

Policy D13 Agent of Change

Policy D14 Noise

## **BRENT**

SPD1 Brent Design Guide

SPD2 Residential Extensions Guide

SPD3 Shopfront Design Guide

Conservation Area Appraisals/ Design Guides

### **POLICY BD1: LEADING THE WAY IN GOOD URBAN DESIGN**

**All new development must be of the highest architectural and urban design quality. Innovative contemporary design will be supported where it respects and complements historic character but is also fit for the future. In delivering high quality design, development proposals will be expected to show how they positively address all the relevant criteria within London Plan design policies and the Brent Design Guide SPD1.**

#### **Justification**

- 6.1.11 The council is committed to delivering excellence in development quality. It expects all new development to embrace the principles of good design, and positively respond to the character of Brent's places.
- 6.1.12 The policy seeks to create buildings and places of high quality that will be appreciated by future generations. High quality design is both visually interesting and attractive and should enhance local character. Good design is not just about what things look like, it is also about how places function and how individual buildings and the spaces around them contribute to the public realm and community well-being. The design of the places and buildings that make up our local environment affects everyone and the quality of life. Good design makes places that put people first, promote health and are welcoming, feel safe, are enjoyable and easy to use for everyone. The council will continue to use advice from the Brent Design Review Panel to inform the decision making process.

### **POLICY BD2: TALL BUILDINGS**

**A tall building is one that is more than 30 metres in height above ground level.**

**Tall buildings are directed to the locations shown on the policies map in Tall Building Zones.**

**In Tall Buildings Zones heights should be consistent with the general building heights above ground level shown on the policies map, stepping down towards the Zone's edge.**

**In intensification corridors and town centres outside conservation areas and areas of distinctive residential character developments of a general building height of 15 metres above ground level could be acceptable, with opportunities to go higher at strategic points in town centres.**

**In all cases the tall buildings must be shown to be positive additions to the skyline that would enhance the overall character of the area. They should be of exceptional design**

**quality, consistent with London Plan Policy requirements in showing how they positively address their visual, functional, environmental and cumulative impacts.**

### **Justification**

- 6.1.13 Height is only one element of a development when considering its acceptability and whether it is of good design. Nevertheless, it is a significant one in terms of increasing the visibility of a development and its potential wider impact on an area's character. London Plan Policy D9 identifies that the Brent Local Plan should provide a definition of a tall building and identify areas where tall buildings are acceptable. The council has done this in a number of different types of location taking account of factors such as those identified in D9 and other London Plan policies D1 London's Form, Character and Capacity for Growth, D4 Delivering Good Design and D6 Housing Quality and Standards, including Table 3.2.
- 6.1.14 The Local Plan policies map identifies Tall Building Zones which will each be able to accommodate differing scales of buildings including those of 30 metres or more. (A residential tall building typically has a floor to floor distance of around 3 metres. So a 30 metre residential building would typically be approximately 10 storeys in height). It sets out the general building heights that would be appropriate in the Zones. This has been based on extensive analysis consistent with London Plan Policy D4 criteria a, b and c, as set out in Brent's Tall Buildings Strategy. This includes factors such as a consideration of Brent's prevailing character, a desire to create clusters of tall buildings rather than standalone ones, and concentrating the densest development in areas with good public transport accessibility.
- 6.1.15 Any reference within any place, site specific or design policy in this plan to number of storeys is for residential storeys. Proposals for commercial premises should be consistent with the parameters set by the height in metres for the identified number of residential storeys. **The heights identified for the Tall Buildings Zones, town centres and site allocations are based on a high level of analysis, rather than in many cases considering a detailed building design. They indicate the heights likely to be generally acceptable to the council. This does not mean that all buildings up to these heights are automatically acceptable. Proposals will still need to be assessed in the context of other policies to ensure that they are appropriate in that location. There might however also be circumstances where the quality of design of a development and its impact on character is such that taller buildings in these locations could be shown by applicants to be acceptable.**
- 6.1.16 Within the areas identified there should be variety in heights to add to visual interest to the skyline. Whilst there will need to be a progressive stepping down of buildings to the edge of the tall buildings zone, to respect the existing lower scale character of adjacent areas, this can be subtle and incorporate variety of building heights, it does not have to be a strictly linear progression.
- 6.1.17 In town centres and intensification corridors outside conservation areas and areas of distinctive residential character, to support increased density to deliver a significant number of new homes, well designed taller buildings (compared to existing heights) are likely to be supported. Typically, these areas have reasonably good access to public transport and a range of services/facilities which could be better supported with increased patronage of new building occupants. The intensification corridors are main (A) roads where public transport accessibility level is 3 or above, where the

width of the street indicated by the distance between properties front to front (typically, but not exclusively 22.5 metres) and space/relationship with properties to the rear indicate scope for increase in height. The character of these places is such that the significant height associated with Tall Building Zones is not considered appropriate in these locations through the work that has been done to date in supporting the Local Plan, including the Tall Buildings Strategy. Nevertheless, taller buildings, typically of around 15 metres (5 storeys), with the opportunity to go higher at strategic points in town centres (e.g. locations adjacent to stations) could be appropriate. Buildings should in these locations reduce in scale towards adjacent properties on side streets.

6.1.18 Similar to the Tall Buildings Zones, whilst town centres and intensification corridors have been identified to be acceptable for taller buildings, development will still need to be consistent with other Development Plan policies, including BD1. It might be that for example policies that relate to heritage assets or the amenity of neighbouring properties will reduce the appropriate height below those identified. In addition, the opportunities for increases in height consistent with this policy are more likely to be acceptable where a more comprehensive development takes place including a whole or significant parts of a terrace, or in the case of detached and semi-detached buildings a number of adjacent properties. This will allow for instance better relationships between proportions of width to height and probably greater development capacity to be achieved. The council will provide further guidance on preferred solutions for different blocks of properties within individual town centres and intensification corridors.

6.1.19 In all cases the tall buildings element must be of such a design quality that it should enhance the character of the place within which it is set. London Plan policy D89 contains criteria for the assessment of the appropriateness of tall buildings applications, including visual functional, environment and cumulative impacts. This together with design policies D1, D3, D4, and D6 (incl. Table 3.2) forms a detailed policy framework against which the design merits of a tall building can be considered. In addition, Brent Local Plan policies, Brent Tall Buildings Strategy and the Brent Design Guide SPD1 identify a range of matters to appropriately address some of which include:

a) Visual impacts:

- Positive contributions to views from different distances
- Positively reinforcing the hierarchy of place and assist wayfinding
- Elegant, with exemplary architectural quality and materials
- Buildings positively contributing to the character of an area, including impacts on heritage assets
- No adverse reflected glare

b) Functional Impacts:

- Internal design to ensure safety of occupants
- Servicing, maintenance and management
- Accesses and ground floor uses ensuring no

- Movement capacity in the area
  - Sufficient infrastructure provided
  - Benefits to wider area maximised
  - No adverse effect on aviation, navigation, telecommunication and solar energy generation
- c) Environmental Impacts:
- Wind, daylight, sunlight and temperature conditions
  - Support air movement
  - Noise
- d) Cumulative Impacts:
- Combined impacts of numerous buildings in one place

## **LONDON PLAN**

Policy D1 London's Form, Character and Capacity for Growth

Policy D2 Infrastructure Requirements for Sustainable Densities

Policy D3 Optimising Site Capacity Through a Design Led Approach

Policy D4 Delivering Good Design

Policy D9 Tall Buildings

## **BRENT**

Brent Tall Building Strategy

Brent Design Guide SPD1

## **POLICY BD3: BASEMENT DEVELOPMENT**

**Proposals for basement development of an existing property must:**

- a) Demonstrate that sustainable design standards are integral to the proposal, including its construction and operation**
- b) In the case of habitable development only be ancillary accommodation to a dwelling above**
- c) Be no wider than the original building**
- d) Extend no further than the existing front elevation, 3 metres to the rear and 1 storey down (4 metres floor to ceiling height for a detached property or 3m in other cases)**
- e) Ensure any rooflights are flush with the ground and close to the main building**
- f) Ensure any lightwells are modest in scale, preferably located to the rear and if located to the front are no more than whichever is the smaller of 800mm or half the length of the garden.**
- g) Be protected from sewer flooding by a suitable pumped device**

## **Justification**

6.1.20 London Plan Policy D10 Basement development requires the council to establish a policy to address the negative impacts of large-scale basement development below

existing buildings. Basement applications have increased in Brent, particularly to the south where property prices are generally higher. The extensive excavation to create basement space, plus necessary structural works for buildings above and plots adjacent can mean extended periods of works are required. Many aspects of concerns raised by residents about basements are controlled by regimes outside the planning system. Brent has produced a Basement Supplementary Planning Document to identify to applicants and those surrounding about the planning and non-planning issues that need to be addressed.

- 6.1.21 The policy focuses on controlling the size, use and the environmental impacts of basements. This is to ensure that from a planning perspective they provide an acceptable accommodation solution for their occupants and do not significantly adversely impact on the character of an area and the amenity of neighbours.

### **LONDON PLAN**

Policy D10 Basement development

Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

### **BRENT**

DMP1 Development Management General Principles

Basements Supplementary Planning Document