

# Appendix 1

## Refurbishment and Maintenance Specification

### Brent PRS Portfolio

#### Acquisition and Letting Criteria

For acquisitions these criteria are to be met or capable of being met. For lettings these criteria are to be met through refurbishment or other works in advance of being made available for letting.

#### 1 Location of Property

- 1.1 The property must be situated within Brent, North London, Herts., Bucks., or Beds or other areas as formally agreed by the Project Board.
- 1.2 Properties must be suitable for the use of households not owning a car i.e. should be served by adequate public transport, and be within walking distance of a shop selling basic groceries.

#### 2 Tenancy Status

- 2.1 Properties must not be acquired if this would directly cause an existing tenant to be evicted and made homeless in order to make the sale. If the property is already on sale on the basis of vacant possession and an existing tenant would be evicted anyway, then it must be established that any proceedings against the tenant are in accordance with proper legal process. Properties are not to be acquired subject to existing tenancies.

#### 3 Property Type

- 3.1 The property shall be freehold or leasehold and must be self-contained. If leaseholds have less than 75 years remaining on the term, then the lease must be extendable, and the cost of lease extension must be included. Any other title variations must comply with the Council of Mortgage lenders ("CML") requirements for the Bank.
- 3.2 Certain properties are not acceptable as set out below:
  - 3.2.1 freehold flats
  - 3.2.2 flying freehold unless suitable provisions are contained in the legal title and insurance is in place
  - 3.2.3 properties above shops/commercial premises only to be considered if they are:
    - 3.2.3.1 not directly above shops/restaurants that sell hot food
    - 3.2.3.2 not directly above drycleaners/Laundromats
    - 3.2.3.3 not directly above pubs
    - 3.2.3.4 not used for commercial activities between the hours of 8.00 pm and 6.00 am

3.2.4 properties located in close proximity to light industrial units if this is likely to have a significant adverse impact on occupants.

3.3 Where the property is a new build this must have NHBC/Zurich or similar cover and any builder performance guarantees available which comply with the CML requirements.

#### 4 **Property Standards**

4.1 Properties shall not contain any Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System as set out in the Housing Act 2004 and associated guidance or where they do contain such hazards it is practical to remedy such following acquisition. Where the Property is a flat, all flats in the building of which it is part shall also conform to the appropriate fire protection standard or be reasonably practical of being brought into conformity following acquisition.

#### 4.2 *Minimum Standards*

4.2.1 All properties (including any areas used in common by the occupier where the property forms part of a block or estate) must on the date they are brought into use by the London Borough of Brent:

4.2.1.1 be structurally stable

4.2.1.2 be free from serious disrepair

4.2.1.3 be free from dampness prejudicial to health

4.2.1.4 have adequate provision for lighting, heating and ventilation

4.2.1.5 have an adequate piped supply of wholesome water

4.2.1.6 have satisfactory facilities for the safe preparation and cooking of food including hot and cold water supplies to a sink

4.2.1.7 have a suitably located water closet for the exclusive use of the occupants

4.2.1.8 have a suitably located bath or shower and a wash hand basin each with satisfactory supplies of hot and cold water

4.2.1.9 have an effective system for the draining of foul, waste and surface water

4.2.1.10 have all necessary Consents for the Permitted Use

4.2.1.11 have been purchased with good legal title.

4.2.2 The electrical installation must comply with the requirements of the current edition of the "Requirements for Electrical Installations (BS 7671: 1992).

4.2.3 The gas installation(s) must comply with the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

4.2.4 Property construction - the property must be of a solid construction. It must be built in accordance with local planning requirements. Where the property contains asbestos, this must present no hazard.

4.2.5 Room decorations must be clean, complete and of a high standard.

#### 4.3 *Internal Property Space Requirements*

##### 4.3.1 Bedroom standard

4.3.1.1 Single bedroom - not less than 4.6m<sup>2</sup> (50ft<sup>2</sup>)

4.3.1.2 Double bedroom - not less than 10.2m<sup>2</sup> (110ft<sup>2</sup>)

4.3.2 Separate Living Room or combined living/dining room or combined kitchen/diner of a suitable size for the likely number of occupants.

#### 4.4 *Kitchens*

##### 4.4.1 General Standards

4.4.1.1 The layout and size of the kitchen must enable the safe and hygienic preparation of food.

4.4.1.2 Adequate food storage and work/preparation surfaces should be provided with a minimum number of units for the likely number of occupants.

4.4.1.3 Base and wall units must be modular and securely fixed, and in good working order. Kitchen units may be located in dining areas, provided the cumulative floor area is sufficient for such purpose.

4.4.1.4 Worktop surfaces must be a minimum 30mm thick with a rolled top edge faced with a material which is durable and easily cleaned. Edges, joins and corners must be faced with a suitable material to prevent injury and ensure durability. The worktop area for preparation of food must cover all the low kitchen units. Worktops and cupboards cannot be located directly over cookers or hob burners for fire safety reasons.

4.4.1.5 Functioning white goods shall be installed prior to letting i.e. as a minimum, a cooker, fridge/freezer and washing machine adequate for sustained use by the household renting the property.

##### 4.4.2 Wall Tiling

4.4.2.1 Splash backs of a suitable material to allow easy cleaning and availability, such as tiling, minimum height of 300mm, must be provided to all walls abutting the worktops and sink unit. Facing materials must be fixed with waterproof adhesive and finished with water-resistant grouting.

4.4.2.2 All worktop/sink abutments should be properly struck with an approved waterproof silicone sealant.

##### 4.4.3 Flooring

All kitchens must be provided with a durable and impervious floor covering which is also easily cleaned: e.g. properly fitted heavy gauge sheet vinyl, vinyl floor tiles or ceramic floor tiles.

#### 4.4.4 Electrical Power Supply

4.4.4.1 At least two unengaged double-switched sockets must be provided over the worktop area. Such sockets must be safely located at least one meter away from the taps of the sink unit or any other source of water.

4.4.4.2 An adequate number of low-level sockets must be provided for appliances such as the fridge and washing machine/dryer.

#### 4.4.5 Ventilation

4.4.5.1 Kitchens should preferably have windows that are capable of being opened and that provide at least one air change/hour.

4.4.5.2 Kitchens with no windows that open must be provided with a powered extractor fan capable of providing at least four air changes/hour. This unit must also be wired to the lighting circuit of the kitchen and be provided with an over-run of fifteen minutes.

4.4.5.3 Where physically practical, permanent ventilation should be provided to all habitable rooms in the form of air bricks or trickle vents.

#### 4.4.6 Doors

4.4.6.1 The kitchen represents the area of greatest fire risk. It should, at the very least, be fitted with a notional 30 minute self-closing fire resistant internal door for all one and two storey properties.

4.4.6.2 For three storey properties, all kitchens should be provided with 30-minute fire resistant internal doors with an approved self-closer and housed within an acceptable door frame with adequate stops.

4.4.6.3 Glazed panels above fire doors should be fitted with 6mm wired glass or other fire retardant material

#### 4.4.7 Location of Kitchens

4.4.7.1 No bedroom bathroom or WC should open directly into a kitchen or kitchen/diner.

4.4.7.2 The main entrance to the house/flat must not be through the kitchen.

4.4.7.3 No W/C should open directly into a kitchen.

### 4.5 *Bathroom and Water Closet Compartments*

4.5.1 Bathrooms should be preferably fully tiled or be provided with a minimum of 450 mm tiled splash back to the bath and wash hand basin. All abutments between the walls

and bath/wash hand basin to be sealed and properly struck with waterproof silicone sealant.

- 4.5.2 All grouting and sealants must be free of live mould growths.
- 4.5.3 The bath/shower tray/water closet pan must be sound, clean, free of hard water scale and in proper working order with easily operable taps and flush mechanisms.
- 4.5.4 All water supply and drainage pipe-work and joints must be water tight and accessible.
- 4.5.5 Bath panels should be capable of being removed but be securely fixed at all other times.
- 4.5.6 All internal bathrooms and water closet compartments with no external windows which are capable of being opened must have a ventilation rate of at least three air changes/hour.
- 4.5.7 If boilers are installed in bathrooms, they must be housed in protective enclosures and positioned so as not to interfere with the safe use of the bath or water closet. Except for the boiler thermostat, all other heating/hot water controlling switches, programmers etc should be located outside the bathroom.
- 4.5.8 Small bore waste macerators such as the "SANIFLOW" system are not generally acceptable.

#### 4.6 *Hall Landing & Fire Safety*

##### 4.6.1 General

- 4.6.1.1 For two storey properties, provide two mains powered (with battery back-up) and interlinked smoke alarms fixed to the ceilings of (a) the ground floor hallway and (b) the first floor landing.
- 4.6.1.2 For properties over two storeys, a proportionate number of mains powered (with battery back-up) and linked smoke alarms must be provided.
- 4.6.1.3 For single storey properties, a mains powered (with battery back-up) smoke alarm must be provided.
- 4.6.1.4 Houses of two storeys or more converted into flats should be fitted with a self-closing fire door to each flat entrance in addition to the above.

##### 4.6.2 Access

4.6.2.1 All entrance doors must have the following:

- (a) Letterbox
- (b) Door bell or entry phone
- (c) Yale (or similar) night latch
- (d) Chubb (or similar) deadlock

4.6.2.2 Any back door must have the following:

- (a) Morticed latched lock with thumb turn release
- (b) 150 mm tower bolt (top and bottom)

4.6.2.3 Door frames must be continuous and undamaged.

4.6.2.4 All doors must have secure hinges and operate freely and easily

4.6.2.5 All glass door panels up to a height of 1100mm must be provided with either safety glass or 6mm wire reinforced glass. Where a glass door comprises of several small panes, laminate safety film will be sufficient.

4.6.2.6 Patio doors and French door are not acceptable in bedrooms. Patio doors must have mortice latched locks and a deadbolt. French doors must have integral security deadbolts to the top and bottom of the door with either mortice locks or hinge bolts on each window leaf.

4.6.2.7 The Property must have an access which is safe and well lit. Any external stairs should be safe, well lit, having strong railings and be well constructed.

#### 4.6.3 Windows

4.6.3.1 All windows must be in good working order and reasonably free from decay. They must be in good decorative repair. The areas capable of being opened must equate to a minimum of 1/20 of the floor area of the room to provide natural ventilation.

4.6.3.2 The effective sill height of windows capable of being opened at first floor level and above must be at least 1100mm. If this is not the case, white backed wooden board will be secured against the window to a height of 1100mm with 100mm window restrictors added where physically possible.

4.6.3.3 Locks must be provided on all windows on the ground floor or lower ground floor.

4.6.3.4 Louvre windows are not acceptable.

#### 4.6.4 Stairways

4.6.4.1 All staircases must be provided with securely fixed handrails for their entire length unless enclosed by walls on both sides.

4.6.4.2 Balusters on the staircase or on landings should have a maximum spacing of 100 mm.

4.6.4.3 Staircase glazing is not acceptable.

4.6.4.4 Any uncarpeted stair treads must be fitted with non slip nosings or anti-slip treads.

4.6.4.5 Staircase risers must be infilled.

#### 4.6.5 Walls and ceilings

4.6.5.1 All walls and ceilings must be structurally sound and free of material cracking and unkeyed plaster. The surfaces must be even and all decorative surfaces must be in good order. Any incidental mould growth must be properly treated with an approved fungicide to kill the vegetative parts of the mould growths prior to final decoration.

4.6.5.2 Polystyrene ceiling tiles are not acceptable.

4.6.5.3 Any visible unprotected or damaged asbestos cement panels must be properly removed, double wrapped and be disposed of as special wastes and in accordance with the relevant legislation and Code of Practise. Further, enquiries must be made to the current owner/landlord/estate agent of the property to determine whether an asbestos register has been collated for the building. If the register indicates that asbestos is located within the structure of the building/unit this must be removed, double wrapped and disposed of in accordance with the relevant legislation and Code of Practise. It will not be necessary to undertake an asbestos register in the event that one has not already been commissioned.

#### 4.6.6 Floors

4.6.6.1 All floors should be level, even and free from trip hazard or dampness. All floor covering should be of reasonable quality and in good condition.

4.6.6.2 Any wooden floor covering must be hardboard or 4 mm plywood or laminated strips or similar.

4.6.6.3 Carpets and vinyl floor coverings must be properly fitted and secured without rucks or gaps. In relation to newly built properties, all vinyl must be laid directly onto 4mm plywood.

4.6.6.4 Threshold strips must be used when carpets run up to doorways, when there are changes in floor coverings and where levels change.

#### 4.6.7 Fireplaces

All gas fires must comply with the requirements of gas safety legislation. Safety grills must be provided. As an alternative, gas fires may be capped and covered.

#### 4.6.8 Carbon Monoxide Alarms

4.6.8.1 Where there is a gas fire a Carbon Monoxide alarm is to be provided.

4.6.8.2 Additionally, a Carbon Monoxide alarm must be fitted in any room that is used partly or wholly as living accommodation which also contains any appliance which burns, or is capable of burning, solid fuel. This would include log and coal burning stoves and open fires, even if they are not normally in use, and is advisable for gas and oil boilers. If an open fireplace is purely decorative and not useable then it is not covered

#### 4.6.9 Decoration

All surfaces must be clean with a smooth finish.

### 4.7 *External Property Requirements*

#### 4.7.1 Walls and Windows

4.7.1.1 External décor must be sound with repairs made to damaged windows and defective external joinery.

4.7.1.2 Parapet walls must be in good condition with copings, flashings and fillets to prevent penetrating dampness.

4.7.1.3 All brick work must be sound. Chimney stacks must be in good repair with chimney pots securely fixed.

#### 4.7.2 Roofs and Rainwater Goods

4.7.2.1 All slates or tiles, copings, render, aerials, or downpipes must be made safe. Rainwater pipes must be secure, continuous, free from leaks and should empty directly into an open or back inlet gully. Open gullies must be fitted with a shoe. Gutters must be fitted with adequate falls and be free of blockages.

4.7.2.2 External access roofs must be fitted with 1,000mm railings for access. Balconies and staircases must be in good structural condition and free of obstructions and other hazards. Thresholds to balconies must be made from Glass Reinforced Concrete (GRC) tiles or non-slip tiles.

#### 4.7.3 Outbuildings

4.7.3.1 Sheds, garages and outbuildings must be structurally sound, free of accumulation and secured against unauthorised access. All glazing below 1100mm to be replaced with either wooden boarding or safety glass.

4.7.3.2 Purpose built conservatories which are poorly constructed or unsafe must be demolished.

4.7.3.3 Greenhouses and lean-tos must be demolished and removed

#### 4.7.4 Gardens

4.7.4.1 Gardens must be free of debris. Ponds must be in-filled or covered with a suitable grill preventing accidental access. All patios, pathways or other concrete areas must be reasonably level and in reasonable repair. They should be the same level as the surrounding area.

4.7.4.2 Manhole covers must be easily removable for access. Gullies must be clear and fitted with gully grills with upstands to open gullies.

#### 4.7.5 Boundary Walls



4.7.5.1 Brick or stone pier, boundary and retaining walls must be sound, upright, stable and free from any major defects.

4.7.5.2 Hazards such as glazing or corrugated asbestos in-fill must be removed. Side access gates must be in good condition and fitted with a latching device and bolts at the top and bottom.

4.7.5.3 Boundaries to railway tracks must have secure fencing, minimum two metres in height.

#### 4.7.6 Refuse Disposal

Refuse/Recycling bins must be supplied per property complying with local collection arrangements.

### 4.8 Services

#### 4.8.1 Gas, Water and Electricity

4.8.1.1 All gas, electricity and water services must be separate and supplied individually. This includes isolation points with stop cocks located within each individual property. All gas and electricity services must be separate metered and clearly labelled. Any landlords supply must be separate.

4.8.1.2 If night storage heating is installed the circuit must be wired for Economy 7 or 9 usage and must be arranged for the installation of the correct meter.

4.8.1.3 Gas pipes that are not in use must be safely disconnected. Gas meters on escape routes, for example fire exits, stairs etc, that are below 2,100mm in height must be protected in fire resistant cupboards with vents and hinged doors.

4.8.1.4 Flue terminal guard must be provided in accordance with gas safety regulations.

4.8.1.5 Permanent vents must be provided in kitchens, toilets, bathrooms and other rooms which contain gas fires and boilers.

4.8.1.6 Where electrical works are required to the property in order to meet these Acquisition Criteria, then hard wired carbon monoxide alarms will be included within these works in all properties with a gas supply.

#### 4.8.2 Heating Systems

4.8.2.1 A space heating and hot water system must be provided. There must be an adequately sized radiator or night storage heater in every habitable room. The heating system must be either gas central heating (preferably) or electric night storage heating.

4.8.2.2 All bathrooms to be fitted with a wall mounted electric heater where no other heater is in situ. A fixed 2Kw blow fan heater is preferable to a night storage unit.

- 4.8.2.3 Electric cylinder immersions must be provided on all hot water and storage cylinders.
- 4.8.2.4 Conventional flue gas water heaters in bathrooms must have permanent ventilation to meet gas safety regulations.
- 4.8.2.5 All radiators and radiator pipework must be securely fixed to the walls. Radiator valves must be in full working order and fitted with caps.
- 4.8.2.6 All heating appliances which are not used must be isolated and their supply feeds disconnected.
- 4.8.2.7 All hot water cylinders must be fitted with insulation jackets. Tanks located in loft spaces must be properly insulated and all associated pipework lagged.

#### 4.8.3 Electrical

- 4.8.3.1 The property must comply with the NICEIC approved standard. A copy of a NICEIC (17th edition) periodic inspection report must be included in the Handover Pack.
- 4.8.3.2 Where applicable, landlord's electricity supply and meter for communal area and external lights should be provided. Lighting circuits in communal areas must be separate to those within the property.
- 4.8.3.3 All exposed or inadequately insulated electrical connections must be replaced or repaired to the above standard. Sheathed mains electrical supplies must be boxed-in if they are easily accessible to unauthorised persons.
- 4.8.3.4 All rooms should have the following minimum socket outlets:
  - (a) Bedroom - one double
  - (b) Lounge - two doubles
  - (c) Dining - one double
- 4.8.3.5 All rooms must have a lighting pendant or batten holder and must be provided with light shades and bulb points. Fluorescent strip lighting must not be installed in any room other than the kitchen.
- 4.8.3.6 Electricity meters and fuse boards below 1,000mm must be put in a fire resistant cupboard. Where the meters and fuse box are located within an understairs cupboard, however, this need not apply provided that the cupboard itself is made fire resistant.
- 4.8.3.7 External lights for deck access to flats, maisonettes or alleyways must be provided from street level to the front door. The lights must be bulkhead vandal resistant and connected to the landlord's supply.

#### 4.9 *Miscellaneous*

#### 4.9.1 Child Safety

Low windows should be boarded to 1100mm with 100mm window restrictors fitted where physically possible to prevent the risk of falls. Accessible balconies and roofs should be guarded, although consideration should be given to means of fire escape. Excessive gaps in balustrades should be closed off so that it is not possible to pass a sphere, 100mm in diameter, through any part of the structure.

### 5. **Energy Efficiency**

#### 5.1 Minimum EPC E rating.