

# Westbrook Gateway

Development Brief





The brief will not be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document but is a statement of council policies affecting the site and is intended to provide guidance for developers.

The document is intended to support pre-application discussions about development proposals for Bolton town centre, although it is designed for use throughout the development control process. Applicants are advised to contact the Planning Section to discuss their proposals as early as possible. Additional guidance may also need to be consulted depending upon the nature and location of the application.

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## Westbrook Gateway Development Brief

# 1. Introduction

### 1.1

The council is seeking the comprehensive redevelopment of an area known as Westbrook Gateway to the south east of Bolton town centre. The area is bounded by Manchester Road, the residential development to the south of Grosvenor Street, the valley of the River Croal and Lower Bridgeman Street. The area covered by the brief is shown in plan 1. Much of the site is dominated by the former Bolton College building. The College relocated to a site within the Knowledge Campus during September 2010 leaving a large plot available for redevelopment.

### 1.2

Bolton is on the cusp of an economic renaissance. It is already the North West's fifth largest employment centre and is an important regional retail destination. This is one of a number of major strategic development opportunities that will help to generate hundreds of millions of new investment and generate around 10,000 new jobs.

### 1.3

The Westbrook area presents an exciting development opportunity for a housing led mixed-use development that will have a significant regeneration impact. It is of strategic importance in supporting the sustained growth of Bolton as a regional centre. Although the site is outside the boundary of the town centre as defined in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), this is an important gateway site for visitors to the town centre and a very high standard of design will be required.

### 1.4

The site is adjacent to Bolton town centre which is the Borough's main centre for shopping, business and civic affairs. It is also the most important centre for arts, entertainment, urban leisure and cultural activities and is thus a focus for the wider community. As such it is an exemplar for the Borough's key brand values:

- **'Open'** – (friendly/welcoming)

This reflects the openness of the people, the spaciousness of the town and the green spaces that surround it. Bolton is, and should aim to be, friendly, welcoming and inclusive.

- **'Colourful'** – (characterful/distinctiveness/interesting)  
Bolton has a distinctive history and heritage, as well as many famous characters associated with the town. We should work to maintain and enhance this.

- **'Sound'** – (decent/reliable/trustworthy)

The Borough has an underlying sense of quality and dependability, Bolton is somewhere that people can depend on.

The brief seeks to support these values through reference to planning guidance and other data about the site context, and the council's aspirations for the site.





## 2. Purpose of the brief

### 2.1

This brief has been prepared to guide the development of the land within the boundary of the Westbrook Gateway area as shown on plan 1 (page 4). The brief will set out in detail the objectives of the council for the form and content of development proposals for the site to provide guidance for developers.

### 2.2

This is a rare opportunity of a site in or around the town centre that is large enough to accommodate a major development. This site is in a highly accessible location on the edge of the town centre. It is well served by public transport being located on a number of bus routes serving Manchester Road and Lower Bridgeman Street and a short walk from the newly refurbished Rail/Bus Interchange. It has good access to the main highway network with its main road location and proximity to St. Peters Way.

### 2.3

The brief will give information on issues such as preferred activity, urban design principles, opportunities for vehicular access and egress, car parking, public realm and open space requirements and issues of local distinctiveness, perception and image.

### 2.4

The site is identified as being within the Bridgeman Place Area of Change by the Bolton Town Centre Action Framework. There have already been investments in new office accommodation in the area and there is also developer interest in some of the better quality industrial blocks. The relocation of the College has left a large plot available for redevelopment.



## 3. Policy context

### 3.1

This brief will expand on policies set out in the Bolton Unitary Development Plan adopted in April 2005. The relevant policies are listed opposite.

### 3.2

Further details of these policies can be found on the council's website [www.bolton.gov.uk](http://www.bolton.gov.uk). Alternatively, copies of the policies are available for viewing at Bolton Town Hall.

### Box 1 Policy Description

<b>N7</b>	<b>Trees, woodland and hedgerows</b>	<b>A7</b>	<b>Cycle parking</b>
<b>N9</b>	<b>Species protection</b>	<b>A8</b>	<b>Major development (access)</b>
<b>EM2</b>	<b>Incompatible uses</b>	<b>A9</b>	<b>Access for people with disabilities</b>
<b>EM3</b>	<b>Pollution</b>	<b>A10</b>	<b>Traffic management and calming</b>
<b>EM4</b>	<b>Contaminated land</b>	<b>A16</b>	<b>Pedestrians</b>
<b>EM5</b>	<b>Derelict land and buildings</b>	<b>A17</b>	<b>Cyclists</b>
<b>EM6</b>	<b>Energy conservation</b>	<b>A20</b>	<b>Transport measures</b>
<b>EM10</b>	<b>Surface water run off</b>	<b>A21</b>	<b>Public transport, walking and cycling</b>
<b>D1</b>	<b>Design and the built environment</b>	<b>H1</b>	<b>Housing</b>
<b>D2</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>H3</b>	<b>Determining housing applications</b>
<b>D3</b>	<b>Landscaping</b>	<b>H4</b>	<b>Affordable housing</b>
<b>D5</b>	<b>Public art</b>	<b>H5</b>	<b>Housing density</b>
<b>D10</b>	<b>Alteration or extension of listed buildings</b>	<b>CP4</b>	<b>Provision of health and community facilities</b>
<b>D11</b>	<b>Demolition of listed buildings</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>Employment and the economy</b>
<b>D12</b>	<b>Alternative uses for listed buildings</b>	<b>E3</b>	<b>Siting of offices and industrial development</b>
<b>O4</b>	<b>Provision of open spaces in new developments</b>	<b>E4</b>	<b>Industrial development</b>
<b>A1</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>E8</b>	<b>Tourism</b>
<b>A3</b>	<b>Travel plans</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Retail and leisure</b>
<b>A4</b>	<b>Developer contributions roads, paths, surfacing and car parking</b>	<b>S4</b>	<b>Retail developments on sites outside the defined centres</b>
<b>A6</b>	<b>Car parking standards</b>	<b>S7</b>	<b>Hot food takeaways and restaurants</b>
		<b>S8</b>	<b>Leisure</b>

## Policy context

### 3.3

Developers should note Bolton's Core Strategy is expected to be adopted in April 2011. This will replace parts of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). Policy TC4 in the emerging Core Strategy states that the Westbrook area should be developed for a mix of residential leisure and small scale food retailing. The Core Strategy should be referred to following its adoption for development purposes.

### 3.4

The site is unallocated in the Unitary Development Plan, but it is immediately adjacent to the defined boundary of Bolton town centre. Policy S4 states that the council will only permit retail developments on sites outside the defined centres which meet all the following criteria:

- i) the applicant has demonstrated the need for the development in terms of quality and quantity; and
- (ii) the applicant has demonstrated that the sequential approach to site selection has been adopted and that no sites exist within or on the edge of the centres identified in Policy S3, which are suitable, viable for the proposed use and are likely to become available within a reasonable period of time;
- (iii) the proposal, either by itself or together with recently completed developments or outstanding planning permissions, will not harm the vitality and viability of any nearby town, district or local centre;
- (iv) the proposed site is accessible by a choice of means of transport.

A large scale retail development would not be appropriate outside the defined sub-regional centre identified in the UDP, but the site is suitable for a range of development proposals including residential uses and small scale retail to serve local need that will help to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.

### 3.5

**Further guidance is provided by Planning Control Policy Notes. Those that are relevant to this site are listed below.**

<b>PCPN1</b>	<b>Health, well-being and quality of life</b>
<b>PCPN2</b>	<b>Space around dwellings</b>
<b>PCPN4</b>	<b>Shop fronts</b>
<b>PCPN6</b>	<b>Display of signs and adverts</b>
<b>PCPN7</b>	<b>Trees: protection and planting in new development</b>
<b>PCPN8</b>	<b>Children's play space</b>
<b>PCPN9</b>	<b>Location of restaurants, cafes, public houses, bars and hot food takeaways in urban areas</b>
<b>PCPN10</b>	<b>Planning out crime</b>
<b>PCPN18</b>	<b>Provision for cyclists</b>
<b>PCPN20</b>	<b>Listed buildings</b>
<b>PCPN21</b>	<b>Highways considerations</b>
<b>PCPN22</b>	<b>Public art</b>
<b>PCPN26</b>	<b>Affordable housing</b>
<b>PCPN27</b>	<b>Housing</b>
<b>PCPN30</b>	<b>Education</b>

**Car parking standards are set out in Appendix 7 of the Unitary Development Plan.**

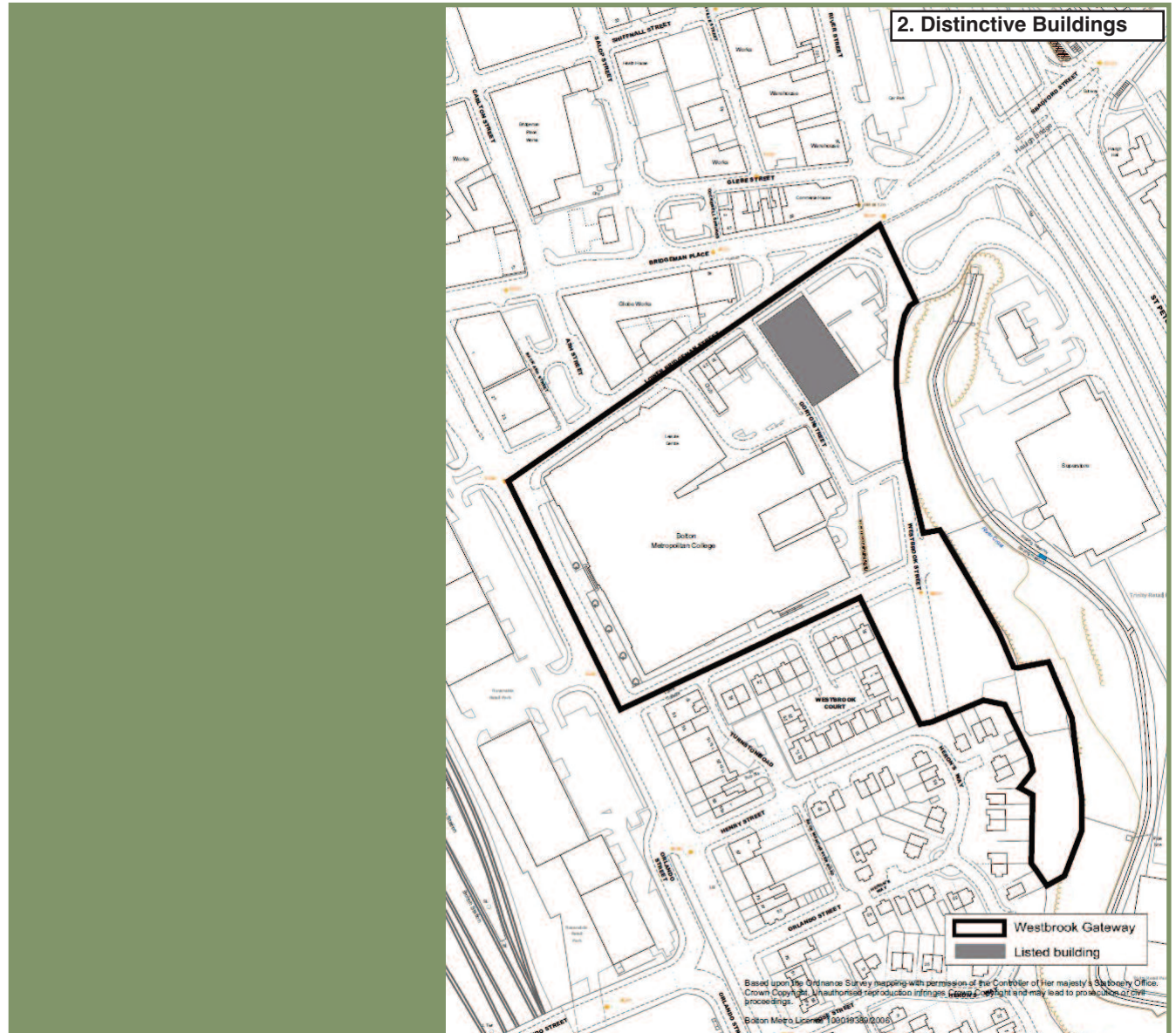
## Policy context

### 3.6

The council has produced a Supplementary Planning Document, 'Building Bolton' which provides design guidance for new development in the town centre based on the principle of enhancing local distinctiveness in Bolton's townscape. This has identified a consistent pattern of damaged townscape the 'shatter zone' peripheral to the main civic and retail core (as shown in plan 3).

### 3.7

This zone has generally suffered from urban clearance in recent decades, yet retains characteristic patterns of buildings, topography and public spaces which deserve to be protected from further redevelopment pressures. The council encourages redevelopment in these areas which respects and responds to its context. This brief contains references to the design principles that have been included in 'Building Bolton'. The SPD can be viewed online at [www.bolton.gov.uk/buildingbolton](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/buildingbolton) and hard copies can be obtained from the One Stop Shop, Ground Floor, Town Hall or from the Strategic Development Unit by calling 01204 336121.





## Policy context

### 3.8

The council has commissioned a Public Realm Implementation Framework 2007-2012. This is intended to guide development towards making a good contribution to the future townscape. It addresses the council's strategic aim to create a town centre that will attract investment and that people will be happy and proud to use. The objectives are to:

- Create a vision for Bolton's public realm
- Ensure consistency of design and quality in the creation of the public realm
- Create a more functional and pedestrian friendly environment
- Channel public realm investment effectively
- Provide a context for public realm funding bids and negotiations
- Achieve high standards in design and maintenance

### 3.9

Developers should refer to the new Government Strategy "Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy". This aims to place sustainable development at the heart of the land use planning system and at the core of new planning guidance. The council has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document on Sustainable Design and Construction which provides advice on issues such as renewable energy, biodiversity, and sustainable drainage.

### 3.10

UDP Policy H4 states that the council will negotiate with developers to provide an element of affordable housing on suitable sites of 25 dwellings or more, or 1 hectare or more in size. The suitability of sites will be assessed with regard to the following:

- i) there is an identified housing need for people on low incomes who cannot afford to rent or buy their own home in current open market conditions in the area of the proposed development;
- ii) the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- (iii) the opportunity to secure a broader social mix by adding to the choice of housing types, sizes and tenures available;
- (iv) the particular costs associated with the development of the site; and
- (v) whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority.

### 3.11

This is a large development so affordable housing should be provided on site, integrated within the residential element of the scheme. The threshold for affordable housing contributions is 15% in the emerging Core Strategy, which is lower than the UDP threshold.

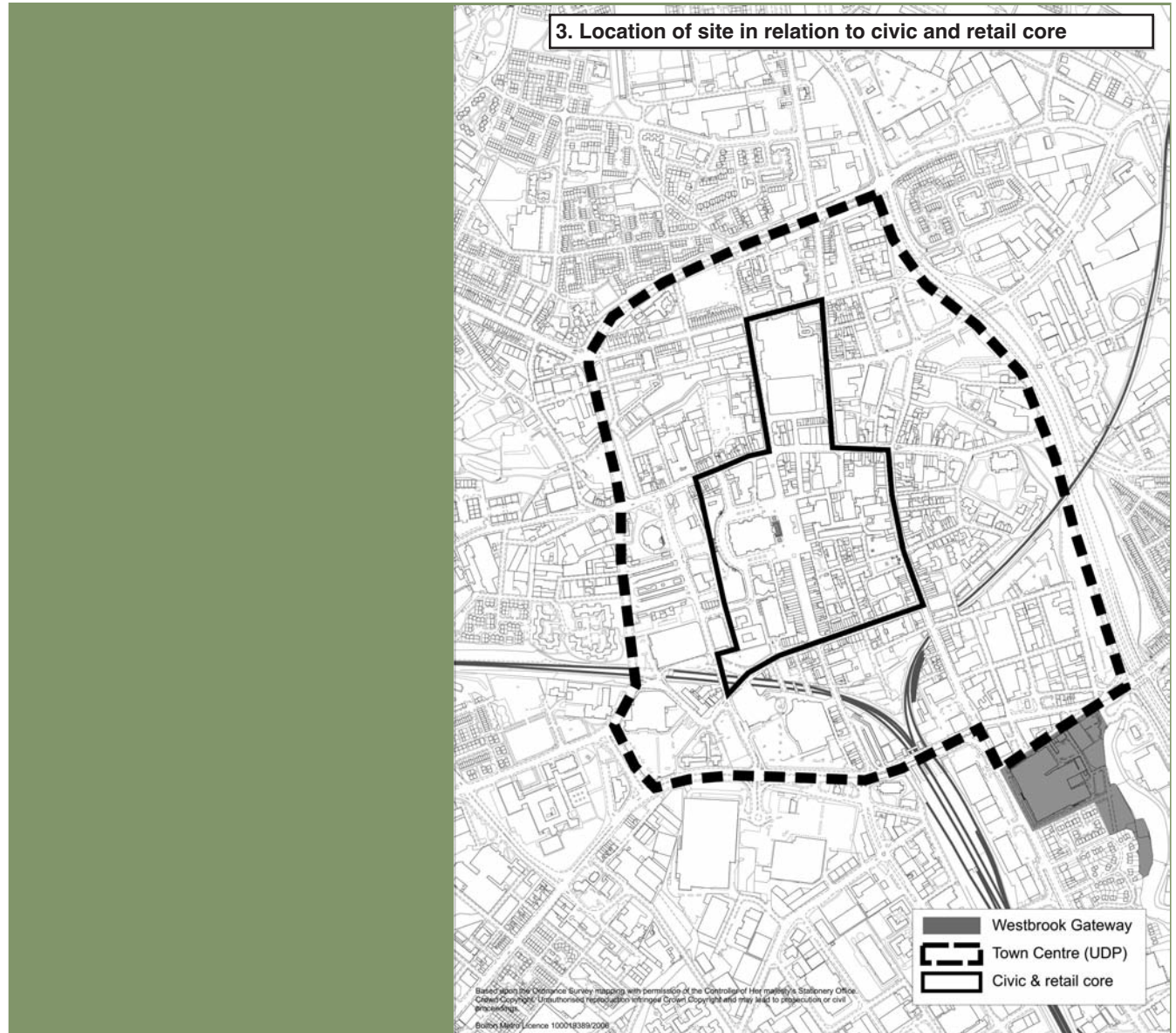
It should be noted that the UDP threshold had been superseded by PPS3 in any case. To ensure that initial and successive occupiers enjoy the benefit of affordable housing, occupancy restrictions may be the subject of conditions or legal agreements. However, the council will not impose controls where occupancy is to be controlled and managed by a Registered Social Landlord. The tenure mix within the affordable housing provision should be a minimum of 15% as outlined in Bolton's emerging Core Strategy to meet the needs of low income households, key workers and those on average incomes now unable to purchase.

## Westbrook Gateway Development Brief

# 4. The Westbrook Gateway Area

### 4.1

The site is located on the south eastern edge of the town centre. Its location in relation to the civic and retail core is shown in plan 3. This is a key gateway site for traffic coming into Bolton town centre from the south and east. These traffic streams meet to the east of the site where traffic from St. Peters Way meets Bradford Street and at the Manchester Road/Lower Bridgeman Street junction. Building Bolton identifies two gateways at either end on the triangle of land enclosed by Bridgeman Place, Lower Bridgeman Street and Manchester Road. The site slopes down from Manchester Road towards the river.





## Westbrook Gateway Development Brief

# Site appraisal - physical character

### 4.2

In the eastern part of the site on Lower Bridgeman Street is Bolton Business Centre, a listed building which was converted from a former public swimming baths building dating from 1847. This is a protected building that must be retained in any new development. New development will need to ensure that it preserves and enhances the setting of this listed building. With Globe Works and Commerce House just north of the site boundary, these buildings form an attractive gateway grouping. There is a small terrace of buildings on the Lower Bridgeman Street side of the site. One of these properties is occupied by the Lancashire Central Homing Club.

### 4.3

To the north of the site on Lower Bridgeman Street is Globe Works, a complex of industrial buildings in multiple occupation, ranging from two to five storeys. The earliest elements date from 1884. Parts of the buildings, known as Bridge House, have been converted to office use and another part is occupied by the Soundhouse live music venue. Building Bolton identifies Globe Works as a building of high value in terms of its contribution to local distinctiveness.

### 4.4

To the west of Globe Works and fronting Manchester Road is a three storey retail building occupied by World of Wicker and a modern building used by HSS Hire. The rear of these properties is visually poor and open to public view to traffic entering the town centre along Lower Bridgeman Street.

### 4.5

To the west across Manchester Road is a retail park built on the site of a former railway goods warehouse and the area to the south is predominantly residential. To the east of the site is the steeply sloping valley of the River Croal.



## 5. Land uses

### 5.1

Residential development will be appropriate subject to the regulations to minimise adverse noise impact from adjoining activities. Houses should be located away from the Manchester Road frontage where the site is most heavily affected by traffic noise and where active street frontages are encouraged. There is an opportunity on this site to provide some larger family accommodation to balance the number of smaller units being provided in the town centre. Accommodation attractive to older persons could also be provided. This will increase the range of housing offer to those who wish to live within easy reach of the town centre.

### 5.2

The council will not accept large-scale retail uses outside the defined sub-regional centre. However, along the major road frontages where it would be advantageous to raise the residential uses above the street level for amenity sake, small-scale retail and service uses including convenience food stores to serve the requirements of a newly created sustainable neighbourhood will be acceptable.





## Westbrook Gateway Development Brief

# 6. Development issues

### 6.1

Bolton Council is the principal land owner in this area.

### 6.2

The site is affected by traffic noise from the surrounding highway network. Houses will not be permitted on road frontages due to the high traffic flows in this area and residential properties must be protected from noisy activities linked with the small scale commercial or retail uses on the site.

### 6.3

Residential properties built on the site are likely to be affected by noise from road traffic. To minimise any disturbance, the windows to all habitable rooms within the development shall be acoustically dual glazed. For habitable rooms, acoustic dual glazing to the standards of the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975 (as amended) shall be provided. Alternatively sealed double glazed units comprising glass of 10mm and laminated 6.4mm with a 12mm air gap, including alternative means of ventilation may be used. Mechanical ventilation should be provided for inhabitable rooms ensuring no requirement to open windows for fresh air, which must be sound attenuated. The design criteria of the windows and ventilation must achieve the standards laid down in BS8233:1999 of 35 45dB.

### 6.4

New development itself may be a source of noise and therefore any proposals for the site need to be sympathetic towards the neighbouring residential development. This is particularly important at the southern end of the site which abuts the residential

developments off Henry Street. Developers should discuss potential noise impacts from any development with the council's Environmental Health Officers. A noise assessment and mitigation plan will be required.

### 6.5

The 12 Hornbeam trees along the Manchester Road frontage of the site are protected by Tree Preservation Order 647 (Manchester Road, Bolton).

### 6.6

The layout of the development will have to take account of a 1,350mm diameter, 3.7m deep public combined sewer running to the east of the site along the line of Westbrook Street. Building over the sewer will not be permitted and a 10m wide maintenance strip is required, 5m either side of the centre line of the sewer. Another major sewer is 2,140mm diameter, 15m deep running through the south east of the site, to the east of Westbrook Street and this requires a 12m maintenance strip.

### 6.7

The council encourages development proposals to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) in order to manage surface water run off and retain water on or near the site. SUDS offer significant advantages over conventional drainage systems and as such reduce flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run off. Further guidance is available on the Environment Agency's website [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) and CIRIA's website [www.ciria.org.uk](http://www.ciria.org.uk). The term SUDS covers a wide range of urban drainage facilities from end of pipe facilities such as wetlands or

retention ponds, to source control systems such as soakaways, infiltration trenches and basins, swales and permeable surfaces.

### 6.8

Developers should carry out a full ecological assessment of the site and surrounding areas. Steps should be taken where possible to ensure that any natural habitats and the surrounding environment are respected and protected and that access is maintained for local residents. The site is adjacent to the River Croal corridor and green space area, developers should be mindful that the River Croal lies in a deep valley more than 10m lower than the development site and that the green space is located on a sharp steep slope to the Croal Valley.

## 7. Design recommendations

### 7.1

The single most significant design issue is the visual and physical permeability of the Westbrook site bounded by Manchester Road and Lower Bridgeman Street. This includes:

- The development of gateway opportunities and focal points. The development should form a place that has a distinctive character and that is specific to the scheme. Regard should be made to neighbouring buildings, window proportions and palette of materials. The design of the neighbourhood needs to pay reference to the neighbouring residential properties and the adjoining Merchant's Quarter development. New buildings need to be in rhythm and aligned with neighbouring buildings.
- Potential for a new pattern of public spaces within and between the main blocks. Public spaces and pedestrian routes should be overlooked and feel safe. The development should have a legible network of routes and courtyards that are interesting, welcoming and people friendly with integrated play provision. Design should aim to create a shared green space that reflects the feel and atmosphere of a village green.
- Street frontage design. Streets should be defined by a well structured building layout, there should be a clear definition between public and private realm. Car parking should be well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene. The grid pattern of streets and green space should reflect that of neighbouring Merchant's Quarter.

- Visual and physical links between Manchester Road and the river.
- Visual and physical links between the College site and the Globe Works site, and northwards to the civic core.
- Buildings should exhibit architectural quality that allows for adaptation and conversion. This includes the careful coordination of proportions, materials colour and detail. Particular care should be given to corners, rooflines and how the buildings meet the ground.
- Developers should refer to the Building for Life criteria which promotes design excellence and celebrates best practice in the house building industry. Details can be found at [www.buildingforlife.org](http://www.buildingforlife.org)
- An east-west pedestrian route through the site, from Manchester Road to the river frontage, would help break up the mass of the Manchester Road frontage and create permeability into the site from its main frontage.
- The council is receptive to proposals on how best block structures, and the spaces between them, might be realised. Proposals might include conventional streetscape treatment, atria running the full depth of buildings, or other architectural methods designed to retain block permeability.

### 7.2

The preferred outcome for the site would involve the extension of town centre design principles for the area north of Bridgeman Place across the Westbrook site. The industrial area north of Bridgeman Place illustrates how a strong grid of streets can provide a legible access network when combined with positive block development (i.e. to back of pavement with active uses and entrances onto the street) and a diverse mix of uses. Openings into the site from the block perimeter need not weaken the main street frontages.

### 7.3

It is suggested a theoretical grid is superimposed on the site, creating a tripartite division corresponding, in a north – south direction to the former alignment of Carlton Street/Ash Street/Bell Street, and the line of Gorton Street which still exists within the site.

- This defines a Manchester Road frontage which can be redeveloped to a scale appropriate to this important gateway location.
- A secondary block, corresponding in width to the Globe Works site, could contain linear or focal public realm (the Ash Street/Carlton Street alignment suggests an architectural theme that could be visibly extended into the heart of the site). It also provides a substantial frontage opportunity to Lower Bridgeman Street.



## Design recommendations

- A tertiary block, along the easterly outlook to the river, contains opportunities for additional frontage to the Haulgh Bridge gateway, alongside the listed former swimming baths building. The relationship with the river and its steeply sloping wooded embankment, and the valley/potential canal site beyond, all suggest redevelopment opportunities which could exploit the environmental potential of the site. This frontage need not be treated as the least important feature of the site. Vehicle access is available off both Grosvenor Street and Bradford Road.

### 7.4

The council is looking for well defined and active street frontages that maximise the gateway opportunities of the location. The Globe Works provides an example of the robustness of architectural design and scale that might be appropriate for this area and its relationship to the street. Other useful comparisons can be made with the industrial area to the north of Bridgeman Place. For example, the scale and massing of building elevations on the east side of Ash Street (i.e. the Globe Works) and Carlton Street, or on the west side of River Street near the junction with Bridgeman Place. Surface perimeter car parking, service yards or other features which suggest lower density and weak street frontage will not be appropriate on the Manchester Road or Lower Bridgeman Street elevations.

### 7.5

An additional gateway opportunity exists alongside the listed former swimming baths on Lower Bridgeman Street. This is a sensitive site which should be developed with a view to the context created by the baths, the east elevation of the Globe Works, and Commerce House, north of Bridgeman Place. The design will require two elevations one facing Lower Bridgeman Street and the other facing east towards Haulgh Bridge. The council will welcome modern design proposals that are sensitive to their context.

### 7.6

For the site as a whole, materials chosen should be considered in relation to the robust industrial forms of nearby buildings. This council is not expecting a pastiche-style duplication of 19th Century brick and stone dressed facades, but will require a complementary palette of quality materials. Modern design is welcomed. There is the opportunity for highly original use of form and materials, provided the contrast is managed carefully in relation to the overall structure described above.

### 7.7

The pedestrian environment should be designed to be as safe and convenient as possible so as not to discourage people from accessing the site on foot or by public transport. This can be achieved through measures such as the appropriate use of high quality surfacing materials, landscaping, lighting, signage and road crossings.

### 7.8

The council encourages developers to incorporate an element of public art within the site. Artworks should be used to reinforce the sense of place and create a distinct identity for the site. No particular art form will be favoured above another, but durability and long term maintenance should be taken into consideration.

### 7.9

Any artworks should be considered an integral part of the development design. This can include either architectural or public realm design provided a recognised public artist is appointed as either the main or partner designer. It is essential that all commissioned works are unique, original, and of the highest quality.

### 7.10

The council encourages developers to obtain a Crime Impact Statement for any scheme that is proposed in order to ensure that crime prevention is considered in the early stages of the design process.

### 7.11

As this will be a residential led development which will provide some family homes, a children's play area should be provided. Developers should refer to the Planning Control Policy PCPN8 Children's Play Place for further guidance.

## 8. Transport issues

### 8.1

Highway improvements at the junctions of Manchester Road and Trinity Street and Manchester Road and Lower Bridgeman Street have recently been completed. Land should be made available to provide an additional lane to Lower Bridgeman Street.

### 8.2

It may be possible to provide 'left in/left out' access from Lower Bridgeman Street subject to the access position being as far from Manchester Road as possible and subject to capacity checks and a safety audit. The internal road layout of this area should be designed to avoid the creation of possible rat runs. The design of the Manchester Road frontage should ensure that no changes are made to existing site lines.

### 8.3

Grosvenor Street offers an additional access point but would need to be signalised for any significant increase in vehicular traffic. To avoid a detrimental traffic impact on Manchester Road, Grosvenor Street may need to be aligned so that it joins Manchester Road opposite the retail park signals. Highways consultants should be appointed early in the development process so that the various access options can be tested.

### 8.4

There are aspirations to introduce bus priority measures on Manchester Road. These should not have any adverse effect on the development of this site.





## 9. Monitoring and review

### 9.1

The council will monitor the significant effects of the development brief. The test of the effectiveness of the brief will be whether the objective of the high quality, mixed-use comprehensive redevelopment of the Westbrook Gateway area is achieved. The council's Strategic Development Unit will monitor all the stages in the development process including, obtaining planning permission, construction of the approved development and occupation of the completed units.

