



The Future of Darrick Wood

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Darrick Wood Sounding Board



Early on in this process 18 months ago, we asked residents to consider joining a Sounding Board if they had an interest in the project and felt they could contribute their views and be impartial.

Definition of a Sounding Board

A person or group whose reactions to suggested ideas are used as a test of their validity or likely success before they are made public.

We have eight residents on the Sounding Board. Not all of them can get to meetings, but they are kept informed via other methods and have given us their views which have influenced some of the changes in the designs as we have progressed.

It is not too late to be part of the Sounding Board, as there is still more work to do, however, please be aware that the Sounding Board is impartial. Members look at all the plans for the whole estate and do so in an unbiased way.

You can speak to **Lynn** or **Vivienne** to find out more about how you can get involved. Feel free to pop into the office or you can phone / email us on:



01689 889700 lynnruss@kenistonha.co.uk
vivienneastall@kenistonha.co.uk

If you have general queries about anything else you have read in this newsletter, please contact one of the following members of Keniston staff:

- ⇒ Jonathan Card - Chief Executive
- ⇒ Vivienne Astall - Operations Director
- ⇒ Tony Coward - Property Services Director
- ⇒ Housing Officers - Andrea Spittle or Susan Rimmer



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The Future of Darrick Wood

Fourth edition - July 2019



We recently held a public consultation on the future of Darrick Wood and plans for development. This newsletter explains more about the event and what we can tell you so far. You will also find example comments of what you have been telling us over recent weeks and some frequently asked questions where we have issued a response.

The consultation event

On Monday 17th June, the event was held at the Darrick Wood community centre. Residents were able to meet with Ayre Chamberlain & Gaunt the architects, our consultants Redloft and Calfordseaden, and also various members of Keniston staff.

On display were detailed boards showing the different stages of design and where we are right now. **If you wish to view these boards, they are currently on our website www.kenistonha.co.uk and on show in our conference room.** As the room is in regular use, please make an appointment to come in by contacting our Customer Services Team.

Residents completed feedback forms during and after the event. The feedback is currently being looked at by all of those involved in the planning. We give you a flavour of what has been said on the next page.

A reminder of the sites previously identified for development

- Site 1** - located near the wooded area to the east of the estate at the top of Isabella Drive
- Site 2** - located in the south west corner of the estate near to the A21
- Site 3** - The community centre on Broadwater Gardens



The next phase

We will be going back to Bromley Council in the coming weeks for a second pre-planning meeting to refine the details for **site 1** before making a formal planning application. There are many details around the design to finalise including the storey levels and number of homes. This is an ever-evolving process.

Site 2 near to the A21 is currently on hold. We may revisit the plans at a later date.

Site 3 the community centre is also on hold, but we are currently working with the Darrick Wood community group to survey residents asking what they would like to see from a potential new building. DWC members will be door knocking asking you to complete their survey. There is also an online version available on the Darrick Wood Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/darrick.wood





Sample feedback so far



Comments

- ◆ The new houses look different compared to the current houses so will not fit in.
- ◆ **Bats live in the trees on the boundary of the estate at site 1.**
- ◆ Larger car park would attract hooligans, increase noise and encourage motor repairs, quad bikes and burnt out cars.
- ◆ **A danger of overdevelopment.**
- ◆ 25 homes mean another 40 cars.
- ◆ **I do not want to open my door to a view of concrete.**
- ◆ Proposed development for site 1 is far too close to existing houses and taking too much of the green away.
- ◆ **I feel this will spoil the beauty of the place.**
- ◆ Upset about loss of wildlife. We have bats, foxes and badgers at the back and we enjoy having the animals here.
- ◆ **Our children play on that green.**
- ◆ I understand there is a housing shortage, but don't agree with what is proposed.
- ◆ **I want to withdraw my name from the petition. Having slept on it and had a rethink, I have reconsidered my position. I do not wish for my name to be on the petition opposing the development. I was very grateful to Keniston when I was offered housing and I realise the need for more homes to be provided.**
- ◆ I would never object to more housing. Too many people live in big homes and don't need the extra bedrooms, but at the same time don't want extra homes being built on their doorstep. If everyone took their attitude, no new homes would ever be built
- ◆ **I am concerned about construction traffic and noise.**
- ◆ I like that fact that Keniston is a small association. I'm worried that new builds will make them bigger and too busy.
- ◆ **Would have preferred houses. It's a nice quiet area (site 1) and building flats I believe will create more noise.**
- ◆ Losing green space to existing residents and giving it to new residents instead.



If Keniston has already decided to build the new flats, why are you asking us for feedback?

Keniston has decided that we would like to go ahead with the project, but there are a lot of details that have not yet been decided. We are still working on the design, and we want to take on board comments from residents, neighbours, and the planning department, before we finalise what we submit for planning permission. We really do want to know what everyone thinks. While we cannot promise that everyone's wishes can be accommodated, we welcome constructive feedback and it will help us get the best outcomes, for everyone.

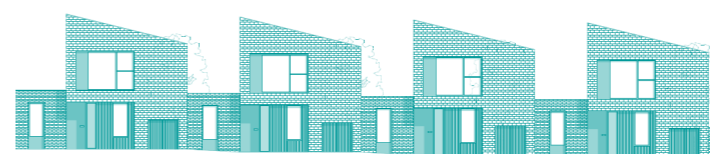
The final decision on whether the scheme can go ahead will be made by Bromley Council. They will consider consultation feedback received, as part of reaching their decision.

What about the plans for site 2? It looks like a very small area to put more homes there.

Plans for site 2 near the A21 are currently on hold. We are focusing on moving forward with seeking planning permission for site 1 at the top of Isabella Drive (wooded area). If we decide at a later date to look at site 2 again, we will consult residents and keep you updated.

Will there be traffic measures along Broadwater Gardens?

The roads are part of public highways and traffic enforcement would need to be addressed with the Council highways department.



Will there be enough public open space?

We acknowledge that access to well-designed public open space is a key contributor to quality of life and personal well-being. We are required to provide the appropriate amount and mix of open space for the size of the development. The new development will benefit from additional planting as part of the landscaping scheme.

Will there be enough parking at site 1?

The scheme will include facilities for vehicle and cycle parking.

Why don't you use the overgrown area next to the community centre?

We would like to be very clear that this area belongs to **Bromley Council** and is a protected meadow. Once a year when we hold a fun day, we ask for permission from the Council Park Rangers to use the area for our event and permission is only granted because around September, the meadow is cut down as part of their annual plan and we are allowed to place some activities there. We cannot purchase the land or use it at any other time of the year.





Why do we even need new homes at Darrick Wood?

Keniston exists to provide good quality affordable housing, for those who need it and who are unable to afford open market costs. We know from all our current residents, how important it is for them to have a secure home – it is literally life changing.

Everywhere we work, there is a huge shortage of affordable housing. Buying land is difficult and expensive, so it makes sense to first look at the estates we already own, to see if there are ways of building additional housing. We believe that with careful design and good planning, the Darrick Wood estate can absorb some additional housing, without changing the character of the estate.

Will any of the new homes be for sale?

At this stage, we do not know. The main need is for new rented homes. But building is very expensive and it is possible that to make the finances viable, we may need to include some shared ownership 'part rent part buy' homes. We know that some Darrick Wood residents have in the past shown an interest in buying a home, and if we do have some homes for shared ownership sale, we will offer them first to people on the estate.

How did Keniston choose 'Site 1'? (top of Isabella Drive)

We started by looking at whether it made the most sense to have a number of small new developments scattered across the estate – building onto the end of existing terraces of housing for example. But the reality is that this would be both costly and – importantly – more disruptive to residents, with a number of different building sites. We believe that 'Site 1' at the top of Isabella Drive can absorb new homes, and with good design will not unreasonably impact on existing homes.



Will I be able to rent one of the new homes?

We are keen to make some of the new homes available for existing Keniston residents who need to move. We will talk to Bromley Council more about how this might work, nearer the time – for instance helping existing residents who are willing to move from a home that is larger than they need. Most of the new homes will go to people nominated by the Council, and registered with them.

Who is paying for the building costs?

Keniston will pay for the building costs. We will borrow most of the money needed, at commercial rates of interest, which we will pay out of the rental income. We can expect to get a grant from the GLA (Greater London Authority), which will cover around a third of the cost. We are also exploring whether we can obtain additional grant from Bromley Council.

Will Keniston build houses? What about bungalows?

At the moment, the plan is to build flats. We looked at building houses and bungalows, but this is not looking possible due to the cost. We were keen to try and include some bungalows as we know that they are popular especially with older people wanting to move from larger houses, but the costs are just too high.



Sample feedback so far

Suggestions

- ◆ More parking is needed.
- ◆ Community fruit & vegetable plots would be welcomed.
- ◆ A diagonal build and smaller car park would work better for residents of Cherrycot Rise.
- ◆ Better parking and more landscaping where possible.
- ◆ More social rented housing.
- ◆ Traffic control is essential along Broadwater Gardens.
- ◆ Please remove the trees that are shown on the plan in front of my house.
- ◆ Bungalows for site 2 would be better as they won't overlook the neighbours.
- ◆ Build 2 bedroom bungalows for older tenants which would relieve some housing problems.
- ◆ Reduce the amount of flats proposed for site 1.
- ◆ Reverse the layout so the bulk of the building is towards the rear leaving the front more open.
- ◆ Ask those who are under-occupying if they want to consider a move.



This is the first I have heard about the plans? Why haven't I been informed?

Keniston conducted a survey of all Darrick Wood residents back in 2017 asking in which way we could make improvements to the estate. We also talked about our strategic plan to build more homes, including some at Darrick Wood. We then published the results of the survey via a newsletter called 'The future of Darrick Wood'.

We have issued three of these newsletters so far, with this one being the fourth. The newsletters were specifically relating to our plans for the estate. If we have not gone into in-depth detail in some of these communications, it is because we were not at a stage in the design process where we could show you a definite plan. We then invited residents to a public consultation on 24.06.19 where we did have more to show you and in more detail. And even now, the plans which we have displayed at the public consultation may still be subject to change.

Why are the trees being pruned at the top of Isabella Drive?

Some time ago when we inspected the area, we noticed that there were trees that were in need of attention, but these had not been included in our tree works plan. The area is now part of the regular plan and the tree surgeons have been on site recently cutting back those that needed it. Our trees are cut at specific times as part of a five year tree plan.

