

# **Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework**

**Cheltenham Borough Council  
South West Regional Development Agency  
Gloucestershire County Council**

**Technical Appendix:**

**North Place and Portland Street Development  
Brief**

**2010 Revision**

**Adopted - December 2010**

## **PREFACE – 2010 Revision**

On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008 the North Place and Portland Street Development Brief was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council as a technical appendix to the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) within the Local Development Plan (LDF).

The economic slump and other factors have led to questions as to whether the Brief, as adopted, can effectively be delivered. This is a conclusion which has been reached by the Cheltenham Development Task Force which was set up by the Council and its partners to drive forward the Civic Pride programme and bring key regeneration sites forward for Cheltenham.

So, whilst there is an absolute commitment to retain the principles embodied within the 2008 document the fixed interpretation – particularly the range of uses - needs to be made more flexible in the light of changing circumstances.

This Brief has been revised to reflect both these changes and a changing statutory planning framework. Consequential changes have also been made to the SPD.

This Development Brief is a Technical Appendix to the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD. Both the revised Brief and the revised SPD were adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

Both were subject to a consultation which ran between 23<sup>rd</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> October.

The documents form part of the Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD sitting within the Council's Local Development Framework and are each a material planning consideration when the Borough Council determines any relevant planning applications.

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Documents can be viewed on-line at [www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urban](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urban)design.

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1. This Development Brief forms part of the Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework (UDF) prepared for the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). These three bodies are now partners in the Cheltenham Development Task Force, along with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 1.2. Once approved, this development brief will form a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) within Cheltenham's Local Development framework (LDF) and will be a material consideration when the Borough Council in its role as Local Planning Authority determines any planning applications for the site.
- 1.3. Cheltenham is a thriving town set at the foot of the Cotswold scarp. It grew significantly in the late 18<sup>th</sup> /early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when it was a popular spa resort. It was developed as a number of set-piece estates to a masterplan. This left an extensive legacy of Regency buildings and formal gardens. However, the streets in its core are frequently dominated by vehicular traffic and the traffic management paraphernalia which accompanies it. Pedestrian access to, and in some cases within, the town centre is often difficult, with many routes being cut by the town's two ring roads. In addition a number of prominent sites are underused and have a negative impact on the quality of the street scene.
- 1.4. **The principal aim of the Civic Pride project is to build upon the regency heritage of the town by revitalising the street scene, including the buildings, streets and spaces in order to bolster the town's economy.**
- 1.5. The UDF process has analysed transport, economic, environmental and land-use issues affecting the town in order to create strategies to achieve this aim. Part of the project focuses specifically on the redevelopment of council owned sites to be promoted as exemplars of sustainable development. North Place and Portland Street car parks form one of these sites.
- 1.6. The key Civic Pride documents set out below, establish the context for this Development Brief. Together with this brief and its companion for the Royal Well site they make up the UDF and development on this site must comply with their various proposals.

Masterplan Report	Halcrow Group Ltd	September 2007
Public Realm Strategy	Halcrow Group Ltd	March/December 2007
Transport Strategy	Colin Buchanan	April 2007
Phase 2 Scenario Testing	Halcrow Group Ltd, Nisbet LLP and King Sturge	December 2006
Urban Design Strategy	Halcrow Group Ltd	October 2006
Baseline Report	Halcrow Group Ltd	October 2006

## Changing Circumstances

- 1.7. The following key factors have impacted upon potential future uses:
- a. An independent market re-appraisal by specialist property advisers which questions whether the Brief, as adopted in 2008 is deliverable in the current market conditions
  - b. The decreasing likelihood of the creation of a new build Civic Hub in the austere economic climate that we now find ourselves
  - c. Further site analysis including ground investigation work because of localised contamination resulting from the site's use as a coach station raises challenges for the medium density housing.
  - d. The opportunity for speculative office build is perceived as limited, however the Borough Council does not wish to rule it out if it is deliverable. Furthermore, Joint Core Strategy's emerging Employment Land Review recognises the value to economic investment of area-specific regeneration which improves the quality of the environment. Consequently, the Brief introduces opportunities for a wider range of commercial development on the site (e.g. office, retail etc.) along with a range of other potential uses.
  - e. Following recent detailed transport modelling work there has been an examination of opportunities to relocate Royal Well bus bays, currently serving the national coaches and rural services to the town. These bays, when relocated, will cater for services with a stopping time of no longer than 20 minutes. It is proposed that these bays are located at the southern end of the North Place/Portland St site, and will be in addition to the stops located along the proposed "bus spine" which will cater for the urban services.
- 1.8. The need to reappraise the development brief for this site is not unique and there is evidence that several sites across the Borough are being reconsidered as a result of the challenging financial circumstances being faced by landowners and developers alike.

## Purpose of the Brief

- 1.9. This Development Brief sets out the Council's planning requirements for development of the site in order to secure high quality, sustainable, mixed-use development that will also preserve and enhance the special character of Cheltenham. The Brief aims to provide flexibility to enable developers to bring forward innovative design proposals for the site, once the basic design and sustainability parameters have been met.

## Main Objectives

- 1.10. The Council wants development on the site to satisfactorily resolve issues of design, layout, use, access, car parking and street scene. Proposals will be in accordance with the policies of the existing Local Plan together with national planning policy guidance (see Appendix). It will provide mixed use development which:

- a Is an exemplar of sustainable development and design quality in both building form and street scene
- b Creates a vibrant mixed-use hub acting as a catalyst for regeneration north of the High Street
- c Encourages the use of sustainable transport modes
- d Delivers series of spaces on St Margaret's Road which improve pedestrian movements and streetscene and creates a vibrant, safe street.
- e Maintains a minimum of 300 town centre public car parking spaces to support the retail attraction of the town centre
- f Creates town centre streets and spaces which are pleasant, safe and vibrant with their own sense of place
- g Creates a series of high quality public spaces which
  - i. enhances the setting of Holy Trinity Church
  - ii. establish a green corridor linking the town's two historic promenades (The Promenade and Pittville Park).
  - iii. addresses the pedestrian severance between St Margaret's Road and the Brewery by delivering clear pedestrian connections
  - iv. mark significant focal points within the site
- h Preserves and enhances the existing historic architecture.

## **2. Development Context**

- 2.1. Since the adoption of the Brief in 2008, much of the contextual information has been up dated. This section contains information which is current as at July 2010.

### Location

- 2.2. The site consists of two extensive surface car parks on cleared sites about 250 metres north of the High Street (Plan 1). Together they total about 2.1 ha. Generally, to the north, west and east of the site are historic residential suburbs; to the south and east is town centre related development.

### Planning

- 2.3. The site is allocated for mixed use development under Policy PR2 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan. The uses identified in the Plan are housing with a minimum 100 units, including 50 affordable dwellings; public car parking; public open space; and other possible public uses. Since the Plan's adoption in 2006 market conditions have changed significantly and there is detailed evidence to guide the most appropriate type of development, for example in the Housing Needs Assessment (2009). The overarching housing issue to address on the site is the delivery of affordable housing and the Council now considers this is best reflected in Policy HS 4 a generic housing policy which requires a minimum of 40% affordable housing and it will be seeking this level of provision through the development of the site.
- 2.4. The site is within the Central Conservation Area and is covered by the Old Town Character Appraisal and Management Plan, an adopted SPD.
- 2.5. Both of these documents form part of the statutory planning framework for the site. A list of the most relevant planning documents and policies is appended: they will be used to determine planning and related applications for the development of the site.

### Land Ownership

- 2.6. The land is owned by Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC), with a stopped up road (Warwick Place) in the south of the site owned by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC).

### Historic Context

- 2.7. The location of the site within the Central Conservation Area gives the site a status as a designated heritage asset within Planning Policy Statement 5. This document requires all parties (potential developers and planning authority) to understand the significance of heritage assets both in terms of this particular site and the significance of nearby heritage assets and their settings. A separate heritage assessment for the site is being prepared independently to assist with the interpretation and assessment of any future proposals, to enable "the understanding of significance" requirements of PPS5 to be fulfilled. This analysis will assess the following characteristics:
- The heritage significance of the site, being a site located with the conservation area
  - The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting;
  - The general character and distinctiveness of the local buildings, spaces public realm and the landscape;
  - Landmarks and other features that are key to a sense of place;
  - The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces;

- The topography;
  - Views both into and from the site and its surroundings;
  - Green landscape;
  - The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain.
- 2.8. Historically the sites were principally dominated by two uses. The majority of the area of North Place car park was the site of a large detached 19<sup>th</sup> century house with large landscaped gardens until the construction of the Black & White coach station. The house was subsequently demolished and the garden used as coach parking and then a car park. The site of Portland Street car park was Victorian housing of mixed quality around an internal lane until demolished in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In terms of street layout - North Place and Portland Street existed on their current lines; St Margaret's Road extended only as far as North Street in the east, with the east-west route involving a dog-leg along Warwick Place until its extension as part of the construction of the northern relief road in the 1980's. The maps of 1884 and 1902 provide some helpful visual clues as to the historic layout.
- 2.9. The site lies within the Central Conservation Area and although it has no structures within the curtilage there are buildings within close proximity that are listed as II\*, II or alternatively noted on the Index of Buildings of Local Interest.

#### Archaeology

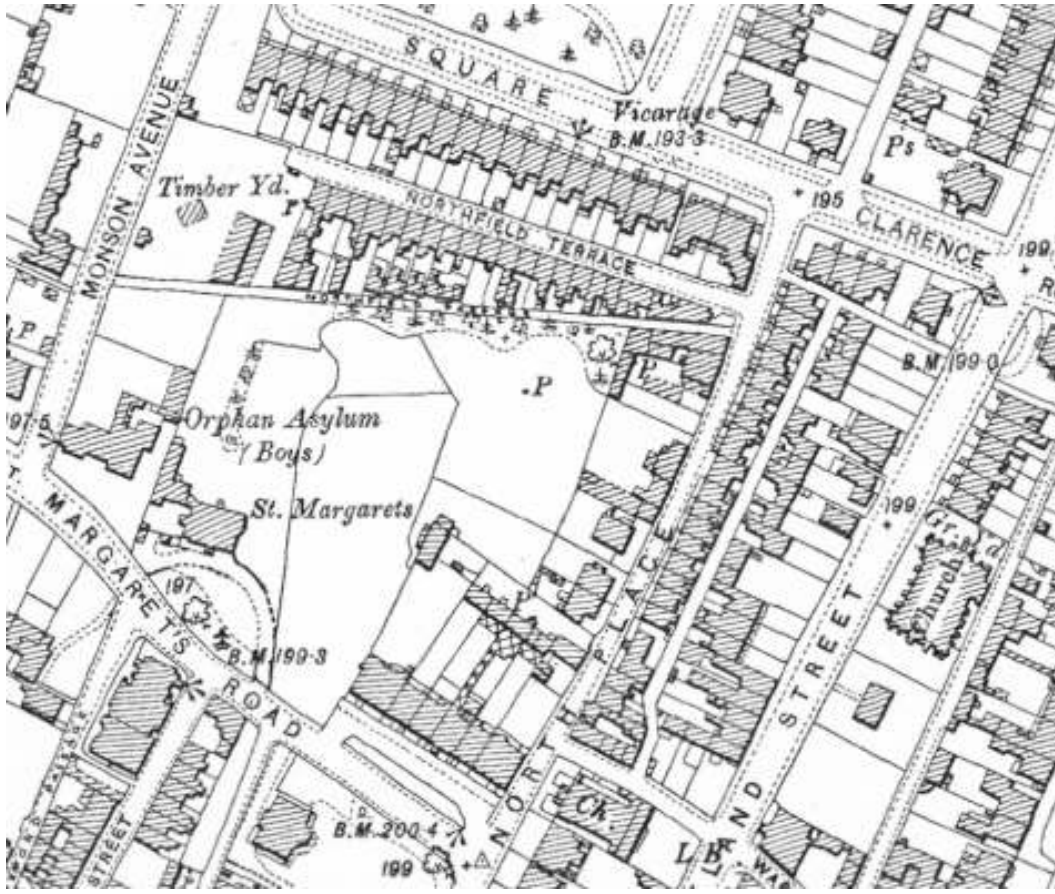
- 2.10. The Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology area summary (a desk based survey) for the car parks carried out in 2001 identified the following potential for archaeological finds.
- “The Desk Based Assessment identified a field boundary and trackway which may be pre-medieval, a probable medieval field system, a terrace of buildings dating to at least 1800, small scale building development covering a period between 1806 and 1855, and a C20 coach station and car parks. Any C19 buildings with cellars will have destroyed evidence of earlier activity. The Desk Based Assessment identified an area which appears to have remained largely undeveloped through the C19 and C20, where it is possible that earlier features and deposits will have survived. {Source Work 6468.}”*
- 2.11. This analysis suggests that the likelihood of any earlier features surviving on Portland Street is remote given that this area was previously Victorian housing with cellars. However there are elements of North Place that may have survived relatively undisturbed and where further analysis and investigation would be appropriate.

#### Flood Risk

- 2.12. Flood risk is recognised as a significant issue for Cheltenham residents following the events of 2007. As such this site will be considered as Stage 2 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, the findings of which are expected in Autumn 2010. An extract from the Environment Agency in response to the initial brief is at Appendix 2. From the response analysis it is evident that with an appropriate approach and well developed strategy the site can realise a significant number of the strategic aims set out in the original Development Brief. The greening helps support the biodiversity, whilst underground car parking can be achieved so long as due regard is made to the water table and aquifer.

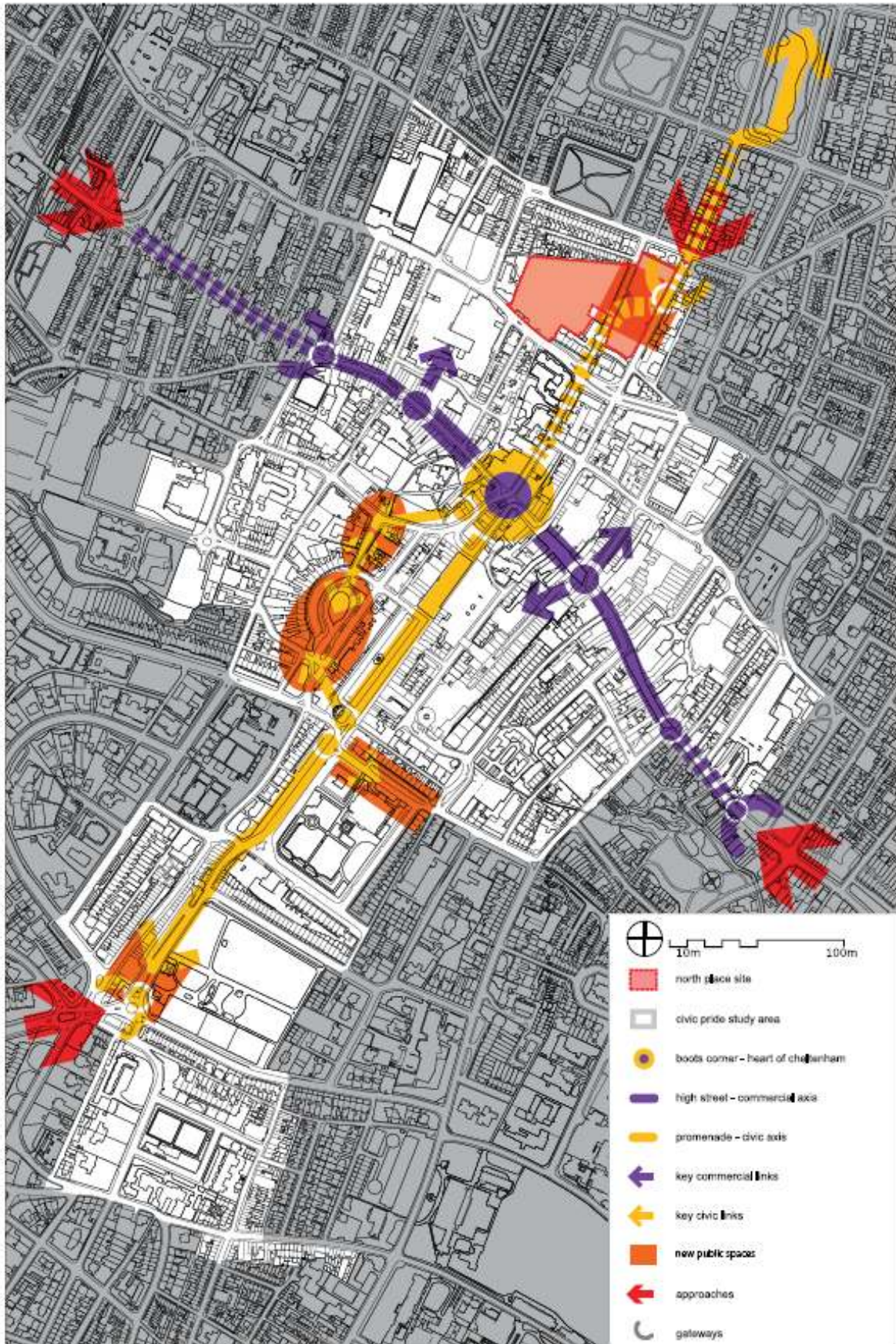


1884 Map



1902 Map





Plan 1: Site Location

## Analysis

2.13. Plan 2 gives an analysis of the site and its surroundings. The main points are

- a The site is a flat cleared brownfield site, with little of aesthetic value – a few semi mature trees are set on the Portland Street and St Margaret's Road boundaries.

### **Movement**

- b St. Margaret's Road is part of the orbital northern relief road and heavily trafficked at peak times. The considerable amount of paraphernalia associated with managing traffic on St Margaret's Road has a negative impact on the quality of the street;
- c Portland Street is historically the main northern approach to the town centre, though at this point it is currently one-way out of town with a contra-flow in-bound bus lane. It is heavily trafficked;
- d North Place splits the site;
- e Warwick Place is decommissioned highway used for parking as part of the neighbouring health club and is an unsightly edge to the site which should be incorporated into the redevelopment;
- f A number of important pedestrian routes come into and pass through the site – linking the town centre, the Brewery, Pittville Park and northern residential suburbs;
- g The site is well located for most bus routes in the town.

### **Neighbouring development**

- h The site is addressed by the rear of predominantly residential buildings at Northfield Terrace and Clarence Square to the north, St Margaret's Terrace to the south and Dowty House to the west;
- i Across Portland Street to the east is a mix of building styles, heights and uses (residential, religious, commercial);
- j The Brewery, a recent retail development, is across St Margaret's Road to the south west;
- k A number of key neighbouring buildings are listed and the site is within the Central Conservation Area.

## Plan 2: Site Analysis and Opportunities



Threshold between Dowty House and the site needs to be addressed to respect residential amenity.



Proposals to address vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist circulation within the wider town centre context, plus potential connections to the town centre.

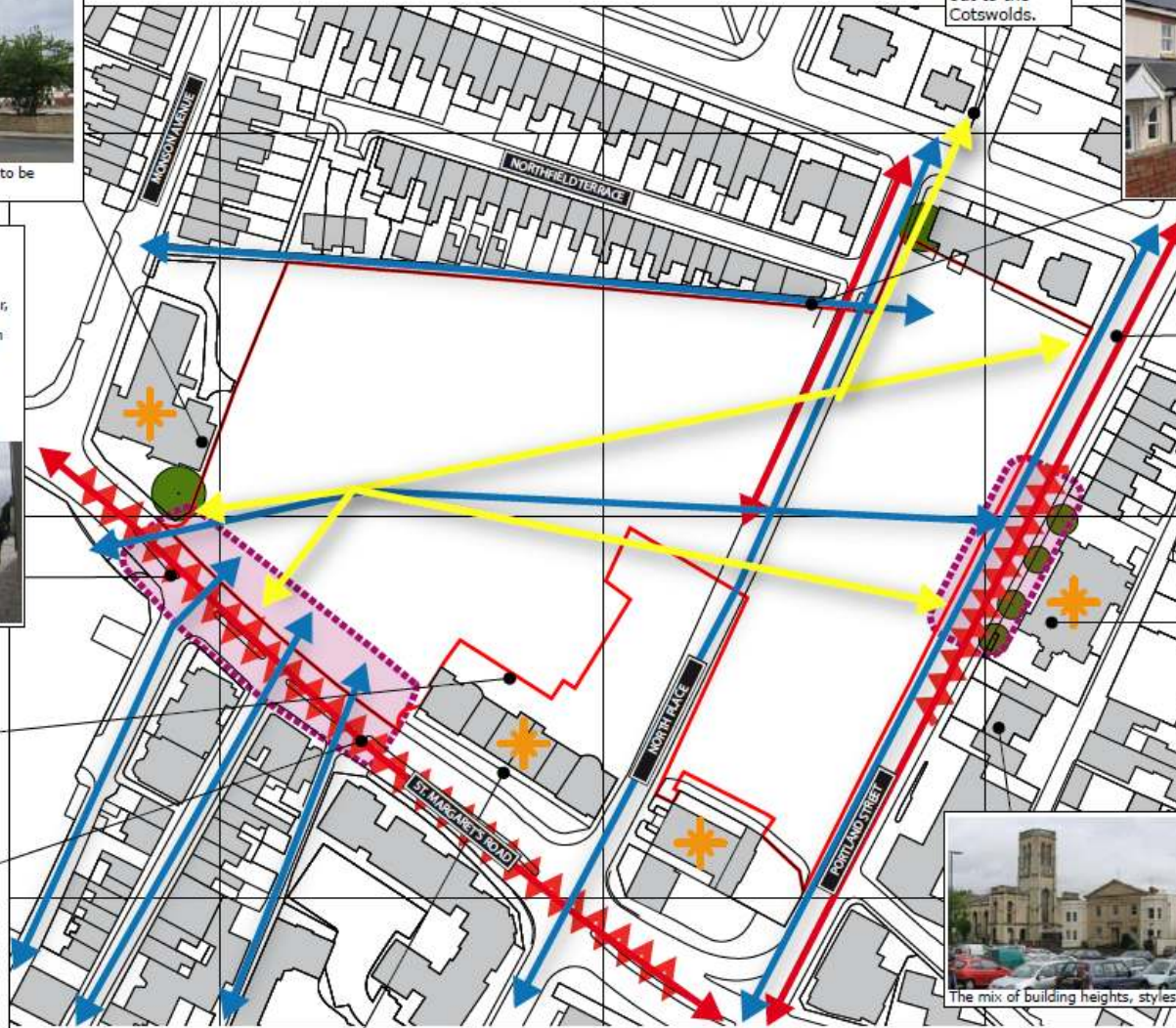


Currently used for residential parking.

Proposals need to consider St Margaret's Road and traffic flow, particularly crossing points and linkages with the town centre.



St Margaret's Terrace (Grade II\* listed) and adjacent buildings to east currently back onto site. St Margaret's Terrace is one of the only terraces in Cheltenham whose rear has formal symmetry. Little of the original rear gardens survive. Thresholds between proposals and residential amenity will need to be addressed.



Consider views out to the Cotswolds.



Northfield Passage is a pedestrian route with a mix of frontages and rear gardens. Proposals will need to consider this boundary and threshold.



Potential for better pedestrian and cyclist linkages to Pittville Park to the north.



Development to address key Regency and Church frontage along Portland Street.



The mix of building heights, styles and densities surrounding the site should be considered.



Indicative only, do not scale

- land in public ownership
- ★ landmark
- ⚡ existing severance
- existing buildings
- ➔ vehicular access
- ➔ view in/out
- significant tree
- ➔ pedestrian access
- public space opportunity

### Constraints

2.14. Plan 2 gives an analysis of the site and its surroundings. The main points are:

- a The amenity of adjacent residential uses needs to be protected
- b There is a requirement to consider the adjacent Listed Buildings and their settings, in particular Holy Trinity Church and St Margaret's Terrace rear elevation
- c There are a number of views across the site to Holy Trinity Church, St Mary's Church and to the Cotswolds
- d St Margaret's Road and Portland Street experience heavy traffic flows and have few opportunities for pedestrian crossing;
- e The site may contain archaeological remains
- f There is a need to retain a minimum of 300 public car parking spaces on the site in some form
- g The site has limited localised contamination resulting from former use as a coach station.

### Opportunities

2.15. Plan 2 identifies some of the site's opportunities.

- a Public consultation on various elements of the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework, demonstrated significant support for the approaches outlined in this brief - notably support for mixed use development on North Place/Portland Street, addressing pedestrian severance from the town centre and delivering high quality streets and public spaces. The redevelopment of this site offers an opportunity to build on that support.
- b The site is in a strategically important location on the edge of Cheltenham's town centre on two major routes. It provides a key opportunity to form a new northern gateway to the town centre. Redevelopment of this site also provides an excellent opportunity to expand the core of the town centre, by creating a new focus for the town north of the High Street.
- c As a cleared brownfield site, with few redeeming features, the site is a blank canvas for a major new development, with its own sense of place and the opportunity to create bespoke spaces and streets.
- d The site has the potential for the development of blocks on a strong east-west orientation, providing a good opportunity for an environmentally sustainable development with a low carbon footprint.
- e The location within the historic fabric of the town and its well developed block structure establishes a strong framework with the potential to build a network of urban blocks, streets and spaces – see PPS5 historic context statement
- f The site offers the opportunity to provide a mix of suitable town centre and edge of centre uses. The following uses are required on the site, other uses may be appropriate where they contribute to the objectives of the brief:

- i. Residential development which reflects the findings of the Housing Needs Study (2009)- with a minimum of 40% affordable units
  - ii. Employment-generating uses
  - iii. A 6 bay bus node for local and national buses.
  - iv. Public car park for a minimum of 300 cars – here, there is an opportunity to consider placing parking underground as one of a number of options.
- g The site should realise Civic Pride Urban Design Strategy objectives around the provision of new public space and pedestrian linkages between the Promenade and Pittville Park
- h The site also offers an opportunity to create internal linkages and viewing corridors and a series of high quality public spaces which
- i. enhances the setting of Holy Trinity Church
  - ii. provides high quality public spaces
  - iii. link the towns two historic promenades (The Promenade and Pittville Park)
  - iv. addresses the pedestrian severance between St Margaret's Road and the Brewery by delivering clear pedestrian connections
  - v. mark significant focal points within the site
- i There is a further opportunity to provide strong active building frontages and space along St Margaret's Road and Portland Street either of which could be developed as boulevards or tree-lined avenues.
- j There are wider views of the Cotswold Scarp and town centre churches which, if retained, could enhance the structure and layout of the development.
- k There is the potential to radically re-consider traffic management arrangements and to enhance the road corridor in St Margaret's Road. This would help to address the problem of pedestrian severance, improving linkages to the town centre and creating a pleasant street in line with the various strategic objectives of the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework. Subject to traffic modelling, Portland Street may also have the potential for a radical reconsideration of traffic management arrangements, such as 2-way working, which coupled with streetscene enhancements may help to create significant improvements in movement, activity and character.

### 3. Development Principles

- 3.1. This section details the land use and design requirements for the development of the North Place and Portland Street sites. They emerge not only from the analysis of the sites, but from the principles established in the other parts of the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework. As such **this section needs to be read in conjunction with the Civic Pride Urban Design Strategy, Transport Strategy and Public Realm Strategy**. Plan 4 illustrates the broad principles.

#### Land Use

- 3.2. The site is suitable for a range of mixed town centre and edge of centre uses which will help to secure the sustainability of the wider site. This Brief does not specify the full range of acceptable uses; it will be for the developer to justify proposed uses in terms of an ability to deliver the various objectives of the Brief and the wider Civic Pride documentation. However, the following are the explicit requirements of the Council:
- a Residential units – a minimum of 100 units with a minimum of 40% affordable housing (see policy HS4 of the Local Plan)
  - b Commercial development that enhances the economic offer of the town centre particularly where it provides significant job creation and training opportunities, local supply chains, a reduction in travel miles for goods and/or the potential to secure organisations with a demonstrable commitment to corporate social and environmental responsibility
  - c Six bay bus node with facilities for local and national services with ancillary services including toilets, refreshments and, possibly ticket and management space. There is not likely to be a long-stay lay-over requirement for coaches
  - d A minimum of 300 public car parking spaces – potentially underground
  - e New landscaped public squares and spaces

#### Design Principles

- 3.3. The site will require sensitive planning and design. Set out below are a series of headline design principles which are detailed in turn in the boxes which follow.
- A “Beacon” sustainability solutions are a key Civic Pride objective and public ownership of this site presents a unique opportunity to secure exemplar standards of sustainability.
  - B The site requires the creation of a coherent and cohesive block structure, street hierarchy and design philosophy.
  - C High quality design is essential. Proposals will respond positively to the site’s historic context, avoiding pastiche and delivering a style which is clearly “of its time”. They will establish a sense of place. Sustainable movement links and important views through and beyond the site will integrate with the rest of the town. Design processes will contribute positively to placemaking and the creation of an attractive and distinct place.
  - D Sustainable movement choices will be maximised including the integration of enhanced pedestrian linkages between the town centre, the site itself and other parts of the town to the north
  - E The site will deliver a series of vibrant streets and spaces bounded by active building frontages in order to ensure an interesting and safe public realm. They will enhance the setting of Holy Trinity Church; link the towns two historic promenades (The Promenade and Pittville Park); link the site and the Brewery development; and mark significant focal points within the site

### **Design Principle A Sustainability**

- a Development will incorporate a range of sustainable design and construction techniques, for example;
  - i passive solar design
  - ii heat exchange and natural ventilation systems
  - iii utilisation of high thermal mass construction techniques
  - iv high standards of insulation
  - v low-carbon or renewable energy systems
  - vi measures to reduce water consumption and promote water re-use
- b Roof gardens and green walls should be used to announce the area's sustainability credentials and may become a public viewing gallery, with views across the town, and to Cleeve Hill. Green walls will soften any blank or inactive elevations (such as a decked car park, or end wall).
- c Any development should be designed to a minimum Level 4 Code for Sustainable Homes as a minimum with a commitment to increase this across the site where viable or BREEAM Very Good as a minimum.
- d Surface water runoff will be minimised (current levels of runoff will not be increased) using sustainable urban drainage systems – for example landscaped areas, permeable surface, green roofs etc
- e Materials should be sourced locally wherever possible and procured from sustainable sources.
- f Sustainable waste management is required and must be a basic principle of the design. Developers will be required to submit a waste minimisation statement.

### **g Design Principle B Structure**

- a The current split of the site along North Street offers an opportunity to consider the creation of two distinct character zones – though there may be other contextually sensitive layouts.
- b New streets should be aligned along important view corridors. There is an opportunity to create a focus with views to the Brewery and Dowty House tower to the west; church spires to the south (St Mary's and St Gregory's in particular); and Holy Trinity to the west. Any opportunities to retain glimpsed views of the Cotswold scarp should be retained.
- c A perimeter block approach to new development on the site, which builds on the surrounding historic form, will help to create a clear hierarchy of spaces and a clear distinction between private and public space. It will also present an opportunity to complete currently fractured building lines along Portland Street and North Place. The layout of streets and spaces should contribute to the strategic spaces around the site and seek to encourage links - both in terms of pedestrian and cycle movement and for the benefit of biodiversity.
- d Housing densities will demonstrate efficient use of land and respect impacts on neighbours.
- e Buildings of up to 5 storeys in height may be acceptable on main streets. However, heights are likely to be a maximum of 3 storeys on the northern and western edges in order to minimise the impact on neighbouring development.

### **Design Principle C Design Quality**

- a The new development will take cues from, and respond positively to, the site's historic context in a manner which delivers a set of buildings, streets and spaces which are clearly of their time. Pastiche building designs will not be permitted.
- b As a publically owned site, the design process will bring together private and public sector professionals from a range of skills working as a team from concept to implementation. Engagement with stakeholders will be key. A quality audit system will ensure Civic Pride objectives are being met.
- c The design process will be based on placemaking – developing the vision for the site envisaged through the other Civic Pride Strategies before moving to detailed design of buildings and traffic management regimes.
- d Streets and spaces will establish the structure for the development of the site and they must be well considered both strategically and in detail using a landscape-led approach. Detailed landscape plans will be required with planning applications.
- e In order to help create an identity and sense of place the materials used in buildings, streets and spaces will be high quality and long lasting. For streets and spaces, the Public Realm Strategy sets out a set of requirements for street furniture, surface materials, lighting and other elements.
- f With a few notable exceptions, Cheltenham is not a town of individual iconic buildings and, in the main, proposals for the site should avoid such approaches. However, the detailed layout may offer opportunities to use distinct building forms and elements to mark an important corner or approach.
- g The quality of detailing will be important to the success of the proposals. The submission of detailed plans, sections and elevations will be required for selected elements as part of detailed planning applications.
- h The design and layout of streets, spaces and buildings - including the bus interchange and car parking - will create safe and secure environments. Streets and spaces will be active and vibrant. They will be enclosed by buildings which provide active edges and natural surveillance. There will be a structure to urban blocks, which maximises security of private spaces and service areas. Spaces and streets will meet Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design standards and buildings will meet Secured by Design standards. The development will incorporate the principles set out in Safer Places and, where appropriate, incorporate the requirements of Counter Terrorism mitigation.



## **Design Principle D Movement**

The Civic Pride Transport Strategy sets a structure for strategic movement throughout the town. St Margaret's Road will take orbital traffic; Portland Street is a radial approach to the town centre. This establishes the context for movement within and around the site. The Strategy is currently under-going further modelling, the results of which are not yet available – potential developers are advised to check the latest situation with the Borough Council. In order to address how sustainable travel is delivered on the development, it is likely that there will be a requirement for a travel plan - advice is available from the Highway Authority.

- a The development of the site will encourage sustainable transport choices by adopting a hierarchy where ease of movement by pedestrians and disabled people is a first priority, then cyclists, public transport users, essential service vehicles and finally private cars.
- b An improved pedestrian environment is required on St. Margaret's Road and Portland Street - addressing areas of pedestrian severance and improving links between the town centre (Boots Corner, Pittville Street, Lower High Street and the Brewery), the site and the north of Cheltenham. Each street will be given a strong landscape structure with spaces and tree planting. The design will help to calm traffic speeds and ease congestion – the current traffic light regime will be reviewed. These treatments will facilitate the pedestrian link between the town's two traditional promenades (The Promenade and Pittville Park).
- c All streets will provide access for pedestrians and disabled people in a safe and attractive environment with plenty of seating so that the less able can rest en route. Shared surface streets in particular will be designed so that the visually impaired can use them safely and confidently.
- d Routes through the site will accommodate calmed cycling movement - providing convenient and safe links to the emerging wider network of cycle routes and addressing severance by major roads around the site. Cycle parking will be well overlooked, easily accessible and some will be covered.
- e A 6-bay bus node for local and national services, to include appropriate interchange and support facilities, will be accommodated at the southern end of the North Place/Portland Street site, potentially in North Place. It may include supporting taxi provision.
- f There are a variety of access opportunities to the site. The Highway Authority's view is that the introduction of a new junction onto St Margaret's Road would introduce further delays and congestion to an existing vital transport corridor and vehicular access to the site here is unlikely to be acceptable. Additionally, choice of access points will not be allowed to compromise urban design objectives which are seeking the creation of vibrant streets and spaces, good pedestrian linkages and enhanced street scene. Access proposals will be subject to modelling. All streets within the site will be designed to a maximum of 20mph.
- g The site needs to provide for car parking as follows:
  - i Residential parking levels will be agreed with the planning and highway authorities and will be based on evidence related to the need of accommodation provided and the availability of parking in and around the development overall.
  - ii A minimum of 300 public car parking spaces will be provided
  - iii Other commercial and retail uses will be provided with limited parking to meet their essential operational and service requirements only.

- h There are a variety of options for the location of parking.
  - i On-street or in public spaces – in secure, overlooked locations, suitably integrated in an attractive street-scene
  - ii Undercroft – subject to the creation of active frontages on ground floors
  - iii Underground – subject to suitable ground conditions
  - iv Multi-storey – subject to suitable screening with green walls or single aspect development to activate edges.

Rear parking courts in residential and general commercial areas are not acceptable as they create insecure intrusions into the core of blocks and are inefficient in use of space.
- i Residential cycle parking will be at 2 spaces per unit in convenient, secure, dry locations.

### **Design Principle E Streets and Spaces**

Other parts of the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework establish a vision and principles for the design and layout of streets which are attractive, avoid clutter and accommodate a variety of functions – including movement, social and recreational activity. The design and implementation of streets and spaces this site will comply with the all elements of the Urban Design Framework.

- a The site offers an opportunity to create a striking contemporary northern extension to the town centre using high quality materials and the integration of public art. The continuation of a green corridor from the Promenade up to Pittville Park is required through new tree planting combined with an integrated public art and lighting design.
- b The new buildings enclosing the streets and spaces will take their cue from surrounding historic development and make a positive contribution to on-street activity and passive surveillance. Street frontages will include main entrances at regular intervals and active rooms. In order to help activate frontages and protect amenity, private rooms, such as bedrooms and bathrooms will not be permitted on ground floor street frontages.
- c To encourage safe streets, cafes will be encouraged to spill out onto streets and spaces and residential development will have opportunities for personalised space on street frontage (balconies, front gardens etc).
- d Boundary treatments will be clear and identifiable and should demarcate private areas from those accessible to the public. For residential buildings, the treatment should provide privacy and security whilst maintaining natural surveillance. Commercial uses should front directly onto public space where possible, with little requirement for boundary or threshold treatment.
- e To engender a strong sense of place and community cohesion, streets should be designed as outdoor rooms accommodating variety activity (variously - movement, parking, quiet relaxation, children’s play and social activity). As indicated earlier, a strong landscape structure is required to create attractive streets and spaces. There will be abundant tree and shrub planting, opportunities for public art and high quality surface materials. This will be supported by the opportunity to personalise private outdoor spaces, and there should be an opportunity for this on all residential properties.
- f Within the site, North Place and any new streets will be designed as shared streets allowing easy movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

- g There is an aspiration that St Margaret's Road will see the introduction of structural tree planting, new surfacing and the creation of a series of landscaped spaces. Street clutter in the form of highway infrastructure will be minimised as part of the design process. The street will be humanised - accommodating orbital traffic, but delivering a strong pedestrian presence to calm traffic movement. Designs should reflect this aspiration as they meet this edge. Portland Street could be similarly improved by better landscape, traffic management and enclosure by buildings and uses which humanise and vitalise it
- h A new public space will mark the northern gateway into Cheltenham and connect the historic Regency promenades of Montpellier and Pittville. The square will:
  - i establish a suitable setting for buildings
  - ii establish an enhanced setting for Holy Trinity Church – taking a cohesive surface treatment across Portland Street which accommodates through vehicular traffic but leaves open opportunity for the extension of the main square's activities at appropriate times
  - iii incorporate robust hard and soft landscaping, providing areas of sun and shade and enabling flexibility of use (including quiet space, performance, meetings, social activity, play, and through pedestrian movement)

#### **4. Developer Contributions**

- 4.1. Developer contributions will be expected to:
- a Provide on-site affordable housing in line with local policy;
  - b Make appropriate provision for infrastructure and other public services including community facilities and education;
  - c Make provision for Green Travel Plans and other sustainable transport options;
  - d Provide play space and equipment appropriate for the site's residential space and potentially provision of an outdoor gym. This provision is likely to be linked to the cost of developing new public realm and streetscape;
  - e Provide for the enhanced materials required under the Public Realm Strategy

#### **5. Planning and Related Applications**

- 5.1. The process identified in the Design Quality section will require that the developer will enter into pre-application discussions with the planning authority prior to the submission of a planning application.
- 5.2. All planning applications must be made in full and in addition to detailed plans, sections, elevations, detailed public realm and landscaping plans must be accompanied by:
- a A design and access statement illustrated with concept diagrams and sketches explaining the design principles on which the development is based and how these are reflected in its layout, density, scale, landscape, visual appearance and relationship to the town centre. Statements must be compliant with the CABI guidance on design and access statements.
  - b A sustainability and energy statement, to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of proposed developments. Use of the South West Sustainability Checklist for development should be considered to promote a consistent approach to realising the opportunities of sustainable design and construction
  - c A 3-D, Sketchup model or similar
  - d A transport assessment
  - e A mitigation strategy for known and unknown ground conditions.

An archaeological field evaluation has been commissioned by the Borough Council

A site specific flood risk assessment is not currently anticipated, subject to the emerging SFRA

- 5.3. Any planning consent will be accompanied by a condition restricting hours of working and access arrangements during construction in areas close to residential properties in order to protect residential amenity.

## Planning Context

A full policy review is included within the Baseline Report, covering the general policy framework that applies to the Borough and the site. All the relevant planning guidance is available on the Councils' web site. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 local plan policies are saved until replaced by relevant development plan documents. Cheltenham Borough Local Plan is currently saved indefinitely. The following core policies and proposals are relevant to a future planning application which will need to show compliance with these policies where they are relevant:

### Local Plan

The site is located within the Principal Urban Area of Cheltenham. The following policies directly affect the site:

BE1-7	Conservation Areas (the site is within the Central Conservation Area)
BE8-10	Listed Buildings
RT1-RT2:	Retail Development (the site is within the Core Commercial Area)
CP1	Sustainable Development
CP2	Sequential approach to Location of Development
CP3	Sustainable Environment
CP4	Safe and Sustainable Living
CP5	Sustainable Transport
CP6	Mixed Use Development
CP7	Design
CP8	Provision of Necessary Infrastructure and Facilities
BE1	Open Space in Conservation Areas
BE2	Residential Character in Conservation Areas
BE11	Buildings of Local Importance
BE16	Buildings in Conservation Areas
BE34	Nationally Important Archaeological Remains
BE34A	Archaeological Remains of Local Importance
NE4	Contaminated Land
HS1	Housing Development
HS2	Housing Density
HS4	Affordable Housing
RC5	Development of Amenity Space
RC6	Play space in Residential Development
RC7	Amenity Space in Housing Developments
TP 6	Parking provision in Development
TP127	Development and Highway Safety
TP130	Parking provision in Development
UI 1	Development in flood zones
UI 2	Development and flooding
UI 3	Sustainable Drainage Systems
UI 4	Maintenance strips for watercourses
UI 5	Culverting of watercourses
PR 2	Land Allocated for Mixed Use Development

### Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Documents (SPD)

- Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD
- Central Conservation Area Old Town Character Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Feb 2007) (SPD) which gives guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of character can be achieved.

- Travel Plans (SPG) explains the circumstances in which Travel Plans are required and advocates a package of measures tailored to sites aimed at delivering sustainable transport objectives. It also sets out matters which may be subject to planning obligation.
- Sustainable Development SPG
- Sustainable Buildings SPG
- Public Art SPG
- Affordable Housing SPG see also Cheltenham Housing Needs Study (2009)
- Sustainable drainage systems SPG
- Planning obligations – transport SPG
- Public art SPG
- Security and crime prevention SPG
- Waste Minimisation in Development Projects SPD (Gloucestershire County Council)

### **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

Local Plan policies are saved until formally replaced by those in the Local Development Framework (LDF). Work is ongoing collaboratively with neighbouring local authorities to prepare Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy. This will provide the overarching strategy for meeting the development needs of the Joint Core Strategy Area over the plan period to 2026.

### **Strategic Planning Guidance**

The saved policies of the adopted Gloucestershire County Council Structure Plan Second Review (1999) are still valid;

- S3 Development of land within built up areas.
- S.5 Community Services and Infrastructure
- S.6 Local Character and Distinctiveness
- S.7 Environmental Quality of Development
- H.7 Affordable Housing
- T.1 New Development and the Transport System
- T.9 Public Car Parking
- EN.1 Energy Conservation
- NHE.6 Historic Environment
- RE.2 Open Space Provision

### **National Policy**

The following national Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Guidance (PPG) are relevant;

- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3 Housing
- PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment
- PPS 10 Planning for Sustainable Waste Management
- PPS 22 Renewable Energy
- PPS 23 Planning and Pollution Control
- PPS 25 Development and Flood Risk, including SUDS guidance
- PPG 13 Transport

**Extract from Environment Agency response to initial North Place & Portland Street Development Brief - 11<sup>TH</sup> April 2008**

The Environment Agency supports the principle of redevelopment at this site but wishes to make the following comments. The site is shown on our maps to be located in Flood Zone 1 which is the low flood risk zone, with less than a 1 in 1000 probability of fluvial flooding in any year. We would point out that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is yet to be undertaken, which assess all forms of flooding. There is a chance the SFRA could identify other forms of flooding affecting the site. However we anticipate that the site will be suitable for any development from a flood risk perspective. Regardless of the outcome of the SFRA the management of surface water flooding will be important.

Also we welcome that the SPD incorporates sustainable design principles and the provision of “beacon” sustainable solutions for this redevelopment.

**Flood Risk**

The site lies outside the flood plain of the River Chelt so the only issue from a flood risk perspective would be the management of the surface water drainage. A FRA in accordance with PPS 25 that addresses the risk of flooding from surface water run-off must support the planning application. We would encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated within the development. The intention to carry out a FRA which addresses surface water run-off for the development of this site should be incorporated within the development brief as this is a requirement of PPS25.

**Land Contamination**

We have no records for this site area for the type of previous land-use which existed. The brief refers to ‘brownfield’ land; from our local knowledge, this land was previously a residential area with possible commercial use. A full Desk Study should be carried out to determine a site history. No historic landfill data is available from our records for this area, but this does not mean that this area has not been land filled, as historically Cheltenham had many local clay and sand pits across the town which have been infilled with a variety of materials. This site is located on the Cheltenham Sand and Gravels a Minor aquifer, so there is a chance that this area has been locally quarried. We have no records of contaminated land at this site, but the local authority contaminated land officer should be able to confirm this further. Therefore, the Desk Study, Conceptual Model and Site Investigation will be required to support the planning application. The SPD should acknowledge this.

In terms of the parking options ... The ‘underground’ option may encroach into the Minor aquifer of the Cheltenham Sands which has a fairly shallow water table. This would mean that any development below the water table would need to consider tankering/ dewatering of the underground structure to reduce ingress of groundwater in the basement area. Sumps may also need to be incorporated into the basement to take any water away. This would be quite a challenge from an engineering point of view and very costly. An underground basement may also divert groundwater flows and affect any local abstractions in the area and flows to the River Chelt. Our concerns are that ground water should not be adversely affected and that any contamination is removed so there is no risk of creating pollution pathways. We recommend these matters are investigated prior to deciding upon the principle of underground parking. The SPD should reflect these constraints.

The documents listed (in original Section 5.2 – Planning and Related Applications) seem fairly high level and this reflects in the language used from the list (a) to (h). In our opinion (a) and (h) are very similar in content. We would prefer the wording in (h) as a ‘land contamination assessment’ is a standard requirement which would include: desk study, site investigation, risk assessment, remediation and validation. A

land contamination assessment should confirm if the site is contaminated and then made suitable for use.

### **Biodiversity**

The site is currently used as a car park covered by hard standing on the whole redevelopment area. By redeveloping this site we would advise you to seek opportunities to create more green space which would positively improve this part of town. We also strongly support that you incorporate the use of green roofs and walls into the design principles. These features also help to increase biodiversity in town centre.