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# Design and Access Statement

Residential development  
Land adjacent to 24 Railway Street  
West Bromwich



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been produced in support of a submission for a full Planning Application for a vacant site at land adjacent to 24 Railway Street West Bromwich West Midlands B70 9HJ

The brief is to create an economically viable development that provides residential to the ground floor change of use from previously commercial usage also to the rear conversion to the rear residential unit. The first floor will be retained as residential however will be refurbished.

The scheme has been designed within the objectives of Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3, and By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System – Towards Better Practice (DETR 2000).

### Scope of the Design and Access Statement

The purpose of the document in line with government policy is to demonstrate to the reader the rationale behind the scheme.

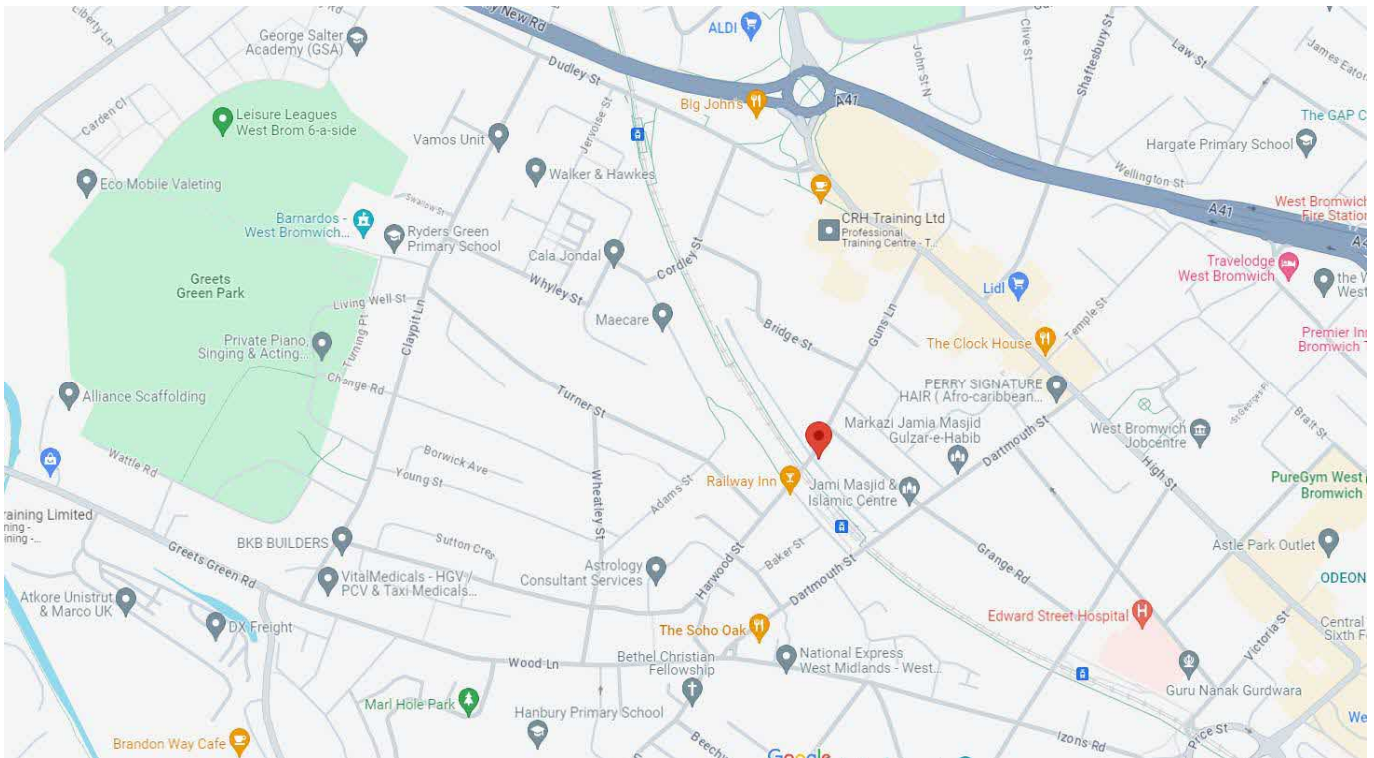
To help explain the design process the report will first seek to investigate the context within which the proposal fits and to evaluate how this may have influenced decision making. The report will further explain the detailed design aspects of the scheme and state the access arrangement for the site.

### Pre-application Consideration

The proposed development has been carefully designed through extensive pre-application consultation with residents. This has ensured the principle of residential development, and the design concept is considered acceptable by nearby residents before submission of the formal planning application.



Site Location Figure 1



### Site Location

The site is rectangular in shape having an area of approximately 350 sq metres and is situated about 1.5 km north-west of the centre of West Bromwich. It is highlighted on the site location plan (fig. 1).

The site is located on the northeast south of Railway Street at the corner of Harwood St and Guns Lane. The site is bounded by residential housing of varying architectural design and density. Adjacent to the southern boundary is a retail shop.

### Topography

The site slopes gently from southeast to north-west, with a 0.5m fall to north and a crossfall of between 0.15m – 0.25m.

## Access

The access to the site is off Railway Street and Guns Lane as this is a corner site. The site is within proximity of several services. Public transport on the West Bromwich High Street can be accessed via Guns Lane. The site can be accessed from the local road network including Junction 1 of the M5 which is within 3km of the application site. The Dartmouth Metro Station is within 0.3km. Shopping facilities are available in the West Bromwich Town Centre (1.5km).

The location of the site is considered highly sustainable therefore no off-road parking will be provided however secure cycle storage will be provided. As the site is a corner site there is ample parking on the street as this is a predominantly residential area the roads have no restrictions.





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## 2. DESIGN POLICIES

The proposed development at site will be guided by national, regional and local design guidance and policy. This document establishes a summary of the regional, national and local planning guidance to which the developer must respond.

National planning guidance is issued through a series of Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). Both PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' and PPS3 'Housing' place a strong emphasis on the importance of design in the development process and attach a high priority to redeveloping sites for residential purposes.

### **Regional Policy**

#### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

Chapter 4 of the West Midlands RSS addresses the renaissance and regeneration of the urban environment within the Major Urban Areas (MUA) of the conurbation. High quality living environments are encouraged which combine high densities with high quality design, the creation of sustainable urban communities that achieve an increased capacity and require the scale and demand for better service provision within the local area.

Policy QE4 advises upon a strategy of securing a good standard of townscape constituting urban form and building design with the use of architecture and urban. These themes feed in to the final design of the scheme.

Policy T2 aims to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car through encouraging new development in accessible locations.

#### **National Policy Planning Policy Statement 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005)**

PPS1 sets out the Governments approach to the promotion of good planning and is underpinned by the core principle of sustainable development. In pursuit of this objective, the guidance states that there is a need for the provision of good quality new homes in suitable locations to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent home in locations that reduce the need to travel.

The site is recognised as a suitable and sustainable location for residential development, due to its close proximity to existing services and facilities that can be easily accessed through walking, cycling or alternatively by public transport. As the site is a suitable and sustainable location for residential development, the development proposal for the site should therefore ensure it provides good quality homes in West Bromwich with convenient pedestrian and cycle links to allow ease and convenience of access to the local centre and existing public transport routes.





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### **Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' (2006)**

PP3 sets out the provision of housing, advocating the promotion of more sustainable patterns of development through making more efficient and effective use of land. In particular, the statement advocates the re-use and redevelopment of brownfields to deliver much-needed housing.

The importance of making more efficient and effective use of land should be considered in any proposal for the site.

### **Planning Policy Guidance 13 'Transport' (2001)**

PPG13 relates to transport issues and emphasises the importance of siting development in locations that reduce the need for long journeys and offer a variety of alternative transport modes to the car.

Any development proposal for the site should therefore provide convenient pedestrian and cycle links to allow ease and convenience of access to the town centre and existing public transport routes.

In accordance with national parking standards guidance, the scheme will provide a total of 12 parking spaces, 8 for residents, 2 for visitors and 2 for the occupiers of the adjoining property who will lose their garage and drive as part of the alteration to the access way.

### **By Design 'Urban Design in the Planning System' (2000)**

This is the companion document to PPS3 which addresses specific design issues and promotes the idea of an urban design vision. As such, the proposed development acknowledges this and draws upon the overriding principles of the document, which include:

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



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### **By Design 'Better Places To Live' (2001)**

This is a further companion to PPS3 and demonstrates how to apply the principles to development. Six key areas are identified, each of which has influenced the design of the proposed development at Joining's Bank.

- Understanding the context,
- Thoroughness in design,
- Housing layout and urban form,
- Housing mix and neighbourhood,
- Creating a movement framework,
- Space in and around the home.

The importance of good design in creating better places to live has been a key objective in the proposals for the site and ensures that a sense of community evolves successfully between the existing and future residents of the area.

### **Secured by Design (2004)**

Secured by design is the police flagship initiative supporting the principles of 'Designing out Crime' by use of effective crime prevention and security standards for a range of application's. It supports one of the Governments Key Objectives for planning; to create secure, quality place's for people to live and work.

### **The Development Plan**

#### **Sandwell Unitary Development (2004)**

The scheme has been designed in accordance with Policy UD1 through the high-quality design of the scheme and construction using suitable materials. The design of the scheme relates to the locality through the use of appropriate scale in respect of the surroundings.

The UDP recognises that proposals for new residential developments in such areas should therefore be carefully designed, ensuring they do not detract from the character of the surrounding area. A good standard of design is important in all residential developments, which should be used to create a high-quality living environment.

The proposal has been carefully designed to adhere to this policy by responding to the local character and context of the area.





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The scheme satisfies the criteria set out in Policy H3 in that:

- the site is previously developed land that is suitable for residential development,
- it is compatible with other plan policies;
- it is compatible with adjacent uses,
- it will provide a development that respects the character of the area,
- will provide a high-quality residential living environment, and
- will have good proximity to public transport and local facilities.

### Supplementary Planning Guidance

Residential Design SPG (2004)

This guidance sets out key objectives in seeking to create developments that:

- Are attractive and sit comfortably within the site and its setting,
- Make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area, and
- Achieving suitable density

We consider that the proposed development does accord with these fundamental principles being of an appropriate scale and form, sitting comfortably relative to surrounding residential properties. The development plot can adequately accommodate a development of this size, which has been orientated in order to ensure a 'best fit' within the available land.

We consider in this instance a careful analysis of the local character has been undertaken and addressed by the proposal, and as a result, the development does represent the best response to the local context and is appropriate for this given location.

The proposed development is in keeping with the existing character of this area. The design of new developments should reinforce and evolve local characteristics that are considered positive. Care has been taken not to ensure any detrimental effect on the positive townscape and landscape features. Responding to the context of the local area will ensure the unique identity of a place is not harmed, in addition to avoiding any potential adverse impacts on neighbouring buildings and uses.

In relation to the density, the SPG indicates in some locations it may be appropriate to consider much higher density designs in the region of 85 dwellings per hectare (this is the average number of dwellings in a typical apartment design).

The SPG further accepts market considerations that will influence housing designs and this together with the design-led approach that this SPG promotes, makes density a measure of the product, not a determinant of it. With this in mind, the high-quality design and density of the scheme seek to gain the following benefits:



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### Social Benefits

- Encourages positive social interaction, familiarity and diversity.
- Improves viability of, and access to, community services.
- Offers increased opportunities for a range of housing types.

### Economic Benefits

- Enhances the economic viability of development, particularly on brownfield sites.
- Increases feasibility of local services, such as shops, schools, health care and public transport links.
- Improves economies of infrastructure.

### Transport Benefits

- Supports public transport.
- Reduces car travel and parking demand.

### Environmental Benefits

- Reduces the need to travel by car and car parking demand, thereby reducing pollution and improving air quality and improving pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Increased energy efficiency.
- Preserves public open space, and
- Reduces overall demand for development land thereby avoiding the loss of Greenfield sites.

In addition, the proposed scheme has been designed to be broadly by numerical standards set out in Appendix 3 of the SPG ensuring:

- The erection of fencing, 1.8 metres in height, on the boundary of the site to complement adequate existing mature screening,
- Sufficient external amenity area,
- Apartment sizes in the scheme to be broadly meet:-
  - 2 No Studio Apartment 48 sq. m one of which is an existing one that needs refurbishment.
  - 1 No 2 Bed 3 Person Apartment 64 sq. m
- Compliance with the 45-degree code in relation to neighbouring residential properties.



### 3. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION Overview of the Site Boundaries

- To the north, the site is bounded by Guns Lane and residential development.
- To the south the site is bounded by the existing Railway Track and Harwood Street. Some existing trees frame the boundary.
- To the east residential development comprising two storeys defines the edge.
- To the west, the site boundary is formed by residential dwellings comprising semidetached houses and Guns Lane.



#### Access

- Access is currently gained from Railway Street and the Corner of Guns Lane on the southwest boundary of the site.
- Existing pedestrian connections into the site are also gained from Railway Street and Guns Lane



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## Visual

- The current site a ground-floor shop an apartment above both of which are derelict at the moment.
- The existing shop has been waiting for several years and therefore state of disrepair the flat above also needs refurbishment.

## Environment

- The site is currently suffering continuous vandalism. The commercial use on the ground floor required a hood and ventilation which has been fixed to the Guns Lane elevation completely breaking away from the local character. The site is a prominent corner and therefore would benefit from the above intervention.
- Green space is provided locally within walking distance to Greets Green Park, which is to the West of the site and within 300 metres of the site. Opposite the site is a tram line which also creates a linear link and it's a green corridor which is protected by the local authority.

## Summary of Constraints

The proposed residential development has emerged from a careful site analysis.

The design will need to respond to the following existing constraints:

- Sensitive boundaries: allowing small amenity space which will accommodate Bin stores and cycle stores.
- Existing storey height around the site.
- Each unit will have its private access allowing for segregation and enhancing the usage.

## Summary of Opportunities

The proposed design need to respond to the opportunities presented by the site. These are considered to be:

- Opportunity to provide a residential development of 3 residential units.
- Opportunity to create a sustainable development that is accessible by public transport and allows access to local facilities such as shops, play areas and pubs.
- Opportunity to create a sense of space by:
- The formation of an amenity space within the site.



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#### 4. DESIGN PROPOSALS Urban Design Principles

The proposed design concepts have developed in response to the existing constraints and opportunities of the site.

The design concepts also reflect best Urban Design Practice in terms of creation a sense of place by considering legibility, quality of the public realm and a sense of place.

The proposed design concepts are as follows:

- Creation of a strong frontage onto Railway Street and Guns Lane.
- Creation of a new development taking into account existing heights and local materials.
- The character, density and form of the layout reflect the local residential area which is characterised by a mix of traditional styles of detached, semi-detached and terrace suburban housing;
- A change of materials for the central space defines the character and boundaries of the space.

#### 5. ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN

Pedestrian access is available into the site from Railway Street. The separate access points residential apartments.

- Accessibility: Off-site

The site is in a very sustainable location close to the metro station. It is also within walking distance of bus routes, local shopping centres and schools.

The proposal provides 10 cycle spaces which are covered if required this allows for tandem and delivery bikes, power will also be provided at this point to allow powered vehicles.

- Accessibility: On-site

The site is relatively flat allowing for easy walking and

Two No dwelling will have Access to dwellings will be compliant with Part M of the Buildings Regulations four level access into the building.