

Planning Statement for Land adjacent to 39 Southcote Rise



INTRODUCTION

1. This statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for the provision of 2no. 3 bedroom dwellinghouses with associated parking and amenity space on land adjacent to 39 Southcote Rise.
2. The application is a resubmission of scheme that was refused in February 2020. The reasons for refusal have been carefully considered and the proposal redesigned. It is considered that the Council's earlier concerns with regards to the impact of the development upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of no.39 Southcote Rise have been addressed through the redesign and repositioning of the dwellinghouses.
3. The Council's concerns with regards to the impact of the proposed development upon the street scene and the existing local and historic context of the surrounding area have also been carefully considered. The revised submission addresses these concerns through the redesign of the scheme and the provision of additional information that was lacking from the earlier submission.
4. This document encompasses the requirements of a design and access statement and should be read in conjunction with all submitted plans and supporting reports.

APPLICATION SITE

5. The application site is a vacant area of land which historically formed the western section of the garden of no.39 Southcote Rise.
6. The application site no longer forms part of the garden of no.39 as it has been physically separated from the garden by a wooden fence and is also registered as its own title.
7. The site is enclosed on all four sides by a close boarded fence. To the east is the garden of no.39, to the west the garden and garage of no.48 Orchard Close, to the south the garden of no.37 Southcote Rise and to the north the site fronts onto Westcote Rise.
8. No.39 Southcote Rise, which as detailed above sits to the east of the application site, is a semi-detached dwelling, forming a pair with no.37 Southcote Rise. The pair sit on the corner of Southcote and Westcote Rise, with no.39 forming the actual corner building. The front entrance of no.39 Southcote Rise is situated on Westcote Rise.
9. If one were to apply the test within the Technical Guidance of the GPDO to the arrangement of no.39, the front elevation is where the front door is and this is the principle elevation. As such, the rear elevation is the party wall with no.37 and the two remaining elevations are the sides. The front and side of no.39 are heavily screened from street level views by considerable sized hedges.
10. As the garden area of no.39 Southcote Rise that sits between the building and the application site is clearly used as a 'traditional' rear garden, for the purposes of this discussion, although to the side of the building we do refer to it as the rear garden.
11. The application site sits to the west of the garden of no.39 Southcote Rise.

THE PROPOSAL

12. Planning permission is sought for the provision of 2no. 3-bedroom, semi-detached dwellinghouses with associated off-street parking provision and private amenity space.
13. The new dwellings comprise of two storeys with single storey side wings. The dwellings are similar in their design to the existing buildings along Westcote Rise consisting of a double height bay window, arched entrance and hipped roofs. As with the existing buildings along Westcote Rise, most of which have single storey side additions, the proposed dwellings would also have this additional space.
14. The ground floor level of the proposed dwellings comprise an entrance hall, WC, study and a lounge room/diner opening up to a kitchen that overlooks the rear garden. At first floor level each property has two double bedrooms, one with an ensuite and a family bathroom. A third bedroom is located within the loft space of each property.
15. Both properties have two off-street parking spaces located to the side elevation and serviced by an electric charging point. One space at each property complies with the Council's requirement for a 1.2m wide transfer area ensuring that the dwellings are fully-accessible.
16. To the rear, each property has a private garden of at least 60sqm along with secure bicycle parking for at least two bicycles. Dedicated refuse and recycling storage are located to the side elevation of each property.
17. The rear gardens are enclosed with close boarded fences. To the front, it is proposed to create an attractive boundary comprising a dwarf wall and hedging behind along the perimeter of the site. As is illustrated on the submitted drawings, both the front and rear gardens will be landscaped with grass, hedging, flower beds and trees.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

18. The available online planning history for the application site is detailed below. The only entry relates to the refusal that was issued in February.

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
74151/APP/2019/4114	Two x 2-bed semi-detached dwellings with associated parking and amenity space and installation of 2 vehicular crossovers to front	Refused	14 th Feb 2020

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

19. The following policies within the Local Plan are relevant to the consideration of this proposal:
 - H1 Housing Growth
 - BE1 Built Environment
 - DMH 2 Housing Mix
 - DMH 6 Garden and Backland Development
 - DMHB 11 Design of New Development
 - DMHB 12 Streets and Public Realm

- DMHB 14 Trees and Landscaping
- DMHB 15 Planning for Safer Places
- DMHB 16 Housing Standards
- DMHB 17 Residential Density
- DMHB 18 Private Outdoor Amenity Space
- DMT 1 Managing Transport Impacts
- DMT 2 Highways Impacts
- DMT 6 Vehicle Parking

20. In addition to the local planning policies, those of the London Plan considered relevant to this proposal are:

- 3.3 Increasing housing supply
- 3.4 Optimising housing potential
- 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments
- 3.8 Housing choice
- 5.3 Sustainable design and construction
- 7.2 An inclusive environment
- 7.4 Local character

21. It is considered that in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, National Planning Policy Framework, and the aims of the London Borough of Hillingdon's Local Plan, the proposals will;

- 1) Increase the stock and choice of housing in the borough;
- 2) Be compatible with the scale and design of established local development;
- 3) Enhance the character and appearance of the street scene;
- 4) Preserve the green and leafy appearance of the local area; and
- 5) Not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding properties.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

22. Paragraph 59 of the NPPF states "To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed".

23. The Local Plan identifies there is an identified need for three-bedroom units. Para. 6.12 of the Local Plan Part 1 states "almost all new market housing should have three or more bedrooms".

24. The application proposes the erection of two, semi-detached dwellings of 108sqm each. The properties will provide family-sized accommodation of three bedrooms with gardens. Para 6.23 outlines the Council's desire that that "high quality design for new homes will continue to be a priority for the Council and the type of dwellings provided should reflect housing needs identified in the borough, particularly the need to provide more family homes with adequate garden space". The proposed development helps to address this priority.

25. Paragraph 4.4 of the Local Plan Part 2 confirms that family-sized accommodation of three or more bedrooms is "much needed" in the borough. This is further emphasised by the Council's most recent housing needs study that identifies, as outlined in para. 4.6 of the Local Plan Part 2, a "substantial

borough-wide requirement for larger affordable and private market units, particularly three bedroom properties”.

26. The Local Authority's housing delivery targets are currently being met and are on track to continue to be met. However, as identified through Policy H1, the Authority should “meet and exceed its minimum strategic dwelling requirement” subject to other Local Plan policies. The London Plan echoes this London-wide duty to not just meet the minimum housing numbers.
27. The London Plan also seeks to ensure that local authorities balance the contribution gardens can make to a local area with the housing needs and choice for Londoners.
28. The development proposal will provide two additional residential units within the borough without giving rise to significant harm to the local character or resulting in significant harm to the garden provision in the local area.
29. The proposal, whilst building on historic garden land will also ensure no.39 retains a rear garden space of approximately 120 sqm which is twice the size advocated by the development plan whilst also providing two, family sized dwellings with private rear gardens of 60sqm each. Whilst the Council may consider the proposal to result in the loss of garden space, the actual loss is minimal in the overall context of the area and when balanced with the public benefits the proposal brings including the material benefit of providing the housing size that has been identified as being “much needed”.
30. During the consideration of the earlier scheme, the Council has stated that as “the site lies within an established residential area where there would be no objection in principle to the intensification of the residential use of the site, subject to all other material planning considerations being acceptable, in accordance with the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Development Management Policies (2020)”.
31. During the consideration of the earlier scheme, the term ‘backland development’ was used to assess the proposal. The application site is not a backland site. Whilst it is located adjacent to no.39 Southcote Rise, it has its own frontage to Westcote Rise.
32. The application site and the proposed dwellings will be accessible directly from Westcote Rise in a similar fashion to the other properties on Westcote Rise.
33. The front elevations of the proposed dwellings will front the street, the vehicular accesses are from the street to the area to the side of each building and the rear gardens are directly to the rear of the dwellinghouses.
34. The site arrangement and layout are the same as the other buildings within Westcote Rise and as such compatible with the prevailing character and pattern of development within the street to which it will form a part.
35. Backland development, as detailed in a number of recent appeals decisions within the Borough, is not applicable to a development site such as this. Whilst the application site may once have been the garden of another residential dwelling, as it has a clear frontage to an established road, it is not backland development.

36. Detailed below are a number of sites where a new dwelling was proposed on a piece of land that previously formed a garden or vacant parcel of land adjacent to an existing dwelling that would have its own clear frontage to the street. We consider these developments, although differing in their particular circumstances and/or some were approved under the previous development plan, relevant to the issue of backland development. It is considered that they clearly support our stance that the current application site is not backland development by virtue of the street frontage to Westcote Rise.
37. 2 St Margarets Avenue (your ref: 69131/APP/2016/17) has a similar arrangement to the current application site being located adjacent to a corner building. Following the refusal of the application, the decision was allowed at appeal with the Inspector stating that the proposal was not backland development as it had a frontage to Micawber Avenue. Please see paragraph 3 of the Inspector's decision.
38. 40 Ducks Hill Road (your ref: 73183/APP/2019/868) was approved by the Council following a previous refusal and dismissal at appeal. Paragraph 7.01 of the Officer's Report references an earlier appeal at the site stating "Although it is located within a rear garden area it is noted that the Planning Inspector on the previous application clearly stated that given the proposed dwelling would have its frontage onto Cygnet Close and take vehicular access from it is difficult to see how the proposed development could be described as 'backland development'. The additional dwelling would comply with the key objective to deliver more housing units. Subsequently, it is considered that the redevelopment of this parcel of land is acceptable in principal".
39. Land to the rear of Dawley Road (your ref: 68572/APP/2012/1245) was approved by the Council. Despite the officer report clearly stating that the development was within the rear garden of no. 35 Dawley Road and the property is setback a considerable distance within the plot, no consideration to this site being backland development is given. The plot also has a frontage to Clifford Gardens from which the property would have its access which lends itself to the same conclusions as above; the development cannot be considered backland when there is a direct frontage to a street.
40. Development at 2 Arlington Drive (there are numerous entries and associated/linked applications for this site) was dismissed at appeal for a number of slightly differing schemes/options for the creation of new houses on the site. In relation to the scheme that involved building to the side of the existing dwelling directly facing the street, the Inspector stated in para.13 "Policy H12 of the HLP2 seeks to resist backland development in residential areas unless there would be no undue disturbance or loss of privacy to adjoining occupiers. Although the houses in the appeal developments would be in what is effectively the rear garden to No. 2, they would have their own access directly onto Arlington Drive. I thus conclude that the developments would not constitute tandem development of a backland area, and that this policy would not be applicable to them".
41. Copies of all relevant documents relating to the above cases are provided as an Appendix to this Statement.
42. Policy DMH 6 addresses the issue of backland and garden development. For the reasons outlined above, this proposal is not backland development. However, the site did historically form part of the garden area of no.39 Southcote Rise so it is appropriate to consider it against the relevant policy in relation to garden development.

43. The supporting text to policy DMH 6 identifies the harm that the Council are seeking to avoid. "The restrictive approach reflects the direct and indirect value of gardens which contribute to local character, provide safe and secure amenity and play space, support biodiversity, help to reduce flood risk and mitigate the effects of climate change, including the 'heat island' effect".
44. The application site no longer forms a part of the garden of no.39. No.39 has retained an area of rear garden measuring approximately 120sqm. This measurement is not 100% accurate as no.39 has not been surveyed. The figure has been arrived at by using the OS map and a copy of the diagram is included in this submission. This area significantly exceeds the minimum size of garden required for a dwellinghouse.
45. The application site, whilst adding to the built form within the site will also provide two areas of garden space. All these garden spaces will contribute to the local character, provide safe and secure amenity and play spaces, support biodiversity and help to reduce the risk of flooding and climate change in accordance with the aims of Policy DMH 6.
46. Policy DMH 6 states "There is a presumption against the loss of gardens due to the need to maintain local character, amenity space and biodiversity. In exceptional cases a limited scale of backland development may be acceptable, subject to the following criteria:
 - i. neighbouring residential amenity and privacy of existing homes and gardens must be maintained and unacceptable light spillage avoided;
 - ii. vehicular access or car parking should not have an adverse impact on neighbours in terms of noise or light. Access roads between dwellings and unnecessarily long access roads will not normally be acceptable;
 - iii. development on backland sites must be more intimate in mass and scale and lower than frontage properties; and
 - iv. features such as trees, shrubs and wildlife habitat must be retained or re-provided".
47. The first part of the policy refers to gardens by stating "there is a presumption against the loss of gardens due to the need to maintain local character, amenity space and biodiversity". The second part of the policy goes onto detail the circumstances whereby backland development may be acceptable. As it has been established that the application site is not backland development, the criteria detailed above in the second part of the policy are not considered relevant to the consideration of this proposal.
48. The provision of the two dwellings will not result in a significant detriment or harm to the ability of the remaining garden at no.39 to provide private amenity and play space, from supporting biodiversity or mitigating against the risk of flooding.
49. Furthermore, the new properties will contribute by providing private amenity and play space for two new families, will support biodiversity on the site through the provision of the planned landscaping scheme as well as mitigating against the risk of flooding and climate change through the provision of modern construction techniques and sustainability measures whilst also contributing to the housing stock of the borough.

Local character

50. The prevailing local character will not be harmed by the development proposal. The prevailing character of the area is residential. The officer report for the previous refusal describes the area as “the houses within Southcote Rise, Westcote Rise, Orchard Close the other surrounding roads are defined by their spacious plots and ample frontages relate to the suburban aesthetic of the surrounding area and original intent in which this part of Ruislip had been developed in. The properties are comfortably positioned within their respective plots with ample gaps between the built forms maintaining a sense of rhythm along the road as well as providing a sense of openness to the street scene” [sic].
51. It is not considered that the plots within Southcote Rise, Westcote Rise or Orchard Close are particularly spacious or have particularly ample frontages. From a street level perspective the area is characterised by pairs of semi-detached dwellings that have been heavily altered through the passage of time with numerous side extensions, boundary changes, roof level alterations and general small-scale works that all contribute to the narrative of the area. The plots widths and the semi-detached dwellings within them, at street level, are not significantly different from those proposed as part of this application albeit the existing dwellings have been added to over time.
52. The properties within the immediate vicinity have a similar pattern of two storey bay window and entrance door arrangement, hipped roof and a side extension housing a garage or additional reception space.
53. Any appreciation of plot size is only discernible in aerial views of the locality. An aerial plan of the area is provided with this report. This clearly shows that some of the surrounding properties have relatively long gardens in relation to the size of the dwellings. However, as this is only discernible from the air it is not considered that this contributes to any particular sense of openness or spaciousness around the plots. Indeed, if one looks at the southern end of the block created by the four streets of Southcote Rise, Westcote Rise, Orchard Close and Hill Lane, there are properties built within the southern most section fronting Hill Lane. This is in contrast to the undeveloped northern end of the block along Westcote Rise. Whilst this undeveloped northern end may well be historic and the original plan for the area, it is not considered to be particularly characteristic of the area and is not repeated in any coherent pattern in the immediate locality.
54. It is acknowledged that the spacing between Southcote Rise and Orchard Close along the frontage of Westcote Rise provides a sense of space between the streets. However, the blank, fairly utilitarian expanse of boundary fence along the full length of Westcote Rise is not particularly attractive nor does it create a sense of belonging or connection to the street as required by para. 127d of the NPPF. At street level, users of the street are physically disconnected from the spaces beyond the fence line with no appreciation of any openness when faced with a blank fence.
55. The development site represents only a small area of the frontage to Westcote Rise with the remainder falling outside of the application site and as such unaltered by the development. The openness to the east and west between Southcote Rise and Orchard Close will still represent a significant gap between the side elevations of both new dwellinghouses and their respective neighbours, no.39 Southcote Rise and no.48 Orchard Close.

56. The provision of the dwellinghouses does not infill the gap between these two streets as there will remain a considerable space both to the east and west with views across the rear gardens and past the new dwellinghouses from Westcote Rise still possible.
57. As can be seen in the street view perspectives submitted with the application (drawing nos. 150 P1 and 151 P1) the proposal presents an attractive addition to the street that complements the existing built form to the northern side of the street.
58. The buildings do not look out of place, nor would they appear isolated when they relate to the existing built form opposite, are sufficiently spaced from their respective neighbours to the east and west, and have appropriate front boundary treatment that provides a sense of place.
59. The proposal provides a visual link between Southcote Rise and Orchard Close, much as the properties to the south on Hill Lane do, that is lacking at present with dwellings only to the north side of the street along Westcote Rise. The proposal does not represent a cramped form of development given the distances and spaciousness that would remain to both the east and west.

Amenity

60. The previous proposal was refused (second reason for refusal) on the basis that the proposal would result in a sense of enclosure and a loss of outlook to the occupiers of no. 39. The development proposal has been completely revised to address this concern.
61. The dwellings now proposed are part two storey/part single storey. The two storey element now sits 13m away from the elevation of no. 39. The single storey element is 10m from no.39 Southcote Rise and set to the north of the outlook from no.39. Both the two storey and single storey parts have hipped roofs which are sloped away from the neighbouring building.
62. The positioning of the dwellings away from the elevation of no.39 ensures that there remains a good distance between this elevation and the side elevation of the nearest building. The position of the dwelling within the plot also ensures that the bulk of the building is set to the north of the outlook from the rear windows, retaining excellent outlook across their garden and the neighbouring gardens to the south and west.
63. As detailed above, no.39 has a garden area of approximately 120sqm. Whilst this is not 100% accurate as no survey has been undertaken on that property, it has been measured using the OS map. A copy of the area identified as 'rear' garden is provided at the end of this document. This area is twice as large as development plan policies would dictate is acceptable for a 3 bedroom house and is clearly a generous sized space. It is not considered that the provision of the new dwellinghouses would impact the enjoyment, by way of sense of enclosure or loss of outlook, to this generously sized amenity space in accordance with the requirements of Policy DMBH 11.

Quality of accommodation

64. The application proposes the erection of two, semi-detached dwellings of 108sqm each. The properties will provide family-sized accommodation of three bedrooms which is "much needed" in the borough as detailed in the Council's most recent housing needs study that identifies a "substantial borough-

wide requirement for larger affordable and private market units, particularly three bedroom properties" (para 4.6).

65. It is acknowledged that the development proposal itself does not provide a 'mix' of housing units but given the small-scale of the proposal, it is not possible to vary the mix significantly and as such the decision has been taken to focus on addressing the Council's undersupply of three-bedroom units to meet the recently identified need.
66. Both properties have two off-street parking spaces, dedicated refuse and recycling storage, private amenity space to the rear of each house measuring 60sqm, outside storage sheds and secure and covered storage for two bicycles. These requirements are all in accordance with the Nationally Described Technical Housing Standards as well adopted local planning policies, in particular DMHB 16.
67. The rear of the properties are south facing so there are opportunities to utilise these sunny aspects to provide increased sustainability measures such as solar panels at main roof level. The properties are dual aspect with the main living areas opening out onto the private rear gardens. The side elevations each contain one window at first floor level which services the staircase. These are noted as being obscurely glazed to provide further comfort that no overlooking issues will arise as a result of the development.
68. The dwellings both have one bedroom within the loft space which are serviced by rooflights to the rear roofslope. Each property also has one rooflight to the side roofslope. As with the first floor windows, these windows are above the staircase and as such do not give rise to any issues with privacy as no views outwards are possible.
69. The development will require the provision of two vehicular crossovers onto Westcote Rise. These are broadly in the same location as the previous application to which the Council's Transportation team confirmed to be acceptable. The boundary treatment has been carefully considered to ensure that no obstruction is created within the visibility splays of the driveways and the Applicant understands that an agreement will be required with the Highways department to undertake the works to create the crossovers.
70. As noted in the comments from the previous application, the opportunity has been taken to include electric charging points adjacent to each driveway and the vehicle indicated on the plans is a Tesla.
71. The provision of two dedicated off-street parking spaces per property is in accordance with adopted development plan policies.
72. Cycle parking is noted within the rear garden. Each property has two dedicated spaces which are secure and covered thus complying with adopted development plan standards as well as the London Plan.
73. In accordance with Policy DMHB 18, each property has 60sqm of dedicated private amenity space to the rear as well as both properties having front gardens that provide natural surveillance to the street. As detailed above, although the application site is a separate title from no.39 and no longer forms part of their private amenity space, in recognition of the historical link, it should also be noted that no.39 retains a private rear garden of approximately 120sqm.

74. The revised proposal has carefully considered the requirements of Policy DMHB 15 and the submitted details demonstrate that the proposal will provide natural surveillance and a sense of place within the development. The boundary treatment clearly delineates the public and private areas with a clear connection between the spaces which contributes to the street scene.
75. The existing arrangement does not contribute to the street scene at street level. The site is surrounded by a close boarded fence that whilst providing a continuity to the boundary with the two neighbouring sites, creates a visual barrier that does not contribute.
76. The proposal enhances the street scene by connecting the dwellings to the street scene in a complementary and coherent manner. The pattern of development is compatible with the surrounding buildings and particularly those opposite whilst the open front gardens and welcoming entrances anchor the development within the street.
77. The landscaping of the proposal has also been fully reconsidered and further details provided to reassure the Local Authority that the green and leafy appearance of the area will be enhanced by the proposal.
78. In accordance with the requirements of DMHB 14, a new tree survey has been undertaken and the associated report and plans are submitted alongside the application. The report notes that there are no specific protections afforded to the trees on the site. Nevertheless, the Applicant is committed to providing a green and pleasant environment for the benefit of both the existing and new residents as well as the wider street scene and local area.
79. The submitted plans illustrate indicative landscaping plans with both the front and rear gardens providing grassed lawns and boundary hedging. To the rear, it is also proposed to retain and/or plant trees to provide visual interest as well as increase the biodiversity of the area.
80. The Applicant is aware that the landscaping and the opportunities to improve the biodiversity of the area are important and to that end is happy to agree to a pre-commencement condition requiring further details of landscaping within the site should the Council consider it necessary and appropriate.

Additional information

81. The submission is accompanied by a completed CIL additional information form which confirms that the proposal would give rise to a CIL liability on the 216sqm floor area that will be created. This equates to approximately £12,960 of Mayoral and £20,520 of Hillingdon CIL liabilities.

CONCLUSION

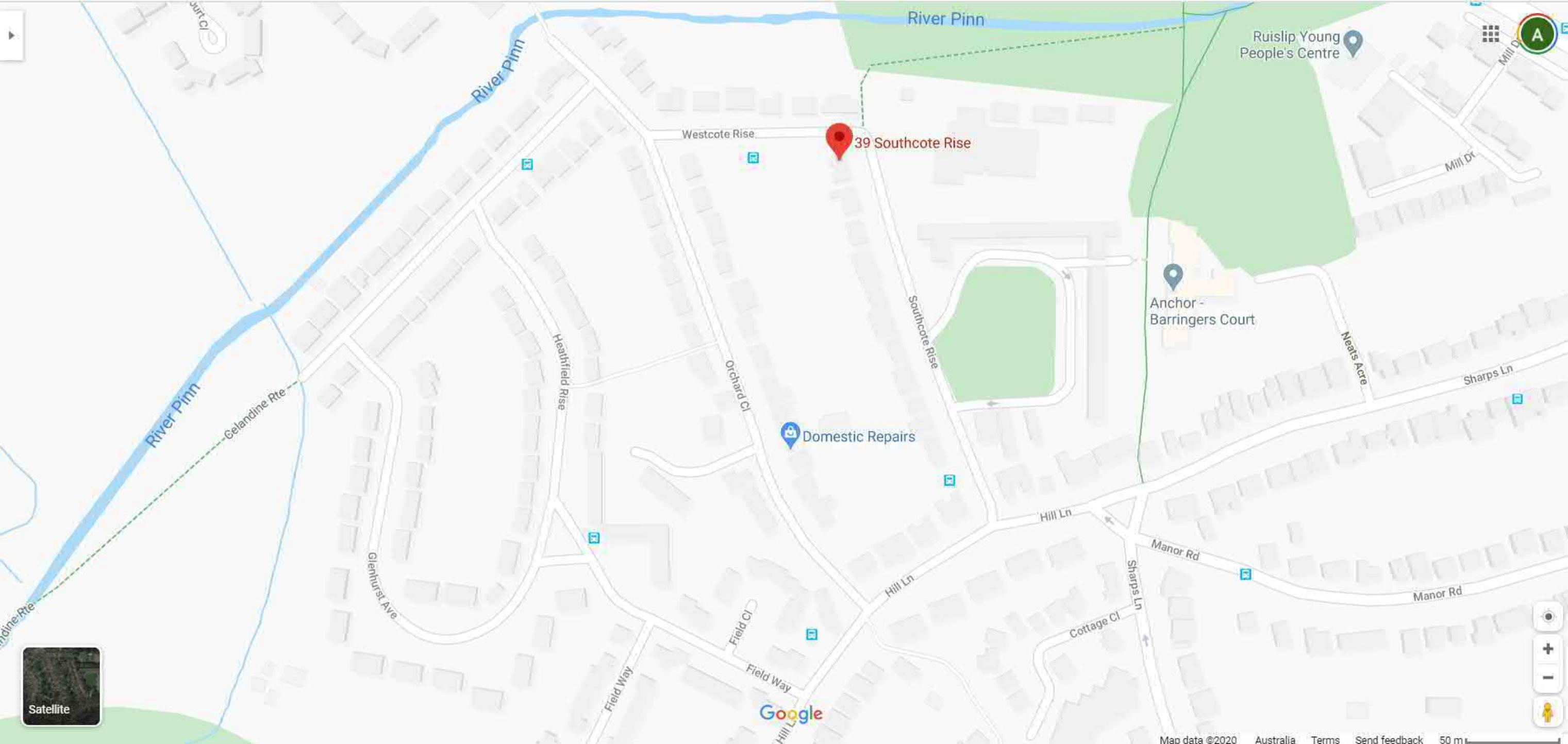
82. The proposal will contribute, albeit in a small way, to the housing stock and choice within the borough through the provision of two, three-bedroom, family-sized dwellings with access to private amenity space.
83. The proposal makes efficient use of this currently vacant site in accordance with the aims of national planning policies without giving rise to significant and demonstrable harm to the local environment in accordance with local planning policies. The proposal does not amount to backland development.

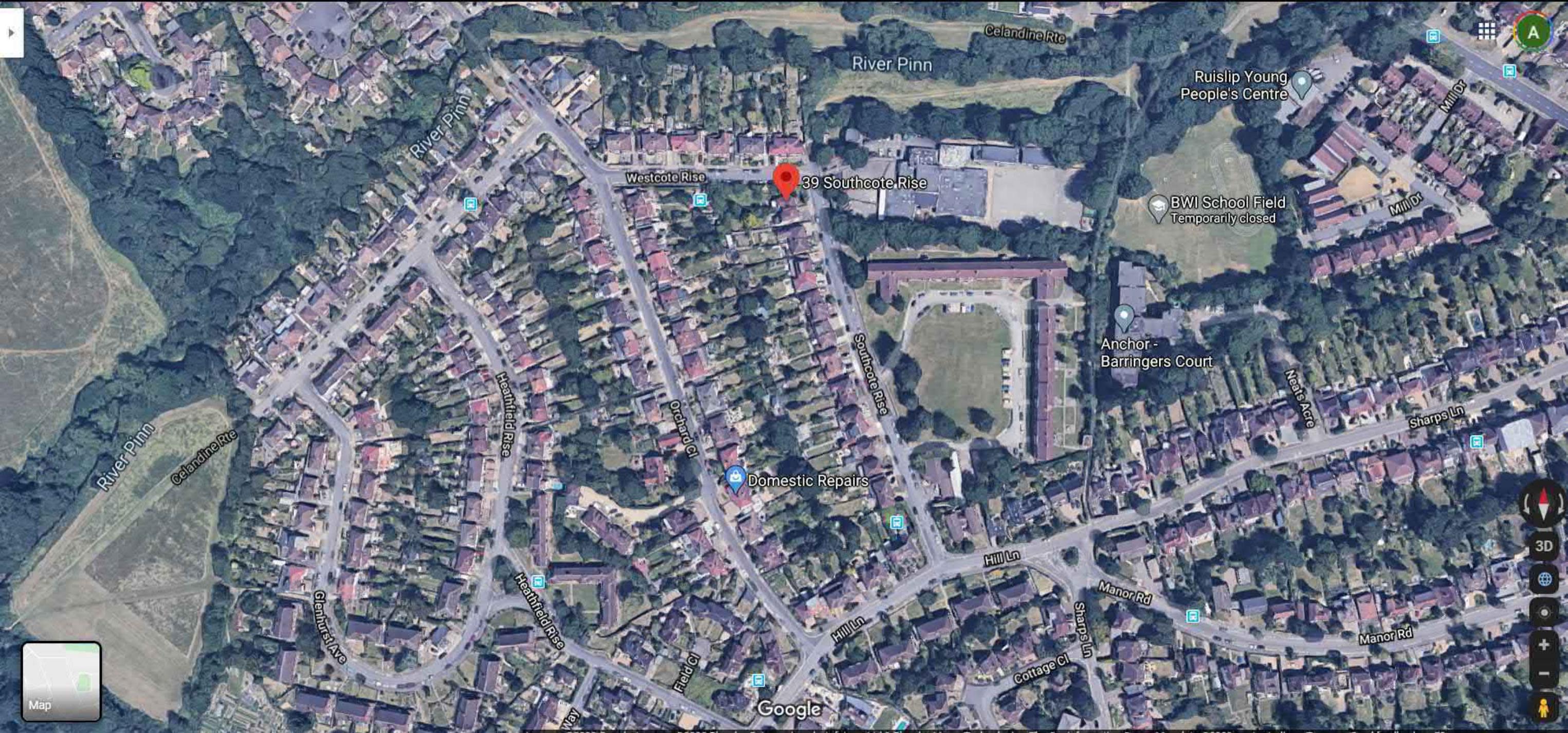
84. The proposal will retain the visual break between the two streets of Southcote Rise and Orchard Close when viewed from Westcote Rise whilst enhancing the street scene at street level. The new dwellings provide interest to the southern side of Westcote Rise, replacing the lengthy, blank expanse of close boarded fence that does not connect users of the street to the space beyond.
85. The site will be landscaped with replacement trees planted to the rear of the buildings helping to ensure a green and leafy appearance for views from the upper levels of surrounding buildings. The open and green nature of the front gardens will provide a greater softness to the street scene than the current close boarded fence arrangement that physically disconnects users from the space beyond the fence.
86. The proposed two dwellings are attractive in their design, seeking to integrate into the wider street scene and pattern of development whilst maintaining the sense of space to the east and west. The buildings provide natural surveillance and a connection with the street with the open front gardens and welcoming front entrances. The proposal represents good planning and the minimal loss of private, fenced-off space, is outweighed by the positive benefits to both the housing stock and street scene that the scheme brings.

121 m²

104 m²

39





Google



