Planning Brief

Western Rd / Miles Road
Development Site

(Former Mitcham Gas Depot)
Western Rd / Miles Road
Mitcham
CR4

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If you would like more information in your own language, please contact us at the address shown in the box below.

For further information:
Telephone: 020 8545 3003
Email: paul.mcgarry@merton.gov.uk

Information is also available in large print, in Braille and on tape.
PLANNING BRIEF FOR WESTERN ROAD / MILES ROAD DEVELOPMENT SITE, MITCHAM.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Policy Statement No.12 “Local Development Frameworks” (ODPM, October 2004), acknowledges the valuable role Supplementary Planning Documents can perform in support of development plan policies / proposals. The purpose of this brief is to provide guidance to landowners, the Council and prospective developers on planning and transportation matters which should be taken into account when considering the redevelopment of the site. It has been revised following public consultation and is recommended to the Council for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document to Merton’s emerging Local Development Framework.

Background

1.2 The majority of the site is being considered for disposal for a phased redevelopment scheme over the next few years. It represents the biggest redevelopment opportunity in Mitcham Urban Village (MUV) and is close to the MUV Centre. Part of the site on the corner of Western Rd./ Portland Rd and will be retained as a gas distribution depot and AA Computer Centre, occupied with B1 office space. However, a substantial part of the site is vacant. The most westerly part is accessible from Miles Rd. and is under-used as B1 factory space, currently subject to redevelopment for mixed - use development (see para.1.5 below).

The Council has commissioned consultants Space Syntax to develop an urban design framework for Mitcham Town Centre. This site is on the western boundary of the Mitcham Urban Design Brief study area. Reference should be made to the design brief to provide a context for the development of the former gas works site, particularly to the long-term development strategy proposed in the brief.

Site Location and Description.

1.3 The site is located between Western Rd. and Miles Rd, Portland Rd., Seaton Rd., and Field Gate Lane and is 300 metres from Mitcham Fair Green. The site is situated mostly in Lavender Fields Ward with its most westerly part in Cricket Green Ward. It is irregularly shaped, flat and extends to approximately 6 ha. The site has its main frontage on Western Rd. and Public Rights of Way nos.168, 169, 172, 173 lead to it from the west and south. The site is mostly occupied by offices, buildings and structures necessary for its operation as a gas depot with associated pipework, including a tall telecommunications mast and a gas holder which is a
locally listed building. It has been estimated that approximately 300 jobs are located in or based at this site. Part of the site (1.2 ha) is vacant land. Surrounding land uses are: housing, employment and a local park. Although the site does not appear in the Council’s Register of Contaminated Land (Environment Act 1995), the site or a substantial part of it is understood to have been used for potentially contaminative purposes and includes a gas pressure valve.

**UDP Designations and Planning Status.**

1.4 The lawful uses of the site in terms of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 (as a gas depot with office accommodation) are sui generis and B1. The majority of the site is designated as Site Proposal 71P in the Unitary Development Plan (2003) for mixed uses: B1, housing, open space, live / work development and community purposes.

1.5 The site has a complex recent planning history. A revised planning application for proposed mixed use development on the Miles Rd factory site was turned down by the Planning Applications and Licensing Committee in December 2003, following the refusal in September of a similar proposal on urban design and loss of employment floorspace grounds but subsequently granted in March 2004. In the last few years planning permission was granted subject to conditions for the erection of a single storey extension to offices for additional accommodation, new compound, boundary treatment and landscaping works. A continuation of a Hazardous Substance consent was granted for the site on 05/01/01 (ref.no.00/P1599).

**Objective**

1.6 The site is a “brownfield” site and represents the largest and most important redevelopment opportunity in Mitcham Urban Village which can contribute substantially to meeting local needs for employment, open space and housing, including affordable housing and community facilities. Accordingly, the key developmental objective for this site is:

- To create a high quality, higher density, mixed use scheme developed according to the principles of sustainable development where at least 50% of the land area of the site comprises non-residential development.

**2. COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS**

- The Council will require an illustrative master plan for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site to be prepared as an exemplar sustainable development scheme comprising business, housing, live / work development and community facilities reflecting the development principles for Mitcham Urban Village and indicating how such redevelopment will be phased.

- A combined heat and power system should be incorporated as an integral part of any redevelopment proposals.
• The principal vehicular accesses to the site will be from Western Rd./Miles Rd. with a 3 metre strip reserved along the Western Rd. frontage for highway widening purposes.

• All car parking generated by redevelopment will be accommodated on-site. Secured cycle parking should also be provided with a 4metre fully segregated pedestrian/cycle route linking Miles Rd with Western Rd immediately south of the site.

• The needs of mobility-impaired people will be met in full.

• There shall be no vehicular through route between Miles Rd. and Western Rd.

• At least 30% of residential development will be provided as affordable housing.

• S106 contributions as set out in paragraph 8.2 below.

3. COUNCIL ASPIRATIONS

• To encourage the redevelopment of the site for balanced, mixed uses making a significant contribution to the regeneration of Mitcham as an Urban Village.

• To promote a redevelopment scheme which reflects a high standard of urban design and which is well integrated with its surroundings.

• To incorporate a local recycling site on part of the site currently reserved as the Transco depot and occupied by the gas holder as / when it becomes available for redevelopment.

4. PROPOSALS
(See attached Plan No. PMcGi\WesternRd_MilesRd).

Mixed Uses

4.1 The following areas are gross and exclude roads / footpaths / cycle paths / verges. It is proposed that the site be redeveloped for a mix of uses: Housing and Community uses (approximately 1.7ha) Business / Gas Depot B1 (approx.1.7ha), Local Park incorporating a nature conservation area (approximately 0.7ha) and Live / Work development (approximately 0.5ha) incorporating a local recycling facility. The gas holder site, its exclusion zone and the Centrica office and Transco operational land have been retained. In the event they are declared surplus to operational requirements the site could be redeveloped for business, live / work development, possibly incorporating a public recycling site and public open space. Alternatively, this area of the site could be developed for more community facilities and could be made suitable for the development of a local care centre (hospital).
It is likely that any contamination arising from its present use and the cost of any decontamination required would render the site less suitable for residential development. The local park proposal is an extension of the Miles Road park.

4.2 The high stone wall on Portland Road and the concrete wall on Fieldgate Lane are major obstacles to north–south movement and accordingly should be removed in the interests of making the site more permeable. Western Road in the vicinity of this site would be an appropriate location for the development of a gateway feature signifying "Mitcham Urban Village."

Access

4.3 It is proposed that vehicular access to the retained, operational gas holder and associated equipment, business and proposed live/work development sites be taken from a new all-movement junction on Western Road. It is proposed that secondary vehicular access to the gas holder site and the principal access to the housing/community use site be taken from Portland Road. Pedestrian/cycle access to the site is available from the network of roads, footpaths/public rights of way surrounding it. In particular, new shared use pedestrian/cycle access arrangements should be formed to the local park extension from Seaton Road/Miles Road/Fieldgate Lane/Fox’s Path and the path between the Miles Road factory site and the proposed housing/community use site. Pedestrian/Cycle routes should permeate the site providing direct connections across it in north-south and east-west directions to surrounding areas.

Residential Density

4.4 The sites proposed for residential development are located within 800 metres of Mitcham Urban Village Centre (a public transport interchange) with a public transport accessibility index of 3 and as such could sustain higher density development of between 200 - 300 habitable rooms per hectare producing approximately 190 - 270 dwelling units. (UDP schedule 6a refers)

5. URBAN DESIGN

5.1 Urban design objectives for the creation of successful streets, spaces, towns and villages are defined by Government in its report, produced by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, entitled “By Design” (DETR, 2000) as:

- **Character:** a place with its own identity.
- **Continuity and Enclosure:** a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguishable.
- **Quality of the Public Realm:** a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.
- **Ease of Movement:** a place that is easy to get to and move through.
- **Legibility:** a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand.
- **Adaptability:** a place that can change easily.
- **Diversity:** a place with variety and choice.
Principles

5.2 In promoting the regeneration of this key site a comprehensive master plan for the site should be produced following these principles:

- **Create a Better Place to Live** - streets should be safe, attractive and easy to use for pedestrians and shoppers, buildings and public spaces should be designed to enhance the area’s overall attractiveness and a range of community facilities provided.
- **Promote Social Diversity** - a more balanced housing stock, including the provision of affordable housing, will contribute to the creation of a more sustainable, vital and viable community.
- **Mixed Uses** – to reinforce the existing socio-economic base of the area by encouraging the development of a range of new residential, business, community and open space uses.
- **Priority to Sustainable Transport** – to encourage the development of safe and efficient transport infrastructure giving priority to movement by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and to reduce the reliance on and provision for private cars.
- **Open Up Public Spaces** – public open spaces should be remodelled to provide a more attractively landscaped setting for the buildings around them.
- **Buildings should make a Positive Contribution to the Environment** – by respecting the existing street pattern or by defining new public spaces. Refurbishments and new buildings (generally three to six storeys high) should make a positive contribution to the public realm and be adaptable in mixed use formats to changing economic circumstances.

6. **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

(UDP 2003 policies PE13, PE3, PE5, PE7 refer)

6.1 In addition to the above aspects of sustainability relating to land use proposals, traffic and the reuse of brownfield land, developers will be encouraged to include the following sustainability features in development proposals:

- All dwellings to be built to the BRE eco-homes standard (good), for which accreditation will be required, providing a low level of carbon dioxide emissions and a redevelopment scheme should include a combined heat and power system.
- Buildings should be orientated (in a southerly direction as far as possible) to maximise passive solar gain.
- New development should incorporate renewable energy infrastructure e.g. photovoltaic panels
- Building material to be recycled as far as possible and any timber used in new development should be derived from renewable sources.
- The Council will require that site planning should enable convenient access for service vehicles transporting recycled material to be achieved.
The Council will require that external lighting minimise light pollution while providing adequate illumination to help reduce the fear of crime and enhance the sense of security of a place. The Council will require flatted residential development to be provided with secure bicycle storage facilities. The Council will require the feasibility of incorporating sustainable drainage systems into a design, to facilitate the absorption of water into the ground, be investigated. The Council will encourage new dwellings be designed to
- Facilitate home working by providing adequate space capable of dedication for work purposes and suitable telecommunications infrastructure.

Further information is available in the SPG on Sustainable Development (October 2001).

7. POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 The planning framework for the site is based on the policies and proposals contained in the Council’s UDP (2003) and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes.

**Mitcham Urban Village** (Policies U1-U5)

7.2 The Council’s policies for Mitcham Urban Village seek to encourage a mixed use and a higher (residential) density pattern of sustainable development in an area defined approximately 600 - 800 metres from Mitcham Fair Green. The provision of local employment, retail and community support facilities supported by good pedestrian / cycle connections and public transport services, reducing the reliance on private car travel, are important features of an urban village. High quality design in the built environment is also sought (see section 3 above).

7.3 The Council’s SPG on Mitcham Urban Village (January 2003) advises that this site is located in the Mitcham Employment Centre and is appropriate for mixed used development while retaining its employment - generating capacity. The SPG recognises that this area offers the best opportunity for creating an exemplar urban village development scheme comprising higher density mixed use development designed to high standards.

**Mitcham Urban Design SPD** (Draft)

7.4 The Council are currently in the process of preparing an Urban Design SPD for Mitcham Town Centre, which will draw upon the Urban Design Brief prepared for the Council by Space Syntax. It will be adopted as a supplementary planning document to Merton’s emerging Local Development Framework late 2005.
Housing Policies (Policies HP1, HP2, HN3, HN5, HS1, HS2, HS4)

7.5 Any application for housing development will require proposals to take into account the scale and character of the adjacent properties and proposed commitments. A mix of dwelling types / sizes and tenures is sought. The Council intends that 100% of all new dwellings should be built to “Lifetime Standards” to incorporate a sustainable approach for the Borough in meeting its general mobility needs. Minimum amenity space and gardens are required in a redevelopment scheme (10sq.m. per habitable room for flats). Further guidance is listed in the Council’s SPG “New Residential Development” (September 1999).

Affordable Housing (Policies HN1, HN2)

7.5 There is clear evidence that a large proportion of the Borough’s residents are unable to gain access into the private residential market or secure good quality rented accommodation. On sites which can accommodate 15 or more units the Council will require proposals for the provision of affordable housing and will seek to enter into agreements with developers so that an average of 30% of the new units can be made available to be retained as permanent affordable housing.

Employment Policies (Policies E1, E4, E5, E10, E13, E14, MU4)

7.6 The Council is keen to encourage development proposals which create employment opportunities in the light industrial or studio and laboratory sectors and which can be located on the smaller employment sites outside the designated industrial areas. UDP policies support the protection of employment land and potential employment and against loss to other higher value uses such as residential and retail warehouses, and seek to assist manufacturing businesses to compete for land and floorspace.

7.7 Policy also seeks to secure environmental improvements from employment development such as requiring sustainable access and high quality design and layout of new development. The Council will also favourably consider proposals for the development of live / work units outside core shopping frontages in appropriate locations in accordance with the provisions in the Council’s approved SPG on Live / Work Development (April 2004).

Built Environment (Policies BE3, BE22, BE23, BE28, BE31, BE33)

7.8 New Developments on the site should seek to improve the quality and character of the built environment. New development should be of a high standard of design and relate well to neighbouring development. Attention should be given to the height and design of proposed developments. Consideration of sustainable development (e.g. BE28, energy efficiency) and user-friendly building design should be given particularly in terms of access to buildings, public facilities, safety and security. The Council promotes a standard of urban design which seeks to “design – out” crime and reduce the fear of crime.
**Waste and Refuse (Policies. PE10, PE11, PE12)**

7.9 The Council will require the provision, within a development scheme, of adequate waste and refuse storage facilities along with satisfactory vehicular servicing arrangements. The Council will also require these areas to be screened or enclosed. Storage areas should be no more than 25 metres and 9 metres respectively from vehicular access points. In order to facilitate the use of wheeled bins surfaces must be suitably designed for the bins to be trundled to / from the storage areas (e.g. by the incorporation of dropped kerbs etc).

7.10 The Council is looking for appropriate sites across the borough on which to accommodate a new generation of public recycling sites and / or depots. Potential uses can include municipal waste transfer, materials reclamation, waste processing and disposal facilities, municipal vehicle parking, workshops, offices and ancillary uses. Further details of these requirements and Merton’s draft Waste Management Strategy can obtained from Cormac Stokes on telephone no. 020 8545 3131 and in the SPG on “Sustainable Development (July 2000).”

**Transport (Policies LU2, LU3, LU4, LU5)**

7.11 The site is served LT bus service No.152 New Malden-Mitcham-Pollards Hill on Western Rd., part of the London Distributor Road and Bus Priority Network. Under policy LU2 (figure 6.5) of the UDP the site’s public transport accessibility rating is 3/6. Developers are required to take this into consideration and assess any potential impact new development could have on the local environment and transport network. In order to reduce potential congestion, developers will be required to submit proposals for development, which improves access to the site, by means other than the car in order to minimise car-use. Western Rd. is a proposed cycle route and surrounding areas lie within the Council’s Lorry Ban initiative. The site is not included in a Controlled Parking Zone.

**Sustainable Development (Policies ST1a, BE31, PE14)**

7.12 In view of the Council’s commitment to sustainability, development proposals should be formulated having regard to incorporating the ideas in the SPG on Sustainable Development. Encouragement is given to sustainable redevelopment schemes that involve recycling urban land. The Council will assess development proposals in the light of its own sustainable development checklist. Prospective developers are required to submit their own sustainable development statements with their proposals. The Council encourages the retention of existing buildings (wherever possible) in order to conserve building materials. The Council encourages the use of materials from renewable sources and the re-use of building materials and the minimisation of waste in the development process. The Council’s SPGs on Sustainable Development (October 2001), Designing out Crime (September 1999) and New Residential Development (September 1999) refer.
7.13 The Council encourages the provision of community facilities across the borough (through the use of planning agreements) in appropriate locations to serve a wide variety of community requirements ranging from health care, schools and youth facilities to day-care facilities. These requirements will be clarified in consultation with interested parties.

Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) (Policies BE18-BE20)

7.14 Part of the site is in a designated archaeological priority zone (forming part of Mitcham Village APZ). As such the Council will seek to protect and conserve the site. Therefore, the Council will require a preliminary site evaluation and an Archaeological Impact Assessment to be submitted with any planning application and before proposals will be considered by the Council.

Hazardous Substances: (Policy E10)

7.15 The Council will not permit new development for storing / manufacturing hazardous substances to exceed the levels specified in the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992 (Schedule1) New development within the consultation distance from existing premises storing or manufacturing hazardous substances will be permitted, provided the new occupiers are not materially harmed or put at risk and the proposal would not prejudice effective operation at the existing premises. A separation distance of 18m between new development and the gas holder has been proposed for the purposes of this brief.

Highways and parking standards (Policies RN4, PK2, PK3, PK6, WC4)

Access

7.16 In the design of new road layouts, accesses and footways, developers will be encouraged to provide safe and pleasant environments. This can be achieved by following the standards set out in the Transport Planning SPG (April 2001), Generally, the carriageway widths and footways should be in accordance with the guidelines set out in the SPG for “New Residential Development.”

Car Parking

7.17 Council parking standards are included in Schedule 6 of the Second Deposit Draft UDP (October 2000) and adopted UDP 2003, which set out maximum parking standards related to the availability of other modes of transport. Appropriate standards are detailed below. Development of the site should allow for the requirements of mobility-impaired people to be met in full.

7.18 Developers will be required to take into consideration the limited amount of car-parking space in the adjacent roads and accommodate all parking demand from redevelopment of the site within the site. The UDP and SPG set out maximum figures of car parking spaces for residential dwellings.
These are set as 1–1.25 spaces per 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings. For B1 uses the appropriate standard is 1 space per 100m² gross floor area. For the Live/Work part of the development proposals it is considered that 1 space per unit is appropriate (under review).

**Cycle Parking**

7.19 The Council requires new developments to provide secure cycle parking at the standards set out in SPG “Sustainable Transport” (2004). These standards require cycle parking facilities to be located as close as possible to the site, offer security against theft and be visually acceptable. Minimum cycle parking standards for residential development are set out as 1 space per 2 dwellings and 1 space per 200m² for light industry/business uses.

### 8. PLANNING APPLICATION and s.106 AGREEMENT.

8.1 An outline planning application accompanied by an *indicative* Master Plan will be acceptable. Full planning permission(s) will be required in due course and prior to redevelopment commencing. A Sustainability Statement, a Transport Statement and an Urban Design Statement setting out how the proposals will meet the Council’s sustainability objectives, an assessment of public and private transport impacts and how they will address urban design issues will also be required. The site will require to be assessed for contamination and remedial measures taken prior to redevelopment.

8.2 Decontamination issues and remediation measures will be dealt with by planning condition. The Council will expect a developer to enter into a s.106 agreement in association with a planning permission to develop the site which will provide financial contributions or planning conditions for:

- The provision of improved educational facilities locally including implementing the Council’s “safe routes to schools” programme.
- The provision of contributions towards the enhancement of sustainable modes of transport (public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure) parking controls, junction improvements and traffic management in the vicinity of the site (UDP policy LU5 refers) especially the necessary junction improvements at Miles Rd. / Church Rd. (UDP, 2003 Site Proposal 11T refers)
- At least 30% of the proposed dwelling stock to be provided as affordable housing.
- The extension of the local park at Miles Road, associated landscaping improvements and its management and maintenance arrangements.
- Setting up and monitoring a car club for three years.
- Drafting and monitoring compliance with the agreement.
- Undertaking an assessment of energy use and gas emissions.
The provision of community facilities on or off-site and community-based initiatives.

Local employment benefits and the production of a Green Travel Plan with respect to the employment development.

**Educational Facilities (Policy F.2)**

8.3 The Council considers that residential developments may generate a requirement for improved local educational facilities. In this event the Council will be looking for financial contributions towards these facilities as part of a s106 agreement. The contribution will be based on the number of school places assumed to be generated, calculated with reference to the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Bedroom Dwelling</th>
<th>2 Bedroom Dwelling</th>
<th>3 Bedroom Dwelling</th>
<th>4 Bedroom Dwelling</th>
<th>No. of primary places</th>
<th>No. of secondary places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Housing</strong></td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.986</td>
<td>3.286</td>
<td>Divide the total by 16 and then multiply by 7</td>
<td>Divide the total by 16 and then multiply by 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Housing</strong></td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>1.113</td>
<td>1.911</td>
<td>Divide the total by 16 and then multiply by 7</td>
<td>Divide the total by 16 and then multiply by 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Multiply the total number of each type of dwelling by the figure in the table, depending on whether it is social or private housing and then apply the formula for the number of primary and secondary places)

9. **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

9.1 Sources of information used to compile this brief are:

- London Borough of Merton UDP (October 2003)
- London Plan, Greater London Authority (February 2004)
- Consultation draft PPG3 Housing (July 2003).
- SPG Mitcham Urban Village (January 2003)
- Planning Policy Statement 12
- Local Development Frameworks, ODPM (October 2004).
- SPG on New Residential Development (September 1999)
- SPG on Affordable Housing (Draft) (April 2004)
- SPG on Accessible Environments (June 2003)
- SPG on Sustainable Development (October 2001)
- SPG Archaeology (September 1999)
- Interim Local Implementation Plan 2002/2003
10.0 CONTACT INFORMATION

Further information on this planning brief is available from;

Paul McGarry
Plans and Projects

Environment and Regeneration
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
Morden
Surrey  SM4 5DX

Tel:  020 8545 3003
Fax:  020 8545 3326
Email: paul.mcgarry@merton.gov.uk

ATTACHMENTS:

- Site Proposals Plan No: PMcG\WesternRd_MilesRd
- Sustainability Appraisal Report
Western Road / Miles Road Development Site
(Transco-SecondSite)

Land Use Proportions

A 1.0 ha Transco Operational Land (B1)
B 0.7 ha New B1 Business Development
C 0.5 ha Live Work Development
D 0.8 ha Residential (C3)
E 0.9 ha Residential (C3)
F 0.7 ha Open Space
4.6ha TOTAL SITE AREA

Key:
- Transco Operational Land and B1 Business Use
- Residential Development
- Live-Work Development
- Open Space
- Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian / Cycle Route

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