



Planning Potential secured approval for a community garden, allotments and 9 dwellings on Urban Green Space within the Sutton Garden Suburb Conservation Area in the area of Greenhill, Sutton.

The site was designated Urban Green Space by Sutton Council but had not been publicly accessible for over 20 years. The site sat derelict and overgrown within the suburbs, failing to deliver the open space benefits to the wider community and causing problems with fly-tipping.

The site has a long complex history having been designed as part of the Rose Hill Garden Suburb by Cavendish Pearson back in 1900 to include several houses and a local park, however the breakout of WW1 put a stop to the plans. In WW2 the site was then used for allotments, with the allotments sold in 1997 and purchased by a major housebuilder. The housebuilder failed to obtain planning permission for the 28 homes proposed on the site and the land was subsequently sold on again at auction in 2014, where it was purchased by our client.

Planning Potential were appointed to assess the development potential of the site, establishing that the Urban Green Space Local Plan policy designation restricted development. Having studied the history of the site and its intended function as part of the Garden Suburb, the project team set about developing plans to bring the site back into public use, aligning the proposals closely with Cavendish Pearson's original proposals for the land.

The Council's own research identified there was high demand from residents in the area for more public open space and specific demands for allotments. However, despite this, the community sought to prevent the site being redeveloped, applying to have the site registered as an asset of community value in 2017. No offer was made by the residents' group for the land and subsequently the designation fell away.

Following extensive engagement with the local community and local planning authority, proposals which maximised the sites benefits were prepared, including a children's play area, allotments, community garden (with a pond, meadow grassland, lawn area and woodland walkways). The

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proposals were therefore also able to achieve net biodiversity gain, following careful consideration.

9 high quality family dwellings were included as part of the proposals, carefully designed to follow the arts and crafts architecture style of the surrounding suburbs, which were commended by Officers and Members.

Accordingly, the proposals gained Officer support in 2020 and were approved at Planning Committee in 2021.



### Summary of Achievements

- Working proactively with the Council Officers to overcome the policy objection to housing on Urban Green Space;
- Commissioning and coordinating ecology, tree and landscaping experts to show a net biodiversity increase;
- Considered and comprehensive public engagement to inform and receive feedback, working hard to maximise the sites benefits to the local community; and,
- Securing Member support to the proposals despite the challenges of the site.