This document was assembled by a committee of residents of the Auckland Rise, Church Road and Sylvan Hill estate and surrounding streets after canvassing all those living in the area. It represents their views. We aim to ensure that residents’ interests are considered throughout any proposed development.
Together Church Road, Auckland Rise and Sylvan Hill are a rare thing in city planning: a council estate that works. The estate is well spaced, clean, safe and peaceful. Residents like the area, and it contributes to the success of the Crystal Palace locality.

The landscape of Croydon borough has not traditionally enjoyed universal appreciation, and if the council is serious about changing perceptions of the borough, then it is with places like this estate that change will begin.

Residents feel very strongly that the current plans to add eight new four-storey blocks to the estate represent a threat to our community, and pose issues which are serious and require immediate attention.

We are demanding urgent engagement from the council and the developers, on the issues outlined in the following pages. Without significant and binding action on these points, we will be forced to oppose the development outright.

If you are affected by anything in this document or wish to get in touch with the residents’ group, please contact us online at www.facebook.com/acklnrdrise/ email aucklandrise.sylvanhill@gmail.com or call 0203 256 2043
Building works

A two-year project building up to eight blocks on one narrow cul-de-sac road will create significant disruption, noise and potential danger for residents. Residents will need to see detailed and binding commitments about the way the works will be carried out.

These are issues which developers have to address in all projects. However, our estates present unique problems:
- There is just one way in and out to Auckland Rise, and one road which is easily blocked.
- There are many children and people with mobility issues who would be in physical danger in any normal building site.
- There are also many residents who work from home, or are at home during the day, so noise levels, and working hours will need to be more strictly regulated than usual.
- In addition, there are landlords and home-workers whose income would be affected by development. Compensation for this would need to be discussed.

We would strongly oppose any work until we are satisfied that these issues are addressed in a legally binding way.
It is important that any new development recognises the need for affordable and local authority housing in London. Brick by Brick appear to recognise this, but residents will need to see much more detailed information about the type and nature of proposed housing, how it will be made available, and how it will be managed and filled.

We will need to know how exactly this commitment to affordable housing is made binding on Brick by Brick in its agreements with the council. A development which prices out local residents from the area will not be acceptable.
Subsidence

The entire estate has a history of subsidence. Five years ago, work was undertaken to shore up one block. This work caused houses 81 and 83 to become unsafe and cost hundreds of thousands in remedial work.

There is a planned four-storey block even closer to 81 and 83 and close to several neighbouring houses and blocks. Remedial work arising from this block alone could wipe out Brick By Brick’s profits for the entire development and affect residents’ safety.

It may be worth noting that St John’s, just over the road from the site of two of the proposed blocks, is already being supported along one side due to problems with subsidence.

Residents would find it necessary to make the scheme’s underwriters aware of this issue.
Refuse collection

Since the estate was built, rubbish collection has changed. It is now done less often and recycling has been introduced. The current collection points are no longer fit for purpose. Additional facilities are badly needed already and more residents’ rubbish would create significant sanitation problems.

This development offers the chance for rubbish collection points to be redesigned for a council with modern recycling aims. Residents will require specific and realistic plans for this to be written into any planning agreement.
There have been long-standing issues with water, drainage and electricity supply around the estate. Given the frequency of recent leaks and repairs it appears that the current utility provision is barely keeping up with demand.

We are calling for detailed information from the developers on their proposed improvements to utilities to enable them to cope with any extra development.
Light and privacy

The steep incline of the hill at the estate’s location and the number of large trees within make light a particular issue. Many properties are in shadow from the woods and trees and from other blocks.

There are areas of the proposed development – particularly at the top and bottom of the estate – where the height of the new buildings would mean that proposed windows would look directly into existing flats, and that current residents would lose significant light.
Parking

Parking is a unique issue on the estate because it is on a steep slope and is home to many people with mobility issues. Roads nearby are already limited in parking, so all residents have to be able to park within. There are currently around 110 parking spaces on the estate for 218 flats and houses. Working with these proportions, provision for a further 30 parking spaces will be needed to avoid a potentially serious problem for vulnerable residents, and those living around Auckland Road and Church Road.
Social areas

There are many children and young people in the estate, and the play facilities are rather limited. Brick By Brick have suggested improvements, and we are keen to make certain these are expanded upon and made a firm part of any development work.

Young adults currently have no facilities within the estate and this will become a problem if the population here increases.
Laundrette
When the estate was built, a laundrette was included. It has not been used for decades and is falling down. Left as it is, this building will soon become a magnet for antisocial behaviour, and lead to problems within the estate. Demolished, it will be a dead area.

Refurbished as a hub or bookable space it could become a real benefit to the estate and surrounding community.
There is a case for redeveloping the garages on the estate, but they are currently used by residents with limited other space. We will need reassurance that there will be specific provision for the residents affected.
Conservation/trees

The estate and the nearby woods are home to, among other creatures, pipistrelle and noctule bats, woodpeckers, owls, muntjac deer and stag beetles.

It is also home to many mature trees which are not only protected for conservation reasons, but also because they preserve the integrity of the subsidence-prone estate.

Removal of any of the trees represents an unknown risk to surrounding wildlife, and dwellings.

Invasive and potentially harmful Japanese knotweed is also an issue on the estate. Major earthworks risk its spread, which can be met by the government with hefty fines and even prison sentences.
Auckland Rise, Church Road & Sylvan Hill Action Group

Contact us online at www.facebook.com/acklnrdrise/
email aucklandrise.sylvanhill@gmail.com or call 0203 256 2043