

Strategic guidance for the former Middlesex Business Centre site, Southall.

September 2026

This note sets out Ealing Council's strategic aspirations for the Middlesex Business Centre site, reflecting the council's role as the place maker and enabler of good growth. It is not a planning policy document and should not be relied upon as such. It is intended to guide and assist landowners, developers and investment partners by setting out the council's aspirations for a comprehensive, coordinated and high-quality approach to future redevelopment. For clarity, this document uses 'the council' to refer to the council in its placemaking role, and 'the local planning authority' to refer to the council when exercising its statutory planning functions.

The council is keen to work constructively with the landowner and future delivery partners to realise the site's potential. Redevelopment should reinforce Southall's role as a Major Centre in West London, deliver substantial housing and economic benefits, improve the town centre offer, improve the public realm, strengthen public transport and active travel connections, and provide community infrastructure so that both existing and new communities benefit from growth.

The site and its strategic position within Southall

The Middlesex Business Centre (MBC) site is located in East Southall, close to Southall Elizabeth Line station, south of the railway and bounded by Merrick Road, Bridge Road and Glade Lane Park. With c. 5 hectares in a single ownership, it is one of the largest vacant sites in Southall without a development delivery programme and therefore of strategic importance in unlocking East Southall. The concentration of development around the station area and Merrick Road provides a clear rationale for comprehensive regeneration. The site has the potential to support significant housing growth, provide an appropriate mix of employment, cultural, community and town centre uses, create new jobs, attract investment and contribute to the continued growth of Southall's local economy.

Planning policy context

The site is allocated in the emerging Local Plan as Southall site allocation 08SO.

The **emerging Local Plan (Regulation 22) and site allocation Ealing-08SO.**

[Publication and submission documents | New Local Plan \(Regulation 22\) – index of](#)

[examination documents | Ealing Council](#) set out the relevant policy context, design principles and key requirements for the site, including the site allocation plan shown in [figure 3](#). Given the stage reached by the emerging Local Plan, the site allocation and Southall town policies are capable of carrying significant weight in any decision-making. The allocation supports a 'mixed use scheme comprising residential, health, community and a proportion of commercial and retail uses'.

The Local Planning Authority encourages early engagement through its pre-application services ([Introduction | Pre-application advice | Ealing Council](#)), including the Design ([Ealing Design Review Panel | Ealing Design Review Panel | Ealing Council](#)) and Community ([Community Review Panel | Community Review Panel | Ealing Council](#)) Review Panels.

The consented scheme under reference 183673OUT secured a mixed-use redevelopment, including residential, health, community, and a portion of commercial/retail uses, and was consistent with the principles of the adopted and emerging policy framework. If a revised vision or redevelopment brief is pursued any future proposal will need to demonstrate how it responds to the emerging Local Plan, the London Plan and other relevant strategic guidance.

The council's priorities for redevelopment

The council would welcome development proposals which deliver the requirement of the emerging Local Plan and make a comprehensive contribution to Southall and the wider borough. In particular, redevelopment should address housing, employment, cultural, leisure, open space active travel and community infrastructure needs. Given the requirements of the site allocation, the council will not welcome a redevelopment that comprises of predominantly of employment uses.

The council's aspirations for the site are set out below:

- **Meeting housing needs** – The council's view is that the site could deliver approximately 2,000 homes. However, it is noted that the site capacity may need to be revisited taking into account new regulations, viability consideration and % of non-residential uses proposed at the site. The need for affordable housing in the borough is acute, and therefore the council would welcome proposals which provide the maximum reasonable level of affordable housing, with a clear focus on social rent. Where intermediate homes are provided the council supports intermediate rent products, in

particularly London Living rent over shared ownership. For residential uses, the council's aspirations for the site are set out in order of priority:

- Predominantly C3 housing, including Built to Rent (BTR)
- Non- conventional residential uses, only as a smaller part of the offer;
 - Purpose built student accommodation (linked to a local higher education institution) is preferable to co-living.
 - The emerging Local Plan does not support co-living in this location, and would only be an acceptable part of the mix where justified by need and with clear quality and management arrangements.

The emerging Local Plan sets a fast-track threshold of 40% affordable housing, with a 70:30 tenure split in favour of social rent. The local planning authority recognises the Mayor of London's time-limited emergency measures, to support London housebuilding, including 20% affordable housing fast track route where qualifying criteria are met.

- **Character areas** - The council's view is that the site should provide a carefully managed transition between the predominantly residential character of Merrick Road and the industrial character of Bridge Road and the adjacent LSIS. Given the scale and strategic location of the site, consideration should also be given to multi-level commercial and industrial workspace towards the eastern part of the site, providing opportunities for local business growth while being appropriately located and designed to create a buffer to minimise impacts on residential uses. Active ground floor and non-residential uses should be located at lower levels, with new homes positioned away from the LSIS and integrated with commercial / community uses.

Proposals should mitigate potential noise, and amenity impacts from the railway and nearby industrial uses. Mixed ground floor uses including commercial, local retail and community uses, should be included, delivering active frontages along street edges and direct pedestrian routes between Southall Station, Glade Lane Park, the Havelock Estate to the south and the canal. Ground floor uses should be carefully considered to provide the amenities required by existing and future residents, and complement both the commercial offer within nearby developments and Southall Town Centre.

- **Placemaking and design excellence** - Proposals should demonstrate exemplary design quality and a contextually responsive approach that reflects Southall's distinct character, heritage, communities and town centre role.
- **Building heights** – As set out in the site allocation, the site is suitable in principle for a tall building. Building height, massing and street layout should be developed in accordance with the Tall Building Strategy. 16 storeys (56m) is considered to be the tallest appropriate height. A range of lower heights should be provided across the site, with the tallest elements located along the railway in response to the wider context of tall buildings.
- **Heritage retention** - Proposals should retain and positively integrate local heritage assets, including the locally significant Sunrise Radio building, and should support local identity, memory and community pride.
- **Employment and workspace** – Redevelopment should include employment uses that are appropriate to this location, given its proximity to residential uses to the west and complementary to the adjacent LSIS and the affordable workspace planned at the Cyrus One site ([Figure 1](#)). Careful consideration should be given to unit sizes, typologies, affordability, servicing and management arrangements that can co-exist with a residential led scheme to support a diverse range of occupiers, while protecting the effective operation of the adjacent LSIS.
- **Highways**- The local road network has limited capacity in accommodating significant additional HGVs and servicing large scale industrial uses. The existing industrial uses accessed via Bridge Road and potential cumulative impacts would provide limited network capacity without significant highways infrastructure investment.
- **Public Transport**– The site should enable new and improved public transport connections, i.e. supporting enhanced permeability to Southall station, and aligning with the Council's and TfL's aspirations for bus service enhancements in the area. Design must follow TfL guidance and established good practice in ensuring routes, particularly Healum Avenue, are sufficiently spacious and well-lit, have good sightlines, and feel safe for all road users.
- **Walking, wheeling, cycling and public realm** –Cycle routes should align with the Council's Cycle Network Plan aspirations, and walking routes should ensure permeability and follow desire lines. These routes should support walking, cycling, bus connectivity, and links with Bridge Road, and

should feel safe, inclusive and welcoming throughout the day and evening, with reference to the Healthy Streets approach, the Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, and TfL's guidance for designing routes that feel safe after dark. They should include seating, greening, lighting, clear sightlines and active frontages. See also figure 2. Particular consideration should also be given to strengthening active travel connections between the Blue Footbridge and Merrick Road through to the Havelock Estate to the south linking through or around Hortus Cemetery.

- **Enabling modal shift** – Proposals should align with the Mayor's Transport Strategy and Ealing Transport Strategy and should minimise car trips. Walking, cycling and public transport should be designed as the safest and most convenient ways to access the site, maximising the site's proximity to the Elizabeth Line and Southall town centre. In accordance with planning policy, provision should be made for rental e-bike and e-scooter parking, high-quality private cycle parking, and active electric vehicles charging for any parking bays, including disabled bays.
- **Utilities and infrastructure**- Southall East is facing considerable infrastructure pressures, particularly for the electricity supply and network capacity issues. The cumulative impacts of the recent data centres planned in Southall and proposed housing growth would need to be carefully considered and energy intensive uses such as data centres would be resisted on this site.
- **Community connections** –The scheme should support the council's Connected Communities vision by maximising social value, local business participation, and opportunities for residents to build connection and resilience. This should be embedded through design, engagement, social value commitments, and the long-term stewardship and programming of public spaces.
- **Community involvement** - Proposals should align with Ealing's Community-led Regeneration Charter, and be shaped through early, meaningful and transparent engagement with local communities. Engagement should support social cohesion, strengthen local identity, and secure tangible benefits including jobs, skills, community spaces and improved public realm.
- **Wider opportunities and coordination**– Landowners and developers should work collaboratively so that proposals come forward in a coordinated

manner. This should include participation in the Southall Landowners and Developers Forum and alignment with emerging Southall Placemaking Delivery Plan.

- **Sustainability leadership** – The scheme should be an exemplar of sustainable design and construction, seeking to exceed baseline policy requirements where feasible. It should comply with council sustainability policies, promote sustainable behaviours and consider opportunities to connect to a proposed District Heat Network waste heat from data centre operations.
- **Climate adaptation** - The site presents an important opportunity to improve resilience in an area of Southall is identified as having a high climate risk and relatively poor tree canopy cover. Proposals should address overheating (taking into account the prevalence of hotter summers), flood risk and other climate-related risks over the lifetime of the development, including through sustainable drainage, urban greening, water efficiency, shade, biodiversity enhancement and resilient public realm design.
- **Green and blue infrastructure** – The site is deficient in access to Local and District Parks and should therefore incorporate accessible, well-designed green, blue and open spaces. This should include pocket parks, open spaces, links to Glade Lane Park and opportunities to activate the canal, contributing to biodiversity, climate resilience and the wider green and blue infrastructure network in Southall.
- **Strategic alignment** – Proposals should respond proactively to relevant local strategies and plans including the Southall Town Regeneration Framework 2024, the Southall Spatial Planning Framework 2022, the Southall Economic Vision and the emerging Southall Placemaking Delivery Plan 2026.
- **Phased delivery**- Given the scale of the site proposals should be supported by a comprehensive masterplan setting out the expected phasing and sequencing of development, infrastructure and public benefits. This should include:
 - meanwhile uses and the early delivery of community benefits;
 - The phasing of neighbouring developments that may affect footfall, viability and the mix of uses;
 - Coordination with infrastructure projects, including Get Southall Moving active travel improvements, utilities, adjacent data centre infrastructure and any proposed heat network.

- **Proven delivery partners** – The council expects delivery partners to demonstrate a strong track record in successful placemaking, long-term partnership, inclusive community engagement, and stewardship. Any new developer partner should show how it will:
 - deliver good placemaking through connected, inclusive and resilient places that reflect local identity, support healthy and sustainable living, and create long-term value for communities and the environment;
 - undertake proactive, inclusive and transparent community engagement;
 - secure effective long-term stewardship of development, public space and community assets;
 - put in place a delivery model that enables and safeguards the council's short, medium and long-term vision for the site.

Figure 1: Emerging Ground Floor Use Plan (Source: Draft Southall Economic Vision and Placemaking Delivery Plan, Jas Bhalla Works and PRD, 2026)

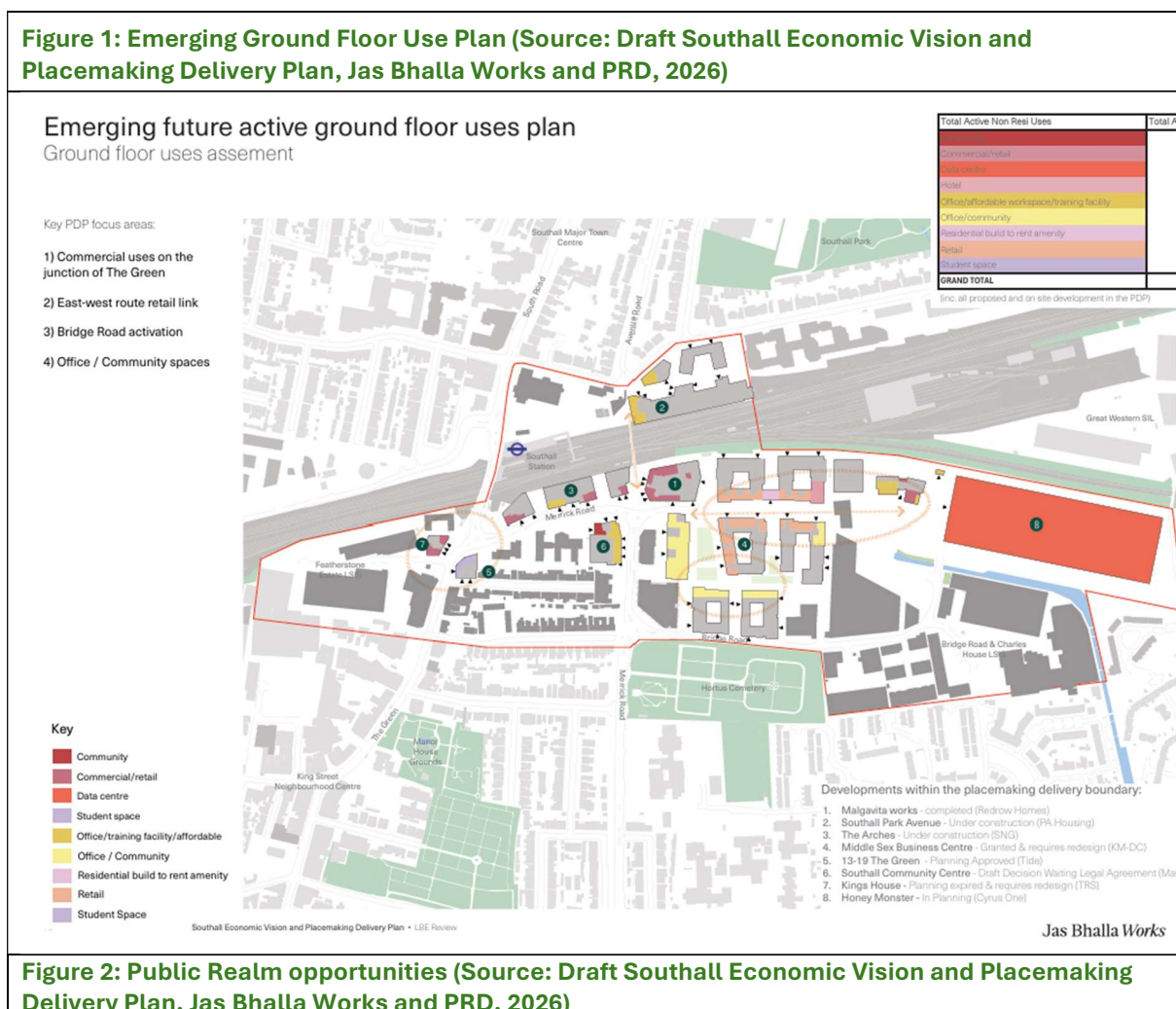


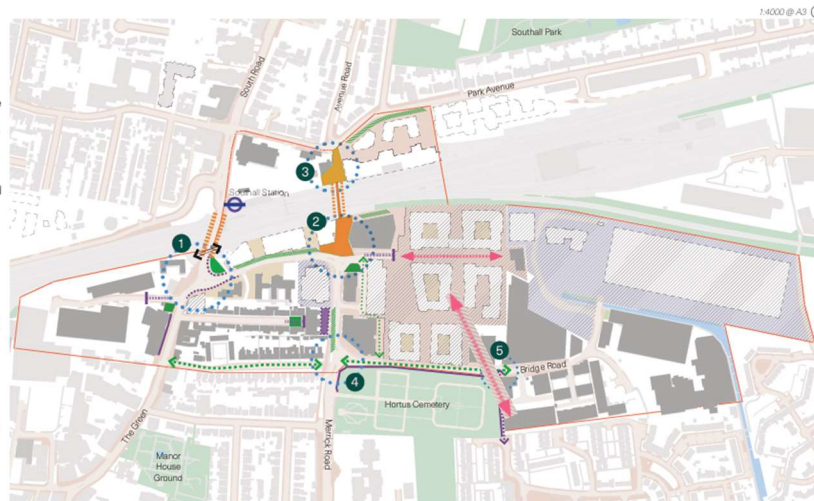
Figure 2: Public Realm opportunities (Source: Draft Southall Economic Vision and Placemaking Delivery Plan, Jas Bhalla Works and PRD, 2026)

Public Realm Opportunities and Constraints

Public Realm Strategy

Key area for improvement can be captured into the following clusters:

- 1 Southern Station Road**
 - Improving the quality of the bridge with artwork
 - Create a new pedestrian crossing
 - Increase planting to edges of key corners
- 2 South bridge / Merrick Road**
 - Install lighting and artwork to improve safety
 - Increase planting to forecourt areas
 - Improve wayfinding with signage and artwork along bridge
 - Introduce active play element
- 3 North bridge / Avenue Road**
 - Create improve planting along boundaries and railway
 - Improve wayfinding with signage and artwork towards bridge
 - Increase planting along
- 4 Merrick Road / Bridge Road**
 - Uplift roundabout with tree planting and lighting
 - Increase planting along car parking and blank walls
- 5 Bridge Road**
 - Install lighting and artwork along the Hortus Cemetery blank wall
 - Uplift alley with lighting new paving to increase safety



Opportunities and constraint plan

Key Opportunities:

Key junctions for improvement

Greening to promote active travel route

Lighting /surveillance for safer routes

Greening and planting at key corners

Edge planting to improve streets / in between spaces

Bridge enhancement / uplift

Future active travel route

New pedestrian crossing

Key Constraints:

Cul-de-sac / dead end

Alleyway

Car Parking

Inactive / Blank walls

Change in pavement level / poor pedestrian access

Jas Bhalla Works prd

Figure 3: Local Plan Allocation – Southall 08SO – Middlesex Business Centre, Southall Town Plan

The Local Plan Reg19

Southall – 08SO

Middlesex Business Centre

SITE ADDRESS

Bridge Road, Southall,
UB2 4AB

SITE AREA (Hectares)

4.95

OWNERSHIP

Private



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CURRENT USE

Middlesex Business Centre, featuring a number of workspace units, in addition to light industrial, storage and distribution uses.

PROPOSED USE

Mixed-use scheme with residential, health facility, community use and a portion of commercial/retail.

RELEVANT PLANNING APPLICATION(S)

183673OUT, 224785REM.

SETTING/TIPOLOGY

Campus.

PTAL

1a-3

TALL BUILDINGS

The site is in principle suitable for a tall building. Design analysis indicates a maximum height of 16 storeys (56 metres).

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS/SITE CONSTRAINTS

Flood Zone 3a (surface water), locally listed buildings (on site and nearby), SINC (metropolitan), Green Corridor (adjacent), SINC (local and borough) (nearby), Priority Habitat (nearby), LSIS (adjacent), SIL (adjacent), Opportunity Area and Strategic Area for Regeneration.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Social infrastructure, including healthcare. New road and highways improvements. Public realm, landscaping and greening improvements. Measures to improve permeability and active travel.

INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME FOR DELIVERY

Within years 1-10 (2023/24 – 2032/33)

Reference Links

- [Ealing's New Local Plan – Reg 22 2. Publication and submission documents | New Local Plan \(Regulation 22\) – index of examination documents](#)
- [Southall Town Plan](#)
- [Southall Town Regeneration Framework \(2024\)](#)
- [Southall Spatial Planning Framework \(2022\)](#)
- [Ealing Council Ealing's Jobs & Skills Strategy 2024-29](#)
- [Ealing 20-minute neighbourhood framework](#)
- [Ealing Council Cultural infrastructure plan](#)
- [London Growth Plan](#)
- [West Tech London](#)
- [The London Plan 2021| London City Hall](#)
- [Draft Ealing Council Climate Adaptation and Resilience Strategy.pdf](#)
- [Ealing's new Community-led Regeneration Charter – Good for Ealing](#)
- [Ealing Council's Affordable Workspace Delivery Plan](#)
- [Ealings_economy_after_6pm.pdf](#)

Ends