

# Palmers Green Library

## N13 4EY

Refurbishment Works Planning Application

## Planning Statement

on behalf of

LB Enfield Corporate Maintenance and  
Construction Team

November 2013

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# Palmers Green Library N13 4EY

## Major Refurbishment Proposals

### Planning Statement

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This brief Statement covers planning issues and has been prepared in support of a detailed planning application for the refurbishment of Palmers Green Library, including a major upgrading of the library facilities, the provision of new lifts and creation of space for a potential new medical practice / health centre.
- 1.2 The application also includes significant enhancement to the public realm, creating better connectivity between a new entrance to the building and Green Lanes, revised parking and servicing arrangements, and new landscaping proposals (please see submitted **location plan** and separate **proposed site layout plan** ref **PL007**).
- 1.3 This planning application has been prepared by the Council's Corporate Maintenance and Construction Team and is submitted by London Borough of Enfield Property Services on behalf of the Council's library services and other potential users of the refurbished building.
- 1.4 Separate planning applications are submitted by Hollybrook Developments, to set out proposals for the former Southgate Town Hall and, separately, for the south western part of the combined site. The extent of the respective planning application site areas is described below.

### Purpose of Planning Application

- 1.5 The purpose of the submitted planning application for Palmers Green Library is to:
  - set out the Council's commitment to the continuing community role of the long established Library building;
  - identify the proposed uses of the refurbished building and other elements of the regeneration proposals, including better pedestrian access and connectivity, and positive contributions to the public realm;
  - explain the inter-relationship between the refurbished library building and the proposals for the remainder of the site, including the former Southgate Town Hall;
  - confirm the acceptability of the development proposals in terms of the adopted Planning Brief for the site, and the policies set out in the Council's Core Strategy and emerging Development Management Document (DMD).
- 1.6 The intention of the planning application also is to show the phasing of the development, the principles guiding the improvements to the public realm, and the parking arrangements for the proposed uses in the Library building.

### Extent of Planning Application Area

- 1.7 The 'red line' planning application area covers approximately 0.23 hectares (see **existing site plan** – drawing reference **PL002**). This totals approximately half of the combined site which includes the former Southgate Town Hall.

- 1.8 The red line area covers the main Library building, the frontage to Broomfield Lane and Shapland Way, the enhanced pedestrian access from Green Lanes, incorporating improvements to the public realm, and the revised vehicle access and parking.
- 1.9 The refurbishment proposals for the Library building follow on from an earlier consent for the demolition of the south west wing of the building (planning permission reference P13-01645LBE dated 20 August 2013). The outline 'footprint' of the area demolished in accordance with this earlier consent is shown on drawing **PL002**.
- 1.10 The existing vehicular access, from the adopted highway at Shapland Way, will be modified to serve both the refurbished library building and the residential development on the remainder of the site. This access will remain in the ownership of the Council, but maintenance responsibility will be shared with the residential developer (and subsequently with any management company put in place by the developer).
- 1.11 A shared service access to the rear of the Library building will also be provided by the residential developer, and may, on occasion be used in connection with maintenance and service work at the rear of the Library building. This area forms an integral part of the residential site and, consequently, the service access is not included within the red line of this planning application. Further details of the use of this area are set out below.
- 1.12 These refurbishment proposals represent Phase 2 of the work on the Library building, following earlier approval for the demolition of the west wing of the building and other enabling works.

### **Planning Applications for adjoining land**

- 1.13 Separate planning applications are to be submitted for the area outlined in blue on the existing site plan (**PL002**). This area covers the southern part of the 'combined' site and totals approximately 0.30 ha. The planning applications will confirm the details of conversion of the former Town Hall to provide residential apartments, and separately, the proposals for the new build affordable housing.
- 1.14 The housing proposals are submitted by Hollybrook Developments, a specialist residential developer with expertise in the conversion of former civic buildings and similar projects in London and elsewhere. The residential application proposals will also include the shared vehicular access which connects with the public highway at Shapland Way.
- 1.15 The housing proposals for the Town Hall and adjoining land comprise a conversion of the former civic building to create 18 apartments, together with 18 affordable homes in a new build development. Parking for the residential units will be in the area fronting onto Green Lanes and in the south west part of the site, accessed from Shapland Way.
- 1.16 The shared access with the Library will serve the affordable homes and the conversion of the former Town Hall (see Proposed Site Layout Plan **PL007**). As

described above, a shared service access will also be provided to the rear of the Library and in front of the area to be developed for affordable housing units.

- 1.17 The relatively limited use of this shared service area for vehicle access (beyond the defined 'turning head' area required for refuse vehicles and deliveries) will allow the area to function as amenity space for the affordable homes as well as the converted apartments in the former Town Hall. The area forms part of the residential planning application, but it will create an amenity area that relates to the whole site. New planting to the rear of the Library building will supplement this amenity role of the area to the front of the affordable homes development.
- 1.18 A variety of surface treatment and materials will emphasise the pedestrian and amenity role of this area. Other features are likely to include trees planted in containers, areas of shrub and flower planting, and benches. This area will also be used to provide pedestrian access and a link to the rear of the former Town Hall (where bin stores and bicycle storage facilities are to be located), and to the entrances of the new build affordable homes, which are to be located between the Library and the New River.
- 1.19 The proposed site layout (drawing ref **PL007**) indicates the relationship between the two sites and the defined boundary between the housing and the refurbished library building. However, this is intended to provide only a brief summary of the housing proposals, and reference should be made to the more detailed plans, elevations and sections and other application details which are submitted by Hollybrook Developments.

### **Pre-Application Public Consultation**

- 1.20 The principles for future use of the combined Library and Southgate Town Hall site are set out in the Council's Planning Brief (adopted October 2011). The Planning Brief is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in the Local Development Framework.
- 1.21 The Planning Brief was subject to public consultation in Autumn 2011, and there was an opportunity at that time for comments and responses to be submitted from English Heritage and other statutory consultees. The Planning Brief is a significant material consideration in making decisions on planning applications affecting the site.
- 1.22 Further public consultation was undertaken in September and October 2013, specifically on development proposals for the site. This pre-application consultation included the public display at the Library of site and floor plans and details of interim arrangements for the library service.
- 1.23 The display was supplemented by communication with all community groups and other local organisations in the Palmers Green area to inform about interim arrangements and long term plans for the site. In addition, meetings were held locally, including an Area Forum meeting and evening and Saturday sessions at Palmers Green Library.
- 1.24 Comments from all the public consultation elements have been taken into account in the emerging refurbishment proposals for the Library building. This Planning

Statement provides only a brief summary of the pre-application public consultation. Further details are set out in the Community Consultation and Communication Plan report, and separate schedule of individual comments on the proposals, which accompany the planning application.

### **Planning Application submission documents**

1.25 The on line planning application submission, via the Planning Portal, includes the following supporting documentation, in addition to this Planning Statement:

- Application forms and certificates;
- Location plan;
- Existing site plan identifying the application site (red line) and adjacent land owned by the applicant (blue line);
- Site Layout plan showing the inter-relationship between the Library site and former Southgate Town Hall site and adjoining land;
- Existing and Proposed Elevations;
- Proposed Floor Plans;
- 3D images of refurbished library building from selected viewpoints;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Community consultation and communication plan report;
- Schedule of comments from community consultation;
- BREEAM assessment for 'non – domestic' refurbished building;
- Appropriate planning fee.

### **Contents of Planning Statement**

1.26 The Planning Statement includes the following sections following this Introduction:

- **section 2: Background**

provides a description of the site's history, heritage and design, the adopted Planning Brief, a description of the surrounding area

- **section 3: Description of Development**

includes reference to enabling works, the library and potential medical centre, parking arrangement and sustainability credentials

- **section 4: Compliance with Planning Policy**

provides a brief overview of the planning policy matters that need to be taken into account in the determination of the planning application;

- **section 5: Summary**

provides a summary of the Statement

## 2 Background

### History, heritage and design

- 2.1 Southgate Town Hall was built as municipal offices in 1893. It was the administrative and civic centre for the Southgate Urban District Council until 1965. The Town Hall was extended in 1916 to include a Council Chamber and the adjacent Library building was constructed during the Second World War, with completion in 1940.
- 2.2 The style of the buildings reflects these different periods of construction. The Town Hall is a Victorian building with a steep pitched roof, a central clock tower, and some interesting detailing to the brickwork. By contrast the flat roofed Library building follows a simpler design style, typical of civic, education and other buildings of the interwar period, and influenced by European architectural styles. The library was purpose built as the new facility serving the whole Southgate district, and designed by Middlesex County Council architects' department.
- 2.3 In 1965, Southgate Urban District became part of the London Borough of Enfield, and the civic functions were relocated from Southgate Town Hall to central facilities. The Town Hall continued to provide office space and other facilities for many years, but the civic role further diminished with the completion of the new Civic Centre in Enfield Town for the Borough Council in the 1970s. However, the Palmers Green Library, on the same site, has continued in library use throughout, and represents one of the key library and learning facilities in the Borough.
- 2.4 The Enfield Characterisation Study (2011) highlights the impact that the relocation of the Town Hall civic functions has had on Palmers Green, stating that the area has lost its 'key anchor use'. The Characterisation Study gives the former Town Hall as an example of a building that needs a viable new use to support its on-going role as a historic landmark.
- 2.5 Whilst both the former Town Hall and Palmers Green Library are important buildings in heritage terms, neither building is listed, nor do they form part of a Conservation Area. However, it is recognised that, given the heritage significance of the buildings, their distinctive styles, and location in a prominent location on a key route through the Borough, the design of any new development should complement and reflect the existing materials, style and scale.

### Planning Brief

- 2.6 The principles for development of the overall site are set out in the Planning Brief, which was published for public consultation in summer 2011, and subsequently adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in October 2011.
- 2.7 At the time the Brief was prepared, the future use of the Town Hall was uncertain, although one of the primary objectives was to deliver improved, modern library services, potentially with an associated community facility.
- 2.8 The Planning Brief makes clear also that the existing buildings should be retained as part of any redevelopment scheme, maximising the relationship with

surroundings, improving connectivity and securing better pedestrian access to the Library building.

- 2.9 This Planning Statement considers the proposals in the context of the adopted Planning Brief and other Planning Policy considerations in section 4.

### **Surrounding Area**

- 2.10 The surrounding area is a mix of residential, community and commercial uses. Palmers Green district centre is located directly north of the site and contains a variety of retail uses and other facilities such as banks, offices and restaurants appropriate to a local centre. The main focus of the centre is located further north, close to Palmers Green railway station (see Location Plan).
- 2.11 To the south, the 'overall' site is clearly defined by the boundary with the New River. This waterway creates an interesting and attractive feature in an otherwise urban landscape. The waterway is fringed by trees and, to the east of Green Lanes, there is a towpath that follows the northern bank of the New River. Further south of the site is the A406 North Circular Road, which is a major east – west traffic route serving North London. Between the site and the A406, Green Lanes is characterised by a mix of retail, commercial and residential uses.
- 2.12 Truro House and former stable block are directly opposite the former Town Hall, on the east side of Green Lanes. Truro House is a Grade II listed building which is identified on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register. Subject to completion of a legal agreement, planning permission has been granted for the refurbishment of the original house, together with residential development of 25 units of accommodation in part of the grounds. The adopted Planning Brief provides more details on how the development of the former Town Hall and Library should relate to Truro House, and this is considered in section 4.

### **Disposal of former Town Hall and adjacent land**

- 2.13 The decision to dispose of the former Town Hall, and the southern part of the site was agreed by the Council, and the site was marketed and bids received in late 2012. The preferred bidder was selected in March 2013, and the Council have worked closely with Hollybrook Developments to finalise the contractual situation, determine the precise boundaries between the two parts of the combined site, and to progress development proposals.
- 2.14 The sale of the former Town Hall will bring the building back to beneficial use and prevent deterioration of the fabric, it will deliver affordable homes on site, and the proceeds from the disposal will help to fund the major refurbishment of the Library and associated environmental improvements.

### 3 Description of Development

#### Completion of Enabling Works

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Enabling Works, including demolition of the west wing, is to enable the separation of the existing Palmers Green library from the former Southgate Town Hall, and to prepare the land to the rear of both buildings for new development. This part of the development proposal has been approved through an earlier planning application, and the works commenced in November 2013.
- 3.2 In order that the Library service is able to continue within the main building once the enabling works are complete, a temporary staircase is to be installed on the west extension to replace the escape stairwell which is being demolished.
- 3.3 The main library will be closed for a limited period of approximately eight weeks, to allow all utility services and other separation works to be completed, together with the installation of the temporary escape staircase. These works are also due for completion. The design details of the new escape staircase are shown in the plans approved under planning permission P13-01645LBE and described in the Design and Access Statement submitted with that application.

#### Refurbishment of Library Facilities

- 3.4 The major refurbishment of Palmers Green Library aims to respond to the four priorities that the Arts Council has identified as a pre-requisite to sustain and develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century public library service:
  - the library as the hub of the community;
  - making the most facilities of digital technology and creative media;
  - ensuring that libraries are resilient and sustainable;
  - the opportunity to support the community and help deliver the right skills.
- 3.5 The cost of the refurbishment will total approximately £4.5 million pounds, which represents a major investment not just for Southgate, but for the Borough as a whole. A substantial part of this cost has been met by the sale of the former Southgate Town Hall.
- 3.6 The key principles of the design are set out in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary, the proposals are intended to enhance the experience of a library visit, to make the building more attractive and accessible, broaden the attraction by embracing digital technology and similar initiatives, and to extend the public and community use of the building through the potential inclusion of a health centre / medical practice.
- 3.7 The Library Use will be on ground and first floor. The floor plans (ref **PL008** and **PL009**) indicate the relevant areas. The total Library floorspace (including shared floorspace but excluding service areas) is approximately 800 square metres. The

existing lift shaft is to be demolished and a new lift shaft serving the whole building will be constructed on the east elevation.

- 3.8 The design details of the building are described in the Design and Access Statement. The facades of the existing building are to be renovated with repairs to brickwork and parapet copings, and new windows, with modern glazing and insulation qualities, will replace the existing single glazed windows. The replacement windows will be similar in appearance to the existing single glazed units and will retain the 1930s character of the building. New insulation and finishes to the existing roof are proposed, together with replacement of roof lights.

### **Potential Health Centre / Medical Practice**

- 3.9 An area of the building has been identified for a potential Health Centre / Medical Practice / Doctors' Surgery on the ground and basement floors. The total floor area for this use is approximately 730 square metres, plus shared use of a further approximate 70 square metres. The floorplans (ref **PL008** and **PL009**) indicate the areas identified for this potential medical / doctors' surgery use.
- 3.10 Details of the layout for the medical practice are yet to be determined, but might include a reception area on the ground floor near to the entrance foyer. Lift access would be available to all floors of the building. As indicated in the adopted Planning Brief, the introduction of a doctors' surgery / health centre will maximise usage of the building, and extend the benefit to the local community. It will reinforce the opportunity for the building to create a 'community hub' and, with a mixture of uses and activities, extends the sustainable characteristics of the development.

### **Public Realm Enhancement**

- 3.11 Substantial improvements to the public realm are proposed as part of the Library refurbishment. The main objectives of these enhancement works is to:
- create a new main pedestrian route into the building from Green Lanes;
  - announce the refurbished building to passing motorists, cyclists and pedestrians on Green Lanes;
  - significantly enhance the forecourt to the east of the building, to create a functional open amenity area;
  - provide an appropriate 'quality' setting for a new entrance to the Library building;
  - achieve better connectivity into and around the site;
  - establish a townscape quality which can define the boundary between the refurbished Library and the conversion of the former Town Hall.
- 3.12 Additional details on the proposals for this area are set out in the Design and Access Statement and are shown on the Proposed Site Layout (ref **PL007**). The forecourt area is raised in gentle steps leading up from the footway at the junction of Broomfield Lane and Green Lanes towards the eastern elevation of the Library building. Part of the new access will be in the form of a gentle ramp which will be suitable for wheelchair use.

- 3.13 There are benefits too for the setting of Truro House and grounds on the eastern side of Green Lanes. Although some distance from the Library building, the creation of a new pedestrian route from Green Lanes and the planned associated environmental improvements will create an attractive wider setting, and this enhancement will be further reinforced once the refurbishment works to the former Town Hall get underway.
- 3.14 The existing shrubbery and trees within the landscaped strip along Broomfield Lane will be replanted as part of the scheme proposals. This will open up the views of the Library building and the new public realm area, and will create a better visual link into the site.
- 3.15 Other planting is proposed along the boundary with the former Town Hall forecourt, and at the rear of the library building, where there will be an opportunity to combine a landscaped strip with a larger amenity area for the proposed affordable homes. These details are set out in the separate planning applications submitted by Hollybrook Developments.

### **Access and Parking arrangements**

- 3.16 As indicated elsewhere in this Planning Statement, the existing parking arrangements are to be revised as part of the scheme proposals. Vehicular access to the Library building will still be from Shapland Way, and the Council will retain ownership of a 5.5 metre wide access route from the adopted highway to the parking area. The access and parking arrangements are shown on the Proposed Site Layout Plan (ref **PL007**).
- 3.17 The Library site is well located for public transport, with bus routes on Green Lanes and railway station at Aldermans Hill. The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Rating of 3 (medium rating). There are car parks (supermarket and public) within the Palmers Green shopping centre. It is anticipated that many visitors to the Library and / or Health Centre will arrive by public transport, on foot or by bicycle. Others may well visit as part of a combined trip to local shops and supermarkets, having parked elsewhere in the shopping centre. As a consequence, parking for the library and health centre uses will be limited.
- 3.18 In total 15 car spaces will be provided for users of the Library and users of the potential Health Centre / Doctors' Surgery. Of the car spaces to be provided, two will be allocated for drivers with disability. Of the total spaces, four will be allocated solely for visitors to the library and four will be allocated for the medical practice. The remaining seven spaces will be for shared between visitors to either the doctors' surgery or the library.
- 3.19 Although details are yet to be agreed, a Traffic Control Order may be used to control parking arrangements. It is likely that a parking charge will be imposed for all visitors, although short stay parking charges are likely to be nominal. Such an arrangement would enable short visits for the return of books, for an appointment at the surgery and / or the collection of prescription authorisations.
- 3.20 Vehicle parking periods beyond short stay visits would be discouraged by higher charges to ensure that the maximum 'turnover' of spaces was achieved. This

seems a fair and equitable arrangement to ensure benefit for most users of these community facilities.

3.21 It is not envisaged that there will be any staff car parking for the Library. There may be a requirement for up to four spaces for the Doctors' surgery / Medical Practice, but this has yet to be determined. The charging period would only operate whilst the facilities were open to the public, and, for example, is unlikely to operate before 8am or later than 8pm in the evening. This could allow use of the parking facilities to be used for visitors to the adjoining residential properties during evening hours and on Sundays.

### **Sustainability**

3.22 BREEAM environmental assessment uses recognised measures of performance to evaluate a building, the specification, design, construction and use. The refurbishment of existing buildings clearly gives less opportunity to achieve high levels of sustainability, but this project has taken account of BREEAM on sustainable refurbishment and fit out, as established by the 2008 guidelines. The emerging 'Non Domestic refurbishment' guidelines 2014 are still at pilot stage.

3.23 A consultants' report on the sustainability credentials of the project is submitted with the planning application, so this Planning Statement only briefly summarises some of the initiatives that have been incorporated in the development proposals

3.24 The replacement of existing windows will create significant improvements to the insulation of the building, will improve thermal qualities and reduce energy costs, together with acoustic benefits. Other elements of the refurbishment will focus on the upgrading and renewal of services and facilities, and significant improvement in energy management. New lifts, in particular, will have much greater efficiency and reduced energy consumption. New insulation and other improvements to the roof of the building (including the replacement of existing roof lights) will also create significant improvements in thermal insulation and a reduction in energy consumption.

3.25 In summary the building refurbishment works score credits on many categories, including acoustic performance, noise attenuation, reduction of CO2 emissions, water metering and consumption, materials specification, responsible sourcing of materials, cyclists' facilities and pedestrian / cycle safety features.

3.26 Other benefits will result from the opportunity to increase the number of visitors to the building, with a much higher utilisation of floorspace and greater efficiency from combined trips to the joint community facilities. It is anticipated that more visitors will use public transport, or will walk or cycle to the library and health care facilities. New cycle parking is introduced, with better connectivity for pedestrians to the rest of Palmers Green centre. Revised parking arrangements will seek to reduce high dependence on the use of private cars to visit the site.

## 4 Compliance with Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.1 The NPPF was published in March 2012. It emphasises a presumption in favour of sustainable development, provides guidance for decision takers and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.2 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF states that ‘to deliver social... and cultural facilities and services’ planning policies and decisions should:
- plan positively for the provision and use of shared space (for community facilities and other local services);
  - ensure that facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community;
  - ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 4.3 In relation to buildings that have heritage value, Paragraph 131 of the NPPF advises that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of, inter alia, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

### LB Enfield Core Strategy

- 4.4 The Council’s Local Plan policies map for the core Strategy confirms that the combined Library and former Town Hall site has no specific planning designations. As stated earlier neither building is listed as of special architectural or historic interest, and the site does not form part of a Conservation Area.
- 4.5 The defined district centre of Palmers Green lies further north of the site, and includes the Morrisons supermarket and car park, and shop units and other premises around the junction of Green Lanes and Aldermans Hill.
- 4.6 The New River, to the south of the site is defined as a Wildlife Corridor, and is designated as a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 4.7 Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy supports the delivery of neighbourhood Health Centres, including modern GP practices. The policy refers to the anticipated need for a new facility for the south west of the Borough in either Southgate or Palmers Green.
- 4.8 Policy CP11 resists the loss of existing cultural and arts facilities, and indicates that more flexible use of community facilities may make the provision more sustainable and viable. Policy CP11 also refers to the potential relocation of libraries to High Street sites. At paragraph 5.112, the Core Strategy notes that for existing libraries, the focus will be on the quality of the service provided. This will include enhanced services and facilities, such as IT and the provision of community rooms where possible, and reshaping opening hours to better suit the needs of library users.

4.9 Core Policy 31 states that the Council will preserve and enhance all of the Borough's heritage assets. The policy advises that built development and interventions in the public realm that impact on heritage assets should have regard to their special character and based on an understanding of context. In the interpretation of this policy, it is recognised that the buildings are not listed, but a similar approach is adopted in relation to the enhancement works to the new pedestrian entrance.

### **Development Management Document**

4.10 Policies in the emerging DMD support the provision of new community facilities (Policy DMD 16) subject to a number of criteria including the 'efficient and effective uses of land and buildings, and, where appropriate, provides opportunities for co-location, flexible spaces and multi-use. Policy DMD 17 seeks to protect the use of existing community facilities.

4.11 Policy DMD 37 sets out the criteria for achieving high quality and design led development. This includes the opportunity for improving an area in accordance with defined urban design objectives (as listed in the policy).

4.12 Policy DMD 42 covers the Design of Civic / Public Buildings and Institutions. Key criteria in the policy include the importance of achieving landmark status for buildings, the opportunity for positive enhancement of the public realm, and the importance of ensuring entrances are prominently and conveniently located.

### **Adopted Planning Brief**

4.13 The adopted Planning Brief seeks a mix of uses for the site and, for the Library building, the objective is to combine the Library (D1 use) with an associated community use (categorised as D1 or D2 use).

4.14 The requirements of the Brief are that both the Library and the former Town Hall should be retained, and that the 'non-residential' uses occupy the Library building. Any new build residential development should be located towards the rear of the site. A new entrance should be provided to the library, with better facilities and improved access for disabled visitors.

4.15 Other objectives set out under Design considerations include improved public access to Green Lanes, and the creation of strong frontages to surrounding streets, respecting the character of Truro House and grounds on the east side of Green Lanes, and providing an active frontage to this main through route.

### **Conclusions on Planning Policy compliance**

4.16 This brief assessment covers relevant national policy, the Council's adopted Core Strategy, emerging Development Management Document (DMD) policies, and the adopted Planning Brief for the combined site. The conclusion from this assessment is that the refurbishment proposals for the Library building, with associated environmental improvements and enhancement to the public realm, relate well to the policy support for community facilities and comply fully with the planning policy framework.

## 5 Summary

5.1 This Statement covers planning issues and has been prepared in support of a detailed planning application for the refurbishment of Palmers Green Library, including a major upgrading of the library facilities, the provision of new lifts and creation of space for a potential new medical practice / health centre, and external improvements to create a new pedestrian access from Green Lanes.

5.2 The purpose of the submitted planning application is to:

- set out the Council's commitment to the continuing community role of the long established Library building;
- identify the proposed uses of the refurbished building and other elements of the regeneration proposals, including better pedestrian access and connectivity, and positive contributions to the public realm;
- explain the inter-relationship between the refurbished library building and the proposals for the remainder of the site, including the former Southgate Town Hall;
- confirm the acceptability of the development proposals in terms of the adopted Planning Brief for the site, and the policies set out in the Council's Core Strategy and emerging Development Management Document (DMD).

5.3 The 'red line' planning application area covers approximately 0.23 hectares (see **existing site plan** – drawing reference **PL002**). Separate applications are to be submitted for the former Southgate Town Hall and adjacent land in the south west part of the site.

5.4 These adjoining applications (on approximately 0.30 ha) are to be submitted by specialist residential developer, Hollybrook, who are proposing to convert the former Town Hall into 18 apartments and to construct a new build development of 18 affordable homes on the adjoining land at the rear of the site, facing onto the New River.

5.5 The principles for future use of the combined Library and Southgate Town Hall site are set out in the Council's Planning Brief (adopted October 2011). The Planning Brief is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in the Local Development Framework.

5.6 Further public consultation took place in Autumn 2013 specifically on development proposals for the site. This pre-application consultation included the public display at the Library of site and floor plans and details of interim arrangements for the library service. Further details are set out in the Community Consultation and Communication Plan report, and separate schedule of individual comments on the proposals, which accompany the planning application.

- 5.7 The major refurbishment of Palmers Green Library aims to respond to the four priorities that the Arts Council has identified as a pre-requisite to sustain and develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century public library service. A significant part of the £4.5M cost is met by the sale of the former Town Hall and adjoining land. Total floorspace for the Library (including shared areas) is approximately 800 square metres.
- 5.8 The design details of the building are described in the Design and Access Statement. The facades of the existing building are to be renovated with repairs to brickwork and parapet copings, and replacement windows, with better insulation qualities, will be similar in appearance to the existing single glazed units and will retain the 1930s character of the building. New insulation and finishes to the existing roof are proposed, together with replacement of roof lights.
- 5.9 A new entrance route to Green Lanes will be opened up, and new paving and other environmental improvements will be incorporated as a major enhancement to the 'public realm'.
- 5.10 An area of the building has been identified for a potential Health Centre / Medical Practice / Doctors' Surgery on the ground and basement floors. The total floor area for this use is approximately 730 square metres, plus shared use of a further approximate 70 square metres. The floorplans (ref **PL008** and **PL009**) indicate the areas identified for this potential medical / doctors' surgery use.
- 5.11 In total 15 car spaces will be provided for users of the Library and users of the potential Health Centre / Doctors' Surgery. Of the total spaces, four will be allocated solely for visitors to the library and four will be allocated for the medical practice. The remaining seven spaces will be for shared between visitors to either the doctors' surgery or the library.
- 5.12 Details have yet to be agreed, but a Traffic Control Order may be used to control parking arrangements. It is likely that a parking charge will be imposed for all visitors, although the charge for a short stay period may be nominal.
- 5.13 Other sustainable benefits will result from the refurbishment works. There will also be an opportunity to increase the number of visitors to the building, with a much higher utilisation of floorspace and greater efficiency from combined trips to the joint community facilities. It is anticipated that more visitors will use public transport, or will walk or cycle to the library and health care facilities.
- 5.14 This Statement includes an assessment of relevant national planning policy, the Council's adopted Core Strategy, emerging Development Management Document (DMD) policies, and the adopted Planning Brief for the combined site.
- 5.15 The conclusion from this assessment is that the refurbishment proposals for the Library building, with associated environmental improvements and enhancement to the public realm, relate well to the policy support for community facilities and comply fully with the planning policy framework.

**Property Services Department, London Borough of Enfield  
29 November 2013**

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