

AMENDMENT

Proposer: Cllr Jayne McCoy

Seconder: Cllr Jake Short

Motion 2 - Housing quality and Sutton's special character

Proposed by Cllr Neil Garratt

Seconded by Cllr Elliot Colburn

Council notes that Sutton is a predominantly suburban borough, that many people choose to live here to enjoy the benefits of our suburban character, and that the overall success of London as a thriving global city depends on suburban boroughs such as Sutton also thriving and retaining its special appeal.

Council notes that while Sutton's new Local Plan provides protection against the loss of family housing, this is under threat from the Mayor of London's proposed new London Plan **which requires Sutton to find an additional 512 homes per year on top of its Local Plan targets, largely from development on small sites.**

The proposed London Plan would strip away protection for existing family houses, actively target the demolition of family homes for replacement with blocks of flats, may make it difficult to include family housing in future developments, and fundamentally puts at risk Sutton's character and appeal as a place for family living.

Council notes that further erosion of family housing is possible where houses are converted to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in cases where planning consent is not required, and that an Article 4 direction may be an effective way to prevent both undesirable and low quality HMO conversions by requiring such conversions to obtain Planning consent, as other London boroughs have already done.

Council notes that where a conversion deviates from the planning consent, it is harder to bring the development into compliance the longer it's allowed to carry on, therefore timely inspections and prompt enforcement actions are important in reassuring residents that planning rules are not being flouted.

Council notes that Sutton's unique character is further under threat from the Government's Housing Delivery Test which sets a target of 1,774 homes per year: that is 1,347 homes above the target in our Local Plan.

Council finally notes that where proposed development is attractive, in keeping, and of high quality then it meets with more support from our residents and thus provides both the housing we require as well as contributing a positive legacy for the future built environment of our borough.

Council therefore resolves to:

- **Note that Sutton was the lead council presenting a joint statement of case against the Mayor's Draft London Plan targets at the February 2019 Examination-in-Public on behalf of Sutton, Kingston, Merton and Richmond.**
- Establish a **cross-party** working group, under the remit of the Housing, Economy and Business Committee, to investigate the potential for an Article 4 direction covering HMO conversions, either in specific areas or across the whole borough.
- Investigate what actions the Council may take to mitigate the threat from the Mayor of London's proposed London Plan to existing family homes in Sutton, and also to ensure that we can in future build family homes in Sutton as needed.
- **Lobby the Government to rethink its housing delivery test formula that would necessitate allowing high rise development across the borough making Sutton look more like inner London than a suburban area.**
- **Lobby the Government to withdraw Permitted Development Rights for office and retail conversions to residential and houses in multiple occupation that lead to substandard accommodation with no family housing provision.**
- Ensure that planning policy now and in the future encourages new development which is attractive, in keeping with the local character, and enhances Sutton's built environment.