

Appendix 1: Covent Garden Brief - Planning Policy Context/ Considerations

National Planning Policy and Context

The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated in 2021)** is the overarching framework for plan-making and decision making. As such, it is a material consideration in drafting this brief and in considering any subsequent planning applications on the Riverside House site.

[National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/publishing.service.gov.uk)

The **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)** supports the interpretation of the NPPF, and the National Design Guide (updated 2021) guidance on 'good design'.

Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029

The Key Local Plan policies to guide the layout and design of any development proposal on the Covent Garden site are highlighted below. These are the ones which are considered most important in guiding the principles to be included in this development brief, albeit other policies may also be relevant even if not detailed here.

[Local Plan - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](https://warwickdc.gov.uk)

Warwick District Council is preparing a South Warwickshire Local Plan with Stratford District Council with an anticipated adoption date of end of 2025. Whilst this is less likely to be relevant for the Covent Garden proposals given the timetable for delivery of the SWLP, it is important to be aware of the emergence of this new development plan.

Covent Garden and the Warwick District Local Plan

The Covent Garden site is not allocated for any particular use in the current Local Plan. It is however, in a central location within the defined Leamington Town Centre Boundary and within a defined 'Area of Search' for major retail investment. The site is wholly within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area.

It is accepted that this site has the potential for redevelopment and could be utilised for a range of uses, or mixed use development provided that they are of a genre commensurate with maintaining a vital and viable town centre.

This position was reinforced in the **Warwick District Council Retail and Leisure Study July 2018.**

[Warwick District Retail & Leisure Study - July 2018 - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](https://warwickdc.gov.uk)

Covent Garden is recognised as a potential development site and the (then) aspiration of the Council to develop the site for a new Council Headquarters is referenced in this document.

From a planning perspective this site would be deemed a 'brownfield site' or previously developed land. The NPPF promotes and supports the value of the redevelopment of such sites.

Key Local Plan Policies are therefore found in the following sections of the adopted Local Plan:

Retail and Town Centres

Policy TC1 Protecting and Enhancing the Town Centres sets out that development proposals for main town centre uses will be permitted in town centres if they are of an appropriate scale with regard to the role and function of the town centre. It ensures that proposals will also reflect the character and form of the town centre.

Policy TC2 Directing Retail Development directs new retail development in the retail town centres first. Where suitable sites are not available in –centre sites are considered with regard to their sequential acceptability/ availability, i.e. edge of centre before out of centre locations.

Policy TC5 Providing for Shopping Growth in Royal Leamington Spa Town Centre states that proposals which satisfy the sequential test in Royal Leamington Spa will be permitted if firstly, it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets retail needs appropriate to the character and form of the town centre; secondly, that that the proposal creates pedestrian links between main shopping areas along primary frontages; and thirdly that the impact of the proposal on traffic movement is fully considered to promote public transport and provide car parking.

Other relevant policies relating to town centre investment include:

Culture, Leisure and Tourism

Policy CT1 Directing New Meeting Places, Tourism, Leisure, Cultural and Sports Development this policy states that this type of development will be permitted in Town Centres in accordance with the Town Centre policies.

Policy CT2 Directing New or Extended Visitor Accommodation states that new or extended hotels will be permitted in Town Centres in accordance with the town centre policies

Housing

Policy H2 Affordable Housing housing developments of 11+ dwellings must provide 40% affordable housing.

Policy H4 Housing mix the mix of market housing should contribute to a balance of house types across the district in accordance with the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Design

Policy SC0 Sustainable Communities this policy sets out 12 design principles to be incorporated in any scheme, aimed at creating and sustaining strong

communities. This includes integration with existing communities, layout, infrastructure, movement and access and climate change adaptation amongst others.

Policy BE1 Layout and Design seeks to ensure new development positively contributes to the character and quality of its environment, and includes 17 design principle which proposals should demonstrate conformity with.

Policy BE2 Developing Significant Housing Sites sets out that any scheme of over 200 dwellings, and/or which may have a significant impact on the character and appearance of an area should conform with a development brief, and sets out the principles to be incorporated into the development brief.

BE3 Amenity seeks to protect the amenity of nearby residents and users, and ensure acceptable standards of amenity are provided for future occupiers.

Transport

Policy TR1 Access and choice seeks to ensure highway safety and suitable access for a range of transport modes.

Policy TR2 Traffic Generation requires large scale developments (both residential and non-residential) that result in the generation of significant traffic movements to be supported by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan to demonstrate the practical and effective measures to be taken to avoid the adverse impacts of traffic.

Policy TR3 Parking sets out car parking requirements

Healthy safe and inclusive communities

Policy HS1 Healthy, safe and inclusive communities this policy has a reasonably broad scope, but principles relating to walking and cycling movement, quality public realm, green space for recreation, and energy efficiency should translate into the development brief

Climate Change and flood risk

Policy CC1 Planning for Climate Change Adaptation seeks to utilise layout and orientation and other design tools to mitigate rising temperatures, incorporate green spaces and minimise vulnerability to flood risk.

*** The Council is developing a **Net Zero Carbon Development Plan Document**. The DPD aims to focus on minimising carbon emissions from new buildings within the District to support the achievement of national and local carbon reduction targets. It aims to ensure that new developments will be net zero carbon in operation. At this point in time it cannot be afforded any weight, however, as the Plan gets closer to the point of adoption the weight that can be given to it will increase.

Policy FW1 Reducing flood risk ensures that developers meet the necessary requirements so as to ensure that development is resilient to flood risk.

Historic Environment

Policy HE1 Designated Heritage Assets seeks to protect designated heritage assets and their settings.

Policy HE2 Conservation Areas includes a presumption in favour of the retention of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area.

Natural Environment

Policy NE1 Green Infrastructure the Council will protect, enhance and restore the district's green infrastructure assets and strive for a healthy integrated network for the benefit of nature, people and the economy.

Policy NE3 Biodiversity sets out that new development will be permitted provided that it protects, enhances and/or restores habitat biodiversity.

Delivery and Monitoring

Policy DM 1 Infrastructure Contributions sets out that development will be expected to provide or contribute towards provision of measures to mitigate its impact and make it acceptable in planning terms and provide any physical, social and green infrastructure to support needs associated with any development.

Royal Leamington Spa Neighbourhood Plan – adopted May 2021

[Final RLSNDP for referendum - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](https://warwickdc.gov.uk)

The Royal Leamington Spa Neighbourhood Plan was produced by the Town Council in collaboration with the local community. It forms a part of the Development Plan and is an important material consideration in the context of the Covent garden brief and any future development proposals.

Policy RLS1 Housing Development Within the Royal Leamington Spa Urban Area sets the criteria for residential development in the urban area.

Policy RLS2 Housing Design encourages the use of higher environmental standards in building design and energy performance, and seeks Building for Life (or similar) to be utilised in the scheme development.

Policy RLS3 Conservation Areas sets out principles to be adopted for schemes within or near to a conservation area.

Policy RLS5 Housing mix and tenure seeks to respond to most up to date data, and to seek opportunities for detached and semi-detached family dwellings.

Policy RLS7 Public Art requires the consideration of public art to add distinction and visual interest to development proposals

Policy RLS16 sets out development considerations with regard to development proposals within the town centre

Warwick District Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

In addition to policies within the local plan, this development brief, and any subsequent planning applications will need to accord with relevant Supplementary Planning Documents. These include:

- [Affordable Housing SPD](#) (July 2020)
[Affordable Housing SPD 2020 - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Developer Contributions SPD](#) (July 2020)
[Developer Contributions SPD - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Air Quality and Planning](#) (January 2019)
[Air Quality SPD - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Public Open Space](#) (April 2019)
[Public Open Space SPD - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Parking Standards](#) (June 2018)
[Parking Standards SPD - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Residential Design Guide](#) (June 2018)
[Residential Design Guide - Download - Warwick District Council \(warwickdc.gov.uk\)](#)

*** The Council is developing a Net Zero Carbon Development Plan Document. The draft DPD aims to focus on minimising carbon emissions from existing and new buildings within the District to support the achievement of national and local carbon reduction targets