

PROPOSED NEW CIVIC CENTRE SITE OPTIONS – PLANNING MERITS

There are 3 site options being promoted for the potential new Civic Centre in Wembley. These are:

- a) An expanded/redeveloped Brent House on the High Road
- b) A new development adjacent to Wembley Stadium station on South Way
- c) A development/refurbishment of Clerical and Medical site, Olympic Way.

A development of a Civic Centre on all 3 sites would conform with planning policy as set out in the UDP and SPG for the Wembley area.

In planning terms, a highly sustainable, low parking provision, welcoming, highly accessible and legible, and innovative and inspiring in its design development would be sought whichever site were to be chosen.

All 3 sites would pose significant planning, urban design and architectural challenges if they were to result in a successful, popular and visionary Civic Centre – these, to a large degree, would vary in nature depending on the flexibility offered by the shapes of their plots. Notwithstanding this (and depending on the need for wide/spacious internal spaces as well as larger amenity areas) all three sites could offer exciting and visionary design opportunities, given the necessary input of quality and consultation/assessment of needs for the new Civic Centre.

All 3 sites would suffer to some varying degree from functioning smoothly during event days by the inflow and outflow of stadium visitors.

All 3 sites generally have very good public transport access, with both buses and trains (in soon- to- be refurbished stations) within walking distances nearby.

Below, are set some of the more strategic characteristics and planning merits (some more positive, some more negative) for planning on each of the sites.

Brent House

- Major contribution to vitality and viability of the town centre, but would displace some well established and successful existing business space in what is the most successful office building in the town centre and which could still be used/reused for many years(beyond that occupied by the Council) which already makes such contribution (thus reducing overall potential regenerative gain). In this respect, losing Brent House would be the least sustainable of the three solutions.
- Helps to maintain linkages between the town centre and the major regeneration area to the east.
- Prominent location, visibility and civic prominence and a Civic Centre landmark on the most strategic route through the town centre.
- Established civic function already.
- Good public transport access (better bus, short walk to trains).
- Little scope for significant expansion without loss of trees or existing amenity space (as opposed to redevelopment), constrained by the existing “dated”

and monolithic office building which would not inspire civic pride into the future.

- Could capitalise on site gradient lowering towards the rear.
- Rational large quadrangular plot offers more opportunity for flexible site planning and spread out layout which could incorporate large civic space in central position and create interesting landscaping around it.
- Pedestrian/vehicular conflict in reaching the new Civic Centre across the High Road.

South Way

- Adjacent to town centre therefore more likely to contribute to activity in the centre and to regeneration by developing a vacant brownfield site and aid in further regeneration.
- Adjacent to a major new pedestrian square and the new pedestrian boulevard in the Quintain development, would be conducive, in conjunction with the high level of visitors and activity, to the creation of a new sense of place and a new public/civic heart for Wembley.
- Good strategic location in reinforcing the link between the town centre and the regeneration to the east.
- Good direct rail access, less direct bus access but quite satisfactory.
- Identified in Wembley Masterplan as 'civic heart'.
- Less of a direct contribution to town centre than Brent House but adding to vitality of the wider area.
- Site shape constrains layout and creation of broad spaces as well as opportunities for amenity spaces / landscaping– could lead to the need for tower

Olympic Way

- Adjacent to area of most forthcoming new activity (the Quintain development)
- Would offer major boost by public/civic presence in the heart of the New Wembley, very significantly enhancing the social and economic regeneration to be brought about by the Quintain development and the stadium, by directly spatially interacting with both and providing a steady stream of people in the new redevelopment area
- Would face an attractive new public space (a linear park/square) and provide an attractive setting for visitors/employees
- No direct contribution to town centre but adding to the vitality of the wider area and a catalyst to further redevelopment (such as of the College sites further north).
- Problematic access on major events
- Good underground and bus access within reasonably short walk.
- Planned widening of Olympic Way to incorporate linear park would reduce the developable part of the site and result in a narrow top-to-bottom site dictating a certain form of development which could place constraints on the spatial needs of the Civic Centre
- Retaining existing office building would not add to vision of future
- Removing the car park would be highly sustainable