

**APPENDIX 2(i):
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR REGENERATION**

PROJECT: LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE – BAXTER GATE AND THE INNER RELIEF ROAD CORRIDOR

Loughborough Town Centre – Baxter Gate and the Inner Relief Road Corridor

Vision	A development of high quality which will transform an existing blighted area, into a positive part of the town centre offering a mix of uses, distinctive architecture and townscape, respect for heritage assets and an excellent approach to the treatment of the public realm. <i>(Former General Hospital and Aumberry Gap Development Brief [SPD adopted March 2007])</i>
Description	<p>The core site in total extends to 2.8 hectares and adjoins the eastern quadrant of the town centre. The site falls into three distinct components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The derelict shell of the former General Hospital together with a row of vacant properties facing Baxter Gate and related land (0.76 hectares) in the ownership of Moorfield Ltd and William Davis. ii) A doctors' surgery and NHS Walk in Centre (with significant surface parking) extending to 0.68 hectares in the ownership of the Primary Care Trust. iii) The Aumberry Gap site (0.52 hectare) which, with the exception of the public house site on the Leicester Road frontage, falls within a single private ownership but with multiple tenancies accommodating mixed industrial and commercial uses with some residential at first floor. <p>Other parts of the potential redevelopment area include a hotel, children's nursery school, retail premises fronting Leicester Road and Baxter Gate, and pay and display car parking adjacent to the Magistrates' Court.</p> <p>A secondary site of up to 1.36 ha sits at the northern end of the Proposed Inner Relief Road and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Council's Limehurst Depot site (0.76 ha) ii) Business and assembly uses fronting Canal Bank (0.26 ha), and iii) Mixed uses including a medical practice and tyre fitting business fronting Bridge Street (0.34 ha) <p>The commercial potential of the sites will be enhanced by the delivery of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road (IRR) which is to be delivered as part of the £15 million Loughborough Town Centre Transport Project approved by the government on 14th December</p>

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	<p>2011. Work on site will commence in the autumn of 2012 with completion expected in the spring of 2015. The line of the IRR will define the eastern limits of the core redevelopment opportunity. The provision of bus hubs at Baxter Gate and Derby Square supported by reduced traffic volumes within the town centre and improvements to the public realm will bring the redevelopment sites into the ambit of the commercial centre of the town.</p>
<p>Deliverables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A major mixed use development which could add significantly to the retail offer and urban character of Loughborough Town Centre, ▪ Consolidate Loughborough as a sub-regional centre ▪ Provide sustainably for the growth in new housing and jobs anticipated over the period to 2031. ▪ Projections indicate a need over the plan period for an additional 16,000 square metres of comparison goods floor space and 4,000 square metres for convenience goods floor space which reasonably might be directed towards this site. ▪ Some interest has been expressed in respect of extra care housing for the elderly where immediate access to town centre services and facilities, including health care, may be an influential factor bearing upon the viability of the proposition. ▪ A comprehensive approach affords the opportunity, in phases if necessary, to incorporate a new permeable street layout with buildings designed to present active frontages to new public thoroughfares. ▪ Regeneration will provide the catalyst for the conservation and restoration of the statutorily listed building at 54 Baxter Gate and the attached range of locally listed buildings. ▪ The secondary, site focused on the Limehurst Depot site, has the potential to accommodate a major mixed use development incorporating elements of housing, extra care housing, business and office related development with the prospect of retail and commercial uses linked to public realm improvements to the Canal Bank, completing the assemblage of landmark buildings clustered around the regenerated Loughborough Wharf.
<p>Planning Policy</p>	<p>Policy CA/4b of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan states:</p> <p><i>Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of the identified opportunity sites at Fennel Street, Baxter Gate and Leicester Road provided the ground floor uses fall primarily within the following classes (as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) Shops (Class A1)</i> <i>ii) Financial and Professional Services (Class A2)</i> <i>iii) Food and Drink Uses (Class A3)</i> <i>iv) Office (Class B1(a))</i> <i>v) Hotels (Class C1)</i>

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- vi) Residential Institutions (Class C2)
- vii) Dwelling Houses (Class C3)
- viii) Non-residential institutions (Class D1)
- ix) Assembly and Leisure (Class D2)

And provided the development would:

- a) *Avoid partial redevelopment where such an approach would prevent or seriously prejudice the redevelopment of the remainder of the identified Opportunity Site;*
- b) *Orientate primary frontages towards pedestrian preference areas where possible;*
- c) *Retain buildings which make an individually important contribution to the existing townscape;*
- d) *Create new areas of open space for repose and public interaction;*
- e) *Screen from wider view service areas and storage compounds; and*
- f) *Make a positive contribution to the vitality of the town centre; in particular elements of housing should be provided wherever possible and preferably at first floor and above.*

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to assist in the provision of those elements of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road necessary to service adequately the redevelopment proposed.

Further details to guide the overall development of the site are set out in a supplementary planning document (SPD) adopted in March 2007: [Former General Hospital & Aumberry Gap Development Brief](#)

Policy RT/21 identifies an Opportunity Site for redevelopment around Loughborough Wharf in the following terms:

Land around the Grand Union Canal, Loughborough is identified on the Proposals Map as a major opportunity site for redevelopment. In determining applications for development of the site the Borough Council will permit a range of compatible uses such as shops, offices, business, residential, leisure, entertainment and tourism facilities which would maximise the recreational and tourism potential of the canal and be appropriate to a town centre location.

Planning History	There have been no comprehensive proposals for the redevelopment of the core site in its entirety. Particular attention has focused upon the former General Hospital site which has twice been the subject of planning applications, primarily for student housing with minor elements of retail and commercial use at ground floor. Both applications, P/06/2362/2 and P/08/1555/2 were
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refused planning permission and dismissed on appeal. The inspectors on each occasion were not satisfied that the development as proposed adequately provided for mixed use as prescribed in former guidance for town centres and retail development set out in Planning Policy Guidance 6 (PPG6); additionally the proposals failed to deliver the active frontages required by the adopted SPD.

The former General Hospital was demolished in June 2012 on account of the deteriorating state of the buildings. Discussions with the site owners are continuing with a view to identifying an alternative acceptable use for the site.

Other constituent elements within the redevelopment site have been subject to minor applications of purely local significance.

The Grand Union Canal Opportunity site, as originally allocated, extended to some 2.8 ha of which almost 1.5 ha have been successfully redeveloped:

P/95/1095/2: Erection of 10 one bedroom dwellings, Canal Bank (0.23 ha)

P/00/2402/2: Demolition of [laundry] and erection of 74 three and four storey flats (Mariner's Quay, Derby Road) (0.58 ha)

P/05/2846/2: Demolition of buildings, erection of 35 apartments, 179 student bed-spaces, a restaurant (Class A3), a cafe (A3) or bar (A4), amenity block, new moorings and reconfiguration of canal basin. (Waterways student flats and "The Basin"(0.23 ha)

P/10/2819/2: Erection of hotel (C1) with ground floor retail space (for use classes A1, A3 and A4) with associated access, parking and landscaping. (87 bedroom hotel in place of proposed 35 apartments approved under P/05/2846/2).

Issues

Any development of the core site might be expected to proceed by way of a series of phases.

Technically, certain of those phases need not await the delivery of the Inner Relief Road, but critically their commercial potential and consequent value is likely to be inextricably linked to the delivery of the Loughborough Town Centre Transport Scheme. The new road will improve vehicular accessibility to the site and bring it closer to the established commercial centre in the perception of shoppers and investors. Government approval of the scheme reasonably might be expected to act as a catalyst provoking interest from potential investors.

Additional impetus may be injected by the progression of the Core Strategy towards adoption. Confirmation of the scale of new housing and employment generating business to be directed towards Loughborough and north Charnwood over the plan period to 2028 and beyond will give investors the necessary confidence to commit resources to economic development and regeneration projects, certain in the business potential of the target catchment area.

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	Initial proposals for the delivery of the Grand Union Canal Opportunity Site, developed in partnership with British Waterways, embraced land and property to the east of the canal basin, including the Council's Limehurst Depot site. The scheme envisaged primarily housing development accessed from Limehurst Avenue connecting into the Canal Bank, enabling the closure of the Bridge Street junction and pedestrianisation of Canal Bank adjoining the basin. That scheme was abandoned when discussions with the Environment Agency indicated a need to provide for safe access to development at all times in view of flood risk.
Interventions /Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Establish a partnership with Leicestershire County Council to co-ordinate delivery of the Loughborough Transport scheme including the provision of quality bus hubs utilising Section 106 developer contributions. <p><u>Baxter Gate & Leicester Road</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Contact Moorfield to clarify intentions for the redevelopment of the Baxter Gate Hospital site to deliver elements of extra care housing within a mixed use scheme. 3 Monitor progress towards the relocation of the NHS Walk In Centre from the Pinfold Gate medical centre. 4 Contact PCT to explore prospects for a partnership with CBC/Moorfield Group in comprehensive redevelopment of the wider former NHS site with or without the retention of the existing Pinfold Gate medical centre. 5 Engage owners of Leicester Road/Aumberry Gap site and residual land adjoining the route of the IRR to enter into a wider regeneration project. 6 Review the prospects for securing a comprehensive development of the site with the assistance of compulsory purchase and provisions for maintaining land (Section 215 notices) to encourage land owners to work together. 7 Explore options for funding support – asset backed vehicle including CBC housing land at Fielding Court. (Potential alternative in the former pig market area off Granby Street Car Park linked to new access to Queen's Park and connection via Bleach Yard to Wards End as a precursor to any improvements in Bedford Square. (Devonshire Square development brief)) 8 Engage the Business Improvement District Board to establish a framework for co-operation and local business support in securing the redevelopment of the sites. <p><u>Limehurst Avenue</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Engage Environment Agency to determine flood risk and flood mitigation measures required in the event of development. 2 Determine with Asset Management the scope for disposal of the depot site following consideration of the package of remedial measures required to bring the existing facility up to an acceptable operating standard. 3 Commission viability assessment as appropriate in the light of responses to 1 and 2 above.