

Proposed erection of a detached four bedroom house
at

Treetops
Hillcroome Road
Sutton SM2 5EL

PLANNING, DESIGN (including character assessment), ACCESS STATEMENT



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INTRODUCTION

This statement is submitted to the London Borough of Sutton in support of a submission pursuant to the refusal of a detached house under reference(LPA reference: DM2018/00933) at Treetops, Hillcroome Road, Sutton SM2 5EL. The previous application was a long standing planning application for the erection of a pair of four bedroom semi-detached houses. Negotiations on the original scheme were protracted and culminated recently in a suggestion by the Council that the site is suited for a pair of semi-detached houses but this position was subsequently retracted and refused permission, suggesting the site was more suitable for a single house.

The application comprises:

The plans

This statement

A tree report by Arbtech

A construction method statement

A FRA and SUDS report by GeoSmart Information Ltd

An energy & sustainability statement by Doherty Energy.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS, INCLUDING A CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The nearby architecture is very mixed being a range of semi-detached and detached dwellings from varying eras. The character of the area is medium density suburban dating from the 1930's up to the 1990's. The proposal draws on the older character.

The site contains some trees detailed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan and it is notable the Local Planning Authority do not question matters of tree retention and protection.

The site lies on the corner of Upland and Hillcroome Roads and the existing dwelling is single storey with Upland Road and Hillcroome Road forming the northern and eastern boundaries of the site respectively. On the west of the site lies the private residences along The Ridgway which typically consists of three-storey private dwellings. The dwellings along both Upland Road and Hillcroome Road consist of a mixture between 2 and 3 storey dwellings. The effect of changes in the area arising from the past fifty years is a diverse range of house types and architectural styles.

The development site is currently occupied by an existing one storey private residence. The building has brick facades and plain tiles to the roof. The adjacent buildings and the majority of the buildings on Upland Road and Hillcroombe Road are larger in scale. The residential dwelling at No 4 Upland Road is two storeys with render to the ground floor and timber cladding to the first floor. The 3 storey properties to the rear of the proposed development site along The Ridgway are predominantly rendered with some brickwork and hanging clay tile to the facades. The site is shown below:



Character assessment

As part of the application the site plan shows that the plot size of all the existing houses in the immediate locality are generally plots of the same or smaller than that proposed, as shown below.



The road comprises a wide range of property types in terms of a) age b) architectural style c) bulk and massing / storey heights and d) positioning along the road. The existing development follows a very linear layout parallel to the road and the contours of the street. The road edge to plots comprises green verges with either mature hedges, shrubs and trees planted alongside. As noted above, there is a range of building types and styles even with the ASLC (Area of Special Local Character). These may be subdivided thus:

Older buildings: Dwellings ranging from late Victorian / early Edwardian to 1930's

- a) These houses represent the older vernacular in the road, typically two-storey with steeped pitch roofs, and elevations broken up with bays. Original extensions and outbuildings culminating in gabled roofs, main bulk-hipped and gable ends.
- b) Red stock brickwork to ground floor levels with a range of tile hanging, render and boarded features to first floor levels.
- c) White painted window frames with white glazing bars and/or leaded lights and solid timber front doors some with glazed panels.
- d) Features comprise tile hanging, selective use of render, brick banding courses, brick rubbed or soldier course arches over openings, dark stained timber to gables.

Typical examples are:



A common feature is a wide 'rambling' style.

Typical details repeated in the application are:

- A mix of render, tile and brick (as above)
- Extensive use of dormer window
- Steep pitch roof
- Varied original additions both with flat and pitched roofs.



1930's – 1970's buildings: Dwellings ranging from 1940's – 1960's single storey to various 1960's – 1970's two storey type

- a) These houses represent a diverse range of bulk and massing with lower pitched roofs to bungalows and 1970's two storey.
- b) Red and yellow stock brickwork to all levels (some dwellings are rendered at ground levels), tile hanging, white painted boarding to upper levels ground floor levels with a range of tile hanging, render and boarded features to first floor levels.
- c) White / stained or black painted window frames with either matching glazing bars or clear glazed, and solid timber front doors – stained or white painted.
- d) Features – a dominance of pantile roof tiles, some plain tiled, soldier course arches over openings.

These are shown below:



Recent / present day development: Dwellings ranging from 1980's to present day (these include properties that have been upgraded and fully refurbished).

- a) These houses and flats represent either a modern vernacular, 2 storey, some with roof conversions, flats – either full 3 storey or 2.5 storey (roof space) gabled feature roofs to frontages, hipped and gabled ends. Bay windows to ground and first floor levels. Also, more contemporary designs – using red brick, horizontal render feature bands, large glazed areas - grey anodised aluminium window and door frames
- b) Red stock brickwork to all levels tile hanging, white painted boarding to upper levels ground floor levels with a range of tile hanging, render and boarded features to first floor levels.
- c) White / natural or dark stained window frames with either matching glazing bars or clear glazed, and solid timber front doors –stained or white painted.
- d) Features – plain tiled roofs, soldier course arches over openings, white fascias and soffits.

These are shown below:



THE PROPOSED LAYOUT AND DESIGN

The design concept flows from the previous negotiations with the Council and the recent refusal. The most important context considerations are:

1. The siting of the building is largely on the site of the existing bungalow and hence does not impact on ecology or the landscape.
2. The architectural language of the development is strongly influenced by the Arts and Crafts theme of the adjacent Area of Special Local Character using influences and detail drawn from the immediate locality and traditional components as described in this statement. The prevalent theme of the older buildings is repeated by:
 - Using a range of attached forms
 - Using a range of materials within a common palette
 - Including modest dormers.
3. Parking is provided in a convenient location. The proposed house re-uses the existing access and hard standing.
4. The landscaping role played by the existing boundary planting is retained. Through this design approach to both buildings and landscape the requirements of the Development Plan are met. The development will thus integrate into the landscaped setting. The proposal includes private gardens exceeding the minimum standards.
5. Cycle storage is provided in the secure private garden to encourage sustainable transport use.
6. In the existing access is not changed there are no transport implications.
7. The companion energy and water usage report concludes:

7.0 CONCLUSION

- a) *The London Borough of Sutton requires all minor residential developments to achieve at least a 35% reduction in regulated carbon dioxide emissions on site.*
- b) *The Application is for the redevelopment of the site to create a new detached residential unit at Treetops, Sutton, SM2 5EL.*

c) It is proposed that in order to meet the requirements of policy this development will adopt a high standard of design with regard to energy efficiency principles. It has been estimated that the proposed development will achieve a reduction of at least 14.9% in the carbon dioxide emissions through fabric and services efficiencies and a total of 68.6% through the use of an air source heat pump and solar photovoltaics.

d) At planning stage it is not possible to produce the final reports on the energy demand, carbon dioxide emissions, based on the initial construction information. It is envisaged that during detailed design, the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions can be improved.

e) This report has assessed the risk of overheating and the development has been identified as having a slight risk, which can be reduced by incorporating low G value glazing, internal shading by light coloured curtains or cross ventilation by opening the windows fifty percent of the time.

f) The water usage has been assessed and although the actual water fittings have not been selected yet, the calculations show that it is possible for this development to achieve the requirements of the planning policy, thus minimising the impact of the development on the local water resources.

g) This Energy and Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the requirements of planning policy with regard to carbon dioxide reduction, incorporation of low and zero carbon technologies and water consumption. It is for these reasons it is considered that this application should be viewed favorably by the London Borough of Sutton.

8. The SUDS strategy is:

Although the Site has a High potential for infiltration SuDS, due to spatial constraints, whereby an appropriate buffer zone of 10m between building foundations and the soakaway cannot be provided, infiltration SuDS would not be feasible in this instance.

There are no surface water courses within 100 m of the Site. Discharge to surface water body is unlikely to be feasible.

There is a public surface water sewer located adjacent to the north of the Site on Hillcroombe Road. In addition, there is a manhole on Site, of which surface water could be discharged into after consultation with the utility provider to confirm this route would still be appropriate.

Consultation should be undertaken with the utility provider to confirm there would be sufficient capacity within sewer network for the proposed flows from the development and to gain permission to connect where necessary.

9. The companion flood risk assessment records:

The Site is currently used within a residential capacity. Development proposals comprise the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a single residential dwelling with associated driveway and garden areas.

The flood risks from all sources have been assessed as part of this report and are as follows:

- According to the Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning Purposes, the Site is located within a fluvial Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability).
 - According to the EA's Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea (RoFRS) map, which considers the type, condition and crest height of flood defences, the Site has a Negligible risk of flooding from Rivers and the Sea.
 - According to the EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (pluvial) flood mapping, the Site has a very low risk of pluvial flooding.
 - Groundwater Flood Risk screening data indicates there is a Negligible risk of groundwater flooding at the surface in the vicinity of the Site during a 1 in 100 year event.
 - The risk of flooding from artificial (man-made) sources such as reservoirs, sewers and canals has been assessed:
 - The EA's Risk of Flooding from Reservoir map confirms the Site is not at risk of reservoir flooding.
 - o Ordnance Survey (OS) data confirms there are no canals near to the Site.
 - o A sewer flooding history search was undertaken using the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (AECOM, 2015). This confirms no recorded incidences of sewer flooding at or within the vicinity of the Site.
 The risk of flooding from artificial sources is considered to be negligible.
 - The risk to the development has been assessed over its expected 100 year lifetime, including appropriate allowances for the impacts of climate change. More extreme weather events could increase the risk to the site from increased potential for surface water. Site specific assessment indicates risk to the site will not increase significantly and appropriate mitigation measures are proposed.
- In accordance with paragraphs 157, 164 and footnote 51 of the NPPF (2019), as the development proposals are comprised of the demolition of an existing building and construction of a similar building in its place within Flood Zone 1, the Sequential Test is not required.*

NATIONAL POLICY

The Government published a new final version of the National Planning Policy Framework in February 2019. One of the key drivers for the revision was the need to deliver a sufficient supply of homes. For decision taking, there is a presumption in the Framework in favour of sustainable development and "...Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."

Turning to the specific subject areas, the NPPF states (paragraph 59):

To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

A new provision of the NPPF is an emphasis on small sites, and the guidance notes:

68. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;

The proposal is such a small site and provides an opportunity to create a good family home, responsive to local needs.

The proposal provides a family house with amenity space that makes effective use of land, as required by paragraph 117 of the Framework, which states:

Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development and should establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live. Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. The design presents a well-conceived scheme meeting all current standards.

The above notes the new NPPF provision in paragraph 68 regarding the value of small sites and the benefit they bring to the housing market. This is now recognised in London by the Mayor in the new adopted London Housing Strategy 2018. It notes, as does the new NPPF, the role of small sites and small developers. This is a theme not found in the Local Plan. The London Housing Strategy notes on page 51 (relevant extracts are also copied in Appendix A):

3.20 Smaller sites tend to be completed more quickly than larger ones, and, when they are located in parts of London with lower land values, they can help to support the delivery of market homes at relatively more affordable prices. However, in the eight years to 2014, completions on small sites (under 0.25 hectares) fell by half, and this decline was even more pronounced in outer London and on very small sites (under 0.1 hectares). The rise in development on small sites since 2014 is largely accounted for by the conversion of offices and workplaces into housing (see box 1), something the Mayor believes cannot and should not be relied upon to continue at the same rate.

3.21 To support more new homes on small sites, the Mayor has set out policies in his draft London Plan to give a clear presumption in favour of appropriate residential development on small sites, including specific borough-level targets for this type of development (my underlining). This new approach will enable more homes to be built in areas within walking distance of town centres and public transport and accepts that there is a need for the character of some neighbourhoods to evolve to accommodate additional housing. The Mayor will support councils to accommodate this new approach, including through new housing design guidance, and exploring new ways to improve public transport and active travel options in suburban areas, as set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

The proposal is an example of this type of small site and provides an opportunity to create a new family home.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The London Borough of Sutton adopted a new Local Plan in February 2018. It supersedes the previous DPD's. The thrust of housing policy is that the LPA are aiming to deliver at least 6,405 new homes over the plan period 2016-2031 (427 homes per annum). Part of this will be achieved in the Suburban Heartlands (the remainder of the borough not covered by Sutton Town Centre and the District Centres). This part of the borough will achieve 10% (c 635) of the new homes. Policy 7 addresses Housing Density and states:

Local Character

a *The Council will permit new dwellings and conversions of existing properties provided the density is suitable to the local character and taking into account the characteristics of Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Local Character and respecting the Suburban Heartlands (see Appendix 8, Maps 8.8 to 8.46 and Policies Map).*

Characterisation Study: Understanding Sutton's Local Distinctiveness, (London Borough of Sutton, 2008)

Within Sutton Town Centre

b *As a guide, the Council will expect new developments to be within the Central Setting of the London Plan Density Matrix (see below). This will be applied within the Sutton Town Centre boundary (see Appendix 1, Map 1.1 and Policies Map).*

Within the Sutton Town Centre Area of Potential Intensification

c *As a guide, the Council will expect new developments to be within the Urban Setting of the London Plan Density Matrix (see below). This will be applied to an area within approximately 800 metres walking distance of Sutton Town Centre (see Appendix 1, Map 1.1 and Policies Map).*

Within District Centres and the Areas of Potential Intensification

d *As a guide, the council will expect new developments to be within the Urban Setting of the London Plan Density Matrix (see below). This will be applied to an area within approximately 400 metres walking distance of a district centre (see Appendix 1, Maps 1.2 to 1.8 and Policies Map).*

Within the Suburban Heartlands (all other residential areas)

e *Developments should maintain and seek to enhance the quality of the borough's environment ensuring all new development respects the positive features of Sutton's character, reinforcing local distinctiveness and a sense of identity. The Council will apply the Suburban Setting of the London Plan Density Matrix to these areas.*

The location is in the 'Suburban Heartlands'. The proposed development will be at a density that is compatible with many parts of the locality. Adequate provision has been made so that no harm shall come to any existing properties or to local amenities with regard to traffic noise or disturbance. The proposal would result in a low rise traditional building suitable for its suburban location with good size accommodation. The proposed architectural style and the overall density draw on the themes of the locality and thus reinforce local distinctiveness. Both the layout and detailed design ensure the amenities of adjacent properties are protected as well as those of the new development.

Policy 9 regarding housing sizes and standards states:

Housing Mix

a *The council will grant planning permission for new residential development, provided that it includes a mix of dwelling sizes which is proportionate across tenures.*

b *In terms of dwelling sizes:*

- (i) all developments within Sutton Town Centre should seek to provide a minimum of 25% of all dwellings on the site as having three bedrooms or more, unless it can be demonstrated that this would be unviable or the particular site circumstances are not suitable for family housing.*
- (ii) all developments outside Sutton Town Centre should seek to provide a minimum of 50% of all dwellings on the site as having three bedrooms or more, unless it can be demonstrated that this would be unsuitable to the location or not viable.*

c *On sites particularly suited to larger-sized family houses such as sites over 0.5ha or in an area with a low public transport accessibility level, the council will expect the proportion of units having 3 bedrooms or more to exceed 50%.*

Housing Standards

d *The council will not grant planning permission for new residential development, including conversions, which does not meet the internal space standards set out in the London Plan (or any successor document).*

e *The council will expect that 90% of all new dwellings within a scheme containing housing to be accessible and adaptable dwellings (Housing Technical Standard M4 (2)) and 10% of all new dwellings within a scheme containing housing to be wheelchair user dwellings (Housing Technical Standard M4 (3)).*

f *The Council will not grant planning permission for new residential development, including conversions, which does not provide an adequate amount of private amenity space. An adequate amount of amenity space will be considered on a case-by-case basis with reference to the minimum standards (used as a guide) set out the council's Urban Design Guide SPD (or any successor document) and taking into account local character.*

g The council will not grant planning permission for new major residential development, including conversions, which does not provide an adequate amount of play space and informal recreation space on site. An adequate amount of play space and informal recreation space will be calculated according to The Mayor's Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play Space or Informal Recreation SPG (or any successor document). The council's Community Infrastructure Levy will provide for play space and informal recreation space off-site.

The proposal provides a four-bedroom dwelling which meets this policy requirement. The nationally prescribed floor standards are exceeded.

Policy 28 considers character and design and states (only the relevant sections are copied):

The Council will grant planning permission for new development, including new buildings, alterations and extensions, provided the new development:

- a Is attractive, designed to the highest standard, especially with regard to architectural detailing, and uses high-quality materials.*
- b Respects the local context and responds to local character and heritage assets.*
- c Is of a suitable scale, massing and height to the setting of the site and/or townscape.*
- d Seeks to improve an area of poor character.*
- e Makes a positive contribution to the street frontage, street-scene and / or public realm, such as using railings and low walls where practicable.*
- f Is inclusive and accessible for all and improves movement through areas with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes.*
- g Is secure and designed to minimise crime and anti-social behaviour.*
- h Is robust and flexible in use.*
- i Responds to natural features and retains trees, hedges and other landscape features and spaces of amenity value, where possible.*
- j Is not dominated by car and cycle parking.*
- k Creates attractive, functional and clearly defined public and private space.*
- l Protects any important local views and creates new ones wherever possible.*
- m Carefully integrates building services equipment and, in industrial areas, operating equipment.*
- n Maintains the setting and visual amenity of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, Public Open Space and Urban Green Space.*

Opportunities for the removal of poor townscape and its replacement by development of an improved quality and scale will be pursued.

For Green Belt, MOL, Public Open Space and Urban Green Space Maps see Appendix 5, Maps 5.1 to 5.25 and Policies Map.

Landscaping and Trees

New development, where appropriate, should:

- (i) Make provision for suitable new planting, trees and boundary treatments, taking into account the future effects of climate change.*
- (ii) Incorporate well-designed soft and hard landscaping.*

Where trees are present on a proposed development site:

- (i) A landscaping scheme should be submitted alongside the planning application which makes provision for the retention of existing trees, recognising their existing habitat, that are important by virtue of their significance within the local landscape.*
- (ii) Their significance may be as a result of their size, form and maturity, or because they are rare or unusual. Younger trees that have the potential to add significant value to the landscape character in the future should also be retained where possible.*
- (iii) The retention should be reflected in the proposed development layout, allowing sufficient space for new and young trees to grow to maturity, both above and below ground.*
- (iv) Where existing trees are felled prior to permission for development being sought, the council may require replacement planting as part of any permission granted.*
- (v) The council will require compliance with latest arboricultural or silvicultural standards in respect of any tree works or development near to trees.*
- (vi) The type and quantity of trees should also be considered with regard to a changing climate and the need to provide mitigation for that change.*

The siting and massing of the proposed development repeats the traditions of the locality. In short, the suburban norm of the locality is respected. By reason of the location, design and in particular window location there is little impact on the amenities of adjacent properties. The design secures privacy and ensures no loss of light or outlook. The bulk and footprint of neighbouring properties are varied, allowing for the proposal to conform to the diverse, yet traditional designs of the area. The site layout shows the retention of the hedges on the boundaries.

Policy 29 seeks to protect amenity. It states:

The Council will grant planning permission for development unless it adversely affects the amenities of future occupiers or those currently occupying adjoining or nearby properties, or has an unacceptable impact on the residents of the surrounding area. In assessing the impact of the proposed development, the council will take into consideration the following:

- a** *Overlooking causing loss of privacy and how this is addressed by design or separation.*
- b** *Access is safe and secure and does not cause disturbances.*

- c Outlook / sense of enclosure.*
- d Sunlight, daylight, overshadowing and the need for artificial light.*
- e Noise and vibration levels and times when such disturbances are likely to occur.*
- f Odours, smoke, fumes, dust, litter accumulation, refuse collection/ storage and exterior lighting.*
- g The effect of traffic movement to, from and within the site and car parking.*
- h Microclimate (the climate of a very small or restricted area).*
- i The ability to and the effect of being able to change use (as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) (2015) without the need to obtain planning consent.*

By careful design of the first floor there are no privacy implications. The positioning ensures no effect on light.

Parking standards are expressed in Policy 37 and its associated appendix. The policy states:

a New developments will be expected to provide car parking in accordance with the Council's restraint-based, maximum car parking standards taking into account public transport accessibility levels, existing publicly available parking provision and usage in the vicinity of the site, and the need to deter unnecessary car use while avoiding overspill parking problems.

A proportion of all parking spaces should be provided for parking for disabled people and the charging of electric vehicles. New developments will also be required to provide cycle parking in accordance with the council's cycle parking standards. Details of these standards and how they will be applied are set out in Appendix 11.

b In town centres and other accessible locations, applications for developments proposing limited or no parking will be favourably considered, provided the applicant can demonstrate to the council's satisfaction that this will not result in an increase in on-street parking which would adversely affect traffic flow including bus movement, highway safety, residential amenity and the local environment.

c Proposals for car-free development should normally:

(i) be located in a PTAL 5 or 6 area.

(ii) provide disabled parking and parking for operational / servicing needs.

(iii) enter into a legal agreement prohibiting residents from obtaining on-street parking permits.

(iv) be located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) or contribute to the implementation of a CPZ where one does not currently exist.

(v) provide evidence that the public transport infrastructure has sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased demand from the development, or make a contribution towards increased capacity.

The Local Planning Authority parking standards require two spaces per dwelling which is met.

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

The applicants have considered the proposal and understand what is appropriate and feasible for the site in its context. The buildings will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. Doors and their furniture will be suitable for all members of the community. All future users will have equal and convenient access to the building and its associated spaces. The access allows the buildings to have flexibility to meet future changing needs.

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the site has an opportunity, consistent with the development plan and government policy to provide a high quality development in keeping with the form of the surrounding area. In developing the site in a high quality manner we can introduce significant benefits to the locality with an appropriately designed development, and make housing gain.

In light of the above and given the compliance with National Policy, the Local Plan and associated development plan documents, we would seek your favourable recommendation and consideration.