

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: November 2024	Decision maker: Strategic Director of Housing
Report title:		Lomond Grove – Local Lettings Plan	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Camberwell Green	
From:		Ricky Bellot - Head of Housing Solutions	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Strategic Director of Housing is asked to approve the local lettings plan for the twenty-two new homes at Lomond 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 note the further criteria applied to residents of the local lettings scheme as follows:
 - i. The local area is defined as Southwark Council tenants as detailed in paragraph 32.
 - ii. Allocations 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 Lomond Grove.
- 4. The development at Lomond Grove includes twenty-two new homes that are scheduled for completion in October 2024, comprising of one, two and three bed flats.
- 5. All twenty-two 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 18,600 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 Lomond 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 32.
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.
13. Following the first round of lettings to the local area and allocations 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 twenty-two properties will be rounded up to 6 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 20th November 2024. No adverse findings was found as part of the findings from the assessment.
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. Lomond Grove development was approved at planning committee in September 2021 and no Climate change implications statement was produced.
27. The development has Air Source Heat Pumps installed as part of the energy strategy.

Resource Implications

28. None.

Legal Implications

29. See the concurrent provided by the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance at paragraphs 44 to 50 below.

Financial implications

30. None.

Consultation

31. Landlord Services, Southwark Construction and the Housing Needs service have been working in partnership with the local tenants, to design a Local Lettings scheme for the initial allocation of the new build scheme for Lomond Grove.

32. These meetings have been conducted over a number of months and an agreement has been reached with the residents, tenants for the geographical area for the Local Lettings area. The local lettings area covers the Elmington Estate including the following properties/buildings:

- 1-47 Caspian Street
- 61-91 Brisbane Street
- 2 -13 Broome Way
- 1-26 Drinkwater House
- 1- 2 Draycott Close
- 1-67 Masterman House
- 1-25 Piper Court
- 1-16 Pope House
- 1-8 Jago Walk

33. The consultation undertaken prior to the planning application submission, as outlined in the Design and Access Statement, includes engagement with ward councillors, the local project group, and local residents, who were invited to two public meetings and an online exhibition from 29.03.2021 to 13.04.2021, with 16 attendees at the public meeting and 173 visitors to the online consultation pages. Additionally, the council formed a local resident project group in January 2020 and held several online consultation meetings between February 2020 and February 2021, providing regular updates through newsletters, which mentioned local lettings.

34. The new homes sit on the Elmington Estate and will consist of the following social rented properties:

Property size	Number of units
1 bed flat	9
2 bed flat	6 (including two wheelchair accessible unit)
3 bed flat	7
Total	22

35. Therefore, it is anticipated eleven properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 32 of this report, and, 6 properties will be allocated to homeless households.
36. As at the 29th October 2024, thirty-one households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homeseach Bidding Scheme. Seventeen 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 broken up below:

Priority category	1 bed need	2 bed need	3 bed+ need	Total count
Under occupiers	3	1	0	4
Management transfers	0	0	1	1
Overcrowded households	0	0	8	8
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	1	1
Medical needs	0	0	2	2
Accessible housing requirement	0	0	1	1
Sheltered housing	0	0	0	0
Total	3	1	13	17

37. 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. This includes the provision of sufficient accessible properties for the local residents in a housing need.
38. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified seventeen households on the Estates. Therefore, it is expected they will free up properties that will be available to other residents on the housing list.

39. 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.
40. 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 the properties will be available on the Homesearch bidding website.
41. 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.
42. The homes will be advertised in advance of the completion of the homes on Lomond Grove. The first 50% of homes will be advertised to the local tenants, the next 25% will be allocated 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.
43. 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 (DG 16/12/2024)

44. The recommendation in the report is the Strategic Director of Housing approves the local lettings plan for the 22 new homes Lomond Grove.
45. The Council has a duty under the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 to ensure it has a scheme for determining priorities and the procedures it will follow for allocating housing accommodation. The scheme must be framed to ensure reasonable preference to certain categories of housing applicants. In accordance with this duty, the council has in place the Housing Allocation Scheme 2013.
46. Generally, the council must not allocate council housing (or nominate an applicant to a housing provider with whom it has a nominations agreement) except in accordance with its allocation scheme.
47. It is permissible for the scheme to contain provision about the allocation of particular housing accommodation to persons of a particular description, whether or not they come within one of the reasonable preference categories

set out in the Allocation Scheme (Local Lettings Policies). However, such policies must not displace the system of reasonable preference in the main allocation scheme.

48. The statutory basis for local lettings policies is provided by S.166A (6) (b) of the Housing Act 1996. Guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government acknowledges that they may be used to achieve a wide variety of housing management and policy objectives.
49. The council's Allocation Scheme, paragraphs 7.10.1 to 7.10.4, provide that the council may decide to operate one or more local letting policies within Southwark and that a local lettings policy may be introduced, as part of a multi-agency approach with existing local communities or in partnership with Private Registered Provider landlords, to take account of social factors.
50. The local letting plan in this report makes provision for allocating new properties at Lomond Grove to existing local tenants, homeless applicants, and to applicants on the main register. The Strategic Director should satisfy himself that the need for the local lettings policy outlined in the report is defined and consistent with the provision in the council's allocation scheme for such policies.

Consultation

51. The Strategic Director is reminded the Allocation Scheme provides that local lettings policies will be reviewed on a regular basis and equality impact assessments will be undertaken including consultation with customers and communities, before a local lettings plan is agreed. The Strategic Director is required take into account the outcome of the consultation when making a decision on the recommendations and is referred to the consultation section of this report.

Public Sector Equality duty (PSED)

52. 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.
53. 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 Strategic Director is referred to the

community impact section of this report.

Strategic Director of Finance

54. No comments sought.

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	30 th 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			

