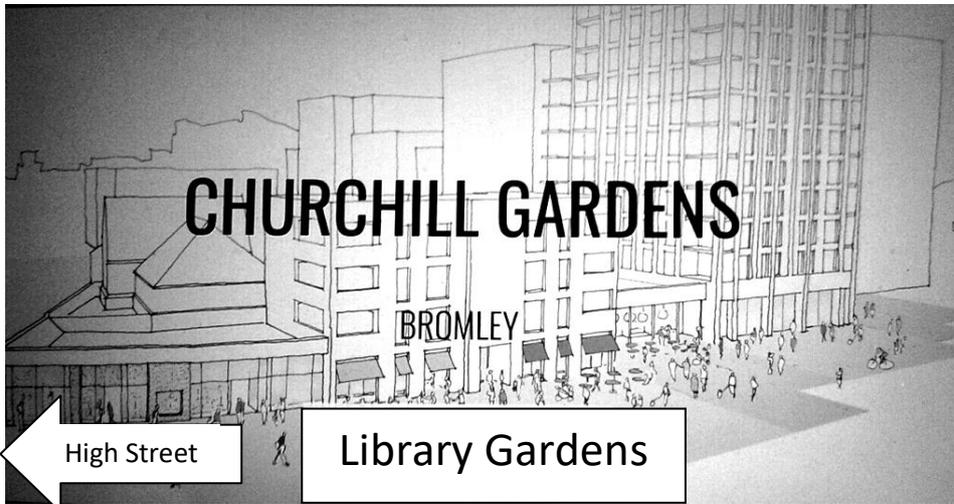
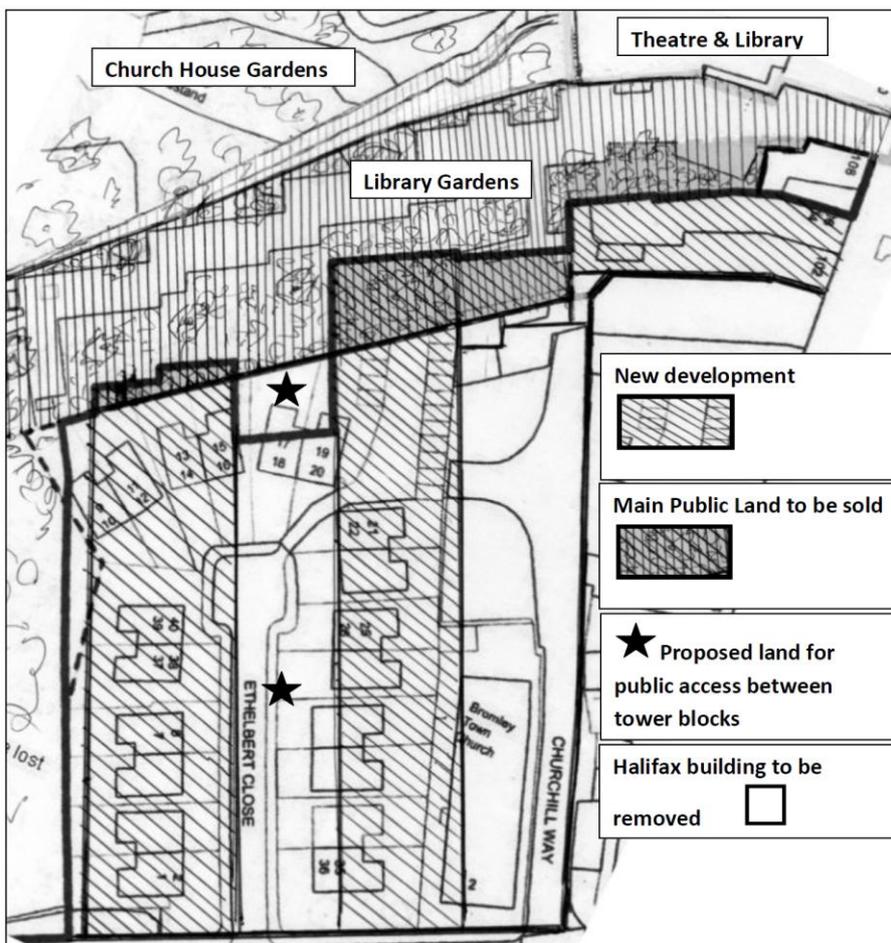


PUBLIC CONSULTATION – proposed redevelopment of LIBRARY GARDENS, 40 existing homes in ETHELBERT CLOSE and the TOWN CHURCH



This is a Council development on land either owned by the Council or to be acquired by compulsory purchase and sold on a 250 year lease to the Council's chosen development partner Countryside Properties. The visual (left) is produced by the architects. The Friends of Bromley Town Parks and Bromley Civic Society urge you to challenge the proposals which we regard as a profound violation of Library Gardens and major injustice to the existing residents and owners of the homes in Ethelbert Close and the Town Church.

SAVE LIBRARY GARDENS The development takes up all of the south side of Library Gardens. It comprises 380 flats in two 11 storey blocks on the site of Ethelbert Close which extend into Library Gardens necessitating the sale of land. The development continues along the Gardens frontage opposite the Library and Theatre to provide yet more restaurants and shops necessitating paved forecourts. This massive development blocks the the vision of sky and greenery and any semblance of the Gardens so lovingly given to us in the Will of Emily Dowling in 1900 under the care of the Council is destroyed. Even the historic name Library Gardens is lost as the whole development becomes "Churchill Gardens" - if we let it !



Premature sale of land by the Council

The Council have already issued a public notice of intention to sell parts of Library Gardens to the developer (which is referred to as Church House Gardens) under the 1972 Local Government Act Section 123(2a). This is mainly the land where the tower blocks will intrude into the Gardens. While it is said other land will be added this is essentially an area hemmed in by the two tower blocks. This notice of sale is advance of consideration of consultation comments or a planning application which suggests this , so called, consultation exercise is a farce. **You have until 12th July to object** to this premature sale which has to be in writing to : David Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services, Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR13UH

About Library Gardens



The land now Library Gardens was given to the people of Bromley in the will of Emily Dowling in 1900 for use for recreation and education. Originally it was called Neelgherries Gardens after the Dowling house but shortly afterwards, when the Library was built on the High Street site, it became known as Library Gardens. It was famous for its floral clock which was done away with by the Council in the 1980s to save maintenance costs! *Pictures: postcard from 1908 looking towards the High Street and opposite direction and the floral clock in 1960.*

Library Gardens is historically and visually distinct from the adjacent Church House Gardens which were acquired by the Council in 1926.

Planning constraints

Library Gardens and the adjacent Church House Gardens are designated as Urban Open Space which does not allow development other than small structures related to open space use such as the redundant toilet block. In 1987 they were designated as part of *Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area* which carries a duty to ensure any development will *preserve or enhance the historic character or appearance*. In the current draft Local Plan they are also designated as *Local Green Space* in recognition of their environmental quality under the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The harmful impact on the character and appearance of the High Street Conservation Area is also a statutory consideration. **It is clear from the proposals that none of these statutory considerations have been addressed either by the Council or their chosen development partner.**



Ethelbert Close is to be demolished. It currently provides 40 affordable flats occupied by families, elderly and disabled residents, some are tenants and some owner occupiers. The council have already served compulsory purchase notices. The Council, looking for income is using the housing shortage as an excuse to justify this catastrophic loss of peoples' homes for this monstrous development. **The Town Church** which is major asset to the local community is willing to be relocated but only if existing facilities are replicated on site or nearby.

The Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) A housing development is of some kind is featured in the adopted plan but only subject to satisfying the relevant planning constraints above. However, this is not a site identified in the AAP as even possibly suitable for taller or tall buildings especially as it is bordered on two sides by the Conservation Area. For Library Gardens which is within the CA the AAP policy is they should be valued for their quality, enhanced and better integrated with the High Street. This has now been re-interpreted by the present Council regime as an excuse to eradicate the Gardens intrinsic and potential quality in favour of commercial exploitation as an extension of the High Street.

Have your say The consultation is conducted on behalf of the developer by a PR company and comprises 3 sessions in the High Street **Thursday 6 July** - 2pm to 7pm **Friday 7 July** - Midday to 5pm **Saturday 8 July** - 10am to 2pm You will be asked to fill in a questionnaire. From the **10th July** the development information is available online at www.churchillgardensbromley.co.uk where you can also make your comments.

Contact details: Email: consultation@cascadepr.co.uk or Call: 020 7871 3565

Please copy your comments to the Ward Councillors : Nicky.Dykes@bromley.gov.uk; Will.Harmer@bromley.gov.uk; Michael.Rutherford@bromley.gov.uk

Do please let us know your comments via: chair@bromleytownparks.org.uk or chair@bromleycivicsociety.org.uk

Keep in touch via websites: www.bromleytownparks.org.uk or www.bromleycivicsociety.org.uk

Please give us your support by joining one or both of our groups – see online for details or write c/o : 8 Pixfield Court, Beckenham Lane, Bromley BR2 0DG