

A Development Brief for the Court Street Site Old Town - Leamington Spa

**Final Development Brief
September 2003**

Document No. 2320.01a
Date: Sept 2003
Produced by: AC/JB
Reviewed by: SG/LF

Contents

1. *Introduction and Background*
2. *Vision and Summary*
3. *Purpose and Scope*

PART 1 – DESIGN GUIDANCE

4. Design Guidance
5. Concept and Indicative Masterplans
6. Procedural Guidance and Support

PART 2 – SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR CHANGE

7. Planning and Regeneration Context
8. Site and Context Appraisal
9. Constraints and Challenges
10. Summary of Consultations

11. *Bibliography*

List of Figures

- Figure 1. Site Location
Figure 2. Development Concept
Figure 3. Indicative Masterplan
Figure 4. Site Constraints
Figure 5. Planning & Regeneration Context

1. Introduction and Background

Warwick District Council is committed to the sustainable regeneration of Leamington Old Town. The Court Street Site is a significant development opportunity within Old Town. Securing redevelopment of the Court Street Site is integral to the continued improvement of Old Town. In order to promote and guide redevelopment the Council commissioned planning and urban design consultants Taylor Young to produce this Development Brief for The Court Street Site.

Old Town is a distinctive part of Leamington Town Centre. Located a short distance from the main retail areas Old Town provides a rich mix of uses and strong character, which is based upon its heritage townscape and railway bridges.

The Court Street Site covers approximately 0.58 hectares and is bounded by the railway viaduct to the north, Clemens Street to the west, Court Street to the east and Waterside Medical Centre to the south. This site area is illustrated on Figure 1. Wider relationships and interfaces are important in creating opportunities and barriers to development on the Court Street site and these are illustrated in Figure 2. The site is largely in public ownership, although the Stoneleigh Arms is in private control. The Council is looking to promote the comprehensive redevelopment of this site through its ownerships and through the statutory planning process.

2. Vision & Summary

The vision for Court Street is to see the site developed and transformed into a busy and attractive destination within Old Town which not only offers new activities, but which also supports the local economy and adds to its sense of distinctiveness.

...A new mix of uses... Higher grade businesses... Creative production and display... Live and work space... Specialist retail... Cafés and alfresco activities... Reducing car parking levels... Transition between employment and retail... A vital and vibrant place... New opportunities and choice...

...Improving pedestrian connections... Sensitive and practical access arrangements... Improving the railway edge... Integration with the canal... Promoting walking and accessibility... An integrated site... A well connected place...

...An improved pedestrian experience...value added from a quality landscape ...An open space for Court Street...Public art creating somewhere special...A new place and destination within Old Town...

...High quality architecture... Sensitive response to heritage setting... A new look at existing buildings... New life for the railway arches... A new design philosophy... Contrast and juxtaposition... Proportion and harmony... Quality over style... Sustainable and accessible Buildings...

3. Purpose and Scope

Development Briefs are useful because they explain the planning and design aspirations for a site and can help to encourage development interest and guide the preparation of proposals. This proactive approach should not only improve the efficiency of the planning and development process, but also improve the quality of the development.

The Brief provides a degree of certainty for all those involved in the development process. It identifies broad ambition and opportunity and provides a flexible and adaptable context for the redevelopment proposals on the site.

The Development Brief serves the following purposes:

- to identify new opportunities for the site and establish a shared **vision** for the future.
- to establish a framework of **land uses** for the site based upon a desire for a thriving mixed use commercial area.
- to identify **access** issues, opportunities and constraints and establish how redevelopment can contribute to the permeability and legibility of the area.
- to identify the physical characteristics which make Old Town and this site special and provide **design guidance** for new development on this site, in terms of layout, massing, materials and details.
- To identify potential benefits for **public realm** and street environment.

The Development Brief has been consulted upon with local stakeholders at the draft stage where different options were considered. The Brief is now formally adopted by Warwick District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The Development Brief for Court Street is therefore a material consideration within the planning system.

(Note: This has not yet been through the statutory processes and is not yet adopted or endorsed by the council)

...This Brief provides fresh thinking on how this important site can contribute to the sustainable regeneration of Old Town...



View into the Court Street Site from Clemens Street

PART 1 - DESIGN GUIDANCE

4 Design Principles for the Court Street Site

Good urban design is about making places that work and which add to and enhance their setting. The guidance provided within this section of the Brief helps to explain how the design of new development on this site can achieve this ambition.

A starting point for developers and their designers is to consider what the main principles which should inform development proposals are. The principles suggested below focus attention on the main considerations of place making for this site.

- 4.1 *New development should sit happily within the pattern of Old Town, respecting relationships between buildings and open spaces and ensuring routes are provided to and through the site to ensure permeability, legibility and accessibility, for pedestrians and then vehicular traffic.*
- 4.2 *New buildings should respect and enhance the townscape of Old Town by ensuring a sensitive approach to scale, skyline and proportion. Building design, materials and construction methods will need to be as high in quality as the existing townscape found within the wider Town Centre. The proximity of the conservation area demands a sensitive approach on this site.*
- 4.3 *New development should contribute to the character of Old Town. It should not simply seek to 'fit in' and should demonstrate a clear identity. New development should ensure sensitive relationships with the traditional townscape context and this can be achieved more effectively through sensitive contrast and juxtaposition than by mimicry.*

- 4.4 *Open space and landscape will need to be an integral part of any 'scheme'. The design of the spaces between buildings should receive the same level of consideration and attention as the buildings themselves. The ambition for this site is to create a high quality public realm focused on a new civic space.*
- 4.5 *A mix of new uses is promoted which can add to the life and vitality of Old Town. These uses should support the local economy and local businesses. At its best this can be a vibrant blend of creative production based businesses along with, new opportunities for living and contemporary lifestyles. These uses would reflect the historical function of the area together with its future focus. Functional requirements to serve these uses must be integrated but should not dominate.*
- 4.6 *Quality which is timeless is preferable to style which may come and go. Integrity and thoroughness in the design and construction of new and refurbished buildings and open spaces is of utmost importance. In the same way the overall quality of 'Place' is judged to be as important as the architecture or design of any of its parts.*
- 4.7 *Good design will create well loved places which represent good economic investments. Investment in good design can lift the area, creating a step change in the quality of the environment and leaving a lasting legacy to the benefit of Old Towns business and residential communities.*

These principles are expanded upon within the more detailed guidance within the following section which establishes design parameters for this site.

5 Urban Design Parameters

5.1 Preferred uses for the Site

5.1.1 *The importance of a mix of uses*

The size, scale, heritage setting and location of this site within the heart of Old Town make a mix of uses desirable. Proposals for single use and single block developments, which would not support the diversity, are not considered appropriate on this important site. The following uses are promoted on this site.

5.1.2 *Creative, production and display*

Workshops for creative production, specialist retail, and other flexible workspace with associated display areas can all add to the character and vitality of Old Town and are promoted on this site. Proposals for crafts and arts related uses will be judged against a strategic ambition that sees Spencer's Yard as the main destination for these activities within the Town Centre. The emphasis of uses on this site within this context is for higher quality production with uses such as bespoke iron/steel working, glass blowing and other traditional uses are encouraged. The potential for local/regional business of this nature to cluster together in this location should be one option.

5.1.3 *New Uses within the Railway Arches*

The Brief promotes the re-use and refurbishment of the railway arches as a key feature of the site. If the existing garage and storage uses could be relocated, then this space could be transformed to accommodate new uses which look over and add life to the Court street site. Practically, this raises important issues about the future of two important local businesses. Derek G. Miles Garage would certainly need to relocate from the archways it occupies (2) within the southern (operational) viaduct, although the 2 within the northern (redundant) viaduct could remain. The viability this business may be affected if this space were to be lost however and further work is required to identify how this issue could be taken forwards.

Similarly, the storage space occupied by Frettons within 1 archway (in the southern operation viaduct facing the Court Street car park) would also need to relocate. The implications and opportunity this raises for Frettons is described in more detail later within this section, although again, the detail of how this might be achieved goes beyond the scope of this Brief.

The refurbished railway arches would make an ideal location for the creative production and display uses described previously. These uses may be better managed collectively to help generate a critical mass of activity.

In addition one archway is promoted for uses orientated towards young people within Old Town. Regenesys have identified the concept for a youth project which would develop the archway adjacent to Clemens Street for a 'juice bar' (or similar) which would be run for and by young people. This concept is at an early stage and although it is not the role of this Brief to identify how this could be developed, it is useful to identify the opportunity.



Creative reuse of railway arches is a real opportunity.

5.1.4 Places to eat and drink

Cafés would be welcomed as part of the land use mix on this site. The scale of such uses is important and these uses should not become the dominant function of the site. Alfresco activities such as pavement cafes are encouraged under the regulation of the Council. Pubs and bars would not normally be considered appropriate on this site and the consumption of alcohol on this site will not be permitted other than as part of restaurants. Restaurants will only be considered on this site where the quality of the use is of the highest order and can be proved to add value to the existing restaurant provision locally. The site is certainly not suitable for additional take away food uses.

5.1.5 Residential development & live/work

Residential development is considered appropriate providing this includes a proportion of flexible live and work units. Live work can help to cultivate small-scale business activity. The concept encourages more flexible use of space within buildings. Living areas are self-contained alongside more adaptable open areas, which can be developed to reflect the requirements of small-scale businesses and production.

In reality this often means one floor left open for business ‘personalisation’ and fitting out with accommodation above or below. In practice heavier production is better located at ground floor whilst artistic uses are better located on top floors where better natural light can be developed. A combination of the two can be incorporated in taller developments.



New live and work can provide opportunities for exciting architecture.

5.1.6 Business and employment

Business/employment uses are a traditional part of the land use mix within Old Town and are promoted as part of the land use mix on this site. The quality of the business setting on this site should be much improved. The nature of these uses is important and manufacturing uses are discouraged. A ‘higher grade’ of business uses is encouraged and these could focus on servicing primary business locations within the town.

Proposals for managed workspace adjacent to the site provide an opportunity to further strengthen the business sector within Old Town and mark the transition to a higher-grade business environment.

Business uses indigenous to Old Town should contribute to and benefit from the regeneration of this important site. The scope for this site to be developed to offer accommodation to growing and developing businesses as well as new operations within Old Town should be investigated through redevelopment. Whilst the statutory planning process has limited powers to prescribe the exact nature of uses on this site, the Council as landowner can play a role in assisting local businesses as described. Clearly any proposals from local businesses will be judged against the criteria established in this Brief.



Business and employment uses should be accommodated in good quality buildings and landscape.

5.1.7 Frettons

Frettons is a successful business within Old Town, with a reputation and draw which reaches beyond the locality. It is important that this use forms part of the future of Old Town and this site in particular and as a result, this business warrants special attention in this Brief. Reflecting consultations, two options are now identified.

The first option would involve the showroom use remaining in its present location with the storage area relocating from the railway arch to a new purpose built extension to the rear of the existing showroom. The second and preferred option would be the relocation and (limited) expansion of the showroom and storage areas together into the ground floor of a new development block on the car park site.

This would bring a number of benefits to the area and the operators, by rationalising the business into purpose built accommodation. This would avoid accessibility problems of motorcycles parked up in the alleyway between 13-15 Clemens Street and provide an opportunity for new uses within the existing listed building. This approach will require the Council and this business to work together towards a mutually beneficial outcome.

5.1.8 The car park

The site should retain an element of public pay and display car parking to serve Old Town. The level of this provision will be reduced from its present provision with more information provided within section 7.3.

5.1.9 New Uses for the Former School House

Crèche and childcare facilities would be supported on this site and could be located within the refurbished Former School House. Other community orientated uses would be supported within this building which offers scope for adaptation and extension. Such uses which have proven popular through consultation could provide a link to the original purpose of this building and provide a new community focus.

5.1.10 Other uses

The site could provide accommodation for a range of uses, which fall outside the (strict interpretation) of the planning use classes order. Uses, which fall into this category and where a demand for floor space has been recorded locally, include a martial arts studio and a childrens crèche/play barn.

In assessing the suitability of such uses to locate on this site the Council will use the following tests.

- *Uses should generate pedestrian activity and vitality on site.*
- *Uses should help to confirm the site as a special destination.*
- *Manufacturing or storage should not be the main use on site.*
- *Uses should not preclude the wider mix of uses developing.*
- *Uses should be neighbourly in terms of noise.*
- *Parking requirements will not dominate the site.*
- *Design of the building as ever is of vital importance.*
- *Uses are locally relevant and/or indigenous to Old Town.*



A mix of uses is encouraged on the site and within buildings.

5.1.11 Food retail option

Based upon aspirations to retain historic buildings on this site and feedback from public consultation, a large scale food retail store is no longer seen as appropriate for this site. A significantly smaller scale provision of high quality food retail in the form of a delicatessen, perhaps associated with a café for example is not ruled out, but this would form part of a larger mix and would not dominate the site.

5.2 Linkages, Movement and Access

5.2.1 Pedestrian connections and integration

As part of a safe, 'walkable' and pleasant Old Town the redevelopment of this site should adopt a sensitive and balanced approach to access and linkages where traffic and service requirements do not undermine the quality of pedestrian linkages.

The link across the site from Clemens Street to Court Street is a key pedestrian connection and will need to be retained as part of any scheme to provide a safe and direct route. New pedestrian linkages are promoted to the front of refurbished railway arches. In part this will be made possible by clearing away the clutter within unit 1A on Clemens Street and the 'tidying up' and/or remodelling of rears to properties backing onto the arches.

The linkages between 7 and 9 Clemens Street, between 29 Clemens Street and the Stoneleigh Arms site and the linkage adjacent to 43 Clemens Street could all be developed to add to the permeability of the area.

A much-improved pedestrian connection to the canalside would be supported and this could add value to the development of the site and adjacent areas. Unlocking valuable canalside site should be a longer-term ambition.

5.2.2 Vehicular access

The site is constrained in terms of existing vehicular access arrangements. The Court Street/High Street junction is very tight and the link from High Street via Althorpe Street and Cummins Street is even more tortuous. The view from the County Council Highway Authority is that the poor access from High Street will limit the scale and nature of new development on this site. This is one reason why a large food store is not feasible as this would have required the demolition of the Stoneleigh Arms, which is not now an option on this site.

A smaller scale mixed development, although generating some additional traffic, can be serviced from existing highway network, although some improvements to the junction of High Street/Court Street may be required as part of any development.

Walking, cycling and public transport are seen as important means of accessing this Town Centre site and the design of any scheme should reflect this.

5.2.3 Service and delivery access

Service and delivery requirements including refuse storage and collection, will need to be considered as part of any development proposals. Ideally service and delivery traffic should be taken from High Street/Court Street and the practicality of this will need to be demonstrated.

It is anticipated that the refurbished railway arches will be serviced directly from the site to the south of the viaduct. The 3 metre maintenance strip required by Network Rail should be incorporated within the landscape design of a new space outside the railway arches.



Redevelopment of the site can help to improve pedestrian linkages balancing access requirements.

5.2.4 Court Street car park

Given that the current allocation of 44 parking spaces represents a large over allocation it is sensible to consider rationalising this facility to facilitate the redevelopment of the site for new uses. In establishing the new level of parking to be provided, consideration has been given to the likely increase in journeys to Old Town from ongoing regeneration.

The new provision of public pay and display parking will more accurately reflect existing and perceived future usage. The Brief recommends a reduction in the order of 50% in the number of spaces provided. This suggests a total of 22 spaces be provided and of this the Council will expect 5 of these spaces as a minimum to be designed to accommodate disabled/mother and baby access.

Developing on part of the Court Street car park site will have implications for the other main car parks in Old Town at Bath Place and Packington Place. Any redevelopment proposals for these sites will need to take account of the proposed reduction in provision on Court Street.

5.2.5 Parking levels in new development

The site should be developed to take forward the key messages within PPG 13 in terms of parking provision, including:

- *Reduced dependency on car use and promote walking and cycling.*
- *Reduced parking requirements in locations such as town centres.*
- *Reduced off street provision facilitating higher density development.*

The Council will seek an innovative approach to the design and provision of car parking within new development on this site. No minimum or maximum limits are set in terms of parking provision for new uses on the site. The planning authority will expect developers to demonstrate that any parking on site provides no more than 'operational minimum levels' in this accessible Town Centre location. Car free options will be supported where their viability is demonstrated as will car share schemes, which can provide access to cars in a more innovative and socially equitable manner.

5.2.6 Traffic impact and sustainable travel

The County Council will normally require a traffic impact assessment as part of a planning application for the redevelopment of this site to demonstrate the feasibility of site access and the impact on the wider network. The Council may also require the production of a green travel plan for the site. To promote sustainable travel patterns the Council will encourage the provision of secure cycle storage on site, and showering facilities within commercial employment development.

5.2.7 The railway edge

The constraints placed upon this site for access to the railway infrastructure are not onerous. Views into and across the site from this busy rail line should be developed and the rail line means the site is highly visible from a main transit corridor through the Town Centre and new development must address visual impact in this respect.

5.2.8 The canal corridor

The Council will support proposals which see canalside improvements. An improved linkage into the Court Street site from the canalside and its towing path is encouraged. Whilst there is no direct 'adjacency' this site should be associated with an Old Town neighbourhood which benefits from the amenity of the canalside.



Sustainable travel is encouraged and infrastructure such as cycle storage will be important in promoting greener travel behaviour. Making linkages to a refurbished canalside is also a strategic priority beyond the site boundary.

5.3 Public Realm and Open Space

5.3.1 Landscape quality

The Town Centre character and quality should be extended across the public realm of Court Street. The refurbishment of the alleyway between 13-15 Clemens Street has begun this process. The design of external spaces should reflect the character of the works undertaken in Clemens Street, wherever possible using similar materials and furnishings.

5.3.2 An open space for Court Street

The development of this site presents the opportunity to develop a new small scale open space within Old Town. This could act as a new point of reference within a new development destination in Old Town. This space would provide amenity value to the uses which locate here. Such a space if located near to refurbished railway arches would significantly enhance the setting of the structure and create the kind of environment specialist uses can benefit from.

5.3.3 Accessibility and special needs

The Council will expect any new space and wider landscape to be publicly accessible. A management regime will need to be developed for public areas within the site and developers are encouraged to liaise with the Council regarding this issue.

The Council will expect development proposals for public areas/spaces to address the special needs of people with disability, to provide an accessible environment for all. Developers are urged to have early discussion with the Access Officer for this area.

5.3.4 The retained car park

The retained car park should be designed to be safe and attractive. It should provide a quality landscape setting at the point of arrival. Trees and landscape features are encouraged. The space should provide clear and direct pedestrian connections and be well lit at night.

5.3.5 Public art

The Councils Public Art Strategy identifies the opportunity to create a more distinctive and legible Old Town. The development of this site should include a contribution towards new public art features within or close to the site. These should be coordinated and provide an opportunity to add a new level of quality and integrity to the area through creative environmental design.

Artistic features need not be as formal as placed statues/installations and could include mosaics, floor plates and plaques, bespoke street name plates, bespoke street furnishings, lighting, railings and even security gates.



Tile Mosaic within neighbourhood centre in Chester. Porcelain pigeons bringing life to a blank building elevation in Manchester's Northern Quarter.

5.4 Townscape and Building Form

5.4.1 Defining street frontages

Frontages to Court Street and Clemens Street should be strengthened as a result of new development. The original development frontage to Court Street which was removed when the car park was created should be reinstated where possible. Views over existing adjacent employment areas east of Court Street may demand a more flexible approach to building orientation however. Also new development should help to define the east-west linkages across the site. Refurbishing the railway arches to create an active street frontage is a key ambition.

5.4.2 The railway arches

The railway arches should be developed as key townscape elements and can provide a location for exciting new uses. They have the capacity to provide a special location and ambience within Old Town. The refurbishment of the arches should enhance the brick work and overall impression of the frontage, utilising consistent and sympathetic materials. The use of architectural glazing to 'open up' these frontages visibly is encouraged to create maximum natural light penetration and to preserve the integrity and aesthetic character of the archways themselves. A consistent approach to the illumination and signage of these special features will be required.

5.4.3 The future of the Stoneleigh Arms Public House

Based upon townscape heritage and conservation issues along with views expressed through public consultation the approach to the Stoneleigh Arms should be to retain and refurbish this important building. The re-use of this building for a public house would work against the principles of the Brief and so other uses and combinations of uses should be considered. The building is within a conservation area but is not listed.

5.4.4 The Former School House at No. 16 Court Street

Based upon the special social history associated with this building uncovered during public consultation, the Former School House should be retained and refurbished as part of the redevelopment of this site. The location of this building within the heart of the site means that it will be a key organising feature within any redevelopment. Its extension is not ruled out and there is a good deal of flexibility in how this building could be improved given it is neither listed nor within the conservation area. Ensuring the high quality and sensitive restoration of this important building will be critical to achieving a solution which is sympathetic to the integrity of the original building and provides the basis for its re-use.



The former School House (left) and Stoneleigh Arms (right) are important historic buildings and should be retained

5.4.5 Milverton House

Milverton House is not integral to the townscape heritage and character of the site. As such these buildings could be demolished as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the site, subject to ownership and leasehold issues being resolved. Existing uses would need to be relocated, either as part of the redevelopment or on other sites within the Town. Any demolition of this building should ensure minimum impact on the adjacent historic former School House.

5.4.6 Skyline and building heights

Buildings should be in the order of 2-4 storeys in height, demonstrating a respect for and relationship with the proportions of adjacent buildings along Clemens Street. 1 storey buildings are not considered substantial enough on this site. Taller Buildings are not ruled out and could contribute to the distinctiveness of this site if well designed and located. New development which makes a new statement on the skyline of Old Town will need to be carefully considered. One approach might be to locate a taller development or features to be visible from Bath Street above the railway viaduct and bridge, sign posting the regeneration of the site.

5.4.7 Scale, proportion and massing

The heritage character of the Clemens Street area should be referenced through the scale, and proportion of new development. The vertical emphasis created within building facades and the narrow widths between individual properties, provide a strong rhythm along the street. Buildings designs should respond to the established proportions and geometry of the existing street. This will ensure new development is integrated more completely within the structure of the street.

5.4.7 Building materials

The Council will assess the detailed design of any proposed building against the quality of the surrounding area which acts a benchmark. Good quality materials and construction processes should be used. Materials should be carefully selected and be integral to the buildings design. In Old Town simplicity in design and construction is characteristic. The Council considers the following materials as appropriate to this area.

- *Traditional stock or reclaimed red bricks.*
- *Render in natural tones for large walls/facades.*
- *Bold coloured render for smaller architectural features.*
- *Architectural glazing systems can create a contemporary feel.*
- *Structural steelwork can be exposed to good effect.*
- *Contemporary rain screened panels in naturalistic finishes.*
- *Natural grey slate for roofs which are characteristic to the skyline.*

The use of other materials is not ruled out and these would need to be justified through a design statement for development.

5.4.8 Building design

The proportions and scale of the existing building stock of Clemens Street should be utilised in the design of new buildings on this site. New development should be contemporary in nature and should be sensitive to the heritage townscape of Old Town, but offer a new interpretation on this. High quality design in new development on this important site is a priority for the Council. A creative and innovate approach to architectural design is promoted and the Council do not seek to limit possibilities on this site.

5.4.9 Sustainable buildings

New buildings should be resource efficient in their construction and their operation. The Council encourages developers to use the Building Research Establishments sustainability rating system (BREEAM) to assess and demonstrate the sustainability of their buildings. Buildings which score a 'good' rating are encouraged by the Council.

5.4.10 Accommodating special needs

Buildings and their approaches should be designed to be accessible by people with disabilities. Of primary importance is Part M of the building Regulations, which establishes minimum requirements. The Council will encourage developers to move beyond this basic requirement. Development which meets the Code of Practice BS 8300:2001 (www.bsi-global.com) is welcomed.

5.4.11 Signage and name plates

Early consideration of signage and name plates should be demonstrated. These must be sensitive and sympathetic within building frontages, providing clear and bold information, but not dominating the facade. The Council will encourage signage composed of individually mounted lettering (as has been undertaken at Waterside Medical Centre). This looks particularly effective and offers a contemporary way of labelling and identifying uses in a sensitive manner. Night time illumination should not dominate the frontage by day.

Advertisements will need applications for planning permission in accordance with statutory guidance and early advice should be sought from the Council.

5.5 Safety and Security

The redevelopment of this site should work towards improving safety and security within this area. The site at present does not suffer from excessive incidence of crime, but the perception and fear of crime is perpetuated by the isolated nature of the site particularly at night. CCTV coverage of the area has now been secured.

The Council wish to promote safer places based upon three core themes which can be easily translated into design proposals and comprise; Promoting natural surveillance; Clearly defining public and private areas; and Developing Secure but sensitive buildings.

5.5.1 Natural surveillance

Promoting natural surveillance and ensuring 'eyes on the street' is widely recognised as reducing the incidence and the opportunity to commit offences. Places which have a regular and steady pedestrian presence will invariably feel safer than more isolated and cut-off places. The aim should be to ensure.

- *Direct pedestrian routes through the site are well defined by building frontages.*
- *Building entrances are visible from public routes.*
- *Activity generating uses such as shop fronts with large visually transparent windows are located at ground floor level.*
- *Good levels of street illumination are provided at night.*
- *Landscape and other features do not create hiding places or obscure views.*

5.5.2 Public and private spaces clearly defined

Clearly delineation of public areas from private spaces can help to identify where public access stops. The approach should seek to ensure that:

- *Fronts of buildings facing other fronts and enclosing the public realm.*
- *Backs of buildings located against other backs of buildings locking together service, storage, parking and amenity spaces.*
- *Ensure open spaces are an integral part of the site development.*

5.5.3 Secure and sensitive design

Buildings should be designed to be secure, but also sensitive in order to ensure crime against property is minimised but not at the expense of a harsh external appearance which will only reaffirm the perception of crime. To this end development should consider the following.

- *The design and specification of doors, windows and other points of entry to buildings should demonstrate high standards of security*
- *Security shutters where needed should be internally mounted within building frontages.*
- *'Alley-gates' gates, fences and other such features provide opportunities to incorporate artworks distinctive to Old Town, where there necessity is proven.*
- *Boundary walls which often become home to barbed wire and other defensive infrastructure, should not front onto public areas.*
- *Liaison with Warwickshire Police Architectural Liaison/Secured by Design team should be undertaken at an early stage.*

5.6 A Concept for Change

The Concept plan (Figure 2) provides the spatial context for the principles and guidance and establishes the main site opportunities. This is capable of interpretation in many ways.

5.7 The Indicative Masterplan

This indicative Masterplan illustrates how the design guidance can be developed into an overall scheme. The indicative Masterplan is illustrated in Figure 3. This scheme is neither the only nor necessarily the optimum solution for the site and there scope for developers to interpret the guidance in a more innovative and creative manner. It does however illustrate a pragmatic approach to the redevelopment of the site, achieving the basic requirements of the Brief.

5.8 How the Place might look after Redevelopment

The sketches on this page illustrate how the site could look after redevelopment along the lines described in this Brief.



Sketch of refurbished railway arches accessed through 1A Clemens Street



Sketch of new public space, car park and adjacent new buildings

6 Procedural Guidance and Support

6.1 Implementation

Implementation of this Brief will be secured through the development control process. All development proposals will be subject to statutory processes including full applications for planning permission, listed building and conservation areas consents.

Developers are required to discuss their proposals with Warwick District Council as planning authority and Regenesis as local regeneration agency at an early stage in the development and design process.

Planning applications for this site should be accompanied by a written design statement. At the outline stage this should state the overall concept and philosophy for the development. In detailed applications this statement should be developed to become a more detailed and outline how the principles for the site have been developed into the detailed scheme, its layout, massing, uses, linkages, materials and so on.

Development proposals which respond well to the challenge and guidance established in this Brief will, in principle, be supported by the District Council as local planning authority. The detail of any proposal will then be considered through the planning system with the aim of securing the highest quality standards of design on the Court Street Site.

The local authority as the main landowner within the Court Street Site will seek to ensure that the Development Brief remains a key reference point for redevelopment, subsequent to the disposal of part or all of their land interests within the area.

This Brief provides a strong case for the site to be considered in the context of adjoining sites. Developers are encouraged to explore such opportunities and to discuss proposals at an early stage with the Council and Regenesis to consider how such ideas can be delivered.

...Development proposals which respond well to the challenge and guidance established in this Brief will, in principle, be supported by the District Council as local planning authority...

6.2 An Approach to Change

These constraints need to be addressed if the site is to realise full potential. An approach to the challenges these constraints set is described below and these will need to be delivered in a co-ordinated manner, championed by development partners – including the Council utilising their existing ownerships and statutory powers.

1. *Land assets within the site need to be addressed to unlock the potential of the site and prepare it for comprehensive redevelopment.*
2. *Assembly of the site would be desirable to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment.*
3. *Encourage the relocation of manufacturing uses close to the site which, if retained may limit the scope for change on Court Street. New and complementary uses would be sought for these sites, thus increasing the redevelopment opportunity.*
4. *Promote a collective management regime for the railway arches to ensure the full potential is developed.*
5. *Ensure access arrangements relate to the scale of development suggested and do not harm the wider regeneration of Clemens Street.*
6. *Seek to open up the canal side through the redevelopment of adjacent under-utilised sites in the longer term.*
7. *Address constraints – Respond to opportunity.*

6.3 Contacts

Chris Elliott, Strategic Director
Warwick District Council

John Archer, Head of Planning & Engineering
Warwick District Council

Philip Clarke, Policy and Projects
Warwick District Council

John Whittle, Head of Property Services
Warwick District Council

Alan Mayes, Principal Conservation Officer
Warwick District Council

Sharon Newport, Regeneration Manager
Regenesiis

Ray Smith, Business Development Co-ordinator
Regenesiis

Warwick District Council
P.O. Box 1720
Riverside House
Milverton Hill
Royal Leamington Spa
Warwickshire CV32 5RL
(01926 50000)

Regenesiis
4-6 Clemens Street
Old Town Leamington Spa
CV31 2DP
(01926) 883377

PART 2 - THE CONTEXT FOR CHANGE

7 Planning & Regeneration Context

7.1 Planning

The adopted Local Plan for Warwick District (1995) provides the wider planning context for the Court Street site within Old Town Leamington Spa. Any development proposals should have regard to the policies within this plan. This plan is in the process of being revised with a Deposit Draft expected in October 2003. This Development Brief provides continuity as the local plan context moves forward. It is intended that the Brief will remain SPG when the new Plan is adopted in due course.

With specific reference to Leamington Town Centre and the Court Street site, a number of Adopted Plan policies are of relevance.

- *The site can be found within the Commercial Core area where Policy LTC H2 suggests commercial activities should be focused.*
- *The eastern portion of the site falls within an Employment Area designated in Policy DW EMP5 that states that the development of such areas for 'non-employment' uses will not normally be permitted.*
- *Policies LTC ENV1 and ENV2 suggest all new building should be designed to a high standard in a manner that is complementary to the existing built form.*
- *Policies DW ENV 5 - 16 cover listed buildings and conservation area. The policy seeks to protect listed buildings and conservation areas from inappropriate development, demolition and alteration. The western portion of the site falls within the Conservation areas. The site does not contain any listed buildings, although No. 13 and 15 adjacent to the site are listed buildings.*
- *Policy LTC ENV5 suggests the Council will co-ordinate a programme of environmental improvements in 'Enhancement Areas' such as Old Town.*
- *Policies DW TR6 and TR7 suggest the provision of off-street parking within the Town Centres will be kept under review and any*

new development should provide sufficient parking in accordance with the Council's approved standards.

Figure 3 identifies the main planning issues as relevant to the site.

...The Brief updates and expands upon the adopted Development Plan, providing detailed guidance for the site and continuity in terms of the Council's aspirations as the Local Plan is Revised...



View eastwards over the existing car park towards businesses on Court Street

7.2 Regeneration

This Development Brief also updates the Regeneration Framework produced for Old Town in 1998, by Taylor Young working for Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County council and British Waterways. This framework is itself adopted as SPG and continues to provide the regeneration context for Old Town. The regeneration of Old Town has sought to:

- *Enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people.*
- *Address social exclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged.*
- *Promote sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment and infrastructure, including housing.*
- *Support and promote growth in local economies and businesses.*
- *Tackle crime and improve community safety.*
- *Promote mixed use development within Old Town.*

The redevelopment of this site needs to work towards achieving these core ambitions, through detailed proposals for uses, access, townscape and public realm. It is disappointing that the redevelopment of this site has not yet taken place, but this only serves to demonstrate the complexity of achieving development on difficult and constrained sites. The ambition within the existing Regeneration Framework to see this site developed for new food retail focus has been revisited in this study. The Development Brief process has enabled this option to be reconsidered alongside other opportunities.

The regeneration of Old Town has gathered momentum over recent years, championed by the local authority and partners through Regensis, a regeneration company based in Old Town. Recent projects funded through Single Regeneration Budget have included the refurbishment of the environment along Clemens Street and cosmetic improvements to several historic buildings. The development of Waterside Medical Park and a proposed managed workspace scheme adjacent to the site, provide evidence of strong public sector commitment to the improvement of the area.

This will be consolidated by the development of a healthy living network and Sure Start initiative within Old Town. Within this context, the Court Street site is a major opportunity within an improving Old Town and new development can contribute to and capitalise upon its unique character and vitality.

...The regeneration of Old Town has gathered momentum and the Court Street site presents a real opportunity to contribute to and capitalise upon this success...



The improved street environment on Clemens Street creates a more people friendly place

8 Site and Context Appraisal

8.1 Town Centre Context

The site must be considered in terms of its role within the Town Centre and Old Town itself and the main points to summarise include:

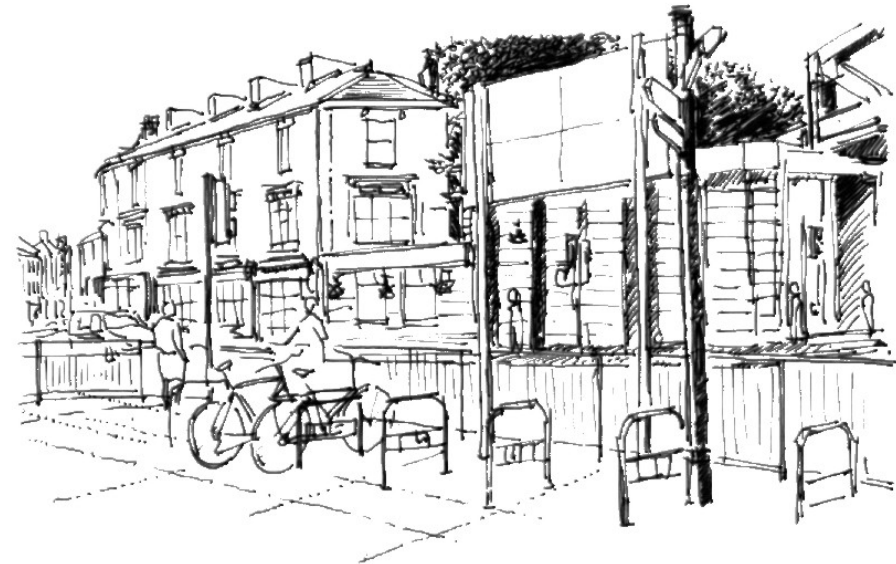
- *The Clemens Street axis is very important as this provides a link into the heart of the Town along Bath Street.*
- *The Railway Station, which is now listed, is only a short walk from the site within Old Town.*
- *The railway line itself forms a separation between the Old and New Town and offers potential for good views over the site.*
- *The historic Old Town provides a mix of uses and is a natural location for specialist, creative and cultural uses.*
- *Old Town provides an essential local centre within walking distance for the residential communities south of the Town Centre.*
- *The built fabric of Old Town offers contrast to the more formally laid out Town Centre to the north.*
- *Court Street lies at the heart of Old Town. It serves this area as a car park but offers little in terms of destination or vitality creation.*

8.2 Immediate Interfaces

The site cannot be considered in isolation. The development of the site can benefit from and be informed by the role and physical setting of Old Town. The principal interfaces are described as follows:

- *High Street/Bath Street provides a link into the core of the Town Centre with its Regency architecture and mix of uses.*
- *Clemens Street offers an older and less formal townscape. The recently refurbished street environment provides an attractive setting. Uses are varied and include secondary and specialist retail.*
- *The canalside is cut off from the site at present by low grade storage uses which offer little amenity value to the surrounding area.*
- *Althorpe Industrial Estate provides an edge to the site to the east and south. This is a working environment providing a variety of local businesses. The physical condition of some of these uses is poor.*
- *The railway arches are an underutilised asset. These spaces offer potential to create an attractive and distinctive edge to the site.*

...The site is strategically well located within Old Town, close to the Railway Station and the primary retail and commercial areas. The site lies within a vibrant mixed-use area, which is being reinvented through regeneration...



Clemens Street and Court Street beyond High Street underneath the railway bridges.

8.3 The Court Street Site

The site raises a number of important urban design considerations and presents a compelling case for regeneration and a basis for action. The main messages from the analysis of the site are summarised below.

8.3.1 Uses and Functions

- *Milverton House is in use as low quality workspace*
- *The former School House at 16 Court Street is similarly underutilised and offers scope to accommodate new uses.*
- *The Stoneleigh Arms Public House is vacant adding little to the area.*
- *The railway arches are underused and in use for storage and garage uses fail to contribute to peoples enjoyment and use of the site.*
- *The main use of the site is a pay and display car park.*
- *The site functions to serve Old Town but does not add vitality directly. It is an arrival point and conduit but not a destination in itself.*
- *The site lacks overlooking from nearby buildings and uses but is relatively busy due to the links to Clemens Street.*
- *In the evening the site feels more isolated and less safe and as a result fewer people use the site, even for parking.*

8.3.2 Movement & Linkages

- *The site provides an important pedestrian link from the employment areas to the east to Clemens Street and beyond.*
- *The alleyways leading to the site from Clemens Street provide good connections into the site from the west. However, pedestrian linkages across the site are poorly defined.*
- *Pedestrian movement north south within the site is not developed. The railway line and arches create a barrier to the north.*
- *The depots to the south create a physical barrier to the canal.*
- *The site is a principal arrival point in Old Town by virtue of its role as a main car park.*
- *Views into the site from the railway line should be improved as the public face of the Town Centre.*

- *A survey by the District Council noted that existing car parks in Old Town were operating at 25% of capacity. The Court Street car park, which provides some 44 spaces.*



The Old School House No.16 Court Street offers scope to accommodate new uses within a refurbished building.



The alleyway between 13 and 15 Clemens Street provides a vital pedestrian link to/through the site.

8.3.3 Open Space and Public Realm

- The site is open and for the most part undeveloped, but a space it fails to function as a people place.
- Landscape quality of the car park is low, although the boundary to properties on Clemens Street offers some landscape value.
- The quality of street furnishings and materials is poor and could be refurbished.
- The alleyway between 13 and 15 Clemens Street provides a good quality space, although motorcycles displayed here undermine accessibility.
- Street lighting on this site is poor and the environment at night gives rise to a fear of crime.

8.3.4 Buildings and Townscape

- The site is a gap in the townscape fabric of Old Town. The historical urban grain of this community (as illustrated in Figure 6) was totally destroyed by clearance which made way for the car park.
- The Stoneleigh Arms Public House has intrinsic townscape value both in itself and as part of an established streetscape along Clemens Street within the Conservation Area. As such this important building warrants retention.
- The Old School House at 16 Court Street is an important building which offers a tangible linkage to the social history of the site. It was the focal point of the former community within this area. Despite falling into some disrepair its condition is reasonable and its value in townscape terms merits its retention.
- Milverton House is a one storey building of no real townscape value and could potentially be removed to open up the site.
- The railway bridges, the viaduct and archways provide key townscape features which can add to local distinctiveness.
- Buildings along Clemens Street provide an important reference point in terms of the scale, proportion and massing.
- Buildings addressing Clemens Street turn their backs to the site.
- The transition in scale and height from 2/3 storeys to the east – ‘A Town Centre Scale’ towards a more functional employment landscape to the west is marked.



The landscape value of the existing car park is low



The railway arches could be transformed to inject new life into the site.

9 Constraints and Challenges

9.1 Ownership

The car park is in the ownership of Warwick District Council. The alleyway between No. 13 and 15 Clemens Street is in public ownership as adopted by the Warwickshire County Council. The Stoneleigh Arms Public House and associated land are owned by Aldi.

9.2 Leases

Milverton House is owned by the Council but is subject to a 99 year ground lease due to expire in 2065. The Railway arches are leased to a number of interests including the District Council who lease 8 units and No. 1 Clemens Street from Spacia.

9.3 Vehicular Access

Access to this site from the road network is constrained. Vehicular access to the existing car park is taken from High Street via Court Street. It is accepted that the redevelopment of this site for uses which would attract large numbers of new car journeys would require a new traffic link from Clemens Street, an option which is detrimental to the wider character and townscape of the area and which has not proved popular through consultation. The requirement for a single traffic access point taken from Court Street will impact on the nature of future uses possible on this site.

9.4 Prescribed Access Rights

Historically several properties addressing Clemens Street were serviced from the rear off Court Street car park. The Council has pursued a strategy of terminating and 'buying out' prescribed access rights across the car park in order to provide more scope for redevelopment. The only remaining access issue to be resolved is the claimed right of access over the car park to service 15-17 Clemens Street – 'Frettons'. The Council dispute the validity of this claim. It is clear that if existing uses are to continue to flourish (and this is vital to the future of Old Town) practical proposals for access, which balance the requirements of all interests, will be required.

9.5 Rights of way

There are no formal rights of way across the site. Informal pedestrian linkages particularly east west are evident. The alley-way link between 13-15 Clemens Street, which is adopted highway, is the principal link to the site from Clemens Street. It will be important that this linkage is retained and improved. The site is presently cut off from the canal and towing path.

9.6 Adjacent land uses/plots

The overall character and environment of the wider Court Street area to the south and particularly the east may inhibit development at the present time. The employment uses which front Court Street from the east may prove a significant barrier to attracting the right quality development onto the core site.

9.7 Employment uses and the Commercial Core

Employment activity in the area is protected through planning policy and future uses at Court Street will need to be complementary, albeit in the context of a town centre, where a range of mixed uses and commercial activities may be acceptable. This is consistent with other planning policy which promotes the site for core town centre commercial uses.

9.8 Services/statutory undertakers

A list of statutory undertakers is provided in section 10. With the exception of a 600mm sewer/drain, which originates within the site as illustrated in Figure 3 there are no significant or unusual gas, electrical, telecommunications infrastructure affecting the site.

9.9 The railway line

Network Rail will require a minimum 3 metre maintenance strip between the active railway line and viaduct and any new development on the site. Any new buildings or structures will need to demonstrate that they do not place additional load onto the footings of the viaduct piers. Network Rail will need to be formally consulted as part for the development process.

9.10 The railway arches

The potential offered by the railway arches needs to be unlocked by addressing the existing uses within these spaces. The present uses for storage and garage uses will need to be relocated to allow refurbishment and regeneration to take place. The railway arches are owned by Spacia, the property division of Network Rail. The Council lease 8 arches from Spacia, 5 to the southern (operation) viaduct and 3 within the older (redundant) viaduct to the north. Of the remaining archways 4 are leased to Derek G. Miles Garage (2 in the southern Viaduct and 2 in the northern viaduct) and 1 arch (within the southern viaduct facing Court Street car park is leased by Frettons from 'Spacia'.

These leases let by Spacia are classified as Periodic Tenancies and are subject to 6 months notice by either party. There are a number of legal conditions governing the 6 month notice period one or more of which Spacia must satisfy to enforce the 6 month notice period to their occupiers. One of these conditions is 'regeneration', although this relates to specific proposals for a site rather than merely new ambitions.

Consideration should be given to the practical requirements of Frettons and Derek G. Miles if the space within the railway arches is to be used for new uses as is proposed in this Brief. Redevelopment of this asset needs to be undertaken on a comprehensive basis and negotiations with these two businesses will be critical.

9.11 Ground Conditions

Prospective developers should be aware that given the history of this site, which was in use for employment purposes prior to becoming a housing area in the 19th Century and then a car park in the 20th Century, land contamination may be an issue requiring remediation. This is not uncommon on Town Centre sites of this nature and consultations with the Environment Agency have not identified any particular issues of concern, with the exception of a small aquifer which originates on the site.

No detailed survey work has been undertaken as part of the Development Brief process. Developers will be expected to undertake desk top and site investigation work investigating ground conditions and any archaeological issues.

9.12 Environment and Ecology

There are no significant environmental or ecological constraints to development on this site. Through development however, any trees or landscape lost will need to be replaced with an increased provision as part of any scheme. Investigation into roosting bats will need to form part of any proposals to demolish or refurbish any buildings on the site.

10 Consultations

Government identify that Supplementary Planning Guidance will be given more weight as a material consideration within the planning system where it has been prepared in consultation with the public (ODPM 1998).

10.1 Public & Stakeholder Consultation

Meaningful consultation has been at the heart of generating the Development Brief for the Court Street Site. This is a requirement of the planning system to enable the Brief to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Warwick District Council – the local planning authority. The benefits of undertaking consultation have been threefold.

- To understand the ambitions which the local residential and business communities hold for this site.
- To record feedback and stakeholder preferences in respect the proposals for this important site.
- To identify more detailed information which relate to the site, including factual information from statutory undertakers along with historical and social issues from the local community, both of which are important when considering how best to redevelop this site.

The Consultations comprised three main elements.

- Initial stakeholder consultations – prior to developing proposals.
- Consultation with statutory undertakers and other bodies – ongoing through the process of preparing the Brief with all statutory notifications taking place alongside the public consultation exercise.
- A public consultation exercise was undertaken after 'Draft' Proposals had been approved by Planning Committee. (The Main Consultation Event) Feedback from questionnaires and written responses are summarised in greater detail in a separate report on the consultation process, available from Warwick District Council. This also identifies how the Brief was revised to take account of comments raised.

Sifting through the detailed responses a series of key messages were identified. These included:

- The unpopularity of a large food store on this site and the preference for a mixed use scheme.
- The importance of Number 16 Court Street as a key historic building which must be retained as a focal point for the community.
- The importance of retaining the Stoneleigh Arms as a key historic building on the site and within Clemens Street.
- Support for the refurbishment of the railway arches as important features adding to the distinctiveness of the site.
- The need to ensure local businesses are supported and encouraged to flourish through the redevelopment of this site.
- The need to ensure redevelopment of the site provides tangible benefits to the local community in terms of a better environment, new and improved uses and new opportunities.



Warwick District Council, Regenesis and consultants Taylor Young are grateful to all those people who took the time to attend the event and contribute their ideas to the process. Certainly the contribution of local people to the Development Brief has enriched its content and sharpened its focus to provide a real consensus on the new vision for this important site.

10.2 Statutory authorities and other organisations

Consultation with a range of the statutory undertakers/other interests below has been undertaken in the preparation of this Development Brief.

Network Rail – Midlands Zone

Spacia – Property Division of Network Rail

Water Authority – Severn Trent Water

Gas Pipelines – Transco

Electricity - Powergen

Cable/Telecommunications – British Telecom/NTL

Warwickshire County Council - Highway Authority

British Waterways (Where proposals include the canal side)

English Heritage (Regarding proposals for Stoneleigh Arms)

Access Officer - District Council / Warwickshire County Council

Community Safety/Architectural Liaison – Warwickshire Police

More detailed consultations will be required as ideas are progressed. The Council will expect to see how such consultation has impacted on development proposals.

11. Bibliography

The following are Key texts which have informed the production of this Brief:

PPG 1: General Policy & Principles: (1997) DETR now ODPM

PPG 3: Housing: (2000) DETR now ODPM

PPG 6: Town Centres and Retail Development: (1996) DETR now ODPM

PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment: (1994) DETR now ODPM

By Design: Companion Guide to PPG 1: (2000) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) & DETR now ODPM

Planning and Development Briefs: A Guide to Better Practice: (1998) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Building in Context – New Development in Historic Areas: (2001) CABE & English Heritage

Urban Design Compendium: (2000) English Partnerships & the Housing Corporation

Urban Design Guidance: Urban design Frameworks, Development Briefs and Masterplans: (2002) Urban design Group

The Value of Urban Design: (2001) CABE, University College London & DETR now ODPM

Warwick District Local Plan: (1995) Warwick District Council

Development Principles for Court Street – Althorpe Street Area, Taylor Young Urban Design (1998) Adopted as SPG 1999