

Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Topic Paper Site 20: Tesco, 13 Acre Lane, Brixton

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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

1.1 This Topic Paper provides the background to the preparation of the allocation at Tesco, 13 Acre Lane, Brixton (Site 20) and sets out the approach taken to:

- The wider Local Plan evidence base to support the allocation of the site;
- The site's baseline context;
- The evolution of the allocation;
- Feedback from engagement and consultation;
- Consideration of the approach to key issues and opportunities; and
- Delivery and implementation,

2. CONTEXT

Planning Policy Context

2.1 Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 61-001-20190315) states that Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places.

2.2 Within this context, councils are required to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development over the plan period.

2.3 Site 20 is not currently allocated for development in the Lambeth Local Plan (LLP).

2.4 The site falls within Brixton major town centre, outside of the primary shopping area. It falls within the Brixton Creative Enterprise Zone.

Site Context

2.5 The site currently accommodates a single storey Tesco store with approximately 2,500 sqm net sales area and an associated 229 space car park.

2.6 As set out in the Site Selection Paper, document EB 01, sites are proposed for allocation in the SADPD for one or more of the following reasons:

- To set clear, site-specific parameters for the type and scale of development expected on a site, including the associated public benefits it should deliver.
- To address site-specific circumstances that may require a more tailored approach to that set out in borough-wide policies.
- To articulate the vision and potential that can be achieved through land assembly and/or a comprehensive approach to developing adjacent sites, particularly where these are in different ownerships.
- To encourage landowners to consider the potential for optimising the development capacity of their land and help deliver key place-making objectives, where they might otherwise be uncertain about what would be supported.
- To signal some additional sites as appropriate for tall buildings, outside the locations already identified in the LLP.
- To enable key strategic infrastructure to come forward in a timely way.

2.7 For Site 20 it was considered that a new site allocation would encourage engagement with the landowner to highlight and explore the opportunities for sustainable development of the site. A new allocation would allow for an agreed framework to be put in place to set out details of the site-specific parameters for the type and scale of development expected on the site. This would enable development and intensification of this town centre site.

3. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE BASE

3.1 The SADPD is supported by a suite of evidence base documents including:

- Design Evidence Papers, documents DE01 – DE24
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment, document EB 04
- Flood Risk Paper, document EB 02
- Viability Report, document EB 05

3.2 These documents have informed the proposed allocation of Site 20. A summary of these documents and their conclusions is provided below.

Design Evidence

- 3.3 The proposed allocation is supported by the Design Evidence Paper for Site 20, document DE 20. This evidence demonstrates the approach taken to understanding the design-led optimisation of the site to inform the content of the proposed site allocation policy.
- 3.4 The guiding approach in developing the draft site allocation policies is design-led optimisation of development capacity, as required by London Plan Policy D3. This has involved analysis of the optimum mass and height that can be achieved on each site, having regard to site-specific planning constraints such as vehicular access and servicing, and including impacts on neighbouring uses, views, townscape and heritage assets. Key spatial planning objectives have been factored in and identified for each of the sites. This includes for example: strategic place-making and contribution to implementation of the relevant policy for Places and Neighbourhoods; inclusion, accessibility and permeability in the public realm; healthy routes and active travel; community safety; townscape and design quality, including contribution to local distinctiveness; and urban greening.
- 3.5 The Regulation 18 indicative approach exploring the potential quantum of development on the site has been based on the re-provision a Tesco retail unit on the site. This is because Tesco have expressed a desire to remain. The Council was able to draw upon previous experience of the redevelopment of large-scale supermarkets (the Tesco, Kennington Lane redevelopment and the Sainsburys, Wandsworth Road redevelopment). Both of those sites were very similar to Tesco Acre Lane prior to redevelopment. The Tesco, Kennington redevelopment informed assumptions around the size of serving bays and ground floor retail accommodation heights. The Sainsburys, Wandsworth Road scheme informed assumptions about ground floor parking and first floor retail with housing and amenity on the roof. Tesco Ltd. was able to assist with the technical details.
- 3.6 Early optioneering explored placing the re-provided retail store (matching the existing retail floorspace) in different locations on the site. The principal consideration in terms of the placement of the retail store was safe vehicular access for deliveries, servicing and parking. In addition, the presence of trees (street trees and those on the site subject to TPO) influenced the layout. The preferable option in terms of siting and access was then taken forward three dimensionally to identify an optimum massing. To optimise residential capacity, homes are placed on top of the Tesco store (as had been achieved

in the Wandsworth Road and Kennington supermarket redevelopments) and on those parts of the site not occupied by the retail store.

- 3.7 The site's very sustainable location called for an efficient optimisation. Residential neighbour sensitivity, townscape and heritage asset settings, were the main constraints that dictated the indicative massing. Vu-city 3D model was used to test massing impacts in townscape and heritage settings. Iterations of massing were tested in an accurate 3D model (Phoenix) by daylight and sunlight consultants GIA and the massing refined to ensure no unacceptable impacts on neighbours.
- 3.8 In response to representations received at Regulation 19 the indicative approach was refined further. A site boundary error was corrected, and further interrogation of the indicative approach massing was undertaken in the Phoenix model with GIA in order to ensure that the site capacity was fully optimised. Having undertaken considered refinement to the massing and height in the less sensitive parts of the site, it was possible to increase the range of homes from approximately 120-170 to approximately 180-210 homes in a form which had acceptable neighbour, townscape and heritage impacts.
- 3.9 The indicative approach to layout and access, massing and general height, daylight and sunlight provides an appraisal in terms of townscape, visual impact assessment and the effect on heritage assets. This analysis has found the approach to successfully address the various opportunities and constraints identified for the site.

Daylight and Sunlight

- 3.10 The proposed allocation is supported by a Daylight Amenity report prepared by GIA, document EB 04. This was commissioned to demonstrate good design and optimisation of residential capacity, daylight and overshadowing testing on both internal amenity for future occupants and external amenity to existing neighbours in relation to the proposed site allocations, including Site 20.
- 3.11 As set out in the report, a Vertical Sky Component (VSC) facade study was completed to understand daylight potential in the existing and indicative scenarios. In line with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Guidelines, the focus was on residential properties along with any non-domestic buildings where occupants may have a reasonable expectation for daylight.

- 3.12 A VSC facade study was also undertaken on the indicative façades, to understand the potential for the indicative scheme to provide future occupants with good levels of daylight and sunlight. In addition, an overshadowing study was also completed showing how the shadow cast by the indicative massing would affect the open spaces within and around the site. Images illustrating the results of these assessments are set out within the report.
- 3.13 GIA's façade study identified little or no change in daylight to the vast majority of neighbouring properties surrounding the site. Where change in VSC was noted, this was to areas that were inherently sensitive due to projecting wings or recessed façades.
- 3.14 The BRE Guide acknowledges at paragraph 2.2.14 that such design features may result in a "larger relative reduction in VSC". In addition, the lower retained VSC values at the recently constructed building at 41 Acre Lane are isolated at ground level, which will be of commercial use and therefore not considered a sensitive receptor for daylight.
- 3.15 As such, GIA consider the massing is appropriate for its context with view of potential impact on neighbouring daylight and sunlight amenity.
- 3.16 GIA also studied daylight amenity within the site allocation. Very good levels of daylight are reaching most of the scheme's elevations.
- 3.17 Windows located close to the inner corners of the open courtyards would have a slightly reduced daylight ingress, however this can be easily compensated by providing larger windows. Similar levels are seen in the flank elevations of the smaller C-shaped block, however these can also be mitigated by relying on the side elevations through dual-aspect rooms. Overall, the draft site allocation is expected to have an excellent performance from an internal daylight perspective.
- 3.18 It should be noted that balconies inherently restrict the access to daylight and sunlight to the windows set below them (if projecting) or behind them (if recessed). Therefore, their effects should be mitigated, where possible, providing rooms with additional windows free of obstructions, or by staggering balconies or internal layouts so that the windows serving the living areas are not overhung.
- 3.19 Finally, GIA considered overshadowing. It was concluded that there will be some overshadowing to the neighbouring amenity areas located north and east. Those to the north will receive some additional shade in the morning, but will have plenty of afternoon sunlight. Those located east will receive additional shadow in the afternoon. As the

shadow plots demonstrate, over two hours are likely to be retained on 21st March and so they would remain compliant with the BRE Guidelines.

3.20 The podium courtyard terrace will see good sunlight levels and the public realm is also expected to perform very well. Some areas of the public realm will be more shaded, in particular a portion of the courtyard, while others will receive plenty of sunlight, particularly the area located to the south, so the amenity space should be designed with this in mind.

3.21 The access to sunlight will obviously improve over the summer months, likely offering future residents' excellent levels of sunlight.

3.22 This study from GIA confirms that the indicative approach to massing shown in the design evidence is appropriate for this town centre location and that adverse impacts can be minimised or mitigated. The overall design approach is therefore considered to be sound with regard to daylight and sunlight.

Flood Risk

3.23 The proposed allocation is assessed as part of the Flood Risk Evidence Paper, document EB 02, which supports the SADPD.

3.24 This confirms the site lies within flood zone 1 and has very low risk of surface water flooding.

3.25 The flood risk paper confirms that the site can be considered at very low risk of flooding. The overall approach is therefore considered to be sound with regard to flood risk.

Viability

3.26 The proposed allocation was assessed as part of the Viability Assessment prepared by BNP Paribas, document EB 05. This tests the ability of the sites in the SADPD to be developed for residential and residential-led mixed use development applying the plan policies in the London Plan, the LLP and prevailing rates of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), subject to indexation, in the Council's Charging Schedule.

3.27 The study methodology compares the residual land values generated by indicative developments on the proposed site allocations which the Council expects to come

forward over the life of the SADPD. The appraisals compare the residual land values (RLV) generated by those developments to the sites' benchmark land values (BLV) to reflect the existing value of land prior to redevelopment. The appraisals reflect development plan policy requirements and CIL.

3.28 The study utilises the residual land value method of calculating the value of each indicative development. The residual land values have been established using Argus Developer which is development appraisal software widely used by developers, valuers and local planning authorities.

3.29 The Assessment was carried out when housing and commercial property markets were inherently cyclical and at a time when both commercial and residential markets have experienced a period of growth.

3.30 The gross areas and massing for the site allocations were informed by studies undertaken by GIA Surveyors, while the indicative schemes reflected LLP and SADPD policies on heights and mix of uses.

3.31 The results of the appraisals in the assessment indicate that most of the site allocations in the SADPD are either viable or on the margins of viability. Details relating to Site 20 are set out in the table below.

Table 1. Summary of appraisal results (policy compliant level of affordable housing)

Site No.	No. of units	RLV £m	BLV £	Surplus / (Deficit)
20	191	£5.46 m	£24.07 m	(£18.61 m)

3.32 The assessment for Site 20 notes that the site currently accommodates a supermarket which would be re-provided as part of the new development. This results in a high benchmark land value. Arguably, this benchmark land value could be adjusted to remove the value of the existing supermarket and replace this with the costs of a temporary store and compensation for loss of profits during redevelopment. This would need to be tested with the store operator when an application comes forward, as they would clearly need to be incentivised to release their store for redevelopment.

3.33 The site may become more viable as a result of changes in values and costs; availability of grant funding; changes to the assumed tenure mix or percentage of affordable housing. As set out in the assessment, any changes to affordable housing would need to be agreed through a planning application that takes the viability tested route.

3.34 The site allocation policy envisages comprehensive redevelopment of the site, which would be appropriate considering the single land ownership involved. Various factors and assumptions may make redevelopment more viable and a more attractive option for the site owner and operator during the lifetime of the SADPD, which covers the years 2020-2035. In light of this, the site allocation overall is considered to be sound with regard to viability.

4. EVOLUTION OF THE SITE ALLOCATION

Regulation 18 Consultation

4.1 Consultation took place on the draft SADPD between 10 January and 22 February 2022, in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012:

4.2 The draft SADPD was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SustA), Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), Flood Risk Evidence and Design Evidence Papers. For Site 20 the Design Evidence paper, document DE 20, provided further details on the design approach which was informed by the site's constraints.

4.3 Over the course of the Regulation 18 consultation, 3,308 representations were received in total. The Regulation 18 Consultation Statement, document SUP 13, provides a detailed summary of the consultation process.

4.4 A total of 85 respondents commented on Site 20. Of these who responded: 5% were in broad overall support of the approach; 2% were neutral to the approach; 22% provided a mix of responses; and 72% objected to one or more aspect of the approach. Details of the matters which received support and which generated objections are shown in detail in the Regulation 18 Consultation Statement.

4.5 Key issues raised in support of this site allocation included:

- Support for the provision of new housing, including affordable housing.
- Support for retention of supermarket and active frontage.
- Support for making better use of the site and townscape improvements.

4.6 Key issues raised in objection to this site allocation included:

- Insufficient consultation and information.
- Concern about massing, height and density of development.

- Negative impact on neighbours.
- Objection to access and servicing being taken from Baytree Road – should be from Acre Lane.
- Negative impact on local character, heritage, views, traffic, parking and pollution.

Changes made in response to Regulation 18 Consultation

- 4.7 Following a review of representations received and ahead of Regulation 19 consultation, various changes were made to the site allocation. These are summarised below.
- 4.8 Following refinement of the design and capacity analysis of this site, there was an increase in the number of homes s proposed. The overall number increased from 120-170 homes to 180-210 homes
- 4.9 A small amendment was made to the site boundary in response to a consultation comment from a neighbour. This corrected a mapping error, where a small area of adjoining private garden land had been incorrectly shown as being within the site allocation.
- 4.10 There were no significant changes to the other development principles in the site allocation.
- 4.11 Details of these changes were included in the Regulation 19 SADPD consultation, as discussed below.

Regulation 19 Consultation

- 4.12 Consultation on the SADPD Proposed Submission Version (PSV) took place between 8 March and 3 May 2024 and a second stage was undertaken between 18 June and 13 August 2024.
- 4.13 Over the course of the Regulation 19 consultation, 324 representations were received in total. The Regulation 22 Consultation Statement provides a detailed summary of the consultation process.
- 4.14 A total of 116 respondents commented on Site 20. Details of the matters which received support, and which generated objections are shown in detail in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement.

4.15 Key issues raised in support of this site allocation included:

- Support for the provision of new housing, including affordable housing.
- Support for retention of supermarket and active frontage.
- Support for making better use of the site and townscape improvements.

4.15 Key issues raised in support of this site allocation included:

- Insufficient consultation and information.
- Insufficient affordable housing proposed.
- Object to loss of supermarket.
- Concern about massing, height and density of development, including increase in housing numbers from Regulation 18 consultation.
- Negative impact on neighbours, including concern about loss of boundary wall.
- Green spaces should be provided.
- Objection to access and servicing being taken from Baytree Road – should be from Acre Lane.
- Negative impact on local character, heritage, views, traffic, parking and pollution.

4.17 It is considered that the proposed allocation for Site 20 is appropriate given the above considerations. It presents an opportunity to re-provide a supermarket for the town centre in addition to approximately 180-210 new homes, including affordable housing. This will help to address the current poor appearance of the site through high quality design, which responds well to its sensitive context adjoining conservation areas. Other benefits include a widened footway and increased activity on and around Acre Lane, that will improve community safety, and significant potential for enhanced urban greening and biodiversity.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 This paper has demonstrated that the site allocation proposed for Site 20 is an appropriate strategy for the site that is supported by evidence. Comprehensive redevelopment has been shown to be feasible and this will improve the design and streetscape of this site, help contribute to the borough's housing targets and secure benefits for existing and new communities. The requirements set out in the site allocation provide a clear expectation of what can reasonably be expected to be considered acceptable.

- 5.2 The Lambeth Housing Trajectory, which forms part of the council's Housing Development Pipeline Report, is in the process of being updated. This update will include evidence concerning the expected timescale for delivery of the SADPD site allocations. An updated schedule of expected delivery timescales for the SADPD site allocations will be presented for examination when this information is available. Some modifications to the Site Allocations showing delivery timescales will need to be made as a result of this update. It is therefore considered that the proposed site allocation is sound.
- 5.3 Delivery of Site 20 will be monitored through the council's annual Authority Monitoring Report.