

# Winchester Laundry & Cleaning Company Site Design Brief

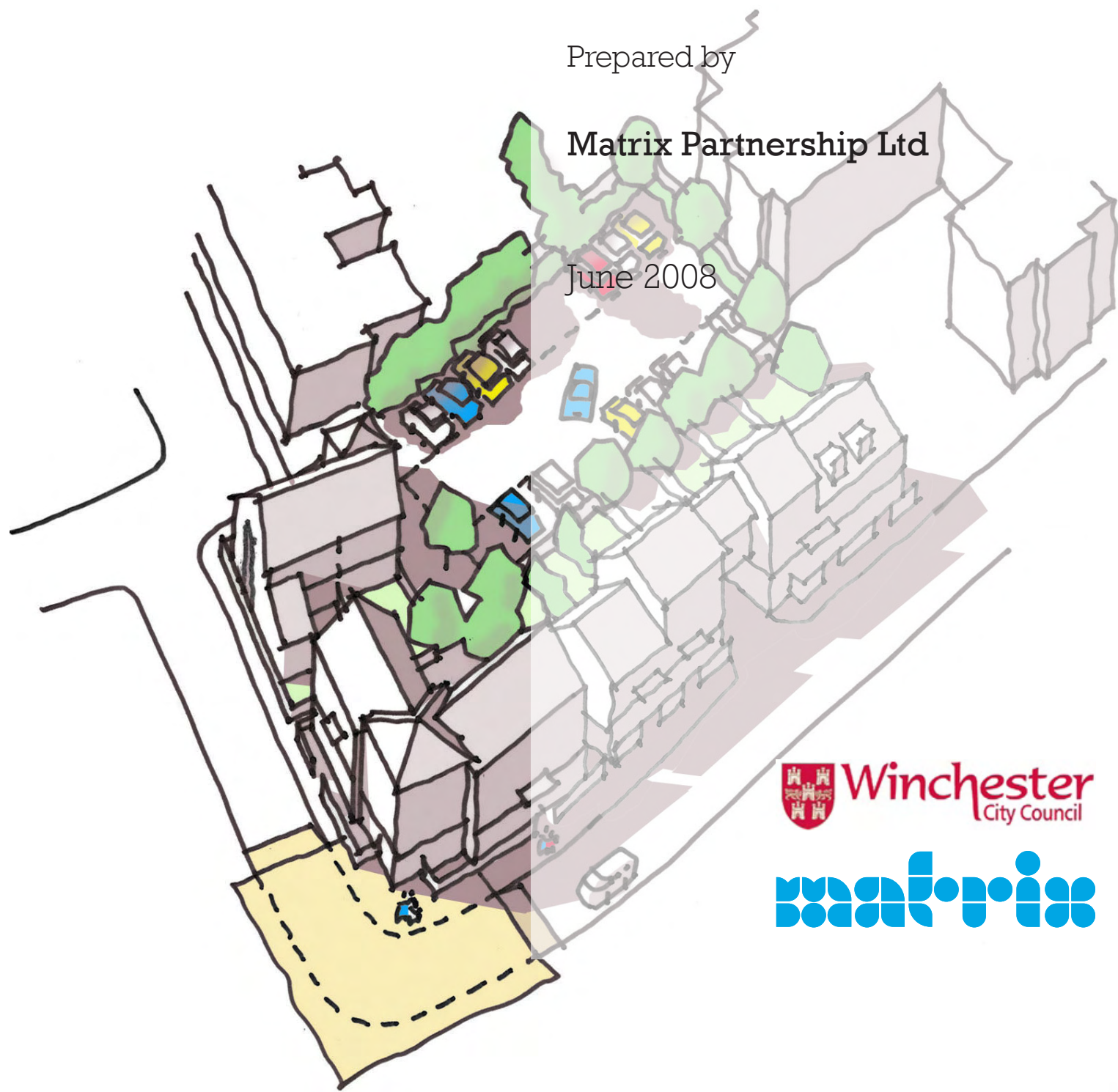
for

**Winchester City Council**

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#### **The Status of this Design Brief**

This Design Brief was endorsed by Winchester City Council Cabinet on Wednesday 9th July 2008. The brief will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals relating to this site. The brief was the subject of public consultation (see Section 05). A public meeting was held on the 7th May 2008 to which local residents and interested parties were invited. The subsequent design brief has been adjusted to have regard to the feedback received from this event.

#### **Acknowledgements**

Winchester City Council would like to thank all those involved in the preparation of this document including the local community whose interest and participation has made a valuable contribution to the brief. Also Context One Archeological Services for allowing use of an extract of their report on the Hyde Abbey Fish Ponds.

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# 01 Introduction



Figure 1: Aerial photo of the design brief site in context

## 01.1 Background

This design brief (the brief) has been commissioned by Winchester City Council (the Council). The brief aims to help deliver a high quality of development at the former Winchester Laundry and Cleaning Company premises (the site) located on the corner of Hyde Abbey Road and Gordon Road, just north of the city centre.

The premises was formerly occupied by the Winchester Laundry and Cleaning Company. The company has now vacated this site leaving the premises empty at the present time.

It is considered that the availability of this site presents an exciting opportunity for its redevelopment in a manner that will enhance the townscape of this area.

This brief is intended to be used to help guide and inform applications for planning permission and help assess planning applications by providing an appreciation of the context of the site and establishing suitable parameters for its redevelopment. It should provide a basis for the Council and the community to work with landowners and developers and to deliver a high quality development that respects the character of this area and is compatible with the surrounding land uses.

This document was endorsed by Winchester City Council Cabinet on 9th July 2008 as a design brief and it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to this site, although it is not a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Nevertheless, community consultation has been undertaken on the potential future redevelopment of the site. The feedback received from the consultation has been used to help inform the content of the brief.

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Figure 2: View west along Hyde Abbey Road



Figure 3: Site buildings seen from Gordon Road



Figure 4: Houses on King Alfred Terrace



Figure 5: View looking east along Hyde Abbey Road to the site

## 01.2 Purpose - What is a design and development brief?

A design brief is a document that provides a design framework for the development of a site, with regard to its context, constraints and appropriate new uses. It includes design guidelines which seek to ensure that new development respects both the site and its surroundings to ensure that the final outcome is of high quality.

The purpose of this brief is to help achieve the suitable redevelopment of the site by:

- establishing an appreciation of the context of the site;
- identifying and understanding the constraints and opportunities presented by the site; and
- setting out planning and design guidelines by which the site should be developed.

## 01.3 Report Structure

### Section 1 – Introduction

Summarises the purpose of the brief, the process followed, and the policy context in which the brief was prepared.

### Section 2 – Site context

Establishes the physical and historical context of the site.

### Section 3 – Site analysis

Provides an analysis of constraints and opportunities.

### Section 4 - Initial options

Sets out options used to test potential development scenarios

### Section 5 - Public consultation

A summary of the public consultation event and the key messages emerging from stakeholders.

### Section 6 – Planning and design principles

Sets the principles by which the site should be developed.

### Section 7 - Interpretation of design principles

Three examples of how the principles have been interpreted as illustrations of indicative design solutions.

### Section 8 - Submission requirements

Outlines the information expected to accompany a planning application for re-development at this site.

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Figure 6: Site within the context of Winchester

## 01.4 Site Area

The design brief area is situated just north of Winchester City Centre, beyond the historic city walls, within the established northern suburb of Hyde.

The site occupies an area of approximately 0.23 ha and is bounded by Hyde Abbey Road to the south and Gordon Road to the east. It was formerly the premises of the Winchester Laundry and Cleaning Company. Vacant buildings now occupy the majority of the site which is enclosed by a tall brick boundary wall. The main point of access is off Gordon Road.

The area comprises a variety of building characters, although terraced housing, with well defined front boundaries, together with the common use of brick provide a uniformity of character. Occasional small industrial premises, such as the brief site, sit alongside terraced houses. The River Park Leisure Centre, St Bede C of E Primary School and flats are also within close proximity.

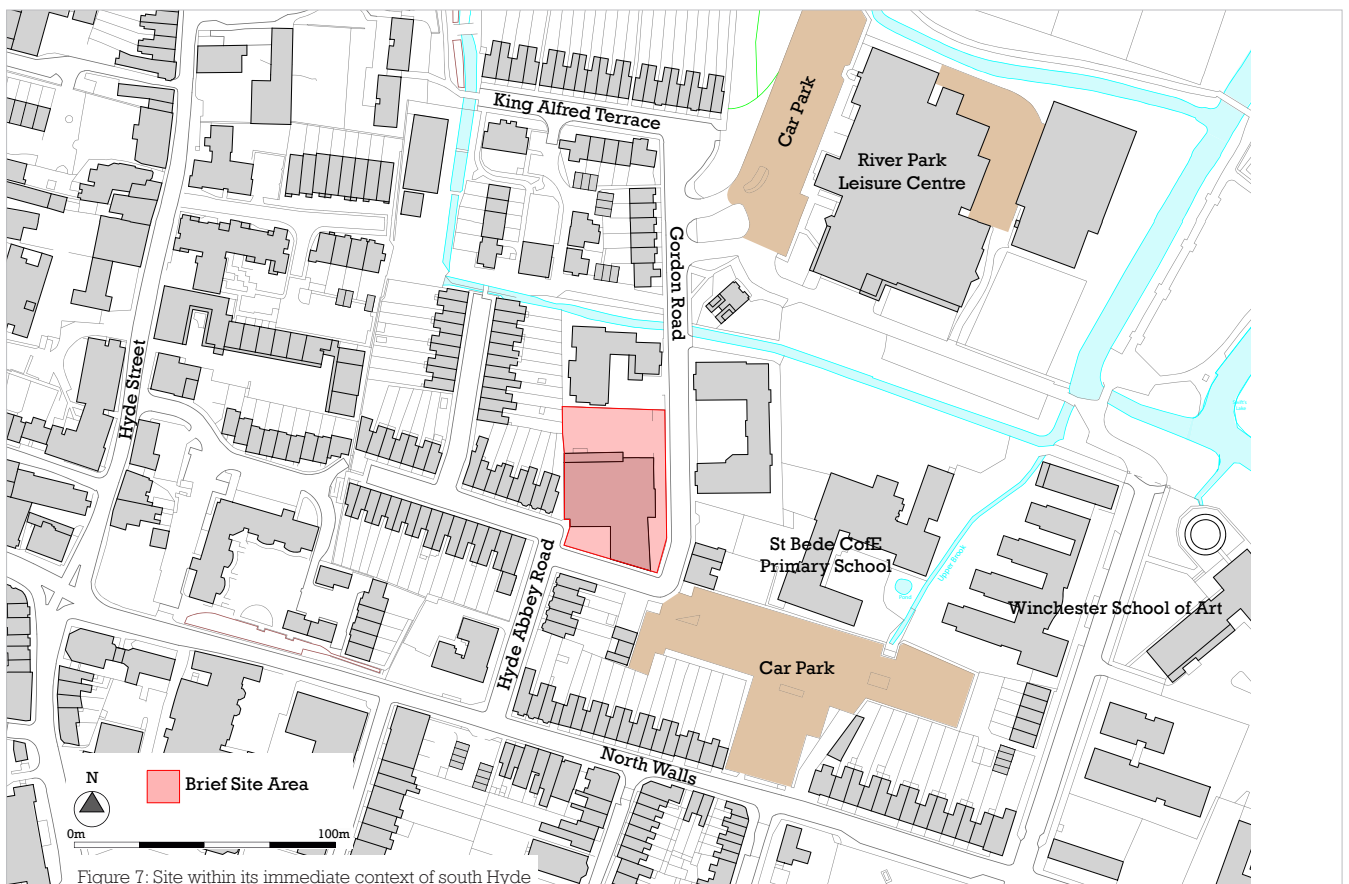


Figure 7: Site within its immediate context of south Hyde



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## 01.1 Planning Policy Context

This design brief has been prepared during a time of change within the current planning system. Existing planning policies are contained within the Winchester District Plan Review (2006) against which applications for development are assessed.

However, Winchester City Council is in the process of preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF) which will eventually replace the existing District Plan Review (2006). It should be noted that the LDF is at an early stage in its development and as such the policies contained within the Winchester District Plan Review (2006) will continue to form the basis of planning decisions. Nevertheless it is important that the guidance within this brief has regard to both the existing planning policy framework but is also considered against the background of an emerging LDF.

The Winchester Development Plan comprises:

- Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9) – the current Regional Spatial Strategy
- The Hampshire County Structure Plan (saved policies only); and
- Winchester District Plan Review (2006).

In due course RPG 9 and the Structure Plan will be replaced by the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East and the District Plan will be replaced by the LDF.

This brief provides an overview of the main policies in the District Plan that relate to this site. Developers are advised that the brief does not refer to all the relevant policies. They should refer to the documents mentioned above in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the existing and emerging planning policy framework.

### **The Winchester Cleaning and Laundry Company and District Plan employment policies**

The site is shown located outside the defined town centre for Winchester. The former cleaning company premises are an employment site (albeit currently vacant) for the purposes of

the District Plan and policies E1, E2 and E4 seek to encourage businesses or protect sites from changing to non-employment uses. In summary:

#### E.1.

Small scale employment uses (B1, B2, or B8) will generally be permitted within Winchester where it is not likely to significantly increase car journeys and makes provision for cyclist and pedestrians. Proposals must be satisfactorily accommodated in terms of scale, density and character and should not be detrimental to adjoining uses, with regard to noise, traffic and operating hours.

#### E.2.

This policy seeks to retain employment within Winchester. The loss of employment due to change of use or redevelopment will only be permitted where any proposed expansion of the existing employment use would cause environmental or highway objections that would otherwise be overcome by redevelopment.

The benefits of redevelopment would need to outweigh the benefits of retaining the existing use.

It is worth noting that the site formerly provided employment for approximately 70 people.

#### E.4.

Office development (Use Class B1 a) is not generally permitted outside the designated town centre.

Research and development (B1 b) and light industry (B1c) is however permitted as is general industry (B2) and storage and distribution (B8), subject to satisfying other policies including transport.

As part of the evidence base for the emerging LDF the Council has produced the Winchester District Economic and Employment Land Study (2007) (the EELS). One aspect of this study was to assess the suitability of existing employment sites against a range of market attractiveness, sustainable development and strategic planning factors. Each site was graded according to their fitness for purpose for an employment use. Sites fell into one of the following categories; clearly fit for purpose (green), fit for purpose with improvements (amber) or clearly not fit for purpose (red). The brief site

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was assessed as part of this process and was identified as an 'amber' site.

The site is clearly currently the subject of policies which seek to retain it for non-office employment purposes, although the EELS identifies this as a site suitable for employment use but that improvements are required. The EELS concluded the current use is incompatible with the surrounding area and that the access is not entirely suitable, although the study identifies the sites viability for future employment purposes as 'fair'.

However, given that the present use raises issues regarding access and compatibility with the surrounding uses, it is considered that these are unlikely to be improved sufficiently to enable the existing site to be appropriate for purely employment purposes in this context. This therefore suggests that a suitable mixed use scheme would be the appropriate means of achieving the redevelopment of the site in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding area, in terms of access and employment activities appropriate within a residential setting. A quantum of housing development to facilitate this change may be acceptable.

## **Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East**

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (The South East Plan) has been tested through an examination in public (EiP) and the Draft SE Plan Panel Report was published in August 2007. It found that with regard to Employment Land it would be unwise for Policy RE2 (v) to allow mixed use development "where appropriate", because of the risk of undermining sites which provide for necessary but lower value employment uses.

Opportunities and threats from mixed use development and protecting or safeguarding employment land should be considered in employment land review work. The Panel Report considered that it is better for particular sub-regional strategies to identify the circumstances of relevance to their local authorities.

## **Conclusion**

In light of the planning policy considerations and the circumstances of this site, being located within a largely residential area together with some access restrictions, these factors would make it undesirable for the site to be redeveloped only for employment uses. It is therefore considered that a mixed use scheme may provide a suitable alternative approach to its redevelopment.

The brief presents an opportunity to provide a framework for the regeneration of this site that would deliver a mixed use scheme that both supports the role and function of this part of Winchester and helps the town to meet its future needs for housing, employment and possibly community facilities. It is anticipated that the content of this brief will be reflected in any planning application for development on the site.

## **District Plan Review (2006) - other relevant policy considerations**

In addition to employment land policies identified above, a range of other policies contained within the Winchester District Plan Review (2006) are considered relevant and therefore should be considered when preparing proposals for the redevelopment of the site.

### Design & Development Principles

DP.3 encourages sustainable forms of high quality development including the efficient use of land in accordance with government guidance, whilst responding positively to the character of the local environment and avoiding unacceptable adverse effects on adjacent land. Policy H.7 recommends residential development densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph).

DP.6. Allows for the provision of appropriate levels of high quality amenity open space.

### Historic Environment

HE.1 allows for the preservation and management of archaeological remains and provides for archaeological investigation, excavation, recording and publication of findings

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where appropriate where preservation on-site is not possible.

HE.2. Where the extent and importance of archaeological remains is unknown, developers are required to provide evidence of adequate archaeological assessment.

HE 4. The Laundry site is immediately outside the Winchester Conservation Area so redevelopment proposals for the Laundry site will have an impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. Proposals must not detract from the setting of the Conservation Area.

### Housing

H.2. Residential development will generally be permitted within built up area. No specific residential allocation is identified in respect of the former laundry site but it is within the built up area.

H.5. If residential development is permitted on the former laundry site a proportion of the new residential units will need to be affordable. This is likely to include homes for rent, shared-equity and key worker housing. However, the definition for affordable housing does not include low-cost market housing. The threshold for providing affordable housing is 15 dwellings and the level of provision is 40%.

H.7. Residential development will generally be permitted. On sites large enough to accommodate 2 or more dwellings, 50 percent of new dwellings should be small one and two bed units, and can include terraced houses or flats.

(N/B Please refer to the Winchester District Plan Review, 2006, for the full policy text accompanying commentary for each of the above policies)

