

## **Meeting of the Cabinet – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

### **Report of the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise**

#### **Portersfield Development Brief**

##### **Purpose of report**

1. To seek Cabinet endorsement of the Portersfield Development Brief to be used to promote and guide the comprehensive development of the key regeneration site in Dudley town centre.

##### **Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
  - Endorse the Portersfield Development Brief as set out in Appendix Two.
  - Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Economic Delivery, to make any non-substantive changes necessary to the document prior to it being published.

##### **Background**

3. Portersfield is a development opportunity site (Opportunity Site 2: Trindle Road/Hall Street/Birdcage Walk) located within Dudley Town Centre and is one of seven development opportunity sites identified in the Dudley Area Action Plan (DAAP). It is identified as a Priority Site in the emerging Dudley Local Plan (Regulation 18 consultation, November-December 2023). The site(s), encompassing an area of 3 hectares, is located adjacent to the Dudley Interchange and the proposed Metro Stop (both schemes of which are currently under construction) and is bounded to the north by St Joseph Street, Claughton Road North, by Duncan Edwards

Way to the east and by Hall Street to the south. A map of the site(s) location is shown in Appendix One of this report.

4. The site(s) is a key regeneration site for Dudley Town Centre and forms part of a wider £1 billion regeneration programme of investment in Dudley borough being promoted by the Council, through the current Dudley Area Action Plan (DAAP) and the emerging new Dudley Local Plan (DLP). Given the investment in the transport network through Metro and the Dudley Interchange, the comprehensive development of this site will provide the opportunity to create a new and attractive residential led urban quarter connecting new and existing residential communities by delivering high quality residential development, public realm and green corridors for walking and cycling.
5. The Council is committed to facilitating the regeneration of the wider Portersfield area to create a vibrant residential quarter providing quality homes set, within well designed and welcoming public spaces. This new quarter will support the Council's aspirations to increase town centre living, and along with other developments, to increase footfall to support town centre businesses and provide infrastructure to support the growing tourism/educational offer for Dudley town centre and the wider borough.
6. To realise this opportunity, and to maximise the potential, a development brief (the Brief) has been produced which will help to deliver the comprehensive regeneration of the site(s) (see Appendix Two).
7. The purpose of the brief is to assist in ensuring that any new developments are designed to the highest possible quality. In addition, it sets the parameters for development in order to guide future planning applications and includes:
  - an explanation of how the proposed development of the site should meet national and local policies and guidance
  - the identification of any constraints and opportunities on and around the site and how they will be addressed
  - the vision, objectives and key principles for the development.
8. Furthermore, the brief will be used to support additional work areas to promote development of the site, and where there are complex issues to address such as:
  - listed buildings, conservation areas and heritage assets with archaeological interest

- sites in multiple land ownership, where coordination between parties will be required to ensure the delivery of a high quality, coherent development
- supporting future planning applications and potential Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)
- informing the preparation of development appraisals – to enable an assessment of viability; and
- the preparation of documentation for the procurement of a Development Partner, as well as the competitive dialogue process whereby a development partner will need to know what the scheme it is expected to deliver.

### **Portersfield Development Brief**

9. The Portersfield Development Brief has been prepared following an eight-week consultation exercise that was carried out in July-September 2023.
10. During the consultation, members of public, residents, businesses and stakeholders were invited to take part in the consultation to *“Help shape proposals for the future of the Portersfield site”*. The consultation document provided a plan of the site with several proposals/options including highway and pedestrian related proposals, connectivity and public realm/landscaping improvements, design principles, and potential development sites whereby views/comments were sought.
11. A consultation questionnaire requested comments on ten questions about the proposed movement, accessibility, heritage, and landscaping proposals for the site. Stakeholders were encouraged to complete the questionnaire which aimed to capture the local community’s views and preferences regarding the options and proposals being consulted on. A total of 459 people completed the questionnaire. All questions secured a ‘strongly agree or agree’ rating from more than 70% of responders, with several in the high 80%/ low 90% rating.
12. The feedback from the consultation exercise, plus previous public engagement activity, has helped to shape the proposals and principles set out in the Brief which is the subject of this report.
13. The Brief has also been prepared within the context of the local and national planning policy, including the evolving Draft Dudley Local Plan. It will provide guidance to developers on suitable land uses, design and layout, access, and transportation in order to promote the development of the site in a manner that will enhance the vitality of a key gateway site to Dudley town centre. The Brief will aid the Council in assembling land for development, undertaking viability and other exploratory studies and to aid

the process for external funding submissions. As well as providing guidance in the determination of future planning applications.

14. The key elements of the Brief set out as follows:

- The site context, constraints and opportunities;
- Planning Policy context –for example national policy and the current local plan policies including the Dudley AAP and emerging Dudley Local Plan;
- The Council’s overarching vision and objectives for the site;
- Development principles and illustrative proposals for the individual development sites, plus potential uses, highway improvements, pedestrian access and connectivity and public realm and landscaping improvements; and
- Implementation and delivery arrangements for the site

15. The Brief sets out the Council’s vision for the area, which has built upon the vision in the Dudley AAP and further informed by the public consultation. The vision seeks to create a new urban quarter that is attractive and distinctive, whilst connecting new and existing communities and helping to support economic, social and environmental benefits for local people, businesses and residents. In achieving this vision, the development of the Portersfield site will provide:

- a welcoming arrival and destination space that takes advantage of its proximity to the new Interchange, the Midland Metro and the historical context of the town centre;
- a high quality/healthy development with an enhanced environment that supports people’s wellbeing by providing high quality spaces and active travel;
- improved highways/public spaces that provide for improved access and connectivity, particularly to pedestrians and cyclists;
- enhancements to the town’s heritage by providing key gateways/arrival points in the town centre and creating new and improved views of the town’s heritage assets and
- a residential-led development, improving the vitality of the town centre.

16. The Brief sets out the Council’s aspirations to develop a new urban quarter that will enhance the vitality of the town centre, secure high-quality developments that build upon the town’s heritage assets and introduce a new residential population with a focus on securing a higher quality residential development that meets a range of local housing needs. Alongside this, the Brief takes advantage of the Midland Metro and new Dudley Interchange which provide a new arrival point for the town centre allowing the opportunity to create an attractive destination space in the

Dudley town centre, providing a focus for highway improvements that allow for much needed improvements to pedestrian/cycling connectivity across the town centre, the provision of new public spaces and high-quality public realm/streetscape and landscaping.

17. The Brief divides the site into three main development areas as shown in Appendix One. For each of these areas appropriate uses and design principles have been set out in detail throughout the brief. To summarise the main proposed uses for these three sites are as follows:
  1. **Portersfield North (Area 1)** – Land north-west of Trindle Road  
The development site provides a key role as a welcoming/destination space for the wider area. The site is located adjacent to the proposed metro stop and Interchange. It is envisaged that residential development with commercial ground floor uses to provide active frontages to the Interchange and public spaces provide the most appropriate use of the site.
  2. **Portersfield South (Area 2)** – Land to the south-east of Trindle Road  
This development site was previously occupied by the former Cavendish House. It is envisaged that residential development will form the main use of the site with improved pedestrian links, highway improvements and enhanced public spaces.
  3. **Portersfield South (Area 3)** – Land between Porter Street and Hall Street  
It is envisaged that residential development will form the main use of the site with improved pedestrian links, highway improvements and enhanced public spaces.
18. Alongside this, the Brief identifies seven development principles which will guide the development of the individual areas of the wider site. These include:
  1. ***Destination space and place*** – ensuring that as a key gateway/arrival point into the town centre development proposals will need to be designed so that the built form and public realm create a high-quality destination that fully integrates with the metro and new Dudley Interchange.
  2. ***Hall Street (Portersfield South Area 3)*** – the retention of existing historic buildings and sympathetic integration of new build developments.

- 3. Residential led urban quarter** that brings vacant floorspace and land into use whilst ensuring that development reflects traditional street patterns and public spaces.
  - 4. Creating a positive image for the town** – ensuring development presents a positive image for the town, particularly around key gateways such as Duncan Edwards Way and Kate’s Hill.
  - 5. Safeguarding of Porter Street** – improving pedestrian connectivity between the town centre and the existing residential communities by ensuring that Porter Street is safeguarded and can be re-connected to Porter Street South and to the Kate’s Hill community.
  - 6. Improvement of landing point** – improvements to the existing footbridge across Duncan Edwards Way via landscaping and public realm improvements to make the area more welcoming.
  - 7. Enhancements to Trindle Road** – through the provision improved cycle paths, reduce speed limits and improved/creation of pedestrian crossing points.
  - 8. Future proofing developments** creation of a new urban quarter where buildings are zero-carbon ready.
19. To ensure comprehensive development of the site, it is envisaged that the Council will lead on the delivery of the Portersfield scheme, working with a development partner(s), Avenbury, as a significant landowner and other parties. This will be led by the Council’s Regeneration Team as the site promoter who will oversee this process by engaging with a development partner(s), facilitating land assembly, funding and comprehensive development of the site.
  20. It is recommended that Cabinet endorse the Brief as attached to Appendix Two of this report to be used to promote and guide the development of the key regeneration site in Dudley town centre.

## **Finance**

21. All costs associated with the preparation of the Development Brief which is the subject of this Cabinet report are funded from existing budgets and resources.

## **Law**

22. Following consultation and Cabinet endorsement, the 'Portersfield Development Brief' will guide the development of the Portersfield site. Whilst the Brief does not have the status of the Supplementary Planning Document it will be used as a consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## **Risk Management**

23. There are not considered to be any material risks from this report.

## **Equality Impact**

24. An Equalities Impact Screening has been undertaken and is attached in Appendix Three. The assessment found that the Development Brief had no specific impacts on protected characteristics. The Brief will be used to guide development in the Portersfield area in line with adopted Planning documents. Development of the site(s) will lead to improved, well design and accessible new developments.

## **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

25. It is considered that there is no additional human resources or organisational development implications resulting from this report. Work on the Development Brief has been carried out by the Planning Policy Team in the Regeneration & Enterprise Directorate with assistance from officers in other Departments where necessary.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

26. There are not considered to be any commercial/procurement implications because of this report.

## **Environment/Climate Change**

27. Meeting the challenge of climate change is a core principle of the Development Brief. The Brief has been prepared in the context of current and emerging planning and national guidance which clearly states that proposals for the Portersfield site should be shaped in ways that 'contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

## **Council Priorities and Projects**

28. The Brief will support the Council's priorities to be the 'Destination of Choice' and the 'Safe and Healthy Borough' by ensuring housing developments that are well designed, more accessible and built to higher environmental standards that reduces emissions and creates a sense of place.
29. In addition, the proposed interventions will support the aspirations of the Dudley Borough Vision 2030 by creating healthy, attractive environments where people want to live.



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### **Appendices**

- Appendix One – Portersfield site plan
- Appendix Two - Draft Portersfield Development Brief
- Appendix Three – Portersfield Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

(All of the appendices are available online at the link below:-

<https://dudley.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/116/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/543/Meeting/6638/Committee/468/Default.aspx>

Paper copies can be made available for Elected Members upon request)

### **List of Background Documents**

- Meeting of the Cabinet - 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Agenda item 10 - <https://dudley.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/116/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/543/Meeting/6636/Committee/468/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>
- Meeting of the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 - Agenda item 7 - <https://dudley.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/116/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/543/Meeting/6655/Committee/543/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>