



Planning Committee

16 November 2011

Report from the Assistant Director, Planning & Development

Wards affected:
Barnhill, Welsh Harp, Tokyngton

Brent Town Hall – Planning Brief

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the Council's proposed Planning and Development Brief which provides more detailed guidance for the future and development of the Town hall and its site. This report explains the need for the brief and the principles that it requires of any new proposals for alteration and development of this important listed building and its curtilage. The site already has an adopted Site Specific Allocation (SSA W3) and the Planning Brief will provide more detailed specific guidance for future owners.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Planning Committee notes and is invited to comment on the attached Planning Brief and its contents and supports a subsequent consultation exercise with local residents, their associations, statutory bodies and other interested parties, prior to the brief being reported to the Executive for final approval and adoption.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 As members are aware the Council is due to relocate to the new Civic Centre in mid 2013, at which time the existing Town Hall on Forty Lane will be surplus to the Council's accommodation requirements.
- 3.2 For this reason the Council has identified the site in its Site Specific Allocation (SSA) Development Planning Document (DPD). The DPD forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). The Site Specific Allocation states that further development guidance will be produced; the attached brief satisfies that requirement of the allocation. The SSA W3 Allocation states:

“Mixed use development including offices, retail (for local needs only), residential, hotel and community facilities ensure the retention of the Listed Building. Any change of use and/or development should enhance and not

detract from the character and importance of the Town Hall, and have regard for existing traffic problems to surrounding residential areas and seek to improve these conditions”.

- 3.3 The Town Hall is a Grade II statutory listed building which places certain restrictions on the way in which the building can be altered and the type and level of development within its site. This makes the disposal of the Town hall a much more complicated exercise than would normally be required for unlisted buildings. (The Town Hall and associated site are illustrated in (Fig. 1) within the attached guidance document).
- 3.4 The Council is acutely aware of the past and indeed future significance of the Town Hall for the Borough and to help in securing a successful future use, the attached brief has been produced. The guide deals with many issues but principally it outlines the restrictions and the significant opportunities that the statutory listing represents. It outlines the Council expectations for any development scheme and having been consulted upon, the brief will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. Once formally adopted the guidance within the SPD will become the fundamental requirement of any successful planning application for future development.

Issues

- 3.5 The brief will ensure that the character of the Town Hall is preserved for the future through a new use or mix of uses that is sustainable and financially viable well into the future. The brief will require that the following issues are rigorously and sensitively considered by any new potential owners of the site.

The Town hall has a generous site with the opportunity for further development in the established landscape setting. Although opinions are split, the building has a strong architectural presence; it has large spaces and volumes internally and has a strong relationship with the new Wembley Regeneration Area being located within the boundary of the Wembley Area Action Plan. However, care will have to be taken in the reconfiguration and conversion of the site and the following principle issues are dealt with and expanded upon within the brief:

1. The Grade II Statutory listing will require a sensitive and informed approach to the development of the Town Hall and its site.
2. Any new uses proposed for the building and site will have to be sensitive to the requirements of the historic fabric, site accessibility and circulation and the needs of the buildings neighbours.
3. The part that Brent's community and the wider heritage lobby will play in the future of the building and the need to liaise and coordinate with other agencies including English Heritage.
4. All alteration and or interventions into the structure of the existing buildings will have to be of the most sensitive architectural designs and executed to the highest construction standards.
5. Any further development of new buildings within the site will have to be of the highest architectural standards.

6. Prospective purchasers or applicants will have to understand the implications of further site development on the site's neighbours. The Council has other guidance to assist with these issues including SPG17.

Timetable for Disposal and Consultation

3.6 It is envisaged that the consultation exercise will take 4 weeks and be initiated by the end of November 2011; dependent upon the responses the findings will be reported back in January to the Executive with a suitable recommendation. The sales exercise may be run in parallel with the brief being appended to sales information and brochures as draft guidance until formal adoption. The indicative but not exhaustive consultation list will include:

1. Local residents in the streets around the Town Hall
2. Barn Hill Residents Association
3. Tudor Close Residents Association
4. English Heritage
5. The 20th Century Society
6. Environment Agency
7. Transport for London
8. The GLA

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The preparation and production of the brief as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be met from existing Regeneration and Major Project's budgets.
- 4.2 The sale of the Town Hall is an essential part of the Council's future financial strategy and within the prevailing constraints of budgetary restrictions, its expedient sale will help to reduce management and maintenance costs as part of the move to the new Civic Centre. The Planning Brief will help to ensure an expedient and efficient sales process is carried out and that prospective purchasers fully understand the implications of the ownership of the Town Hall.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The adopted "Supplementary Planning Document" (SPD) will be supplementary to the "Site Specific Allocations" (SSA) "Development Plan Document" (DPD). The specific allocation SSA W3 (Appendix One) outlines the basic potential for the site at Brent Town Hall. The preparation of the LDF of which all these documents are a part, including the Wembley "Area Action Plan" (AAP), is governed by a statutory process set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. There are also associated Government planning guidance and regulations. Once adopted with the status of an SPD the Brent Town Hall Planning and Development Brief will become a principal

consideration in the decision making and scrutiny of any planning application for development on the site.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 Full statutory public consultation will be carried out in preparing the SPD and an Impact Needs / Requirement Assessment (INRA), which assessed the process of diversity and equality in the producing of planning design guidance was prepared and made available in 2008.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

7.1 The adopted SPD will be produced, consulted upon and reported to Committee by existing staff resources within Planning and Development.

8.0 Environmental Implications

8.1 The new Town Hall SPD will guide the sale and development of the site. However, further controls and requirements including the Wembley Area Action Plan will control impacts on the wider environment, including requiring measures to mitigate climate change. Sustainability appraisal will be undertaken through the life of any application and further supplementary guidance including SPG17 and SPG19 applied.

9.0 Background Papers

Wembley Area Action Plan
Brent Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (Allocation W3) See
Appendix A
Wembley Masterplan, June 2009

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Mark Smith, Planning & Development 020 8937 55267

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Appendix 1 – Site Specific Allocation W3 Brent Town Hall

W3. Brent Town Hall

Address: Forty Lane, Wembley, HA9

Ward: Barnhill

Area: 2.1 hectares. (0.5 hectares assumed developable area)

Description:

Grade II Listed Building performing administrative, political and ceremonial roles for Brent Council set within a predominantly suburban context. The site is within short distance to Wembley Park station and is afforded impressive views over the new Wembley Stadium development.



Map W3

Core Strategy policy context:

Core Policies 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 23

Planning guidance:

The Council intends to prepare guidance for this site.

Planning history: None relevant

Allocation:

Mixed use development including offices, retail (for local needs only), residential, hotel and community facilities ensuring the retention of the Listed Building. Any change of use and/or development should enhance and not detract from the character and importance of the Town Hall, and have regard for existing traffic problems to surrounding residential areas and seek to improve these conditions.

Indicative development capacity	78 units	78 units
Indicative development phasing	2015 - 16	2017 - 18

Flood risk comments:

A Flood Risk Assessment will be required as the site area is over 1ha. Flood zones are subject to change and modelling and re-modelling is carried out on a quarterly basis by the Environment Agency, therefore any assessment must ensure that the most up to date data is used as part of the Flood Risk Assessment.

Justification:

The building is reaching the limits of its use in terms of purpose and size and the Council is seeking a new Civic Centre within the Wembley Regeneration Area. The existing Grade II Listed building however remains an important visual, social and historic landmark in the borough. The outbuildings to the rear have been added over time and are not subject to the Listing. The sensitive redevelopment of these buildings and appropriate re-use of the main building can enable its continued use and secure its long term restoration.

Notes:

Because of the Listed Building Status, the entire site area has not been used to estimate the indicative development capacity. An assumption has been made regarding an area to the rear of the building, that could possibly be used for development in principle. A more detailed design and feasibility exercise is required to establish the true capacity of this site.

Appendix 2 – Brent Town Hall Planning and development Brief

Appendix 2 to this report has been produced separately and attached to the bundle for members only.