

**Re: Planning Proposal DC/19/111251, Duncombe Hill Green
Construction of a part three/part four storey building on land at the corner of Duncombe Hill and Brockley Rise SE23, to provide 7 two bedroom self-contained flats**

I am writing on behalf of the Forest Hill Society to object to this planning application.

The Forest Hill Society is the local amenity society for the area covered by SE23 and have around 400 members. The society is keen to ensure that the area develops in a positive way that supports the economic, environmental and social well-being of the people that live and work in it. Generally we try to be positive about changes to the area and proposals for improvements, however in some cases it is necessary for us to raise concerns about proposals as part of the planning process.

We support the objections raised by Friends of Honor Oak, other local organisations, and many local residents.

There are several concerns we have with this application:

Loss of Green Space

The proposed development will result in the loss of green, open space. This green space is specifically designated as Local Green Space in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Crofton Park and Honor Oak, as well as being contrary to Lewisham planning policies [Spatial Policy 1(4) and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy] which seek to protect open space and urban green space.

This green space is important to the character of the local area as it is sited close to the centre of Honor Oak, close to the only pub and one of the shopping strips. For many it forms the Village Green at the heart of Honor Oak and opposite the community centre. The Green creates a natural break in the development at the point where six different roads come together and is as important to the character of the area as any other Village Green.

It is very disappointing to see this green space enclosed by the developer, without planning permission, removing this amenity from public access and even preventing residents enjoying the visual break created by this small green space at the heart of the area.

We believe that the council should respect the draft Neighbourhood Plan - which pre-dates this planning application or the purchase of the land - and safeguard this green space in line with the Neighbourhood Plan as is laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on Trees with TPOs

The existing trees have all been recognised for their amenity value and have been issued with TPOs. This is also in recognition of the variety of trees on site: willow, sycamore and crab apple.

The willow tree is shown on the 3D view of the development (and in the design and access statement) included within the planning application, despite being removed from the site in the proposed plans (Proposed site plan rev a).

We believe the council should seek to continue to protect these trees and that any images and plans should be revised to show the actual impact of the loss of mature trees from this site.

Poor Design

Although the units meet the minimum size for three person flats, they are designed to accommodate four people, with two double bedrooms and two bathrooms. The living areas – kitchen/diner/lounge seem particularly small for 3-4 person units – with designs showing just 2-3 bar seats rather than a proper table for meals. In addition, almost half the flats will be overlooked from their neighbour's balconies (e.g. much of the lounge in flat 4 would be overlooked by the balcony of flat 3). These issues suggest over-development of the site resulting in poor quality internal layout.

For the reasons stated above we ask that the council reject this planning application and look to formally designate this site as Local Green Space as quickly as possible.