The Vision for Abbey Meadows

To create a highly attractive and successful Science and Technology Park; attractive residential and working environments and leisure destinations that deliver benefits for existing and future residents of the city; and to generate an essential boost to the economic and social prosperity of the City.
CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction 6
Map 1 7
Map 2 8
1.1 Background to Regeneration Initiative
1.2 Location of Abbey Meadows
1.3 General Character Statement
1.4 The Importance of Leicester’s Canal and Riverside
1.5 Typology and Morphology
Map 3 10

2.0 Development Frameworks and Area Strategy Guidance 11
2.1 Development Frameworks
2.2 Area Strategy guidance
Map 4 13

3.0 Planning Guidance 14
3.1 City of Leicester Local Plan (January 2006)
3.2 Housing
3.3 Retail and Leisure Uses
3.4 Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest
3.4.1 Buildings of Local Interest
3.4.2 Historic Buildings to be retained
3.4.3 The Setting of Historic Assets
3.5 Open Space and Play Areas
3.6 Traffic and Parking
3.7 Housing
3.8 Sustainable Development
3.9 Archaeology
3.10 Bio-Diversity
3.11 Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance for the area

4.0 Purpose of this Document - Guiding Principles 18

5.0 Urban Layout Plans 20
5.1 Concept Plan - Destination and objectives
6.0 Infrastructure - Primary Movement

Map 5

Map 6

6.1 Interconnecting Network of Street
6.2 Pedestrian Movement
6.3 Bridge Links
6.4 Access for Disabled
6.5 Public Transport
6.6 Cycle Links
6.7 Parking

7.0 Public Spaces - Hard and Soft

Map 7

7.1 Children’s Play Areas
7.2 Waterside Centre
7.3 Former John Ellis Playing Fields
7.4 Private Amenity Space

8.0 Urban Design - Landmark Views

Map 8

8.1 Definition of Spaces and routes
8.2 Creating Views
8.3 Defining Landmarks
8.4 Safe Streets and Spaces

9.0 Land Use

Map 9

10.0 Massing - Storey Heights

Map 10

10.1 Density

11.0 Planning and Development Issues

Map 11
11.1 Developer Contributions
11.2 Flood Risk
11.3 Bio-diversity
11.4 Quality Design
11.6 Housing Mix and Type
11.7 Affordable Housing
11.8 Highway Design
11.9 Archaeology
11.10 Landscaping and Trees
11.11 Community Safety
11.12 Amenity

Map 12

12.0 Other Requirements
12.1 ICT Provision
12.2 Highways and Bridges
12.3 Drainage
12.4 Services
12.5 Emergency Services

13.0 Consultation

14.0 Contacts

15.0 Appendices

Appendix 1. Abbey Meadows Project Area Plan
Appendix 2. Housing Needs Survey
Appendix 3. Heritage and Conservation
Map 14
Appendix 4. Local Plan Standards
Appendix 5. Ecology - Kingfisher Site and ‘Leatherbank’
Appendix 6. Submission of Plans and other Information
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Regeneration Initiative

The Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC) was set up in 2001 in response to the Government’s Urban White Paper. It is a working partnership between the public and private sectors and is a private company limited by guarantee.

The rationale of the LRC is to concentrate on physical regeneration within an area of approximately 400 hectares, which includes, the city centre, the impact zone of the 1960’s inner ring road, and the Grand Union Canal/River Soar. (Map 1)

The LRC commissioned consultants to produce a Masterplan for this Strategic Regeneration Area. The masterplan process analysed the economy, environment, social aspects, image and market potential of Leicester. It defined objectives in order to realise the potentials and offer development opportunities. This Masterplan was subject to intensive public consultation, which influenced the strategy and confirmed support for the major proposals. Leicester City Council Cabinet agreed the Strategic Framework of the LRC’s Masterplan in principle in September 2002. It has been incorporated into the City of Leicester Local Plan (Adopted January 2006).

The Masterplan proposes 5 major intervention areas, where redevelopment and regeneration activity is being focused. These five intervention areas are:

1. Office Core
2. Abbey Meadows - Science and Technology Park
3. Retail Circuit
4. New Community
5. Waterside

The locations of these intervention areas are indicated on Map 2.

The LRC Masterplan set out a vision for a Science and Technology Park located close to the National Space Centre, providing research and knowledge based enterprise and employment opportunities. It also identified the potential for a substantial new residential neighbourhood, supported by community uses, that would benefit from its proximity to the high quality environment of the river and canal corridors to the north of the city centre. This has been published separately by the LRC. The aim is to create a quality, highly accessible, vibrant, integrated working and living environment, with improved links between established communities to the east and west.
Project Areas:
1. Office Core, 2. Abbey Meadows, 3. Retail Core,
4. New Community, 5. Waterside

STRATEGIC REGENERATION AREA

ABBESS MEADOWS

Map 2
1.2 Location of Abbey Meadows

The Abbey Meadows area (Map 3) is 1 mile/1.5 km to the north of the city centre, and is within the Leicester Regeneration Company Area. It includes:

- **Science Park**
  - The former John Ellis school site west of the River Soar and north of Corporation Road (excluding the playing fields)
  - Land to the north and west of the National Space Centre, boarded by the River Soar to the east and the A6 to the west

- **Wolsey Island** - the peninsula to the north of Abbey Park Road bounded by the canal and River Soar;

- **Former BUSM** - site to the north east of Wolsey Island, bounded by Hildyard Road to the south, Ross Walk to the east and the canal to the west;

- **Riverside West** - an ‘L’ shaped site to the north of Abbey Park Road, and the existing Swithland Avenue housing area west of the River Soar presently occupied by allotments and partly vacant industrial uses.

1.3 General Character Statement

The area is distinguished by two distinct characters - the industrial built environment and the tranquil natural environment. A third element is the striking characteristic of the natural buffer between these sub-areas.

The industrial environment is focused on Wolsey Island, fronting onto the north side of Abbey Park Road and parts of the east side of the Grand Union Canal.

The natural environment is a pervasive element in the area, massing to the south of Abbey Park Road in Abbey Park itself, and filtering through the intervention area in the River Soar and Grand Union Canal corridors, to the open land of the playing fields to the North East.

Beyond these distinct areas and on the outskirts of the intervention areas, lie fairly dense residential zones: to the west a fairly standard 1930’s development of semi-detached/terraced housing.

1.4 The importance of Leicester’s Canal and Riverside

The area contained within Abbey Meadows is dominated by the river and canal offering attractive areas and potentially high value residential markets.
The value of Abbey Meadows is wide reaching:

- It can help restore Leicester as a place where people want to live and work and provide a housing and commercial offer set within a sufficiently attractive environment.

- The area of brownfield land that can be reclaimed and harnessed for regeneration is substantial, and of such a scale that it is possible to achieve planned, comprehensive and truly sustainable development, that can create and enhance communities and support a mix of land uses, services, facilities and attractions.

1.5 Typology and Morphology

The overall area is approximately 32 hectares and for the large part has no significant changes in level, except at the canal and riverside embankments. The Space Centre and Grade II listed Abbey Pumping Station technology museum to the north form the dominant landmarks.

There are also significant structures, including two chimneys and a brick built water tower on the former Courtaulds/Wolsey site that is associated with previous industrial use and which form landmarks and aids to orientation.

Other pointers and landmarks include the waterways, bridges, pedestrian and cycle routes and Abbey Park, all of which help define the character of this area.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND AREA STRATEGY GUIDANCE

2.1 Development Framework

This Supplementary Planning Document has evolved from the Development Framework by Building Design Partnership (BDP) for the Abbey Meadows area commissioned by the Leicester Regeneration Company in response to the Leicester Regeneration Strategic Masterplan for the City (Map 4).

BDP undertook the following studies:

- Appraising the physical environment, transport and highways infrastructure.
- Developing a range of solutions.
- Testing the solutions in the wider community by consultation.
- Developing and refining the emerging solution.
- Defining the main principles for the development.
The Development Framework defines the principles for the physical infrastructure, and built form, and the mechanism for the delivery of regeneration of the area. It is intended to:-

- Establish the design and development objectives for the Abbey Meadows project
- Identify and resolve key strategic development opportunities and constraints
- Identify the key infrastructure requirements and the likely public sector investment requirement
- Assist in delivering and phasing the projects
- Assist the private sector in developing proposals for key parts of the strategy
- Establish an agreed public realm and infrastructure strategy
- Assist the planning and highway authority in considering development proposals at Abbey Meadows
- Assist in attracting further private and public sector support for the project
- Consider a comprehensive approach to flooding, highways, ecology and phasing

2.2 Area Strategy Guidance

Area Strategy Guidance is being prepared by Leicester City Council for each of the LRC intervention areas. Each will include the guiding principles for the physical infrastructure and built form and other relevant planning requirements that the City Council expects in the area.

This document is intended as Area Strategy Guidance. It has been subject to consultation and Council approval for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and will form part of the City of Leicester Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework. The SPD may be taken into account as a material consideration in deciding planning applications. Developers should be able to demonstrate how they have responded to the guidance in their own ideas, initially in pre-application discussions with the authority.

The guidance may also be material in the event of proposals for Compulsory Purchase Orders to achieve its delivery.
3.0 PLANNING GUIDANCE

This document can be considered as supplementary to the City of Leicester Local Plan (Adopted January 2006).

3.1 City of Leicester Local Plan (January 2006)

The area is designated a special policy area. A copy of the area map is in Appendix 1. The policy encourages mixed-use development to bring forward regeneration in failing areas typically alongside the ring road.

The whole of the Abbey Meadows area is covered by policy PS08 “Science and Technology based Business Parks and Environs, Abbey Meadows” and is one of the LRC intervention areas.

3.2 Housing

Abbey Meadows is identified within Leicester’s Local Plan as being a strategic housing allocation and therefore the residential redevelopment of this area of land will play a vital role in contributing to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and local plan targets in terms of delivering an appropriate range of housing to meet the City’s current and future housing needs and contributing to the city’s target number for supply of new houses.

In line with Central Government’s Mixed and Sustainable Communities policies, Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) and the City of Leicester Local Plan housing policies (HO6 and HO9 – See appendix 4), the council will expect all residential developments within the Abbey Meadows SPD area to:

- Provide sufficient housing to meet the requirements of the whole community, including those in need of affordable housing and those with other special needs
- Provide a range of high quality designed dwellings of different sizes, types, tenures and affordability to improve choice and create mixed and socially inclusive communities
- Contribute to a more sustainable pattern of development by ensuring that new housing is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport
- Promote good design and layout in new housing developments in order to create high quality living environments

Please refer to Leicester’s Housing Needs Survey 2002 in Appendix 2 which informs on the sizes, types and tenures of homes required within the City.
3.3 Retail and Leisure Uses

Given the close proximity of Belgrave shopping centre and the city centre, major retail development on Abbey Meadows would be contrary to policy and would be unacceptable. Small scale retail shops may be acceptable where they meet a local need. Similarly, proposals for leisure development must compliment the predominantly residential proposals for the area. The proposed area around the water tower on Wolsey Island represents an opportunity for a cultural/leisure destination of appropriate quality and scale.

Proposals for retail and leisure uses, which are considered to be in excess of local need, will be subject to a sequential test in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6) and policies within the City of Leicester Local Plan.

Proposals for A3, A4 and A5 food and drink uses will be subject to the provisions of Local Plan Policy RO6 and guided by the principles set out in the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance ‘A3 Uses in Local and District Centres’.

3.4 Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest

The statutorily Listed buildings and structures that are adjacent to the area and those buildings of architectural or historic merit that are on the Local List within the development area and that are intended for retention are given in Appendix 3.

The settings of these buildings and structures within and adjacent to any new developments will need to be considered in relation to local plan policies.

3.4.1 Buildings of Local Interest

These buildings are not listed but are none the less recognised as being of architectural or historic interest within a local context and every effort must be made to retain and incorporate them within new development schemes.

3.4.2 Historic buildings to be retained

The buildings identified in Appendix 3 should be retained. They should also be exploited as a resource opportunity wherever possible.

Abbey Pumping Station offers the opportunity for mixed use (museum/tourism; community use and cafe): as such the approach should seek to maximise this resource to the same extent of the Space Centre
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

Wolsey Factory Water Tower offers considerable potential for a high-profile restaurant or similar facility, which could form a focal point along the riverside. Adjoining elements should be considered for retention for cost and sustainability reasons.

The Chimneys are going to offer little ‘use’ benefit, but in an otherwise fairly tight and generally low-lying development, they form useful legibility markers.

3.4.3 The Setting of Historic Assets

This applies not only to those identified above but to those relating to Abbey Park Road. In particular; Abbey meadows Bridge, Abbey Park entrances and lodges, and the Sangra Building on the north east corner.

3.5 Open Space and Play Areas

Adequate provision for open space and play areas must be made in the area in accordance with Local Plan policies.

3.6 Traffic and Parking

The relevant policies in the Local Plan relating to traffic and parking are contained in Appendix 4. They set out how the Council’s parking standards will be applied and the circumstances under which Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required.

Parking requirements are also set out in the adopted SPG – Parking Standards (Adopted September 2002)

3.7 Sustainable Development

The Local Plan sets down 3 policies that developers will need to address in their designs, costing and planning submissions.

3.8 Archeology

The City’s archaeological heritage will be preserved through the refusal of any proposals that would seriously damage nationally important archaeological remains, including scheduled Monuments. Where archaeological remains are not considered likely to be of national importance, the developer will be required to undertake prior assessment and evaluation.
3.9 Bio-diversity

The relevant local plan policies are contained in Appendix 4.

The River Soar and Grand Union Canal are regionally important strategic wildlife corridors. They are arteries of high quality habitat which support rare and threatened species, connect some of Leicestershire’s best nature conservation sites, and bring wildlife into the heart of the urban area. The River Soar and Grand Union canal corridor through Leicester is the most significant biodiversity feature within the City, linking the countryside south of the city to the north. It links with other significant corridors through the City, and together these corridors and the sites along them make up a green network reaching throughout the built up area.

The River corridor is not only of local value, but is part of a wetland system that is of great importance to the bio-diversity of Leicestershire and the region. The River Soar, together with its tributaries and associated wetlands, is of County and regional value for nature conservation. Sustaining the biodiversity of Leicester’s Riverside is therefore important not just for the wildlife in the City and the rest of our green network, but for the wildlife of the whole of the Soar Valley as well.

3.10 Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance for the area
Abbey Park Road (Wolsey Island) – adopted April 2002
Abbey Lane – adopted January 2000
BUSM/ Ross Walk – adopted January 2000

The above guidance documents have contributed to the development process of the Development Framework and this SPD. Re-assessment of planning and development opportunities for the area has led to a range of solutions that depart in some respects from these earlier intentions. It is anticipated that these three SPG documents will be superseded by this document and in due course withdrawn.

The complete text of the local plan and adopted SPG’s can be viewed on the City Council’s web site www.leicester.gov.uk
4.0 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles for delivering the objectives of the Development Framework are:

- Provide for 45,000 square metres of Science and Technology floorspace in a phased delivery programme

- Include sixty small and medium sized businesses

- Create a new neighbourhood of high quality design consisting of a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures. Schemes should seek to reflect current and future housing needs and demands within the city.

- The retention of historic and significant buildings and features

- The formation of new cross-river linkages to improve connectivity between east and west communities. These will be by way of new road connections serving each of the development areas and strategically positioned bridge links for cycle, pedestrian and vehicular access

- Enable and promote public transport permeability and accessibility to the new and existing neighbouring developments

- Retain and enhance the quality of the riverside and canal side corridors for biodiversity, recreation and commuting, and provide for their long term management

- Incorporate a level of high quality publicly accessible open space, reflecting the needs of the new development and adjacent communities

- Provide the highest quality environmental and landscape infrastructure within and fronting the public realm

- Ensure that the development is highly accessible to the city centre on foot, by cycle and all public and private traffic modes

- Improve landscaping and environment

- Enhance pedestrian walkways and cycle paths from Abbey Park Road stretching northwards to link with new pedestrian bridges over the river

- Ensure that the streets and spaces are safe and convenient for everybody

- Provision of a new primary school or improvements to the existing school, and provision of other community facilities
• Provide the planning backing for land assembly by negotiation or Compulsory Purchase as part of the delivery and land acquisition programme

• Create places that generate appropriate levels of activity. This is particularly important along main routes where active uses convey vibrancy and provide safe routes for pedestrians

• Encouraging a mix of uses that will contribute to the economic and social ‘health' of the Abbey Meadows area. A varied and lively street life is one of the key indicators of a successful urban place

• Stipulation of the building density, heights, form and massing to all proposed development sites to create quality public realm and clarity

• Stipulate the requirement for high quality building design

• Enable good public transport penetration and convenient access

• Provide a level of high quality and equipped public open space that meets the immediate needs of the development and adjacent communities
5.0 URBAN LAYOUT PLANS

The urban layout plan will control the form and distribution of development and open space and the nature and implementation of the public realm. The key to creating successful streets and spaces will be through defining the principles of enclosure for the built form.

5.1 Concept Plan – Destinations and Objectives

Refer to Map 5

- Create high quality residential area
- Improve and unlock potential of Space Centre
- Improve and capitalise upon potential of River Soar and Grand Union Canal
- Rejuvenate and capitalise upon potential of Abbey Park
- Expand and rejuvenate the quality and reputation of Belgrave Road
- Interconnect above destinations to mutual benefit and City benefit
- Interconnect and expand existing communities
- Upgrade community facilities and quality
- Unlock former industrial brownfield land and alleviate flooding problems
- Protect, improve and enhance biodiversity value and habitats
6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE - PRIMARY MOVEMENT

6.1 Network of Interconnecting Streets, including Highways, Pavements and Landscaping

Please note: The Local Plan safeguards land for a transport scheme linking Abbey Lane and Loughborough Road. The proposals for the Abbey Meadows area set out in this document address the provision of east-west links, and do not require the implementation of the highway reservation.

Refer to numbers on Map 6

1. Junction with Abbey Lane

- Main decision point to approach the science park and space centre. Landmark building to be located on the North East corner of junction as part of the science park.

- It is intended in the long term that dedicated public transport access should be followed through to Abbey Park Road.

2. Science Park approach corridor

- Residential development on the south side to the back of pavement line, providing passive surveillance to the street, including front doors and windows to principal rooms on the ground floor. Science park facades to the north side will be set back behind landscaped space, which may include visitor parking. These facades will include front doors and reception space. North South access roads are to align providing visual connectivity between the Science Park and residential area.

3. Science Park arrival space

- The north side science park facades will step back to create an arrival space with views framed of the space centre tower. This space will contain bus stops and a pedestrian friendly environment to encourage movement towards the space centre north, and the River crossing east. The proposed footbridge is to be visible from this space.

4. Space Centre car park

- The current car park is bisected by a public road which will remain, and in early phases will be part of the bus route serving Abbey Meadows. This will be replaced potentially by a circuit from the south, Abbey Park Road, to join Abbey Lane, allowing the car park to become the landscaped focus to the science park.
5. River crossing

- A pedestrian bridge link is required to link the Science Park area with Wolsey Island.

- The footbridge over the Soar will offer clear and safe 24 hour public access onto Wolsey Island and eastwards. It will connect with the proposed civic space north of the existing wharf, and visually connect with the retained water tower.

6. Junction with Abbey Park Road

- It is intended that the existing Abbey Meadow Road should have limited vehicular access, providing an improved and safe waterfront environment with pedestrian and cycle priority.

- West of the existing road bridge will be access for buses only and some dwellings on Riverside West.

7. North-South approach to Science Park

- This road will connect with the arrival space described above. Access is for pedestrians and cycles plus emergency vehicles only.

- The road will be screened from the rear gardens of existing dwellings by rear gardens of new properties and will reveal views of the river and space centre tower at intervals along its length. Residential properties will align to the back of pavements offering passive surveillance to the street with frequent front doors and windows to principal rooms on the ground floor.

8. Junction with Abbey Park Road for Wolsey Island

- A secondary access to the wider highway network is required to Abbey Park Road and further access options are desired to increase permeability and thus spread vehicular volumes.

- This is the principal arrival point for all vehicles, local and visitor, to Wolsey Island

- Signal control for pedestrians and cycles

9. Abbey Park Road crossings

- New crossing points will connect pedestrian routes with Abbey Park: the design and locations to be agreed, considering ease of movement,
traffic calming benefits, and value to the Abbey Meadows image. The priority is to connect the river walk with the park, the canal walk with the park, and the main boulevard access with the park.

10. North - South Boulevard

- The route north is to be visually distinctive leading all visitors to the civic square. A 20 metre wide boulevard between building facades with standardised road and footpath finishes and detailing, lighting design and street furniture, trees and parking bays. Other streets and side roads will offer general permeability but will be visually less important.

11. Road bridge approach

- Key highway infrastructure requirements for development of the BUSM site include provision of a secondary point of access in addition to Ross Walk and Holden Street, that will not impact on the close grain 19th century terrace housing to the east and south. The bridge link with Wolsey Island would satisfy this need and would be a prerequisite of development of the area.
- The proposed road bridge will provide all-vehicle access over the canal to connect with the Belgrave road area. A minimum width of 10 metres is required for the bridge.

12. Water Tower and footbridge

- The existing Water Tower on Wolsey Island is to be retained as a local landmark. This will mark the position of a proposed footbridge over the canal and be part of the east west connectivity between Belgrave Road and Abbey Lane. This route is for 24 hour safe pedestrian and cycle movement and will be aligned with residential properties offering passive surveillance.

13. Main Civic Square

- The boulevard will terminate at a civic space containing the retained water tower and views of the Space Centre tower. This is a pedestrian priority space with vehicular through movement reduced to 20mph. There will be on-street visitor parking for the mixture of facilities, river walks and wharf, which will complement the specific parking requirements for other proposed uses.

14. Riverside

- Vehicle access will follow the existing riverside road but be part of the proposed pedestrian priority 20mph restricted zone.
15. Wolsey Island to Belgrave Road link

- The road bridge described above joins Ross Walk to become a desire line for the Belgrave Road commercial centre. This is a primary visitor route and building facades on the north side will be set back to create a wide pedestrian and cycle friendly tree-lined east west route.

16. Abbey Meadows East internal movement (BUSM site)

- Parallel to the canal the primary north south vehicle routes will connect with Holden Street after running alongside the River Soar pedestrian route at the Holden Street footbridge. Further north east the existing road will also connect with Loughborough Road. Other streets being primarily residential may be down graded with potential for ‘home zone’ design and other pedestrian friendly measures to discourage vehicular through movement.

17. Loughborough Road connection

- This route will become a primary entrance to the Wolsey Island Riverside, and will reveal views of the river weir and space centre tower.

18. Canalside Walks and Cycle Routes

- A more formal design is appropriate with pedestrian and cycle routes running parallel to the canal on the west bank, elevated out of the flood plain, with building facades to the back of footpaths, defining an urban route. The building block structure will be permeable with many safe opportunities to leave the footpath.

- The east bank will not include a linear walk, but will have overnight moorings north of the proposed road bridge, and a protected Kingfisher Nest to the north of the Wolsey Chimney footbridge.

19. East- West connections and crossings

- A primary objective is to connect the existing communities and city destinations in the area. The primary east west routes for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians will provide attractive, safe and clear 24 hour connectivity between existing and proposed community housing, the Space Centre and Science Park, the riverside and canal, and the Belgrave Road commercial centre.

6.2 Pedestrian Movement

The 4 areas which make up Abbey Meadows are currently difficult to access on foot, being separated by the canal and River Soar. In view of the
current restriction to pedestrian movement there needs to be significant improvements to walking links to the north, south, east and west. New walking links need to offer:

- Easy access between the different uses within Abbey Meadows
- Direct and safe access between the Science Park, Wolsey Island and B.U.S.M sites
- A safe and easy access between established communities particularly the Belgrave area

Consideration needs to be given to measures to improve pedestrian facilities outside the Abbey Meadows boundary. These measures should include:

- Crossing facilities on Abbey Lane
- Improved pedestrian access to Abbey Park and other residential areas
- Improvements to pedestrian facilities in the Belgrave area, particularly with Belgrave Road Shopping area
- Improved access to river and canal sides at bridges on Abbey Park Road

6.3 Bridge Links

In considering the appropriate location for the bridge crossings consideration will have to be given to Biodiversity and Visual Amenity.

- Biodiversity

- Visual Amenity - The City Council would expect a high standard of bridge design which would contribute significantly to the visual quality of the site.

- Key highway infrastructure requirements for development of the BUSM site include provision of a secondary point of access in addition to Ross Walk and Holden Street. A bridge link with Wolsey Island would satisfy this requirement.

6.4 Access for disabled and less mobile people

All pedestrian routes etc. must be readily usable by disabled people and consideration must be given to providing suitable parking facilities (on- and off-street) for disabled people.

Access Statements should be prepared and submitted with proposals, which explain how each development will meet the standards and obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The statements should comply with Disability Rights Commission guidance (www.drc-gb.org). They should be ‘living’ documents, developed in stages.
to demonstrate “how access issues will be considered from the initial inception stage through to completion, and into the occupancy phases of the project”.

See Appendix 4 for further details

6.5 Public Transport

In the long term, it is intended to provide a bus route via the A6 diverting through Riverside West. The strategic location of bus stops in and around this area mean that residents from the whole Abbey Meadows site would have easy access to public transport via proposed pedestrian bridges and links.

To avoid rat running, a bus gate should be provided on the link road from the centre of the Science Park down to Abbey Park Road. A bus gate would allow a potential journey time saving, as it would allow services to bypass the A6 Abbey Road/Abbey Park Road signalised junction.

6.6 Cycle Links

Cycle routes adjoin the site, the most significant being the national SUSTRANS route which runs from Abbey Park Road to the south, up the western canal bank to the National Space Centre. This route offers easy access south to the city centre, through Abbey Park and then via St Margaret’s Way.

The provision of cycle links is essential and must be an integral part of the development. All existing and proposed new cycle routes need to be shown, together with how development will improve east/west and north/south pedestrian and cycle links and how access and connectivity to the Canal and River will be achieved.

6.7 Parking

Car parking should be provided in accordance with the Local Plan and the maximum parking standards set out in the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Vehicular Parking Standards.

6.7.1 Private parking

A mixture of provision will be provided including private spaces on plot and garages, communal undercroft and courtyard parking, and designated off street spaces. Visitor parking will be on street and well designed, particularly as part of the boulevard concept, civic space and wharf.
6.7.2 Parking provision for apartments

Parking provision for apartments should be easy to access and feel safe for residents to use. Adequate parking provision is important for the success of all residential schemes but it should not visually dominate a residential scheme. Acceptable forms of providing the parking provision are therefore as follows:

- Basement car parking is the Council’s preferred means of accommodating parking provision as it enables the maximum amount of land at ground floor level to be given over to active uses within external amenity space. However, consideration will need to be given to flood risk levels and archaeology.

- The alternative to basement parking would be surface parking placed in courtyards or to the rear of buildings behind the street frontage. This could be decked over with landscaped courtyards above.

- The provision of car parking could result in significant increases in traffic flow in the area and on the traffic network as a whole. Developers may be required to produce a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) of any proposed development as part of a planning application.
7.0 PUBLIC SPACES - HARD AND SOFT

A Public Realm Strategy has recently been commissioned by Leicester Regeneration Company with the aim of unifying public realm across the whole of Abbey Meadows. When complete this strategy will form part of this adopted SPD.

A range of public space will be required to deliver public squares, play space and other incidental landscaped areas where these provide a practical or, in some cases, a purely visual amenity. Open space provision is likely to contribute to the flood alleviation requirements and be part of the strategic concept for Abbey Meadows and the City.

Refer to numbers on Map 7

1. Abbey Lane arrival and ‘image corridor’

- Science park buildings to the north side of the road will be set back with landscaped foreground. The Abbey Lane corner will announce arrival at the science park. Facades at the east end will contain a space and reveal views of the space centre tower and River footbridge.

2. Space Centre arrival space

- Primarily a hard space containing the bus stops for the space centre and community transport.

3. Science Park focus

- The existing landscaped car park serving the Space Centre will become the focus for the science park with surrounding facades facing the space with main entrances. Early phases will use the road through the car park as part of the vehicular circuit, as at present.

4. Space Centre leisure space

- An important visitor area linking the Space Centre and pumping station visitor attractions, with views of the weir and proposed Wolsey Island landmark structures.

5. Abbey Park Gates

- The Abbey Park is the defining element to this road and the gates must remain a dominant element in any development proposals.
- Abbey Park Road arrival at Wolsey Island
- Building facades will be set back behind landscape and reveal the
boulevard entrance to Wolsey Island. A visual ‘gateway’ will express the importance of this route over other options.

6. Abbey Park Road arrival west of river

• The landscaped space here will reveal the river and clear footpaths and cycle routes, as well as offering access along the proposed north south road.

7. Canal road-bridge crossing

• A space to the south of the bridge will reveal key landmark structures and onward movement to Belgrave Road.

8. Wolsey Chimney Square

• A pedestrian friendly space giving access to upper and lower towpaths on the canal west bank and footbridge to the east bank.

9. Wolsey Island civic square

• A pedestrian friendly space to be ‘visually contained’ by building facades on three sides, directing though movement between the boulevard and River footbridge. The space will frame views of the Space Centre tower. This is the focus for mixed uses and will include visitor parking.

10. River wharf

• The existing wharf will be a focus for mixed use activity which may include river boats and floating restaurants. See Waterside Centre below.

11. Locks

• A Riverside Square will reveal the locks as an attraction, and the space will accommodate footpath and cycle way.

12. Canal corridor and Leather Bank

• Protection of Kingfisher nest-site in the ‘leather bank’ (see para. 11.3.2 and Appendix 5)
• Creation of new reedbeds and marginal marsh habitats along offside of canal adjacent to Wolsey Island/BUSM
13. River Soar ecology corridor

- In contrast to the Canal corridor this area is dominated by wildlife and habitat preservation and enhancement. Building facades will respect the sensitivity of the context physically and visually with strongly modelled façade and sky-line.
- Wetland creation on John Ellis playing fields
- Conservation of mature bankside trees, tree groups and areas of scrub and bushes, and additional planting of willows and alders
- Conservation of existing aquatic habitats
- Creation of new reedbeds and marginal marsh habitats in river adjacent to John Ellis/Beaumanor open space
- Removal of Japanese Knotweed

14. Local amenity spaces

- Incidental space is required for the use of local residents within the densely populated housing areas. These have local amenity value including casual sport, toddler play, walking and sitting, and visual quality. The siting, size and shape will be largely determined by the detailed design proposals. Much of this area is however affected by flood plain considerations, and detailed solutions to flooding issues will be on a strategic as well as local basis, described elsewhere. It is likely that any local requirement for flood compensation land will be combined with the river ecology corridor, recreation space and local amenity spaces. This will have an implication upon the detailed design of the above. These spaces have further value in terms of orientation and clarity in the public realm, and where possible the siting will reflect this additional quality.

15. Community Space

- The Abbey Meadows east residential area will include a large recreation space serving existing and new areas. Subject to the comments made previously, this will be sited along the north south ‘community road’. A row of housing should be built on the back of existing houses in order to provide surveillance and activity onto the recreation area.

16. Riverside arrival north

- The route in from the Loughborough road will reveal the River Soar and create the opportunity to connect with and upgrade the existing river crossing and the surrounding streets and walks.
7.1 Childrens Play Areas

- All residential development will be required to provide a level of open space that is consistent with the local plan standards (See Appendix 4) wherever this is practicable, enabling a hierarchy of doorstep, neighbourhood and local, recreational facilities.

- This is particularly important for toddler and junior play (LEAP’s and LAP’s), to ensure surveillance, unsupervised play and personal safety. In addition, a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area) of play will be required to ensure that all ages are catered for. A NEAP area incorporating a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) should be included.

7.2 Waterside Centre – Wolsey Island

- All appropriate forms of water-related leisure and recreational activities will be encouraged, including fishing and boating, subject to impact on wildlife.

- This site offers a significant development opportunity. It has a prominent position on the River Soar, overlooking the River and the National Space Centre (NSC) and existing waterside access. The redevelopment of Wolsey Island and improved pedestrian links to the NSC and Belgrave areas may provide an opportunity to develop this site.

- The site could have a number of different end uses including residential, hotel, leisure or mixed use (subject to planning policy), centering around and incorporating private or semi-private open space and secure boat and mooring facilities. The site could also provide permanent boat moorings, limited residential moorings, a boat hire fleet location and/or trip boat operations and other leisure facilities.

7.3 Former John Ellis Playing Fields

- Local accessible sports and recreation provision or the improvement of existing off-site local facilities will be considered where it is agreed that the level of physical provision within the site is either impracticable or not consistent with achieving a good planning outcome. The playing fields of the former John Ellis School have been identified as the preferred location for sport given their accessible location. Adequate changing facilities will be required to ensure optimum use of the site.

7.4 Private Amenity Space

- In addition to public space, all forms of family housing shall be provided with a private rear garden.
7.4.1 Apartments

- Opportunities should be explored to provide ground floor apartments with a private garden space. This is most appropriate to apartments that address internal courtyards at ground level, as opposed to the external public realm. Similarly, first floor apartments that address an internal podium space should also be designated a private garden space. Every effort should also be made to provide apartments from the first floor upwards with a private balcony. Roof gardens and communal private space would also be considered.

7.4.2 Private Shared Amenity Space

- This space, which is intended for use by all the residents of a single apartment building will be required for all developments. The space can be provided at ground floor level or at upper levels on a podium. The amenity space must be designed as a destination place/garden and not merely be a linear corridor space that people pass through.
8.0 URBAN DESIGN - LANDMARKS AND VIEWS

- Development principles, strategic urban clarity, and good design practice.

8.1 Definition of spaces and routes

- Primary routes and spaces have been defined above including the proposed contribution to the quality of Abbey Meadows. The urban design plan locates principal facades to support this vision. The principal facades show a ‘formal relationship’ where the urban structure is critical for visual clarity.

8.2 Creating views

- In support of visual clarity revealing high quality buildings and landscape, important viewing opportunities are located on plan. The street network, building façade alignment and in some cases storey heights, are controlled to create and compose high quality visitors.

8.3 Defining landmarks

- Landmark elements work on a strategic level and local level. The strategic elements include the towers which will draw visitors to the area, and also give character to the immediate vicinity. Local landmarks are sited to guide movement and announce decision points and destinations. The clarity or legibility of the urban structure will create a comfortable high quality environment while still allowing innovative architecture.

8.4 Safe streets and spaces

- All public realm must be safe to all users, and be seen to be safe. This will be achieved through providing passive surveillance from residential development together with frequent options for travel. All community connecting routes will pass through safe residential streets. Ground floors will include frequent front doors and windows to principal rooms to all streets and spaces.
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

URBAN DESIGN
Landmarks and Views

ABBREY MEADOWS

Map 8
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

Refer to numbers on Map 8

Strategic importance and local importance

1. Abbey Lane

- A prominent structure is required to the north east corner as part of the science park, which will announce the visitor arrival, combined with high quality road and landscape design.

2. Space Centre Tower

- Every opportunity must be explored to reveal the tower, from distant approach roads to the local environment. The urban structure has been designed to reveal the tower to prominent views supporting and encouraging visitor approach. The tower is the magnet attraction for the area and was sited deliberately to harness the under used potential of this high quality stretch of water. The proposed public realm strategy will exploit the landmark potential of the tower to give distinct character and visual clarity to the whole Abbey Meadows area.

3. East - West crossing

- The proposed footbridge over the Soar is critical to the success of Abbey Meadows. It must be of high visual quality, and carefully sited to join the Space Centre arrival space with the Wolsey Island civic space. The bridge structure and surrounding ramps and footpaths will combine with the proposed upgraded wharf and retained water tower to create a coherent design composition. Future uses for the water tower will enhance the prominence and attraction to visitors and the success of both the civic space and Space Centre sites are heavily dependant upon the design and delivery of this east-west crossing.

4. Space Centre tower from Abbey Park Road

- The existing bridge over the River Soar reveals glimpses of the Space Centre tower between mature trees. Building and landscape development proposals must consider the quality and importance of this and other existing viewing opportunities.

5. Abbey Park Road character

- The mature trees and boundary to Abbey Park create the character of this road. Landmark development opportunities have been sited to guide visitor movement into the Abbey Meadows area by drawing attention to primary routes and exploiting distant views.
6. Wolsey Island Boulevard

- Gateway structures lead into the boulevard as a strong design feature to encourage visitor movement towards the Civic Space. The boulevard itself will be the dominant feature. (See Diagram 1)

7. The Civic Space

- Building facades will create enclosure and guide movement, and storey heights around the water tower will be low enough to expose the Space Centre tower.

8. The River Corridor

- This is a large scale natural environment unusual in a city context, and provides the most dramatic setting for the Space Centre tower. All proposals must consider the visual impact from any direction along the River Corridor. The peninsular at the north end of Wolsey Island offers the opportunity for a tall structure. The visual benefit will be to announce the location of the junction between the river and canal and the location of the Wolsey Island residential area and street network connecting local visitor attractions. Distant views of a tall structure in this location will be possible from the north where the Space Centre tower is not revealed, from the Canal Corridor and to the internal road network of Wolsey Island and the existing Belgrave community. (See Diagram 2)

9. The Canal Corridor

- The proposed relationship between buildings and the canal is designed to retain the corridor’s integrity. The peninsular landmark structure will provide the visual draw. Bridges and the corners to many side roads are to be carefully designed but modest to avoid detracting from the canal character (See Diagram 3)

10. Wolsey Chimney

- A popular and prominent local landmark to be retained as a reminder of recent industrial heritage and the reasons for the canal’s construction.

11. The Water Tower

- This is a corner structure to existing industrial buildings which is to be retained. Development opportunities will be sensitive to the tower’s architecture and materials. The tower will be the design generator for the public realm in design and materials, with the intention being to avoid this rather modest structure being visually lost to surrounding development.
Diagram 1
Diagram 2

Notional Section River Corridor

Landscape to enhance ecological value of existing river corridor

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR TO RIVER AND BANKS

PEDESTRIAN ZONE ALONG RIVER EDGE WITH VEHECULAR THOUGH ACCESS

BALCONIES AND WINDOWS TO FACE RIVER, FRONT DOORS FACE RIVER. GROUND FLOORS GIVE SURVEILLANCE TO STREET

SEMI PRIVATE SPACE GARDENS AND COMMUAL TO RESIDENTIAL AREA VARY TO GIVE MODELLING TO SPACE
Diagram 3

Strong modelling to roofline. 3-5 storeys

Balconies and windows to face canal

Facade line follows curve of canal
Facade not continuous - side roads to access canal footpaths

Ground floors provide surveillance to canal footpaths, streets and side roads

Notional section canal corridor

Note: Private space above flood level.
Protected ecological site.
12. The Wharf

- Future proposals will exploit the potential of the existing wharf and mixed uses to enhance the visitor attraction of Wolsey Island.

13. The Wolsey Peninsular

- The proposed tower structure as previously described needs to address in its design and form the contrasting character of the river corridor on its west side and canal corridor to the east. A visually dynamic design will be needed to exploit this potential sensitively, and visually turn the prominent waterside corner. It will be visible from all sides.

14. Wolsey Island to Belgrave Road connection

- The route will be designed with common details and finishes to announce the strategic importance. Landmark opportunities are to be used to draw visitors along the length, but avoid drawing attention to side roads into semi-private residential areas.

15. Loughborough Road approach

- The route from Loughborough Road will engage with the river and focus upon the tower landmarks described above, Pumping Station, Weir and Locks in a natural setting. Proposed structures will not detract from this but rather frame and contain these views.
9.0 MAIN LAND USES

- Map 9 Identifies the main land uses. Other uses may be acceptable subject to National and Local Planning Policy
10.0 MASSING - STOREY HEIGHTS

Refer to Map 10

1. Mixed use flexibility

- The land use plan indicates ‘areas of search’ for retail and commercial uses. Development in these areas will be designed to enable potential changes of use within the life span of the buildings between residential and other uses to facilitate market changes. This will be achieved through ground floor facades to the back of pavement line to largely terraced buildings, and the ground floor storey height being minimum 3.5 metres regardless of use.

2. Block typology

- To achieve the principal façade layout described above will involve different development responses. It may be necessary within development blocks to have double frontage dwellings with front doors to the street but rear access for private vehicles.

- All dwellings will have access to private open space using balconies, roof terraces as well as gardens, and communal gardens subject to detailed design.

10.1 Density

National guidance, set out in draft PPS3: Housing (2006), seeks to encourage housing development that makes more efficient use of land.

Housing density should have regard to:

- The spatial vision and strategy for housing development in the area including the level of housing demand and need and the availability of suitable land in the area
- The current and future level and capacity of infrastructure, services and facilities such as public/private amenity space, and riverside ecology in particular green and open space
- The desirability of using land efficiently and reducing, and adapting to, the impacts of climate change
- The current and future levels of accessibility, particularly public transport accessibility
- The characteristics of the area, including the current and proposed mix of uses
- The desirability of achieving high quality, well designed housing
As a guide we would seek the following densities:
Density/Hectare

**Former B.U.S.M site**

Adjacent to canal – High Density 60+
Remaining site – Low to Medium Density 30 - 49

**Wolsey Island**

Abbey Park Road frontage – High Density 60+
Top of Peninsula – High Density 60+
Central area – Low to Medium Density 30 - 49

**Riverside West**

Housing Area – Low to Medium Density 30 – 49
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

MASSING
Massing - Storey Heights

ABBREY MEADOWS

Map 10
11.0 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

11.1 Developer Contributions

The Abbey Meadows/Science Park will be built through a combination of public and private developers or investors. Section 106 Agreement contributions will be sought from developers to meet the needs arising from the development.

The approach taken by the City Council in drawing up the contribution framework for Abbey Meadows is consistent with current Government Guidance (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Circular 05/2005).

This guidance is not intended to allocate precise contributions in advance, as this will be a matter of detailed negotiation. However, it is intended to provide very strong guidance to developers and landowners in Abbey Meadows as to the likely cost of works required as a result of their development.

The City Council will seek to enter into legal agreements with private developers to secure contributions for undertaking the following:

- Public realm works incorporating hard and soft landscaping and public art.
- Primary infrastructure incorporating highways, transportation and utilities.
- Amend traffic circulation and junctions, improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Off site highway improvements where identified.
- Bridge Maintenance.
- Changes in traffic regulation orders.
- New signs along main movement routes.
- Affordable Housing in accordance with local plan policies.
- Street tree planting within the connected street network where appropriate.
- Improvement to Public Transport services.
- Provision and maintenance of public open space and play areas.
- Design and construction of three new bridge links across the River Soar and Grand Union Canal.
- Upgrading of the canal and riverside environment – including path widening/resurfacing and habitat creation.
- Educational and community facilities including a new primary school should a need be demonstrated.
- Flood compensation measures.
- Improvements to Abbey Park including improved access.

Appropriate mechanisms to share responsibility between developers on adjoining sites will be required to ensure timely delivery of obligations.

In determining the extent of such obligations, consideration will be given to
the financial viability of schemes and their importance in contributing to the regeneration of the site.

The City Council adopted a protocol in 2003 to guide the way in which the Council seeks to secure developer contributions. A further report was approved in October 2006 which reviewed the Council’s existing arrangements for handling developer contributions and to seek agreement to revised policies and procedures designed to improve the council’s corporate approach in dealing with developer contributions.

11.2 Flood Risk

See Map 11

Several areas within Abbey Meadows are identified as at risk of flooding in the Leicester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), (February 2004). This is considered to be the best available information and identifies areas within the 1 in 100 year + 20% flood risk zone, which includes an allowance for climate change, (zone 3 in PPG 25) and the 1 in 1000 year flood risk zone, (zone 2 in PPG 25).

Developers will be required to consult with the Environment Agency (EA) on any proposals for development or alterations within the flood risk zone. The EA has a supervisory duty for all matters relating to flood defence and is the principal operating authority with responsibility for main rivers. Under the Water Resources Act 1991, the EA has a duty to survey matters relating to flooding, including the identification of areas where flood defence problems are likely.

Development will not be permitted if:

a. it would increase the risk of flooding:--
   i) by reducing the capacity of, or increasing flows within a flood plain;
   or ii) through the discharge of additional surface water; or
   iii) by harming flood defences;
   unless measures can be carried out as part of the development to minimise the risk of flooding.

b. it would be at risk itself from flooding; and

c. adequate provision is not made for access to watercourses for maintenance.

Where development is proposed within the flood risk zone, a site specific flood risk assessment is required. The advice of the Environment Agency should be sought at the earliest opportunity.

Where development is permitted:

(i) Finished floor levels must be raised to at least 600mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level, (approximately 300mm above the 1 in100 year + 20% level) to raise the site out of the floodplain.
(ii) Flood plain compensation must be provided to replace the area of floodplain lost. An equivalent area of land must be brought into the floodplain.
(iii) Flood defences may be required to previously defended properties.
(iv) Dry egress must be provided to all properties to provide an escape route in the event of flooding.

All proposed bridges over the river and any works within 8m of the top of the bank of the river will require the prior formal consent of the Agency in compliance with the Water Resources Act 1991 (Section 109) and the Land Drainage byelaws.

11.3 Bio-Diversity

11.3.1 Bats

It is possible that the site offers a habitat for roosting bats. All species of bats are fully protected by national and international legislation. It is a criminal offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, disturb or obstruct a bat roost, or harm a bat. For this reason, it is essential that a full survey of buildings by an acknowledged bat expert be undertaken at an early stage in the planning process. The survey should establish whether bats are present and, if so, the likely impact of the proposed works on the population.

If the surveys reveal that bats or roosts are present, any refurbishment or development of the site, which could harm them will need to be licensed by DEFRA. It is likely that a licence would require mitigation measure to minimise risk to bats; this often affects the time of year, the phasing and the working method of the renovation.

A bat survey and impact assessment will be required before a planning application can be determined.

11.3.2 Wolsey Island/B.U.S.M Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge - Kingfisher nest-site

A small stretch of the boundary overlooking the canal (See Map 7) is constructed from discarded shoes and other leather products. This feature is of some historical interest in its own right but also provides a regular habitat for breeding kingfishers.

Kingfishers are specially protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). It is illegal to:

• Cause harm to kingfishers or to take them from the wild
• Damage or remove a kingfisher nest while it is in use or in the process of being built
• Destroy or remove their eggs from the nest
• Disturb a kingfisher while it is nesting
To be reasonably certain of avoiding disturbance there should be no construction activity of this kind within 30m of the leather bank, *during the nesting season*.

The City Council will insist on at least a 10m permanent buffer zone between the top of the bank and development. This should be fenced off during construction and afterwards, to exclude construction activity in the short-term and people in the long-term.

As long as any bridge supports are set well back from the leather bank, and the bridge is at one end of the feature, the impact is unlikely to be significant if the bridge oversails the nest-site. However, the design and siting of the bridge is crucial. For example, the bridge cannot pass too low over the bank, or if it divided the bank into two halves.

11.4 Sustainability

11.4.1 Sustainable Energy

The mixed use development of the Abbey Meadows/Science Park, incorporating research buildings light industrial and other commercial and a variety of residential types present different opportunities for realising energy efficient outcomes. Each will have its own profile of demand, and building types and uses will permit the employment of different techniques. For each of these uses case studies are available through the government’s energy efficiency agencies that cover all types of developments. Case studies can demonstrate savings in energy and, therefore, cost to building operators or occupants, as well as a reduction in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas outputs. There is also the range of BREEAM standards, relating to residential, office and other premises that provide desirable thresholds of performance, as well as detailed rating systems for compliance. Typically SAP energy efficiency rating for residential uses will be expected to exceed 100, with 120 desirable.

All development is subject to policy UD04 on energy efficiency and major schemes will be subject to policies BE16 Renewable Energy and BE17 Combined Heat and Power/Community Heating, details of which can be found in Appendix 4. The policies are intended to secure reductions in carbon emissions.

**Map 12** indicates a potential CHP/Community Heating Network that is under consideration by Leicester City Council. Proximity to this may provide opportunities for connection to future development.

A statement demonstrating clearly how developers intend to address these sustainability issues will be sought as part of the planning submission for each site.

Collectively, the mixture of uses present opportunities for developers of optimising energy efficiency across the different users, whose demand profiles may...
COMMUNITY HEATING SCHEME
Pipeline - phases 1, 2 & 3
& 2nd Feasibility Pipeline

ABBEY MEADOWS
Map 12
complement and balance each other over a given period. The scale of potential energy saving across the Abbey Meadows area could be appreciable, suggesting lower running costs and, thereby, be an attractive feature to would-be occupants. Proximity to the canal and river provides specific ground source heating and cooling opportunities that may be exploitable.

Passive energy considerations will inform the form, massing and orientation of buildings, as well as internal layout. These may relate to exploiting solar insulation and daylighting benefits or achieving natural ventilation strategies, all of which have energy saving potential that, collectively, can be substantial.

Specifically, the use of glazed atria or curtain walls and light wells can serve the functions of heating, ventilation and daylight access. Consideration also needs to be given in ventilation to utilizing stack and buoyancy effects, as these will have impacts on the external architecture.

A sustainable energy statement will be required with planning applications for all major schemes. Draft guidance is available that sets out the requirements for these statements and this should form a decision on site acquisition and design matters at the earliest possible stages.

11.4.2 Water Conservation and Drainage

An integrated approach to water conservation and storm water drainage will be sought and should be clearly demonstrated in applications for development. Such measures can represent significant operational and whole-life cost savings for building users and represent little or no additional cost at implementation. Incorporation of sustainable drainage techniques will be required in accordance with Local Plan policy BE19, and these may include use of green roofs. Rainwater harvesting and reuse, in accordance with Local Plan policy BE22, can contribute to compliance with both drainage and water use policies. Developments should seek to conserve water through water-efficient management systems and employ rainwater-harvesting systems for its non–potable reuse.

The applicant should also consider, especially where areas not previously built upon are to be developed, the incorporation of a SUDS technique to deal with storm water run off.

11.4.3 Adaptability

Where possible, buildings should be of a configuration and size that would allow future changes of use especially adjacent to primary pedestrian routes and open spaces. Storey depths, room sizes, window, door and stair positions should all consider the possibility of later conversion where appropriate in accordance with Local Plan Policy BE22.
11.4.4 Leicester Better Buildings

The Leicester Regeneration Company, Leicester Partnership and Leicester City Council support the Leicester Better Buildings Project. It aims to improve the quality of the built environment through innovative and sustainable design and construction. The project’s website www.leicesterbetterbuildings.org.uk provides a checklist of issues to consider, sources for further information and case studies. All development within the Abbey Meadows should reflect the aspirations of the Better Buildings Project.

11.4.5 Construction and Demolition Waste

Where possible opportunities for the procurement of recovered (recycled/reclaimed) materials for use in any new build and, similarly opportunities for recovering materials from demolition or refurbishment should be considered, particularly where there is no additional cost above the use of virgin materials.

Methodologies such as the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) Demolition Protocol provide further guidance:

http://www.aggregain.org.uk/demolition/the_ice_demolition_protocol/

11.5 Quality Design

All buildings within Abbey Meadows shall be designed to demonstrate the highest standards of modern European architecture. In order to raise awareness therefore, of the wealth of architectural expertise that exists in the UK, the Council’s Planning Policy and Design Group has assembled a compendium of chartered architects practices that have expressed a keen interest in being involved in the regeneration of the city. Developers and landowners who are considering a new build or conversion project in Abbey Meadows, or indeed anywhere in the city are encouraged to visit the Council in the first instance, and view the architects compendium that is comprised of practice brochures.

11.6 Housing Mix and Type

National guidance (DETR Circular and Planning Policy Statement 3) together with current Local Plan Policies (H06 and H09) seeks provision of a range of housing sizes, types, tenures and affordability to proportionally address current and future ‘local/city-wide housing needs and demands, particularly for family and older persons accommodation, and encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities, within all new housing developments.

In addition to providing a range of dwelling types to meet current general needs and demands, the City Council will negotiate with developers to provide a minimum of 15% of new dwellings to Lifetime Homes standard, with some of
these built to current Housing Corporations Scheme Development Standards and the latest LCC brief for wheelchair housing. Development proposals should clearly show the units which comply with these standards, together with associated accessible car parking access.

11.7 Affordable Housing

The Council will seek to achieve an overall target of 30% of new dwellings to be affordable within the Leicester Regeneration Area, which is recognised as a priority area.

The current definition of ‘affordable housing’ remains as per the description set out in the Local Plan for social housing provided by a Registered Social Landlord (CLLP 6.37a) but has now been updated by national guidance contained within PPS3 and therefore now excludes low-cost market housing (CLLP 6.37.b)

At outline stage at least 30% affordable housing will be sought. The detail of the affordable housing being sought within a particular development will be negotiated at or immediately prior to detailed planning application/reserved matters stage and will be in line with the Council’s Cabinet approved LRC Blue Guidelines. These guidelines require the developer to provide 15% of the affordable housing without grant aid with the City Council supporting applications for Housing Corporation funding from registered Social Landlords towards any provision of affordable homes in excess of 15%.

The suitable housing mix will be agreed in line with the needs of the City area, without generating social exclusion. The City Council will assess whether there are particular costs associated with development of the site and whether the provision of affordable housing might prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site.

The onus will be on the housing developer to demonstrate why any targets may not be met – the presumption will be that the affordable housing created in the development of the site will be provided on-site.

In exceptional circumstances the City Council may approve an element of affordable housing to be provided elsewhere than on the application site via developer payment of a commuted sum.

11.7.1 Standards

All affordable rented units should be built to the City Council’s Minimum Indicative Space Standards and current Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards (HC SDS) with any wheelchair housing meeting the requirements of the “Wheelchair Housing Design Guide”, Second Edition (2006) (as required by HC SDS) and the City Council’s latest Wheelchair Housing Brief.
Affordable homes funded by Housing Corporation grant will be expected to comply with funding requirements which include standards of quality build such as ECO Homes Standards and/or Code of Sustainable Homes as appropriate.

11.8 Highway Design

Highway design and access should conform to the following:

- Roads should act as streets, and be lined with building frontages and, where possible, these frontages should support activity and natural surveillance.

- Appropriate levels of activity along and across streets will be encouraged to achieve natural surveillance. Levels of activity will be required to be compatible with the nature and hierarchy of routes.

- Traffic speed should be controlled by integral design features. In the residential areas this will be to achieve 20mph maximum. These features should be brought within the city centre’s Urban Traffic Control (UTC) system to enable control strategies to be employed for traffic moving within and through the area.

- Traffic calming features must be present every 50m within 20mph zones.

- Key junctions at the entrances to and within the development areas will have toucan pedestrian/ cycle signals.

- There should be ample pavements to each side of the road, to enable easy access by all.

11.9 Archaeology

The Abbey Meadows lies to the north of the mediaeval Leicester Abbey precincts, now situated in Abbey Park. There may be archaeological deposits associated with the Abbey to the south of the area, and there may be even earlier deposits present over some of the area. Across the entire area post-mediaeval activity may also be of archaeological interest, both in terms of buried archaeology and in terms of standing structures.

An archaeological desk-based assessment of the area is being undertaken for the LRC as part of an appraisal of the overall Strategy area. This study will help to identify which archaeological issues need to be addressed.

11.10 Landscaping and Trees

A high standard of design and level of provision of landscape infrastructure will be sought in the individual development areas that make up Abbey Meadows.
Planting proposals will be expected to make a specific contribution to any development, to provide interest on streets, to soften buildings, to create structures and delineation, or to establish landmarks where necessary.

Tree planting improves the environment by mitigating the effects of pollution, providing shade in the summer, softening the urban landscape and humanizing scale. Tree species should be selected so as to develop a significant stature in keeping with the building scale and have tolerance to urban conditions and contribute to the value and function of the Riverside wildlife corridor.

There are a number of protected trees (T.P.O) on the former John Ellis site Science Park site. Any proposed development would need to be accompanied by a fully detailed tree survey, in accordance with the British Standard (BS5837:2005)

11.11 Community Safety

This refers to providing safety to the general public who will be “using” new development. “Using” in this context refers to people who live and work in the site but also those who move through the site to other destinations. New development should offer security to the public, in particular to pedestrians and cyclists.

This can be achieved by observing the following:

- Development must have active ground floor uses with entrances off the street
- Development overlooks public rights of way, streets, footpaths, bridge links
- Development adopts a perimeter block structure to avoid exposing backs of buildings which are a security risk and do not provide surveillance
- Boundary fences to rear gardens and service yards should not be located next to public areas
- Provision of adequate street lighting
- Management and Maintenance

Leicester City Council are responsible for Street Lighting. Please contact Clive Roberts (Public Lighting Group) on tel: 0116 2232030 for further information

11.12 Amenity

11.12.1 Compatible Uses

Uses generating unacceptable levels of noise or other pollutants, which may affect the amenity of neighbouring uses will not be permitted. Noise sensitive development will not be permitted if its users would be unacceptably affected by noise from noisy land uses.
11.12.2 Traffic pollution

The guidance indicates potential residential and other uses in close proximity to the major highway network routes, which are contained within the City Council’s statutory Air Quality Management Area 2000.

Under the provisions of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, detailed assessments would need to be made of the impact on human exposure to pollution generated by traffic on this section of road. Early notification of detailed layout in this regard will be needed for this purpose.

Residential occupiers in close proximity to significantly trafficked roads could potentially be exposed to:

- Levels of nitrogen dioxide from traffic in excess of the statutory air quality objective for that pollutant.
- Levels of noise within noise exposure class “D” under the terms of Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG 24.

For these reasons, careful attention will need to be paid by any developer to the layout, orientation, internal arrangement and design of buildings.

Residential accommodation fronting roads that form part of the principal highway network may be subject to ameliorative measures. These could include arranging residential development internally so that habitable rooms are not on the frontage, or excluding noise and pollution by using fixed double-glazing and mechanical ventilation systems.

11.12.3 Ground Conditions

Previous uses of the sites suggest the possibility of localised land contamination.

Depending on the proposed uses it may be necessary to:

- Draw up and implement an appropriate site investigation, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority
- Draw up and implement a scheme of remedial works appropriate to the findings of the investigation
12.0 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

12.1 ICT Provision

It is envisaged that the Abbey Meadows/Science Park will be able to offer a range of high-speed digital communications and services to potential clients that is technology and supplier neutral and provides flexibility and choice. This could be achieved through the creation of an on-site ring serving all occupiers. The ring will comprise 4 to 6 ducts offering a choice of managed services, primarily targeted at small businesses. Wayleaves for this service need to be dedicated and ducts installed in accordance with an overall plan.

For further technical information contact the Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LSEP)

12.2 Highways and Bridges

Any developer must liaise closely with Leicester City Council as the Highway Authority on any matters on the public highways and bridges as regards permissions, coordination, and technical approvals in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and Highways Act 1980 and Traffic Management Act 2004.

12.3 Drainage

All sewer record enquiries should be made to Severn Trent Water Ltd., who should be informed of any unrecorded drains and any alterations to cover positions or levels.

Adherence should be made to the Environment Agency’s ‘Best Practices’ for ground water and rainwater runoff. The Environment Agency should be contacted regarding any development likely to affect watercourses and exacerbate flooding problems.

12.4 Services

Developers are recommended to contact the relevant body for each service to ascertain the availability of services and any specific requirements for their provision.

12.5 Emergency Services

The Fire Authority would welcome the opportunity to give advice regarding access for fire appliances and the availability of water supplies for fire fighting.
13.0 CONSULTATION

It is important that the contents of this guidance are understood and ideally, accepted by a range of interested parties. This draft guidance was subject to consultation with the following groups:

◊ Landowners
◊ stakeholders
◊ local residents
◊ local ward councilors
◊ office user bodies
◊ development industry representatives
◊ other interested bodies

The results of the consultation were considered in the preparation of the final form of the guidance. This was presented to the Cabinet of the City Council for adoption as Supplementary Planning Document to the City of Leicester Local Plan. Every effort was made to include constructive suggestions that support the key development principles of this guidance.
14.0 CONTACTS

Contacts at Leicester City Council

Development Control
(Pre-application enquiries and planning applications)

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Urban Design
Fabian D’Costa (Senior Planner) 0116252 7239

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Building Conservation
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Archaeology
Chris Wardle 0116 252 7296

Riverside and Flood Risk
Anne Provan 0116 252 7297

Trees Officer – TPO’s
Paul Champion 0116 252 7263

Development Team and LRC Liaison
Deborah Rose/Santok Bansal 0116 252 7202

Development Plans
Rachel Mkanza 0116 252 7271

Transport Development
John Dowson 0116 223 2110

Highway Design, Parking & Traffic Impact
Mark Wills 0116 252 7272

Highway Management
Alan Adcock 0116 252 6540

Pollution Control
Evan Davis 0116 252 6411

Property
Geoff Mee 0116 252 5077
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

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Janet Callan/Julia Keeling 0116 252 8713

**Bridges**
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**Street Lighting**
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Other Contacts

**Leicester Regeneration Company**
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**English Heritage**
Bob Harrison 01604 735456

**Leicestershire Economic Partnership**
Michael Thompson 0116 257 5657

**Environment Agency**
Geoff Platts 0115 846 3622

**Seven Trent Water Ltd**
Dave Raine (Water Mains) 0121 7224000
Mitesh Bajhela (Sewer Records) 0116 2343834

**British Waterways**
Helen Edwards 01636 704 481

**Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service**
MA Tait, Commander Operations. 0116 287 2241

**Leicester Better Buildings**
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**Leicestershire Constabulary/ Architectural Liaison Officer**
Stewart Bradshaw 01636 704 481
APPENDIX 1

Project Area No.1. Abbey Meadows
City of Leicester Local Plan – Adopted 2006

1. Abbey Lane Research Business Park E15
   - see App. 4
2. Primarily Community, Education and Leisure Use.

BOUNDARY OF ABBEY MEADOWS SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY BASED BUSINESS PARK AND ENVIRONS (POLICY PS08)

1. Abbey Lane Research Business Park E15
   - see App. 4
2. Primarily Community, Education and Leisure Use.
APPENDIX 2

Leicester’s Housing Needs Survey 2002 currently informs on the sizes, types and tenures of homes required within the City (pending completion of the proposed Leicestershire-wide Housing Market Assessment) and identifies that 45% of demand across all tenures is for large family homes (those with 4 or more bedrooms) with the city’s affordable housing requirements consisting of a tenure mix of 91% affordable rent and 9% shared ownership, 61% of the total affordable housing requirement being for large family homes. Completions, homes under construction and outstanding permissions within the Abbey Meadows area as at 31 December 2006 include only 3% large family homes and 25% affordable housing with the majority of the 1253 approved new homes being one and two bedroom apartments. Please see table below.

| Completions, homes under construction and outstanding permissions by house type within the Abbey Meadows LRC area as at 31 December 2006: |

In order to achieve both Local Plan and PPS3 policy requirements, it is therefore imperative to achieve a larger proportion of family housing within both the remaining Abbey Meadows site areas and any requests to seek revised approvals on sites with existing/expired planning consent, to include large family homes and additional affordable housing.

In line with PPS3, (effective in terms of policy making since its publication in November 2006 and material in determining applications since 1 April 2007), all residential development proposals will be required to “achieve a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular families and older people” and should also proportionately reflect such needs and demands.

In order to promote adequate provision of family homes within the Abbey Meadows area, the following development proposals will therefore be resisted within this part of the City:

(a) Proposals which do not include a mix of housing types to include family homes (a proportion of which should have 4 or more bedrooms); and
(b) Proposals for only 1 and 2 bedroom apartments.
APPENDIX 3

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

Abbey Pumping Station

This comprises an important Grade II listed industrial building complex, now largely used as a museum and tourist attraction. With its chimney and built form it represents a key features on the riverside and within the landscape generally (especially when viewed in conjunction with the Space Centre)

Wolsey Factory Water Tower and Chimneys

These buildings are rightly identified as buildings of local interest. C19th brick built, they form impressive features in the landscape, reflect the industrial development of the area, and provide legibility points. The Water Tower has adjoining brick buildings, which whilst not being of the same architectural quality should not be dismissed out of hand: any future use of the tower will probably require ancillary service units; as such, these could be re-used, thus saving costs of demolition/rebuild and according with sustainability initiatives of re-use of materials.

Sangra Buildings

These buildings to the SE, particularly where they front onto the Canal, provide an interesting setting to the area. Five storeys high, brick, uniform fenestration, the canal side building again reflects the area’s character, and development in the SE corner of the intervention zone should respect this.

Canal ‘Structures’

Locks, sluice gates etc. are emblematic of the relationship between the industrial (reason for the locks) and the natural (the identity now applied to the canal route).

Other Industrial Buildings

A low-lying industrial complex, of simple 1930’s build (brick, with low, stepped, square pinnacles to the gables) is located behind Abbey Park Road and Abbey Meadows frontages. These are of moderate interest, and whilst their loss could be countenanced, it is recommended that a photographic record is undertaken.

Abbey Park

Quality ‘buildings’ are not limited to the industrial: civic architecture is also of significance in association with Abbey Park (lodges and gates) and bridges
(including piers and abutments).

**The Lodges**

These are good examples of late C19th ‘Arts & Crafts’ buildings, adding prominence to the entrance to the park. The entrance is also enhanced by the iron gates and brick/stone piers.

**Ladybridge**

This is listed in its own right, and its setting should be respected.

**Gate piers**

At the SE of the corner of the intervention area, these are also of interest: brick construction, stone capped, with carved detailing. If possible, these should be retained.

**Materials**

Predominant materials in the built environment are red brick, and slate roofs (or corrugated materials on much of the industrial building stock). Materials for new development should have regard to (respect rather than repeat/imitate) these materials where existing structures are to be retained, but should also take into account of the natural environment context of the development.

**Natural Environment**

As has been indicated, this plays an important role in the area’s character. Dense vegetation provides a buffer between the built environment and the waterways. As a whole the existing natural environment provides excellent ‘quality of life’ factors.
LEICESTER ABBEY MEADOWS

Conservation Areas
A Belgrave Hall
B Loughborough Road

Listed Buildings
A Belgrave Hall, House and associated
   stable, railings and monuments; Cross
   Corners, Thurnaston Road: Grade II
B St. Peter’s Church, Belgrave: Grade II
C Museum of Technology, Corporation
   Road: Grade II
D Abbey Corner Bridge: Grade II
E Abbey Ruins: Grade I
F Abbot Penny’s Wall, forming boundaries
to Abbey Lane, Abbey Park Road
   and River Soar: Grade I
G Abbey Park Lodges, Gates and Railings
H Remains of Cavendish House: Grade I
I 173 Loughborough Road: Grade II
J Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre,
   Rotley Street/ Belgrave Road: Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Abby Ruins, Abbey Park, Abbey Penny’s Wall
forming boundaries to west, north and east;
remains of Cavendish House

Buildings of Local Importance
K Swans Nest Weir, lock and canal
   infrastructure
L Water Tower & chimneys
M Rope Wharf
N Riverside Cottage
O Bocoen House
P Bus Depot and Offices
Q Sagra Building
R Charles Keene College annex
S 199 Loughborough Road
T Brun Street School
U 87 Belgrave Road

Parks & Gardens
Belgrave Hall Park and Gardens; Abbey Park:
Grade II in Parks and Gardens Register.
APPENDIX 4

ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN POLICIES (2006)

General Policies

PSO2. Regeneration and Comprehensive Development

Within the strategic Regeneration Area (SRA) planning permission will only be granted where a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development can be demonstrated. In particular the city council will seek to ensure that the density, layout and design of buildings, spaces and access arrangements is comprehensively phased and implemented within the development sites identified on the proposals map. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice comprehensive development within the SRA.

This would include the provision of open space and could include the enhancement of the quality of existing sites, improvement of access to existing sites as well as the provision of new sites.

Within the Strategic Regeneration Area, the requirement for at least 30% of affordable housing will be taken as a total across the whole of the Strategic Regeneration Area, rather than per site. Affordable housing will still only be required on developments of 25 or more dwellings, or at least 1 hectare or more in size, as it is recognized as a priority investment area.

PS08. Science and Technology Based Business Park and Environs – Abbey Meadow

Planning permission will be given for development that contributed towards the creation of a science and technology based business park in the vicinity of the Space Centre. In addition significant new residential developments, incorporating, limited mixed uses, within local centres serving local need, including café (A3), pub (A4), takeaways (A5) & shops (A1), community and leisure (D2), place of worship (D1), moorings/waterside activities will be permitted in the area shown on the proposals map. Development that frustrates the delivery of this project will be refused.

E15. Abbey Lane Research Business Park

In the Abbey Lane Research Business Park shown on the Proposals Map planning permission will be granted for development within Class B1(b) ‘research and development’.

Planning Permission will be given for other uses that are complimentary or ancillary to the uses specified above or to the National Space Centre.
Planning applications for any part of Abbey Lane Research Business Park which would prejudice the comprehensive development of the whole site will be refused.

Development of this site will require a new access road through the site from Abbey Lane to the National Space Centre.

The Riverside should be a key focus both visually and physically for new development.

A high standard of pedestrian and cycle links should be incorporated within the site and into adjoining areas.

**Transport and Highways**

AM01 The impact of development on pedestrians and people with limited mobility

Planning permission for development will only be granted where the needs of pedestrians and people with disabilities have been successfully incorporated into the design. New or improved pedestrian routes and streets should link as directly as possible with existing or proposed routes and streets should link as directly as possible with existing or proposed routes and streets leading to key destinations, such as leisure/community and public transport facilities, both within or adjacent to a site.

On new or improved pedestrian routes and streets, the amount of carriageway given over to pedestrians and people with disabilities, both within the site and on footways alongside, must be such as to protect them from other highway issues. Where segregation is required, pedestrians and disabled people should not be isolated from other users and activity.

Physical Measures such as dropped kerbs, safe crossing facilities, refuges, safety lighting, landmark features and the use of tactile surface materials will be required in an appropriate circumstances.

**Pedestrian and Cycling Routes**

Particular consideration should be given to identifying and overcoming existing and potential barriers to use by disabled people, and making the area fully accessible. As well as detailed design measures, there are key issues which should influence the over-all planning stages, and reflected in access statements. These include:

a) Overcoming existing barriers to access will be a key requirement. Financial contributions will be sought from developers to overcome barriers in line with DDA requirements
b) Gradients and level changes. The statutory requirements for ramped access can have implications on the extent of development. These should be identified at the earliest stages and where necessary directly influence proposed building alignments.

c) Potential user conflicts: the likely volume of people using the route network should be considered realistically in its planning and design, and sufficient space allowed to minimize conflicts with other users (such as cyclists) which disabled people tend to experience on busy routes. Widening of existing routes will be sought.

d) Urban and landscape design: making the area as “legible” and connected as possible is key to providing a fully accessible environment – this should include improving existing circular routes which take in features such as Swans Nest Weir.

**AM02 Cycling and Development**

Planning Permission for development will only be granted where the needs of cyclists, have been successfully incorporated into the design. New or improved cycling routes should link as directly as possible with existing or proposed routes leading to key destinations, such as leisure, community and public transport facilities, both within or adjacent to the site.

On new or improved cycling routes and transport schemes, the amount or carriageway given over to cyclists must be such as to prevent conflict with other highway users. Where segregation is required, cyclists should not be isolated from other road users and activity.

Physical measures such as advanced cycle stop lines, safe crossings, priority at junctions and roundabouts and the use of appropriate materials will be required in certain circumstances.

Safe and secure cycle parking facilities will be required in accordance within standards set out in appendix 01 of the local plan. Such facilities must be provided in a form and location which would minimize the potential for conflict between cyclists and pedestrians and permit surveillance, thus providing security for both cyclists and people.

**AM03 Pedestrian and Cycle Route Networks**

Planning Permission for development will not be granted where it would sever or adversely affect the continuity of pedestrian routes, unless suitable alternative provision and alignment can be provided to the satisfaction of the City Council.

Planning permission for development will not be granted where it would sever or adversely affect the continuity of the cycle route network, in particular the National Cycle Network routes as shown on Map 03 in the Local Plan and City Centre Routes as shown on Map 03a, unless suitable alternative provision and alignment
can be provided to the satisfaction of the City Council. Development will not be permitted where its activities, particularly in terms of traffic generation, would substantially add to the dangers of pedestrians, people with limited mobility and cyclists using the Citywide pedestrian and cycle route network. Development should wherever possible provide natural surveillance of these routes.

**AM05 Buses and Development**

Planning permission for large scale development will not be granted unless:

- a) at least 75% of the development is within 250m walking distance of a bus stop; and
- b) no part of the development is more than 400m from a bus stop; and
- c) routes for buses through the development are such as to provide direct links with the highway network, by priority access arrangements if necessary, and maximise the opportunity for extending the existing network of bus service in the City

**AM09 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans**

If a Transport Assessment (TA) predicts an increase in traffic on the adjacent highway of greater than 10%, or 5% in sensitive areas, or if existing and proposed on-site car parking would not accommodate the predicted requirements, the TA must identify measures to reduce the impact of the development on the highway. A Travel Plan will also be required which identifies appropriate measures and contributions to:

- a) reduce car usage and increase access by walking, cycling, and public transport identifying measurable modal split targets
- b) reduce traffic speeds and improve road safety and personal security, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists; and
- c) provide arrangements for monitoring and enforcement of the travel plan objectives

A travel plan should be submitted for smaller developments which generate significant amounts of travel in or near air quality management areas, or where it would address a particular local traffic problem associated with a development. In such cases and where necessary, an assessment of traffic movements will be required for the development to identify the impact of traffic on the highway.

**AM12. Parking provision with non-residential development**

Proposals for parking provision for non-residential development should not exceed
the maximum parking standards as set out in Council policy
Reductions below these maximum parking standards will be required by the City Council, in accordance with the reduction targets for non-residential parking provision, after consideration of the following criteria:

a) access by other means of transport (currently and in the medium to long term)
b) availability, accessibility and safety of existing or alternative car parking provision
c) consequences of under provision in a particular location
d) proximity to the Central Commercial Zone
e) benefits of imposing traffic restraint
f) impact on Conservation Areas
g) relationship to other uses nearby
h) anticipated levels of car use (including the potential reduction of car usage through Travel Plans); and
i) pattern of working hours

Parking provision to accommodate the needs of disabled people (i.e. blue badge holders) will be specified in accordance with need and will not be subject to restraint measures. Parking provision to accommodate the needs of people with children will also be specified in accordance with need.

**AM13. Residential Car Parking Provision**

Levels of car parking for residential development will be determined in accordance with Council policy.

Reductions below the maximum standards may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

a) in the Central Commercial Zone
b) in the area immediately adjacent to the Central Commercial Zone, which is accessible by means of transport other than the private car
c) in other locations within 250m walking distance of good public transport
d) where other design objectives are sought (including the creation of a sense of place)
e) in locations where there is existing or surplus parking provision; and
f) in conservation areas where provision cannot be physically accommodated without detriment to the character or appearance of the area.

On –street parking may be acceptable providing access, amenity and safety are not compromised.
Where on plot parking is provided it should be provided between dwellings or within the interior of the block or underground where possible.

**Housing**

**H03. Density**

The following minimum net densities will be sought:

a) On sites of 0.3 hectares or more within the defined Central Commercial Zone: At least 50 dwellings per hectare
b) On sites of 0.3 hectares or more within 250 metres walking distance of main public transport corridors or defined Town and District Centres: At least 40 dwellings per hectare
c) On all other sites: At least 30 dwellings per hectare

On larger sites, a variety of densities may be necessary to meet the urban design objectives of this plan.

In order to achieve higher density development, a high quality of design will be sought, which incorporates environmental considerations, the need for open space and landscaping.

**Affordable Housing**

**Affordable Housing in the CLLP (2006) is defined in paragraphs 6.37 and 6.38.**

**HO6. Housing Mix and Type**

Where appropriate, large new housing developments should provide a suitable range of dwellings sizes and types in order to create mixed and socially inclusive communities.

The City Council will also seek a proportion of new dwellings on appropriate sites to the ‘Lifetime Home’ Standards.

**HO9. Affordable Housing**

The City Council will seek at least 30% affordable housing on developments of 25 or more dwellings, or at least 1 hectare or more outside the Strategic Regeneration Area, which is recognized as a priority investment area.

The Council will seek to achieve an overall target of 30% of new dwellings to be affordable within the Strategic Regeneration Area, which is recognised as a priority investment area.
The onus will be on the housing developer to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, why any targets may not be met – the presumption will be that the affordable housing created in the development of a site will be provided on-site.

In exceptional circumstances the City Council may approve an element of affordable housing to be provided elsewhere than on the application site. The basis of calculating the commuted sum to represent this ‘off site’ provision is the amount of public subsidy which a Registered Social Landlord would require to provide the affordable housing. This sum will be reviewed annually in line with RSL grant rates.

**Bio-Diversity**

**GE02. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Regionally Important Geological Sites**

Development will not be permitted where it would adversely affect Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Regionally Important Geological Sites, unless an overriding national or local need of strategic importance can be shown to outweigh the ecological interest. In such exceptional cases planning conditions will be imposed to mitigate the impact of development on the ecological or geological features of the site.

**GE03. Biodiversity Enhancement Sites**

Development on a Biodiversity Enhancement Site will be permitted if the strategic nature conservation value is maintained or enhanced. Opportunities will be sought through the planning process to enhance the bio-diversity of the site, of adjacent sites or of the green network to which it relates.

**GE04. Protected Species**

Development will only be acceptable where it would not harm or damage the habitat on which a protected species relies, unless an overriding interest can be proven and there are no alternative solutions available. Where an overriding need for the development is demonstrated by the City Council will impose conditions on the planning permission or enter into planning obligations to:

1. Facilitate the survival of individual members of species;
2. Reduce disturbance to a minimum
3. Provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population of the species
Archaeology

BE01. Preservation of the City’s Archaeological Heritage

The City’s archaeological heritage will be preserved where appropriate by:

- **requiring an archeological assessment and evaluation of a site to assist in the determination of any planning application, where that application would affect a site of known or potential archeological significance:** and
- **refusing planning permission for development which would seriously damage important archeological remains, including Scheduled Monuments and other nationally important sites, their setting or character:** or
- **Negotiating amendments to submitted schemes to preserve archeological remains in situ and generally minimize the impacts by appropriate siting, foundation design and location of services and associated landscaping:** or
- **Imposing conditions and/or seeking agreement with developers to ensure that sites of archaeological interest are excavated and recorded and the results disseminated, or are subject to appropriate archaeological investigation and recording during development, where preservation in situ is not merited**

Sustainability Policies

UD04 Energy Efficiency

Planning permission will not be given for development proposals which would fail sufficiently to achieve efficiency in the use of energy and incorporate measures suitable to the proposal by:

- **maximising the benefits of solar energy, passive solar gain, natural ventilation and the efficient use of natural light through siting, form, orientation and layout whilst addressing the density requirements of buildings:**
- **using landscaping to optimize energy conservation**

BE16 Renewable Energy

Planning permission will be granted for the development of renewable energy installations where they do not have an unacceptable effect on the local environment that would outweigh their wider community and/or environmental benefits.

All major developments will be expected to provide an assessment of how they will
contribute towards the regional targets for renewable energy. Planning permission will only be granted for major developments that realize their potential for meeting their energy requirements from renewable resources.

**BE17. Combined Heat and Power and Community Heating**

Planning permission will be granted for infrastructure associated with combined heat and power schemes where it does not have an unacceptable effect on the local environment that would outweigh their wider community and/or environmental benefits. All major developments and developments within the Strategic Regeneration Area will be expected, where feasible, to source their energy requirements from combined heat and power (either through on-site plant or a community heating network). Planning permission will only be granted for those developments that source their energy requirements from combined heat and power or can demonstrate that this is not a feasible option. All new developments within proximity to existing or proposed community heating networks must assess the possibility of sourcing their energy requirements from such networks. Planning permission will only be granted for those developments that propose to meet their energy requirements onsite or from the network or can demonstrate that this is not a feasible option.

**B19 Water Flow and Quality**

New Development must seek to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of, and flows within, the water environment through source control and other mitigation measures.

Development will not be permitted on sites where the discharge of additional surface water will create or exacerbate existing flooding or pollution problems.

**Open Space and Play Areas**

**GE13. Provision of Children’s Play Areas**

Developments which include 15 units of family housing or more should incorporate 0.8 ha. of children’s play space per 1000 population, to include at least one Local Area for (LAP).

Developments of 50 Units or more will be required to include at least one Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP).

The location, siting and design of play areas should:

a) encourage a variety of forms of play to cater for the needs of children of different ages (as appropriate to the site), race, sex and ability;

b) be fenced to make them secure against dogs;

c) provide facilities and access suitable for carers with prams or push
chairs;

d) be overlooked by nearby properties; and

e) cause no unacceptable harm to residential amenity

For smaller developments of family housing the City Council will seek to negotiate a commuted sum towards the provision and/or enhancement of play space in a location accessible to the new development.

GE14. Provision of Youth and Adult Outdoor Playing Space

Residential development must make provision for youth and adult play. Where appropriate a minimum of 1.6 ha. of play space per 1000 population added should be included as part of the development. Where the scale or nature of the development does not allow space for youth and adult play, the City Council will seek a commuted sum towards the provision or improvement of outdoor sporting and recreational facilities in an accessible location. Any provision will be directly related to the development proposed.

Retail Policies

R01. Major Retail Development

Outside the existing shopping centres shown on the Proposals Map, planning permission for major new retail development will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the development, and that there are no suitable and available sites or buildings in the following locations, where appropriate to the catchment that the development seeks to serve:

a) firstly within the Central Shopping Core; followed by sites
b) on the edge of the Central Shopping Core; then
c) within the Town Shopping Cores;
d) on the edge of the Town Shopping Cores;
e) within the district centres or within the local centres providing the proposed development is appropriate to the scale and function of the centre.

Where the above cannot be demonstrated the following considerations will then be taken into account when assessing planning applications for major retail development outside the preferred locations set out above:

a) the proposal does not undermine the strategy and objectives of the Local Plan to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres;
b) the scale of development and type of retailing, by itself, or cumulatively with other retail development proposals, (including those
with outstanding planning permissions) would not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the Central Shopping Core or nearby town, district and local centres;

c) the location is accessible by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling and public transport; and

d) there are no losses of land use, or land allocation, for which there is an identified need in the local plan

R06. LOCAL SHOPPING OUTSIDE DEFINED SHOPPING CENTRES

Planning permission will not be granted for new local shops and facilities falling within Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 outside the centres identified on the Proposals Map unless:

a) there is a need for additional local facilities in the area;
b) suitable sites and premises are not available in nearby shopping centres;
c) the proposed development is easily accessible by foot, cycle and by public transport;
d) significant disturbance is unlikely to be caused to nearby residential areas (the change of use of mid-terrace houses will not be acceptable); and

e) the traffic generated by the development will not have a significantly detrimental impact on parking and traffic problems and pedestrian and highway safety.

Flooding

BE20. Floodrisk

Developments that are likely to create flood risk onsite or elsewhere will only be permitted if adequate mitigation measures and/or appropriate flood defence works can be implemented to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Buildings of Local Interest and impact on Listed Buildings

BE04. Setting of a Listed Building

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would have a detrimental effect on the setting of a listed building.

BE08. Buildings of local interest

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would have an unacceptably adverse impact on a building the historic, architectural or amenity
value of which merits protection.

Urban Design

UD01. High Quality Building Design and Local Context

Planning Permission will be given for sustainable high quality building designs, whether they are interpretations of traditional styles or not, providing proposals have regard to local context including:

a) existing landscape characteristics and features such as trees, hedgerows ponds and waterways;
b) the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines and heights within the street scene;
c) the detailed design of the existing building where ancillary buildings and extensions are proposed; and
d) the retention and enhancement of existing urban spaces, traditional local materials, and townscape or historic features which contribute to the character of the area

Planning permission will not be granted for design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunity available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

UD03. Design and Layout of Streets and Public Spaces

High quality and imaginative designs for streets and public spaces are encouraged. Planning permission will be given for proposals in which:

a) proposals integrate with existing routes and are well connected to the wider area;
b) the layout of streets encourages walking and cycling, and caters for all people including people with disabilities, elderly people, young people and people with young children, and caters for the requirements of public transport;
c) conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles is minimized by street designs that restrict traffic speed to an appropriate level and provide pedestrian and cyclist priority;
d) the safety of pedestrians and cyclists is promoted through streets that are overlooked, preclude potential hiding places and prevent inappropriate access. Unnecessary footpaths between and to the rear of properties should be avoided; and
e) streets and public open spaces are designed to be easily maintained and provide coordinated urban hardware.
APPENDIX 5

Ecology – Kingfisher site and ‘Leatherbank’

It was reported in 1998 that a pair of kingfishers were nesting in the old ‘leather bank’ at the BUSM site, overlooking the canal and close to a mature ash tree in the canal bank. The birds were excavating their nest holes in the friable material formed of old leather, rubber, plastic etc. Nesting was recorded in 2000 and 2001, and they are seen every year in the locality. This is an important site for the species and is likely to be the only one in the more heavily urbanised part of the river in Leicester.

Kingfishers usually return to the same site each year to nest, although they often don’t use the same hole but excavate new ones. The adults start investigating the site early in the year, often from February onwards. Disturbance during this time can easily cause them to desert the nest-site. The nest is a narrow tunnel one to two feet deep into the bank. Several broods can be reared each year, so the nesting season can be taken as usually extending from February to August. However, it is possible for birds to still be rearing young very late in the year - it depends on many factors such as the health and body weight of the adults, how successful the adults have been in raising previous broods, and on available food.

Any activity between February and August involving loud noises, large items of machinery, ground disturbance, vibration, etc., such as could be caused by building, demolition, re-grading, ground stabilising, piling etc. would be disturbing (and therefore illegal) if it was close enough to the site.
APPENDIX 6

Submission of Plans with Planning Applications

This note explains the requirements regarding the submission of planning applications and the quality and detail shown on plans submitted to Leicester City Council. The council have a legal duty to ensure that planning applications are complete and valid, and that members of the public are able to examine, understand and comment on them.

Location Plan

Four copies of a location plan, preferably taken from an Ordnance Survey Sheet and to scale of 1:1250, clearly showing the location of the application site in relation to the adjacent properties, must be submitted with all applications. Extracts from Ordnance Survey sheets may be purchased from licensees of the Ordnance Survey. The City Council can supply such extracts for the purposes of making planning or building control applications.

Site Boundary

The boundary of the application site must be outlined and all adjoining land in the control of the applicant outlined in blue. This must correspond with ownership details given on the application form and ownership certificate.

Scale

All plans must be drawn to metric dimensions and to a recognized scale such as 1:10, 1:20, 1:50, 1:100, 1:200; and 1:500.

Relationships to adjoining sites

The submitted plans shall clearly show the relationship and distance of the proposal to all site boundaries, including the highway.

Access Statement

Please contact the City Council’s Access Officer on tel: 0116 2527290 for further details

Energy Statement

See para. 3.7 and Appendix 4 for details
If you require this guidance to be explained to you, or in large print or on
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Representations received in writing</th>
<th>Changes to draft SPD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statutory Bodies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The EA will rigorously apply the conditions set out in paragraph 16.1 - Flood Risk.</td>
<td>Agreed. No change to text required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Agency is doubtful whether any large scale flood alleviation works to address flood risk in the future would be feasible without changing the flood profile.</td>
<td>Agreed. Amend text to include this text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All proposed bridges over the river and any works with 8m of the top of the bank of the river will require the prior formal consent of the Agency in compliance with the WATER Resources Act 1991 (Section 109) and the Land Drainage byelaws.</td>
<td>No change to text required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Climate Change predictions</td>
<td>No change to text required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land Contamination Comments</td>
<td>Delete report from SPD. Further discussion required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The SPD includes a report by BWB Consulting titled ‘Environmental and Engineering Development Appraisal (November 2004) as an appendix.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Corporation</td>
<td>The proposals include a tariff for planning obligations; this would not include affordable housing which would be provided in kind or on site</td>
<td>Section 5.0 Discuss at future meetings. Will be dependent on outcomes of Member/Officer meetings regarding planning obligations for the key intervention areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Housing Corporation as a funding agency for affordable housing has its own policy to determine the input of out grant on Section 106 sites. The policy is set out in the document ‘The National Affordable Housing Programme 2006/08 Prospectus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key aspects of the policy for paying grant on Section 106 sites:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC preference is for affordable housing in Section 106 sites to be delivered without grant input from the Housing Corporation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For grant to be considered, we require early involvement in the negotiations over the content of the Section 106 Agreement as it relates to the affordable housing, in particular, the expectations about the availability of Corporation Grant. Our objective in negotiations will be that the site delivers more affordable housing or a different mix, which reflects the Government's approach to mixed communities, than would have been possible without the input of grant.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We will only fund Section 106 sites which integrate different tenures in a single site design, following the mixed communities principles. The approach does require us to be involved in discussions on such sites at an early stage to identify the need for grant and what the grant will deliver over and above what could have been provided without it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We would therefore welcome being involved in the future planning process for the overall area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are aware of the Knight Frank report into housing for the Leicester City Centre. It would be useful to know if this report has been used to shape the draft SPD and future considerations of housing in the City Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Housing Corporation funding is sought then we would expect any scheme to comply with our funding requirements which include standards of quality, build such as Eco House standards as applicable at the time. Therefore, it may be useful to add this into the SPD under the affordable housing section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As part of the early involvement in the master planning and site specific work we would be able to offer our input into construction (modern methods of construction options) design quality issues particularly for affordable housing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Agreed. This will be carried out as part of the planning application process. |
| No change to text in SPD |

| Agreed. This will be carried out as part of the planning application process. |
| Discuss at future meeting |
| Discuss at future meeting |
| Change text to 16.9 – amend text as shown. Affordable homes with HC support should be expected to be built to ECO very high standard. |
| No change to SPD |
EMDA welcome the SPD and support it as an approach to bringing together the key planning issues in a part of Leicester which is undergoing considerable regeneration activity. The Agency strongly supports the objectives of the SPD set out in chapter 3 of the document.

EMDA is particularly supportive of the proposed Science and Technology Park. This is a project which supports all three key drivers of success and a significantly large number of the strands of activity of the Regional Economic Strategy 'Destination 2010'. The Science and Technology Park is a strategically significant project which would make a major contribution to the economic growth and development of Leicester City Council.

The Agency is directly involved in the development of the Science and Technology Park. EMDA is grant aiding the City Council to demolish the existing building. Abbey Meadows West area includes the former Depot site which is owned by the Agency.

The Abbey Meadows area comprises a substantial amount of brownfield land. The reuse and reclamation of previously developed sites is welcomed as it is in line with activities and targets set out in the site provision and development strand of the RES.

EMDA would encourage the City Council to ensure that the transport proposals for the area are brought forward in a sustainable way which will reduce the need to travel by car and the impacts of future developments on surrounding areas. We welcome the fact that the importance of sustainable modes of transport is recognised by the SPD.

We note that several areas within Abbey Meadows are identified as at risk of flooding in the Leicester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. It must be ensured that appropriate measures are taken to minimise the risks from floods in any future developments in this area.

Support noted

Para 6.1 - The SPD seeks to upgrade the pedestrian/cycle network to improve access in and around the area. Para 6.0 - It is intended to provide a bus route through Riverside West. No change to SPD

Para. 16.1 Addresses the issue of Flood Risk
No change to SPD
5.0 Key Development Requirements and Planning Obligations
5.1 General Principles

As part of the general principles relating to Planning Obligations we welcome that the City Council will seek to enter into legal agreements with private developers to secure contributions for undertaking the upgrading of the canal and riverside environment – including path widening/resurfacing and habitat creation. We will however need to assess the impact on navigation/flooding in relation to any ecological enhancement in this area.

We strongly advise that the Council and BW, as owners of the towpath, need to resolve the issues relating to the provision of an elevated canal side route and connections to the towpath. Many areas of the towpath, particularly in the centre of Leicester have high volumes of traffic.

We recognise that the towpath is well used but do not understand the conflicting messages being sent to us in respect of cycling access and connectivity to the canal advocated in the SPD and the non-cycling stance being put forward by the Councils Riverside Team in relation to the renewal of the multi-use licence.

5.2.2 Strategic Public Open Space and Play Area

We welcome the inclusion of towing paths upgrades and clean up in this section but believe it needs to be made clear that this relates to both river and canal side paths.

5.2.4 Maintenance Costs

This relates to the Council’s maintenance costs but does not address the issue of additional maintenance costs which could fall to British Waterways.

Agreed. Will need to resolve issue with BW. Further discussion required.

The provision of parallel, dedicated and, where appropriate, raised pedestrian and cycle routes along the Riverside is an established principle of Riverside development in the City. This is to reduce conflict of uses and create flood free routes and need not be in conflict with the BW Access Agreement.

Agreed. Amend text to refer to River and Canal paths.

Agreed. Discuss at future meeting.

Agreed. Discuss at future meeting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.0 Public Space</td>
<td>It is inferred that the towpath is unsafe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7 Proposals for Waterside Centre Area of Wolsey Island</td>
<td>The provision of additional boating facilities is welcomed in principle. BW need further details in relation to proposals before being able to comment on acceptability of uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 Network of Interconnecting streets</td>
<td>BW will need to be involved at an early stage to establish the acceptability of the crossings and in relation to commercial considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.0 Infrastructure – Primary Movement</td>
<td>19. A full assessment of proposed mooring locations would have to be undertaken in order to assess their suitability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.0 Spaces - Hard and Soft</td>
<td>11. Refers to a ‘cycle way’ and ‘some through vehicles’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. We need to assess the impact on navigation/flooding in relation to any ecological enhancement in this area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.0 Planning and Development Issues</td>
<td>The Community Heating Pipeline is shown across the Canal. BW will require any pipe to pass beneath the Canal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change text to include ‘perceived as’ unsafe.

Agreed. No change to text required.

Agreed. No change to text required.

Agreed. No change to text required.

Agreed. Delete ‘some through vehicles’. Further discussion required on cycle routes as above.

Agreed. No change to text required.

Agreed. Change text and sketch as required to show pipe under canal. Further discussion on principles required.
Appendix 2 - Canal Structures
We suggest that this is reworded to reflect that, whilst the canal environment has a natural character, it is also a ‘cruising waterway’.

3.0 Guiding Principles
We welcome the principles relating to

- Recreation potential of the riverside and canal corridors
- The need for high quality, publicly accessed open space to meet the needs of the new development and adjacent communities – this could perhaps be expanded to clarify that it includes sporting provision
- School and community facilities

4.5 Open Space and play areas
Emphasis on this aspect of the development is welcome

5.0 Key Development Requirements and Planning Obligations

5.1 General Principles, and 5.2.2 Strategic Public Open Spaces and Play Areas

We recommend that the 10th bullet point in 5.1 should be expanded to highlight that provision for sports needs to be addressed under this heading. This is particularly important as the emphasis in the document as a whole appears to be on off-site sport provision

Agreed. No change to text required.

Support noted

Support noted

As part of the development of the Science Park on the former John Ellis School, it is proposed to reinstate football pitches on the existing playing fields and provide changing facilities. It would be difficult to provide further on site sports facilities without adversely affecting the aspirations for Abbey Meadows. No change to SPD.
5.2.4 Maintenance Costs

We support the councils approach, as long term maintenance will be crucial to the sustained success of open space and recreational provision.

7.0 Public Open Space

Sport England is not opposed to the proposals for John Ellis School, and the recognition for changing facilities is welcomed. However, the correct direction should be used across the whole of the regeneration area. This should show what is provided in the local area and what needs to be provided through the development process. There may be opportunities to make some provision within the site, especially for small scale facilities such as MUGA’s etc. Also, there may be an opportunity to enhance provision at Abbey Park. Concentrating on John Ellis needs to be justified and other opportunities not overlooked.

English Nature is concerned that the sustainability appraisal does not adequately assess the impacts of the plan on natural environments and biodiversity.

The extent of the bio-diversity enhancement is still unclear from the SPD. An indication of the size of the area to be created would allow better assessment of whether the end result is likely to be an enhancement in the natural assets and biodiversity.

We are supportive of the activities that improve the ecological condition of the canal and river but advise that there should be enhancement of other parts of the area covered by the SPD. It is important that there is no loss of all habitats affected. Areas such as allotments and derelict land are often important wildlife sites. The opportunities provided by ‘green roofs’ for mitigating loss of some habitats should be considered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support noted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.0 - Amend as shown. Include - in addition to LAP and LEAP a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area) of play will be required to ensure that all ages are catered for. A NEAP area incorporating a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) should be included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree. There will be no loss or disturbance of habitats in the SINC (River Soar), which is the only designated site. No change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed – 7.1, 7.3 &amp; Diagrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend text to include details of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extent of proposed new reed bank in canal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proposed extent of John Ellis Wetland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extent of new planting along river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss at future meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments may be retained and managed (in part) as natural open space that enhances the riverside. No other loss of habitat is proposed by the SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Chartered Institution of Waste Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leicestershire Constabulary</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4.7 Housing

Add – To promote good design …in order to create high quality, safe and secure living environments

Para 15.2, alter to:

...compose high quality vistas

Para 16.7, expand and rewrite as follows:

Community Safety and Crime Prevention through planning and design

This refers to providing a sustainable and healthy local environment with well designed public and green space and the creation of safe places through the adoption of designing out crime principles

The creation of a safe environment for people who work and live in the site and move through the site to other destinations.

New development should offer security to the public, in particular pedestrians and cyclists. This can be achieved through the following:

- Access and Movement
- Structure

Disagree about low profile, but agree that plans may be hidden in report. Plans to be extracted and summarised.

Amend as shown

Amend as shown

Agreed. Amend as shown
Para 16.8.2 Traffic Pollution

This may be in conflict with para. 16.7 where habital rooms to residential development are encouraged to overlook the street scene but may be subject to traffic pollution. Buildings should be set back.

Para 19 Contacts

Add Leicestershire Constabulary/Architectural Liaison Officer

Leicestershire County Council

Strategic Linkages with Ashton Green

The SPD does not acknowledge any strategic link between the two proposals, nor does it recognise the need to develop a strategic approach to accommodating both developments. For example there is no recognition that Abbey Meadows will compliment and support a bus route along the A6.

The document needs to be improved in terms of setting the Abbey Meadows development in a strategic context and recognising its strategic links with other developments.

| • Surveillance  |
| • Ownership    |
| • Physical protection |
| • Activity     |
| • Management and Maintenance |

There are ways in addressing potential pollution problems for residential development. No change to SPD

Amend as shown

Discuss at future meeting in relation to the Strategic Traffic Assessment for Abbey Meadows
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wider highways and Transportation impacts</th>
<th>Discuss at future meeting.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The document concentrate solely on the internal matters and access to the road network in the immediate locality. It fails to recognise the wider impacts of this very significant development. The A6 is a key access route into the city. Congestion problems within the city e.g. at A563/A6 “Redhill Circle”, A6/Beaumont Leys lane, A6/Abbey Park Road, A6/Sanvey Gate and A6/Inner Ring Road junctions will cause problems with the County, e.g. on the A6 through Birstall. The document will need to recognise the highways and transportation measures will be required much further a field than is currently envisaged.</td>
<td>Agreed. No Change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transport: The A6 Abbey Lane and Abbey Park Road are key bus routes, used by services serving both the City and County. This document does not properly recognise their importance in this respect. This document fails to recognise the need for Abbey Meadows development to compliment existing initiatives in Birstall (park and ride) and other bus measures on the A6.</td>
<td>3.0 refers to Public Transport serving the Abbey Meadows site. No change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2.0 It is clear that this document provides the key steer to developers as they consider individual sites; It therefore needs to provide the proper strategic context.</td>
<td>Discuss at future meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3.0 This section should recognise the strategic links with Ashton Green Public Transport should have its own bullet point which recognises both strategic and more local issues. Furthermore, the 4th bullet point talks about cross-river bridge linkages including for vehicular access, but this is not reflected in section 5.0 para 5.2.1</td>
<td>Discuss at future meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.0, para 4.3. To minimise vehicle trips, small scale shops would be encouraged on the development</td>
<td>Agreed. SPD identifies areas for small scale shops to meet local needs. No change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.0 para 5.1 The bullet point on public transport should be strengthened</td>
<td>Amend as shown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Groups and Agencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equal Opportunities Commission</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have no comments to make on the draft document</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Rights Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unable to comment on the SPD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Builders Federation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2 The text refers to the draft SPD being prepared in accordance with the Area Strategy Guidance. It is not clear whether this forms part of the Adopted Local Plan, or a Development Plan Document. The draft SPD will not be adopted as SPD until such time as the statutory document it relates, has itself been adopted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| |
| Section 5.0 para 5.2.1 Needs to include strategic off site highway improvements to the wider network |
| Section 6.0 The potential strategic role of the bus link through the site needs to be recognised and considered. Also what about public transport links between Wolsey Island and BUSM site and the Science Park and Riverside West? |
| Careful consideration must be given to the site access onto the A6. This is an important route serving the City and County and congestion on this route will have significant implications on the routing of general traffic and on bus services. In 6.5, 5th bullet point consideration should also be given to including bus priority measures in key access junctions. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amend as shown</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.6 identifies proposals for public transport links. No change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss at future meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| |
| 5.1 The statutory policy basis for any tariff per square metre of built development, and or number of residential units and bed space is extremely unclear. It would seem unlikely that all developments would be capable of paying such tariffs. Equally not all developers would be likely to sign up to such a requirement. Whilst a tariff system may work the approach for sites like this is problematic and likely to make delivery difficult. |

<p>| |
| |
| Amend 2.2 as shown. |
| Agreed. The SPD will form part of the Councils adopted local plan. Amend 2.2 as shown. |
| The approach (and therefore text) relating to Developer Contributions is to be amended to reflect on-going research and negotiations. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.2.4</td>
<td>Maintenance payments for open spaces and highways/footways. With regards to open space payments, any demands will need to be in accordance with Adopted Local Plan standards and Circular 5/05. It is unclear as to why maintenance payments should be sought for highways and footways that are publicly adopted. These should be maintained and managed in the same way as all other public highways and footways.</td>
<td>Agreed. Change text as shown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>The rules, regulations and procedures for delivery of affordable housing are currently in a state of great uncertainty at the moment. Traditional local authority social housing grant has long gone and with it, the degree of control LA’s have over how many affordable units should be provided. All of this means that future approaches to the delivery of affordable housing will be very different to the way the system has operated previously. The availability of subsidy will also be a key factor in this and will require a cascade approach to provision rather than strictly adhering to traditional tenures if the provision of affordable housing is not to be stifled due to lack funding. The draft SPD should address this issue under the heading of public subsidy and should refer to the cascade mechanism to ensure that sites continue to come forward. ODPM Consultation paper ‘Planning for Mixed Communities’ (January 2005) also emphasises the importance of understanding prevailing housing market conditions when setting affordable housing requirement levels:</td>
<td>Discuss at future meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>In determining the amount of affordable housing to be sought on sites, local planning authorities should balance the need for affordable housing against the likely development potential of sites. This relationship may vary across the plan area. This will mean taking into account the implications of competing land uses and making realistic assumptions about levels of public subsidy likely to be available (based on priorities set out in the regional housing strategy and discussions with the Housing Corporation.</td>
<td>Discuss at future meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The document will need to make adequate reference to the importance of the availability of public funding. The above mentioned consultation paper makes specific comment on use of cascade or fallback mechanism where public funding is lacking:

The text will also need to relate to any affordable housing requirement to other planning gains being sort by the local authority, or overall viability of individual development sites.

The same applies to tenure. Policy should not be prescriptive as the aim of the Council should be to meet the housing needs of all. There will be a whole host of reasons why it will not be possible to achieve the same affordable housing solution on two sites, not at least of which is the availability of funding. Tenure should not be determined solely by the level of need for social rented housing to meet the needs of the minority, so much as what is best planning solution for the site in terms of creating sustainable, mixed and balanced communities. The SPD should aim to meet a variety of housing need and should be responsive to the particular needs of each individual site.

The Council will need to have regard to its Housing Market Assessment when negotiating affordable housing provision, as well as local site and surrounding area characteristics, other planning gain requirements, and the availability or not of grant funding.

The development industry is vehemently opposed to open book accounting, which the text seems to imply it. Furthermore, there is no policy justification for the Council seeking to pursue such an approach wither at a national level or local level.

1. The document contains some very important and helpful guidance but there needs to be a fair bit of editing to make the document more readable. As an example there is reference to cycle routes in section 8.3.1 and again in 8.6 and again in section 11 items 18 and 19. This all needs collating in one part of the

Agreed. No Change to text

Discuss at future meetings

Discuss at future meetings

Discuss at future meetings

Agreed. No change to SPD

Discuss at future meetings

Agreed. Text to be edited and amended to make document more readable
document to give clear and comprehensive guidance on this issue. The same comment applies to vehicle parking, vehicle access and standards which appear in two or three parts of the document.

2. Refers in several places to funding mechanisms which will be set up to share costs of public realm, pos etc., but doesn’t say how, who, when or on what basis. Won’t developers need this, and isn’t important that the mechanism should be incorporated to give it the clout of SPD?

3. Section 9 on density doesn’t actually say anything. It sets out national guidance, but what is the guidance here? The bit after the comma at end of first para makes no sense at all. In fact the reference to anything over single storey being 75+ per hectare covers everything surely as no bungalows are being planned here?

### Specific points

- **P 10 para 1.3 & 1.4**
  This seriously under-states the strategic case for the whole project – economic diversification, graduate retention, exploitation of University science, uniqueness of this site in absence of any adjoining Universities, etc., and importance of high quality & of public realm in achieving all this. If that isn’t stated, it weakens the document if challenged, e.g. by planning appeal.

- **2.2** need to be clear that this SPD will be a material consideration in planning apps and CPO.

- **3.0** LRC has always quoted 45,000 sq m as the target floorspace for the Science Park

- **4.3** Retail/leisure should also be complimentary to Science Park as well as housing - pub or restaurant, for example. - Generally Retail and leisure are stated to be for local use, otherwise the sequential test will be applied – However combine with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes will be required to the SPD over time to ensure it responds to changes in demands, market forces and deliverability. Research on these issues is continuing and further work and detailed guidance will be undertaken to ensure the proposals are appropriate and adequate to deliver high quality development and the delivery of essential infrastructure and public realm.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreed. Discuss at future meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed. Change text as shown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed. Change text as shown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed. Change text as shown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“vision” on the front cover “Destinations delivering benefits for City and complementary to Science Park & NSC.
Appendix 1 Reference seems wrong

4.4.1 Every effort must be made to retain and incorporate” – This is too strong for local interest buildings. – Sure we should try & keep. The list seems too long also, Both Chimneys (I thought the “Wolsey” one was the best & was the main landmark? The tower could prove quite difficult to re-use, 7 the riverside centre even rebuilt may be too far away to create the one leisure/retail environment hoped for.

Rope walks buildings seem to cut site in half, Riverside cottages? The bus depot buildings are already to be demolished?

4.4.2 Historic Buildings to be retained seems to include at Diagram 4 part of the Rocket Studio’s but I don’t think this has been allowed for in the master planning for the Island?

4.4.3 What does all this mean?

4.7 Affordable Housing requirements need to be checked. – Housing Policy – View Wolsey island (WI) + BUSM + Abbey Meadows residential offer as one area. Appendix 4 Ho 6 – Affordable Housing (AH) is @ 30% outside LRC area, - what is it meant to be inside LRC area, AM is all within the LRC area.

4.11 Planning Applications/Permissions – Boston House lower density proposal is now approved? Should Morris Homes latest application be mentioned?

5.0 ‘Contributions to support the cost of land assembly’??? Probably means for open space: This needs clarifying as the document seems confused on this point as it talks in one place about negotiated settlements on developer contributions and then refers to a tariff at a rate per sq m (but no figures given) elsewhere.

Disagree. Both the existing chimneys and water towers form important landmarks within the site. No change to text.

Agreed. Change as shown.

Agreed. Change as shown.

The relationship between new development and existing development. Amend text to clarify

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.1 Will this be overtaken by the new approach emanating from the LCC officer/member working group? Prioritising of need/works is needed.</th>
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<tr>
<td>I think as with Waterside a reference to an aspiration for a tariff can be set out but caveat with need for further investigation and research as to its appropriateness here and the mechanism to be employed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repeat of reference to Public Art 1st+5th dot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developers should be able to provide the work in lieu of making contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2.5 Repetition</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.1 How is the formula for highway contributions intended to work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 No U turn facility at the entrance to the Science Park as this will destroy the very Gateway desired elsewhere in the SPD. There is no mention of the desired bus link via the allotments to Abbey Park Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure how the view down the new access road into Science Park will create a view of the NSC without setting back the buildings on the serviced plots too far.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Access to Wolsey Island-shouldn’t this section be a bit more prescriptive in where the access needs to be-after all the frontage to Abbey Park Road is very limited therefore the options are likewise limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 BU&amp;M should be expected to pay for the necessary bridge and associated road construction &amp; connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 Shared cost of open space provision across different ownerships on WI – Ideas to consider? Per acre/per unit/per square foot?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 WI – off site “improvement of contributory local open space and play facilities” – where and what is meant by this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 POS on Science Park should include public art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7 Is the existing riverside location the best phase to “centre” a water &amp;/or leisure experience around? – Too far from water tower? Isn’t such a thing likely to be more than a local destination? And appeal to the City and beyond? - Should it</td>
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<td>Discuss at future meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree. No Change to SPD. A Proposed Waterside Centre would fit will in well with the civic space proposed around the water tower, thus forming an important</td>
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</table>
be closer to the Water tower/foot bridge? - Should it be on NSC side of the river? I don’t understand why the existing AM road would be realigned to create a development plot within the floodplain?

8.4 Are these the areas tested in ARUP’s strategic TA?

9.0 Need to explain more clearly, suggest stat with the 75+ density, and then explain the lower density if single storey development is undertaken.

11.0 Would this information be better combined with section 6?

11. Item 2 - Should residential on SP approach road really be to back of footpath? It’s going to be a v busy road, with SP and NSC visitors, and we should aim at a leafy sort of feel here – houses should be set back, or some gable-on to road.

11.9 20m wide, Boulevard, say: Carriageway 7m 2 Footpath 2.1m = 4.2m Centre area to road 3.8m Total 15m

What are the other 5m for?? Or is it an open/“leafy” sort of feel?

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<td>What are the other 5m for?? Or is it an open/“leafy” sort of feel?</td>
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<td>NB I saw the section dwg “Diagram 10” later in section 13, wouldn’t this be better placed in the earlier section 6/11?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>If we keep Wolsey Chimney, should we remove the other? Do we need both?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>Main civic sq. – The water tower could be a liability and could be too far from Riverside Centre to create one “experience”?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NB Numbers on Diagram 7 do not stand out well enough in black &amp; white – this also applies to other plans. Numbers 4 and 14 have been transposed.</td>
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</table>

destination point on Wolsey Island. Discuss at future meeting.

TA has now been submitted. Discuss at future meeting

Agreed. Subject to further discussion.

Agreed. Section 6 and 11 to be merged to make it more readable

No change to SPD. Residential development at the back of pavement would provide active frontages and better surveillance onto the street, making the environment much safer.

The 5 metres will be landscaping to create a ‘Boulevard’ feel. Clarify in SPD

Agreed. Move to Section 6/11

No Change to SPD

Disagree. Both chimneys are important landmarks within the site. No change to text

Discuss at future meeting
There seems to be no mention in the text of the broken line notation, which seems to downgrade the present NSC access to a pedestrian priority zone. In vehicular terms, this severs John Ellis from the rest of the SP and is a mistake.

12.9/10 These locations are for locals only, not Destinations for others outside the area. The size and distance between could be too great for economic development for a relatively small market. Perhaps a more reusable/looser interpretation should be considered, and allow the offer to appeal more widely?

12.14 This is a huge open area, particularly if a lower (75+) density is implemented. I understand flood considerations here were minimal, if indeed there were any?

12.17 I can’t see the Number 17 on the plan.

13.6 Diagram 10? – A feature building on the tip of W1 will balance the draw of the NSC Tour.

Compare statement of “Gateway Structures” at entrance of Boulevard with Morris Homes’ current application.

Diagram 10 – Central Parking Zone? Shouldn’t this be earlier, say section 11? Which itself should be closer to section 6.

13.11 Modest structure, is it that good? Does the liability of upkeep outweigh the benefits of keeping?

13.12 Perhaps the wharf should be a new construction? And if it attracts outsiders then the leisure and retail associated use could be more than just local?

14 Land Use Plan—any changes proposed to reflect changed mix of uses to Ingleby site? - Diagram 13 – A1/A2/A3 seems way too large for local use only, or is it just to show acceptable locations for it, rather than suggesting the amount? Can’t some of leisure/retail also support the NSC & make it a more viable attraction?

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Disagree. This size of open space would serve a large wide area. Further discussions taking place with EA re: Flooding. No change to SPD.

Agreed. Amend plan as shown.

Agreed. Amend text to clarify.

Agreed. Move to different section

Disagree. Water Tower important feature both visually and historically. No change to SPD.

No Change to SPD

Agreed. Land use plan to be revised to make it in accordance with Local Plan policies, and to make it clearer as to the size and type of uses that would be acceptable on the site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Bestway (Wolsey Island)</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>15 Massing and Storey Heights - I don’t understand the last sentence “highly visible facades aligning the river corridor, when the natural environment is to dominate” Isn’t this Contradictory? We must recognise that 2/3 storey massing is likely to create viability problems, which will require public intervention/Gap Funding to bring Development forward. 16.1 See my comments on flood risk above in 12.14. 16.2.2 The Leather bank 30m exclusion zone presumably only applies to BUSM side (E bank of canal), <em>Not WI side</em>. However it will have a major adverse affect on the development process both in terms of design but also ability to construct. 16.9 Affordable Housing – Treat WI + BUSM + AM as a whole area. The council needs to prioritise the needs between Sec106/Affordable Housing etc. The stated vision for Abbey Meadows has at its heart an aspiration for the regeneration of an extensive area to the north-west of the city centre. The area includes a peninsula bounded by the Grand Union Canal and the River Soar known as Wolsey Island. A warehouse site in the ownership of Bestway is centrally located within this area. In general terms Bestway support the Leicester Regeneration Company’s vision towards the regeneration this part of the city of Leicester. Regeneration of the Abbey Meadows area should make a major contribution to the future environmental quality and economic prosperity of the city as a whole. In other</td>
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words, the initiatives signalled by the SPD will bring about benefits beyond the confines of the area to which the SPD applies.

It is vital to the success of the strategy that a climate is created wherein development proposals will be brought forward in accordance with its underlying principles. This requires that the owners and occupiers of land within the regeneration area are provided with sufficient incentive to bring the vision to reality.

The uses to which land and buildings may be put clearly directly affect value. This equally applies to the intensity of use and any other constraints which may be imposed. By way of example, the density at which residential development may take place and the proportion of affordable housing will have a direct bearing. Bestway are concerned that the imposition of onerous requirements and restrictions may have an inhibiting effect on the attractiveness of their site as a future development location within the context of the Vision in the following respects:

- Our client considers that the Bestway site and, by extension, others within Walsley Island are capable of accommodating residential development at a density higher than that envisaged in the SPD and the recently adopted City of Leicester Local Plan (January 2006). This would be consistent with the objective of maximising the use of previously developed land and the principles of sustainability espoused in many strands of national planning guidance.

Changes will be required to the SPD over time to ensure it responds to changes in demands, market forces and deliverability. Research on these issues is continuing and further work and detailed guidance will be undertaken to ensure the proposals are appropriate and adequate to deliver high quality development and the delivery of essential infrastructure and public realm. Discuss at future meeting.
• Considerable infrastructure costs are associated with the proposals for Wolsey Island, in the form of bridges, roadworks etc.

• The Council is seeking to pursue an overall target of 30% new dwellings to be affordable within the regeneration area, which is recognised as a priority area.

In all probability the effects of these requirements on potential returns will combine to ensure that development proposals in accordance with the Vision will prove unattractive to owners and occupiers and its laudable objectives will not come to fruition.

The affordable housing policy contained in the adopted Local Plan (HO9) advises that the Strategic Regeneration Area is regarded as a priority investment area. Ironically, the affordable housing requirement is likely to prove instrumental in frustrating that very investment. Seeing the investment take place should be the priority and the affordable element a secondary consideration.

A further concern arises in respect of the allocation of costs associated with the proposals embodied in the Vision, and in particular the costs of infrastructure. As we have noted, the benefits of the regeneration initiative will extend far beyond the area which it directly affects. They will be city-wide.

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting
Consequently, our client regards it as inequitable that the full burden of bridge works and other costs associated with Wolsey Island should fall solely on themselves and the neighbouring landowners.

We are concerned that the proposed ‘Common Pot’ for infrastructure, open space, community and social infrastructure will be imposed only on the landowners and stakeholders of the Abbey Meadows Vision.

The regeneration of this area will provide benefits in terms of infrastructure etc. to the wider community, in terms of improving the local and regional economy and the urban environment of Leicester as a whole. By imposing these costs on just a few landowners/stakeholders, together with the requirements for a fairly low proposed density on the site and affordable housing, it is possible that these mechanisms will increase the danger of any scheme coming forward as the individual landowners, including Bestways Limited may find that any scheme proposed is not viable.

Status Architecture and Planning act for Sock Island Investments Limited, owners of the former Courtaulds/Wolsey site at the northern end of Abbey Meadows.

We welcome the SPD and we share in the City Council’s vision for the area. The urban design principles in particular are to be commended as are the policies by providing “…a range and mix of housing type …” – essential in providing a...
mixed, vibrant and more balanced community; and
“...quality design to be achieved....” – so important as a long-term asset for
Leicester.
However we do have certain concerns and comments as follows:

1. Density
We believe that higher densities to those envisaged by the SPD would be
more relevant in this area and would lead to an attractive and exciting
development that this waterside location demands.
Firstly, it means that the costly infrastructure and other Section 106
provisions are more likely to be met, i.e. we doubt whether any
development would go ahead without it being high density.
Secondly, and particularly on the northern tip, a higher density means
more activity, a safer environment (in what otherwise could be a lonely
place) and more people to support the local amenities around the water
tower square.

2. Diagram 13 “Land Use” shows a huge area of A1, A2 and A3 around and
to the south of the water tower. We believe that allocating the ground and
first floors to these uses around the water tower square would be more
than enough to meet the “local needs” which paragraph 4.3 suggests that
it is for. The location, at the end of the island, is not suitable for anything
that attracts traffic.

Changes will be required to the SPD over time to ensure it responds to changes in demands, market forces and
deliverability. Research on these issues is continuing and
further work and detailed guidance will be undertaken to
ensure the proposals are appropriate and adequate to
deliver high quality development and the delivery of
essential infrastructure and public realm. Discuss at
future meeting.

Land use plan to be revised to make it in accordance
with Local Plan policies, and to make it clearer as to the
size and type of uses that would be acceptable on the
site.
3. **Affordable Housing**

   We are concerned that if LCC applies their 16.9 Affordable Housing policy then either no development will happen or it will not meet the Vision of the council. The LRC have identified enormous infrastructure costs and high quality design is essential. These two items must be met and a far more flexible approach to affordable housing is needed if Abbey Meadows is going to happen. Affordable housing must become a secondary consideration.

   On a related note, it is felt that the high infrastructure costs have a benefit to a much wider catchment area than Wolsey Peninsula alone. If the Council is not to be disappointed with the outcome of the Regeneration area then we feel a more creative approach needs to be adopted to the distribution of infrastructure expenses and the allocation of affordable housing.

4. **Paragraph 7.4** “….all forms of family housing to have gardens 11m long…”.

   Whilst commendable in a traditionally British way this could stifle new concepts and ways of living.

5. **Paragraph 7.7 The Waterside Centre**

   The SPD envisages some commercial development which goes against the grain of achieving a dream corridor for the river. It is suggested that a section of the Abbey Meadows road could be moved back to create a

---

| Discuss at future meeting |
| Disagree. Adequate garden space should be provided for family housing. This distance would allow for satisfactory garden space and protect the amenities of adjoining occupiers. No change to SPD |
| Discuss at future meeting. However, the City Council is of the opinion that the centre is compatible with what else is being proposed on this part of the site |
development plot. It is always unfortunately when continuity of the public realm is broken along a riverside. We would suggest building up would be preferable to building laterally. It is also in an area that floods which could mitigate against any development. Some low key redevelopment is however required to hopefully save the mooring/river access and encourage river-related activities.

6. In the interests of good planning and achieving a sustainable development the SPD should be specific in its exploration of pedestrian links between Abbey Meadows and the city centre. The only options at present end at present at St.Margarets Way (not safe or pleasant) or Belgrave Road which is far from being a direct route. The desire line (in daylight hours) is through Abbey Park, although this ends at the canal. Continuing this pedestrian only route through to the city centre should be a future objection.

Blueprint is a newly established public private regeneration company comprising a limited partnership between the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA), English Partnerships (EP) and Igloo Regeneration Fund.

At the outset I would confirm that Blueprint supports the principles behind the document in attempting to guide development, but we nevertheless hope that imaginative, innovative proposals that provide a high quality sustainable response will be encouraged. We share the City Council’s concern that the Abbey Meadows area and in particular Wolsey Island, is brought forward in a comprehensive way and not by a series of fragmented and piecemeal, poor quality developments that do not respond to the longer term aspirations.

Support noted

Agreed. Strategically, the SPD aims to improve links between this site and the city centre, creating accessible and safe pedestrian/cycle routes. Amend text to emphasis this objective.
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Agreed. Strategically, the SPD aims to improve links between this site and the city centre, creating accessible and safe pedestrian/cycle routes. Amend text to emphasis this objective.

Support noted
The successful regeneration of this area will be achieved over the long term and by providing high quality, sustainable well designed development which is not simply a standard market response to perceived residential demand as is currently being developed elsewhere in the City.

The planning guidance for the site does not however appear to have been guided by any thorough market analysis and intelligence as to what form of development is most appropriate and we believe that this is a critical piece of work needed for the Council to be able to prevent proposals for inappropriate and poor quality development.

Although we have some views on elements of the urban and building design approach set out in the SPD, we would expect to discuss these further with the City Council when we bring forward specific proposals. We do however have some specific concerns on some of the key aspects of the Document which we would wish to highlight at this stage.

These concerns are principally

1. Highways and Infrastructure
2. Operation and management of the ‘Common Pot’
3. Approach to public realm and open space
4. Density

**Highways and Infrastructure**

There are a number of references in different sections of the document to the overall approach to highways and movement and specifically to the obligations to be placed on landowners to ensure infrastructure is available as and when required. Our main concern here is ensuring that no developer/landowner can delay or frustrate development of other sites on Wolsey Island given that the main development access needs to come through each parcel, starting from the frontage sites to Abbey Park Road. Our knowledge of the current s106 agreement in place for the MHT scheme does not impose timescales for

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<td>Discuss at future meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss at future meeting. The City Council would not want to frustrate development of other sites on Wolsey Island.</td>
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delivery of the highways to adoptable standard to the boundary. We presume that the s278 agreement will rectify this and furthermore that the obligations on the other developments on the Abbey Park Road frontage will ensure robust legal and planning provisions to safeguard access and infrastructure for the rest of the peninsular within agreed timescales.

**Common Pot**

The application of the 'common pot' approach to the delivery of key infrastructure provision will need much more consideration to achieve a workable arrangement. The SPD does not really deal with this in much detail, it is not clear who will be responsible for operating and managing the 'pot' or who will be responsible for the delivery of some of the key elements listed - for example the three bridges mentioned, the works to the canal and riverside environment, education and community facilities which would be best delivered by the City Council in the absence of there being one single ownership.

Blueprint’s delivery model for regeneration projects would assist the delivery of these wider objectives through its acquisition of a substantial part of the peninsular, the adoption of a comprehensive development framework, site remediation and provision of the main infrastructure and a first ‘Exemplar’ phase undertaken by Blueprint. Subsequently other private sector developers would be re-introduced responding to a brief agreed between Blueprint, LCC and LRC to ensure that the best quality of development is delivered. Without this strategic approach, the operation of the common pot will be difficult to achieve and will rely on landowner agreements, some of whose objectives are not necessarily aligned. We therefore welcome further discussion on this issue with the City Council and LRC.

**Public Realm**

The document makes reference in 5.2.2 to a study of amenity space being underway and in Section 7 the need to agree the location, design, shape and size of open space with Leicester City Council and Environment Agency, yet the SPD is quite specific in later sections and on Diagram 8 about the location and suggested scale required. We presume however that the diagrams in the SPD are meant to be illustrative rather than prescriptive at this stage and we therefore trust that there will be further opportunities to comment.
This site has quite a unique environment, being close to the City centre but set in a tranquil, green environment. The River and Canal corridors and Abbey Park provide large areas of existing open space within easy reach. What is important is to ensure that connections to these areas are made safe and convenient for future residents, pedestrians and cyclists.

The application of standard ‘City wide’ open space quotas is not appropriate for what will be development of largely urban form, where open space and buildings should be planned together and thus relate to one another to create a high quality environment.

Unless there are specific areas to be retained – i.e. the River and Canal corridors, then any public realm and the buildings which will enclose it should be designed together. The plans contained in the document appear to have identified some potential locations and scale of open space arbitrarily and also bear little resemblance to the previous Development Framework plan.

Public Realm on Wolsey Island should be created through a hierarchy of spaces from inner private courtyards and garden areas, through publicly accessible but privately maintained public spaces to public squares and green spaces of a scale appropriate to create a sense of place, enclosure and security. They should be designed to the highest quality and have a specific use related to their surroundings. Public realm should relate not only to the buildings but also to the streets that surround them to ensure they are well connected to the areas they are intended to serve. Rather than applying blanket standard criteria, an analysis of what each space is for, how it will be used and by who, should be carried out as part of the development design process. Public realm should be available to all, not segregated. In fact it might well be possible to better the quantum and quality of open space provided by adopting this approach.

Section 7 refers to a differential burden of open space which will be addressed through a formula to allocate costs equitably. However this ignores a fundamental viability issue and will not work in isolation. It is not just the burden of the costs associated with the provision of the space itself but the loss of developable land which will create further viability problems. The indicative

Agreed. No change to SPD.

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting

Discuss at future meeting. The City Council is looking into the possibility of developing a public realm strategy for the whole of the site.

Discuss at future meeting
drawing (Diagram 8) indicates an area of open space which seems to be unrelated in size and location to the potential masterplan framework for the peninsular. It appears out of scale to what will be required as part of a wider public realm infrastructure. This area would have a major impact on the sites in which Blueprint have an interest and would affect their commercial viability.

The existing use value of some of the existing industrial premises on Wolsey Island will in some cases be more than the development value, after allowing for all the add on/abnormal costs to deal with physical constraints - flood prevention, contamination etc and to achieve the wider aspirations – site wide infrastructure, affordable housing, etc. The additional burden of a loss of developable land will therefore affect viability and would result in land values below that which a landowner would seek to secure for its site and may therefore not be commercially deliverable.

Unless there are specific areas to be retained – i.e. the River and Canal corridors, then any public realm and the buildings which will enclose it should be designed together. The plans contained in the document appear to have identified some potential locations and scale of open space arbitrarily and also bear little resemblance to the previous Development Framework plan.

Density

The issue of density needs to be much better informed. As mentioned above we would expect some further much more detailed analysis of the future market for urban/city centre residential in Leicester given the preponderance of one and two bedroom apartment developments being thrown up by the market. More analysis is needed as to what type of place Wolsey Island should become and that should inform any density targets. There will need to be a transition from the very dense and tall frontage developments which although included in the SPD area do not follow its principles and this needs careful design thought for the sites immediately behind.

Discuss at future meeting

Agreed. Discuss at future meeting.

Research on these issues is continuing and further work and detailed guidance will be undertaken to ensure the proposals are appropriate and adequate to deliver high quality development and the delivery of essential infrastructure and public realm. Discuss at future meeting.
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<th><strong>Local Residents</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Yagnesh Pandya (GE Health Care Consultant)</td>
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<td>No Address Given</td>
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*Traffic Impact & Management - Currently Belgrave Rd and Holden Street, Abbey Park Road - A detailed assessment quantifying the increase and impact on these areas and roads needs to be addressed with respect to the increased Urban Environmental pollution and volume of Traffic.*

Please note that Holden Street is a residential street and not designed for 40 tonne Articulated lorries or as a Primary Route. A restriction to 7.5 tonnes vehicles would be welcomed as part and parcel of this development.

*Loughborough Road Connection - I object to Holden Street being used as a primary route to connect the new development. Holden Street has not been designed as a primary route. There has already been one pedestrian fatality on Holden Street and several near misses due to heavy traffic. Alternative and acceptable access arrangements should be provided for the new development.*

*Environmental Impact Assessment - I would welcome a comprehensive document stating in detail (and not in generality, as it is now) on how this development affects the environment clearly state what mitigation is proposed and how the benefit from the mitigation is derived.*

*Geotechnical Surveys - This will assist in determination of land contamination of the former heavy industry sites. Detailed Proposals for land reclamation should be included.*

*Proposed changes to the highway network will be subject to the outcomes of the Strategic TA and subsequent TA's submitted by developers. No changes to the SPD.*

*Discuss at future meeting. This will be subject to the outcomes of the submitted T.A.*

*Discuss at future meeting. This will be subject to the outcomes of the submitted T.A.*

*Agreed. This is being undertaken at the moment as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment.*

*A strategic land contamination report has been prepared for the sites. Further site specific investigations may be required as part of any planning application. No change to SPD.*
A few hundred yards from the clock tower and you have got nothing to attract people to the City. Any new area that you build must have good links to the city centre, particularly for pedestrians. E.g. Brindley place Birmingham.

One of the best links to Abbey Meadows area is through Abbey Park which should be made a complete open way at all times. All new areas need good pedestrian links from the City Centre with shops, eating places and bars. We cannot keep building in the City Centre only and need to spread out more. The extra tourism will create the supply for these outlets.

Currently live on a boat and would like to express an interest on any moorings proposed as part of the development, as we would like to live near to work (Abbey Park)

- The maps shown on the leaflets are very hard to read. There are no road names or markers.
- Proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge on canal is already there
- Lots of factories will be lost
- Big distances between river crossings

- Need to create pedestrian/cycle access all along east bank of canal, as well as west bank
- Must restore pedestrian access across frontage of Waterside Centre and remove fencing, locked gates, etc, blocking access at present. This should be condition of any future development. Access should be allowed onto the riverside and not blocked
- Am pleased to see plans for open space/amenity space in part of the former allotments on western riverside, and that built development will not be continuous along the entire river frontage on this site
- Am pleased with plans for more pedestrian/cycle and road bridges on the river/canal
- Would like to see the pedestrian/cycle bridges to Belgrave Hall and Church implemented in the near future

Agreed. SPD seeks to improve links to and from the Abbey Meadows site. No change to SPD.

Agreed as above.

One of the aspirations of the SPD is to provide permanent moorings. Comments noted. No change to SPD

The plans in the SPD will be amended to make them clearly.
There are no suitable bridges at present to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists
The majority of factories are vacated and empty
Noted. No change to SPD

Discuss at future meeting

Agreed. This is one of the aspirations of the SPD. No change to SPD

Support noted

Support noted

Agreed. Discuss at future meeting
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mattani Chandrashi</td>
<td>VPL International 134 Marjorie Street Leicester</td>
<td>Plan Illustrations are confusing regarding the allotment site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garry Bedford</td>
<td>38 Vann Walk Belgrave Leicester</td>
<td>Questions the timescale for development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Brooks</td>
<td>20 Middlesex Road Leicester</td>
<td>Afraid regeneration will adversely affect his business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr A Robert Hughes</td>
<td>33 Sudeley Avenue Leicester</td>
<td>The plan is very positive, ambitious and welcomed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The corridor of the river and canal has been woefully neglected and a clear safe pathway from the city centre to Belgrave hall/Cross Corners/St Peters Church and beyond would be welcomed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This part of the City has been neglected and the profile needs raising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good mixed housing and quality, reasonably priced workspaces would help give this historic area a boost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Need to look at Birmingham for inspiration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Welcomes the general tone of the document and in particular I am pleased at the appreciation of the nature of the area in the past, especially the open areas and river and canal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agreed. Plans revised to make illustrations much clearer.

Development has started on part of the site. No change to SPD.
Noted. No change to SPD.

Support noted.

Agreed. Support noted. No change to SPD.

Agreed. No change to SPD.

Agreed. One of the main objectives of the SPD is to create a balanced community. No change to SPD.

Noted.

Discuss at future meeting.

Support noted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting of Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee 21/06/06</th>
<th>Page 22 para 4.9 and page 23 para 4.10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In light of the above pages it is imperative that the part of the allotments indicated on the plan as open space remain so and that the frontage to the river of the new buildings on the other part of the allotments remain as indicated on the plan. Please note that there is a variety of wildlife in this area and in particular a number of newts which can be found to the left of the first gate entrance into the allotments from Abbey Park Road.</td>
<td>Discuss at future meeting. Allotments may be retained and managed (in part) as natural open space that enhances the riverside. No other loss of habitat is proposed by the SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is also good to see the plans for the Wolsey Tower and Waterside centre as the area needs leisure activities but it is also hoped that as far as possible the present high level of peace and tranquillity on the Space Centre side will be preserved.</td>
<td>Agreed. No changes to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are some serious concerns for local residents. Where new residential housing and businesses are concerned it is really important that adequate car and other vehicles parking be provided. At present some of the car firms already in the area are using the local residential streets for parking. Pavement parking on Abbey Lane from the post office towards Corporation Road is just one example.</td>
<td>Adequate parking will be provided in line with Local Plan Standards and the adopted Vehicle Parking Standards SPG. The SPD also aims to improve Public Transport and pedestrian/cycle links to and from the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also as indicated another car firm has applied for a new building on the new road to be built from Abbey Lane, this is not welcome as there are already enough of these uses in the area.</td>
<td>Noted. However, this uses not contrary to Policy. No change to SPD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is disappointing that permission has been granted for first bus to move to Abbey Lane, despite objections from a large number of local residents. With a projected movement of 200 vehicles a day this will aggravate problems of congestion and pollution. The road surface on Abbey lane and on Corporation road is worn out which affects driving conditions. There have been a number of pedestrian accidents, some fatal, in the stretch of Abbey Lane from Abbey Park to Thurmaston Road</td>
<td>Noted. No change to SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 3.0 - 10th bullet point. Reference is made to development being highly accessible to the city centre on foot, by cycle, and public and private transport modes. This implies that the City Council are seeking to encourage private car use contrary to the aims of the Local Transport Plan.</td>
<td>Agreed. Amend text to clarify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This report is an environmental and sustainability appraisal of the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Leicester City Abbey Meadows dated January 2006. Section 1 briefly explains sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment. Section 2 summarises the policy, environmental, social and economic context which affects the SPD. Section 3 explains how this report was prepared. Section 4 presents the main appraisal findings. Appendix A shows the detailed appraisal findings. Appendix B [to be added] notes changes made to the draft SPD in response to earlier feedback. Appendix C consists of points raised with the planning team and their responses.

1. Sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment

Sustainability appraisals (SA) of development plans of LDFs are required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of LDFs is required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Government guidance recommends that SA and SEA should be integrated.

A Stage A “scoping report” - which described the policy and environmental/sustainability context for the plan and deciding on the appraisal scope – was prepared in summer 2004. It has provided a basis for this, Stage B, appraisal of the draft SPD.
Table 1. Links between SA/SEA and LDF development (based on ODPM 2004): this report and its consultation corresponds to the shaded stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPD stage</th>
<th>SA/SEA stage/task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-production</td>
<td>A. Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A1. Identify other relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2. Collect baseline information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A3. Identify sustainability issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A4. Develop the SA framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A5. Test the SPD objectives against the SA framework</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A6. Consult on the scope of the SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>B. Developing and refining options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B1. Appraise issues and options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B2. Consult on the SA of emerging options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Appraising the effects of the plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C1. Predict the effects of the draft SPD, including options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2. Assess the effects of the draft SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C3. Mitigate adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C4. Develop proposals for monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C5. Prepare the SA report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Consulting on the plan and SA report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D1. Consult on the SA report alongside the SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D2. Appraise significant changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D3. Decision making and provision of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption and monitoring</td>
<td>E. Monitor implementation of the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Monitoring of the plan</td>
<td>E1. Monitor the significant effects of the SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E2. Respond to adverse effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Policy, environmental, social and economic context

Stage A of the SA/SEA considered the policy and ‘sustainability’ context in which the Local SPD is being prepared. The main findings of the Stage A "scoping report" were as follows.

In terms of policy context, the SPD should:
1. Identify land for development to provide a mixture of housing that meets the needs of the community, promoting reuse of previously developed land and encouraging sustainable building design;
2. Encourage efficient use of resources, ensuring provision of facilities within new developments to reduce waste production, increase reuse, recycling and recovery of energy from waste;
3. Meet the community’s current and future needs for access to services and recreation, though provision and improvement of open space and right of way networks and by identifying needs for facilities and improvements to visual amenity for recreation and tourism;
4. Aim to reduce the environmental impacts of transport, particularly impacts on air quality and safety through reducing the need to travel and encouraging a modal switch away from road based transport;
5. Consider the future transport needs of the community and ensure that developments are in sustainable locations and by protecting space for transport development.
6. Aim to address problems of poverty and social exclusion, strengthening Leicester as a multicultural and multi-faith city.
7. Aim to strengthen regional and local economies and improve local surroundings through tackling degraded urban environments, and improving access to jobs and services.

8. Include proposals for redevelopment of land that favours a sustainable approach to job creation and the local economy.

9. Aim to protect and improve the quality of natural resources air, freshwater resources, soil resources by reducing loss of resources and the spread of pollutants and providing remediation where necessary.

10. Consider the various environmental effects of the demand on utilities and related resources of new developments.

11. Aim to identify wildlife in the area, protect and enhance habitats and nature conservation sites, and reverse trends of damage to landscape and wildlife.

12. Outline design criteria to preserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment including conservation areas, historic buildings and archaeological remains.

13. Aim to promote health, reduce health inequalities and to provide better health and social care services.

14. Encourage projects that make a positive contribution to and mitigate against impacts on visual amenity.

15. Aim to achieve major long-term cuts in greenhouse gas emissions whilst ensuring secure, diverse supplies of energy at competitive prices in an environmentally-acceptable way.

16. Aim to reduce crime and the fear of crime by promoting safe, secure feeling and crime free environments.

Key sustainability and environmental issues for the area - which should not be made worse as a result of the SPD and ideally should improve - are:

- **Culture, Heritage, Landscape and Access.** Given the proximity of Abbey Meadows to the Medieval and Roman city and association with the Medieval Abbey, there may be undiscovered and significant archaeological finds in the area. Archaeological Impact Assessment should be required for planning applications.

- **Air Quality – Causal Factors** The local use of cars for both trips to and from school and trips to and from work is near the national average, and is an issue given the target to reduce morning peak hour car trips. Peak hour car trips have recently risen slightly. Abbey Meadow plan policies should reflect a move away from commuter car traffic. A high percentage of footpaths need treatment: maintenance and repair. The plan should consider upgrading them along routes most used where necessary, and repairing them where necessary proximate to Abbey Meadows.

- **Air Quality – Output Factors/Evidence** Nitrogen Dioxide pollution and particulate pollution are key issues for the city of Leicester as a whole, regardless of specific location. Plan policies should address the minimisation and/or elimination of nitrate and particulate pollutants.

- **Climate Change** Greenhouse gas emissions must continue to decline to achieve the local target of a 50% reduction by 2025. Abbey Meadow plan policies should ensure a move away from commuter car traffic.

- **Social Inclusion** The percentage of affordable housing is very low (11%) compared to regional data (30%), and the local target (30%). Affordable housing is a priority throughout Leicester. The percentage of homes judged to be unfit is high (54.9%) and increasing.
Soil Resources and Quality. 14.7% of household waste in Leicester is recycled, rising only slowly towards the national target 25% by 2010.

Biodiversity. The number, extent and quality of designated sites for nature conservation has recently been on the decline.

Water Quality. The chemical river quality of the Soar River is not in line with the national target of 94% “good or fair” quality rivers. One water monitoring station near Abbey Meadows has only been designated “marginal” for river chemistry in the most recent year for which data is available, while stations beyond have been designated “pass.” Phosphate levels are also high.

Without the SPD, the area is expected to remain as it currently is: mostly derelict and unused, but with a rich naturally regenerated green corridor along the River Soar, and with the National Space Centre and a few old buildings of quality somewhat isolated and not fulfilling their potential.

Finally, as part of the “scoping report”, SA/SEA objectives were devised. These are essentially a test of the emerging SDP’s sustainability and environmental soundness. These objectives were revised¹, and a final list is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. SA/SEA objectives for the Abbey Meadows SPD

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs of all communities in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the area’s heritage and participate in cultural and recreational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>To promote a sense of community identity that celebrates Leicester’s cultural mix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>To protect, enhance and manage the area’s rich diversity of the natural, cultural and built environmental and archaeological assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>To prudently manage natural resources, including water, air quality, soil and minerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>To maintain and enhance the area’s biodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>To minimise energy usage and to develop renewable energy resource, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>To provide the physical conditions for a modern economic structure, including infrastructure to support the use of new technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>To improve accessibility to jobs and services by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking; reducing the need to travel; and making efficient use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Five additional SA/SEA objectives were proposed in the scoping report, but are not being used in this appraisal. “To enhance and conserve the environmental quality of the region by increasing the environmental infrastructure” was felt to be covered by objectives 6-9. “To involve people, through changes to lifestyle and at work, in preventing and minimising adverse local, regional and global environmental impacts”; “to promote and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities of the region” and “To develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation, creating a climate within which entrepreneurs and world-class business can flourish” were felt to be outside the remit of an SPD. “To create high quality employment opportunities and to develop a culture of ongoing engagement and excellence in learning and skills, giving the region a competitive edge in how we acquire and exploit knowledge” was felt to be covered by objective 910 “To ensure that the location of development makes efficient use of existing physical infrastructure and helps to improve access, whilst reducing the need to travel.” was combined with “To improve accessibility to jobs and services by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking, and reducing traffic growth and congestion” in objective 11. Objective 8 on biodiversity was added.
of existing physical infrastructure

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>To promote and ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction, optimising the use of previously developed land and buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>To minimise waste and to increase the re-use and recycling of waste materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>To limit impacts associated with expected climate change, including flooding and drought.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Appraisal methodology

This appraisal was carried out by Roger Levett of Levett-Therivel sustainability consultants in November 2005 and January 2006. It uses as information the scoping report; photos of the site; and information provided by the Leicester City planners.

- The whole SPD was taken into consideration in preparing the key findings and conclusions in chapter 4. However only parts have been appraised in detailed matrices, because Chapters 1-4 provide general contextual information and summaries of planning decisions already Chapter 5 describes the process of funding development requirements through planning obligations which is most usefully commented on in text form;
- There is considerable overlap in chapters 6-15, so each issue is appraised at the point it is most clearly formulated;
- Most of chapters 16 and 17 consists of references to and reminders of city wide planning policies and statutory requirements which are outside the scope of this SPD to influence.

The consultants asked for clarification and further information on various points in November. Officers responded in January 2006. The questions and answers (attached at appendix C) have been taken into account in this appraisal.

A draft of the full appraisal was submitted to the planning team for comment on 17 January. Their response dated 31 January (attached at appendix D, with our further comments) was taken into account in preparing this version of the appraisal. Very few substantive changes were made to the SPD between the September 2005 and January 2006 drafts. These were generally welcome in sustainability terms (for example some more detailed stipulations on biodiversity and an added reference to recycling construction materials).

We have been informed that the planning team will consider the recommendations made in this appraisal together with responses to the public consultation on the SDP. The planning team intend to produce a statement to be attached to the SPD and SA before consultation starts to say how they will address the SA comments.
4. Key appraisal findings

The detailed appraisal findings are shown at Appendix A.

If the area is redeveloped in accordance with this SPD, there would be many major sustainability benefits:

- a major increase in attractive, high quality housing, including affordable housing
- major employment generation, including high technology in which the city is deficient;
- creation of a characterful new urban quarter, enhancing the city while fitting will into its surroundings;
- good access and encouragement of walking, cycling and public transport;
- better recreational access and enjoyment of the river and canal, and new public spaces
- protection, enhancement and better enjoyment of the natural and historic environmental assets.

We have three areas of concern:

(1) Some of the road access proposals seem more car-focused than is consistent with the aims of the development (though inconsistencies between the masterplan shown in diagram 3 and the SPD proposals in diagrams 6, 7 and 8 make it hard to be sure; in this respect the former is better for the BUSM site, the latter for Wolsey Island.) We are particularly concerned about the proposed new grandiose dual carriageway approach to the National Space Centre which is shown on diagram 3 (though not other diagrams) as a dual carriageway: this seems arbitrary, unnecessary and to give quite the wrong message. We are also concerned at the physical extent and visual dominance of car parking in the Science Park and the housing adjacent to it, which seems inconsistent with the design quality objectives and the standards intended for the Wolsey Island and BUSM areas.

(2) Much of the quality of the proposals depends on ambitious hopes for the development of the Science Park coming true. If demand by science and technology businesses does not materialise, the development could easily slip back into a bog-standard low grade business park. We are appreciative of the candid and thoughtful reply the planning team made to this concern, and recognise that aiming for the science park is a justified gamble. However we suggest it would be prudent to build in to the SPD safeguards to ensure that the site is occupied by the kinds of businesses intended, and cannot drift into a development of a kind not provided for in the SPD and therefore not sanctioned by this appraisal. We are concerned that even at this stage sustainability standards are being compromised by assertions that large scale parking is needed for commercial viability.

(3) Much of the area has been derelict and unused for some time. However our questions have established that some users still on the site are being displaced, and not all have suitable new locations, although the answers we have been given are still only tentative. Creating high-value new jobs and businesses should not be at the expense of suppressing low-value ones which may be providing more immediate benefit to local communities in both the services and the jobs they offer. We would like to be given more complete and definite information about the uses and users which have already been, and will be, displaced from the whole of the site, and what is being done to ensure that they are appropriately re-sited.

We welcome some improvements but suggest the draft could be still made considerably shorter and clearer, and risks of ambiguity and inconsistency reduced, if current considerable overlaps between chapters were removed. For example chapters 6 8 and 11 substantially overlap; likewise chapters 7 and 12; density (currently the very short separate chapter 9) could more conveniently be discussed together massing and storey heights (chapter 15) which in turn is closely related to land use (chapter 14).
Overall recommendations

Clarifications:
State housing numbers, breakdown between different types, % affordable.
Clarify which of the two layouts (diagram 3 vs diagrams 6,7,8) is intended – preferably 3 for BUSM and 6,7,8 for Wolsey Island.
Provide complete information on any current land uses or users to be displaced, and provision for re-siting or substituting for them.
Reduce length and repetition by combining chapters.

Substantive changes
Reconsider the proposed Science Park access road.
Minimise parking provision and reduce parking domination in areas west of Soar. Confirm that ‘zone 3’ rather than ‘zone 4’ parking standards will be applied across the whole SPD area.

Future proofing
Ensure that alignments and block layouts prevent future creation of an east-west trunk road across Wolsey Island.
Build in safeguards against ‘backsliding’ if e.g. Science Park fails to attract high-level tenants wished.

Table 3. Overall impacts of the SPD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA/SEA objective</th>
<th>Comments and overall assessment</th>
<th>Possible changes to the SPD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs of all communities in the area</td>
<td>++ The SPD would provide for approx. 2500 new dwellings, of which approx. 30% would be affordable. This would clearly help to meet housing needs.</td>
<td>State housing numbers and affordable percentage within this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing health services</td>
<td>+ The SPD would help to improve health by providing affordable housing and pedestrian and cycle routes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the area’s heritage and participate in cultural and recreational activities</td>
<td>++ The SPD would open up the river and canal banks for recreation, increase the visibility and use of several historic buildings, and potentially provide a new riverside recreational centre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime</td>
<td>+ The SPD would increase passive security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To promote a sense of community identity that celebrates</td>
<td>+ The SPD does not specifically promote this objective. However it is likely to have positive effects by</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester’s cultural mix</td>
<td>bringing appropriate new uses into a currently derelict area, and repairing and re-connecting currently degraded and fragmented urban fabric.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To protect, enhance and manage the area’s rich diversity of the natural, cultural and built environmental and archaeological assets</td>
<td>+ The SPD would help to preserve historical and archaeological assets.</td>
<td>Confirm no net loss of allotments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To prudently manage natural resources, including water, air quality, soil and minerals</td>
<td>+ By promoting walking, cycling and public transport, the SPD would help to reduce air pollution.</td>
<td>No information on contaminated land was available to us, but there is a good possibility that some parts of the site are contaminated and would require cleaning up before they can be developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To maintain and enhance the area’s biodiversity</td>
<td>+ The SPD protects biodiversity especially along the River Soar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. To minimise energy usage and to develop renewable energy resource, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources</td>
<td>+ Chapter 16 draws attention to the city council’s (good) generic policies but the SPD gives only gentle encouragement to go any further.</td>
<td>SPD should specifically call for new building to meet BREEAM ‘excellent’ rating or Sustainable Construction Taskforce standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To provide the physical conditions for a modern economic structure, including infrastructure to support the use of new technologies.</td>
<td>+ The SPD aims to provide 1800 new jobs, including specifically high-tech jobs, in the new science park.</td>
<td>Analyse who will be displaced, and make specific provisions to ensure that important employment, services and access are not lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To improve accessibility to jobs and services by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking; reducing the need to travel; and making efficient use of existing physical infrastructure</td>
<td>+/- The SPD would provide attractive new pedestrian, cycle and bus routes, and promote walking, cycling and public transport. However it also provides extensive new road infrastructure, including a grandiose approach for motor traffic which seems completely out of scale and character with the aim of the rest of the SPD</td>
<td>Remove the grand boulevard. Scale down road access and parking provision generally. Confirm that zone 3 parking standards will apply to the whole area covered by the SPD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. To promote and ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction, optimising the use of previously developed land and buildings</td>
<td>+ The SPD would make good use of currently derelict land, and lead to more attractive development. SPD quotes (good) generic city planning policies on energy issues but does not add anything</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. To minimise waste and to increase the re-use and recycling of waste materials</td>
<td>+ The SPD encourages reclamation and reuse of construction materials</td>
<td>Make clear that the best option is in situ reuse of construction materials – i.e. combining reclamation and procurement of secondary materials, which are currently treated separately.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>14. To limit impacts associated with expected climate change, including flooding and drought.</td>
<td>I Complies with current Environment Agency guidance. However latest evidence suggests may be worse and sooner</td>
<td>Check with Environment Agency response still adequate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A. DETAILED APPRAISAL FINDINGS

Key:

| ++ | likely to have a very positive impact |
| +  | likely to have a positive impact |
| 0, +/- | likely to have a neutral impact, or both positive and negative impacts |
| -  | unlikely to have an impact |
| -- | likely to have a negative impact |
| I  | likely to have a very negative impact |
| *  | could have a positive or a negative impact depending on how it is implemented |
|    | Nothing specific to this character area – refer to generic policies |

### SPD section | SEA objective | comments and overall assessment (e.g. assumptions made, further studies needed, how implementation might make impact negative or positive) | possible changes to the plan:
--- | --- | --- | ---
5.0 Key Development Requirements and Planning Obligations | 1. Housing needs | See detailed exchanges in Appendix C. We accept that an incentive to build larger houses is currently appropriate here, but maintain that sustainability impacts would be a better basis for the tariff than area of development. | While principle of individual negotiation should be maintained, SPD should suggest ‘rules of thumb’ for relating tariff to sustainability impacts of development, not just area. |

### SEA objective

| + | ++ | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |

General emphasis on high quality pedestrian and cycle network, permeability, connectedness and opening up access to riverside are welcome. However we have concerns that the scale and character of some of the highways elements detract from this generally positive view. These are discussed under specific items below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPD section</th>
<th>SEA objective</th>
<th>comments and overall assessment (e.g. assumptions made, further studies needed, how implementation might make impact negative or positive)</th>
<th>possible changes to the plan:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Science park-gateway</td>
<td>- - - - - - - - - - - - -</td>
<td>This grandiose road (shown as a dual carriageway in diagram 3, although the planning team have assured us this is not the intention) seems inconsistent with the (generally very enlightened) aims and design philosophy of the rest of the SPD. It occupies a considerable amount of the non-flood-vulnerable land. It divides the science park from the housing (contrary to mixed use principles). It brings the heaviest vehicle flows of the development past the new housing. The requirement (section 12.0 Infrastructure 2) that this housing should abut direct onto this main road, with 'windows to principal rooms' onto it seems likely to make the housing unpleasant without achieving the to provide passive surveillance intended, since residents are likely to respond by keeping their curtains permanently shut. It connects an insignificant point on Abbey Lane with the riverbank, where it stops arbitrarily and abruptly. This will give an unplanned or unfinished air - unless it is a 'trojan horse' for a future main road extending across Wolsey Island and connecting to the Belgrave area, using the gaps conveniently left in the buildings (especially on diagram 3; the version on diagram 6 is less 'obvious') and the alignments reserved by the currently proposed footbridges. It makes traffic coming to the space centre or science park from either the city centre or the north go round three sides of a square, adding needlessly to vehicle mileage. The only function it seems to serve is to provide a prestigious ceremonial entrance for people arriving at the science park or space centre by car. The message this gives - if you come by car, we'll give you a grand welcome, but if you come by bike, foot or bus you can sidle in though a back alley round some housing or across the car park – seems highly inappropriate.</td>
<td>Clarify the reasons for this apparently arbitrary and disproportionate piece of highway engineering, or remove it. If it stays, ensure the block layout on Wolsey Island prevents future 'joining up' of the road and gaps to make a high volume traffic road across the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD section</td>
<td>SEA objective</td>
<td>comments and overall assessment (e.g. assumptions made, further studies needed, how implementation might make impact negative or positive)</td>
<td>possible changes to the plan:</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Wolsey Island</td>
<td>+ + + + + + +</td>
<td>Proposed layout shown on diagram 7 provides necessary access in a way that helps make a cohesive neighbourhood, avoids unnecessary vehicle circulation, and frees river frontage for recreational access.</td>
<td>Confirm that diagram 7 is the intended layout, not diagram 3 (which is different and less good.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 BUSM</td>
<td>+ + + +</td>
<td>Proposed layout provides access in ways that minimise vehicle circulation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Highway design</td>
<td>+ + + +</td>
<td>An enlightened approach, except that toucan crossings are a nuisance and obstruction to walkers and cyclists. If the speed control measures are effective, toucans or other crossing designs that restrict and delay non-motorised traffic should not be necessary.</td>
<td>Replace toucans with zebras.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 public transport</td>
<td>+ + + +</td>
<td>Proposals will improve bus access to the site, while potentially reducing journey times for through passengers. But what about people who currently use Abbey Lane bus stops which will be bypassed?</td>
<td>Clarify effects on Abbey Lane bus passengers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 public space, 7.1 Wolsey Island 7.2 BUSM 7.3 Science Park &amp; Riverside W</td>
<td>+ + + + + +</td>
<td>Good policy for provision of attractive local public spaces, meeting residents' needs without travel.</td>
<td>Ensure that emphasis on ‘hard landscaping’ does not reduce opportunities for biodiversity, sustainable drainage and protection against summer overheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 low rise family housing 7.5 low rise family housing 7.6 private shared amenity space</td>
<td>+ + +</td>
<td>Good proposals to give residents access to private green space. Is 11 metres length of private garden really necessary if there is public or private shared amenity space beyond.</td>
<td>Encourage combination of private gardens with shared spaces. Encourage ‘green roofs’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7 Waterside Centre</td>
<td>+ + + +</td>
<td>Proposed development could produce a range of benefits, but viability is uncertain.</td>
<td>Confirm road access is as diagrams 6, 7 and 8, and not figure 3, which creates problem of severance as mentioned in second last para of this section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD section</td>
<td>8.5 Parking</td>
<td>9.0 Density (and 15.0 massing - storey heights)</td>
<td>14.0 Land use (and 10.0 urban layout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments and overall assessment (e.g. assumptions made, further research, how implementation might make impact negative or positive)</td>
<td>General stated approach to parking is good, especially emphasis on limits and on minimising visual dominance. However the scale and obtrusiveness of parking in areas West of the River Soar shown on diagram 3 appears inconsistent with these principles.</td>
<td>Encouragement of higher densities is welcome. Other parts of the SPD should be sufficient to safeguard amenity.</td>
<td>Prudent and responsible response to flood risks as they were understood 2 years ago. However the best scientific estimates of the speed and severity of climate change have considerably worsened over this period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possible changes to the plan</td>
<td>Apply Zone 3 not Zone 4 parking limits to the whole area, including parts W of the Soar. Reduce current parking levels and area.</td>
<td>Good use of currently underperforming land to meet a range of needs.</td>
<td>Good use of currently underperforming land to meet a range of needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B. CHANGES TO DRAFT SPD FOLLOWING APPRAISAL

None yet. To be completed after redrafting of SDP after consultation.

APPENDIX C. QUESTIONS RAISED IN NOVEMBER 2005 AND PLANNING TEAM’S RESPONSES

Displacement of existing employment  Section 1.1 notes that the area 'contains a number of long established industrial uses and has until recently supported significant levels of employment'. This implies there is still some employment on the site though less than before. The rest of the SPD implies these are likely to be lower paid, lower skilled jobs. These are not priorities for economic development, but they may be providing jobs for local people. The businesses may also be providing low value-added services. These again are unfashionable but may be meeting local needs. It would therefore be helpful to know:

- What jobs, and what businesses, would be displaced, either (a) directly by the developments on site or (b) potentially indirectly by rising property values and rents, including effects outside the Abbey Meadows area itself;
- What provision is being made for either retaining these or re-siting them;
- Whether new sites are accessible for their users by means other than car;
- What provisions are being made to avoid, minimise or offset any negative effects.

There is no existing employment on the Science Park Site (Abbey Meadows West) – the land is cleared for redevelopment

The science park will provide circa 45,000 sq.m of B1 research and development accommodation and generate an estimated 1,800 new jobs being a mix of both graduate and above hi value, hi skill and NVQ level 4+ and technician and admin level.

Viability of ‘science and technology park’  The area has clearly not hitherto been attractive to premium users. The history of the Waterside Centre outlined in the second para of 8.7 is a cautionary example of what can easily happen when regeneration projects are more ambitious than the market realities will support. British cities are full of places called ‘innovation centre’, ‘technology park’ etc which are actually simply business parks with optimistic names. When high quality users fail to materialise, the promoters of such developments sooner or later have to offer units to any businesses that want them, and compromise or cancel intended environmental and social requirements as necessary, because this is better than keeping space empty.

We would like to explore the robustness of the reasons for believing that an upmarket ‘science and technology park’ is viable (given the current lack of such facilities in the area, noted in the SPD). How important is the science and technology park to the whole conception? what is the ‘fallback’ if it does not work as hoped? What safeguards can be offered that this will not just drift into becoming a bog-standard business park, with increased car parking reluctantly agreed because tenants will not move without it?

A recent study by Greenborough Consulting has demonstrated a demand for Science and Innovation facility on the John Ellis site and a wider demand for research and development related accommodation in Leicester. This shows that the scheme is a potentially viable proposition and this is soon to be tested as the Leicester Regeneration Company and City Council go through a second stage selection process for a development partner to deliver the first phase of 12,000sq.m of science and
innovation space on the John Ellis site. The process will be undertaken during February and March with an appointment anticipated in April 2006.

At present there is also an in principal allocation of funding of ERDF funding to support the development of the John Ellis site for Science and Innovation use.

There have been recent enquiries from companies looking for space on the Phase 2 site for large research and development accommodation.

**Viability of ‘visitor amenity’** Related to the previous point: given the apparent failure of the previous Waterside Centre to sustain water-related recreations, what basis is there for expecting a larger and more ambitious attempt at much the same thing to work now, especially given that (1) there is no equivalent to the Community Programme funding used last time, and (2) the Riverside SPD is proposing creating a new recreational canal basin not far away, but in a more ‘buzzy’ city centre context more like successful models in (e.g.) Birmingham and Manchester than will be possible at Abbey Meadows. Given that Leicester has hitherto not supported one such centre, it seems ambitious now to assume two. As with the ‘science and technology park’ we would wish to explore the robustness of the basis.

One of the objectives of the LRC Abbey Meadows Intervention Area is to exploit the potential of its waterfront setting. The location of the Waterside Centre buildings within the floodplain and the lack of car parking suggests that the existing site would not be viable in its present form in the long term. Given the proposal for wholesale redevelopment of Wolsey Island, it seems appropriate to identify potential opportunities arising from the redevelopment of this site. This is one of the few places where it is possible to gain access to the water’s edge and this could be exploited in a number of different ways.

It is not suggested or intended that the Waterside Centre should be similar to or in competition with the boat basin development in the Waterside Intervention area. It is unlikely that a boat related business could be commercially viable in this location although there are some opportunities for income generation. The primarily residential development of Wolsey Island, BUSM and Riverside West will also bring a new residential population into the area, creating a need for local services, including a local pub.

There are pubs in the area and there may be opportunities for a family waterfront pub/restaurant garden type development, possibly with the capacity for overnight and visitor moorings for passing boats, (the boat equivalent of being able to see your car from the restaurant). The operation of row boats and/or a trip boat from the same location could also be linked to create a small scale visitor attraction to complement the existing attractions of Abbey Park and the NSC.

There is also potential for waterfront residential development, possibly with communal private open space going down to the water’s edge. There is an increasing trend for boat owners, particularly those in retirement, to spend half of the year touring the waterway network and the winter months at home. Boat ownership is increasing and there is a demand for houses and apartments with mooring rights. The feasibility of these and other ideas needs to be investigated further, but within the context of the SPD it seems appropriate to raise the possibility.

**Car parking standards** Map 2 shows that the Abbey Meadows area straddles the boundary of Parking Standard Zones 3 and 4. The Science and Technology Park falls in Zone 4, the zone with least parking restraint because of lower public transport
accessibility. Given the public transport improvements proposed as part of the SPD we suggest the whole site should be treated as in zone 3, and subjected to its lower maximum parking standards. We would also suggest the residential element should have lower parking levels to both support and take advantage of the improved public transport.

Although there will be some public transport improvements made, it is accepted that the science park element will need to provide a high level of parking, at least in the first stages in order to be competitive. It is expected that the later stages would have lower parking than the first phase. Para s 5.49 & 5.50 of the proposed Modifications to the Replacement Local plan confirm that regeneration will be taken into account in applying the parking levels provided that the level of parking is justified by a TIA & travel plan.

We would accept that the site could be considered as Zone 3 in terms of the SPG parking standards. Would also agree that the residential elements could have lower parking levels, if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the levels of parking are sufficient to not create problems with on-street parking demand.

The maximum parking standards for C3 Residential Dwellings are as follows:
1 bedroom: 1 Space; 2 Bedrooms: 2 Spaces; 3 Bedrooms +: 2 Spaces

**Car access.** The statements of encouragement for walking, cycling and public transport are admirable, but so not seem consistent with the very extensive (and expensive) new road access proposed.

The new road access proposed will facilitate access for all vehicular modes not just cars.

**Planning agreements** We strongly support the overall philosophy set out in chapter 6. But, as we commented on the equivalent text in the Riverside SPD, levying contributions at a standard rate per residential unit or square metre of commercial / leisure floorspace has some potentially perverse effects:

- ‘A flat rate per dwelling gives developers an incentive to build a smaller number of higher value dwellings;
- A flat rate per square metre of commercial/leisure development likewise gives developers an incentive to go for only high value occupants, again discouraging mix and richness;
- The levy does not give developers any signal or incentive to improve the sustainability performance of developments or minimise their costs to the public realm.

However to comply with current guidance the levy will be negotiated individually with each developer. Moreover developers may negotiate reductions in their contribution in return for providing ‘more localised public realm infrastructure … specific to individual development parcels’ themselves. This provision provides a precedent for individual negotiations to avoid the perverse effects noted above. See possible changes
To ensure consistency and fairness we would suggest that guidelines should be produced for how negotiations should take broader factors into account. These could include:

- Linking the levy to important aspects of sustainability performance, such as numbers of parking spaces (which are linked to costs of road access), predicted fossil energy needs, connection to district heat and power system;
- Discounts for socially beneficial uses: lower value-added businesses meeting social needs, ‘market’ housing which is still affordable to e.g. young graduates

In the current housing market conditions and in light of the Knight Frank recommendations on the Leicester city centre housing market I would view fiscal incentives to developers to move away from small 1-2 bed apartments towards larger units as a positive factor. Should market conditions change the strategy could be revised accordingly.

With regard to supporting businesses which have wider social benefits or community benefits it is ultimately a negotiated contribution, which would allow the Local Planning Authority to factor in such benefits into negotiations.

As a final point it would be difficult to levy linked to numbers of parking spaces as this could lead to developers cutting car parking numbers purely to reduce financial contributions. Levy should be linked to relevant impact of development traffic, hence the need for TA reports and Travel Plans.

**Flood risk.** Given the evidence that has emerged within the last few months that climate change may have more severe effects sooner than previously predicted, we would be interested to know the Environment Agency’s view on whether the proposed development in flood risk areas is prudent, even under the conditions set out in para 17.1.

The policy statement outlined in paragraph 17.1 has been provided by the Environment Agency and reflects their current National Policy. The Leicester Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), (February 2004), includes an allowance for climate change of +20%, based on DEFRA guidelines. It would be interesting to look at the evidence of the more severe and sooner effects of climate change to see whether these would result in a flood risk in excess of that predicted in the SFRA. I would be grateful if you could send me this more recent evidence.

One of the conditions attached to development in areas of flood risk is the requirement for floodplain compensation. It is likely that the requirement to replace floodplain lost as a result of development will limit the extent to which development can take place in the floodplain. There is a very limited amount of land available in the City to provide compensation and the more remote the location from the development site the more land is required. It is likely that a large scale flood alleviation scheme, to the south of the City, will be required to address flood risk in the future. A scheme of this type would effectively change the profile of flooding in the City and remove some sites from flood risk.

To exclude development in the floodplain in response to climate change, particularly in the LRC Intervention Areas, could have a significant impact on the ability of the LRC and City Council to deliver the proposed regeneration programme and achieve
comprehensive development of the Intervention Areas. It may be more appropriate to reconsider the location of development sites and open space, (which can be located in floodplain) to create open space and release parcels of land for development. However, the large number of land ownerships and perceived development values for individual sites could make this very difficult to achieve.

APPENDIX D: PLANNING TEAM’S RESPONSE TO JANUARY DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL, WITH APPRAISAL CONSULTANTS’ COMMENTS

Access into the Science Park (A6)

It is not intended to construct a dual carriageway to connect the Space Centre to the A6. None of the diagrams in the SPD suggest this it’s clearly dual in diagram 3: there’s a line down the middle which no other existing or proposed road has except for Abbey Lane, and it has triangular islands at each end. We have commented elsewhere that inconsistencies between this and later diagrams are confusing. We strongly recommend clarifying this in the text and financially a dual carriageway would not be viable. What is required, however, is a good quality access from the A6 announcing the arrival into the Science and Innovation Park. Our concerns about the assumption that ‘good quality’ = car dominated and indirect / inconvenient for local and non-car users, set out in our appraisal of 7.2, remain! From a design point of view this may be a boulevard in style that’s what’s shown in all the diagrams but until a detailed design and costing exercise is done this will not be determined.

There will be a need to provide adequate surface car parking although we will want any car parking areas to be designed with minimum impact on the surrounding area. However, the Greenborough report December 2005 states that one of the main attractors for science park companies is good level of highly visible parking close to the units. We don’t dispute the commercial attractiveness of lots of parking, but its sustainability impacts. It will be a case of getting the right balance between adequate parking and good design so that the viability of the Science Park is not affected. It currently looks to us as if the commercial consideration has trumped all others, and the ‘backsliding’ from sustainability principles we are concerned about is already happening.

Viability of Science Park

We will have our answer on the viability of the Science very soon after the stage 2 bidding round due to start in the next few weeks. The Greenborough Report and the level of interest in the market underlines that there is a demand for such a use in this locality. The issue to consider carefully is the middle section of the Ingleby site which they are now looking at in terms of B1 offices rather than residential use. If this is the area between Swithland Road and the new proposed science park access road, it would remove the concerns about housing amenity raised in our appraisal of 6.2

Employment Displacement

Science Park and Riverside West

Within the Science Park area and Riverside West there are no businesses being displaced. The site has been derelict and unoccupied for some years and is now cleared and ready to redevelop. No relocations are necessary and from an economic point of view the Science Park will attract new employment into a previous abandoned area. As far as the allotments are concerned, these were largely underused and I understand allotment holders have been offered replacement plots on other underutilised allotment land within the area. The allotment
themselves are liable to flooding and as such cannot be developed in the short term until wider flood alleviation measures are put in place upstream in the City.

**Wolsey Island**

- Rocket studios are seeking to relocate, and are still looking for premises.
- Burrells have run down their business in Leicester for quite a long time now & for all intents & purposes have no real presence at Wolsey Island.
- Courtalds - Closed site some time ago, sorry I am not familiar with what happened, but I believe Sock Island investments have owned the site for well over a year.
- Best Way relocating - They are building new premises further North on/near the Loughborough Road.
- Rocket Studios - I believe they are relocating but nothing has been confirmed as yet
- Advanced Tapes - They are planning to relocate within Leicester.
- Miles & Platt - They are planning to relocate and the LRC are trying to assist them.
- First Bus – They are relocating on to Abbey Lane.

**Housing Mix**

There is already a high degree of affordable housing provision (40%) within the approved MHT scheme on the former bus depot site and there is likely to be adequate provision on other sites within Abbey Meadows. To support the Science Park the Greenborough Report suggests that the area needs to offer a high quality of life for company owners and employees. The area therefore has to offer a high quality environment in terms of living but also leisure and recreation. Providing a mix and quality will hopefully address this.

**Contamination**

Your comments are correct. There will be areas of contamination that will need to be addressed as part of the regeneration of this area. These will be addressed as each plot is brought forward and the requisite reclamation will need to be undertaken to bring the plots up to a developable standard according to the end use.

**Build Standards**

Built Standards should be at least to BREEAM ‘Very Good’ but we will be pushing hard for ‘Excellent’. The final standard will to an extent be dependent upon viability issues to enable schemes to proceed. The key driver here is high quality in terms of design, built form and environment.
Leicester City Councils response to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Leicester City Abbey Meadows

The purpose of this note is to explain how the City Council has addressed the areas of concern raised in the SA and SEA. Below is a list of changes (bold text) put forward by the Environmental Consultant along with a paragraph or two on how the City Council has addressed these issues.

Overall Recommendations by the Environmental Consultant

Clarification

1. State Housing Numbers, break down between different types, percentage of affordable housing

   - Housing numbers will depend largely on density. The density section is likely to be revised in order to control the numbers of houses built on Abbey Meadows (increase in housing impact on demand for open space, ecology, traffic and so on)
   - Affordable housing numbers will be in accordance with Government and local plan policies relating to planning obligations. The SPD has been revised to indicate preferred densities.

2. Clarify which of the two layouts (diagram 3 vs 6,7,8) is intended

   - The layouts are the same. Drawings have been enhanced to make proposals clearer. Further text has been added to explain the meaning of each drawing

3. Provide complete information on any current land uses or users to be displaced, and provision for re-siting or substitution for them

   Within the Science Park area and Riverside West there are no businesses being displaced. The site has been derelict and unoccupied for some years and is now cleared and ready to redevelop. No relocations are necessary and from an economic point of view the Science Park will attract new employment into a previous abandoned area. As far as the allotments are concerned, these were largely underused and I understand allotment holders have been offered replacement plots on other underutilised allotment land within the area. The allotment themselves are liable to flooding and as such cannot be developed in the short term until wider flood alleviation measures are put in place up stream in the City.
4. Reduce length and repetition by combining chapters

- The City Council has revised the SPD in order to avoid repetition and make it an easy document to read.

Substantive Changes

1. Reconsider the proposed Science Park access

A good quality access from the A6 is required to announce the arrival into the Science and Innovation Park. From a design point of view this may be a boulevard in style but until a detailed design and costing exercise is done this will not be determined. This is now clarified in the SPD.

2. Minimise parking provision and reduce parking provision in areas west of River Soar. Confirm that ‘zone 4’ parking standards will be applied across whole SPD area

- The provision of parking is in accordance with approved planning guidance on parking and local plan standards. However, the city council will reconsider the numbers of parking spaces and the design of parking areas in relation to policy. Options have been outlined in the SPD to clarify the issue.

Future Proofing

1. Ensure that alignments and block layouts prevent future creation of an east-west trunk road across Wolsey Island

- The future creation of an east-west trunk road is unlikely to be a viable proposition due to financial constraints. The layouts and built form has been designed to avoid the creation of another bridge link. This has been clarified in the SPD.

2. Build in safeguards against ‘backsliding’ e.g. if Science Park fails to attract high level tenants

- The SPD contains advice on Land Use. More information on building use adaptability has been added to the SPD to address this issue.