

Rooftop Homes

Part of Southwark Council's
plan to build 11,000 new
council homes

June 2019

Rooftop Homes – Getting it right for our residents

Southwark Council has committed to build 11,000 new council homes. This ambitious promise is challenging for a small borough like Southwark, but is crucial if we are to tackle the housing crisis locally, and ensure all our residents have high quality homes that they can be proud of.

With land in short supply, one aspect of our plans is to explore building new homes on top of our existing council blocks.

We know any change to the environment where people live can be difficult, and we want to work with local councillors and residents to make sure that we all share an understanding of why it is so important to build new homes in every part of the borough, and what the benefits for existing residents will be.

Here we set out our initial thoughts, but we would welcome comments as we develop our plans to engage with local people about this programme of work.

Why the focus on rooftop sites?

- **Less nuisance and inconvenience.** The use of off-site modular manufacturing makes it more technically feasible to minimise the on-site 'installation' time (often weeks rather than months) comparing favourably with conventional construction projects built on new foundations.
- **The quality of the buildings.** Being manufactured in controlled and 'sterile' conditions the output of the product far exceeds the standard of construction being delivered in all weather conditions
- **More sustainable.** Building on top retains the embodied carbon and embodied energy of an existing building. Thermal efficiencies can also be enhanced, likely reducing heating costs.
- **Communal improvements.** Under the new *estate improvement plan approach* we are looking to capture a **wider range of improvements to existing blocks** and to the wider estate to accompany new council homes. We will seek to tie in rooftop works with other communal works that really enhance the quality of the building, making it an even better place to live.
- **Protecting community space.** Another advantage with rooftop sites is they allow us to retain green spaces and parking spaces which are under pressure in the context of our housing targets.

- **What do residents get out of it?** Desperately needed larger homes for overcrowded families, new homes for existing households, additional investment in existing blocks and creating enhanced shared spaces for all to enjoy.

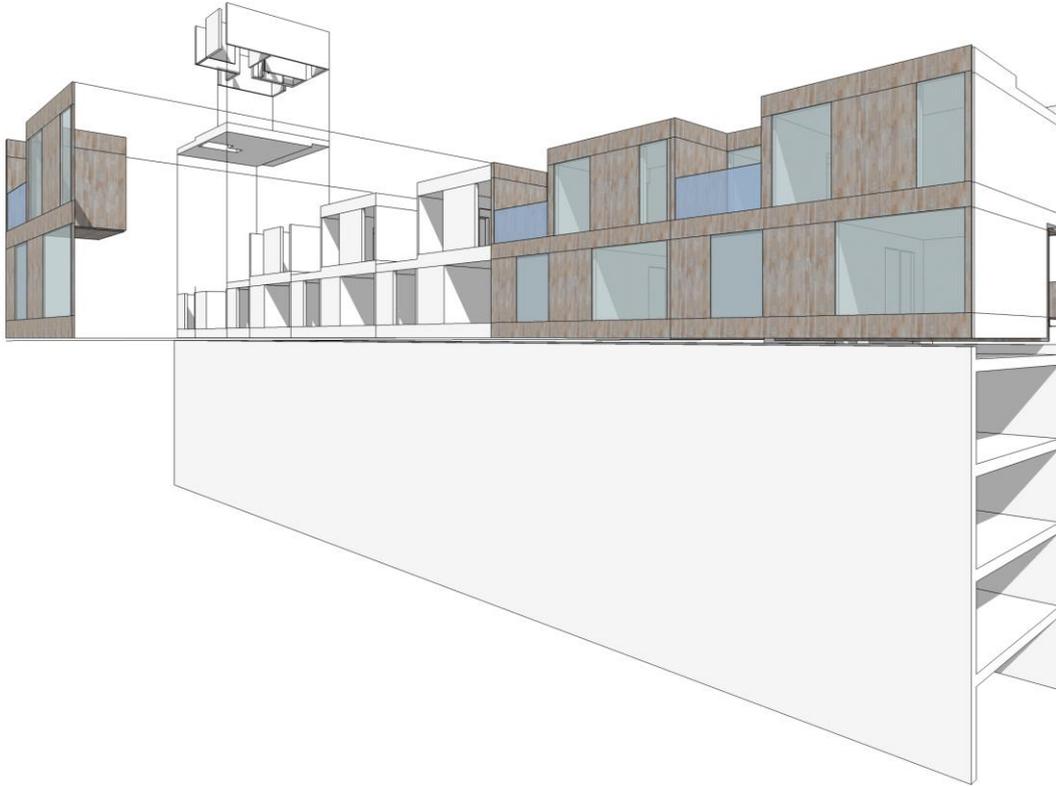
Our proposed commitments:

- We will minimise disruption for existing residents by drastically reducing works periods by carrying out most construction off-site. Any structural works will be organised to minimise noise and dust and to ensure as brief an 'installation' period as is possible.
- Existing residents in a block will be prioritised when the brand new rooftop homes are allocated within a block, with the vacated homes then allocated to people on our housing register.
- Additional estate improvements to the wider area will be offered as part of the *estate improvement plan* approach in our *Great Estates* programme and may include community space, play areas and communal decoration, as examples.
- As many programmed works to the block (e.g. insulation, roof works) will be incorporated into the new homes scheme as is practical and in doing so reducing additional site works visits and reducing leaseholder bills.
- We will work closely and flexibly with residents to achieve design excellence with additional storeys complementing the existing block.
- Detailed and relevant design and structural information will be shared with all residents to maximise confidence that access amenity and the integrity of the block is fully respected, and the works are structurally sound.
- Where applicable we will provide new lift access.

Additionally, for leaseholders who we know are often concerned about service charge bills for major works, we would also offer:

- No charge for costs related to the development of the additional floor(s)
- Future charges spread across a larger pool of residents
- The option to swap their flat for an equivalent new one, subject to availability.

Concept diagram



The build process – to come



Successful case studies (internal) – to come



Successful case studies (external) – to come

Mentmore Terrace, Hackney / Sultan House, Bermondsey



Triangle Estate, Islington

