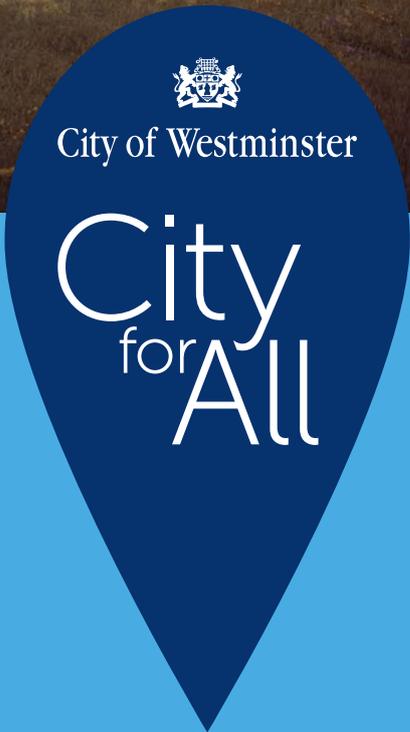




Artist's impression of proposals



Better homes for local people

Consultation Booklet
Balmoral Castle and Darwin House Proposals
June 2020

Have your say

Balmoral Castle and Darwin House proposals

A word from the project team

Thank you to everyone who attended our drop-in sessions in February 2020. We have taken time to review your feedback and used it to help shape our revised proposals, which you can see in this booklet. We are now keen to hear your views at this second stage of public consultation and as we prepare to submit a planning application later in the summer.

In light of Covid-19, we have changed how we are consulting so you can share your feedback from the safety and comfort of home. Whilst we appreciate this is different to how we would normally hold consultations, your health and safety is our absolute priority and we remain committed to giving you every opportunity to tell us what you think about the latest proposals.

This booklet takes you through the latest proposals step-by-step. It shows how we have taken your feedback on board to develop the designs and ensure our proposals benefit the Churchill Gardens community.

The council continues to provide support to our communities across the city throughout this difficult time. If you or someone you know needs help because of Covid-19, please get in touch with us by visiting our website [westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus) or calling our Westminster Connects team on **020 7641 1222** (9am to 6pm, 7 days a week).

Finally, on behalf of the project team I'd like to thank you for giving us a chance to collaborate with you on this project. It has been wonderful getting to know the Churchill Gardens community, and we hope to see you all again soon.

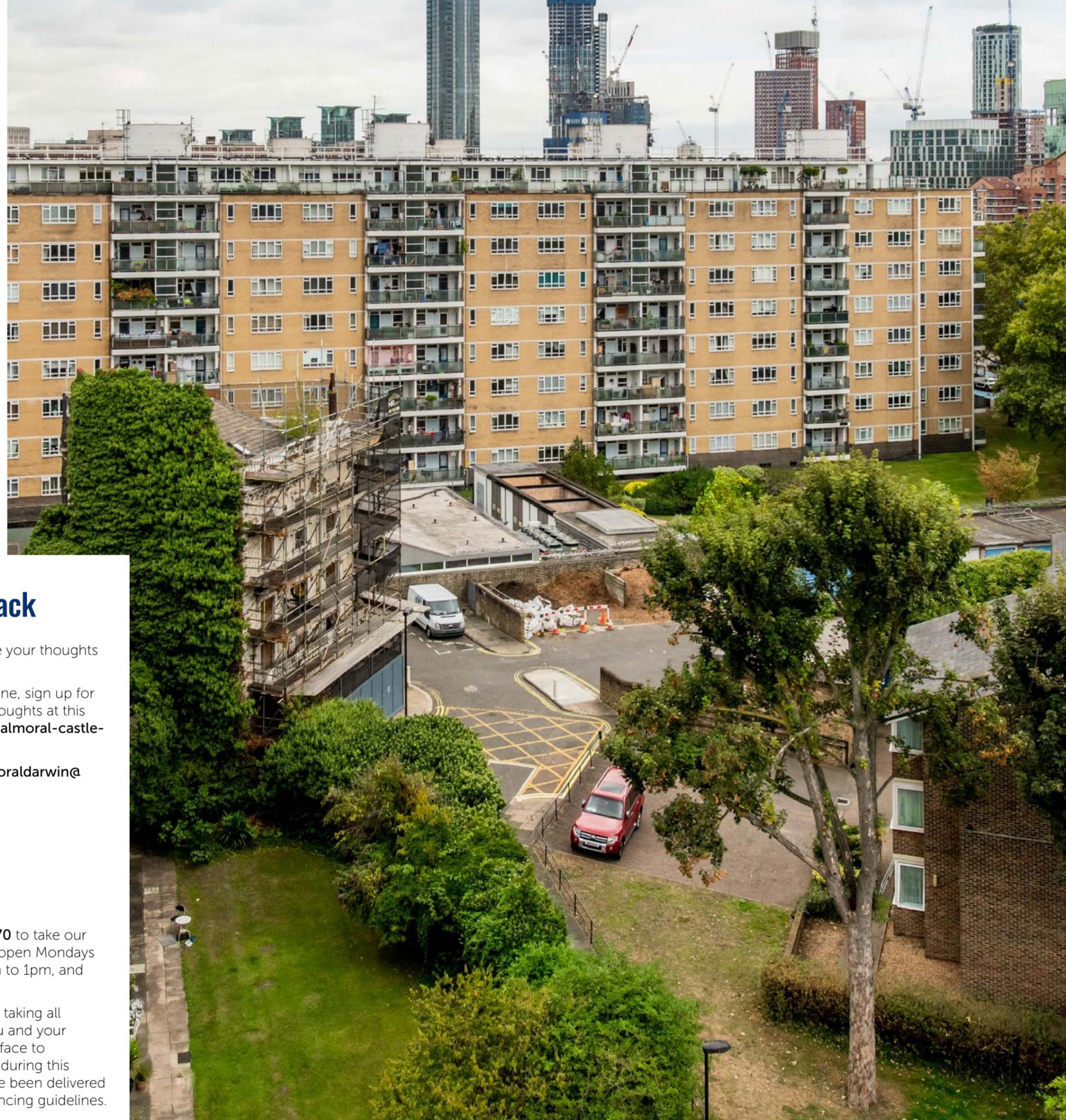
Henrietta Atkinson
Senior Development Manager
Westminster City Council

Sharing your feedback

There are four ways you can share your thoughts on the proposals in this booklet:

1. Online: view our proposals online, sign up for our webinar, and share your thoughts at this address: [westminster.gov.uk/balmoral-castle-and-darwin-house](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/balmoral-castle-and-darwin-house)
2. Email your comments to balmoraldarwin@westminster.gov.uk
3. Post your comments to us at:
Balmoral Castle Proposals
17th Floor
64 Victoria Street
Westminster City Hall
London SW1E 6QP
4. Call our team on **020 7641 3270** to take our phone survey. Phone lines are open Mondays and Wednesdays from 11.30am to 1pm, and 4.30pm to 6pm.

Please be assured that our team is taking all necessary precautions to keep you and your community safe. There will be no face to face meetings or drop-in sessions during this consultation, and all materials have been delivered following government social distancing guidelines.



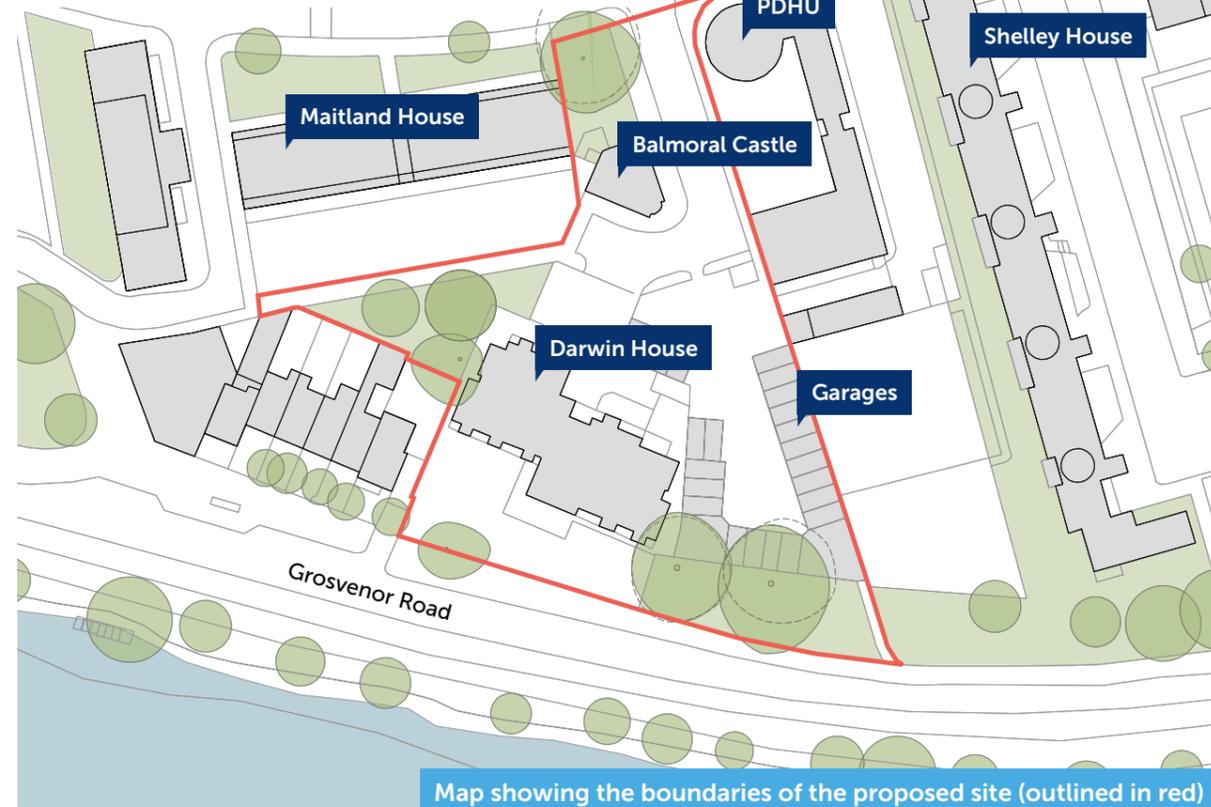
Introduction

Westminster City Council is working to provide more affordable homes for local people across the city.

We want to hear what you think about our proposals to build new community supported homes on the site of Balmoral Castle and the nearby garages for current residents of Darwin House, and affordable homes for intermediate rent on the site of Darwin House.

After a petition in 2018 asking for the Balmoral Castle to be replaced with community supported homes, we decided to explore options for how we could use the site to best benefit the local community. Darwin House was included in the site as the current bedsits do not meet modern standards, and we want to provide better homes for residents of Darwin House to live in.

We are proposing to improve the community supported housing at Churchill Gardens by replacing current homes with better equipped more energy-efficient homes in line with modern standards. After moving Darwin House residents into this new building, it creates the opportunity to build much-needed affordable housing for intermediate rent on the current site of Darwin House.



Building a City for All

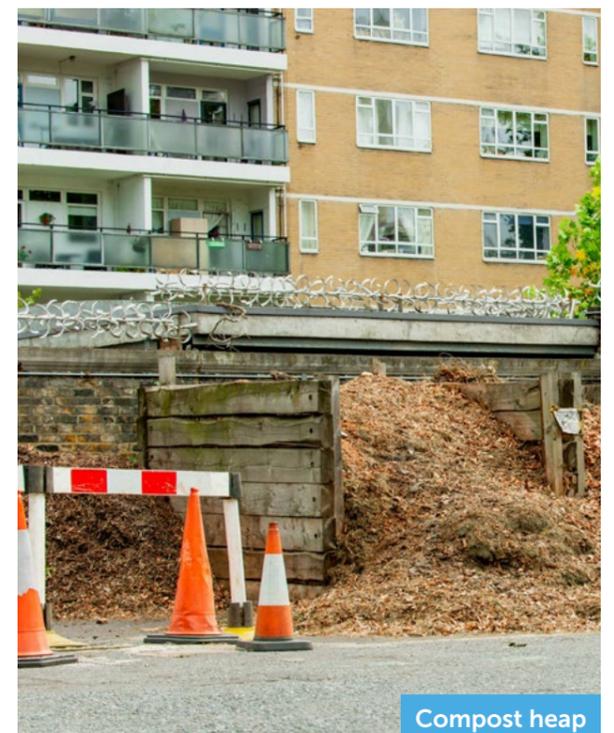
We are dedicated to making Westminster a City for All.

This means creating a place where affordable housing is available to people living and working in Westminster, giving people from all walks of life a chance to thrive in the community.

To learn more about our housing and regeneration programme, visit westminster.gov.uk/housing-renewal

About the site

The images below show the current site comprising Darwin House, Balmoral Castle and the surrounding area in September 2019.



Your feedback so far

We have been engaging with people across the estate since July 2019, firstly through a series of drop-in sessions where you have given us your thoughts on the idea of development, and then at a round of consultation events in February 2020.

92 residents attended the February engagement event and provided feedback to the design team. Residents were supportive of the proposals and in favour of better quality homes for Darwin House residents as well as affordable homes for local residents.

We have also made design changes, where possible, to address residents' comments on the height and appearance of the proposed buildings. You can read about these changes on pages 18-21 of this booklet.



February 2020 drop-in sessions



Our commitments to you

Since we came to you in July 2019 with our early proposals, we have been committed to ensuring Churchill Gardens residents will benefit from this development.

If the development goes ahead:

- We will provide a 100% affordable scheme
- We will support all residents of Darwin House through any moving process
- We are committed to only asking Darwin House residents to move once – into the new community supported housing
- We will phase works to minimise disruption to residents
- All new homes will be covered by a Local Lettings Plan, meaning local people will be the first to benefit from new homes
- Residents will be at the heart of the development and design
- Our designs will reflect the special heritage and architecture of Churchill Gardens Estate

Below is a sample of some of your feedback from our February 2020 drop-in sessions. You can read more about how we've addressed your comments on pages 18-21 of this booklet.

"Looking good but worried about the loss of light to Shelley House."

"Seems very positive. Looks attractive. I'm pleased that it doesn't involve luxury private flats as I worry that could spell the end of the estate."

"Glad to see Balmoral Castle finally going."

"I agree with intermediate housing as I have two children living at home who cannot afford to rent privately."

"We would prefer a more sympathetic development at a lower level."

"Some concerns about height."

"Reducing the noise will be important."

"The project seems to use the space in a much better way and should improve the quality of life of the residents of Darwin House."

Our updated proposals



Artist's impression of the proposed community supported homes (left), new homes for intermediate rent (right), and communal green space (centre) for residents.

New homes for local people

We want to enable Churchill Gardens residents to continue living in their community throughout their lives, in homes that suit their needs. Your feedback has helped shape a design that would deliver:

- **34 new community supported homes** at Churchill Gardens, built to modern standards, giving the people of Darwin House a better, more comfortable place to live
- **18 new council-owned homes for intermediate rent**, addressing the need for more homes for local people who find it hard to rent in Westminster but earn too much to qualify for social housing
- **Accessible parking spaces** for community supported housing residents and visitor parking
- **New communal green space** for residents
- **A new pathway through the estate**, providing pedestrian access through to Grosvenor Road and the River Thames

The new community supported housing will be on the current site of the Balmoral Castle and the garages, while the affordable homes will sit on the site of the existing Darwin House block. We will also provide a new landscaped area for the community between the proposed buildings.

What is community supported housing?

Community supported housing gives older residents the opportunity to live independently whilst having access to any support they may require.

Each self-contained home is fitted with a community alarm system and in most buildings a manager lives on site to provide people with support when they need it.

What is intermediate rent?

Intermediate rent is affordable housing aimed at people who generally do not qualify for social rent, but struggle to afford market rent in Westminster.

This type of rent is aimed at people who already live and work in the city but are finding it hard to afford their own place in Westminster.

If you would like to apply for the intermediate housing waiting list, please visit homeownershipwestminster.co.uk for more information.



Design principles



Reflect the award-winning architecture of Churchill Gardens Estate



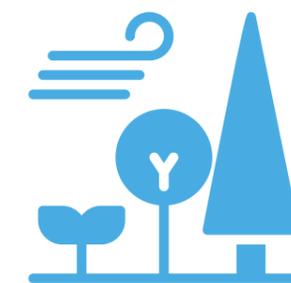
Respect neighbouring buildings



Prioritise Churchill Gardens residents for new homes through a Local Lettings Plan



Be owned and retained by the council, becoming an asset for the community for years to come



Provide a world class example of environmentally friendly design



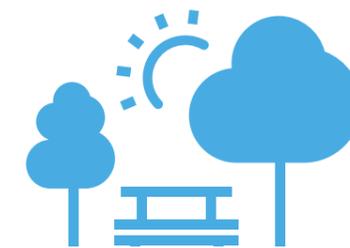
Improve quality of life for Darwin House residents

A cleaner, greener Westminster

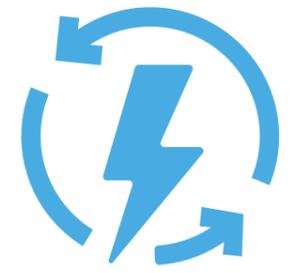
We have committed to be a carbon neutral council by 2030. As part of this, new homes delivered by the council are designed to be as environmentally friendly as possible.



Energy efficient homes, with cheaper energy bills and triple-glazed windows



New green space for the community



Sustainable energy, including solar panels

Better community supported homes

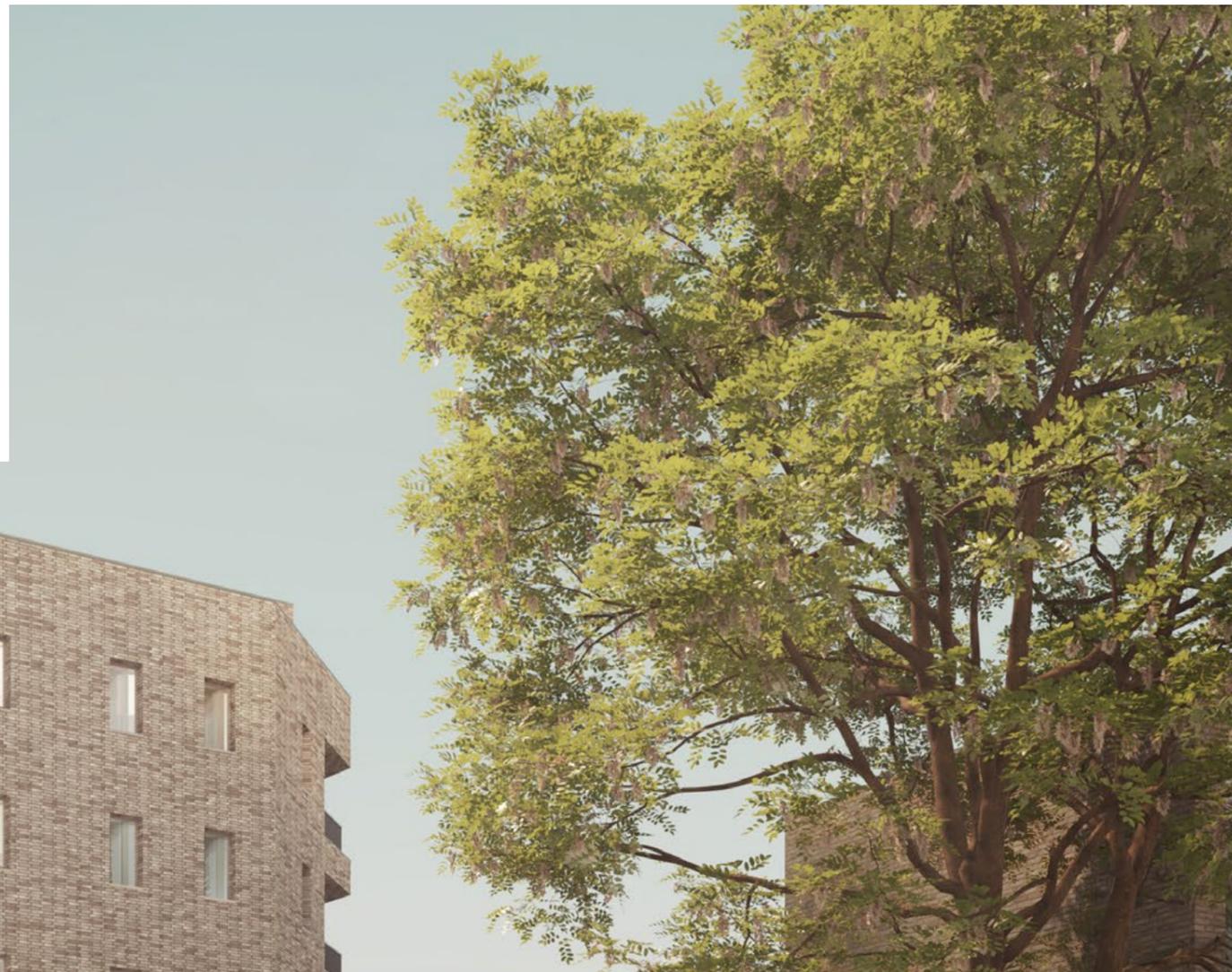
Our proposals would provide 34 modern homes to replace the ones currently at Darwin House.

These homes would greatly improve the quality of life for Darwin House residents, giving them almost twice the amount of space they have in their current homes and access to modern amenities to make their lives more comfortable.

They are designed to high sustainability standards to minimise the carbon footprint of the building, and reduce energy costs for residents.



View of proposal featuring community supported homes (left) from Churchill Gardens Road

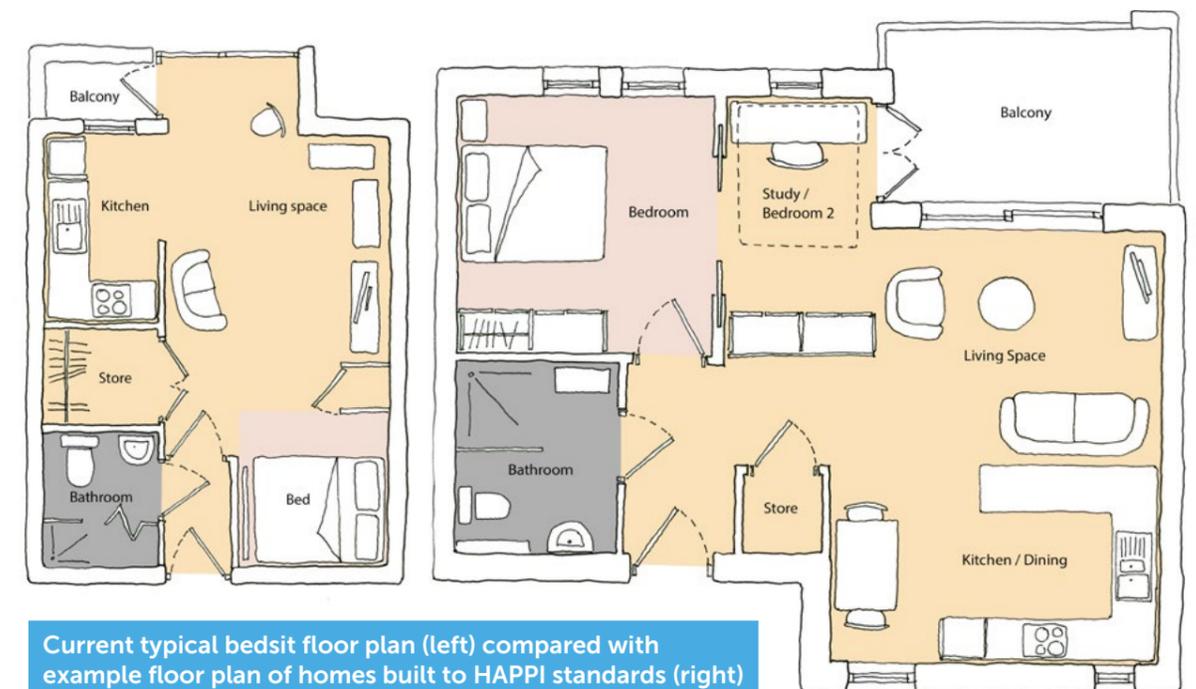


About the new community supported homes

The homes we are proposing will be built to the highest modern standards, using the Housing for Ageing Population Panel's (HAPPI) framework. HAPPI standards help architects design homes that meet the needs of residents in supported housing and provide them with a comfortable, pleasant environment to live in.

Homes built to these standards would give residents:

- Approximately twice the amount of space they currently have
- Separate bathroom, bedroom, and living areas
- A spacious balcony with views of the new landscaped area
- Flexible living areas, including a space that could be used as a study or second bedroom for a carer or family member
- A home designed to be safe and easy to use, designed to be dementia-friendly and fully accessible.



Current typical bedsit floor plan (left) compared with example floor plan of homes built to HAPPI standards (right)

Affordable homes for local people

Creating a City for All, where people can live, work and thrive

The 18 affordable one-bedroom intermediate homes we are proposing to build will be available for local people at below-market rents.

We have changed the proposals from 19 one and two-bedroom homes to 18 one-bedroom homes to allow for a reduction in height, and to address the demand for one-bedroom homes in the area. At June 2020, there were 159 households on the intermediate waiting list for one-bedroom homes in SW1.

These homes will be retained by the council, and a local lettings plan will ensure residents in the Churchill Gardens Estate have top priority. For more information on intermediate rent, or to find out if you are eligible, please visit homeownershipwestminster.co.uk



New landscaping

Creating a cleaner and greener City for All

Churchill Gardens has always been known for the high quality of its public spaces. Our proposed designs aim to reflect that quality by improving the landscaping around the new buildings.

Landscaping will include:

- A new accessway to the River Thames alongside the new community supported housing block
- Dementia-friendly design
- Paved areas, designed to be wheelchair accessible
- Hedges and planting along the front of new buildings
- New trees, grass, and benches.

We have consulted with the MET's Designing Out Crime team to ensure that our new landscaping proposals mitigate potential anti-social behaviour.

These designs also account for the compost heap currently on the site. The compost heap will be moved elsewhere on the estate, ensuring that Churchill Gardens will be able to keep its Green Flag status.

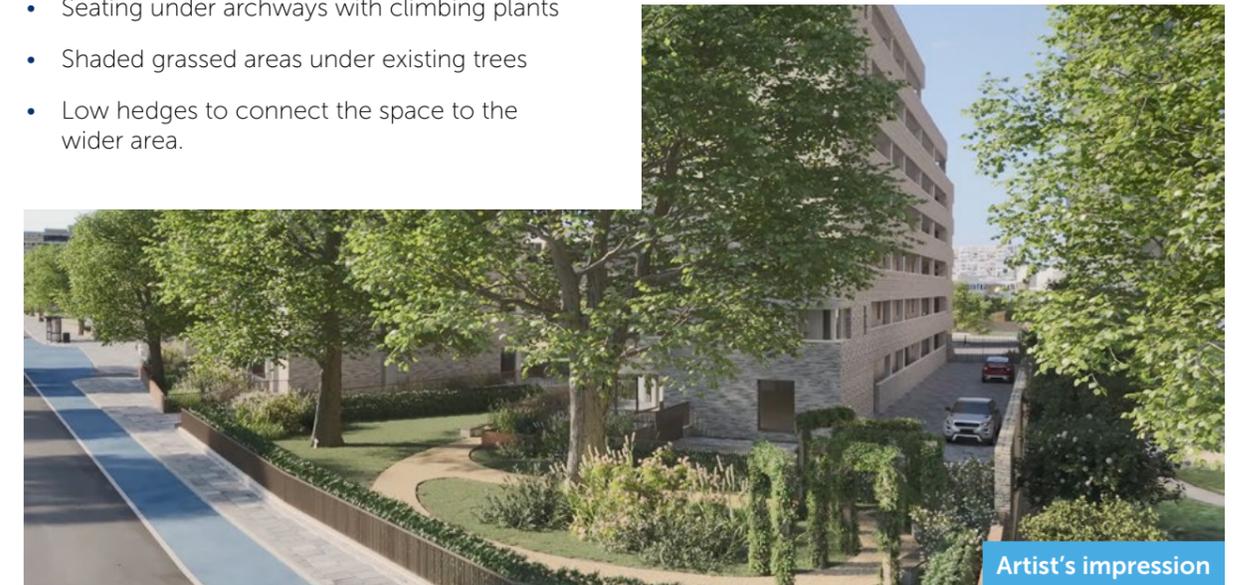


Green space for the community supported homes

The new community supported housing block will also have its own garden area, attached to the common space in the building.

This garden area will include:

- A terrace attached to the common room, with views overlooking the river
- Raised planting boxes for a communal vegetable garden
- Dementia-friendly design features, including a circular path around the space
- Seating under archways with climbing plants
- Shaded grassed areas under existing trees
- Low hedges to connect the space to the wider area.



You said, we did

The table below outlines the key feedback we received at our February 2020 drop-in sessions, and how we have responded in our updated designs.

You said	We did
We are worried about the height of the new building on Grosvenor Road	Our updated designs are one storey lower than our February 2020 proposals, and we have increased the gap between the new intermediate block and existing homes on Grosvenor Road.
Local residents should be able to stay in the area	Current Darwin House residents will all move into the new community supported homes. Residents of Churchill Gardens Estate will be prioritised for new homes in the intermediate housing block.
We would like this proposal to be more environmentally friendly	We are committed to be a carbon neutral council by 2030. These buildings have been designed to the highest possible environmental standards , and include solar panels, heat pumps, and excellent insulation to make them as energy efficient as possible.
Please ensure the proposals reflect the surrounding area	The shape and materials proposed for the buildings reflect Churchill Gardens architecture . We have employed a heritage consultant and have been engaging with Historic England and the 20th Century Society.
We would like to see how the proposed buildings fit with Shelley House	A fly-through video has been commissioned to show how the proposals fit into the surrounding area. You can view the video at westminster.gov.uk/balmoral-castle-and-darwin-house . We have also included the image below, to show the distances between the buildings more clearly.

- 1 Maitland House
- 2 Proposed community supported homes
- 3 PDHU
- 4 Shelley House

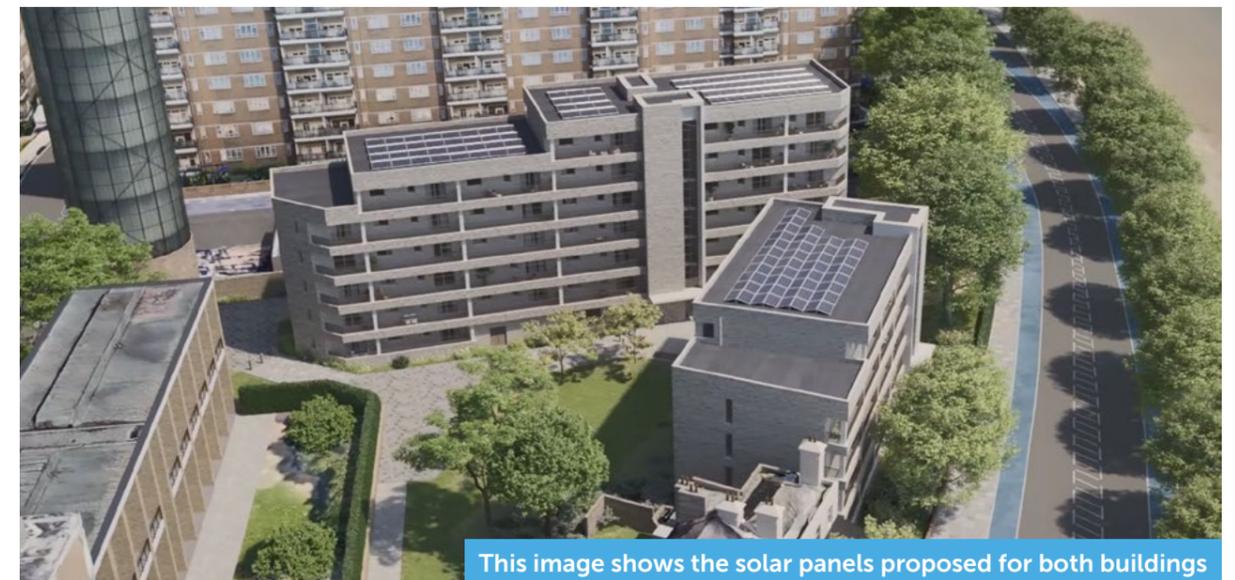
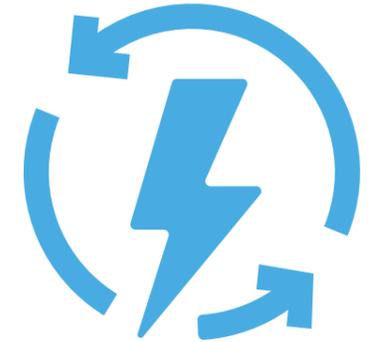


A more sustainable design

Throughout our consultations, your feedback clearly showed that sustainability and the environment are hugely valued by the Churchill Gardens community. The council is committed to improving the environment too, with our goal to be carbon neutral by 2030.

To reflect your values and ensure our proposed buildings have a minimal impact on the environment, the proposed development will include:

- Solar panels on the roof, capable of both collecting and storing energy
- Air heat pump systems
- Triple-glazed windows
- Carefully chosen insulation, designed to keep internal temperatures comfortable using minimal energy
- Cross ventilation system
- In-built shade to reduce need for cooling in the summer
- A range of planting and greenery to increase biodiversity.



Refurbishment vs rebuilding

If we were to refurbish Darwin House instead of building new community supported homes, we would only be able to deliver 14 homes to modern standards within the current building. In order to build the 34 homes we are proposing, we would need to significantly increase the height of Darwin House. Refurbishing the building would also create awkwardly shaped spaces as we attempt to give enough floor space to each flat, and construction on this constrained site would be very difficult.

We would also need to move Darwin House residents twice instead of once, which would be

very disruptive, particularly for those with health and care needs.

Additionally, it would be more difficult to bring the building up to new environmental standards. With the council's commitment to being carbon neutral by 2030, we must consider energy use and sustainability over the full lifetime of the building, and create homes that are made to last.

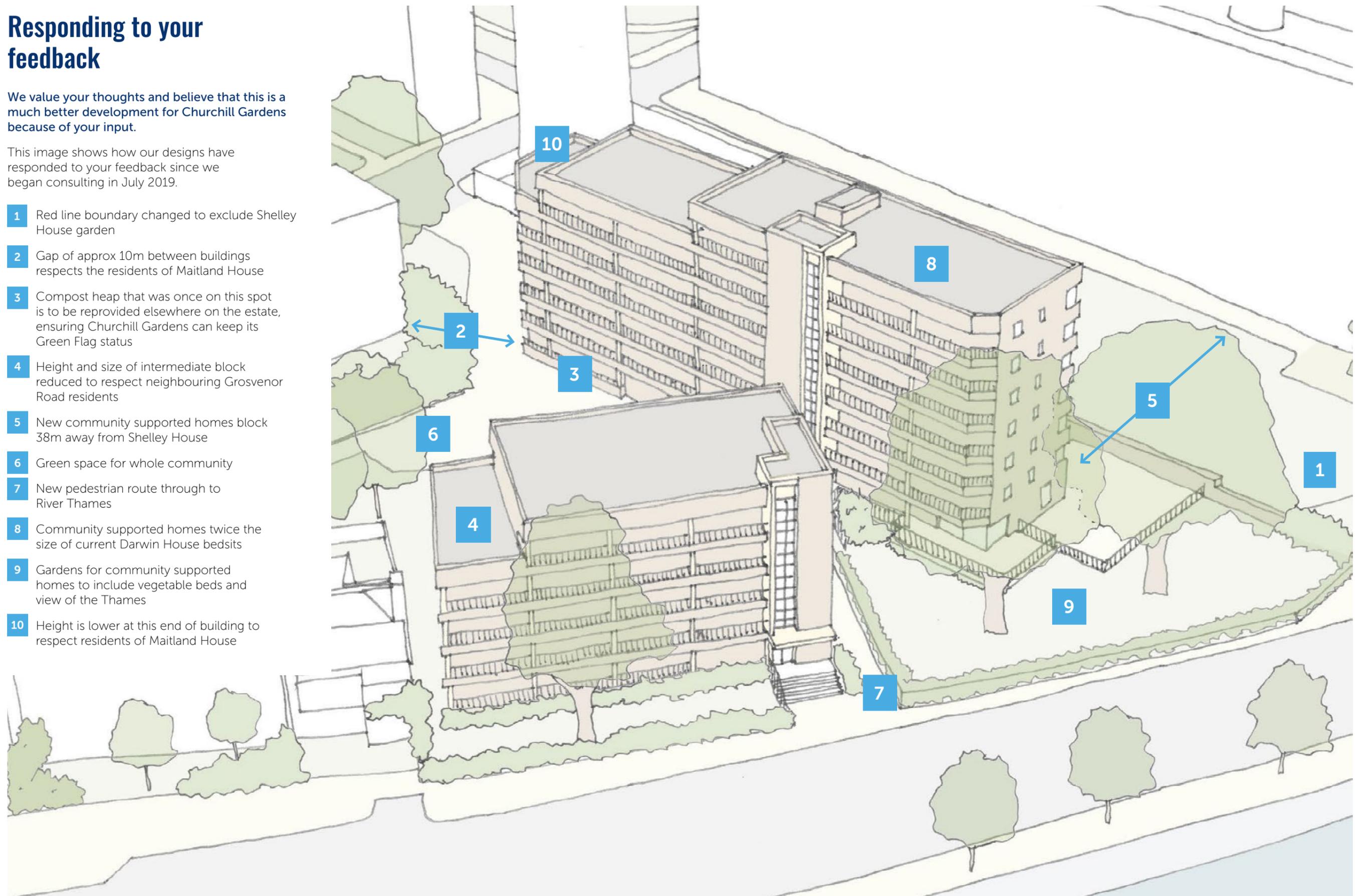
For these reasons, we have decided to propose a new building, rather than refurbish the current one.

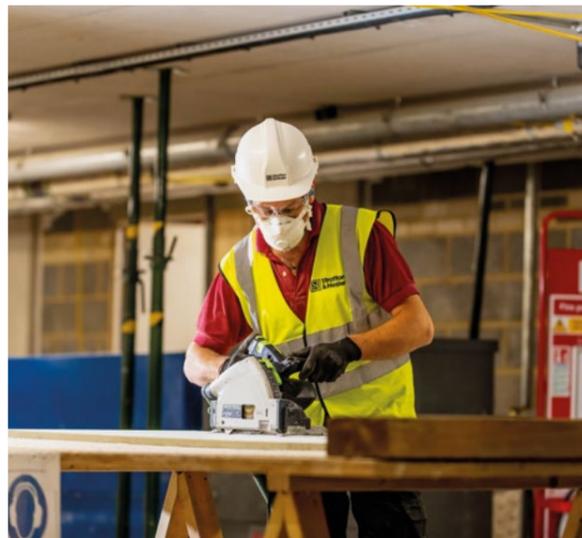
Responding to your feedback

We value your thoughts and believe that this is a much better development for Churchill Gardens because of your input.

This image shows how our designs have responded to your feedback since we began consulting in July 2019.

- 1 Red line boundary changed to exclude Shelley House garden
- 2 Gap of approx 10m between buildings respects the residents of Maitland House
- 3 Compost heap that was once on this spot is to be reprovided elsewhere on the estate, ensuring Churchill Gardens can keep its Green Flag status
- 4 Height and size of intermediate block reduced to respect neighbouring Grosvenor Road residents
- 5 New community supported homes block 38m away from Shelley House
- 6 Green space for whole community
- 7 New pedestrian route through to River Thames
- 8 Community supported homes twice the size of current Darwin House bedsits
- 9 Gardens for community supported homes to include vegetable beds and view of the Thames
- 10 Height is lower at this end of building to respect residents of Maitland House





Our commitment to you: considerate construction

We know that construction can be disruptive, especially for people living close to construction sites. We work with our contractors to minimise disruption for Westminster’s residents on all our sites.

Considerate construction commits our contractors to respect the community, protect the environment, secure everyone’s safety and value their workforce.

We are also committed to working with contractors to ensure that noise and dust are well-managed, and residents are minimally affected.

If you would like to find out more about considerate construction, please follow the link ccscheme.org.uk

If planning permission is granted, we will work on a construction management plan. This will include agreement on working hours, and a resident liaison officer who will be available at all times to support the community during this construction period as well as providing them with regular updates.

If you have any specific concerns about construction, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us by emailing balmoraldarwin@westminster.gov.uk

Have your say

Thank you for taking the time to engage with our revised proposals.

We hope that the information in this booklet has given you a detailed look at the proposed development, however if you have any questions please do get in touch with us at balmoraldarwin@westminster.gov.uk

As this is our final round of engagement on this project, we would like to get your thoughts on these proposals before we submit a planning application.

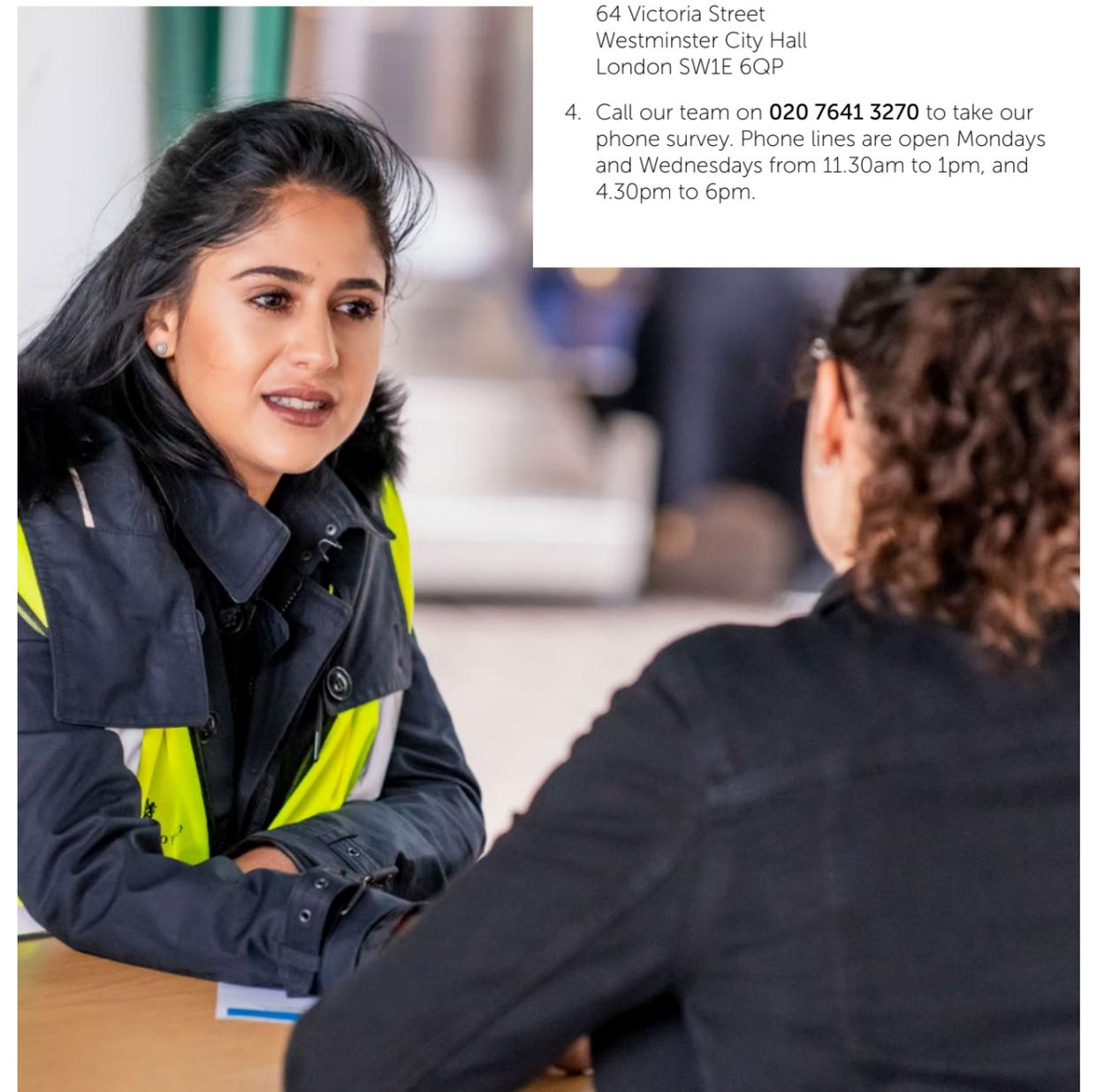
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4. Call our team on **020 7641 3270** to take our phone survey. Phone lines are open Mondays and Wednesdays from 11.30am to 1pm, and 4.30pm to 6pm.



Timeline

The timeline below shows indicative dates for the redevelopment of Balmoral Castle and Darwin House, from consultation to a planning decision.

