



Executive
13th November 2006

**Report from the Director of
Environment and Culture**

For Action

Wards Affected:
Wembley Central

**Supplementary Planning Document for Wembley West End
(South) – approval for adoption**

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-06/07-017

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for adoption of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD12) for the Wembley West End (South) site (Appendix 1) and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report (Non-Technical Summary attached as Appendix 2) and Consultation Statement (Appendix 3).
- 1.2 The report sets out the aims and objectives of the SPD and explains fully the consultation process undertaken throughout the pre-production, production and statutory consultation periods.

2.0 Recommendations

- That the Council's Executive:
- 2.1 Adopt the Wembley West End (South) as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004; and
 - 2.2 Delegate any minor changes to the final draft to the Director of Environment and Culture

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Planning Committee on 16th November 2005 agreed to the production of a detailed draft SPD covering the Wembley West End development site as SPD and for initial pre-production consultation of the SPD with local traders, residents and other stakeholders.
- 3.2 Following positive initial pre-production meetings with businesses and residents in the area the SPD was agreed for consultation at Planning Committee on 15th March 2006.
- 3.3 The Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was prepared and a statutory consultation period of 6 weeks commenced on 21st August 2006 and ran until 29th September 2006.
- 3.4 The Sustainability Appraisal Report sets out the assessment of the SPD in line with the existing Sustainability Indicators established in the Unitary Development Plan 2004. The Sustainability Appraisal Report includes a comparison of the social, environmental and economic effects of three different development options; how social, environmental and economic issues were considered in choosing the preferred option; and any proposed mitigation measures.
- 3.5 The Consultation Statement (attached) sets out how the local authority has consulted on the preparation of the draft SPD and how it has consulted over the formal public participation process of the SPD.
- 3.6 The draft SPD, and SA Report have been prepared in line with the process illustrated in table 1 below. The Consultation Statement sets out this process in more detail.

Table 1. The Supplementary Planning Document Process



3.7 Pre-production Consultation

Your officers carried out consultation prior to the drawing up of the draft SPD to gauge the likely support for an SPD and to include any concerns from the local residents and businesses. Two meetings were held; one for businesses and freehold owners located within the proposed SPD site and one for local residents. While turnout was low (17 for businesses and 6 for residents) there was a small majority in favour of a comprehensive approach for businesses, and complete support from residents. There is a general frustration that this area has been in such a poor state for so long and support for detailed proposals to be brought forward.

Site Description & History

- 3.8 The SPD covers Curtis Lane car park, 493-529 High Road, 1-17 Ealing Road and 1 Station Grove, Wembley (collectively known as Wembley West End South). It also considers the pedestrian and vehicular links around and through the site. This is a corner site with the main frontages facing Wembley High Road and Ealing Road (to the north and east respectively) the other sides front onto Montrose Crescent to the south and Station Grove to the west. The site consists of an open air car park and a terrace of retail units with some other uses on upper floors along the boundary with the High Road and Ealing Road.
- 3.9 The car park and units (503-527) along the High Road were identified in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2004 as a Town Centre development site. However, it has become apparent that the area covered by UDP policy WEM28(b) does not provide the optimum developable site due to the proximity of the units on Ealing Road to any new development. The reasons for taking a comprehensive development approach are detailed in section 3.13.

Development of the SPD

Policy Context

- 3.10 In developing the SPD for this site, the Council's existing site specific policy (Policy WEM28 (b) sets the overall policy approach. Policy WEM28(b) seeks the promotion of the site for uses appropriate to a town centre such as retail or leisure. Housing will be acceptable where it is an element of a mixed-use scheme, and active frontages are provided at ground floor level where development links with the town centre.
- 3.11 In addition, the policy seeks development that retains shoppers' short-stay public car parking in accordance with an assessment of the need for such parking in the town centre and in the light of policies to

promote sustainable travel patterns. It also seeks the provision of improved pedestrian links from the site to the High Road and Central Square.

Issues to be Considered

3.12 In developing the SPD, the following issues had to be considered:

- (i) Pedestrian movement and traffic flows;
- (ii) Reduction in crime and fear of crime;
- (iii) Principles of sustainable development;
- (iv) Scale, height and massing;
- (v) Density and mix of uses;
- (vi) Public realm and landscape treatment;
- (vii) Parking, servicing & accessibility.

SPD Options

3.13 In considering development options, your officers have borne in mind the fact that despite including proposals in two UDPs and local plans before that, little beneficial development has taken place on the site and a number of buildings on the High Road have continued to decay. Your officers are therefore recommending that a comprehensive redevelopment of the site is the best option in order to bring about a transformation of this area of the High Road.

Comprehensive redevelopment means that the properties on Ealing Road frontage that are currently outside the Site Specific Policy WEM28 (b) would be included into the redevelopment area.

The benefits of a comprehensive site that incorporates the buildings on Ealing Road are:

- Any development must take in the corner site (of Ealing Road and High Road) in order to provide proper highway/junction improvements and improvements to the footways and bus stops
- A complete site is more likely to bring forward a viable development site, any development proposals would otherwise be set back and reduced in scale from Ealing Road (if such properties are kept)
- A comprehensive approach signals the Councils intention to make a step change in the quality and breadth of any proposals and their regenerative effects.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.14 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was carried out during the pre-production phase and throughout the development of the SPD to ensure that sustainability issues have been comprehensively considered in drawing up the document. A group of officers in environmental and other disciplines was involved in the pre-production process to assess the options discussed above. The group was independent of the Planning Service.
- 3.15 Following this meeting, a final Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the draft SPD. This accompanied the draft SPD for public consultation purposes and a Non-Technical Summary is attached. Members will be sent a full copy of the Sustainability Appraisal and it is also available to download on the Councils website.

Summary of SPD Contents

- 3.16 The main findings and recommendations of the SPD can be summarised as follows:
- **The Council's first priority is to support and promote a viable mixed use scheme to develop and stimulate the regeneration of the West End of Wembley Town Centre;**
 - **It is the view of the Council that the Wembley West End (South) site should be comprehensively redeveloped. This is the best way to ensure a viable scheme that enables the full regenerative benefits of development to be met;**
 - **There is significant potential to develop this area as a key 'gateway' to the town centre with strong links to the redevelopment of Central Square;**
 - **Exemplary standards of design will be expected to reflect the benchmark provided by the stadium. Only the highest quality architecture and urban design can achieve a distinctive development with a strong identity that can develop the town centre as an attractive and exciting destination for shopping, living, working and visiting;**
 - **There is a need to retain and enhance shoppers' short-stay public car parking and significantly improve the range and quality of shopping facilities so that Wembley can remain competitive as a shopping destination;**
 - **It is recommended that any proposals for development on this site should make provision for considerable improvements to the public realm, including the widening of footways on Wembley High Road/Ealing**

Road and junction improvements at High Road/Ealing Road;

- **The new development should provide for a range of shops and seek to build on the existing character of Ealing Road as a vibrant location for Asian jewellery shops & restaurants;**
- **Higher density development is appropriate on this site because there are excellent public transport links and it is necessary in order to provide a viable development;**
- **4 storey development is generally considered most appropriate fronting on to principle streets with extra storeys set back. This should allow for larger scale development without detriment to the townscape quality and appearance of the public realm. A taller built form is acceptable at the junction of Ealing Road/High Road as a means to create a focal point and gateway to the town centre. It is also acceptable to create higher scale development towards Station Grove, providing that proposals attempt to mitigate the potential negative impacts of a taller building through exemplary design standards.**
- **As a last resort and following evidence of attempts to negotiate with local businesses, the Council will be prepared to use its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to assemble a site for development.**

Compulsory Purchase Orders

3.17 In order to make significant regenerative change to this site, the Council should, in your Officers view, make it clear that it will use its Compulsory Purchase (CPO) powers in order to assemble a site for development. It is hoped that landowners and businesses will come together to form a joint venture to progress the development of the site or agree to fill properties to enable the development to proceed. However the Council should consider CPO as a last resort to achieve its redevelopment objectives. CPO powers will only be exercised where a development partner meets all the cost of acquisition and so indemnifies the Council.

Scale & Massing

3.18 The SPD sets out clear guidelines on the scale and massing of any proposed development. The SPD states that development will generally not exceed a building height of four storeys plus 2 storeys set back fronting on to the High Road and four storeys with a fifth storey

set back on Montrose Crescent and Ealing Road. In order to create a significant gateway to the town centre officers believe that it is acceptable to develop up to 9 storeys at the junction of Ealing Road and High Road assuming that such a building is reasonably well set back. Given the scale of the adjacent Lodge Court, officers also believe that it is acceptable to develop to a similar scale at this part of the site.

S.106 Requirements

3.19 Private Developers would be required to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the Council to provide the following:

- 50% Affordable housing (rented and shared ownership). A lower proportion may be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that this is not viable
- Transport improvements including enhancements to the basement car park and bus related improvements
- Provision of or contribution towards toilets
- Non-car access improvements
- Support of a City Car Club
- Travel Plan
- Town Centre car Parking as a priority
- Residential car parking or Car-free Agreement (As Appropriate)
- Inclusion of community facilities
- Open Space/public realm contribution
- Possible contribution to school places, depending on the number of family sized units and current school capacity
- Job training depending on employment balance sheet: e.g. contributions to job training;
- Public Art.

Public Consultation

3.20 Following the two initial pre-production meetings a presentation was made to the Wembley Area Consultative Forum A short questionnaire was produced to gauge public opinion on the development of the Wembley West End (South) site. There was a 28% response of residents and businesses on the night and the initial findings revealed:

- 96% of respondents support the development of the West End (South) site. Of these, a further 96% were in favour of complete redevelopment.
- There was no response against the redevelopment of this site. Those who were not directly in support were 'not sure' whether they supported development or not.
- 67% of respondents were in favour of improved car parking
- 62% supported the provision of wider pavements

- 96% were in favour of improving the junction of High Road/Ealing Road
- 67% thought that proposals should include improved street lighting
- 79% of respondents believed that development should include a greater range of shopping facilities

With regards to the preferred uses on this site, 25% of respondents believed that residential was appropriate; 70% were in favour of leisure uses; 92% supported retail uses and 62% were in favour of community uses. Other uses that were suggested include cultural – music and arts, educational and more public green space/open space.

- 3.21 During the period between March and June the document was slightly amended in terms of images and layout, but general content remained consistent. A brief article was included in the April edition of the Town Centre news letter 'Town News' explaining what the council was producing and the site area. The ward councillors for Wembley Central were given a brief presentation on the document on June 22nd at Brent House.
- 3.22 An update on the progress and content of the SPD was given at the Wembley Area Consultative Forum on July 19th.
- 3.23 In order to ensure wide and effective participation of the community a formal consultation period was undertaken for a 6 week period from Monday 21st of August until Friday 29th September. During this period the SPD and associated documents were made available at One Stop Shops at Brent House and Brent Town Hall and Ealing Road Library. The documents were also available to view and download from the Councils website. A daytime event was conducted at 485 High Road on Thursday 31st August in which presentation boards were available to view and over 1500 flyers advertising the evening event the following week were distributed. A public meeting was held on Thursday 7th of September at Ealing Road Methodist Church Hall, Ealing Road from 7.00pm. To advertise the consultation period and this event there was a notice in the Wembley Observer; letters were sent to businesses and residents in the surrounding area (shown in Appendix 3) and posters were erected in and around the site.
- 3.24 36 written responses were received from residents and businesses with an interest in the area, 15 of which were submitted as a joint response. The general concerns raised were:
- The relocation of existing businesses within any new development;
 - Proposed building heights too high;
 - The inclusion of toilets within any new development;
 - The impact of new residential units on traffic;
 - Retention and increase of parking;

- Improving the area in the short term;
- Possible inclusion of a bus station/interchange.

Formal responses to all of the written representations are included within the Consultation Statement (attached). Within this document it is made clear whether or not it was deemed appropriate to amend the document based on written representation and if so, what alteration has been made.

Responses from Transport for London and the Greater London Authority were generally supportive of the SPD, requiring only minor amendments to the document.

- 3.25 With regards to the **relocation of existing businesses** within any new development, Section 9 of the SPD was altered to include 'Any developer would be expected to demonstrate a willingness to work in partnership with local businesses'.
- 3.26 In response to the issue of **proposed building heights**, the scale of acceptable development on the corner of Ealing Road/High Road was reduced to 9 storeys. However your officers must stress that a quantum of development is required in order to make any scheme financially viable.
- 3.27 Section 19 of the document has been amended to include **Provision of or contribution towards toilets**.
- 3.28 **The impact of new residential units on traffic and retention or increasing of parking** are vital consideration for any potential development and the Council will require a detailed Traffic Assessment as part of any application. Section 17 of the document has also been amended to include the need for additional funds and transport infrastructure. The section on car parking has been clarified to ensure that any shoppers car parking is used for town centre car parking as a priority. Residential car parking can be incorporated into any scheme after this need has been met, subject to Transport Assessments. Car Free schemes may be considered as an alternative, if it is not viable to secure residential parking.
- 3.29 Your officers are currently investigating possible **improvements to the area in the short term** by carrying out an initial feasibility study into landscaping vacant sites adjacent to Station Grove steps and on Curtis Lane.
- 3.30 It is unlikely that a **bus station/transport interchange** can be viably included within this document. However significant improvements to the current transport situation will be essential requirements.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The SPD is designed to establish the framework for determining an application(s) for the site. The assessment of the planning application will be undertaken in the normal way with costs contained within existing budgets.
- 4.2 There are, however, wider implications arising from any possible development. The associated Section 106 Agreement will secure funding and benefits which will mitigate the impact of the development and contribute to the regeneration of Wembley Town Centre.
- 4.3 The costs of producing this document were contained within the Planning Service's existing budget, which has also met the cost of public consultation estimated to be approximately £5000. Significant savings have been achieved through the ability to produce colour printing of publicity material and documentation in house.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has changed the statutory basis for drawing up development plans in England and Wales. Unitary Development Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance will be replaced by a Local Development Framework. Since there are no provisions under the Act to produce SPG's the Council must now produce SPD.
- 5.2 Planning Policy Statement 12 'Local Development Frameworks' sets out the procedural policy and process of preparing Local Development Documents including Supplementary Planning Documents. The SPD has been prepared in accordance with the guidance contained within PPS12. PPS 12 requires a Sustainability Appraisal and a Consultation Statement to accompany a draft Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.
- 5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents are not subject to independent examination and will not form part of the statutory development plan. However they should be subjected to rigorous procedures for community involvement.
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents are not statutory documents in the same way as the UDP but are material considerations to be taken into account when determining individual planning applications.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 The Statement of Community Involvement identifies how the public are to be engaged in the preparation of SPDs in general. An inclusive approach has been undertaken throughout the consultation process to ensure that different groups have had the opportunity to participate. This includes holding events at different times of day, in different locations, locating posters in a variety of different community institutions and the availability of a translation service.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (If appropriate)

None

8.0 Environmental Implications

8.1 A Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken on the SPD. This accompanies the draft SPD and Consultation Statement.

Background Papers

Details of Documents:

- Planning Committee Report 16th November 2005
- Planning Committee Report 15th March 2006
- Wembley West End South SPD Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
- WWE (S) Sustainability Appraisal Full Report

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact

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Appendix 1

Wembley West End (South) Supplementary Planning Document

Appendix 2

Sustainability Appraisal Non-Technical Summary

Appendix 3

Consultation Statement & Summary of Responses