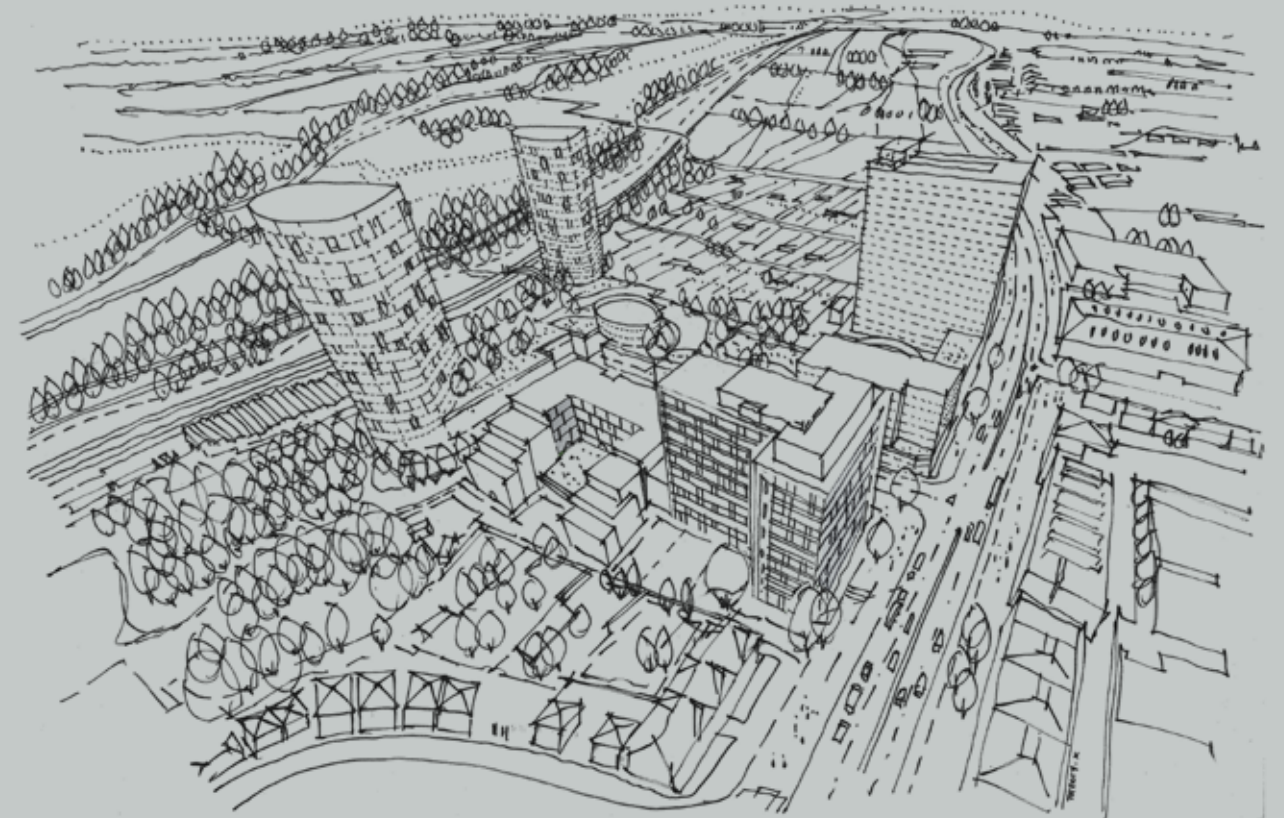


DOWNLAND CLOSE PRE-APPLICATION DOCUMENT

May 2017



INTRODUCTION

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This document outlines high-level aspirations and proposals for the redevelopment of former A1 Dairies bottling plant site, known locally as the A1 site. The site is locally owned and currently occupied by a number of B8 operators including the Applicant and is located along Downland Close in the London Borough of Barnet.

Our proposal provides an opportunity to redevelop this site for the next 30-50 year investment cycle.

This document outlines our proposals for developing a residential-led mixed-use development on the site that will provide current and future residents with a vibrant choice of retail; leisure and community uses; new green spaces and modern new residential apartments.

We wish to engage with the London Borough of Barnet, the Greater London Authority and local residents and business owners to communicate our vision for the site and discuss how we believe it will contribute to and positively affect the surrounding community.

01 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT

The site is situated, between the ridge line of Whetstone High Street and the low lying tube line running north out of Central London. The site sits within Zone 4 of the London Underground within easy reach of the City and the West End.

Immediately north of the site is a large expanse of allotments. To the west runs the exposed section of the Northern Line running to High Barnet, the next and final stop and a series of industrial workshop buildings. Further west lies the popular Brook Farm Open Space, including the Dollis Valley Greenwalk which runs parallel with the Dollis Brook.

To the east of the site runs the A1000 High Road running north from Finchley to High Barnet and beyond.

Immediately south of the site lies a recent office to residential development Northway House, providing 149 units over 13 storeys and dilapidated industrial buildings amongst dense wooded area known as the Planston Works buildings.

CONTEXT

Whetstone town centre is relatively unremarkable in character, with few buildings of architectural merit, but is an area at the beginning of a significant regeneration phase, with a number of planned and in progress redevelopments including both existing landmark towers Barnet House and Northway House into residential accommodation.

The High Road is characterised by a wide variety of forms, ages and styles of mostly commercial property. There is not a clearly defined front building line and the heights of the buildings vary considerably, there being a number of tall office blocks punctuating the view along the road.

1. Site
2. M&S Simply Food
3. Northway House
13 storey mixed use development
4. High Street Retail, Whetstone
5. Barnet House
(12 storey office block on 6m stilts undergoing conversion to residential)
6. Former B&Q site
(124 Residential Units up to 3-6 storeys)
7. Totteridge & Whetstone Tube Station
8. Dollis Valley
9. Oakleigh Park Train Station





1201 High Road, Whetstone



Barnet House



High Street



Northway House





02 EXISTING SITE

The site covers an area of over 5 acres (2.1 Ha) and is orientated east/west.

Currently the site accommodates 3 Class B8 storage buildings, a large number of shipping containers and a small office building in the NW corner.

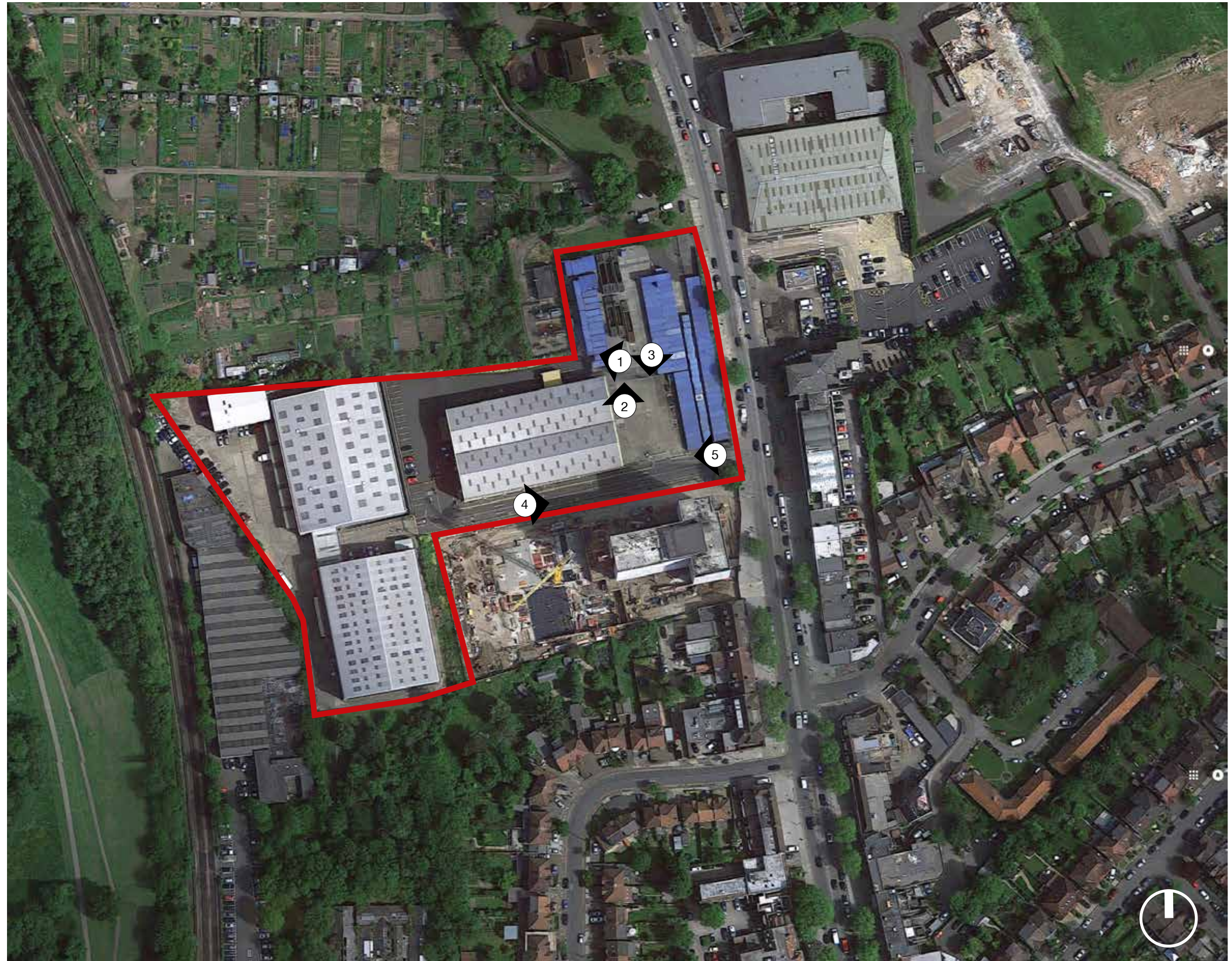
The site is owned by A1 Dairies Ltd. The applicant operates from Unit 1&2 Downland Close. Currently all buildings are in use by numerous tenants and have HGV's, predominantly larger vehicles accessing the buildings to the rear and lighter commercial traffic accessing the unit in the centre of the site.

Tenants on the site currently employ 65 people.

The site benefits from direct pedestrian access to the tube station at Totteridge and Whetstone, via a footpath on adjoining land.

There is a significant level change of the site of circa 18 metres from the High Road to the rear of the site adjacent to the vehicle maintenance workshops on the western boundary.

The buildings benefits from substantial sufficient hard standing slabs beneath the storage units which can be re-used in some of the construction of the proposed scheme.





03 EXISTING PLANS & CONSENTS

The site originally housed the farm buildings that formed part of the Brook Farm associated with the adjacent open space. The site was purchased by A1 Dairies prior to 1904. At this time, A1 & Dollis Dairies erected a small food retail outlet on the High Road at the front of the site. This area was used as a distribution depot for milk floats to local areas under the Express Dairy. The site of the building comprising Units 1 & 2 was used as a bottling plant from 1956 to 1973 when the existing building was erected for use as a distribution warehouse and let to Barnet Health Authority.

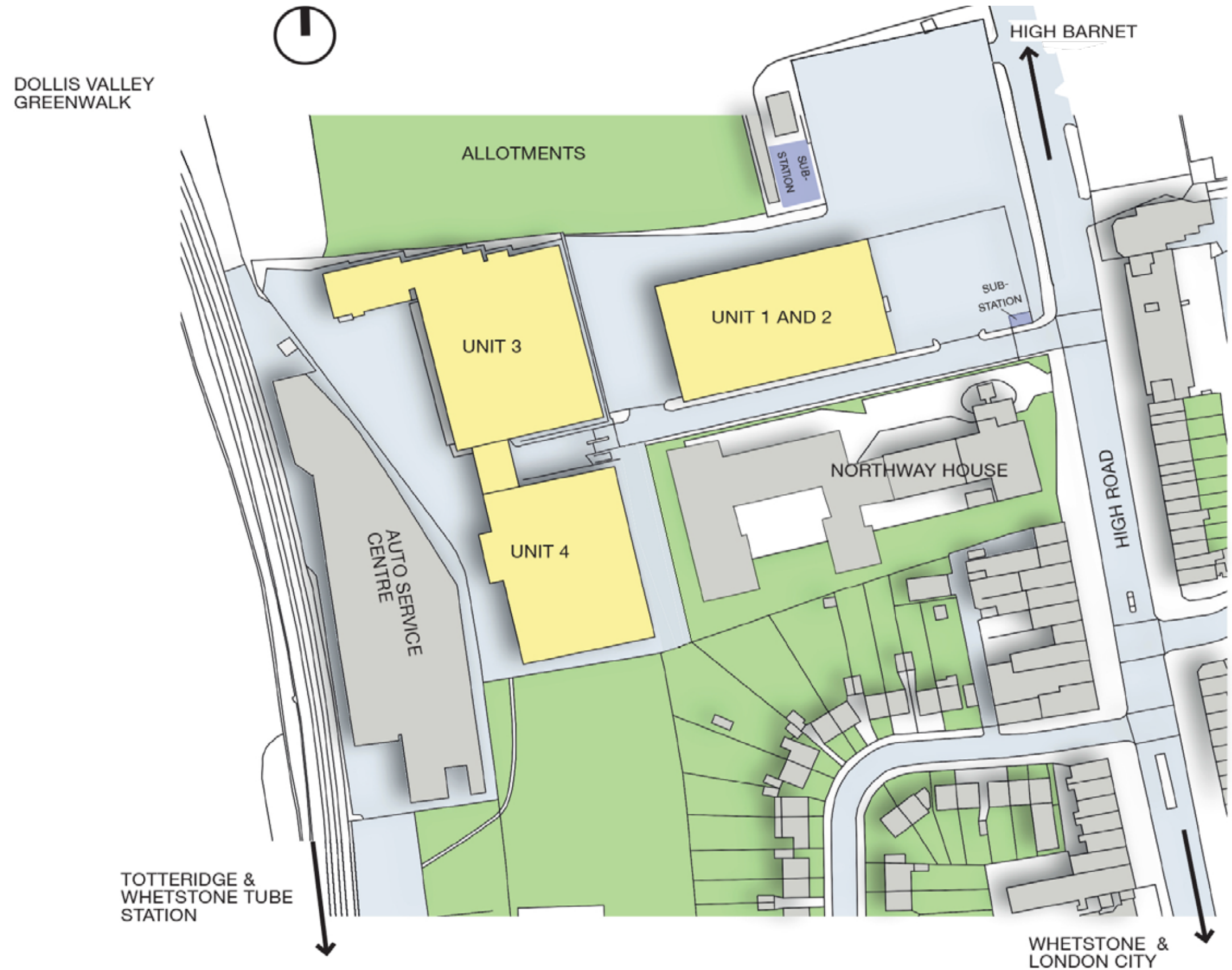
The existing site consists of a number of B8 warehouse buildings. The buildings are used for storage and self-storage and experience regular traffic movements from a mix of large and small goods vehicles.

The north east corner of the site is used for storage and distribution of shipping containers and sits on the former Express Dairy Milk Distribution Depot and benefits from an entrance opposite M&S on the High Road.

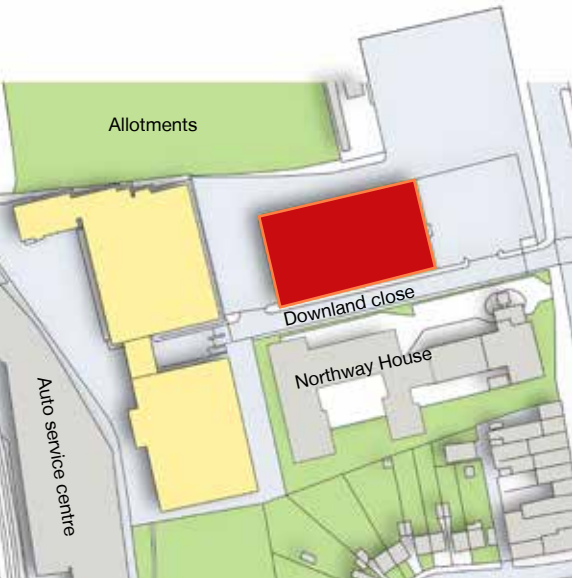
The site has a number of planning consents for additional height. These consents affect Units 1 & 2 and Unit 4. Details of these consents and the effect on building mass are shown below.

The site also has a residential unit within the office block of Unit 3 for a caretaker's flat, which has been occupied for circa 40 years.

There is a small sub-station on the corner of Downland Close and the High Road and a larger primary sub-station on the northern boundary.

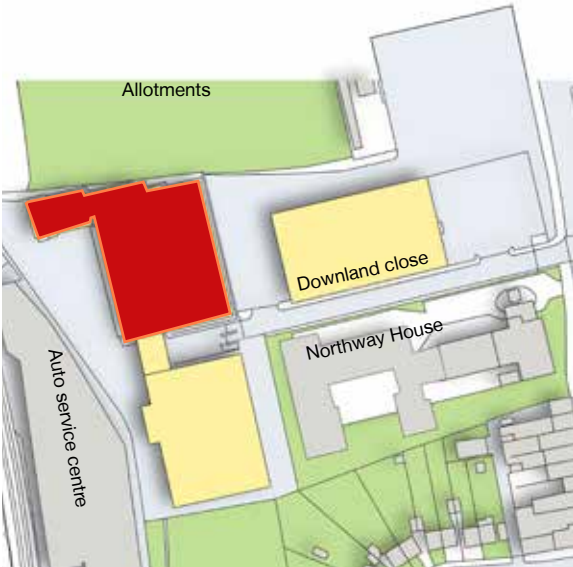


UNIT 1 & 2 AND UNIT 3

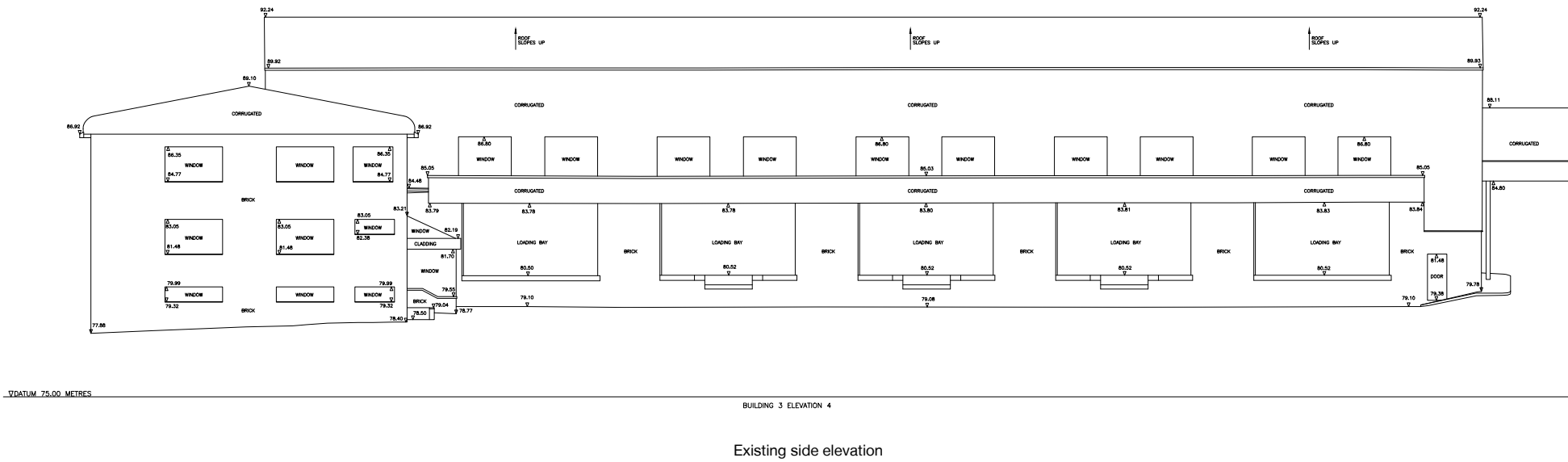
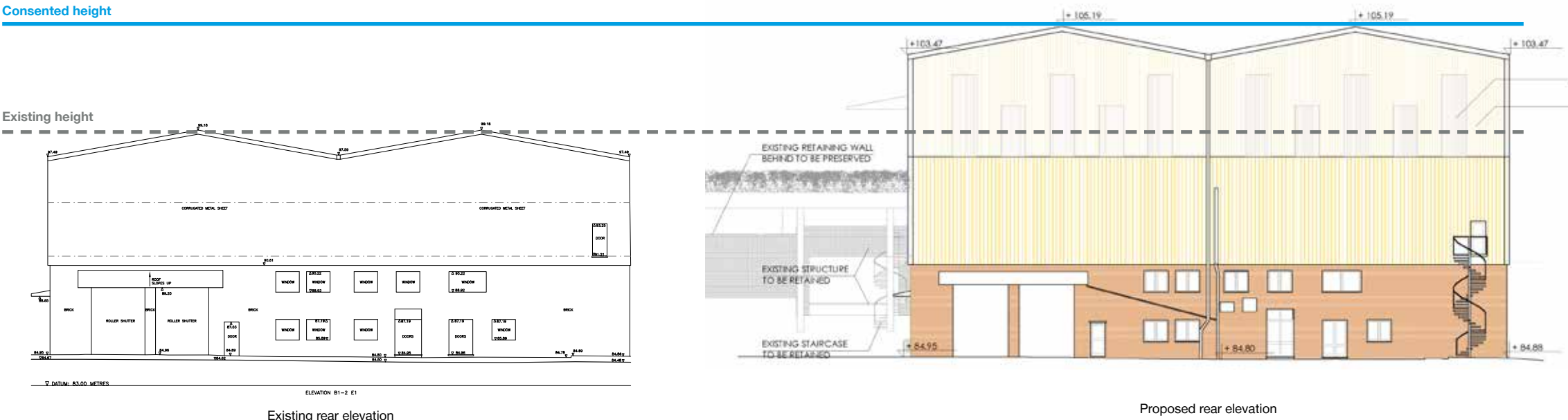


UNIT 1 AND 2
The current Unit 1 & 2 is a single building envelope with a floor area of 25,000 sq ft. The building currently has 4 floors and is primarily used for self storage units and offices for the operator and other tenants.

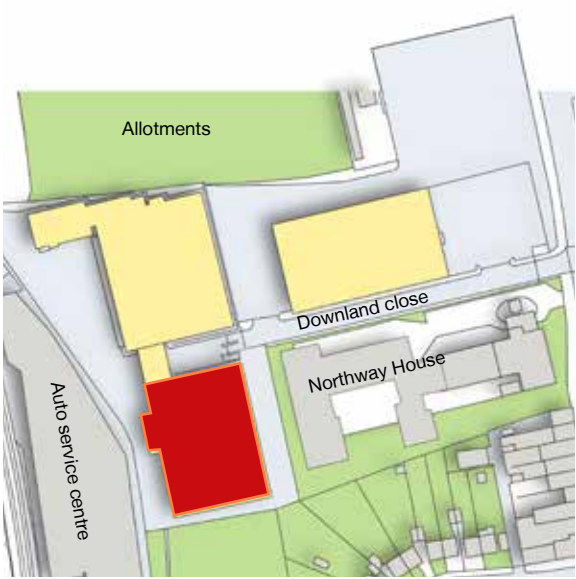
Following appeal (Ref: APP/N5090/A/13/2203563 LPA Ref: B/00845/13) planning permission has been granted for installation of access ramp to northern elevation, increase in height of warehouse by 6m, and installation of Thermosyphon solar air heating panels on southern elevation.



UNIT 3
The current Unit 3 consists of a warehouse facility of 25,000 sq ft, complete with 7 no. loading bays to the rear and an adjoining office building over 3 floors to the west.

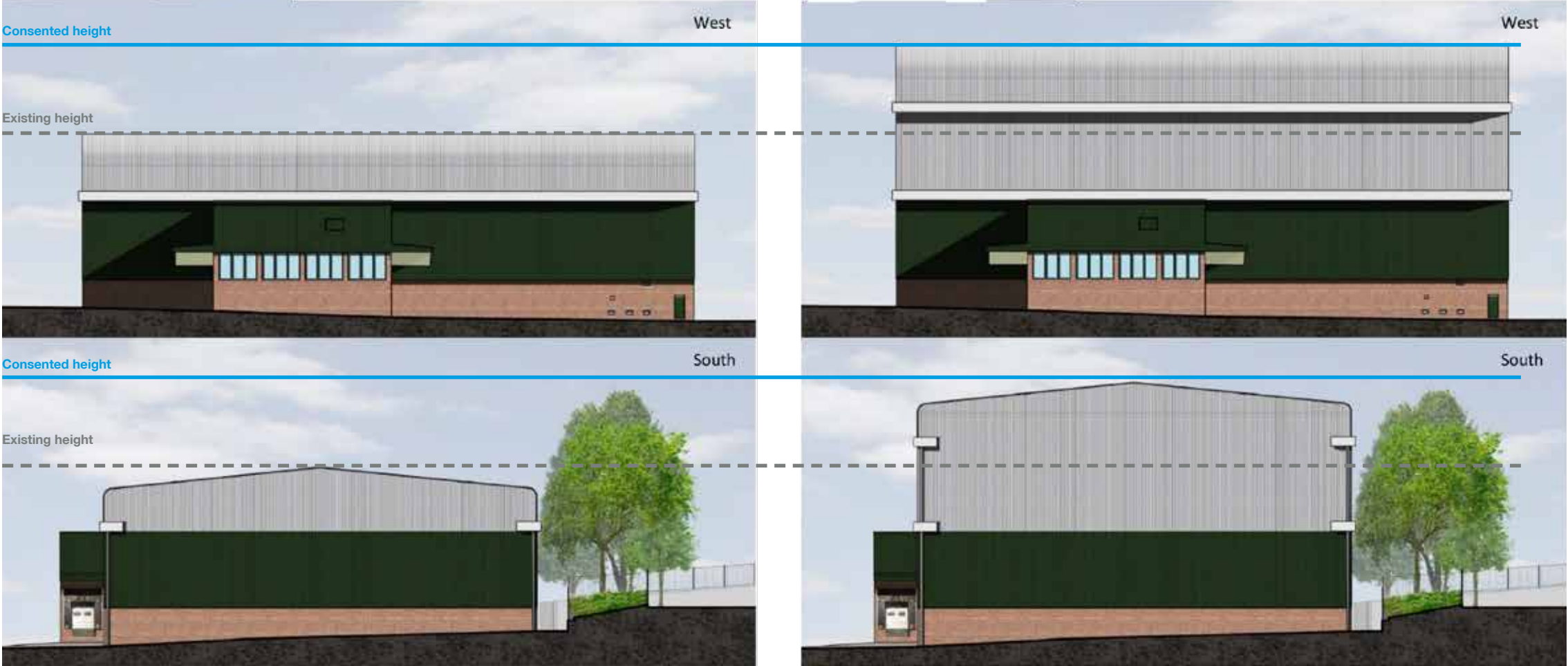


UNIT 4



UNIT 4
 Unit 4 is currently utilised and classified as Class B8 warehouse and occupied by a single tenant and contains a single floor with an area of 23,800 sq ft.

Following appeal (Ref. No: 16/2868/FUL and alternative ref PP-05100310) planning permission granted for external alterations to warehouse building, including increasing ridge height by 7.9m



Existing elevations

Proposed elevations



This image shows consented heights (in yellow) for Units 1 & 2 and Unit 4

04 SITE ANALYSIS

SITE CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

The site sits on the eastern ridge of the Dollis Valley at the northern end of the High Road and Whetstone Town Centre.

To the west is the Dollis Valley Greenwalk and to the north is a large area of allotments.

The site benefits from close proximity to Totteridge and Whetstone tube station, which sits within Zone 4 on the Northern Line with travel times into Central London of 30 minutes. The site also benefits from existing public rights of egress and exit to site for a direct pedestrian access from the tube station car park to the rear of the site. This has the potential to increase the PTAL rating for the site from 4.

The site is visible from higher ground to the west.

The High Road is a busy vehicular route through adjoining towns of North London including Chipping Barnet, Whetstone and Finchley.

To the north east of the site lies Oakleigh Park overground rail station with services into Kings Cross taking approximately 30 minutes.

A number of east/west pedestrian routes lead down to the High Road.

A primary school lies less than 1km from the site to the south east.

There is a significant height change of over 18m from east to west across the site which presents design challenges for pedestrian and vehicular flows.



05 LOCAL POLICY

Our proposals directly respond to key aspects within the Barnet's Regeneration policy and builds upon a number of key development zones across the borough.

The policy states:

“Our approach to growth and regeneration is based around five clear priorities:

- To enhance Barnet as a successful London suburb through the **delivery of quality new homes** and neighbourhoods in the areas of the borough in greatest need of investment and renewal
- To **deliver sustainable housing growth** and infrastructure, and improve the condition and sustainability of the existing housing stock
- To ensure residents in all areas of the borough can share in Barnet's success while **taking responsibility for the well-being of their families and their communities**
- To promote economic growth by **encouraging new business growth while supporting local businesses and town centres**
- To help residents to access the right skills to meet employer needs and **take advantage of new job opportunities**

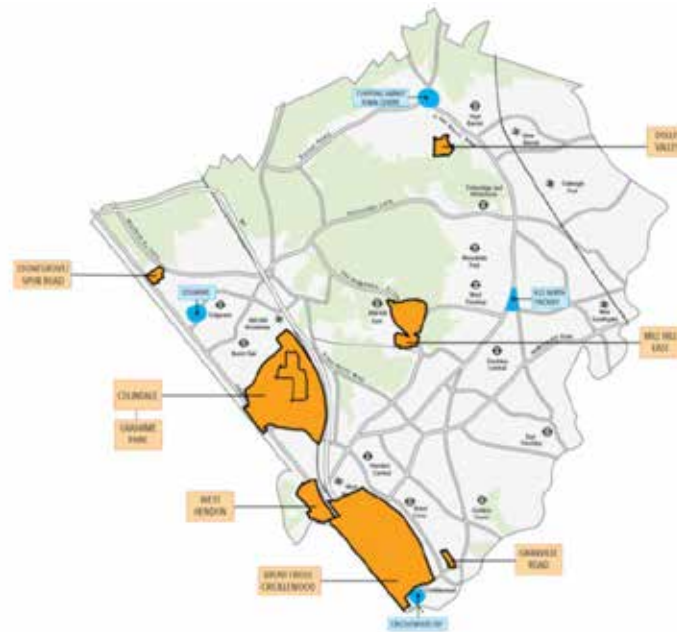
The schemes currently underway include the regeneration of four largest housing estates - West Hendon, Stonegrove and Spur Road, Dollis Valley and Grahame Park, where we will deliver 7000 new homes (4000 more than previously on the estates) and they will provide a range of social rent, affordable and market rate homes.

As we deliver our existing plans, we will continue to look at how we can maximise land owned by the council to build new homes and help meet rising demand. We've committed to building 500 affordable homes on council owned land by 2021 - we're already in the process of building the first 40 and have plans for a further 270."

Major regeneration and growth areas

With seven major schemes already underway in the borough, the programme is set to deliver 27,000 new social, affordable and market rate, homes in the next ten to 15 years this includes:

- 10,000 in Colindale
- 7500 in Brent Cross/Cricklewood
- 2,000 in Mill Hill East
- 7000 through our estate regeneration schemes
- 500 built on council-owned land



Brent Cross / Cricklewood
The masterplan for Brent Cross Cricklewood covers 141 hectares (370 acres) with the iconic Brent Cross Shopping Centre the focal point.
In 2010 Hammerson and Standard Life Investments **secured outline planning permission** for a £4 billion masterplan to create a new town centre, including 841,615 sq ft of retail space, 7,500 homes, 27,000 jobs, three re-built schools, new parks and community facilities, an additional train station on the Midland Mainline, and major road and public transport improvements.



West Hendon
The delivery of 2,000 high-quality private and affordable homes – surrounded by improved open space, thriving shops and businesses, a community centre, better roads and land for a new school – will provide hundreds of jobs and rejuvenate West Hendon. Barratt Metropolitan LLP was **granted an outline planning consent** by Barnet Council for the regeneration of the estate in July 2013. Detailed designs of the next 216 homes (Phase 3A) were also approved at the same time. Since then a Reserved Matters application for Phases 3B 3C has been submitted and approved.



Colindale & Grahame Park
Colindale has been identified as an area for significant strategic growth via the Colindale Area Action Plan and is one of the largest growth and regeneration areas in the Borough. Colindale represents an opportunity to deliver sustainable housing growth and a new compact neighbourhood centre which will be well served by both improved public transport service and high quality public open space.



Dollis Valley
These proposals include replacing the existing 436 flats and maisonettes with a mixed tenure high quality development of up to 616 new homes. This new development will consist of affordable homes for social rent, shared equity and homes for sale on the open market. **Approved subject to conditions.**



Mill Hill
The proposals include plans for 2,000 new homes and 500 jobs, a new community hub to provide retail, commercial and community facilities and public transport and highways improvements. The council's overall aim is to create a truly sustainable and well-designed new community.

We have also referred to the Luton Bedford Corridor Development Plan and the 2010 Barnet Tall Building Study (see p.21) for policy which supports development in this area.

These documents recognise the importance of development within the Borough and needs for additional housing due to population growth as well as the potential for high density development and tall buildings.

“By 2026 the GLA estimate that 133,582 additional residents will live in Barnet, Brent, Camden and Harrow. To meet this expansion, the 4 boroughs are set to accommodate 41,700 new homes between 2007/08 and 2017/18 (London Plan consolidate with alterations 2008). “

“Barnet needs to find 20,550 new homes from 2007/8 - 2017/18.”

Barnet is recognised for the ability to deliver 80% of its housing capacity in key large sites from the 4 Boroughs covered by the report.

North West London is considered to provide a gateway and corridor of connection between the economic ‘powerhouse’ of central London and wider areas of growth. The concept of a co-ordination corridor, focussed on Barnet, Brent, Camden and Harrow is considered to promote cross-borough working and provide potential efficiencies in infrastructure provision.

The boroughs of Brent and Barnet have already been identified for special status by central government, while Harrow and Camden are also set to experience significant growth and major regeneration projects.

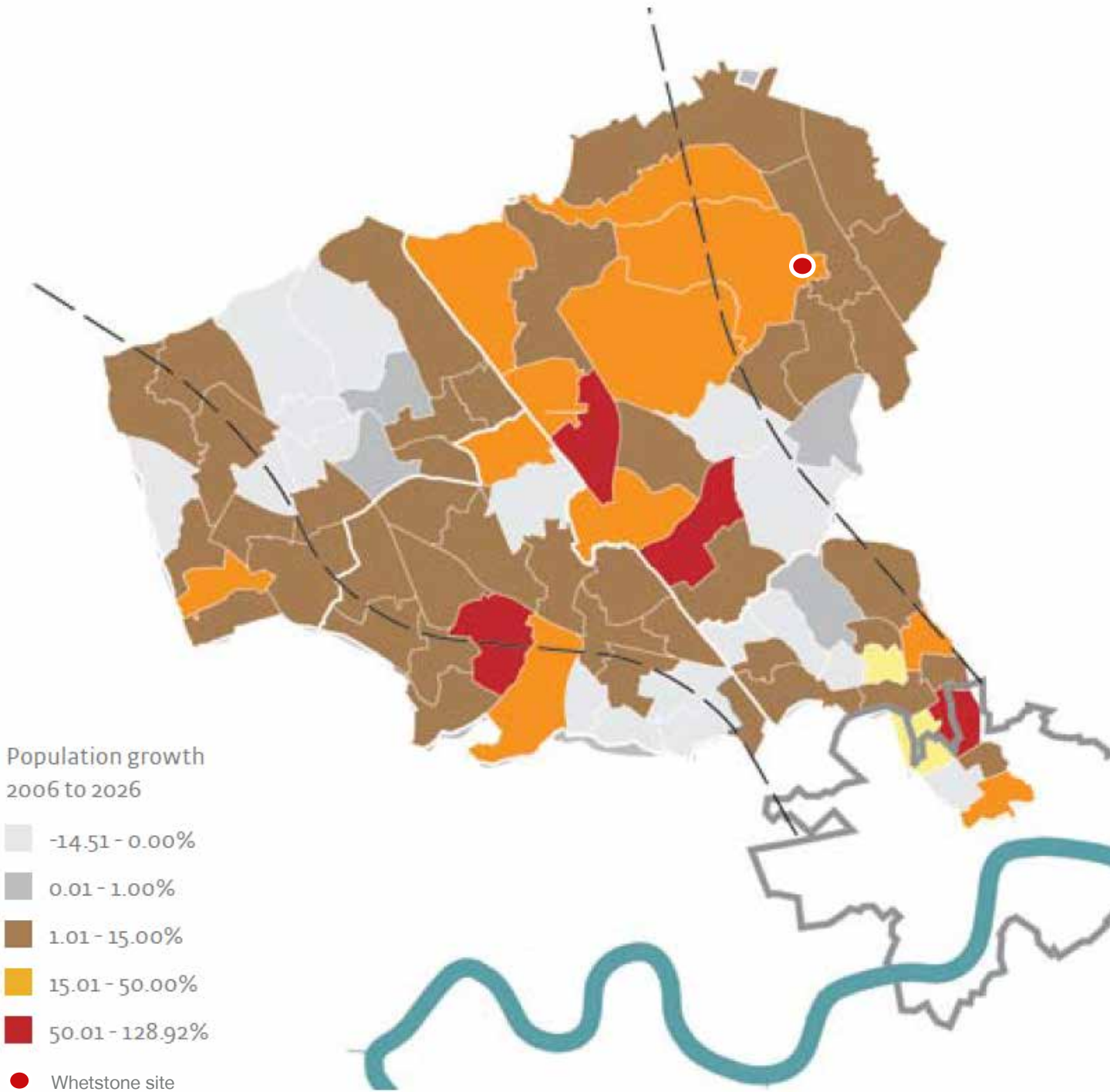
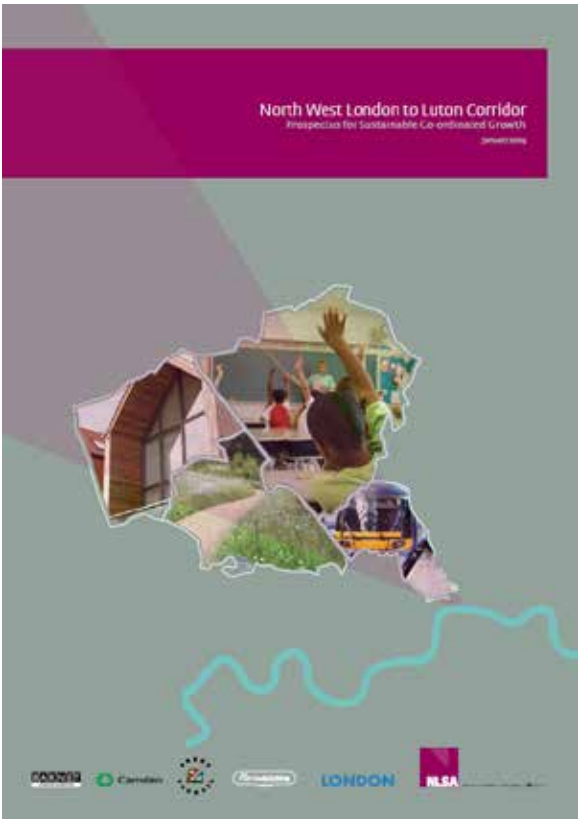
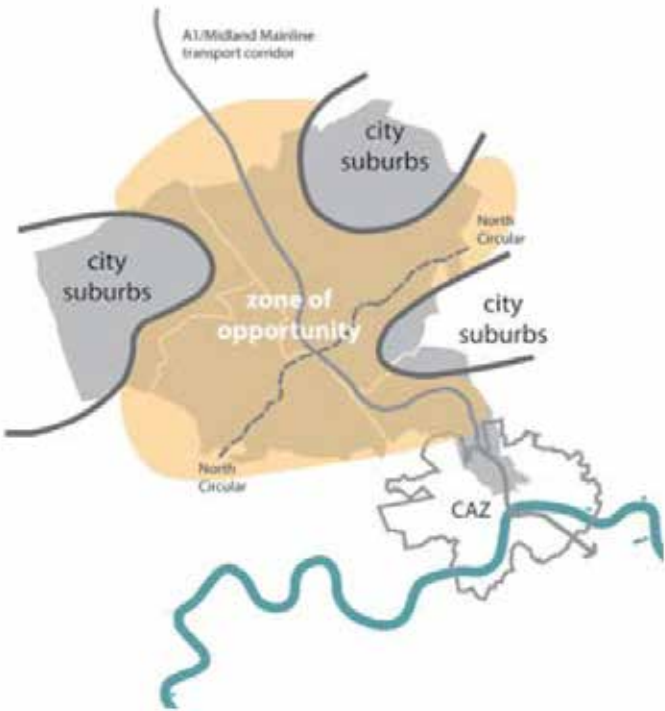


Figure 28
North West London Corridor
'zone of opportunity'.



06 PLANNING POLICY APPRAISAL

This section considers the planning position relating to the proposed redevelopment of land at Downland Close. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies contained within the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Statutory Development Plan comprises The London Plan (2015), LBB Core Strategy (CS) (2012) and LBB Development Management Policies DPD (DM) (2012).

This section assesses:

1. The acceptability of the loss of the existing employment use as well as its re-provision in part with other appropriate employment uses;
2. The principle of redeveloping the site for residential use;
3. The principle of redeveloping the site for other mixed uses including retail, cinema etc.

These are addressed in turn below.

1. EXISTING EMPLOYMENT USE

1.1 The site is in Class B Employment Use (Class B8 storage, with some ancillary B1 office) and is estimated to provide only circa 65 FTE jobs. The existing buildings and yards however respond poorly to the site's townscape context and represent an inefficient use of this highly accessible site. The site provides a clear opportunity to deliver high quality mixed use redevelopment including an improvement in retail/employment floorspace alongside new homes.

1.2 The intention is that the existing buildings will be replaced with a more efficient form of mixed use development. The proposals however allow for 1,022 sqm (GIA) of office to be included as well as other employment generating uses e.g. food retail; cinema; 100 bedroom hotel; 20,000 sq ft of other leisure uses; gym and other medical/health related amenities etc.

1.3 It is anticipated as a consequence that the number of jobs created will be in excess of the existing level.

1.4 This site lies directly adjacent to a town centre and is evidently underutilised by the existing use. It is therefore entirely suitable for a high density mixed use redevelopment which will deliver a net increase in jobs through the provision of employment generating uses.

1.5. **Given the above we would conclude therefore that the loss of a class B8 use is acceptable in planning terms.**

2. PRINCIPLE OF RESIDENTIAL

2.1 The development proposes 600 residential units.

2.2 The principle of residential units on the site is also acceptable as it is in line with national, strategic and local policy. Housing is identified as a priority land use on former employment sites and the London Plan recognises the "pressing need" for additional homes in London. The London Plan 2015 sets a target of 23,489 dwellings to be provided within LB Barnet between 2015-2025. The LBB Core Strategy provides an expectation that 28,000 new homes will be met during the lifetime of the Core Strategy (2011-2026).

2.3 London Boroughs should seek to achieve and exceed the relevant minimum average housing target, optimising housing output on sites. This includes the need to realise the potential of brownfield housing capacity, particularly in highly accessible locations.

2.4 In terms of appropriate density levels the site has a PTAL level greater than Northway House, the density of which is based on a PTAL banding of 4-6. In response to this and against the London Plan density standards we would suggest that a density of up to 1100 habitable rooms, per hectare is acceptable. The London Plan and the Housing SPG are also clear that higher densities are appropriate in locations where public transport accessibility and connectivity are already good or are anticipated to improve.

2.5 The development of up to 600 new homes on a circa 2 Ha site is consistent with the above guidance on densities and will make an important contribution towards these local and strategic housing objectives. The development will provide a range of residential units of varying size, including an appropriate level of family accommodation. It will make a valuable contribution towards local housing need and responds directly to the residential land use objectives outlined in the London Plan and adopted emerging local policy.

2.6 The London Plan sets out a variety of requirements for residential dwellings (minimum dwelling sizes, private amenity standards and child play space etc) as well as accessibility requirements which will be achieved throughout the development.

2.7 **To conclude, it is considered that this is an appropriate location for high density residential development of the type proposed.**



3. RETAIL USES

3.1 Retail uses are a defined “town centre” use (NPPF, Annex 2) and should be directed towards Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) within defined “town centres” (this includes district centres). Figure 3.1 shows the defined town centre boundary and the main retail frontages for Whetstone District Centre. The Plan does not identify a PSA, although this is generally the primary shopping frontages and adjoining secondary frontages. The site therefore immediately adjoins the town centre boundary and is within 150 metres of the PSA (DM Policy DM11). As such, it is an ‘edge of centre’ site.

3.2 In line with planning policy, retail uses will be acceptable in principle on edge of centre sites if they can demonstrate compliance with the sequential and impact tests. The sequential test directs retail development to PSAs in the first instance, followed by edge of centre locations. Within the PSA we are not aware of any there are no available or suitable development sites.

3.3 Policy CS6 promotes the distribution of retail growth to meet the capacity for an additional 2,200 sqm of convenience goods across Barnet. In addition the Core Strategy identifies capacity for an additional 16,800 sqm (net) of comparison goods floorspace. The proposals can contribute to these needs.

3.4 The site forms a natural extension to the ‘town centre’ and retail development on the site would enhance the vitality and viability of Whetstone District Centre by enhancing footfall and encouraging linked trips. The majority of the retail floorspace on the site will front the High Road and create an active frontage to increase footfall and bring significant benefits to the wider centre.

3.5 A retail assessment has been undertaken by Lichfields to establish the requirement for additional retail floorspace in line with the sequential test requirements. This suggested that expenditure capacity could support around 3,525 sqm net of convenience goods floorspace.

3.6 **The provision of both comparison and convenience floorspace would therefore meet a required need and would strengthen the retail offer available in Whetstone.**

4. EVENING ECONOMY USES

4.1 Cinema, restaurants and bars are all defined “town centre” uses. The NPPF encourages these uses to be directed to town centre locations.

4.2 The Core Strategy identifies that there are four cinemas providing 21 screens within the borough and that cinema provision is considered adequate to meet cinema demand, unless the market dictates otherwise. A study was undertaken by Lichfields on the current and emerging cinema capacity in the area which market capacity for further cinema provision in Whetstone.

4.3 Given the site’s location, there is potential to promote other evening economy uses such as restaurants and bars in this

location would enhance the vitality and viability of the district centre by drawing customers to the centre, beyond core shopping hours, and encourage linked trips.

4.4 Impact on residential amenity will be an important consideration if these uses are progressed. Policy CS6 seeks to ensure that food, drink and entertainment uses as part of a healthy evening economy in town centres do not have a harmful effect on residents and the local area. Cinemas and restaurants work successfully alongside residential uses and measures will be put in place to ensure the scheme does not give rise to adverse noise, litter and anti-social behaviour.

4.5 The Core Strategy recognises that most of the existing hotels are not within town centres. The Development Management Policy document states that the Council will consider hotels as tourism related development and would expect them to locate in a town centre with good public transport links. **Given the location of the site adjacent to Whetstone town centre as part of a mix of commercial uses we would suggest that this part of the proposed scheme is policy compliant.**

SUMMARY

The proposed development will deliver a wide range of planning, housing, employment, community and environmental benefits.

1. The principle of a mixed use development of the scale, quantum and composition proposed at the site is firmly supported by the NPPF, the development plan and associated guidance. The scheme is strongly supported by policy and guidance at all levels;

2. In contrast with the existing use the proposed development will provide a net increase in job creation;

3. The scheme will provide 600 high quality residential units making an important contribution towards local and strategic housing objectives. This is a significant benefit in the light of London’s pressing housing need and the role of Barnet in fulfilling that need;

4. The scheme will provide a range of market and affordable residential units of varying size, tenure and type, including a good level of family accommodation, alongside smaller entry level units. The proposed dwelling mix responds to local need, will contribute towards the creation of a mixed and balanced community and is of major benefit to the local housing stock;

5. All of the proposed units will be designed to comply with the London Plan floorspace standards and the requirements of the GLA’s Housing Design Guide. All will experience high standards of amenity and will provide a good residential environment;

6. The proposed development will be of the highest design and architectural quality. It will significantly enhance the area’s townscape and public realm, and will strengthen the area’s character and identity; and

7. The development will deliver significant investment in this area. It will act as a catalyst in the area’s regeneration and will form a precedent for high quality place sensitive design. This is a strategically important location in the local centre, which warrants a high quality scheme of the height, scale, configuration and character proposed.

The development will deliver a range of significant planning and regeneration benefits, including employment generation; maximising the delivery of high quality homes and contribution towards creating sustainable communities objectives; its design quality, townscape response and public realm benefits; local environmental enhancement; and sustainability and renewable energy use.



07 PROPOSAL

OUR VISION FOR THE SITE

Our ambition for the site is to create a sustainable, unique mixed-use destination at the northern end of Whetstone High Road that complements the town centre and provides a rich mix of new retail and leisure uses for the residents of the surrounding areas.

Our inspiration comes from world-class examples of well designed, desirable high density developments around transport hubs, examples of which can be found across dynamic, cosmopolitan urban centres and can offer an alternative to the distribution units currently on site.

The concept for the proposal is to provide generously apportioned and spatial residential units above a commercial podium. The planted deck below acts as a residential pedestrian plane that runs through the scheme, transcending the significant level changes in the site and provides a memorable passage across the site for visitors and residents.

The roof space will be landscaped with a mix of hard and soft areas, including the addition of new trees. It is intended that part of this **space will be made available for local events** such as farmers' markets including arts & crafts events giving the wider community a local place.

We envisage the scheme will offer a **concierge located at the heart of the site** in a residential hub that reflects the increasing appetite for community gatherings of this nature in new residential developments.

We believe that **both the location and the physical nature of the site lend themselves to a high density development that utilises high-rise buildings** to deliver a landmark scheme that will place Whetstone among the growing number of modern-living focused developments designed to meet the demanding needs of future generations.

The direct access to the Totteridge & Whetstone tube station at the rear of the site provides an enhanced PTAL rating over the adjacent Northway House development, supporting our proposal for 600 high-quality residential units.

Currently tall buildings in the area are largely imposing 1960's mid-height concrete blocks which are of no architectural merit. **We intend to provide well designed, efficiently planned towers that provide a range of benefits for residents**, such as minimal overshadowing of amenity spaces.



08 CONCEPT & MIX

CONCEPT DIAGRAM

Our proposal seeks to deliver a residential-led mixed-use development which complements the existing town centre of Whetstone by providing a range of suitable new commercial and leisure uses.

These different uses will be connected by a series of built spaces and an open rooftop landscaped plane.

Visitors will progress through the scheme across an internal access plane and via external footpaths, whilst residents will have access to the landscaped garden plane, that mirrors the surrounding green space, situated across the centre of the development, giving an enhanced feeling of privacy.

Space above the retail unit on the High Road will be designed to accommodate local events and markets to the benefit of new residents and the wider community.

The proposed mix of development includes:

- 600 residential units
- 40,000 sq ft of food retail
- 20,000 sq ft cinema
- 100 bedroom hotel
- 20,000 sq ft of other leisure uses
- 10,000 sq ft gym and other medical/health related amenities
- High levels of car parking to service residents, guests and visitors of the commercial elements
- 60,000sq ft of green amenity space including 60 new trees, to improve air quality. Can be partially used to accommodate local events or similar and open spaces at high-level
- A public rooftop restaurant providing views across Dollis Valley
- We would also aspire to connecting with the existing bridge (HB60) in Walfield Avenue from the Brook Open Space or by creating a new foot/cycle path to the north west corner of the site
- Renew 11,000 sq ft offices on site.



OUR PROPOSAL

Residential

The proposal seeks to support the Borough and wider city, by contributing to the provision of much needed new housing through well designed tower developments that maximise the commercial and amenity spaces at lower levels for residents and public to enjoy.

Based upon the GLA's current guidance, the site has the potential to provide in the region of 600 new homes, given its proximity to the tube station at Totteridge & Whetstone and excellent bus route connectivity along the High Road (which results in a PTAL rating higher than that of the adjacent Northway House development which has a density comparable to PTAL 5/6.) This provides a density level of 520 units or 1400 habitable rooms across the 2.1 Ha site. Our scheme also benefits from an existing walkway directly from the underground station car park to the rear of the development. We believe this additional access improves our density further. We would also like to explore the opportunity to connect to the pedestrian footbridge at Brook Farm Open Space via a new path along TfL land adjacent to the tube line, reconnecting the northern end of the town centre to the other side of the Dollis Valley.

We will deliver a suitable mix of units to suit families as well as providing appropriate numbers of 1 and 2 bed apartments for young, mobile professionals who want high quality apartment living in easy reach of the city centre and will cater for this within our unit mix.

The site is capable of offering a number of different tenure types.

Leisure

We propose to complement existing retail in the town and provide much needed leisure uses within Whetstone which are currently predominantly independent, small scale operations. With the increasing number of residents within the Borough, we believe that there is the potential for a 5 screen cinema in this location and this is supported by our Lichfield's Cinescope analysis of the local catchment; visitor classification and existing provision.

Further proposed leisure uses may include large activity based leisure use facilities to support the new residents. These may include a healthcare and well-being suite and amenity throughout the scheme. We also propose to include a hotel that would again complement existing offers and provide additional accommodation for visitors to residents in the new scheme.

We aspire to provide a luxurious public roof top dining experience at the top of Tower 1 above the High Road, that lends spectacular views across the valley and back to the City Centre.

Retail

The site is located 100m closer to the town centre than the adjacent Marks & Spencer Simply Food and on the edge of the Primary Shopping Area. Retail uses proposed include a new foodstore located along the High Road that will offer greater choice to the increasing residential population. Locating a food retail unit here will also create an active frontage to the site. A range of suitable retail offers including destination speciality shopping will increase the diversity on offer to residents and visitors to the area and increase the footfall to the existing high street by bringing more visitors to Whetstone and completing the circular loop of commercial offers.

Car parking & cycles

We aspire to provide sufficient of car parking across the site with circa 400 spaces for commercial and guest parking and 600 spaces for residents, including required spaces for disabled drivers. We will provide an appropriate number of cycle storage.

Green space

We will create approximately 60,000 sq ft of green residential amenity space, including a number of new trees within the heart of the scheme which will benefit both residents, visitors and the local community in air quality and visual terms.

Vehicular Routes

Pedestrian Routes

Residential

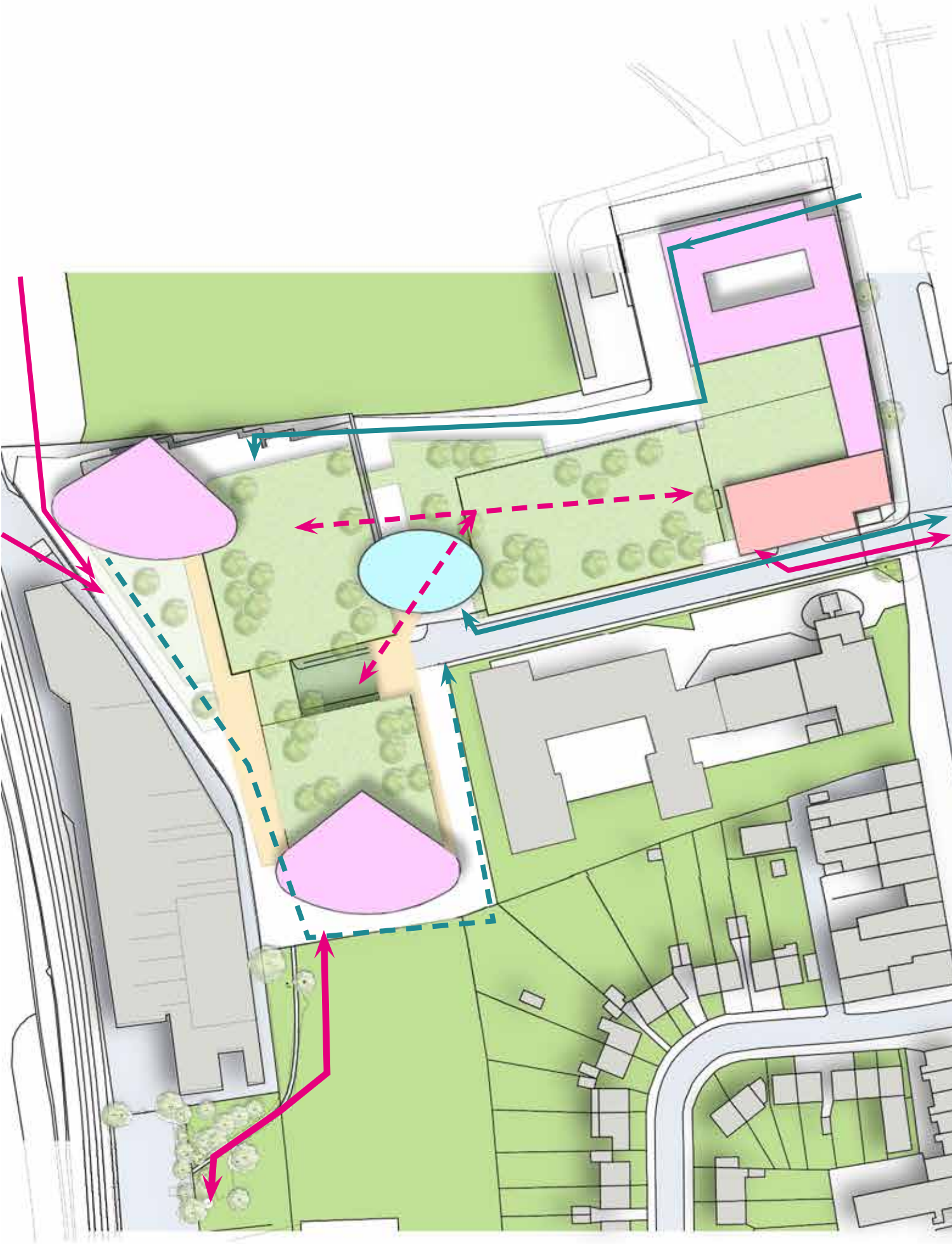
Hotel

Retail & F&B

Gym

Leisure

Cinema



09 MASSING, HEIGHTS & KEY VIEWS

The proposed scheme aims to support the stated ‘pressing need’ for additional homes in London and sits within appropriate density levels for this site based upon location and adjacent transport routes.

Using the adjacent development at Northway House as a guide, we have based the proposals upon a PTAL rating of 5/6, which gives a density of 200-700 habitable rooms per hectare. Given the site, the proposal achieves a density of up to 1,400 habitable rooms, subject to design, townscape and highways supporting this.

The proposed number of units within the scheme is approximately 600, with an appropriate mix of 1,2, 3 and 4 bed units.

There are a few distinct and highly visible, yet dated large buildings along Whetstone including the Council’s own offices at 1255 High Road, built in 1966 and known locally as Barnet House; Northway House (1968) and further south, the Tally Ho development in Finchley. We have taken the AOD heights of Tally Ho and the spire of Barnet Church as our visual heights corridor, which gives us 66 metres above the level of the High Road, or circa 22 storeys based upon 3m floor to floor heights. The site has a significant level change of over 18 metres from the High Road to the rear of the site, supporting the opportunity for additional height at the rear of the scheme, adjacent to the rail line.

Stepped planted terraces will be used to soften western and northern elevations.

BARNET TALL BUILDINGS STUDY 2010

Definition of Tall Building – “8 storeys and above. Buildings above eight storeys tend to take on the attributes of a tall building in a context such as Barnet. They are increasingly likely to be more slender in proportion and may play a more significant role as landmarks due to their greater prominence. Some examples, such as 1255 High Road (see Image 1, right) are slab buildings which are narrow in profile. Later buildings such as the Arts Depot have increasingly broader profiles creating a bulkier appearance and having a significant impact” (Page 5).

Recognition therefore that impact of a ‘tall building’ is dependent upon its profile and location.

Existing Tall Buildings – Recognition that tall buildings have developed along ‘historic corridors’ including the A1000 which has been the “focus for continual renewal and intensification over time and include a spread of tall buildings.” (see Figure 1, Page 6 of Study and Northway House.)

Tall Buildings – Key Issues

1. Topography – “...the Great North Road corridor is along a well-defined ridge – this means that tall buildings within this area are likely to be highly visible and some examples have a significant impact on the skyline of the borough. This can have a positive effect if the building is both elegant and also

provides a meaningful landmark to a place of significance (page 10). However, it is most often regarded as having a negative impact on the character of the area.”

2. Accessibility – “Tall buildings are capable of delivering a high population density which is best associated with good easy access to shops and services and good quality public transport links in order to provide sustainable forms of development (page 14)”. Download Close site has a PTAL of 4.
3. Heritage – “There should be a general presumption that tall buildings are not likely to be appropriate within or close to conservation areas or in close proximity to significant listed buildings. Careful consideration needs to be given to the potential negative impact of tall buildings falling within the back-drop of key views to listed buildings and within conservation areas (page 16)”. Download Close site not located within or near Conservation Area.
4. Open Space – “Where tall buildings are well integrated with their urban context and are located on the edge of an open space this can have a positive character, with the scale of the tower complemented by the scale of the space (page 18”. The Downland Close site is well located and near open space to west which would improve further through provision of footbridge over LUL line.
5. Key Views – “Given the impact of existing tall buildings on these views, it will be important to assess the potential impact of any proposed tall building. This should establish the key features of the view and how they may be affected. Impact will be considered significant if the proposed tall building is likely to mask or clash with the principle focus of the view; or if it is tall enough to break the horizon line and take very significant prominence (page 20).” The Downland Close site is not located in any of the defined 4 Key Views (see Figure 6 below) but its visual impact has nevertheless been assessed in this pre-application document.
6. Urban Grain – “Those existing towers which work best with the urban grain of the area tend to be those which have a direct relationship with the street to establish human scale. The design of a tall building to maintain an appropriate relationship to the street is likely to require active non-residential uses at ground floor (page 22).” Proposals include active frontage with direct relationship to High Road.

Conclusion – Downland Close proposals are compliant with key issues identified in 2010 Tall Buildings Study.

Other benefits of towers over lower rise developments include:

- Better views for residents
- Ability to offer enhanced commercial amenity space
- Shadows move more quickly



Image 1: Barnet House, 1255 High Road



Image 2: Northway House

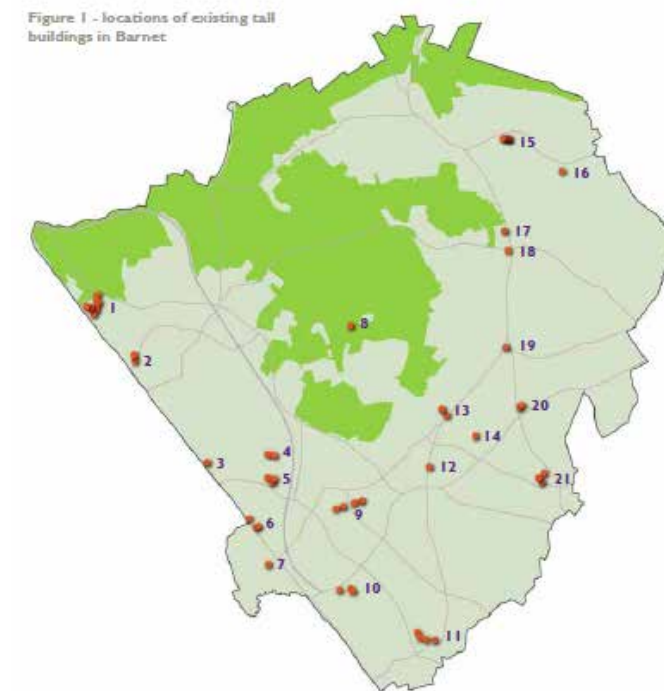


Fig 1, Page 6 - Existing Tall Buildings

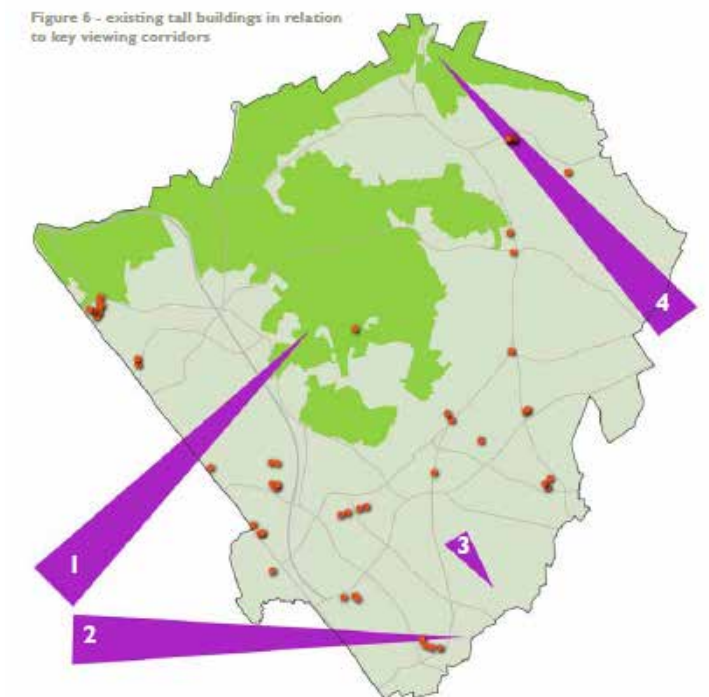


Fig 6, Page 20 - Key Views

CORE STRATEGY CS5

Core Strategy CS5 defines what can be considered a tall building in the borough of Barnet. The London Plan paragraph 7.25 defines a tall building as one that is substantially taller than its surroundings, or significantly changes the skyline. Barnet’s Core Strategy defines a ‘tall building’ as being eight storeys (equivalent to 26 metres above ground level) or more.

Policy DM05 sets out the criteria against which tall building proposals should be assessed. DM05 states that:

Tall buildings outside the strategic locations identified in the Core Strategy will not be considered acceptable. Proposals for tall buildings will need to demonstrate:

- i an active street frontage where appropriate;*
- ii successful integration into the existing urban fabric;*
- iii a regard to topography and no adverse impact on Local Viewing Corridors, local views and the skyline;*
- iv not cause harm to heritage assets and their setting; and*
- v that the potential microclimatic effect does not adversely affect existing levels of comfort in the public realm.*

Proposals for redevelopment or refurbishment of existing tall buildings will be required to make a positive contribution to the townscape.

Each of these criteria have been assessed below:

Active Street Frontage

The scheme will include active street frontage through the provision of retail and leisure uses at ground floor fronting onto Whetstone High Road - the ground floor level units will address and activate these spaces.

Integration into the existing urban fabric

The surrounding area is predominately low rise buildings of two/ three storeys with those building in retail use along the High Road and then extending towards the surrounding residential areas. Immediately around the site there are a number of ‘tall buildings’ including Barnet House, Northway House and the emerging residential development at 1201 High Road.

The location of the site being an accessible location and its physical nature lend itself to a higher density development comprising taller buildings. The high rise elements of the scheme which will be circa 22 storeys will create landmarks which will denote the entrance to the district centre.

No adverse impact on Local Viewing Corridors, local views and the skyline

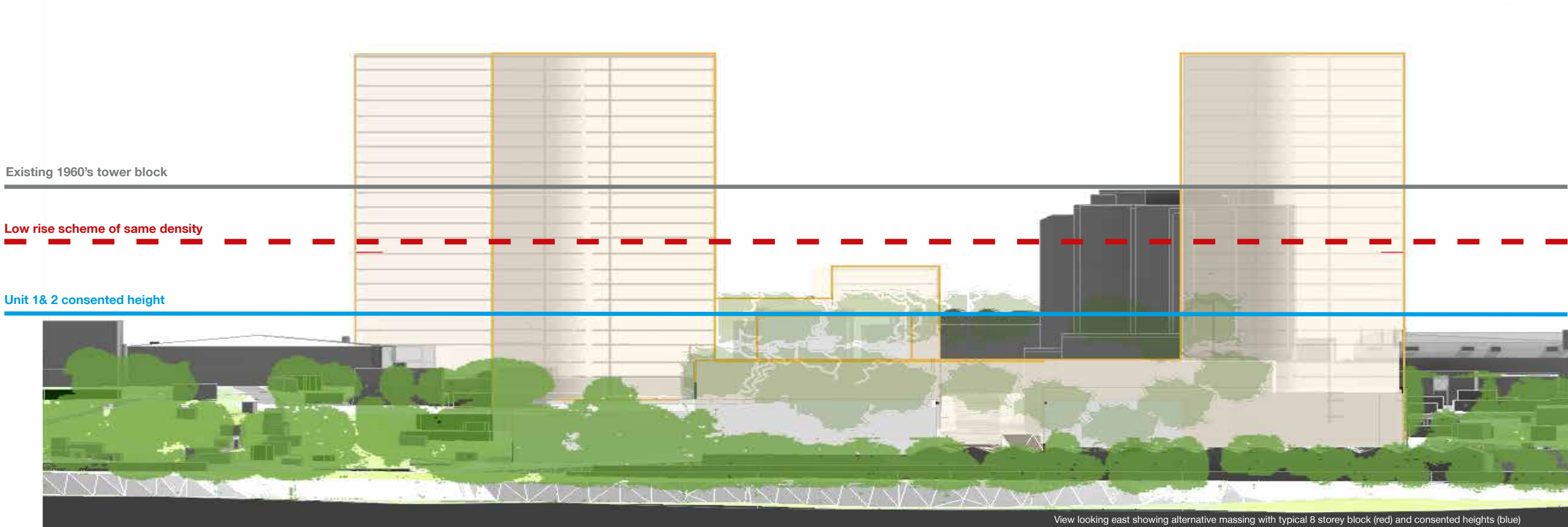
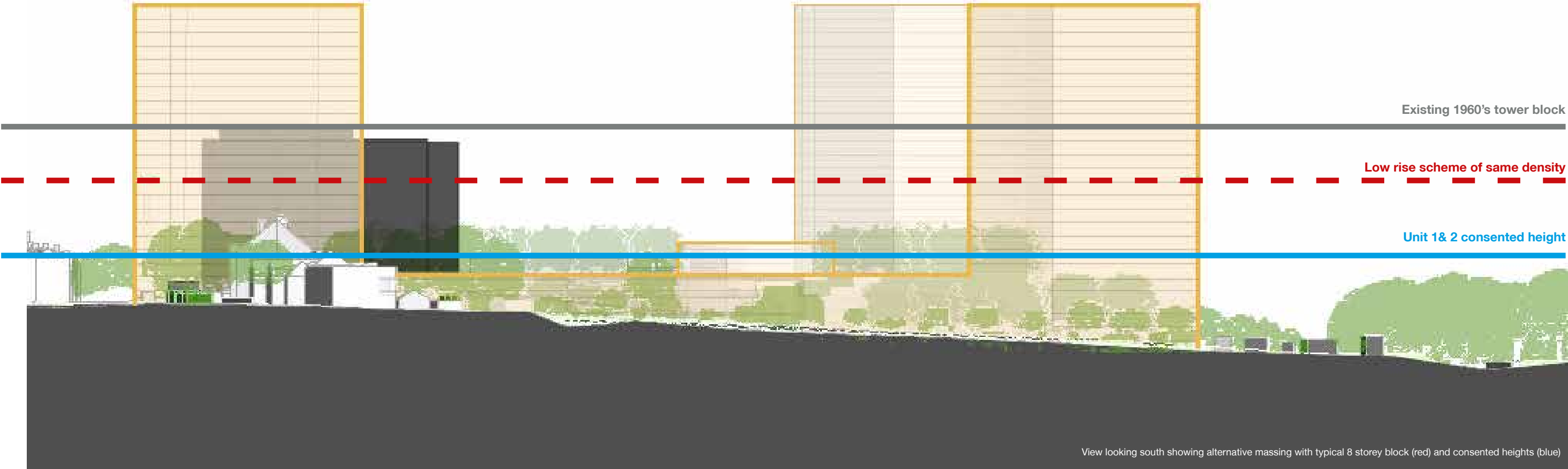
The site is not located in any of the defined four key views identified in the Core Strategy. However, the buildings heights have been assessed having regard to their impact on local views. Based on this assessment it is considered that the buildings will be well designed creating significant landmarks which will signpost the arrival point to the district centre without adversely impacting upon local views and the skyline.

Harm to heritage assets and their setting

The site is not located within in a conservation area and is not within the nearby setting of any listed building.

Microclimate effect

The microclimatic effects of the proposals will be fully assessed as a detailed scheme is worked up. The scheme will also be subject to a daylight/sunlight/overshadowing assessment and a wind assessment.



COMPARISON WITH NORTHWAY HOUSE & BARNET HOUSE

The adjacent development at Northway House sets a precedent for height and density of development in this location, but it's form and bulk can be significantly improved upon by designing and developing a scheme which employs modern architectural thinking and use of materials.

The proposed podium sits below the consented heights for Units 1 & 2 and Unit 4 as shown by these indicative elevations right.

To deliver the same level of commercial and residential development on the site, to the height of a typical Barnet development (8 storeys), the resulting scheme would have much greater bulk across the whole site and create a number of unpleasant spaces at lower levels, hence we feel that well designed towers would improve the quality of the environments in and around the scheme.

Towers perform significantly better than squat, low-rise buildings, both in space utilisation, environmental performance and overshadowing impact upon surrounding areas. Shadows cast by tall buildings move much quicker than those of their low-rise alternatives, impacting surrounding neighbours less and allowing us to provide a far greater open space across the site for use by the residents and visiting public.

We have undertaken a shadowing analysis (below) which demonstrates the speed with which shadows cast by towers move versus the extensive over shadowing, predominantly of open spaces, caused by a low-rise alternative.

Well designed, high-rise buildings create significant landmarks, signposting the arrival point of a town and setting it out from surrounding areas.

FEATURES	NORTHWAY HOUSE	BARNET HOUSE	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
PTAL rating	PTAL Level 4-6	PTAL Level 4	PTAL Level 5/6 (due to additional site access to Totteridge & Whetstone Tube station)
Site area	0.6 Ha / 1.6 acres	0.6 Ha / 1.6 acres	5.5 acres / 2.1 Ha
Density	248 units per hectare	423 units per hectare	285 units per hectare
No. of storeys	13 storeys	12 storeys	Up to 22 storeys
No. of units	149 units	254 micro flats (>16 sq m 1 bed units)	<600
Commercial/Amenity	24,778 sq ft across 6 units for business & community space at ground level only	None	110,000 sq ft of mixed commercial development + 100 bedroom hotel
Open space	Private courtyard	None	60,000 sq ft of green space including an area of public event space
Parking spaces	171 spaces (158 retained for residential)	287	1,000 spaces (600 retained for residential & 400 retained for visitors & commercial use)

SHADOW ANALYSIS

Well designed, high-density towers perform much better in terms of daylight; sunlight and shading than equivalent low rise developments such as those currently in the area.

Shadows cast by towers move much quicker than bulkier, lower height alternatives, meaning amenity space within the site and surrounding buildings will be affected much less, as the comparable studies here demonstrate.

A low rise development, comparable with Northway House and Barnet House cast wider shadows that move more slowly and blot out sunlight in significant parts of the development for longer periods.

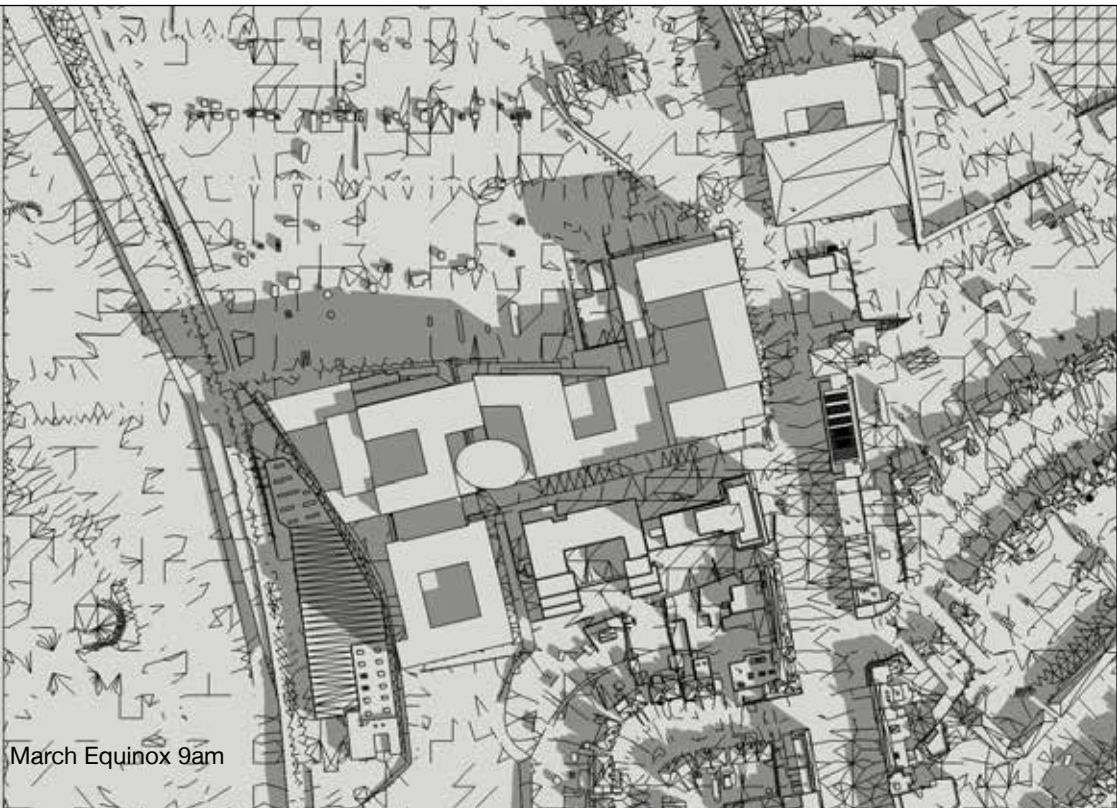
This study further supports the proposed use of towers in this location.

PROPOSED SCHEME

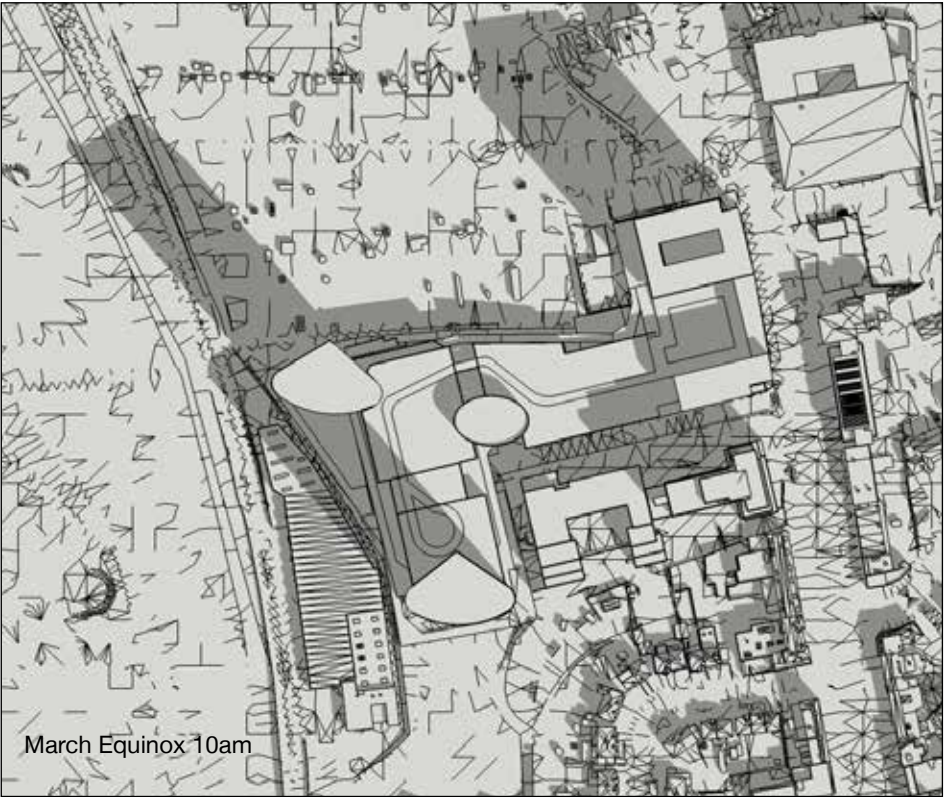


EQUIVALENT LOW-RISE SCHEME





PROPOSED SCHEME



EQUIVALENT LOW-RISE SCHEME



PROPOSED SCHEME



EQUIVALENT LOW-RISE SCHEME



PROPOSED SCHEME



EQUIVALENT LOW-RISE SCHEME



10 PRECEDENT SCHEMES

It is our ambition to recreate the quality and ambiance of world-class mixed-use developments that are currently being developed near transport nodes. These developments are regularly voted as the most positive and popular developments to live in globally, due to a number of benefits including high-levels of amenity; good daylight; excellent views and strong community engagement, all contributing to higher levels of well-being.

These developments are typified by high density apartment living coupled with food retail and leisure provision, designed to the highest quality.

These communities are exciting, vibrant, signature destinations with an urban feel that support sustainable lifestyles where people can live, work, shop and play. With a complementary mix of uses, excellent transit links to surrounding towns and cities, these developments attract residents and visitors from afar to invest in and enjoy all that is on offer.

The developments are pedestrian friendly, with a mix of enclosed and open-air retail and food and beverage offers.

TERRACING

Our proposal will include generous amounts of new green space with extensive planting, including 60 new trees, across the roofscape, pedestrian plane and green terraces along the western elevation as the example from Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire demonstrates. These terraces and green spaces will enhance visual and communal amenity and improve air quality for residents, visitors and the surrounding community.



Top main image: Metropolis, Los Angeles: Up to 39 storeys with 525 units over a 150,000sq ft commercial podium; Tour des Canadiens: 50 Storey tower over a 10 storey podium with green terrace & an array of bars; restaurants and multimedia entertainments destination.

Bottom row: Brentwood, Vancouver: 11 towers providing 6,000 homes and 500,000 sq ft of retail & leisure space; Gardens of Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire

RESIDENTIAL TOWERS IN LONDON

In recent years in line with national, strategic and local policy, there has been increasing numbers of taller buildings* within suburban locations to meet a growing housing need across London.

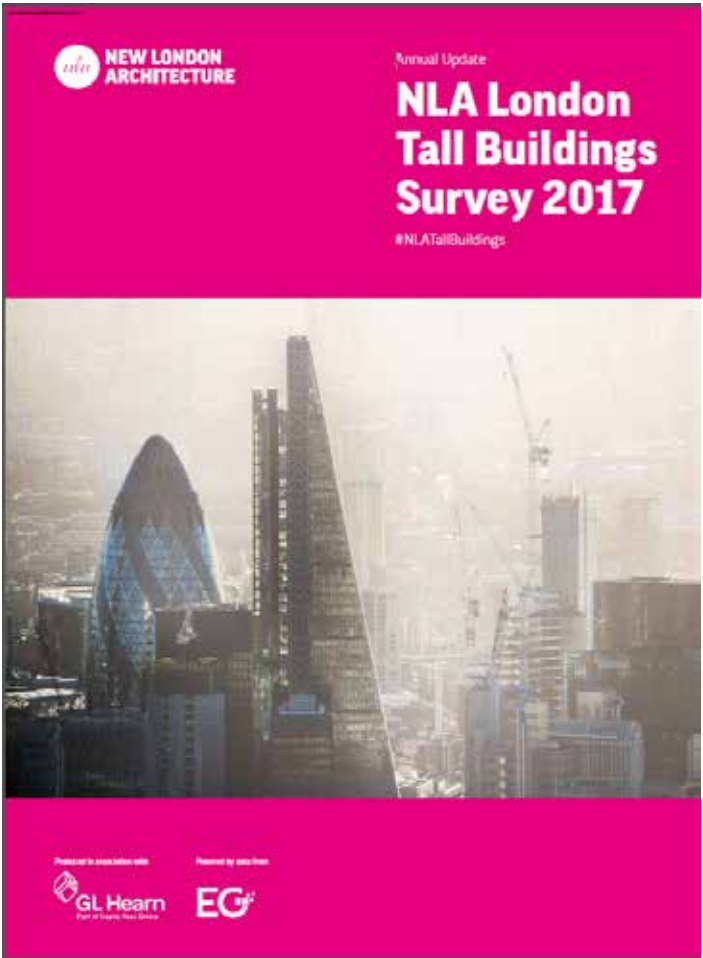
We have reviewed the recently released NLA Tall Buildings Survey 2017 to determine the extent to which tall buildings are being proposed throughout London. The survey shows the significant reliance upon tall buildings to deliver the homes and space London needs as it continues to grow. Highlights from the report include:

- 30% of homes under construction in London are in tall buildings
- 26 tall buildings were completed in 2016, vs 10 in 2015 - a 68% increase
- Tall buildings are no longer being restricted to established clusters, with 24 London boroughs having a tall buildings pipeline with 82 tall buildings within zones 3-4 and 25 in zone 5
- Barnet currently ranks 8th out of the 33 London boroughs in terms of location of tall buildings with 22 tall buildings

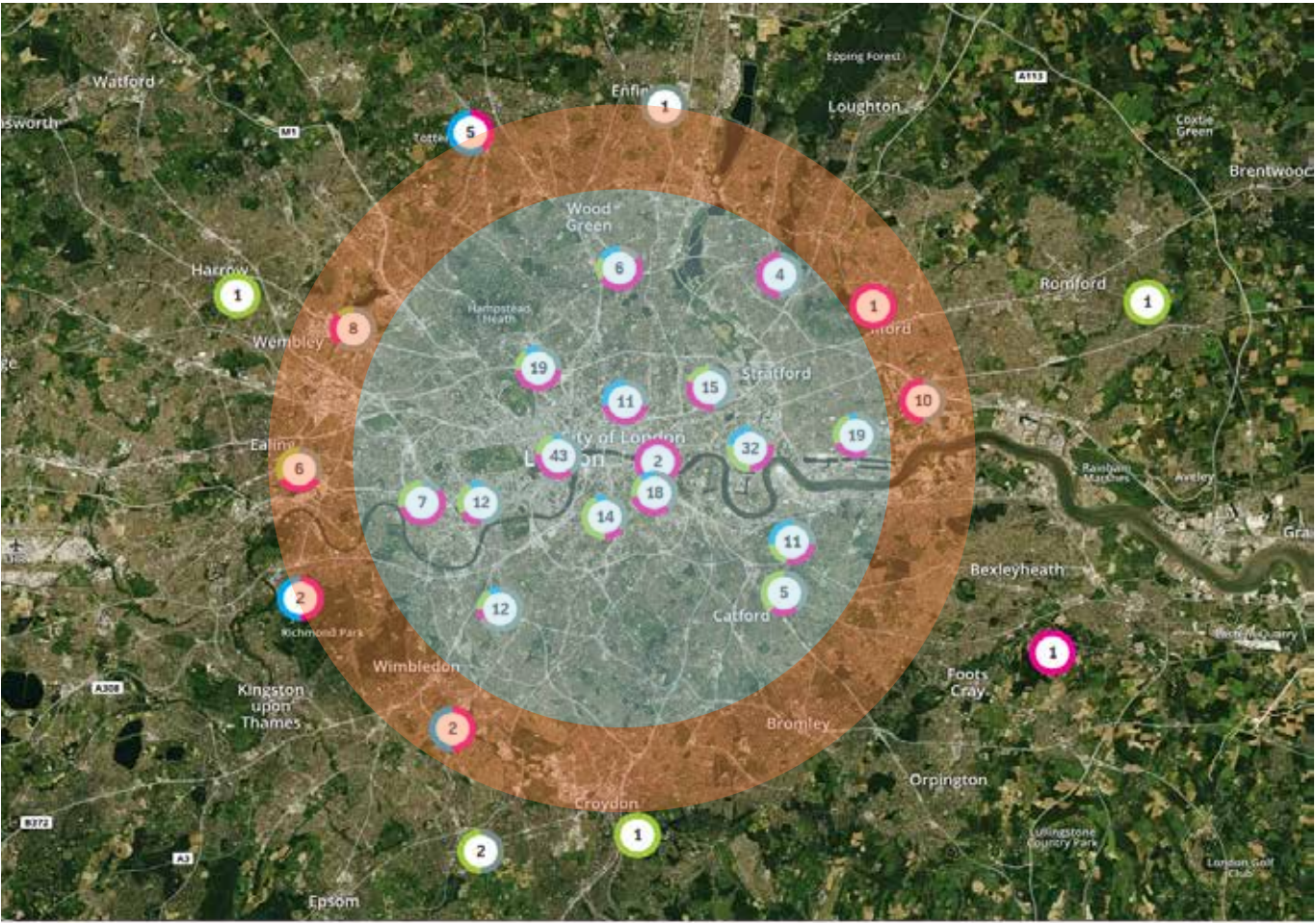
Below we have highlighted a number of relevant schemes that demonstrate the development of tall building solutions to the housing crisis by a number of London boroughs.

These examples demonstrate that tall buildings can work harmoniously in suburban locations while bringing a significant number of planning benefits.

The London Mayor has also very recently called two tall buildings in Tottenham (max 21 storeys) and Harrow (max 17 storeys) for approval recognising the benefits of housing in this way. These can also be viewed below.



*In this study, tall buildings are defined as those of 20 storeys or more



NLA map showing residential developments underway or recently complete across London, highlighting those in a similar distance from CBD as proposal



Saffron Square, Croydon

Berkeley Homes were first granted planning permission for a mixed use residential led development in 2010 (10/02175/P) for the erection of buildings between four and forty four storeys with basement level comprising 755 flats and 2,000 sqm of commercial floorspace (A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1/D2). The key element of the scheme is a 44 storey tower which stands on the edge of the scheme facing Wellesley Road.

The scheme provides a large public square which is flanked on one side by commercial space occupied by A2 and A3 uses, the residents’ gym, as well as the estate’s concierge. There is also a Tesco on the ground floor of one of the buildings, with entry from the main road. More commercial and gym space is included at the base of the tower.

Each of the podium buildings is topped by a communal terrace and landscaped roof garden, accessible only to the residents of that particular building. The majority of flats in the podium buildings also have an individual balcony, most of which face into the courtyard.

The redevelopment of the site was recognised to provide the following planning benefits:

- 1. The buildings provide a comprehensive design solution to bring a redundant brownfield site back into active use. It also makes the best use of a highly accessible location which has a wider range of public transport opportunities within easy walking distance;
- 2. The residential component of the scheme provides an important contribution to the provision of market and affordable housing within this part of Croydon;
- 3. The tower element will be a landmark building which meets its designation as a ‘Northern Gateway site’;
- 4. The site provides a new central open space for public and private use; and
- 5. Active frontage will be provided around the perimeter of the public realm and along the main frontage (Wellesley Road). These uses will complement the proposed residential elements.



Skyline Tower, Hackney

One of the first phase of development comprised full planning permission for 405 units granted permission in March 2012. The Skyline Tower formed the first phase of Skyline, which is one of a pair of towers of 30 storeys at Woodbury Down.

It was considered by the GLA that the tower element acts as a landmark building, which is appropriate for its setting. They confirmed that the tower would also act as a positive landmark and would make a positive contribution towards London’s skyline.

- The scheme was recognised to provide the following planning benefits:
- 1. The proposed commercial units would offer a purpose built replacement provision as part of the larger new neighbourhood centre and would enhance the vitality of the estate and contribute to the social and economic well-being of the area;
 - 2. The increased density and height of the building allowed for additional residential units to be provided (above that approved in the masterplan);
 - 3. The site is located in a PTAL 5 and there would be minimal impact on neighbouring areas and in this regard was considered an acceptable location for a high density development; and
 - 4. The tallest element forms the ‘civic heart’ of the masterplan.

RECENTLY CALLED-IN SCHEMES

The GLA has recently called in two residential schemes for tall buildings within predominately suburban locations. These schemes were Hale Wharf, Tottenham Hale and Palmerston Road, Harrow.

Hale Wharf, Tottenham Hale

The Hale Wharf scheme comprised of a hybrid application to provide up to 505 residential units and up to 1,607 sqm of non-residential floorspace, including retail (Class A1-A5) and office (Class B1). The tallest element of the scheme was proposed to be between 16-21 storeys, with the low rise residential element at 9 storeys.

Hale Wharf located in Tottenham Hale was refused at Committee on 1 November 2016. The application was called in by the Mayor on 4 January 2017. The Mayor approved the scheme at the representation hearing (D&P/1239a/03) on 10 March 2017 on the basis that:

- 1. The GLA supports an increase in density where sites are well connected and will improve further (as is the case with Tottenham Hale);
- 2. The site is considered suitable for a tall building as it would mark the entrance to Tottenham Hale;
- 3. It was confirmed that there would not be any adverse impact on local residents; and
- 4. The infrastructure that would be provided, namely three bridges, would enhance connectivity and would benefit all.

Palmerston Road, Harrow

Palmerston Road proposed the redevelopment of the site to provide 186 residential units (Class C3), 1,165 sqm of office floorspace (Class B1) and 695 sqm of commercial and community floorspace (Class A1, B1, D1, D2). The building ranged between 1 and 17 storeys in height. The application was refused by Harrow Council at Committee on 16 November 2016.

The application was approved by the Mayor on the basis that:

- 1. The proposed development would provide a residential-led mixed use development, including flexible office space for individuals, local start-up business and small and medium sized enterprises, and flexible retail/commercial/community uses as local services for residents. The proposal would make a more efficient use of a prominent and highly accessible, already developed site, on the edge of Wealdstone town centre in close proximity to Harrow and Wealdstone station;
- 2. The design of the proposal was of a high quality in respect to its response to the site and local context and in terms of height and massing, layout and ground floor uses, connections and



Left: Hale Wharf, Tottenham: up to 21 storeys providing 505 units. 35% affordable housing (approved)
Right: Palmerston Road, Wealdstone: 17 storeys providing 186 units. 41% affordable housing (approved)

permeability, architectural appearance and materials and public realm;

- 3. Given the urban context of the site, the application would not unacceptably impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of: privacy/outlook; daylight, sunlight, overshadowing; noise and disturbance; wind; and light spill; and
- 4. The proposal for a high density residential scheme in a highly accessible location accords with the London Plan policy of encouraging such development in locations that give rise to a pattern of development that minimises the need to travel by car.

These recently called in schemes for tall buildings in suburban locations have been supported by the Mayor and demonstrate the importance attached to meeting the London Plan’s housing targets. They also confirm that tall buildings can be incorporated successfully into a suburban context in design and amenity terms.



Emerald Gardens, North West Village, Wembley

Developer/Owner: Quintain

A new development in the heart of a major 85 acre regeneration project in Wembley Park which hosts a wide range of new homes; shopping; parkland and entertainment. Inspired by London’s famous garden squares, Emerald Gardens provides a superb selection of open communal and public parkland. North West Village is the latest phase of the development, set across seven buildings set in an acre of gardens.

- Under Construction
- Borough: Brent
- Size: 474 units
- Up to 16 storeys



Osiers Gate Tower, Osiers Road

Developer / Owner: Baratt East London

This landmark 21-storey residential tower sits within the Osiers Gate development on a former brownfield site alongside both the River Thames and River Wandle. Each elevation responds to its unique position, designed in reflection of its environment and orientation to sunlight, daylight and wind. This enables residents living within the tower and those using amenity spaces below to enjoy maximum sunlight with appropriate screening. The building’s height is emphasised by a graduating intensity of colour ascending the tower from dark to light.

- Under Construction
- Borough: Wandsworth
- Size: 474 units
- Up to 21 storeys



Lewisham Gateway (Phase 1), SE13

Developer / Owner: Muse Developments

This prominent roundabout site at the heart of Lewisham Town Centre will be redeveloped as a high-density mixed-use scheme comprising retail, leisure, office and residential with reconfigured infrastructure and road layouts masterplanned by Arup. The first phase of the development comprises 195 new homes for private sale and private rent together with concierge and retail uses at ground floor. The design works within the parameters of outline planning consent with 22- and 15-storey towers differing in character and materials. The landscape design celebrates the confluence of the Quaggy and Ravensborne Rivers, a key feature of the site, by creating a new public park at their meeting point.

- Under Construction
- Borough: Lewisham
- Size: 16,850 sqm
- Type: Residential



Barking Central, Town Square, IG11

Developer / Owner: Redrow Regeneration

Barking Central is one of the most successful regeneration projects in the UK. It has revitalized Barking town centre with a large mixed-use scheme of seven new buildings including a new Learning Centre, over 500 residential apartments, a 66 bed hotel, a bicycle shed for 250 bikes, nine retail units, a café, a new town square and an arboretum. Delivered in two phases over nine years, Allford Hall Monaghan Morris master planned and designed the buildings, overcoming many challenges to create a scheme that symbolizes the regeneration of this Thames Gateway town.

- Existing
- Borough: Barking & Dagenham
- Size: 500 Units
- Up to 19 storeys
- Type: Residential



West Parkside, Greenwich

Developer / Owner: Knight Dragon

Latest approved phase of ongoing Greenwich Peninsula regeneration plan.

- Approved
- Borough: Greenwich
- Size: 242 Units
- Up to 26 storeys
- Type: Residential



Cannon Wharf Business Centre, Evelyn Street, SE8

Developer / Owner: Barratt London

The residential led development scheme will replace an existing business centre space to provide new homes and commercial space.

- Planning Granted
- Borough: Lewisham
- Size: 696 units
- Up to 21 storeys
- Type: Residential



Alto

Developer / Owner: Quintain

1, 2 & 3 bedroom apartments. The second phase of development under construction in Wembley Park.

- Under Construction
- Borough: Brent
- Size: 362 units
- Up to 22 storeys
- Type: Residential

11 SCHEME BENEFITS

Our vision for this site presents a unique opportunity to re-purpose the Downland Close site for uses more suited to its town centre location as an alternative to continued and extended industrial use.

Redevelopment of this area will provide those who live in and visit the Borough with a high-quality destination that will define Whetstone for future generations and be highly sought after.

In conclusion, we hope you share our ambition for the site and look forward to discussing the following benefits that the development will bring:

1. Significant contribution to future housing supply in LB Barnet given need to provide 2,349 homes per annum
2. Provision of high quality living space
3. Additional retail to meet identified need and help support the function of Whetstone centre by adding footfall to the area
4. Locating higher density development on brownfield land well served by public transport which is fully supported by planning policy at all levels
5. Aspiration to create high quality design and clever use of materials
6. Highly sustainable design
7. Improved air quality and greenery through terraced planting from the northern and western aspects of the site. In addition private garden amenity for recreation and to enhance a sense of community.
8. Compliant with criteria in Tall Buildings Study 2000.
9. Locally retained interest and management from a long term stakeholder and supporter of the local community, providing an innovative approach to the development.
10. Reduced visual impact, overlooking and shadowing over a Low Rise scheme of equivalent density.
11. Local/tourist attraction in the restaurant with outstanding views over the surrounding area
12. Providing the local community with a focal space for open air markets and community events.
13. Providing local leisure and health care facilities to the wider community, in the form of cinema and gym.
14. Potential to provide safe link to existing cycle paths, avoiding traversing the main road via Brook Farm Open Space.
15. Providing residents with limited mobility safe access to essential amenities and leisure offers without exposure to the elements.

Our vision for this site presents a unique opportunity to re-purpose the Downland Close site for uses more suited to its town centre location as an alternative to continued and extended industrial use.



