



## BELLS GARDENS FACTSHEET

JUNE 2021

Dear Resident,

As you know, we recently submitted a planning application for the proposals to build new homes, a new community centre and a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Bells Gardens Estate. We are aware that there has been some literature circulating about the details of the proposed development, so we thought it would be helpful to provide all residents with a handy factsheet to clarify the details of the proposals.

### THE PROPOSAL

- To build 97 new homes, a new community centre and an improved amenity space in the Bells Gardens Estate.
- The development would be a mixed tenure development of social rent and private sale – 65 social rent homes and 32 outright sale homes.

## DETAILS OF THE PROPOSALS

### Amenities and facilities on the estate

- The existing playground on the Bells Gardens Estate would be re-provided as part of this development.
- The existing community centre on the estate is in need of modernisation. It would be re-provided as part of the development and will be slightly smaller in size but with improved facilities.
- The proposed designs for the new community centre were well-received by residents during consultation.
- We agreed with residents that the works would be phased so that the new community centre is available for use prior to the existing centre being closed.
- The existing Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the estate would be re-provided at a reduced size in line with feedback from residents.
- A linear park would be provided between the new blocks and trees would be planted on the estate.

### New community centre proposals

In line with feedback from residents, the proposed designs for the new community centre feature the following improvements:

- Outside space for the community centre's sole use
- An IT Suite
- Two separate halls
- Three kitchen areas
- Additional separate storage areas
- WCs and two disabled WCs
- Office space
- Eight car parking spaces would be re-provided

### Housing amenity land

- Overall, the proposals for the Bells Gardens Estate would add an additional 4% of built footprint area within the red line site boundary, with a corresponding reduction in the overall amount of housing amenity land (open space).
- This additional built footprint would provide significant benefits for new and existing residents. A new purpose-built community centre would replace the existing facility and

there would be substantial improvements to the quality of the landscaped spaces on the estate which would benefit all residents.

- There would also be an overall increase in play space provision, a net gain in tree planting to increase biodiversity across the site, and a landscape that would support a greater variety of uses to suit a range of age groups.
- The new MUGA would meet Sport England guidelines and provide a more flexible facility to support a greater variety of activities without dominating the open space.
- We believe that the substantial investment in upgrading the quality of the housing amenity land and facilities on the estate would be much more noticeable than the marginal loss of housing amenity land overall.

## The proposed new buildings

- The design of the development evolved over several meetings and the project group looked at a variety of different design concepts. We agreed on three separate blocks in line with resident's feedback, to allow more daylight to pass through.
- We reduced the maximum height of the proposed new buildings from 11 storeys to nine storeys in line with resident's feedback.
- We would plant hedges and shrubs to create private space and screening for residential ground floor flats.

## Private sale units

- The private sale units on the estate would be used to help fund the new community centre which would be a significantly improved amenity for residents.

## The site boundary

- The site boundary for the development was extended during the pre-consultation period in line with resident's requests and to ensure that more areas benefited from improved landscaping.

## Resident and stakeholder consultation

- We consulted extensively with residents and local stakeholders while shaping the designs of the proposals and took on board resident's wishes and comments.
- The consultation with residents began in 2018 and lasted over two years.
- To shape the design proposals, we worked alongside a project group made up of local representatives from Bells Gardens Estate, the committee of the Southwark Group of Tenants Associations and community groups who use the premises at 19 Buller Close.
- The Lindley T&RA representative also attended the project group meetings along with the London Youth Support Trust.

## HOUSING NEED AT BELLS GARDENS

We currently have 36 households who are in housing need on Bells Gardens Estate. This equates to a total of 68 people living in unsuitable accommodation. 21 of these households are families and nine are overcrowded or are in need of a wheelchair accessible property.

Under the council's current local lettings policy, at least 50% of the new council homes built on the estate would be offered to local tenants in housing need already living in the immediate area. The remainder of the new council homes would be offered to those on Southwark's housing register.

We recently consulted with residents about a new local lettings policy, which could mean that up to 100% of new council homes will be offered to local residents going forwards.

## YOUR CONTACTS

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