

APPENDIX 1: GAVIN HOUSE SITE REDEVELOPMENT PLANNING BRIEF DRAFT

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SITE: GAVIN HOUSE, NEASDEN LANE

1.0 PURPOSE OF BRIEF

The purpose of the brief is to promote an appropriate redevelopment of Gavin House close to Neasden Station.

Brent Council as the Local Planning Authority seeks a comprehensive redevelopment of this site to provide a mixed-use scheme and landmark development.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located to the north of the Neasden Jubilee Line Station. The site fronts onto Neasden Lane, although access is at the rear via Neasden Close. The close also provides access to railway land including the Neasden Rail Depot. To the south, the Gavin House site abuts the train lines.

To the north and west, the character is suburban residential. Opposite the site, is a recently completed industrial estate. On the southern side of the station, the current use is industrial where there are two sites – Neasden Goods Yard and the site opposite which is vacant.

3.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

The site, which was developed in the mid seventies, was formally used for offices (by the Department of Social Security). The original consent incorporated three residential flats on the top floor, however, these have not been used as flats since 1983. The building became vacant in 1999 and has remained so ever since. The site is not specifically designated within the Revised Deposited Unitary Development Plan's (UDP) Proposals Map 2000-2010, although it is opposite a Borough Employment Area.

Due to its location adjacent to a transport node, the Council considers the site is suitable for a **mixed-use redevelopment scheme** (Policy BE11 Intensive & Mixed-Use Developments), including a significant element of residential use. There is the opportunity to achieve a higher intensity of redevelopment and to promote a landmark scheme consistent with the site's location.

The UDP supports higher densities on sites with good or very good public transport accessibility (Policy H14 Residential Density) and the revised Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 17 (SPG17 Design Guide for New Development) sets out the standards to support such development. Although currently Neasden is within a moderate to good accessibility area, the Council

considers that the Jubilee line which serves Neasden, together with the bus routes which pass the site, make this a well connected location. This is particularly so with the recent upgrading and extension of the Jubilee Line. Policy H10 (Housing on Brownfield Sites) of the UDP encourages the development of brownfield sites without plan allocations that do not come forward for development. Gavin House is situated on one such site. This site would be suitable for more intensive development, particularly for a high-density residential element on the upper floors. The Council will require a mix of dwelling sizes and a mix of affordable and market housing within any residential scheme.

For the ground floor a mix of retail and commercial uses would be suitable. The latter is geared to meeting the needs of station users and passing trade, however, any retail should not compete with retail in the town centre.

Sited next to a major rail corridor, development will have to address the issues of noise and vibration. Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 (PPG24) Planning and Noise, sets out general guidance in respect of development adjacent to noise generators. Policy EP2 Noise and Vibration, within the UDP, reinforces this consideration.

As a potential landmark scheme, the Council will be looking for a building of architectural merit (BE9 Architectural Quality).

The Council will encourage the developers to embrace the principles of sustainable design and construction in the approach to this site through Policy BE12 Sustainable Design Principles and SPG19 Sustainable Design, Construction & Pollution Control. The site falls within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and, therefore, will specifically need to address the issue of air quality. PPG23 (Planning and Pollution Control) contains detailed advice on planning in AQMA's.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

- The site is considered appropriate for a mixed-use scheme that will provide a regeneration focus for the area around Neasden Station.
- The site is prominent when viewed from Neasden Lane and the Jubilee and Metropolitan Lines and Neasden Station. The Council will expect a high quality of design that respects the site's very visible location.
- Pedestrian access to the station is unpleasant. Widening the pavement on Neasden Lane will improve the experience for people using Gavin House and the station.
- The development should form a landmark building, which raises the profile of Neasden and the scheme should make provision for the eventual redevelopment of Neasden Station.

- Development should address the issues of noise, vibration and air quality.

5.0 DESIGN OBJECTIVES

5.1 Scale and Massing

The site is prominent, terminating an important view south along Neasden Lane. There is the opportunity for a landmark scheme on the site. One option might include a tower feature on the northern end, stepping down towards the station. The point feature could be in the region of eight storeys; a drum here would provide a visual link with the Dog Lane development north of the site. The main building should step down towards the station building where the pavements become narrower, with a five to six storey building expression on Neasden Lane.

Due to the levels, there is the opportunity to provide a covered deck to the rear (west) creating an amenity space for residents with car parking/servicing below. Where possible, the part of the building adjacent to the railway should provide protection to the decked amenity area/rear of the building from the potential noise and dust nuisance from the railway and Neasden Goods Yard respectively.

5.2 Frontage

The development should provide an active frontage at ground floor level on Neasden Lane, contributing to the public realm and the experience for the pedestrian. It may be necessary to set back the building façade at this level to create a broader pavement area.

5.3 Architectural Quality

A development of merit is sought using good quality materials and a modern robust design. Particular attention should be paid to the north and east elevations facing Neasden Lane, although as an *'island site'*, all elevations are visible and important. The southern elevation should respond to the potential for noise nuisance from the railway and the potential for future redevelopment of the station.

5.4 High Quality Landscaping

The development will need to provide a high quality treatment to the interface between Neasden Lane and the frontage, including the northern area of the site. Brent Council will encourage tree planting along this frontage.

6.0 USES

6.1 Residential

In any scheme of market housing, the Council requires the maximum reasonable proportion of affordable housing, normally between 30-50% of units (Policy H2 Proportion of Affordable Housing Sought). The Council's preference is for affordable rented dwellings to meet the needs of families in greatest housing need. However, this site may not lend itself to the provision

of family housing to the level normally sought by the Council. The provision of balconies, decked or roof top amenity space could, however, overcome such problems.

The Council does accept that key worker or student accommodation may be a more acceptable alternative residential development. The type of housing could form a large part of the affordable element within any market scheme (Policy H4A Key Worker Housing). The Council defines affordable housing for key workers as that which households earning between £12,000 - £25,000 could afford. Any affordable housing would have to meet the Housing Corporation/Housing Associations standards.

The Council would not normally accept a cash sum in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing. Developers would need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances set out in Policy H4 Off-site Affordable Housing – ‘Provision In Lieu’ for this to be acceptable.

The site would be also appropriate for live/work units, taking advantage of good transport links and other industrial units in the area. An element of affordable live/work units would be required, similar to the provision for key workers.

Ultimately, the Council would like to see a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and affordability within any scheme.

6.2 Commercial

An element of commercial use would be appropriate for the ground floor of the new development. Alternatively, commercial use on the upper floors would be acceptable, provided this was part of a mixed use scheme.

6.3 Retail

An element of retail, which provided for the needs of commuters and local residents, would be appropriate for the ground floor. This should not, however, compete with retail uses in the town centre.

7.0 LAYOUT AND SITING

The indicative layout shows development concentrated on the Neasden Road frontage, with an amenity deck to the rear across the remainder of the site. The development should contribute to the improvement of the pedestrian environment on Neasden Lane by making provision for a wider pavement.

8.0 ACCESS AND PARKING

Vehicular access is via Neasden Close, which also serves Neasden Rail Depot. This junction will need to be improved to serve the development. Any parking should be located at the rear. As suggested, the change in levels across the site provides the opportunity to create a deck to provide covered

parking/servicing. Because the site is exceptionally well served by public transport, parking requirements will be fairly stringent, according with agreed standards within the Revised Deposited UDP.

The development should make provision for some cycle parking facilities located close to the station.

9.0 LANDSCAPING

Materials should be specified which are:

- Of demonstrably high quality
- Complementary to each other in terms of colour, texture, scale, detail and extent
- Appropriate to the architectural expression of the buildings
- Sensitive to their setting within the site and the surrounding area.

Refer to Policy BE6 Public Realm: Landscape Design for further detail.

10.0 PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Any planning application shall be accompanied by the following information:

- An Urban Design Statement
- Contextual drawings
- A Transport Assessment
- A request for a screening opinion for an Environmental Assessment
- A Green Travel Plan (if targets set out in the GTP are not reached then failsafe payments will be required)

Additionally, a legal agreement will be required to progress the development. Such an agreement is likely to cover the provision of:

- *Affordable Housing*

The maximum reasonable proportion of key worker affordable housing will be sought by the Council. Between 30 – 50% of the units will be made affordable to those employees on low incomes (Policy H4A Key Worker Housing).

- *Open Space/public realm contributions*

The Council will expect the developer to contribute to open space/public realm improvements within the area (Policy BE7 Public Realm: Streetscape). The development should incorporate personal safety improvements and embrace the principles of 'Secured by Design' and 'Designing Out Crime' in accordance with the requirements for Policy BE5 Urban Clarity and Safety.

- *Reducing Transport Impacts*

The Council may require contributions or measures to mitigate the off-site transport effects of the development in accordance with Policy TRN4 Measures to Make Transport Impact Acceptable. Examples of measures include:

- Transport improvements including improvements to the junction of Neasden Close with Neasden Lane,
- Improvements to non-car access enabling safe pedestrian access. This could occur by widening the pavement on Neasden Lane and between Gavin House and the station,
- Improvements to public transport servicing for the development,
- Provision of a car pooling scheme,
- Provision of cycle parking facilities,
- Provision for the eventual redevelopment of Neasden Station.

11.0 UDP POLICY CHECKLIST

Built Environment

BE5 Urban Clarity & Design

BE6 Public Realm: Landscape Design

BE7 Public Realm: Streetscape

BE9 Architectural Quality

BE11 Intensive & Mixed-use Developments

BE12 Sustainable Design Principles

Environmental Protection

EP2 Noise and Vibration

Housing

H2 Proportion of Affordable Housing Sought

H4 Off-site Affordable Housing –‘Provision in lieu’

H4A Key Worker Housing

H10 Housing on Brownfield Sites

H14 Residential Density

Transport

TRN1 Transport Assessment

TRN4 Measures To Make Transport Impact Acceptable

TRN10 Walkable Environments

TRN11 The London Cycle Network

TRN22 Parking Standards – Non-Residential Developments

TRN23 Parking Standards – Residential Developments

TRN 34 Design and Land Take of Car Parks

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG17 Design Guide for New Development

SPG19 Sustainable Design, Construction & Pollution Control

Policy Planning Guidance

PPG23 Planning and Pollution

PPG24 Planning and Noise

UDP policies and supplementary planning guidance notes can be located on the Brent Council planning website: www.brent.gov.uk/planning, One-Stop-Shops and local libraries.

12.0 CONTACTS

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Disclaimer:

The information contained in this brief is, as far as the Council is aware, correct but developers should satisfy themselves about any information contained within it. The Council is not responsible for any loss etcetera arising from any error of information contained in this brief.

Potential purchasers and developers are advised to consult the relevant Council officers about their specific proposals before making any application for the

redevelopment of this site. The brief does not bind the Council to grant consent for any particular development on this site.