered decision making in their area. Choice Based Lettings and the local lettings process enables residents to make choices

about where they want to live, enabling them to select a homes in the local community.

### **Policy implications**

19. There are no Key policy implications or amendments required.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

#### **Community impact statement**

20. Awarding priority to existing tenants within the estate recognises the fact that the development of new homes may cause disruption and on some occasions lack of amenities.
21. The groups that are affected and deemed able to apply for the homes as “local” tenants are the tenants living within the immediate vicinity of the estate where the property has been developed.
22. The allocation of these homes will be conducted in accordance with the councils published allocation scheme, which is already subject to its own community impact assessment.

#### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

23. An equalities Impact assessment was carried out on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024 with no adverse findings. The proposal to increase the supply of affordable, good quality homes will benefit households in need from all Southwark communities.
24. This scheme follows the successful local lettings of new developments such as Pelier Street, East Dulwich Estate, Nunhead, Clifton estate, Masterman and Willow Walk.

#### **Health impact statement**

25. There are no health impact implications arising as a result of this policy.

#### **Climate change implications**

26. Linden Grove development complies with Building Regulations Part L that addresses the conservation of fuel and power, and guarantees eco-friendly efficient properties and minimise carbon emissions, as part of a drive towards a greener future. The project is fuelled via air source heat pumps for more eco-friendly living and lower cost of bills for our residents.

27. The scheme also incorporates landscape improvements, providing a new place space. The new homes will have mechanical and heat recovery ventilation systems. The cumulative CO2 savings on site are estimated at 60.9% against a Part L 2013 compliant scheme.

### **Resource Implications**

28. None.

### **Legal Implications**

29. See the concurrent provided by the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance at paragraphs 45 to 50 below.

### **Financial implications**

30. None.

### **Consultation**

31. Consultation was undertaken as part of the planning process and with internal stakeholders during design development stages.
32. The local lettings area covers Linden Grove including the following properties/buildings:

Consort Estate  
Linden Grove Development  
Linden Grove Estate  
Monteagle Way  
New James Court  
69-89 Scylla Road  
Nunhead Green

33. The new homes will consist of the following social rented properties:

<b>Property size</b>	<b>Number of units</b>
1 bed flat	2
3 bed flat	2
3 bed House	2
<b>Total</b>	6

34. Therefore, it is anticipated 2 properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 33 of this report, and, 2 properties will be allocated to homeless households.
35. As at the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024, sixty households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homesearch Bidding Scheme. Twenty-eight of those households have been assessed as having a housing need and are listed in a priority band 1-3. The priority listed households are indicated below:

<b>Priority category</b>	<b>1 bed need</b>	<b>2 bed need</b>	<b>3 bed need</b>	<b>Total count</b>
Under occupiers	2	1	1	4
Management transfers	0	0	1	1
Overcrowded households	0	4	4	8
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	1	1
Medical needs	2	2	4	8
Accessible housing requirement	1	2	2	5
Sheltered housing	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>28</b>

36. The above table shows a mixture of households compositions including 1,2, and 3 bedroom households. Therefore, it is anticipated these households will benefit from the new development within the local area, however those of 2 bed need will not.
37. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified twenty eight households on the Estates. Therefore, it is expected they will free up properties that will be available to other residents on the housing list.
38. As a result, there is sufficient demand to warrant priority given to tenants within the defined local area. An increase in the local lettings area for the new homes will generate unnecessary demand and likely to raise expectations above what can be delivered as part of this local lettings scheme.
39. Letters will be sent to qualifying tenants on the register in advance to inform them of the upcoming development. This will include details of the available homes, qualification criteria listed above and dates when the properties will be available on the Homesearch bidding website.
40. The local Resident Services Officer will work with the Housing Solutions service to help identify additional households within the local lettings estates

that are in housing need but not registered on the Homesearch bidding scheme. Such cases will be expedited in order to permit the households to bid on the new homes.

41. The homes will be advertised in advance of the completion of the homes on Linden Grove. The first 50% of homes will be advertised to the local tenants, the next 25% will be directly offered to homeless households while the remaining properties will be advertised once we have given the full opportunity for the local tenants to register their interest.
42. The information listed on the website will promote the features of the new build homes and ensure the full listing of the local lettings scheme is available for the households listed on the Homesearch bidding scheme.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance**

#### **Strategic Director of Finance**

49. No comments sought.

#### **Public Sector Equality duty (PSED)**

50. The Equality Act 2010 requires the council, when taking decisions, to have due regard to the need to:
  - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it.
51. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in relation to (a) above.
52. When taking decisions on the exercise of council functions conscious thought must be given to the PSED, including having regard to any equality impact assessment carried out, in particular, where any possible disproportionate effects on groups sharing protected characteristics are identified, the mitigation proposed. The cabinet member is referred to the community impact section of this report.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ricky Bellot, Head of Housing Solutions		
Report Author	Alex Herd, Housing Choice and Supply Manager		
Version	Final Draft		
Dated	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2024		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services		Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			