New South Grove / St James
Supplementary Planning Document

NOTE: Refer also to New South Grove / St James
Supplementary Planning Document Illustrative Masterplan

Adopted May 2017
The following illustrative masterplan has been produced as an example of how the principles described in the preceding sections might be interpreted and implemented across the site.

It is not intended to be prescriptive in its detail - alternative solutions may be able to deliver the key design principles outlined for the area. Instead, this illustrative solution should be seen as an initial investigation into how the site may be developed in the future, and as a potential starting point for further proposals.
ILLUSTRATIVE PROPOSALS:
3.1 MASTERPLAN OVERVIEW

3.3.1 - The drawing opposite provides an overview of the illustrative masterplan. The updated masterplan described here focuses on the portions of the South Grove / St James area not already addressed via consented proposals. The main features of the masterplan are discussed below:

- A key north-south pedestrian / cycle route connecting Markhouse Road to the High Street via Courtney Place forms a key part of the proposals. Although this is a pedestrian / cycle route, it should be given a primary spatial quality - with buildings fronting it and active frontages - in recognition of its strategic significance in improving north-south permeability. Scenarios relating to the arrangement of the health hub building and its relationship to primary public realm spaces are shown in section 3.5. The design scenario shown here sees the removal of the existing pub building in order to create a direct / legible link to the Courtenay Place underpass and a generous public square. Additionally a number of options exist for the potential re-use / incorporation of the existing pub building. However, options retaining the pub building require a level of architectural resolution that is beyond the scope of this SPD. This document focuses instead on broad principles concerning the relationship between the proposed Health & Care hub and adjacent public realm.
- The public square provides a focus for health services and other ground floor uses within the Health & Care Hub building, as well as a proposed active, public-facing use on the western side of the square.
- The location of the active, public-facing use is significant, marking the crossing point of the two main routes through the site, and having the potential to form a highly visible focus for activity. There is scope for this building to offer community facing engagement with the workspace uses within the St James Quarter. In urban and architectural design terms, it's also envisaged that this building should provide a strong sense of street grain and character to offset the loss of one of the more characterful existing structures on the site, in the form of the existing pub building.

St James Quarter
- An urban block structure / typology and mix of uses is proposed to support a workspace and creative industries quarter, benefiting from links to St James Street Station, the High Street and St James St.
- A fine grain of routes is proposed that respond to the existing grain of ownership and network of existing and potential connections. This urban grain offers the possibility for a strong relationship between the new development and the station - turning what is currently a ‘back’ along the railway tracks into a new ‘front door’ to the St James / South Grove neighbourhood.
- In urban and architectural design terms the area has scope to develop into a distinctive quarter which builds upon the qualities of the historic fabric to which it relates.

South Grove
- To the east, the consented schemes incorporate a series of larger-scale courtyard blocks - providing a clear delineation between public streets and private communal courtyard gardens.
- A well defined east-west route with a strong street like character is proposed. The route provides legibility and coherence to the site, forming a spine to structure phased delivery, and is multifunctional in character, with the potential to provide for vehicle and service access, and incorporate cycle route provision, landscape elements, water management / SuDS and parking.

Courteneay Place
- Courtenay Place offers the potential to provide improved links between St James Street Station and the High Street, support the north-south link to Markhouse Road, and allow integration of workspace use with the High Street. This could be achieved through a combination of public realm improvements and development - the scope of which relates the possibility of relocating some or all of the existing bus infrastructure in the space - Section 3.6 discusses a number of scenarios that illustrate this scope.

Key
- Health & Care Hub
- Active, public-facing use
- Residential access / service space at ground level
- Area of consented South Grove and Brunner Road proposals
- Indicative outline of consented South Grove and Brunner Road proposals
- Residential above ground floor
3.2 USE & ACTIVITY

3.2.1 - The drawing opposite and key on the right provide a visual summary of the proposed uses in the area.

- The area of the St James Quarter immediately south of the station / railway becomes the focus for workspace / commercial use at ground level (with potential for additional workspace use on upper storeys if viable / preferable).

- The Health & Care Hub and active, public facing uses address the public square and main routes at the heart of the site.

- The illustrative block structure described here incorporates residential development above these uses, with residential entrances arrayed along the east-west route through the site / Brunner Road.

- Retail uses are proposed at ground level where the new block structure engages with St James Street.

- Workspace / commercial uses are proposed with Courtenay Place, forming a northern extension of the St James Quarter that could engage / integrate with the high street.
3.3.1 - The massing approach proposed by the illustrative masterplan is described below / alongside. This material is intended to establish key spatial principles and hierarchies. It is anticipated that the framework illustrated would become the basis for further design testing and development by others in due course.

3.4.2 - Approach to Massing

- The massing strategy illustrated here works between the smaller-scale existing context of St James Street, and higher density / taller buildings towards the centre of the South Grove / St James site - proposing building heights ranging from 3 to 10 storeys.
- The scale and form of buildings engaging with St James Street aim to integrate well with the predominant three storey scale of the exiting buildings, and re-establish a coherent street front (subject to addressing existing landscape and heritage features).
- A consistent street scale is established along the east-west route in the middle of the area.
- Buildings increase in scale along the northern edge of the site, with potential for a taller landmark building (here shown associated with the Health & Care Hub) addressing the north-south link to support legibility and this focus of activity. However, detailed design testing and development should take account of any potential impact on the St James Conservation Area immediately to the north.
- Massing within Courtenay Place (subject to identifying alternative bus provision) is constrained by the proximity of existing properties to the north - detailed design testing and development will need to address daylighting and overlooking constraints.
ILLUSTRATIVE PROPOSALS:

3.4 PUBLIC REALM PRINCIPLES

3.4.1 - The key public realm principles illustrated by the masterplan are summarised below and alongside.

- The main north-south and east west routes are the main ordering public realm elements of the proposals - supporting key connections and establishing a framework for a legible and coherent movement network across the site, and a matrix of high quality public realm spaces. The detail extracts on the right breakdown these routes into their main ingredients. The drawing on the page opposite places these main elements within their broader context.
- Within the St James workspace quarter a series of close-grained, shared surface street spaces with a mews or yard-like quality are proposed - taking on a character that relates to the heritage context of the railway station and viaduct.
- A series of north-south residential streets punctuate the southern residential edge to South Grove.
- Opportunities to find active public spaces that work within this network - such as a local playspace or pocket park - should be explored to help support the development of a well-used and popular piece of public realm.
- Opportunities for the integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be explored.
- Opportunities for the integration of public art and community gardens should also be considered.
- The public realm streets and spaces should provide integrated facilities for walking and cycling - routes should be future-proofed in terms of widths and clearances to ensure paths are generous and remain fit for purpose within the context of future development.

North-south pedestrian / cycle route (right)

1. Improved public realm entrance to High Street
2. Compact urban square within Courtenay Place with scope to provide foreground to built development.
3. Improved underpass - scope to open further railway arches should be explored in order to widen route or provide additional routes.
4. Central public square providing focus for activity including active, public-facing uses, workspace use, Health & Care Hub and associated retail.
5. Pedestrian / cycle route incorporated into consented Brunner Road proposals.
6. Potential to improve South Grove / Markhouse Road junction - range of possibilities spanning from proposed Enjoy Waltham Forest proposals to indicative proposal shown here to remove roundabout and provide a junction arrangement that would be more sympathetic to the public realm.

East-west route (below)

1. Clear and legible street space established to serve site and provide spine for phased deliver / implementation.
2. Continuity with hard landscaped southern edge to central space within South Grove consented proposals.
COURTENAY PLACE - improved public realm link between St James Street Station and the High Street, with potential to form a high quality frontage to development. Improvements to railway arches / verge.

PUBLIC SQUARE - urban square framing the pedestrian and cycle route to the High Street, providing a focus for health services and active, public facing uses, and forming the interface between the workspace uses to the west of the site and the residential focus to the east.

EAST WEST ROUTE - generous and clear street with higher level of vehicle priority than neighbourhood streets and north-south link. Cycle provision integrating with main cycle routes around the edges of the site. Adjusts to suit scale of surrounding urban setting - i.e. broader within South Grove portion of the site than St. James quarter.

‘YARD SPACE’ yard-like public realm character to the streets and spaces within St James Quarter - relating to heritage character of the station building and railway.

LANDSCAPED THRESHOLD SPACE integrated with Willow Walk link / crossing improvements.

NEIGHBOURHOOD STREETS with front gardens to either side, on-street car parking + small-scale communal amenity spaces.

GENEROUS ‘PRIVATE’ COMMUNAL COURTYARD GARDENS within the interior of the blocks.

NORTH-SOUTH PEDESTRIAN / CYCLE ROUTE linking Markhouse Road to the High Street.

Hatched area: area of consented South Grove and Brunner Road proposals.
3.5 HEALTH & CARE HUB / PUBLIC REALM SCENARIOS

3.5.1 - A number of critical, strategically significant elements come together at the centre of the site - namely, the existing pub building, key north-south / east-west routes, proposed public square and Health & Care Hub building.

3.5.2 - Multiple design scenarios exist for how these critical elements can be composed, each resulting in different outcomes - for instance in the form and qualities of the main public realm square, the available footprint for the Health & Care Hub building, or the possibility of retaining and reusing the pub building.

3.5.3 - The sketch studies on the right show a sample of scenarios that explore these issues and illustrate some of these outcomes. The illustrative masterplan adopts one of these options (scenario 2), but is not intended to be definitive - these and alternative solutions and scenarios should be explored further through detailed design testing and development by parties bring forward proposals for the site.

3.5.4 - This document focuses on broad principles concerning the relationship between the proposed Health & Care hub and adjacent public realm. A number of options exist for the potential re-use / incorporation of the existing pub building though this requires a level of detailed design testing that is beyond the scope of this SPD. Options incorporating the pub building may be tested by parties bringing forward proposals for the site.

3.5.5 - In addition to recognising its strategic significance as an intersection of north-south and east-west routes, proposals for the Health and Care Hub building and the public square should demonstrate the square’s primary spatial quality. Buildings framing the square - including the Health and Care Hub building - should deploy active frontages to define the square as a key public space.

Key

- Health & Care Hub
- Active, public facing use
- North-South pedestrian and cycle route
- Potential orientation of public square
- Indicative outline of consented South Grove and Brunner Road proposals
- Illustrative masterplan massing

Existing disused / derelict pub building (far left) and view looking north through Courtenay Place underpass (left) showing the rear of the pub impinging on movement and sight lines.
Scenario 1 - East-West Public Square

- Orientating the public square and Health & Care Hub footprint east-west could potentially establish a better alignment with the building frontages and public realm spaces proposed by the consented South Grove scheme.
- This would result in a public square that is more supportive to the east-west route than the north-south link to the High Street, and a narrower approach to the Courtney Place underpass.

Scenario 2 - North-South Public Square

- Orientating the public square and Health & Care Hub footprint north-south provides greater support to the Markhouse Road / High Street link, places the main public uses on either side of the square and provides a generous approach to the Courtney Place underpass.
- This would result in the Health & Care Hub building addressing the end of the 'linear park' proposed as part of the consented South Grove scheme, rather than the linear park terminating in the public square as per scenario 2.
- This scenario has been adopted as the basis for the illustrative masterplan.
ILLUSTRATIVE PROPOSALS:

3.6 COUR TEN E N AY PLACE

3.6.1 - Courtenay Place has the potential to support improved links to the High Street from the South Grove / St James area and St James Street Station - and to realise an intensity of use that would be more appropriate to its town centre location. However, current usage and site constraints present a series of challenges to realising this potential. The material presented here reviews these constraints and proposes a set of scalable scenarios that implement the SPD principles while responding to these challenges.

3.6.2 - Lying behind the southern frontage to the High Street, Courtenay Place currently plays host to a bus turning / standing facility and a number of bus stops. A number of traffic and pedestrian routes run through the site, however the general public / urban realm quality of the space is low (see right).

3.6.3 - Discussions are ongoing between the Council and Transport for London regarding a rationalisation of bus services within Walthamstow town centre. Subject to identifying alternative, suitable bus provision, there is potential to reduce or remove bus infrastructure from within Courtenay Place. The sketch scenarios on the page opposite (top) illustrate a range of intervention that could take place depending on the scope of changes to the bus facilities, also subject to constraints posed by the existing properties on the northern side of the space (in terms of daylighting and privacy).

3.6.4 - The scenarios across the bottom of the page opposite highlight the potential for supporting development - in addition to that of Council owned sites - to assist in delivering coherent integration of the north-south link to the South Grove / St James area into the High Street.
Scalable Scenarios

- The drawings above map out a range of possibilities relating to the extent in reduction of bus facilities within the space. The minimum level of intervention involves the creation of a better quality public realm route from the station to the high street, with improved lighting and landscaping and measures to address safety in respect to bus movements. The maximum level of intervention involves built development to an envelope defined by the constraints set by adjacent properties and access.
- All scenarios should explore the potential for active use and occupation of the railway arches where possible, and the potential for opening up new / widening existing routes under the railway.
- The drawings on the right illustrate the scope for supporting adjacent development to strengthen the north-south link through the Courtenay Place underpass.

- Existing condition
- No reduction in bus operations
- Public realm improvements only
- Reduction in bus operations
- Small-scale development
- Relocation of bus operations
  - Larger scale development (subject to daylighting constraints and overlooking mitigation)

Relocation / removal of bus infrastructure

Council owned sites only

Supporting development / activity

Adjacent sites
3.7.1 - Central to this document’s recommendations is the principle that coherent development at South Grove / St James will result in a higher quality addition to the town centre than piecemeal initiatives. The principles outlined in this guidance are intended to provide a framework to steer delivery across sequential phases or implementation by a number of different parties.

3.7.2 - These notes provide some high level commentary on how phasing / implementation of the illustrative proposals could address this delivery context.

3.7.3 - The drawing opposite overlays development site / plot boundaries onto the masterplan layout, and illustrates some potential phasing and decant principles.

3.7.4 - The red outlines on the plan opposite relate to assumed development sites / plot boundaries - demonstrating that the illustrated masterplan allows for plot-by-plot delivery as it respects the existing land ownership boundaries - but that in some areas site assembly would be necessary (e.g. south of St James Street Station).

3.7.5 - There is an opportunity for a first phase of delivery within the updated SPD focus area to combine areas of council owned, highways and third party owned land - comprising St James Car Park (A - see map key, right), Brunner Road highway (B), the remainder of the industrial units site (C) and the disused pub site (D). This would have the potential to deliver the Health & Care Hub, a significant new building on St James Street, and the key north-south and east-west public realm links.

3.7.6 - Delivery of the Health & Care Hub would then enable decant of the existing health centre (E) and development of a second phase.

3.7.7 - Time scales for development at Courtenay Place (F) and the area south of St James Station (G) would be heavily reliant on the outcome of review of bus services with TfL and the potential for site assembly, respectively. With regard to site assembly, sites that make up the area south of St James Street station, (G,H) may be brought forward for development independently of each other resulting in a more intricate phasing strategy across this part of the site. For example, larger plots in single ownership such as the ByCity plot (H) may be brought forward ahead of smaller plots (G).

Where development is phased, proposals should support the development of subsequent sites to form a coherent overall scheme.

As discussed in Section 3.5, public realm improvements at Courtenay Place could precede development, subject to accommodating any constraints posed by the existing bus infrastructure.

3.7.8 - Within the broader phasing / implementation strategy, possibilities for establishing short to medium term meanwhile uses on areas of the site should be explored. These meanwhile uses could make significant positive contributions - activating under-used areas of the site, anticipating future uses and growing user groups for these (e.g. workspace or community amenities), while building enthusiasm for future change in the South Grove / St James area. Links could be made with existing community groups and initiatives, directing funding and delivery while building engagement and a sense of ownership.