

Former General Hospital & Aumberry Gap **Development Brief**

Charnwood Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document



March 2007

Supplementary Planning Document Former General Hospital & Aumberry Gap Development Brief

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Foreword: A Development Brief for former General Hospital and Aumberry Gap, Loughborough

Loughborough is at a key stage in its growth and development and the next fifteen years will see further major changes. In addition to the planned growth as part of the Local Development Framework, the Town is being considered for additional significant growth as part of the Three Cities Growth Point in the East Midlands Regional Plan. The Town Centre has to develop and improve if it is to maintain its position within the Three Cities Sub-Region. Accessibility of the centre and the quality of its environment must be addressed and opportunities for new investment must be created.

Impressions of the Town are formed by the buildings and spaces that make up the public realm and townscape, the quality of its facilities and how easy they are to use and move between. It is through these impressions that people make decisions – whether to visit, or invest in the Town, what to do and how to behave when they come here. There are real social and economic benefits in ensuring that the Town Centre realises its potential at the heart of a thriving, vibrant and attractive Town that we can all take pride in. The successful, sustainable development of the former General Hospital and Aumberry Gap Opportunity Sites is important to the creation of the Town Centre that Loughborough needs and deserves.

The Development Brief provides guidance on how these important sites should be developed in line with the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan, and relevant planning and design policies. It provides an indicative but flexible vision of future development form, and has been prepared in conjunction with the Masterplan.

Councillor Cameron MacLeod



Cabinet Lead Member for Planning
Charnwood Borough Council



26th March 2007

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

This brief sets out the Council's planning requirements for the development of the former General Hospital and Aumberry Gap sites, in the context of Policy CA/4b of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, which identifies the sites as key development opportunities.

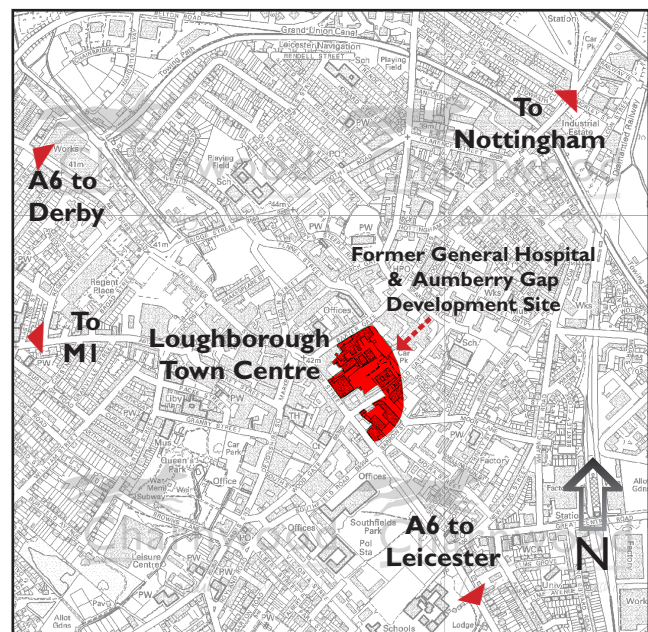
Any proposals for the Opportunity Sites will also need to take account of other relevant policies of the Local Plan and guidance set out in the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Documents, as outlined in the Planning Policy section of this brief. Furthermore, the site is critical to the overall success of the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan, an informal document which provides a clear vision for development over the next fifteen years. The Masterplan suggests that the two Local Plan Opportunity Sites should be considered together and that the land between them and the land isolated by the line of the Inner Relief Road should be incorporated in the development brief. This document reflects that approach.

The Site

The site is located within the easternmost part of Loughborough Town Centre and directly adjacent to the A6 that bisects the Town Centre. The M1 J23 is approximately 5km to the west of the town centre and is connected by the A512 (Ashby Road). Leicester is located approximately 18 km to the south and Nottingham lies approximately 20km to the north.

A number of separate development sites are included within this area but the key sites are the Opportunity Sites of Aumberry Gap and the former General Hospital Site (including the Charnwood & North West Leicestershire Primary Care Trust ownership) identified in the Charnwood Local Plan. The total site area is approximately 2.8 hectares and its boundaries are the proposed Inner Relief Road that will connect Barrow Street with Fennel Street (eastern and southern boundaries), Baxter Gate (northern boundary) and Leicester Road / High Street (western boundary).

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Purpose of the Brief

The brief provides guidance for an integrated, planned approach to the redevelopment of this key part of Loughborough Town Centre to:

- Ensure that any new development takes proper account of all relevant policies of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan and acknowledges other guidance set out in the Council's adopted SPD and SPG including the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan;
- Ensure that any new development pays due regard to the site context and features, planning objectives for the wider area and existing amenities, whilst optimising site potential and development quality;
- Facilitate phased site development, whilst optimising the area's potential and the quality of the development;
- Inform investment decisions, and land disposals and acquisitions by clarifying development constraints;
- Stimulate interest among owners, developers and prospective occupiers so as to bring the land forward for development;
- Encourage co-operation between owners;
- Ease the planning process for potential applicants, Council officers and Members by anticipating issues and offering greater certainty;
- Provide guidance to Council officers and Members to assist in the determination of planning applications.

Status of the Brief

The new Planning Act introduces some major changes to the way the planning system operates. It sees the replacement of the old system of Structure and Local Plans with Development Frameworks (LDF) – a 'portfolio' of documents to deliver the planning strategy for an area. The former General Hospital and Aumberry Gap Development Brief is being produced as part of the LDF and will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the area's redevelopment in accordance with the Council's adopted Policy and other guidance. Once adopted as SPD, the Development Brief will carry greater weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Vision

The Council envisages:

“A development of high quality, which will transform an existing blighted area, containing a significant number of vacant buildings, discordant uses and extensive surface parking and servicing areas, 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.”

Planning Objectives for the Area

- Well planned and phased development, which makes efficient use of brownfield land and follows an urban design strategy based on a clear structure of routes, public spaces, active frontages, new built form and reuse of buildings of heritage value.
- A coherent, distinctive and attractive development which responds to the positive characteristic, significant buildings and heritage value of its surroundings (including the Church Gate Conservation Area and a number of listed buildings) and relates sensitively to its neighbours. A high standard of urban design and architecture is sought, which may be achieved through traditional or modern design approaches.
- A mix of uses across the site that reflect its location at the heart of the Town Centre and will contribute to its regeneration, with a significant residential content, including the opportunity for purpose built student accommodation.
- High quality, ‘active’ frontages to all principal faces of the development, including the proposed Inner Relief Road (IRR) and the new strategic pedestrian route through the site.
- The achievement of buildings of landmark quality for sites on Leicester Road and Baxter Gate identified as being key gateways to the Town Centre.
- The provision of a strategic car park within the development area, adjacent to the proposed IRR.

- Development that adds to the quality and quantity of public space, including improved linkages between the site and other parts of the Town Centre and adjacent residential suburbs. This will include the creation of a new linear open space through the development area linking the new Magistrates Court and the proposed strategic car park with High Street.
- Development that follows the principles of Sustainable Construction and Design, has minimal impact upon the environment, has low or zero carbon emissions in its operation, and avoids any increase in flood risk to the Town Centre.

The Importance of Design and Access Statements

Any planning application for new development within the site must be accompanied by a 'Design and Access Statement'. In the statement the applicant should demonstrate a clear understanding and sensitive response to the characteristics of the site and the context. Applicants will also need to demonstrate to the Council that the guiding design principles in the 'Development Brief', the 'Masterplan' and 'Leading in Design' have been considered and fulfilled. If they do this, determination of the application should be speedier by avoiding need for modifications. If they fail to do this, however, their designs will be unacceptable and will be refused planning permission.

2. PLANNING POLICY

National and Regional Planning Policy

The national policy context is provided by:

- Planning Policy Statement 1 'Creating Sustainable Communities' (PPS1), which sets out overarching government policy and makes clear what constitutes good design;
- Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing', which sets out the government's policy and guidance relating to housing;
- Planning Policy Statement 6 'Planning for Town Centres' (PPS6), which sets out the government's objective to promote the vitality and viability of town centres by planning for the growth and development of existing centres and encouraging a wide range of services in an attractive environment, accessible to all;
- Planning Policy Statement 9 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', which seeks to ensure that the potential impact of planning decisions on biodiversity and geological conservation is fully considered;
- Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 16 set out the government's policy and guidance on planning issues relating to the historic environment and archaeology.
- Planning Policy Statement 22 sets out the government's policy and guidance relating to renewable energy and new developments.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) was adopted in March 2005. Policy 23 relates to 'Regional Priorities for Town Centres and Retail Development'. Other relevant policies include Policy 4 (Promoting Better Design), Policy 40 (Energy Reduction and Efficiency), Policy 41 (Regional Priorities for Renewable Energy), and Policy 49 (Sustainable Transport). The Regional Waste Strategy (Policies RWS 1 & 7) provides a policy context for sustainable construction and design.

The Borough of Charnwood Local Plan

A number of general policies apply to all development within The Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (adopted January 2004) and should be observed to ensure development proposals are in compliance.

The key planning policies relating to the Opportunity Site are outlined in Appendix I. Policy CA/4b is of particular significance and states that:

“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 (Use Classes) Order 1987):

- i) shops (Class A1);
- ii) financial and professional services (Class A2);
- iii) food and drink uses (Class A3).
- iv) office (Class B1(a));
- v) hotels (Class C1);
- 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.”

Supplementary Planning Documents and Other Guidance

- ‘Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan’: this informal document provides detailed guidance for the development and improvement of the town centre.

Proposals that directly affect the development site are:

- o Provision of a strategic, multi-storey car park within the development area, adjacent to the IRR;
- o Opportunity for public realm improvements including the creation of a new linear open space through the development area linking the new Magistrate's Court and strategic car park with the High Street;
- o Sites on Leicester Road and Baxter Gate identified as being key gateways to the town centre and capable of a landmark development.
- 'Charnwood - Leading in Design': adopted SPD which builds on Local Plan Policy EV/1. This design framework document explains the importance the Council places on good design and provides guidance aimed to ensure higher design standards in development throughout Charnwood.
- 'Shopfronts and Signs': adopted SPD which supports 'Leading in Design' and sets out the general principles that should be followed in order to achieve good shopfront and sign design.
- 'Making it Easy': adopted SPD which sets out good practice in designing for people with disabilities.
- 'Affordable Housing': adopted SPD which expands upon existing Local Plan policies on affordable housing and clarifies the Council's position.
- 'Student Housing': adopted SPD which sets out the Council's approach to the student accommodation proposals within Loughborough.
- 'Section 106 Developer Contributions': emerging SPD, currently a Public Consultation Draft, in relation to the process for negotiations to secure planning obligations prior to and during the process of planning applications.
- 'Public Art - Making Places Distinctive': adopted supplementary planning guidance which encourages the provision of public art in new developments.
- 'Church Gate Conservation Area Appraisal': approved assessment of the qualities of the conservation area that affects the development site.

3. SITE INFORMATION

Site History

The historic map shows the approximate location of the Opportunity Sites. The road network is complete by 1884, and is fully enclosed by development. Industrial premises occupy a significant area on the north side of Pinfold Gate. The plan shows that the road currently known as Aumberry Gap was known originally as Cemetery Place.

The map also shows the General Hospital on Baxter Gate, which was established here in 1862 with funds gifted by the Herrick family of Beaumanor. The building was originally two storeys but a further two storeys were added in the first part of the twentieth century and additional buildings were subsequently added to the complex.



By the 1920s Victorian industrial premises off Pinfold Gate have been demolished. The open space created by the demolition, in combination with the private gardens, creates a significant open area in the centre of the development block. This open area has been used as an extensive surface car park in recent times.



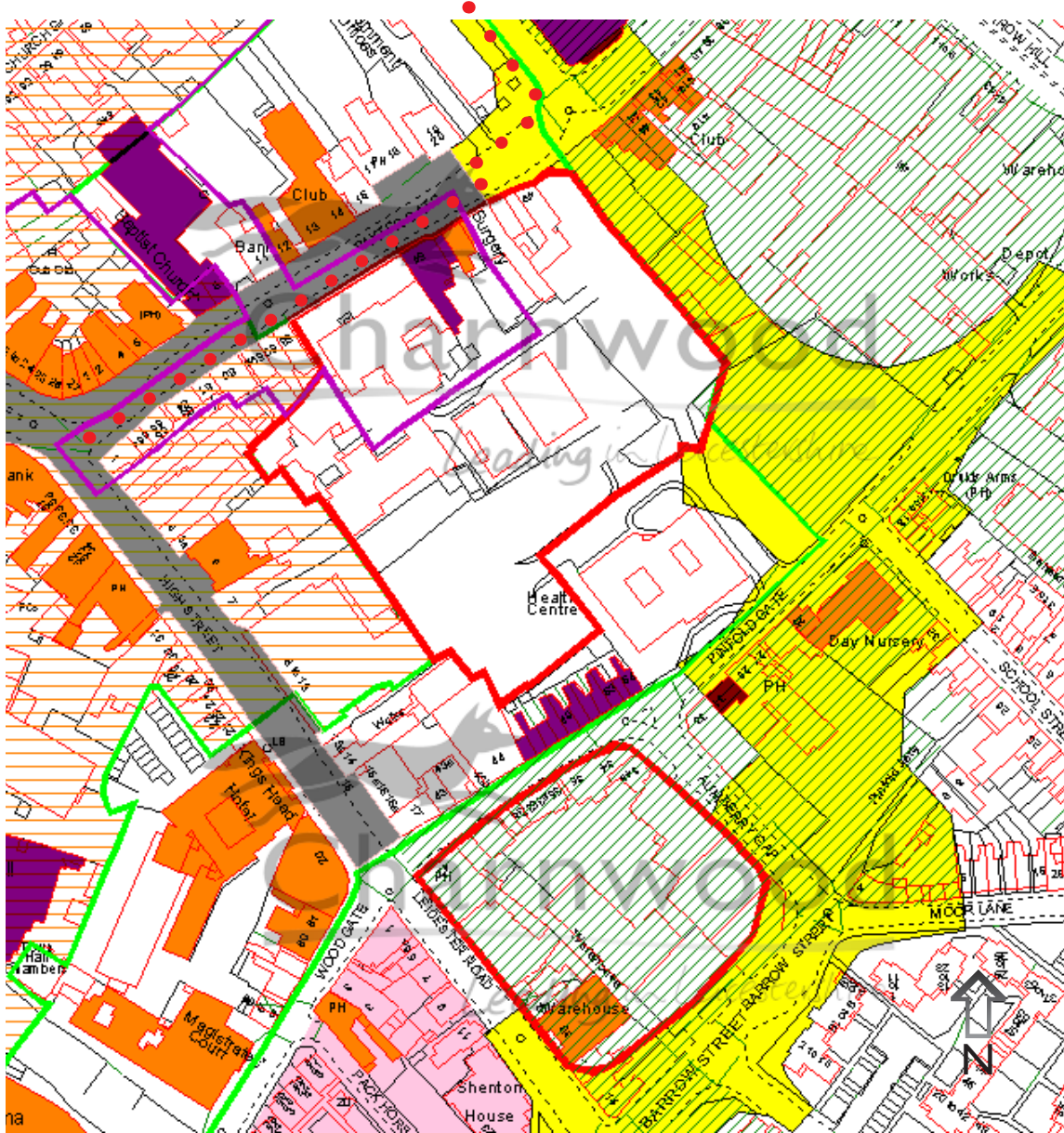
Current Uses and Ownerships

A wide range of uses are currently accommodated within the development area including:












- Health Centre (with a significant area of surface parking)
- Commercial / Retail
- Residential (above street level)
- Light Industrial
- Office
- Hotel

The Health Centre and related area of car parking (0.68 hectares) is owned by the Charnwood and North West Leicestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT). The redundant hospital buildings and related land (0.76 hectares) on the northern part of the site have recently been sold by the PCT to a single private interest. The Aumberry Gap site (0.52 hectares), with the exception of a public house on the Leicester Road frontage, is within a single private ownership but with multiple tenancies. The site is currently being used as mixed industrial and commercial with some residential at first floor level. Other parts of the development area are in multiple private ownerships and tenancies.

Constraints Map



Key

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | Opportunity Sites - Policy CA/4(b) |  | Programmed Strategic Road Scheme - Policy TR/2(ii) |
|  | Conservation Area - Policy EV/10, EV/13 |  | Listed Buildings |
|  | Pedestrian Preference - Policy CA/7 |  | Local Listed Buildings |
|  | Loughborough Town Centre Core Area - Policy CA/2 |  | New Cycleway Routes - Policy TR/13 |
|  | Loughborough Town Centre Outer Area - Policy CA/3 |  | Loughborough Town Centre Business Area - Policy CA/5 |
| | |  | Loughborough Town Centre Commercial Service Area - Policy CA/6 |

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Planning constraints that affect the site can be identified from the 'Borough of Charnwood Local Plan' (adopted January 2004). These have been outlined in the Planning Policies above but particular attention is drawn to:

- The Inner Relief Road Proposals (IRR) include a narrow part of the eastern edge of the area for development from Baxter Gate to Barrow Street. The Council will seek to ensure that any development will not have an adverse impact on the implementation of the road and will negotiate a contribution towards the proposed road (through a Section 106 Agreement) in accordance with Policy TR/2 of the Local Plan. The IRR forms part of Leicestershire County Council's Integrated Transport Strategy for Loughborough.

The County Council has resolved to include the IRR in its Local Transport Plan bid for funding in the period 2006 – 2011. It has also resolved to make provision for buses through two 'bus hubs' (rather than an off-street bus station) and to allow southbound buses to move through an otherwise pedestrianised A6 between Biggin Street and Baxter Gate. The resolution to these issues impacts significantly on the development sites and is fundamental to the content of the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan.

- Buildings on the Baxter Gate frontage of the site are within the Church Gate Conservation Area. The Council will expect any development to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with the relevant Local Plan Policies and PPG15. In addition, the demolition of any buildings here will require special justification in accordance with PPG15.
- The following buildings are Grade II listed:
 - 54 Baxter Gate (former hospital offices);
 - 30 and 31 Pinfold Gate (former cottages with workshops and both now part of a hotel);
 - 45 – 54 Pinfold Gate, a terrace of cottages immediately adjacent to the development site.

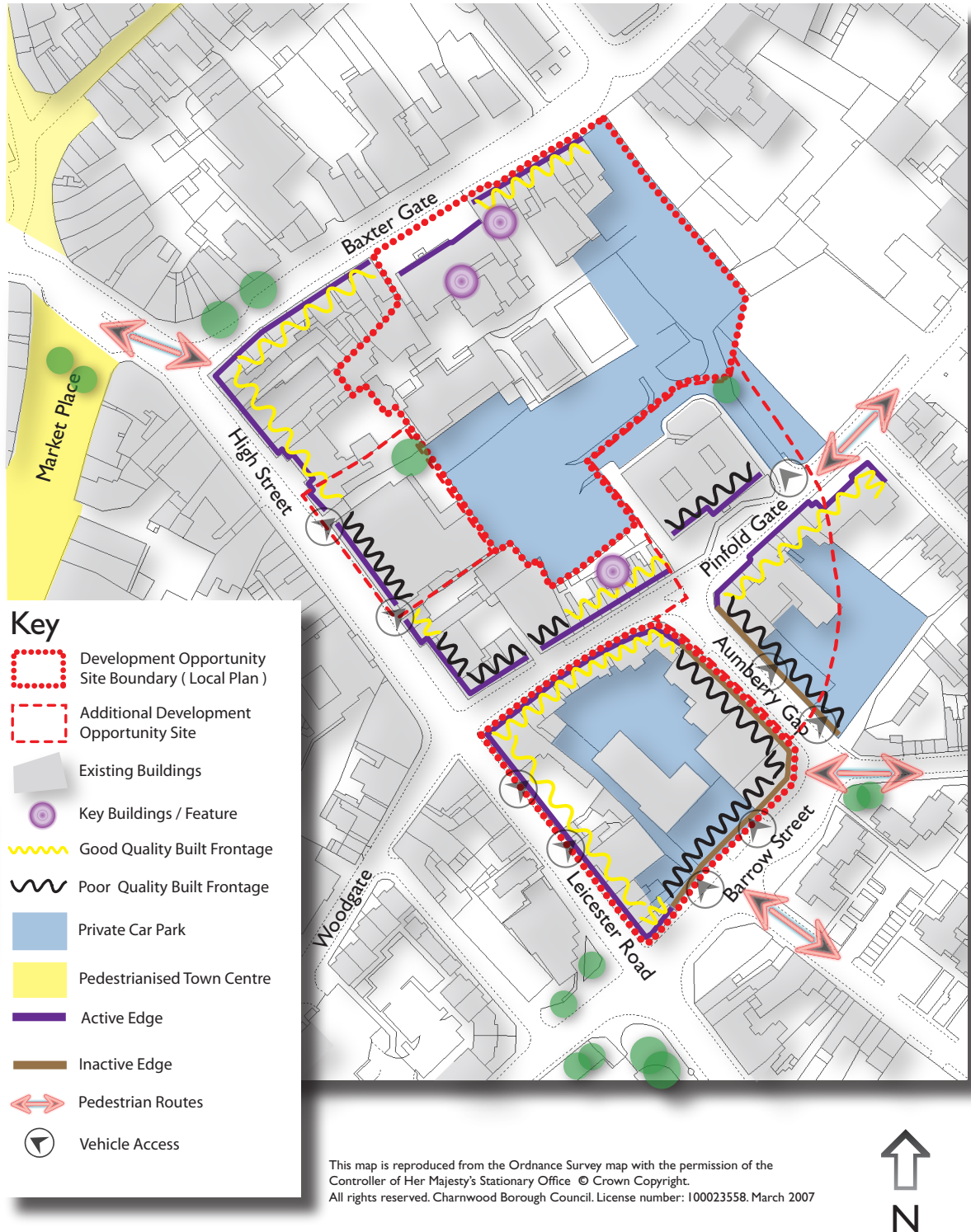
The Council will expect any development to retain and restore listed building in accordance with Policy EV/7 of the Local Plan and guidance in PPG15. However, 30 and 31 Pinfold Gate fall within a part of the site indicated for comprehensive redevelopment. Any proposal to demolish these buildings would need to be assessed against criteria set out in PPG15.

- The following buildings are within or partly within the site are included on the Council's local list of buildings of historic or architectural interest:
 - 52 Baxter Gate;
 - 8a Leicester Road (former Methodist Chapel); and
 - Former Warner Street School and Schoolhouse, Pinfold Gate.

- The site is of archaeological interest in that it lies within the historic core of Loughborough and Leicestershire County Council's Archaeology Section will be consulted on any development proposals.

4. SITE AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Site Analysis Map



5. DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

General Principles

Development proposals will need to follow the guidance set out in the Council's adopted SPD 'Charnwood - Leading in Design', which aims to encourage developments that:

- Are appropriate to their context in respect of scale and compatibility with their surroundings;
- Secure positive improvements to the landscape, streetscape or place where they are located;
- Create safe environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime do not undermine quality of life;
- Encourage strong and positive relations between people from different backgrounds within neighbourhoods;
- Make efficient and prudent use of natural resources;
- Address the needs of all in society.

The Opportunity Site might reasonably contain a mixture of compatible uses but the overall aim should be to achieve a scheme of appropriate scale which reflects the existing character of this part of the commercial centre of the town and adds vitality and interest to the streetscene. The nature and purpose of the development should seek to complement and expand upon the facilities of the established Town Centre.

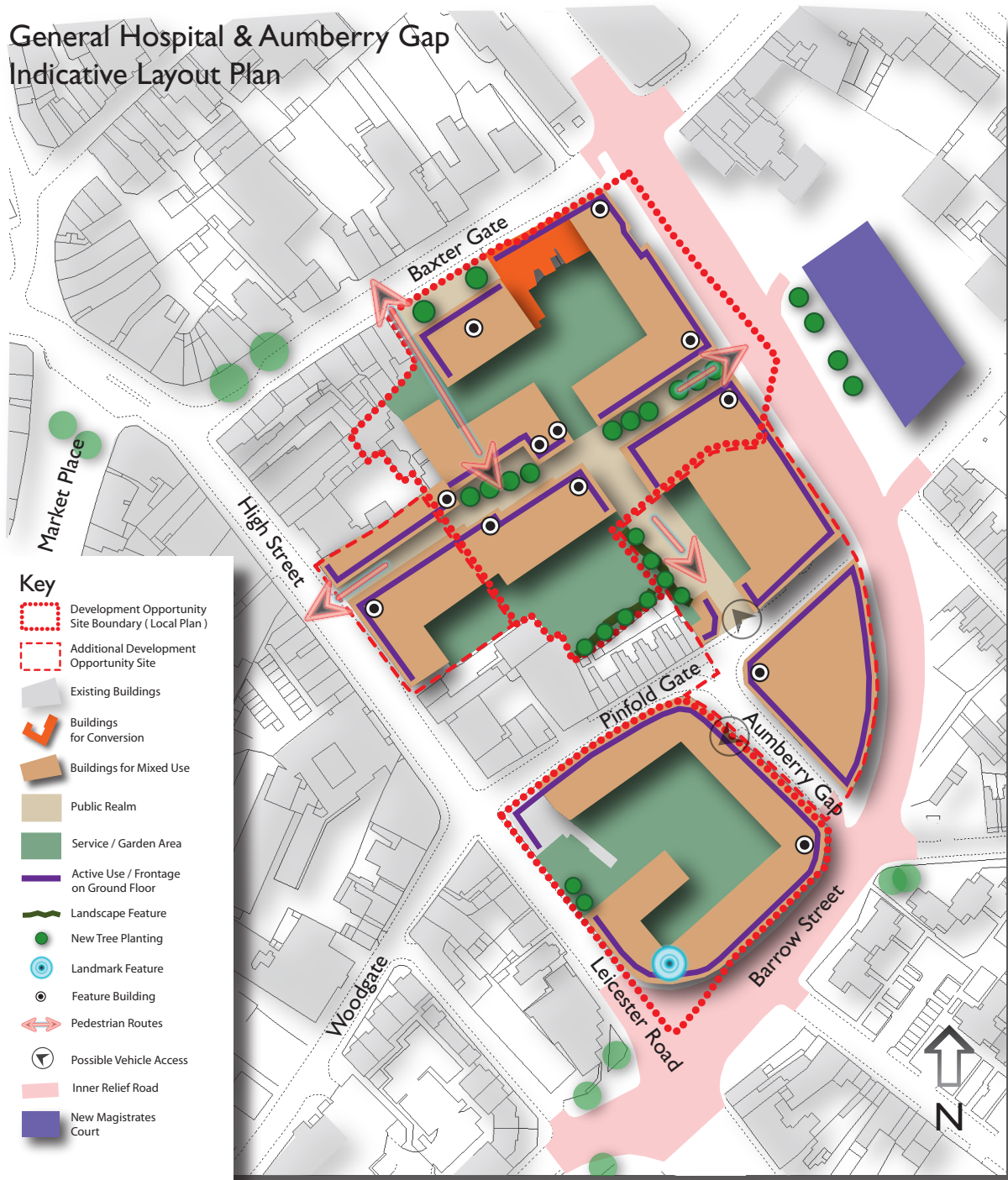
As the site is located within the Town Centre, a high density of development will be acceptable. In the case of a residential development it should be not less than 40 dwellings per hectare.

A comprehensive approach is proposed for the General Hospital/Aumberry Gap Opportunity Sites, suggesting the incorporation of land between the two sites as well as suggesting the creation of a new linear open space through the area. The proposals effectively tie the two areas together into a single site with Pinfold Gate and Aumberry Gap eventually operating as internal access and service roads. However, it is acknowledged that individual development sites can come forward separately provided it can be demonstrated that they do not prejudice the comprehensive redevelopment of the area as a whole (see 'Phasing').

The design option illustrated is based upon available information on the proposed alignment of the Inner Relief Road (IRR). No buildings should be located on the safeguarded route of the proposed IRR. The Opportunity Sites have an extensive

Suggested Layout Principles

General Hospital & Aumberry Gap Indicative Layout Plan



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area and covers a number of separate development phases which are detailed in the Implementation Section of this brief.

Appropriate Uses

The principle of developing the area for a variety of uses, as set out in the Local Plan Policy CA/4b, is encouraged. A wide range of land uses is considered appropriate in land use planning terms:

- 1) Retail uses (food & non-food) (Class A1);
- 2) Office and Business uses (Classes A2 & B1(a));
- 3) Food & Drink uses (Class A3);
- 4) Hotels and Hostels (Class C1);
- 5) Residential Institutions (Class C2);
- 6) Dwelling houses (Class C3);
- 7) Non-residential Institutions (Class D1);
- 8) Assembly & Leisure uses (Class D2).

The Council will seek a mixture of these uses to ensure that development contributes to the regeneration of the area and supports the viability and vitality of the Town Centre. 'Active' frontages, particularly on the ground floors of buildings, are encouraged (i.e. a frontage that adds interest, has front doors and visible uses, and gives vitality to the townscape). Residential use above ground floor is also encouraged. Any proposal incorporating 15 or more residential units will be required to provide at least 30% affordable housing, predominantly for rent, within the development.

Residential use may include elements of purpose built student housing. The proportion of dwellings within and immediately adjacent to the wider development site is low with commercial uses predominating and, therefore, the potential for conflicting life styles is diminished. The proximity to shops, services and leisure facilities and the excellent public transport linkages with the University also make this a sustainable location. The scope to include elements of student housing may play an important part in ensuring that redevelopment projects with wider benefits to the town centre are viable.

Phase 1: Aumberry Gap

Residential uses, principally above ground level, are proposed for this part of the site, which may be especially suitable for purpose built student housing due to the requirement for lower car provision and this area's particular characteristics. It is important that the Leicester Road frontage and Barrow Street corner have active uses on the ground floor.

Phase 2: Charnwood PCT

The existing healthcare centre, with additional facilities, might be relocated to this part of the site. The location would be well related to the new pedestrian route connecting the new Magistrates Court and proposed multi-storey car park to High Street.

Phase 3: Strategic Car Park

A strategic multi-storey car park is proposed with a frontage of ground floor shops facing the Inner Relief Road and offices / residential above. The southern end of the development is proposed as a mixed-use scheme with retail on the ground floor and residential / office accommodation on upper floors.

Phase 4: Former General Hospital

The internal buildings are proposed for residential uses. The building facing the proposed IRR should be designed to have an active/adaptable frontage to the new road. Retail may be suitable on the ground floor with office uses on upper floors. Purpose built student accommodation may be an appropriate component of redevelopment proposals for this part of the site.

Phase 5: High Street

Ground floor uses are to be principally retail with residential / office accommodation on upper floors.

Phase 6: Charnwood PCT

Expansion space for the Primary Care Trust or this part of the site could be a separate development with the potential for commercial uses on the ground floor with residential uses above.

Phase 7: Pinfold Gate

Retail is the primary use proposed on the ground floor with residential / office accommodation on upper floors.

Built Form and Layout

The development should be designed to continue the urban form of this part of the Town as seamlessly as possible, reflecting the lines of movement, landmarks, vistas, grain, character and scale. Proposals should be based on a thorough contextual appraisal, which must form part of a design and access statement accompanying any planning application. The Council seeks a development that creates a strong sense of place and has regard to the character of the Town Centre and the heritage interest of the site and its surroundings. New development should reinforce and evolve the characteristics that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the Town Centre.

The high standard of urban design and architecture sought may be achieved through traditional or modern design approaches. However, traditional design approaches should relate to clear local influences and follow historic precedents closely, not pastiche. The embellishment of development with randomly applied historic elements should be avoided. In any event, the Council seeks excellent contemporary, distinctive design appropriate to a vibrant Market and University Town.

The new built form must satisfy a number of key aims:

- To provide high quality, 'active' frontages to all principal faces of the development, including onto the proposed Inner Relief Road and the new strategic pedestrian route;
- To provide buildings of landmark quality at the identified key gateways of Leicester Road / Barrow Street and the corner of Baxter Gate / Fennel Street;
- To provide a strategic, multi-storey car park within the development area, adjacent to the Inner Relief Road;
- To create a new pedestrian route of quality through the opportunity site to link the proposed multi-storey public car park and new Magistrates Court with the town centre;
- To respect existing positive built form and heritage assets;
- To remove aesthetically poor buildings and incompatible land use activities and to restore built form and active street frontages where this has been lost.

The layout of buildings should, wherever possible, be joined to form continuous street frontages and enclosed spaces, including along the new pedestrian route connecting the new Magistrates Court and strategic multi-storey car park to High Street. Buildings should be placed to create a public frontage and should be aligned to create a prevailing building line close to the back edge of the footway, in an

attempt to provide definition and enclosure to the street. The reinstatement of the building line where it has been lost (e.g. Barrow Street) or its creation where none currently exists (e.g. the frontage to the Inner Relief Road) is essential.

The development should be designed to wrap around and conceal any service areas. Private backs should adjoin private backs. No blank gables should face public spaces, parking areas or pedestrian routes. Surface car parking is discouraged where it would constitute an inefficient use of a town centre site and would fragment the building form.

The Council will encourage, where appropriate, an abundance of windows and doors placed in façades to enliven and overlook streets and public spaces, supporting the active frontages provided by commercial ground floor uses. In the case of apartment development, the number of front doors onto the street should be maximised. Ground floor flats should generally have their own entrances from the street, separated from the entrances to the accommodation above. This arrangement allows people more control and offers flexibility and greater scope for adaptation. This might include future conversion to other uses such as shops or the creation of live-work units. Similarly, purpose built student accommodation should be designed to be adaptable. It should demonstrate a flexibility of layout that can sustain other uses and help development to change over time.

Materials for new buildings and public spaces should be selected for high standards of visual attractiveness, durability and environmental performance, not economy. Preferably, materials should be natural and relate to the town's historic palette. Detailed design must pay attention to all elements of the building (e.g. elevations, corner treatment, roof lines, entrances and windows, etc.) and must maintain the interest and richness of the town centre scene.

Scale of Development

New buildings will need to sit happily into their particular context, respecting the height and pattern of any neighbouring buildings, avoiding overbearing or overshadowing relationships. In some situations buildings of four to five storeys and above will be accepted, provided they are located where they will not dominate or adversely affect the existing premises around the site. Some recent Town Centre buildings have already exceeded a four to five storey height, for instance the Print Room and multi-storey car park developments on Wood Gate. Parts of the Opportunity Site, where the constraint of needing to take account of established development does not apply, may similarly be able to accommodate higher buildings. Any proposal for a high building, however, will be subject to careful consideration of

its effect on key and local landmarks, its impact on the skyline, the quality of its architecture and the particular relationship to adjacent buildings and spaces, existing and proposed. Relationships between developments of different scales may be resolved by 'wrapping' large spaces with smaller buildings; 'stepping' a large mass down to its neighbour; and ensuring that the ground level is as active and interesting as possible. Where 'stepping down' is adopted the change in height should arise out of the requirements of the designer's brief and should avoid a lop-sided appearance in the new building which merely emphasises the difference in height between it and the neighbouring building.

The following general guidelines are provided for the different parts of the site and should be viewed with the plan showing building heights:

Inner Relief Road Frontage:

The completion of the IRR will create a new context and character to this area of the Town. A building height of four storeys and above should generally be achieved along this road to provide the necessary enclosure with the potential to increase the height towards the centre of the development, addressing any sensitive relationships.

Aumbery Gap:

This key gateway site should provide buildings of five storeys on the southern corner as there is an opportunity to create a landmark building here at a gateway to the Town Centre and, with good design, higher buildings may be possible. The height should reduce towards Aumbery Gap and respect the modest two-storey scale of the listed cottages situated on Pinfold Gate nearby.

Pedestrian through route:

Buildings in the area proposed for the new Primary Care Trust facility should be a minimum of two storeys high with some potential for three storeys and above. On High Street four storey building height is considered possible.

Heritage Assets

The layout, design, massing and scale of the proposed buildings must be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of historic buildings. It is important that the listed building fronting Baxter Gate is retained and restored. Any development scheme that incorporates a replacement of the main hospital building fronting Baxter Gate must demonstrate a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Government guidance, set out in PPG15, establishes a 'general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area' and outlines broad criteria for the assessment of proposals to demolish buildings in a conservation area. However, demolition of the main hospital building may be accepted if such an approach can be justified when examined against the PPG15 criteria, particularly in respect of the merits of the alternative proposals for the site.

Similar and stronger considerations would need to apply to any proposal to demolish the listed buildings formerly known as 30 and 31 Pinfold Gate and now incorporated into a hotel.

Within the Aumberry Gap site some buildings of historic interest remain on the Pinfold Gate and Leicester Road frontages. None of these buildings are listed and a number of them are vacant. Their general condition is very poor and they appear beyond viable restoration and are not required to be retained.

Public Realm

It is important that the development contributes to the improvement of the accessibility, permeability and legibility of the Town Centre. Within the development site, safe, attractive and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists should be created that integrate with and enhance the wider movement pattern. This should include well designed pedestrian and cycling access into the site from Baxter Gate and the proposed IRR and a high quality link between the new Magistrates Court and High Street, which should be designed to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians.

Vehicular Access and Parking

The safeguarded route of the IRR includes a small part of the eastern edge of the area for development from Baxter Gate to Barrow Street. The County Council has resolved to include the IRR in its Local Transport Plan bid for funding in the period 2006 – 2011. The Borough Council is anxious to achieve an IRR design that is subservient to the urban form and avoids severing communities from the Town Centre.

It is acknowledged that parts of the site can be developed in advance of the IRR being built. However, the Council will seek to ensure that any development will not have an adverse impact on the implementation of the road and will negotiate a contribution towards the proposed road (through a Section 106 Agreement) in

accordance with Policy TR/2 and Policy CA/4b of the Local Plan. In order to ensure that the operation of the IRR is not compromised, direct vehicular access onto this road should be avoided.

The proposed multi-storey car park will generate a large number of traffic movements, which at this stage have not been fully assessed. The access requirements and implications on the adjoining road network will therefore need to be examined. The multi-storey car park should be designed in accordance with the requirements of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

Safer Parking (ParkMark) Scheme (www.saferparking.co.uk).

Car parking serving residential development should have one point of vehicular access, be under surveillance from principal rooms and be connected directly with entrance doors. This can be achieved without harm to the creation of active street frontages by designing apartment accommodation that alternates living spaces to either face of the building and has communal lobby spaces that link through to entrance doors to each side.

The level of car parking provided in residential development must take account of current Regional Spatial Strategy and Leicestershire County Council guidance, should not exceed 1 space per unit and should acknowledge:

- The Town Centre location where services are readily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport;
- The type of housing. For example the demand for parking in accommodation for elderly people and single people is likely to be less than for family housing. In some circumstances (e.g. purpose built student housing) a no car agreement will be required;
- Proposals involving the conversion of existing buildings where off-street parking is less likely to be successfully designed into the scheme.

For the Opportunity Sites generally there should be no private car parking provided for the occupiers of any office/commercial development other than that which can be demonstrated to be essential.

Cycle Facilities

In the detailed design of vehicular accesses and any necessary off-site works to highways, the scheme must make adequate provision for the safe movement of cyclists. Cycle storage/parking must be located as close as possible to main entrances of offices, shops, healthcare facilities etc., offering a real advantage over the nearest public car parking. Locations should be under constant natural

surveillance/CCTV and well lit. 'Sheffield' type stands large enough to allow bike frames and wheels to be secured are the preferred parking facility. Under cover and secure cycle parking facilities should also be provided for residential properties, preferably within the building envelope. For this key Town Centre location cycle parking provision well in excess of the current minimum requirement for residential development (i.e. one space for every five dwellings) will be expected. A provision of one space per residential unit and, in the case of student accommodation, one space per two resident students is considered desirable.

Access for People with Disabilities

It is important that the development is designed to create an environment accessible and comfortable for all sections of the community, including wheelchair users, people with walking difficulties, the blind and the deaf. Guidance is provided in the Council's 'Making it Easy SPD'.

However, the detailed matters to be addressed will include:

- The provision of adequate and convenient car parking;
- The design and siting of street furniture and signs;
- The treatment of the floorscape;
- Entry and access details to individual properties as well as the development as a whole;
- The design and location of lifts and the provision of suitable toilet facilities.

Shop Fronts and Signage

Shop fronts and advertisement displays throughout the development should be considered as an integral part of the design of the buildings. In the interest of preserving and enhancing a lively and stimulating pavement level shopping frontage unique to Loughborough it is considered desirable that shop fronts respect the proportions, character and appearance of the overall buildings. Further advice is provided in the Council's 'Shop Fronts and Signs SPD'.

Public Art

The Council will seek to negotiate the provision of public art, in accordance with Policy/43 of the Local Plan. This should be incorporated into the fabric of the development or its open spaces and be original, skilful, robust and of lasting value to both the development and the cultural life of the Town. Further guidance is provided in the Council's 'Public Art: Making Places Distinctive SPD'.

Sustainability

Development will be expected to follow the principles of sustainable construction and design to reduce the demand for energy, use energy more efficiently and generate more energy from renewable sources.

Sustainability will be encouraged in the following ways:

- The opportunity to re-use good quality existing buildings should always be examined before demolition or replacement is considered.
- The development must follow the energy hierarchy by:
 - Reducing the demand for energy (e.g. avoid/reduce cooling requirements) by maximising solar gain.
 - Using energy efficiency measures to meet demand, including the use of community combined heat and power (for the production of both electricity and heat), tri-generation (for the production of electricity, heat and cooling during summer months) or district heating.
- Incorporating energy efficient and renewable energy equipment on site to reduce predicted carbon emissions of the development by at least 10%.
- Undertaking a BREEAM or EcoHomes assessment and achieving a VERY GOOD or HIGH rating.
- Incorporating measures to reduce water demand and recycle greywater and rainwater. Consideration should be given to the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) designed to limit the waste of water, and reduce water pollution and flood risk.
- Incorporating recycled materials into developments. Best practice indicates that at least 10% of the total value of materials used should derive from recycled and reused contents in the materials and products selected.
- Using wood from sustainable and managed forests, in accordance with RIBA environmental guidance, and avoiding the use of tropical hardwood.
- Using, where possible, locally sourced materials in constructing buildings and urban spaces.
- Undertaking a Site Waste Management Plan for the development to minimise the disposal of waste to landfill, by reducing wastage of materials on site and encouraging re-use and recycling of wastes that arise. This includes adopting the maximum use of recycled or secondary aggregates feasible in the construction project.
- Reducing air pollution by ensuring acceptable air quality.
- Providing recycling capacity in the development including built-in recycling facilities for organic and other wastes.

Biodiversity

The presence and requirements of protected species and the wider biodiversity, including existing habitats and species, should be assessed and taken on board to ensure that they will not be adversely affected by development proposals and that robust mitigation measures will be implemented to retain sustainable populations. Furthermore the detailed design of buildings and spaces should encourage wildlife and deliver biodiversity gain in accordance with the local 'Biodiversity Action Plan'. Sympathetic design includes the use of native tree and shrub species, the provision of bat and bird boxes within the fabric of buildings, the incorporation of green features such as green roofs, living walls and roof gardens, and the creation of wildlife corridors linking existing habitats and reaching into the heart of the Town Centre.

The serious incorporation of biodiversity features will promote healthy living, give the development a strong sense of local identity, and contribute to an aesthetically pleasing environment, which relates well to the Park.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

Phasing

The overall development will need to be phased over a number of years. The phasing needs to ensure that the planning aims and requirements for the overall development of the area are not prejudiced or compromised. Certain parts are capable of early redevelopment but progress on much of the rest will depend on the completion of the Inner Relief Road and the opportunities for further land assembly.

Phase 1: Aumberry Gap

The development of this site could proceed in advance of the construction of the proposed Inner Relief Road due to the location of the site's road access on the existing highway network.

Phase 2: Charnwood PCT

A new building could be constructed in the existing car park while the present building continues to operate. Access to the site would be via the existing arrangement until further development phases are undertaken. This development could also be completed in advance of the proposed Inner Relief Road.

Phase 3: Strategic Car Park

This phase of development requires land assembly and the PCT to sell their unused landholdings. Once achieved, the internal road network can be built allowing direct access to the new PCT building, a connection onto the proposed Inner Relief Road and access to Phase 4 development. When construction of the strategic car park is completed the proposed changes to traffic flows on Pinfold Gate and Aumberry Gap can be undertaken. This development may require the Inner Relief Road to be completed before construction of the built form begins.

Phase 4: Former General Hospital

The completion of the internal road network will secure direct access to this development. The western half could be completed prior to the completion of the proposed Inner Relief Road, whilst the eastern half is more dependent on the final alignment.

Phase 5: High Street

The redevelopment of this site is not dependent on other phases but development pressure would increase once the proposed strategic car park opens and the desire for a direct pedestrian link into the Town Centre increases. This could form phase 4 of the overall scheme as it is not dependent on the redevelopment of the Former General Hospital site.

Phase 6: Charnwood PCT

Upon completion of the new pedestrian link, this phase of development could be undertaken to complete the enclosure of the route. Vehicle access would be via the PCT car park.

Phase 7: Pinfold Gate

The expectation is that the redevelopment of this site would become more likely as high quality adjacent developments are built.

Co-operation Between Owners

The most successful development of this important site will be assisted by negotiated, mutually beneficial agreements between adjoining owners. The Council encourages owners and prospective developers to negotiate with each other to achieve the most sensible and efficient use of land for mutual benefit and to achieve the best planning for the area.

Compulsory Purchase

The Council has powers to acquire land compulsorily. It will make use of these compulsory powers where necessary in order to ensure the delivery of key proposals of the Masterplan and Development Brief and in the interests of the proper planning of the area.

Developer Contributions

The Council will seek developer contributions towards the provision of various facilities and amenities required to provide adequately for the needs of the development. These negotiations will take place within the context of the guidance set out in Circular 5/05 having regard to the Council's emerging 'Section 106 Developer Contributions SPD' and to specific references set out in the adopted

Local Plan, which have been summarised in previous sections of this brief. The nature and level of contributions will be related to the composition and character of the development proposed but might be expected to include consideration of:

- Recreation, community facilities and amenity land;
- Affordable housing;
- Education, library, civic amenity, waste management and primary health care facilities;
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities, public transport enhancement, Travel Plans, road improvements, traffic management, car parking, traffic regulation orders and associated works;
- Reasonably related contributions to assist in the provision of those elements of the Inner Relief Road necessary to serve adequately the redevelopment proposed (see Local Plan Policy CA/4b);
- Community cohesion and public realm improvements (including CCTV);
- % for Art.

APPENDICES

I. Charnwood Local Plan Policies

Strategic Policy 1 (ST/1): Overall Strategy

Sets out the Council's overall strategy including need to sustain and enhance Loughborough's role as the principal centre within the Borough for shopping and allied services.

Strategy Policy 3 (ST/3): Infrastructure

Outlines the Council's approach to developer provision / contributions towards reasonably related infrastructure or community facilities.

Environment Policy 1 (EV/1): Key Design Policy

Outlines that the Council will seek a high standard of design in all new developments.

Environment Policy 3 (EV/3): Archaeological Sites of County and Local Significance

The site falls within an Archaeological Alert Zone and as such an evaluation of archaeological interest is required.

Environment Policy 5 (EV/5): The Setting of Listed Buildings

Planning permission for development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will be refused.

Environment Policy 7 (EV/7): Demolition of Listed Buildings

The site contains a number of listed buildings within the development boundary. Proposals that require their demolition will require listed building consent.

Environment Policy 10 & 13 (EV/10 & EV/13) : Development / Advertising in Conservation Areas

Part of the site falls within the Church Gate Conservation Area and new development within this area should enhance /preserve its character.

Environment Policy 8 (EV/8): Buildings of Local Historic Interest

Outlines the Council's approach to development proposals that affect its local list buildings.

Environment Policy 16 (EV/16): Access for People with Disabilities

Outlines the Council's concern that the design and layout of development ensures easy access for people with disabilities.

Environment Policy 17 (EV/17): Safety in New Development

Outlines the Council's concern that the design and layout of new development creates a safer environment.

Environment Policy 18 (EV/18): Open Spaces of Special Character

Queens Park is designated as such and development proposals should respect the existing amount of open space and its overall design.

Environment Policy 20 (EV/20): Landscaping in New Development

A high standard of landscape design will be required given the presence of the Conservation Area and an Open Space of Special Character.

Environment Policy 39 (EV/39): Pollution

Outlines the Council's concern that new development incorporates appropriate measures to overcome potential pollution problems.

Environment Policy 40 (EV/40): Light Pollution

Outlines the Council's concern to minimise light pollution from external light sources.

Environment Policy 43 (EV/43): Public Art

Affirms the Council's commitment to the provision of works of public art as an integral component in the design of major developments

Population and Housing Policy 3 (H/3): Density

Given the site's proximity to the Town Centre, residential development should be a minimum of 40 dwellings a hectare.

Population and Housing Policy 5 (H/5): Affordable Housing on Unallocated Sites

The Borough Council will seek to negotiate an element of affordable housing based upon the identified need in the town.

Population and Housing Policy 12 (H/12): Student Accommodation

Sets out guidance for the provision of student halls of residence.

Transport Policy 2 (TR/2): A6 Inner Relief Road

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction of the Inner Relief Road.

Transport Policy 5 (TR5): Transport Standards for New Development

This Policy is framed to ensure satisfactory access for all modes, and avoid overdominance by provision for road traffic.

Transport Policy 6 (TR/6): Traffic Generation in New Development

New development must be acceptable in terms of its impact on the existing highway network.

Transport Policy 7 (TR7): Improving Bus Services and Facilities

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the successful implementation of measures to secure high quality bus services.

Transport Policy 13 (TR/13): Access for Cyclists and Pedestrians

A cycle route is planned for Baxter Gate, adjacent to the Opportunity Site, for which the Council will seek to negotiate a contribution towards its development.

Transport Policy 18 (TR/18): Parking Provision in New Development

This Policy aims to secure a level of parking which as a minimum discourages reliance on the private car but provides sufficient off-street parking to allow development to proceed without creating traffic problems.

Transport Policy 27 (TR/27): Servicing Non-residential Development

This Policy aims to secure the appropriate provision of servicing off the existing highway.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 2 (CA/2): Acceptable Uses in the Loughborough Core Area

Planning permission for ground floor development will be granted for shops (A1), financial and professional services (A2) and food and drink (A3) subject to certain conditions.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 3 (CA/3): Acceptable Uses in the Loughborough Outer Area

In addition to the above uses, planning permission for ground floor development will be granted for hotels (C1), non-residential institutions (D1), places of assembly and leisure (D2) subject to certain conditions.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 4b (CA/4b): Fennel Street, Baxter Gate and Leicester Road Opportunity Site

Provides the general policy and design context for the site which is expanded upon within this brief.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 7 (CA/7): Pedestrian Preference In Loughborough Town Centre

Encourages pedestrian preference measures within certain town centre streets, including Baxter Gate and the A6 Corridor.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 11 (CA/11): Use of Upper Floors

Encourages the positive use of upper floors for a range of commercial and non-commercial uses. In particular residential use is encouraged wherever possible.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 12 (CA/12): Shop Front Design

Outlines the need for good design in shop fronts.

Central Areas & Shopping Policy 13 (CA/13): Shop Front Security

Outlines the need for appropriate design standards in the fitting of roller shutters and security grills.

Employment Policy 1 (E1)

Provides planning criteria for employment development, which may be relevant to B1 uses.

Recreation Policies 3, 4 & 5 (RT/3, 4 & 5): Recreation Provision in New Development

Sets out requirements for play space, youth / adult play and amenity open space in the event of elements of housing being included in new development.

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