

# Lamorbey Planning Brief

*Adopted  
8th September 2007*





## Foreword

This Planning Brief is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which has been prepared to supplement the policies and proposals of the adopted Bexley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2004 and The London Plan (2004), which together form the development plan for the area. It sets out detailed guidance on the potential development of the Lamorbey Swimming Pool site and surrounding area.

The document has been prepared in line with the legislative requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated regulations and guidance on Supplementary Planning Documents.

A draft of this document was published for consultation purposes and responses were considered and taken into account in revising the Planning Brief before the final version of the document was adopted.

This document is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal. Both documents can be viewed on the Council's website.

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- 1.1** This Planning Brief has been produced to help to guide the redevelopment of the former Lamorbey swimming pool site and adjacent areas. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2004), the London Plan (2004) and the Council's new guidance documents including Design for Living, as listed in the attached bibliography.
- 1.2** A draft brief was subject to public consultation, the results of which were considered and revisions made prior to adoption of the Planning Brief.
- 1.3** The current swimming pool building is being replaced by a new pool and leisure centre nearby in Hurst Road, due to open in Spring 2008, at which time the current swimming pool will become surplus to requirements. The existing building is beyond economic use and therefore unsuitable for re-use. This Planning Brief therefore looks at redevelopment options. The primary aim is to seek a financially viable and sustainable mix of uses appropriate to this town centre location, contributing to the vitality of the area, whilst creating a development of high quality design which will contribute positively to the character of the area on this very prominent site.



## 2 | The site and its context

- 2.1 The current swimming pool was built around 1964 on the site of a former cinema. The frontage remains but the building behind is modern. The building lies on the west side of Station Road within the Sidcup Station neighbourhood shopping centre. It occupies a prominent position facing onto a wide pavement at the junction of Station Road and Hurst Road. The current building is not readily accessible as it presents a grand flight of steps up to the central doorway flanked by two small kiosk shops.
- 2.2 To each side of the site are three-storey flat-topped blocks dating from 1934, contemporary with the original cinema. These contain mostly food and drink outlets, some extending to upper floors and some with flats above. These are partly tile faced and partly rendered, and most have been heavily altered over the years.
- 2.3 To the south is a large mid-1930s three-storey terrace of shops with flats above. These are in a robust Queen Anne style, of uniform appearance, contributing significantly to the street scene.
- 2.4 To the north of the pool are various lower buildings dating from the 1950s, including a single-storey building recently converted to an Indian restaurant. The final building along this section of the road frontage is the 1930s Royal Mail Sorting / Delivery Office with a service yard alongside against the boundary of the houses within the Halfway Street Conservation Area.
- 2.5 To the rear is a public car park accessed from Old Farm Avenue via an access road curving round behind the swimming pool. The car park is hard surfaced and, where the rear gardens of houses abut it, there is dense mature tree cover. These trees are important to the setting of neighbouring houses and the conservation area.
- 2.6 To the north of the car park, and on the opposite side of Station Road across from the pool site, is the Halfway Street Conservation Area. Any development proposal therefore needs to be assessed in the context of its affect on the setting of that conservation area and the open area created around the Hurst Road junction, flanked by the former school/ church hall and the church.
- 2.7 The site is very accessible, with bus stops nearby served by three routes and the railway station and other bus routes within 200m.
- 2.8 This Planning Brief looks primarily at the potential redevelopment of the Lamorbey swimming pool site, which is in the Council's ownership. The brief could also apply equally to any future potential redevelopment of other adjacent sites on the frontage, either those flanking the pool or those to the north. These may come forward for comprehensive redevelopment in conjunction with the pool site or could be redeveloped subsequently.

### **Public car park**

- 2.9 The existing public car park, behind the site, provides 164 spaces of which six are disabled bays, and there are also some on-street short stay parking bays. This is the only public car park serving the Sidcup Station shopping centre. It is very well used, particularly during the daytime, and is sometimes full. It is used to a large extent for long term parking by commuters and local workers, and as such short-term availability of parking for people visiting local shops and businesses is sometimes limited. The times

## The site and its context 2

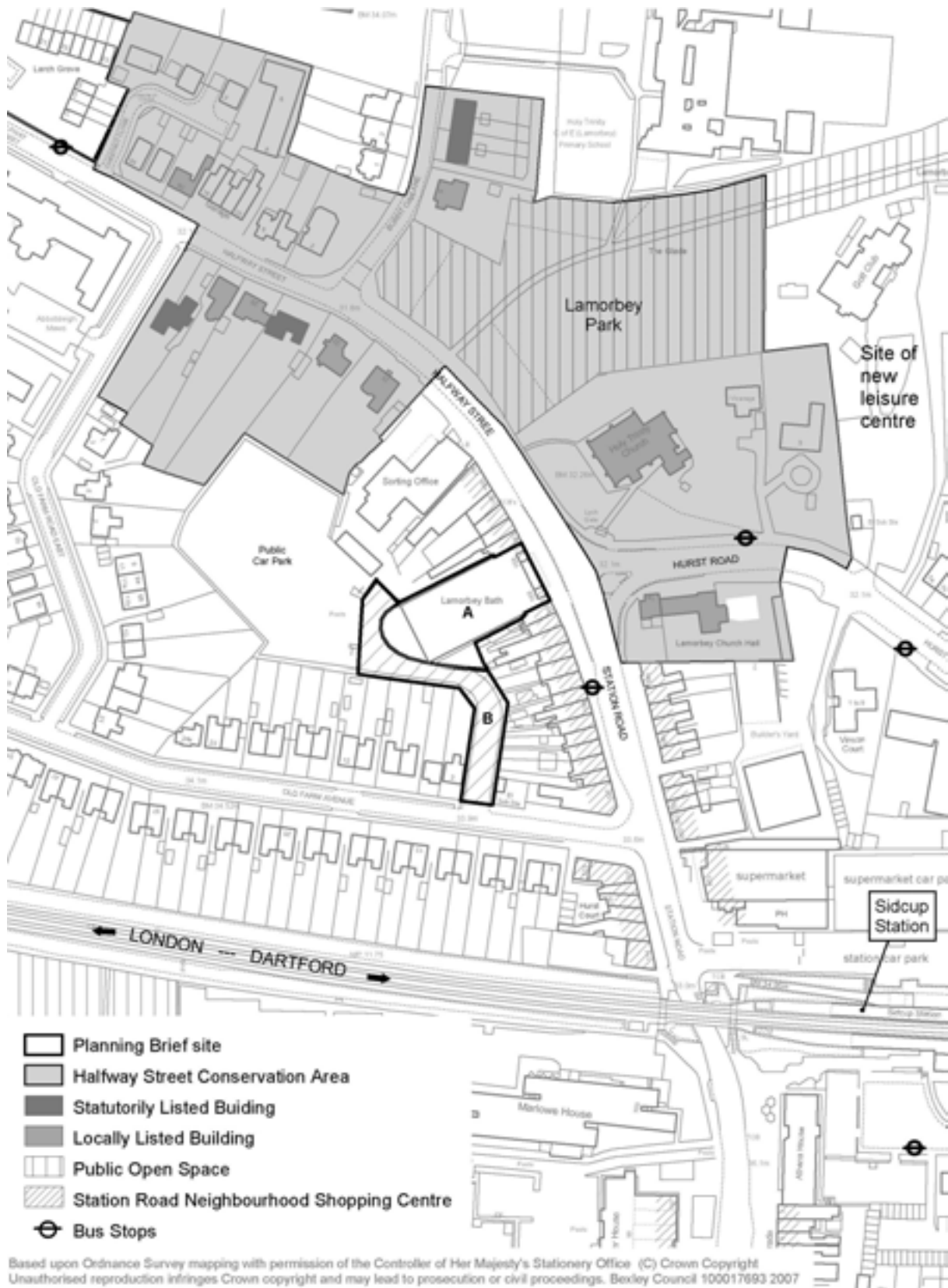
when there are no spaces available may deter casual visitors from using local shops and businesses, to the detriment of the viability of this shopping centre. Its use by customers using the swimming pool will decline when the new leisure centre in Hurst Road with its associated car parking, opens in 2008. In the evenings and at weekends it suffers from youth disorder problems, which can deter evening visits to the area. It would therefore be desirable to secure some increased security in order to meet Safer Car Parks design standards.

- 2.10** Pedestrian links from the car park to the shopping area are poor, requiring people to walk along the access road and along Old Farm Avenue to reach the shopping area. The opportunity should be taken in any redevelopment to provide a new attractive direct pedestrian link from the car park to Station Road.
- 2.11** The car park access road also provides rear servicing to the shops and flats to the south of the swimming pool. The route continues behind the swimming pool and premises to the north of the pool use the route for their rear servicing, including a newly opened undertaker's. That roadway is an adopted public highway.



## 2 The site and its context

### Context





Townscape analysis



- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Planning Brief site                                       | 3 storey or equivalent    |
| Halfway Street Conservation Area                          | 3 storey Queen Anne style |
| Important trees surrounding site                          | 2 storey                  |
| Traffic light controlled junction with pedestrian phasing | 1 storey                  |
| Strong building line                                      | High walls with windows   |
| Views from Hurst Road                                     |                           |
| Central point   |                           |

## 3 Opportunities and constraints

### Opportunities

- Large prominent site facing onto open area at a road junction
- Appropriate location to create a landmark building of quality design
- Redeveloping the frontage site provides an opportunity to create an attractive new pedestrian link from the car park to the shopping area
- Potential to secure a more comprehensive development if owners of adjacent sites wish to participate in the redevelopment

### Constraints

- Heavily used public car park to the rear of the site which needs to be retained and security enhanced if possible
- Need to work between existing buildings on the road frontage, in separate ownership, which are likely to remain
- Need to provide/retain rear service access to buildings on the Station Road frontage including right of way behind the swimming pool site to the buildings to the north
- Development has to respect the adjacent residential properties and avoid overlooking
- Faces a conservation area



## Acceptable uses 4

- 4.1** The context of this site within the shopping frontage of a neighbourhood shopping centre points towards a range of uses which may be acceptable in any redevelopment. At ground floor level, particularly facing Station Road and the pedestrian link, appropriate uses could include small retail units, community uses, health facilities (including medical or dental practices) ie the range of uses already found within this neighbourhood centre and in most shopping centres. Developers should also consider ways of including arts or cultural activities within the development.
- 4.2** Uses on the upper floors could include business uses and offices; Sidcup Station being a preferred office location, although vacancies in existing offices, and moves towards alternative uses, suggest that the office market is not robust. Uses mentioned above for the ground floor, such as health facilities, dentists, etc., could potentially also occupy parts of the upper levels if provided with lift access. The Council particularly encourages the use of upper floors in town centres for residential use, in order to help bring life back into town centres and provide natural surveillance. That use is therefore likely to be successful on the upper floors here.



## 5 Affordable housing

- 5.1** Residential development will have to make provision for affordable housing in line with Policy H14 of Bexley's Unitary Development Plan (2004), which seeks affordable housing as part of any development of 15 or more dwellings. Having regard to local circumstances, a target of at least 35% of units being affordable housing will be sought. The Council's current policy requires affordable housing to be provided on the basis of 70% social rented / 30% intermediate mix, in accordance with the London Plan and the Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Any application for affordable housing should comply with this mix or such other mix as maybe in force when the application is submitted. The affordable element must be fully integrated within the overall scheme in terms of spatial distribution, design and materials.
- 5.2** Affordable housing is expected to meet the identified needs for the Borough as reflected in the Housing Needs Survey. That survey identified the following mix of unit sizes:
- 8% one bedroom
  - 45% two bedroom
  - 30% three bedroom
  - 17% four bedroom
- 5.3** The rented affordable housing element should reflect this range of unit sizes, but for intermediate housing, a majority of two bedroom flats is preferred.
- 5.4** In addition, at least 10% of all affordable units must be developed to full wheelchair adapted standards as detailed in the LB Greenwich Wheelchair Homes Design Guide, as adopted by the South East London Housing Partnership.
- 5.5** The affordable housing will be required to comply with the Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards, reach Secured by Design Standards and be built to Lifetime Homes Standard. Whilst the Housing Corporation would require achievement of an Eco-Homes rating of 'very good', the Mayor of London has now set an expectation for all major developments in London to achieve the 'excellent' standard. However, these standards are being superceded and the Council's newly adopted Sustainable Design and Construction Guide sets an expectation that residential developments should meet the code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 standard and that will apply to all residential units within this development. The affordable housing should also comply with the Council's Affordable Housing SPD. This document also provides details of the financial and legal arrangements for securing affordable housing.

- 6.1** The Unitary Development Plan and the Council's new residential design guidance Design for Living set out maximum recommended densities for developments across different parts of the borough. As this is an accessible site within a shopping centre, close to bus stops and a railway station, Design for Living suggests that a higher range of densities than the overall UDP standards would be appropriate. On a site such as this, the appropriate scale of buildings is probably more important than achieving a specific numerical density, particularly when this will be a mixed use development where the residential element will represent only part of the overall scheme, rather than being a solely residential development.
- 6.2** On the road frontage the established building height is three-storeys, stepping down to the north to one/two-storeys closer to the conservation area. To fit in with this context, new development should be predominantly three-storeys on the Station Road frontage with a taller ground floor for shops, etc. The prominence of this site and its location opposite the Hurst Road junction creates an opportunity for a landmark building on the former swimming pool site. If a building is of exceptional quality of design, it might be appropriate for it to step up in the centre of the frontage to create a four-storey feature. Any future development alongside should follow the three-storey scale but then, to the north, should step down to respect the two-storey domestic scale of the adjacent residential properties in the conservation area.
- 6.3** Development on the rear part of the pool site should be of a scale no taller at the boundary than the existing building, so as not to adversely affect the outlook from and light to adjacent properties.
- 6.4** Potential developers are recommended to read the Council's residential design guidance in Design for Living.

## 7 Form of development

- 7.1** A key feature of the development will be the creation of an attractive new pedestrian link between the car park and Station Road. The Indicative proposals plan indicates some options for this link, but developers may wish to suggest other options. The link needs to be an accessible, level or gently sloping surface, wide enough to create an attractive and safe pedestrian environment, and preferably open or with high head room to avoid becoming oppressive. It should be lined on either one or both sides with small units, for retail or similar town centre uses, to create vitality and interest. If one side is blank, that wall should be artistically detailed to create interest. It should be well lit and units should not be shuttered at night, in order to create an attractive link route at all times. The link can be bridged over at the front so as to create a continuous frontage to Station Road. Further back the opportunity should be taken to create upper floor flats overlooking the pedestrian link to provide natural surveillance. Depending on the position of the pedestrian link, these flats could either line both sides of the link, taking care to avoid overlooking, or occupy just the north side so as to enjoy a southerly aspect. The design should take account of noise generated by Station Road and the car park, and a noise study will therefore be required as part of any application, to help minimise any effect of noise on the development.
- 7.2** It is expected that the development will include CCTV coverage of the pedestrian link route, linked to the Council's central control room. The developer will provide the equipment, including that needed to create the increased capacity in the control room, and contribute a commuted sum towards the costs of ongoing monitoring and maintenance.
- 7.3** The scale of buildings has been mentioned above. In view of the prominence of this site, high quality design is essential. The new building will need to relate sympathetically to the remaining buildings on the Station road frontage. Scale is important, and relating parapet and window levels to those on adjacent buildings will help to reinforce the new development as part of the established street scene.
- 7.4** The design at ground level should help to guide people into the new pedestrian link. Features may include a canopy as on the existing building. Materials along this section of Station Road include brick, faience tiles, and render, indicating that there is no predominant material that needs to be picked up in the new development. Opportunities could be taken to incorporate historic details from the local context, or the site's earlier history as a cinema, reinterpreted in a contemporary way. Developers should also incorporate public art into the design.
- 7.5** Imaginative design for the new development on the swimming pool site is essential, and should help to set the precedent for any future developments on adjacent sites.
- 7.6** Being within a town-centre location, the provision of adequate usable amenity space for residents on the site will create a challenge. This could include some terraces at upper levels and large, usable balconies. (See advice on the provision of useable amenity space in Design for Living). The site is close to three parks, one of which contains an equipped children's play ground, so the provision of on-site equipped play space would not be necessary. The Council will look for a contribution from the developer towards off-site play space provision, to fund improvements in nearby parks.

Indicative proposals



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## 8 Access and parking

- 8.1** The main service access road off Old Farm Avenue will remain as the vehicular access to service the car park and the new development. The removal of much of the pedestrian traffic from this route, through a new pedestrian link, should help to improve safety on this access.
- 8.2** The access road currently provides service access to the rear of the shops and flats fronting Station Road to the south of the swimming pool, and loops behind the pool providing access to the properties between the swimming pool and the Sorting/Delivery Office. This route is designated as a public highway, so any proposals involving development over any part of that route or its realignment may necessitate a highway stopping up order.
- 8.3** It is recommended that, as part of a comprehensive overview of the development of this area, access arrangements to service all these properties be planned in with any redevelopment. This will allow access arrangements to be regularised and properly planned, including the relationship between the service road, the new buildings and the new pedestrian link route. The service road will need a lorry turning head at the end to enable vehicles to leave by the same route. However, should more comprehensive development take place involving adjacent privately owned land, or should the Sorting/Delivery Office site be redeveloped in the future, an opportunity could be taken to create a link from the service road into Halfway Street via the Sorting /Delivery Office's current access, so as to allow a one-way vehicle flow for service vehicles on the service road and avoid the need for a lorry turning area.
- 8.4** As there is a public car park to the rear of this site, which currently provides for the parking needs of the swimming pool, it would appear appropriate that all parking for the new development should be integrated with the layout of the overall scheme, rather than attempt to accommodate separate parking within the frontage site. Any development seeking on-site car parking should accommodate it at basement level so as not to detract from useable ground floor space.
- 8.5** Car parking for the new development would be expected to be calculated within a Transport Assessment and, whilst parking should be broadly in accordance with the standards published in the Unitary Development Plan (2004) (Annex 1 to Chapter 8), the level of parking should be justified using cumulative figures for the different uses and users throughout the day. For residential units, in such a town centre location, the standards are 1 space for units of one/two habitable rooms, 1.5 spaces for units of three/ four habitable rooms, and 2 spaces for larger units. These are maximum figures. A Transport Assessment will be required to show how the travel needs of the users of the development will be met. Any proposals that rely on street parking availability will be resisted. Provision should also be made for secure cycle parking for residents and casual cycle parking for visitors. The developer should also make provision for an appropriate amount of parking for motorcycles.
- 8.6** The developer will need to take into account any potential impact on public car parking and service access during the construction phase of the development.
- 8.7** As well as considering pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links to and through the site, the developer should also consider improvements to pedestrian and cycle movements to and from Sidcup Station and pedestrian movements to and from the main bus stops in the area. Such movements may be affected by increased traffic flows by various modes



## Access and parking | 8

resulting from the development. Improvements to the current crossing facilities at the Old Farm Avenue/ Station Road junction, across Station Road itself and Station Road North/ Station Road junction should be considered.

## 9 Sustainability

- 9.1** The Council is committed to achieving sustainable development. It is the Council's expectation that any development of this site should:
- (a) adopt forms of design, layout, orientation and construction that minimise adverse impacts on the environment and protect and enhance biodiversity;
  - (b) enhance the quality of life for everyone in the area now and in the future;
  - (c) be designed and constructed to minimise running costs and create a high quality living or working environment; and
  - (d) ensure the design of the development is sustainable and incorporates environmentally friendly techniques and materials.
- 9.2** Sustainability is an important consideration which needs to be addressed in major new developments such as this site. This must have regard to a wide range of issues including construction, transport, local materials, biodiversity, social, environmental and economic impacts. Developers should also address the issues of location and orientation relating to solar gain, energy use and efficiency, alternative power sources, water conservation, pollution, waste minimisation, construction materials from renewable, sustainable and local sources, landscape and ecology, accessibility, personal safety, etc.
- 9.3** The development will be expected to include a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme, subject to the land being clear of any contaminants. Developers should consider the risks associated with surface water run-off from buildings and hard surfaces, and include measures to minimise such risks. Consideration should be given to including rainwater harvesting and a grey water recycling system within the development.
- 9.4** Developers should take note of the guidance set out in the London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2006) and the Bexley Sustainable Design and Construction Guide (2007). This Planning Brief is also subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
- 9.5** All buildings will be expected to meet the Code for sustainable Homes Level 3 for residential development and BREEAM very good standard for non-residential development and should also meet the current target of achieving at least 10% renewable energy. It should be noted that a revised target of 20% renewable energy is included in the draft amendments to the London Plan. Once that revised standard is adopted, any new development will be expected to achieve it.
- 9.6** The residential units within the development will be expected to meet Lifetime Homes standards, so as to ensure future usability and adaptability.
- 9.7** Applications for planning permission must now be accompanied by Design and Access Statements, and for this site the issues outlined above should be addressed in that supporting document. For further guidance on other documents which will need to accompany any planning application, see Smarter Developments – Working Together on Major Planning Applications (2004).
- 9.8** Local Sourcing of Labour - The Council is keen to encourage sustainable travel patterns and ensure that the redevelopment of this site brings economic and employment benefits for local people. To this end, developers will be asked to agree that any jobs created

during the construction phase of the development and as a result of subsequent maintenance of the development, are notified to the Council's "Resources Plus" local labour scheme, with a view to recruiting locally where possible. A financial contribution will be sought towards the scheme's costs of local recruitment and training. The eventual site users and any developers on adjacent sites will also be encouraged to participate in the scheme where new jobs are to be created.

## 10 Other considerations

### Trees and landscaping

- 10.1** There are no trees or landscaping on the swimming pool site as it is mainly covered by buildings. Consideration should be given to including green roofs or planted terraces, together with some planting on the pedestrian link, to improve the ecological contribution of the site.
- 10.2** The broad pavement area in front of the site provides significant opportunity for landscape improvement within the public realm to enhance the setting of the new building. Landscape works will need to take account of the existing service runs below the pavement and, as at present, it may be necessary to use movable planters for trees and shrubs. The layout should reflect the pedestrian routes to the new link route and to the road crossing points, as well as the existing pedestrian flows past the site.
- 10.3** A landscape strategy will be required as an integral part of any proposal for the site.

### Designing out crime

- 10.4** Within the development, the layout must clearly define public and private areas. It is essential that the development creates active frontages and windows facing onto public areas to encourage natural surveillance and improve security. Care is needed to avoid creating hidden corners or left-over areas without any defined purpose. Further advice on designing out crime can be found in section 7 above. The development should be designed to achieve Secured by Design standards.
- 10.5** It is expected that a CCTV system will be installed to cover the pedestrian link as part of this development, with the development providing a commuted sum to cover future monitoring and maintenance (see section 7 above).
- 10.6** Developers are recommended to contact the local police Crime Prevention Design Officer for further advice on designing out crime.

### Refuse and recycling collection

- 10.7** Bexley sets high standards for door-to-door collection of waste for recycling. Therefore, besides the normal requirements for refuse collection, the development should make provision within units to allow occupants to segregate their waste into refuse and recyclables and store it temporarily before it can be transferred to external bins. Appropriately located communal areas should be provided to house bins for recycling and composting as well as refuse, easily accessible to collection vehicles.
- 10.8** Consideration should also be given to providing a modern and accessible public mini recycling centre, should space be available.

### Archaeology

- 10.9** The site does not fall within a defined Area of Archaeological Search but does occupy the site of a known former farm complex on the edge of the Halfway Street hamlet. Later buildings on the frontage to Station Road are likely to have destroyed most archaeological remains in that area, but the access road and rear yards do not appear to have been

built on. Some evidence may therefore remain below those areas, and an archaeological watching brief would appear appropriate during ground reduction and excavation works. A specification for such monitoring should be submitted with any planning application.

### **Services and utilities**

- 10.10** The developer will be expected to ensure that all the proposed uses have satisfactory connections to all utilities in accordance with existing regulations. The developer will need to ascertain from the utilities companies whether there is adequate capacity for the particular development proposed, or whether a contribution will be required to upgrade the system. It is also recommended that a cable-based TV system be installed within flats to avoid any future proliferation of external satellite dish aerials.

### **Demolition and construction**

- 10.11** The swimming pool site is flanked by commercial premises, some with flats above, whilst to the rear, this site backs on to a service road and busy public car park. Therefore, there is a risk of disruption to residents, local businesses and users of the town centre during the demolition and construction phases of the development. Potential impacts will need to be addressed through a demolition and construction methodology statement, indicating how the amenity of nearby residents and users will be safeguarded, particularly with regard to dust and noise. It should also address the recycling of demolition and construction waste.
- 10.12** As this is a prominent site, the construction methodology will need to include details of site enclosure fencing and hoardings, which should be attractively designed and resistant to vandalism, graffiti and fly posting.
- 10.13** The demolition and construction methodology should also take into account the results of soil testing and materials within the building, in order to safely dispose of any contaminants identified.

## Bibliography

Developers should take account of the policies and guidance set out in the following publications as referred to in this Planning Brief:

Bexley's Unitary Development Plan (2004)

The London Plan (2004)

Design for Living, Bexley's Residential Design Guide - Supplementary Planning Document (2006)

Affordable Housing - Supplementary Planning Document (2006)

LB Greenwich Wheelchair Homes Design Guide

Sustainable Design and Construction - The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance (2006)

Smarter Developments – Working Together on Major Planning Applications (2004)



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