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Dee Park Planning Brief

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1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Reading Borough Council and the local community have, for several years, recognised the need for a major regeneration programme for the Dee Park estate in order to tackle the problems it faces. The Council has already engaged with the community at a number of stages including the preparation of a Draft Neighbourhood Regeneration Framework, the preparation of a Development Brief for the estate and in the selection of a developer to carry out the regeneration.
- 1.2 The regeneration of the estate supports the Council's vision for the future of Reading as set out in the consultation draft of the Second Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2011. This sets out the following vision for the Borough:

Reading 2020 vision

- 1.3 The vision for Reading was built on the Council's City 2020 initiative and developed through the involvement of key partners, local residents, businesses and other stakeholders, following the Council's City 2020 initiative:

Our vision is to maintain and improve the quality of life in Reading, embracing the challenges of a dynamic, inclusive urban community of the 21st century. Everyone will have the opportunity to benefit from all that Reading can offer. Everyone has a part to play in shaping our future.

It also lists the following Community Strategy themes:

- Fairer Reading for All
- Children and Young People
- Cleaner and Greener Environments
- Culture, Leisure and Sport
- Decent and Affordable Housing
- Healthy People and Lifestyles
- Thriving Economy and Skills
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Transport and Accessible Spaces

- 1.4 The adopted development brief for the Dee Park Regeneration provides the following vision for the future of the estate:

"To create a safe, inclusive and sustainable community, economically, environmentally and socially, as part of the wider Reading, where people want to live and work, and which will inspire a sense of pride."

- 1.5 The regeneration should help achieve both the local vision and the wider Sustainable Community Strategy vision and address its themes. In this respect the regeneration



will be about more than providing new homes. It will be expected to provide a lively and attractive central area, increasing density on appropriate locations, improving the design and mix of housing and providing environmental, community and socio-economic benefits for the whole estate. This will mean the provision of services and facilities on the estate for healthcare, education and social support.

- 1.6 The Dee Park Partnership has been selected as the developer for the scheme through a competitive dialogue process with the Council and involving the local community. It is intended that this document will provide guidance and certainty as to the Council's and the community's expectations for the planning applications that will need to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the physical works on site. The role and status of the document is set out in more detail in the following section.

2. Purpose and Status of the Document

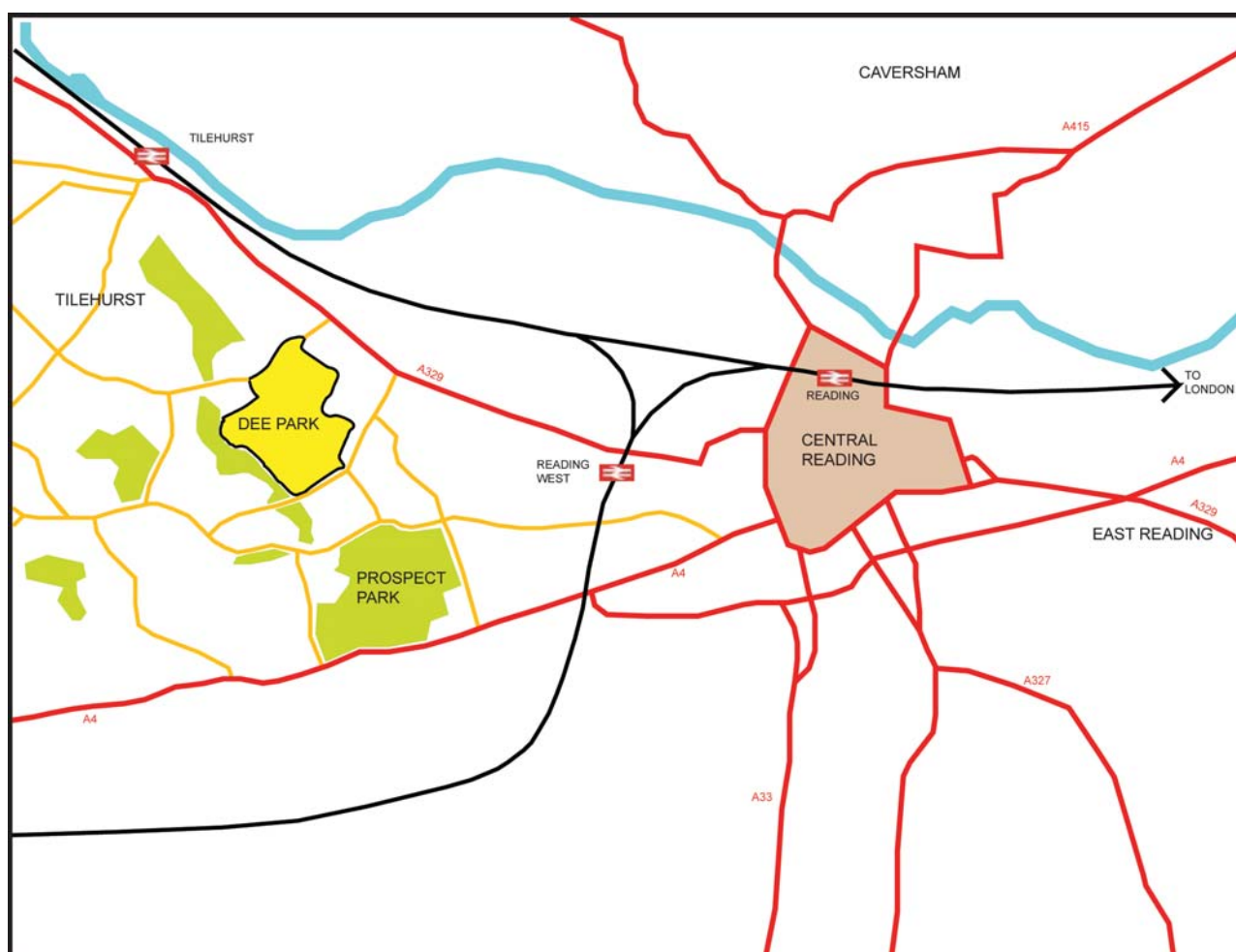
- 2.1 The purpose of this document is to provide planning guidance for the regeneration of the Dee Park area. It is being adopted by Reading Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and as such it will be a material consideration in the determination of any forthcoming planning applications within Dee Park. As a statement of the Council's expectations for the regeneration scheme it provides a useful source of information for residents and other interested parties as to what the regeneration will be expected to achieve and the standards that will be applied. The SPD is intended to provide long-term certainty and standards to ensure that the community's and the Council's needs and aspirations are met throughout the various phases of the regeneration. It incorporates many of the views of local people as it draws on the consultation already carried out by the Council and is itself subject to further community engagement.
- 2.2 The document provides a policy framework for the future regeneration of the area rather than design detail which will be developed through the evolution of the masterplan. The document builds on the extensive work and consultation carried out on the Dee Park Regeneration Development Brief dated February 2005. It supplements the inclusion of the Dee Park Estate as an identified location for Area Regeneration on the adopted Core Strategy Key Diagram

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.3 The guidance in this SPD has been developed and refined by incorporating changes and additions arising from the testing and analysis of alternative approaches within the Sustainability Appraisal process. For further information on how the Sustainability Appraisal has influenced the content of this SPD please refer to the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

3. The Dee Park Estate

- 3.1 The name Dee Park is a colloquial term that is sometimes used to refer to areas outside the Dee Park Housing Estate. However, for the purposes of this SPD the term Dee Park refers to the area outlined in red in the aerial photograph overleaf. (Plan 2).
- 3.2 The Dee Park housing estate is located some 2 miles to the west of Reading town centre as shown on the Location Map (Plan 1) below. It covers an area of approximately 36.5 hectares and lies within Norcot Ward. The estate is roughly defined as lying to the south east of Norcot Road and to the rear of properties in Lawrence Road. To the north east it is bounded by the rear of retail and industrial units on Stirling Way. The eastern boundary is formed by the rear of properties on Osbourne, Brisbane and Grovelands Roads. To the south and west the estate is bounded by Dee Road and the wooded area of Lousehill Copse. The general arrangement of the estate, and the main vehicular access points into it, are shown on the Estate Layout Plan (Plan 3).



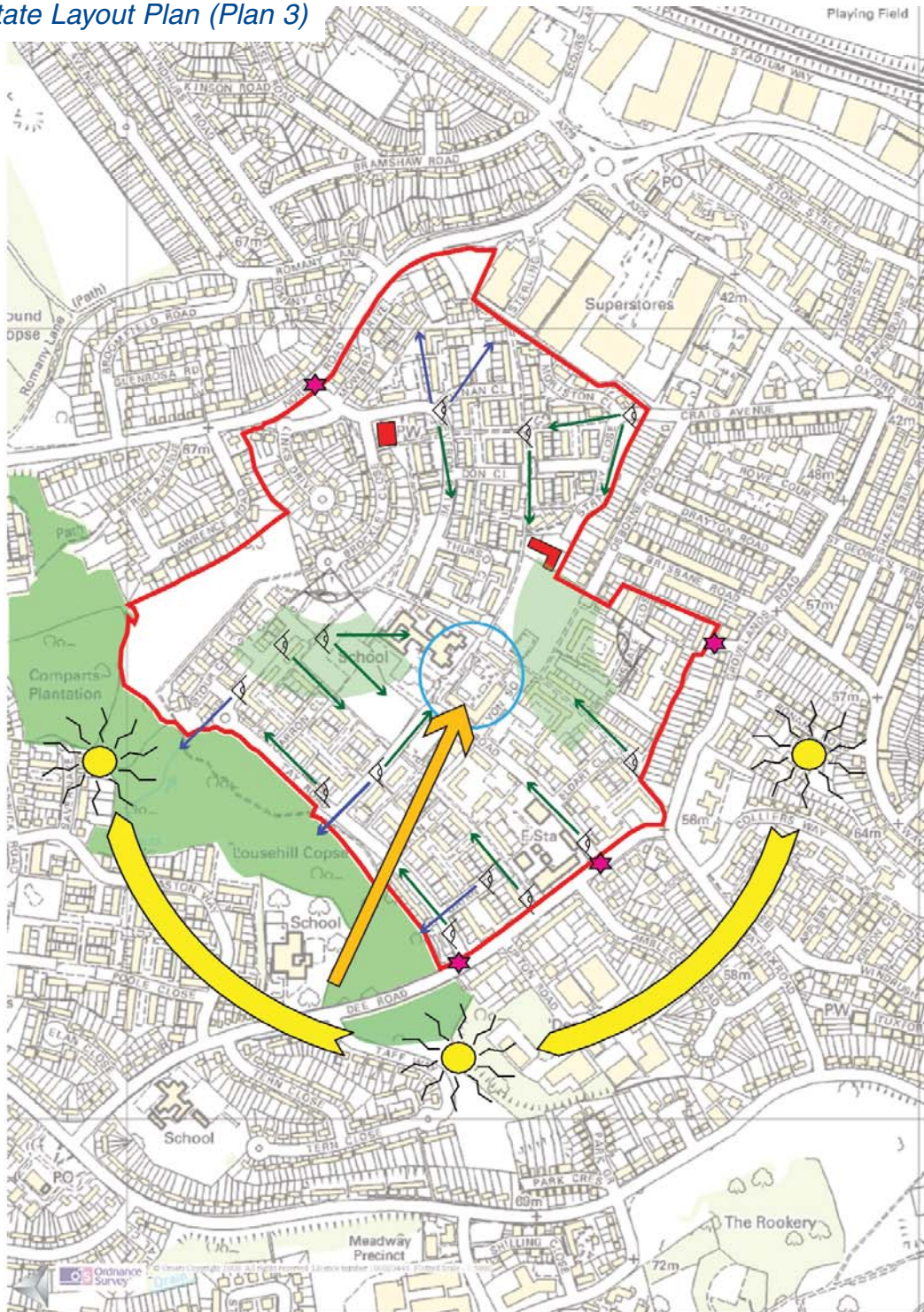
Location Map (Plan 1)





Aerial photograph of Dee Park (Plan 2)

Estate Layout Plan (Plan 3)



LEGEND

EXISTING LANDMARK BUILDINGS



SUN PATH



KEY VIEW INTO SITE

POINT AT WHICH MUCH OF THE
SITE CAN VIEWEDPUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE
WOODLAND

EYE POINTS



VIEW WITHIN THE SITE



VIEW OUT OF THE SITE



GATEWAY TO THE SITE



CENTRAL AREA APPROPRIATE
FOR TALLER BUILDINGS



-

Pedestrian underpass, looking towards Lyon Square

- 
- Reading**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

- 3.8 There is evidence of a strong level of community spirit on the estate and the proposed regeneration has attracted a lot of local interest. It has helped to involve people in taking an active role in developing the future of the estate including through the creation of CRAG (Community Regeneration Action Group). It is also well located in terms of access to open space and nearby employment opportunities.



Lyon Square

- 3.9 The housing on the estate is a mix of low-rise flats, two storey houses and a number of bungalows. Some of the housing is owned by housing associations, some is operated by housing associations on a shared ownership basis while the majority (some 900 units) is either Council owned, rented or ex-Council housing purchased under Right to Buy. Most of the flats and some of the houses on the estate are built in either 'Crosswall' or 'Bison' concrete construction.
- 3.10 There is a large amount of poorly defined and under-used open space on the estate, resulting in low densities and inefficient use of land. Parking on the estate is generally arranged in communal garage or open parking courts. There is also a Council-owned car park adjacent to the Oak Tree public house which has a capacity of 50 spaces, there are also two smaller car parks serving Lyon Square.
- 3.11 Public transport provision comprises a number of routes that operate into the estate or pass along its edge. Quality bus corridor route 17 runs along Norcot Road to the north west of the estate and provides a frequent service to Reading and Tilehurst centres. Core bus route 31 provides a 20 minute frequency (15 minute peak time) from the estate to Reading Station and Tilehurst centre. Routes 15 and 16 run along Dee Road and serve the estate. There are also 2 circular midi-bus routes that operate roughly hourly and connect the estate to Oxford Road, Reading Town Centre and Royal Berkshire Hospital in one direction and Meadway, Asda, Southcote and South Reading in the other. Sunday services are provided hourly by route 30 to Tilehurst or Reading Town Centre and evening and late night service to the estate is via Nightrack route N9.





Three and two storey flats, Dee Park

4. SPD Objectives

- 4.1 A set of SPD objectives has been developed from the analysis of the problems facing the area and the input of the local community who have identified a number of issues and aspirations that they want the regeneration to resolve and deliver. These are based on those in the Dee Park Regeneration Development Brief and have been refined and added to in light of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) carried out in tandem with the production of this SPD. For details of how the SA process has informed the preparation of the SPD please refer to the SA Report.
- 4.2 The identified problems can be summarised as:
- The inhospitable physical environment of the estate
 - The lack of security and high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour (due to physical characteristics of the built environment and socio-economic issues)
 - Low levels of usage of existing facilities/premises in Lyon Square and letting problems
 - Lack of certain facilities e.g. for younger people and childcare
 - The poor quality, energy efficiency and condition of some of the buildings on the estate and parts of the public realm
 - The socio-economic profile, in terms of the relatively high levels of unemployment, low levels of educational achievement and low incomes
 - The lack of a suitable mix of housing types and tenures, particularly in relation to the high proportion of one-bed flats and bedsits and the relatively high turnover of residents and the associated transient population
 - The generally poor image of the estate
 - The inward-looking character of the estate and the lack of integration with the surrounding area.



Views of the Estate

- 4.3 The aims of this draft SPD are very much based on the aims and objectives established for the development brief. The overall objective is to regenerate the area to improve its environment and the sustainability of the Dee Park community and create a place where people will want to live. Regeneration should also make the best use of the available land to support a more vibrant and sustainable community into the future.
- 4.4 In order to achieve this overall aim, the following objectives have been established:
- To create a sustainable neighbourhood - this is an over-arching objective which takes sustainability in the wider sense of achieving social, economic and environmental objectives. The delivery of this objective will be through the achievement of these more specific objectives which are set out below and in the Design Objectives at Sections 8.5 and 8.6.
 - To foster a positive sense of place.
 - To create a well-used and vibrant centre containing a range of facilities and uses, including residential properties to provide activity outside the working day.
 - To improve the socio-economic balance and mix of the community by addressing the currently very high proportion of social rented units on the estate and increase the proportion of privately owned property, and by increasing the proportion of family housing. Proposals should also include measures to support education and training for residents.
 - To achieve improved integration of the estate with the surrounding area
 - To improve local environmental quality and ensure that regeneration proposals minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity, create new habitats and protect and enhance existing habitats.
 - To increase the housing density to achieve more efficient use of available land and increase the viability of commercial and other facilities on the estate.
 - To improve the mix of housing available in terms of types, sizes and tenure.
 - To improve transport links within the estate and to important local destinations including Reading town centre and the nearby retail and employment opportunities and to integrate Dee Park into its immediate surroundings.
 - To improve the community facilities on the estate including making better use of the open spaces and improve the recreational value, quality and safety of open space on the estate.
 - To create a more secure layout and environment in accordance with the principles of Secure by Design.
 - To improve the quality of the public realm and ensure that it is clearly defined.



- 6.5 Borough policies consist of a mix of 'saved' policies in the Reading Borough Local Plan 1991-2006, policies in the Reading Core Strategy (adopted January 2008) and adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPDs and SPGs).
- 6.6 Saved Local Plan policies of particular relevance include HSG5 – Residential Design Standards and CUD14 – Standards of Design in Development. Relevant Core Strategy policies include CS1 – Sustainable Design and Construction, CS2 – Waste Minimisation, CS3 – Social Inclusion and Diversity, CS4 – Accessibility and the Intensity of Development, CS5 – Inclusive Access, CS7 – Design and the Public Realm, CS15 – Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix, CS22 Transport Assessments, CS29 – Provision of Open Space and CS31 – Additional and Existing Community Facilities.
- 6.7 Relevant supplementary planning guidance includes the Spaces around Dwellings SPG, the Planning Obligations SPG and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. Consideration should also be given to the Council's adopted Validation Checklist for Planning Applications.

7. Land Use

- 7.1 It is important that the regeneration of Dee Park is underpinned by a set of land uses that will support a sustainable community into the future. This means that a range of uses should be provided on the estate in addition to its primarily residential use. Residential uses are considered in greater detail in the section on Housing.
- 7.2 These other uses can be broadly divided into commercial uses and social/community uses.
- 7.3 The commercial uses should form the basis for the local centre and provide for everyday shopping needs. The increase in the numbers of homes in the locality, the improved environment and better integration with and accessibility to and from the surrounding areas will improve their commercial viability.
- 7.4 Reading Core Strategy Policy CS3 'Social Inclusion and Diversity' requires that major developments demonstrate measures to enhance social inclusion. This should be in terms of access to housing, employment, services, community facilities, leisure, health, education and other services and facilities. It requires development to take account of the social and cultural diversity of the area in which it is located and to contribute to local distinctiveness. Access to good quality health, education and other social facilities should be provided for all. The policy also requires that new housing development is co-located with a range of accessible facilities, or is planned and located to provide access to such facilities.
- 7.5 This supports Community Strategy objectives to reduce inequality between Reading's neighbourhoods, develop a strong sense of inclusive citizenship, encourage more people to take part in physical exercise, improve the quality of and access to leisure and



arts facilities and enable more people in less affluent areas to make healthier lifestyle choices.

- 7.6 The development brief prepared and adopted by the Council for the scheme in consultation with local people and other interested parties complies with Core Strategy policy CS3 in that it includes a table setting out a range of proposed community uses and facilities. The brief envisages that the majority of these would be grouped to create a modern 'community hub' at the heart of the estate. There is some flexibility in the manner in which these facilities are provided, but they should provide modern, energy-efficient accommodation and enable the use of the latest ICT services including high bandwidth internet access.
- 7.7 They should be prominently located in a well-designed building or buildings to create a welcoming environment and encourage their wider use. Designs should be developed with long-term operating costs in mind and flexibility to ensure that the best use can be made of the facilities provided at different times by a variety of users. The developer will be expected to include proposals for the funding and management of the facilities as part of any planning application(s).
- 7.8 The table of suggested uses is reproduced below: -

Community Hub Requirements
Reception area / front office:
Single 'gateway' to all Reading BC services, including via ICT provision
Housing advice and housing management local estate office, inclusion of a base for Community Wardens
Support Services (Health, Social Services, Education etc)
Integrated, multi-agency approach – mainly supporting children & families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local back office provision for staff • Consulting / interview rooms
Community office space – for e.g. Dee Park Residents Association / Community Trust, other local voluntary groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to office space • Interview rooms
Adult education and comprehensive training and employment advice surgery, support and outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to suitable space for the delivery of adult education (e.g. ESOL, numeracy, literacy, childcare etc) • IT facility – providing free community access to PCs/web and equipped as a training facility

<p>Multi-purpose community facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible spaces for indoor sports, activities (e.g. exercise classes, elderly people's lunch club etc), meetings and community hire for events • Kitchen • Community café/space to socialise and for informal gatherings
<p>Children's Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare for parents looking for work or training • Creche/day care for under 5s • Out of school club for over 5s
<p>Young People's Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Common room' for social gatherings • All purpose space for activities • Recording studio • Workshop <p>The young people's facility should be clearly defined and ideally have a separate access to encourage a sense of ownership in the young people who use it.</p> <p>The youth facility should include office space for a West Reading Area Youth Work Team. This should provide youth work with good visibility among young people and maximise access to youth workers for young people and their parents. This should accommodate 6 desks and the usual storage/amenity requirements.</p>
<p>Sports facilities:</p> <p>All weather, floodlit, outdoor artificial turf games pitch</p> <p>Indoor two-court sports hall / performing arts studio (NB could be multi-use flexible space in community centre or youth facility)</p> <p>Informal kick-about area (NB: a multi-use games area currently provided near Lyon Square could fulfil this role if retained)</p>
<p>Car parking (possibly below ground)</p>

7.9 This list should not be regarded as entirely prescriptive but does give a good indication of the types of facility that have been identified as being desirable by the local community, service providers and other stakeholders. It is estimated that approximately 1,600 square metres of floorspace would be required to deliver the community centre and extended school.

7.10 Favourable consideration will be given to the provision of a neighbourhood facility for Thames Valley Police within Dee Park.

7.11 Proposals that include the redevelopment of the existing 'Maples' Family Centre in Lyon Square should include the re-provision of this facility, though not necessarily in Dee Park.

Civic Square

7.12 The intention is that a new public square should be provided at the centre of the estate to complement the community hub facilities referred to above and provide a focus for commercial activity. It should also provide a location for public art.



Public Realm

- 7.1H In addition to the central square the redevelopment scheme should include significant improvements to the quality of the public realm on the estate generally. Further details on how this should be achieved are set out in a following section of this document.

Open Space

- 7.1I Open space provided as part of the redevelopment should be optimised. Open space should have a clear function and should be located and designed to reflect that purpose. Proposals should seek to enhance the availability and usage of open space for sport and informal activity. A comprehensive open space, recreation and public realm strategy should be submitted with applications for planning permission. Further details on the function and design of open space are set out below.

Housing

- 7.1J The objective is to create an inclusive and sustainable community that provides housing to suit a mix of household sizes and types. Further information on how this should be achieved is provided in the section on housing below.

8. The Regeneration Scheme

- 8.1 Any development proposal will be expected to achieve a high quality of design in order to comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS7. Advice on residential design standards is provided by saved Local Plan Policy HSG5 'Residential Design Standards'. The regeneration scheme should seek to improve the layout and design of the estate in accordance with best practice in urban design.
- 8.2 Any development proposals must be accompanied by a design and access statement that will address the following matters
- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
 - Landscape;
 - Density and mix;
 - Scale: height and massing; and
 - Architectural detail and materials.
 - Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place;
 - Continuity and enclosure;
 - Quality of the public realm;
 - Ease of movement and permeability;
 - Legibility - clear image and easy to understand;
 - Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time;
 - Diversity – meeting a wide range of needs;
 - Responding positively to the local context and creating or reinforcing local character and distinctiveness, including providing value to the public realm;

- Creating safe and accessible environments where crime and fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;
- Addressing the needs of all in society by ensuring that proposals are accessible, usable and easy to understand; and
- Creating a visually attractive scheme with good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.

8.3 Further guidance on how these aspects can be addressed are set out in the following paragraphs which include specific design objectives to be addressed within the Dee Park regeneration. In general, regeneration proposals will be expected to demonstrate high standards of design in accordance with current best practice. Guidance on best practice, including such aspects as appropriate back to back distances, is contained in the Urban Design Compendium 2 'Delivering Quality Places' (English Partnerships, September 2007).

8.4 There are a number of particular design weaknesses in the current estate layout that should be rectified and improved. In this respect the emphasis in Dee Park will be on improving rather than maintaining the existing built character of parts of the estate, while supporting and developing the positive aspects of the area including the sense of community. These are referred to in the section on the Purpose, Status and Objectives of the SPD. Of particular relevance to layout and design are the following:

- The inhospitable physical environment of the estate
- The lack of security and high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour (due to physical characteristics of the built environment and socio-economic issues)
- Low levels of usage of existing facilities/premises in Lyon Square and letting problems
- Lack of certain facilities e.g. for younger people and childcare
- The lack of a suitable mix of housing types and tenures, particularly in relation to the high proportion of one bed dwellings and the relatively high turnover of residents and the associated transient population
- The generally poor image of the estate
- The inward-looking character of the estate and the lack of integration with the surrounding area.

Design Objectives

8.5 The above list indicates a number of aspects that the new layout and design should address. This can be translated into a set of design objectives against which development proposals will be assessed.

- Improve Security
- Make More Efficient Use of Land – through increased residential density, avoiding ambiguous semi-private space and reducing the amount of under-used open space
- Improve the Connectivity of the Estate
- Create a More Vibrant and Viable Centre to the Estate
- Increase the Value and Use of Recreational Open Space
- Diversify the Types and Tenures of Housing Across the Estate
- Improve the Image of the Estate and Create a Positive Identity
- Create a Sustainable Community



- 8.6 In order to meet these objectives there are a number of responses that should be made in the design of new development and improvements to the public realm. These are set out in the following table as they relate to each objective. The list is not meant to be prescriptive and should not stifle innovative design solutions where they can be shown to satisfactorily achieve the objectives.

<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Improve Security (both actual and perceived)</p>
<p>Design Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve surveillance of public spaces by removing underpasses and ensuring pedestrian routes and public spaces are overlooked by active frontages • Improve the overlooking of parking areas • Seek to achieve parking areas that are better related to the homes they serve
<p>Objective 2</p> <p>Make More Efficient Use of Land</p>
<p>Design Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase residential density - higher densities should be commensurate with the achievement of other design objectives • Larger buildings can be used as part of the design approach to help support increased activity and vitality in key locations and to create taller/larger buildings where appropriate to create landmarks and improve legibility • Make better use of some of the under-used and poorly defined open spaces.

Objective 3

Improve the Connectivity of the Estate

Design Responses

- Improve the links between the residential areas and the commercial / community centre
- Improve the links between the estate and the outlying areas
- Ensure that the layout provides equality of access including the provision of routes and facilities that are accessible to people with limited mobility
- Produce a layout that is readily understandable by its users – this would include maintaining views into and out of the estate which would include views from the gateways at the entrance to the estate from Norcot Road, along Spey Road, Tay Road and from the higher ground around the periphery of the estate. The layout should also provide landmarks (distinctive buildings or other features) at appropriate locations and use distinctive design features to identify different parts of the estate
- Ensure that improvements to the network of pedestrian and cycle routes are based on a proper understanding of the security, convenience and accessibility (by all users) of the routes between principal origins and destinations within the estate, including any new nodes created through the regeneration scheme
- Ensure that roads and other routes are designed to be pedestrian and cycle-friendly

Objective 4

Create a More Vibrant and Viable Centre to the Estate

Design Responses

- Provide a mix of commercial, community and residential uses in the central area that will provide activity during the day and into the evening
- Create an attractive and accessible centre that will support retail businesses to meet local needs
- In order to ensure the provision of a range of activities and maintain a vital and viable heart to the estate, development proposals should provide a minimum of 800 square metres gross floorspace for community and youth purposes and at least three retail units all within an accessible central location



Objective 5

Increase the Value and Use of Recreational Open Space

Design Responses

- Ensure that all open space provided in the estate has a clear function (which may be a landscape function)
- Provide a focal area near the centre of the estate for informal and formal community use
- Provide smaller areas of open space and equipped play areas as appropriate
- Maximise the opportunities presented by Lousehill Copse for recreation
- Provide a range of facilities to meet the needs of the community, in particular parents with children, older children and elderly people

Objective 6

Diversify the Types and Tenures of Housing Across the Estate

Design Responses

- Address the imbalance created by the excessive proportion of small units by increasing the number of larger 3 and 4 bed units on the estate
- Create a better balance of tenures by reducing the overall proportion of social rented accommodation on the estate
- Social rented accommodation should not dominate any single development/area within the estate.

Objective 7

Improve the Image of the Estate and Create a Positive Identity

Design Responses

- Design detail / material – the materials palette should comprise appropriate high quality materials with a lifespan of no less than 15 years
- Public art – should be included at appropriate locations including Lyon Square and the main routes into the estate. Consideration should be given to the retention or suitable relocation of the existing public art in Lyon Square subject to community views
- Proposals should include appropriate community involvement measures and make reference to Reading Borough Council's Public Art Strategy

Objective 8

Create a sustainable community

Responses

- Building techniques / materials
- Support for a mixed community
- Provision of facilities for education, training and community activity
- Support a viable centre
- Support non-car modes of transport
- Support for and development of CRAG, Dee Park Residents Association (DPRA) and other community groups.
- Integrated approach to neighbourhood management through the development of a Neighbourhood Management Plan in accordance with Policy BE3 of the draft South East Plan.

More detailed guidance on some of the above design issues is set out below.

Density

- 8.7 Due to the spacious nature of the existing estate layout at Dee Park, current densities are around 35 dwellings per hectare (dph). This is at the bottom end of the indicative density range for accessible suburban areas set out in Core Strategy Policy CS15. It is likely that regeneration proposals will increase this in accordance with the objective of making more efficient use of land and other design improvements.
- 8.8 Core Strategy Policy CS4 requires densities to be related to accessibility by non-car modes of transport to a range of services and facilities including defined local centres (Dee Park is defined as Local Centre in the Core Strategy). In considering how the policy is met by any specific proposal account will be taken of the density of the specific development areas and the impact of the proposed development on the overall density of the estate as a whole.
- 8.9 There are parts of the estate where high densities will be appropriate, for example in order to create a vibrant centre to the estate or to aid legibility by providing landmark buildings elsewhere. In this respect densities within specific locations should be led by achieving an appropriate design solution rather than the imposition of an arbitrary limit.

Height and Massing

- 8.10 Again, height and massing of buildings should be a reflection of what is appropriate for a specific site rather than the result of an arbitrary standard. In general, height and the massing of buildings should reflect the suburban character of the estate and the surrounding area. Account should be taken of normal development control criteria in terms of overlooking and overshadowing, maintaining and improving the quality of important views. These include views from, and to, the surrounding higher land much of which is green space such as Lousehill Copse. This greenspace lends an attractive



backdrop to the estate and provides viewpoints within the site. Proposed development should also create an attractive skyline. The important views are indicated on Plan A – ‘Important Views and Focal Points’.

- 8.11 As referred to under density, taller buildings may be used to accentuate the function of important focal points such as the centre, gateways to the estate on Norcot Road, Spey Road, Tay Road and other key nodes that are created through any proposed layout. The gateways and central area where taller / higher density building would be appropriate are shown on Plan C – ‘Estate Layout Plan’.

Detailed Design

- 8.12 Development proposals should include consideration of ways in which the detailed design of buildings and associated boundary treatments and public spaces, including roads and paths, can be used to provide unifying themes. The objective is to reinforce the distinctiveness of the estate and regard should be had to the retained existing development as well as new buildings.
- 8.13 High standards of design will be expected in accordance with guidance at all levels. The choice of materials should be justified on the basis of their quality, their appropriateness in the context of Reading, their sustainability and their contribution to achieving a sense of place.

Access and Transport

- 8.14 Development proposals will be expected to include a full transport assessment setting out how their proposals will improve transport links within the estate and to the surrounding area. The manner in which this is achieved should take account of the local community's concerns about the creation of a through-route for vehicles across the estate. If such a route is proposed it will need to be tortuous and include design measures to ensure that it does not encourage increased through traffic. Account will need to be taken in the Transport Assessment of the impact of any anticipated increases in traffic arising from the provision of any through route on local junctions.
- 8.15 The Design Standards for the estate streets, footways and cycleways layout should be in accordance with the Department for Transport document "The Manual for Streets, March 2007", which is the national design guidance document for residential streets.
- 8.16 In accordance with saved Local Plan Policy TRN11B 'Development and Traffic', if the development is shown to cause any aggravation of traffic in the area or the highway aspects are unacceptable in terms of amenity, environmental impact or their effect on public transport or safety the Council will seek improvements from the developer to overcome these problems.

- 8.17 The Transport Assessment should include details of the predicted traffic impact of the additional development and audits of any key junctions including Norcot Road and the Oxford Road roundabout, Grovelands Road and Oxford Road, Dee Road and Water Road, and the junctions leaving the estate . Audits should identify any shortfalls in provision for pedestrians or cyclists and include appropriate resources to secure their provision.
- 8.18 Proposals should include improvements to pedestrian and cycle access routes that respect natural desire lines and the need for such routes to be safe and feel safe. They should also set out how the proposed scheme will facilitate and encourage the use of public transport, particularly buses. Developers will be expected to consult with the Council's Transport Strategy section on the form of any such improvements. These will include real-time information displays, improved bus shelters and improvements to service frequencies.
- 8.19 In accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS23, the Council will expect any planning applications for the development of Dee Park to include a green travel plan. This should set out measures to be taken to promote sustainable travel choices for residents and other visitors to the estate and include the provision of safe routes to schools and parks.
- 8.20 Core Strategy Policy CS24 states that maximum car parking standards and cycle parking requirements will be applied in relation to the accessibility of the location to sustainable transport facilities, especially public transport. The development brief for the Dee Park Regeneration indicates that provision should be in the range of 1 to 1.5 spaces per dwelling. It is not considered that 1.5 spaces per dwelling should be exceeded for the new homes provided as part of the regeneration. In addition to off street parking areas for residents, opportunities should be sought for the provision of additional on street parking at appropriate locations.
- 8.21 Developers will therefore be expected to justify their proposals for parking levels on the basis of accessibility to and the relative attractiveness of non-car modes of transport and, in accordance with PPS3, with the likely levels of car ownership. This should be on the basis of census information updated with more recent survey information as available. The census data for 2001 indicates relatively low levels of car and van ownership on the estate with an average of 0.8 vehicles per household compared to an average for the whole of Reading of around 1.1 vehicles per household.
- 8.22 Proposals should also include details of how parking will be arranged to ensure that it is secure and not visually intrusive. This should include improvements to existing parking courts to provide parking that is better related to the homes or facilities it serves and ensuring that appropriate provision is made for wheelchair users.



- 8.23 A mix of parking provision including communal parking areas and on-street spaces may be appropriate. Opportunities should be explored to share parking spaces between different uses that have requirements at different times of day.

Existing Features to be Retained

- 8.24 There are some buildings on the estate, particularly those of more recent construction that do, or can be readily made to, perform adequately in terms of layout and energy use and with the general improvements to the estate proposed in this and other documents it is not considered necessary or appropriate to seek the comprehensive redevelopment of the estate with all the upheaval and loss of embedded energy that this would involve. There are also some particular positive features of the estate whose value should be retained through any regeneration scheme.
- 8.25 One of the most distinctive and attractive features of the estate is its setting, nestling at the foot of higher, partly wooded, ground. This ground is considered more fully in the following section, but within the regeneration scheme the importance of views to and from this higher land should be recognised and used as a positive element in the layout. New development should be located and designed to maintain and respect existing important views and, where possible, create new and attractive ones.
- 8.26 There is some existing public art in Lyon Square which should be retained if desired by the community, though it may be appropriate to relocate it to a suitable new position within the site.

Open Space

- 8.27 The existing estate layout includes extensive areas of often undefined and relatively low-grade open space with few facilities. Much of the existing open space within the estate lacks a clear purpose, provides no shelter or sense of enclosure and does not meet many of the requirements of the local community. As a result the space is generally under-used and is associated with the creation of security risks.
- 8.28 A comprehensive and integrated open space and public realm strategy addressing these issues will need to accompany any redevelopment proposals for the area. The role and function of the open space proposed should be clear and address the needs of all sections of the local community, including children of different ages. Spaces should be fully accessible to all, including the elderly and those with disabilities.
- 8.29 There should be a significant focal area of open space in an accessible and ideally central location so all can benefit. This principal space should be of high quality and suitable for formal and informal recreation. It should be attractively and robustly landscaped to enable a wide variety of uses.

- 8.30 Elsewhere, smaller elements of open space should be used to complement the main area and to enhance other parts of the estate. These open spaces should together provide a series of attractive focal points within the built environment and act as pleasant links between different parts of the estate and between the estate and other adjoining open spaces, including the adjoining Louse Hill Copse. Such spaces should contribute to overall recreational provision and environmental quality of any scheme.
- 8.31 It is important for the use and sense of security of all open space that it is properly overlooked by active building frontages and can be easily and effectively managed and used.
- 8.32 Regeneration should also provide appropriate private amenity space which could include communal 'garden' areas. Play facilities should be provided across the estate and be well integrated with, and overlooked by, nearby residences.
- 8.33 The selection of the scale and layout of trees planted within the public realm needs to signal and complement the proposed urban-structure. In so doing designers need to acknowledge the role that trees play in relation to air quality, shade, a sense of place and differentiation between major and minor routes and spaces.
- 8.34 The major area of open space of Louse Hill Copse adjoins the regeneration area and is a significant local asset that will directly contribute to the choice of open space available to local residents. It is designated as a Local Nature Reserve and forms part of a Major Landscape Feature in the Development Plan. Proposals should maintain and enhance the benefits of the Copse to the estate. This could include measures to improve local involvement in its management and maintenance, the provision of improved access to and through the copse and improvements to its function as a wildlife habitat and corridor. Its important visual contribution to the setting of the estate must be recognised and preserved in any proposals. There may be opportunities to accommodate recreational activities (cycling / walking trails or climbing).
- 8.35 The Council will assess the proposals against its adopted Open Spaces Strategy and the adopted Core Strategy. The provision of funding for ongoing maintenance will be expected to be in accordance with the Council's SPD on Planning Obligations.

Public Realm

- 8.36 The public realm is taken in its widest sense to include not just open spaces but also communal parking areas, civic spaces, roads and cycle and pedestrian paths.
- 8.37 One of the fundamental issues in relation to the public realm on the estate is that it should be much more distinctly defined from private space. Within this well defined public realm, a high quality of design will be required to ensure that a sense of community pride and ownership is fostered. All public areas should be fully accessible to all, including people with disabilities. All parts of the public realm should be there for a reason, and be designed to reflect and accommodate their role and encourage their use. A well-designed and appropriately proportioned central public space should support the proposed revitalised central area of the estate and link with the shops and community uses.



- ## Safety and Security

- ## Sustainable Design and Construction

- All new housing is required to meet the most up to date Eco-Homes 'Very Good' as a minimum standard, and all new commercial developments are required to meet the most up to date BREEAM 'Very Good' as a minimum standard;

- On larger developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1,000 m² of floorspace, ensure that 50% of the provision meets the most up to date Eco-Homes and BREEAM 'Excellent' standards;
- All new developments maximise the use of energy efficiency and energy conservation measures in their design, layout and orientation to reduce overall energy demand;
- All developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1000m² floorspace incorporate on-site generation of energy from renewable sources and energy efficient design measures (including the use of CHP where appropriate) to off-set at least 20% of predicted carbon dioxide emissions from the estimated energy usage of the completed and occupied development;
- All developments reduce mains water use and as part of the Eco-Homes, demonstrate that water conservation measures are incorporated so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the appropriate levels set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM Standards;
- Developments incorporate sustainable urban drainage facilities and techniques as part of the layout of a development as appropriate and as advised by the Environment Agency, including minimising the size of impermeable areas so that peak run-off and annual water run-off is reduced where possible and in any case is no greater than the original conditions of the site. Particular care will be needed in areas of flood risk where different solutions may be required.

8.44 This policy has been introduced by the Council to ensure that developments in Reading contribute towards achieving the regional and sub-regional targets set out in the South East Plan and the Berkshire Structure Plan. The Council's approach is described in more detail in the Supplementary Planning Document 'Sustainable Design and Construction' adopted in March 2007.

8.45 Any development proposals for Dee Park will be expected to address these policy requirements. They should be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement explaining how sustainability requirements will be met by the development with reference to the checklist approach set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document referred to above.

8.46 While the Dee Park area is not within any area identified as being at risk of flooding, there are significant parts of Reading that are. It is important therefore that these areas are not placed at greater risk by changes in run-off patterns arising from new development elsewhere.

8.47 Development proposals for Dee Park should also incorporate measures to minimise the generation of waste in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS2 'Waste Minimisation'. This should include reference to waste generated in the construction, use and life of the buildings. Proposals should include sustainable approaches to waste management, the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the provision within any proposed layouts of adequate space to enable waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.



Landscape

- 8.48 Some of the requirements for landscaping are set out above in the sections relating to open space and the public realm. Landscaping will be a critical element in the successful regeneration of the estate. In reflection of this, a Landscape Masterplan should be included with any development proposals. This should be accompanied by a clear strategy statement setting out how the landscaping will contribute to the achievement of the environmental and other regeneration objectives including local distinctiveness, improving the image of the estate and supporting biodiversity.
- 8.49 Landscaping should be designed to be robust in terms of the materials and species used and so that it continues to look good and function well in future years without excessive maintenance requirements. The landscaping strategy and masterplan should ensure that adequate space is provided for structural landscaping, particularly tree planting to form an integral part of the estate.

Biodiversity

- 8.50 Core Strategy Policy CS36 requires that development should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity (or geological) interest within the site into the schemes. The regeneration should ensure that the Local Nature Reserve at Lousehill Copse is safeguarded and, if possible, enhanced.
- 8.51 Within the estate any existing wildlife links and corridors should be protected and opportunities sought to consolidate, extend and enhance the network.
- 8.52 To comply with saved Local Plan Policy NE7 (Creative Nature Conservation) where possible the regeneration scheme should introduce creative nature conservation measures which could involve improvements to existing habitats or the creation of new ones, use of appropriate native species in landscaping schemes and the use of permeable surfaces to reduce rainwater run-off.
- 8.53 In accordance with saved Local Plan Policy NE6 (Protecting Wildlife Habitats and Natural Features on or adjoining Development Sites) any wildlife habitats should be retained and protected, along with any worthwhile natural features. The policy requires details to be submitted of how such habitats and features on or adjacent to the site will be protected during construction.

The Historic Environment

- 8.54 There are no historic buildings on the site and no known archaeological sites of any significance. However, there have been individual archaeological finds of Prehistoric and Roman artefacts on the site in the past and the area is currently under-investigated for its archaeological potential. In order to ensure that proper account is taken of any heritage assets the site may contain and in accordance with saved local plan policies CUD11 and CUD12 and the advice in PPG16, developers will be expected to commission and submit an archaeological assessment of the site at an early stage.

- 8.55 Early maps show evidence of gravel pits and clay extraction on parts of the site as well as more gravel pits and brick kilns nearby.

9. Housing

- 9.1 The provision of new housing is a key element of the regeneration aspirations for the estate. New housing will assist regeneration by enabling the replacement of sub-standard accommodation and creating a more balanced and sustainable mix of household types and sizes. Development proposals should meet the housing needs of local people on the estate and meet the Council's strategic aims for housing as set out in the Local Development Framework and draft Sustainable Community Strategy.

Housing Mix

- 9.2 The recently adopted Reading Core Strategy requires that

“Developments should provide an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, in accordance with the findings of a housing market assessment. The mix of dwellings should include an appropriate proportion of units designed to the Lifetime Homes standard.”

This accords with the guidance in Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' (PPS3) that developers should provide market housing that reflect demand and the profile of households requiring market housing.

- 9.3 The Berkshire Housing Market Assessment identified a particular need in Reading for three and four bed family type housing. This was due to the historic tendency for the Borough to have a relatively large proportion of small units and the recent trend of building large numbers of flats. This need is reiterated in relation to affordable housing in the Reading Borough Housing Needs Assessment 2007.

- 9.4 The mix of housing created through the regeneration scheme should help achieve the general SPD objective to create a sustainable neighbourhood and should also contribute to the achievement of other SPD objectives as follows:

- To improve the socio-economic balance and mix of the community
- To increase the housing density to achieve the more efficient use of available land and increase the viability of commercial and other facilities on the estate
- To improve the choice of housing available in terms of types, sizes and tenure

Developers will therefore be expected to provide a mix of market housing that includes a minimum of 20% of houses suitable for families (3 bedrooms or more) as well as smaller units that will provide an element of low-cost market housing. More houses should be provided than flats.



- disabled persons units and other specialist properties such as properties with a bedroom and bathroom downstairs for those families coping with a disabled adult in the house;
- Large, affordable, 4 bed & above houses;
- Disabled adapted housing especially to meet needs of disabled children;
- 1 bed flats in blocks of not more than 6 for vulnerable singles;
- Small flats ‘pepper-potted’ within sites secured through planning obligations;
- Shared ownership is an option for Learning Difficulty clients and physically disabled people;
- Bungalows with flexible use e.g. flat for carers;
- Elderly person accommodation including care homes and sheltered accommodation.

- 9.10 Development proposals should therefore include information to explain how the affordable housing being provided will contribute to identified needs. It should also include relevant information on viability, contribution to achieving a better balanced mix of housing tenure and the contribution to securing a sustainable mixed community across the overall estate being made by the regeneration scheme.

Special Needs Housing

- 9.11 Development proposals should satisfy Core Strategy policy CS5 which requires that all buildings should be located, sited and designed to provide suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily.
- 9.12 Proposals will also be expected to include provision for older people's housing in a suitable format to meet local needs. This should include at least 60 new one and two bedroom sheltered units. At least 20% of this provision should comprise 2 bedroom units.

10. The School

- 10.1 Ranikhet Primary School is an important local facility located at the heart of the community. There are aspirations to increase its level of intake to two forms of entry. Regeneration of the estate, including significant additional housing, will provide an opportunity help achieve this aspiration.
- 10.2 Ranikhet is an extended school, and as such it provides a wide range of additional services to pupils and to the wider community. Regeneration proposals should demonstrate how the scheme will provide for the continued development of the school along these lines.

10.3 There may, subject to the agreement of the Council's Education Directorate, be the opportunity to use part or all of the existing school site for development. The use of part of the site would only be permitted subject to the preservation of minimum (or greater) spatial provision to ensure the continuity of provision of educational and extended services, taking account of any requirement for growth. The use of all of the site would only be permitted subject to the reprovision of the school and its grounds as part of the regeneration, again taking into account any requirement for growth.



- 10.4 The regeneration proposals should provide, as a minimum, for enhancements to Ranikhet Primary School to ensure that the school can meet the demand for spaces attributable to the regeneration. Proposals should also take account of forecasts, made by the Council's Education Directorate, of the number of pupils that would be anticipated to attend Ranikhet Primary School irrespective of regeneration. Continuity of the school's extant educational and extended services provision is to be preserved throughout the regeneration process, allowing at each stage for any growth that may be anticipated as a result of regeneration or the forecasts referred to in the previous sentence.

An indication of the pupil numbers likely to be generated by additional housing is given in the table below:

<i>Dwelling Size & Type</i>		<i>Pupils Aged 4-10</i>
2 bed flat / apartment	-	0.35 pupils per dwelling
3+ bed flat / apartment	-	0.46 pupils per dwelling
2 bed house	-	0.66 pupils per dwelling
3+ bed house	-	0.87 pupils per dwelling



- These are considered in more detail below.

- 12.2 The proposed phasing should reflect the community priorities identified through the community responses to consultation carried out in preparing the Council's Regeneration Development Brief.
- 12.3 The phasing plan should also set out how the community will continue to be engaged as the regeneration scheme progresses, including involvement in the detailed design of individual phases and environmental improvements.

Continuity of Service Provision

- 12.4 Regeneration of the estate will inevitably cause disruption to residents, businesses and service providers. Phasing proposals will need to demonstrate that they will minimise this disruption and maintain, as far as possible, the provision of services and access to them. This will include the continuing operation of the school.

Housing Mix

- 12.5 Developers should include details of the housing mix for each proposed phase in terms of the proportion of affordable housing, the form of tenure and dwelling sizes. The objective will be to ensure that a mix of dwellings is available at each stage of construction to meet the needs of the community, including as far as possible meeting the wishes of those displaced residents who wish to remain on the estate.

Implementation of Wider Housing and Environmental Improvements

- 12.6 It is recognised that significant parts of the existing housing on the estate will remain. However, it is important that such areas benefit from environmental improvements and enhanced access to facilities and services through the regeneration process. Development proposals will therefore be expected to show how and when these wider benefits will be delivered in their phasing plan.

13. Developer Contributions

- 13.1 Developers will be expected to follow the guidance in the Council's adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004) in respect of the requirements for community and other infrastructure. It is recognised that the regeneration scheme will include provision of education, community and social infrastructure along with open space, leisure and recreation facilities as integral components.
- 13.2 On this basis the requirement for developer contributions to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement may be limited to the securing of affordable housing and the requirements for any off-site highway works.

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Polish

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Portuguese

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Punjabi

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Urdu

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