Contents

1.0 Introduction ................................................................. 7

2.0 Strategic context ............................................................ 8
  2.1 Introduction ................................................................. 8
  2.2 National planning context ................................................. 8
  2.3 Strategic road connections ................................................ 9
  2.4 Strategic rail, air and sea connections ................................. 10
  2.5 Strategic context - summary ............................................ 11

3.0 Regional context: the Forest of Dean .............................. 13
  3.1 Introduction ................................................................. 14
  3.2 Regional planning context ............................................... 15
  3.3 The Forest of Dean - natural context ................................. 16
  3.4 Historical development of the Forest of Dean ..................... 17
  3.5 Regional transport connections ....................................... 22
  3.6 Regional attractors ......................................................... 24
  3.7 Regional context - summary ............................................ 28

4.0 Cinderford ................................................................. 29
  4.1 Introduction ................................................................. 30
  4.2 Local Development Scheme ............................................ 31
  4.3 Forest of Dean District Council planning context ............... 33
  4.4 Cinderford Business Plan ............................................... 34
  4.5 Local property market review ......................................... 39
  4.6 Socio-economic context .................................................. 41
  4.7 Historical development of Cinderford ............................... 43
  4.8 Urban morphology and townscape ..................................... 49
  4.9 Building typologies ....................................................... 53
  4.10 Landscape ................................................................. 64
  4.11 Land use, heritage and facilities ...................................... 69
  4.12 Movement ................................................................. 72
  4.13 Cinderford - summary .................................................. 75

5.0 The site ........................................................................... 77
  5.1 Introduction ................................................................. 78
  5.2 Cinderford Business Plan - Northern Quarter .................... 79
  5.3 Movement ................................................................. 91
  5.4 Topography and Landscape ........................................... 95
  5.5 Mining legacy ............................................................. 100
  5.6 Land use ................................................................. 103
  5.7 Built Environment ....................................................... 104
  5.8 Ecology ................................................................. 108
  5.9 Water resources and flood risk ....................................... 115
  5.10 Waste management .................................................... 120

6.0 Constraints and opportunities ........................................ 123
  6.1 Constraints ................................................................. 124
  6.2 Opportunities ............................................................ 127

7.0 Conclusions ............................................................... 129
  7.1 Summary of the Baseline Context Report ........................... 130

8.0 Bibliography ............................................................... 135
1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared for the Forest of Dean District Council as a Baseline Report to set out a broad understanding of the key issues, constraints and opportunities for the Northern Quarter site in Cinderford.

Cinderford has been identified by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), previously English Partnerships, as a priority for the south west of England under its National Coalfields Programme. This has resulted in the formation of the Cinderford Regeneration Board (CRB) to lead the regeneration of Cinderford and in the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) appointing a Regeneration Manager to report to the CRB.

In December 2007 the CRB published the Cinderford Business Plan, which is a 10 year action plan for the regeneration of the town. The key project identified in this is the regeneration and redevelopment of the Northern Quarter site as a new mixed use development. The Northern Quarter site brings together several sites identified in the Forest of Dean District Local Plan 2005.

The next phase in the process is taking the business case for the Northern Quarter site from the Business Plan and translating it into a masterplan and an Area Action Plan (AAP). The AAP will form part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Forest of Dean District Council. Once adopted, the AAP will be used to guide an outline planning application and then detailed planning applications for the Northern Quarter site.

The first stage in the translation from business case to masterplan and AAP is an analysis of the context and the site. This document provides a comprehensive strategic, regional, town and site-wide analysis, which will be used to inform the formulation of a high quality sustainable masterplan and robust AAP. The ultimate aim is to create an exemplar development on the Northern Quarter site, to contribute to the wider regeneration of Cinderford as a whole by taking into account the wider environmental character of the locale, and above all, to ensure the Northern Quarter has a distinctive identity as a ‘place’ in its own right.

This report is largely based on information provided by the Client Body. In terms of history, transport, and planning this report presents factual information. The physical and environmental site conditions information has been completed by third party consultants and passed to the Consultant Team for this Baseline Report by the FoDDC.

The Consultant Team for this study has interpreted these third party consultant reports, but in the case of post-mining site conditions, flooding, ecology, topography, archaeology and built heritage the information has been insufficient to allow full analysis.

It is recommended that additional work will be undertaken to expand on the issues as listed above to provide a more thorough understanding of the site conditions. It is proposed that a site appraisal report will be undertaken on the post mining legacy, geology, flooding and waste will be based on further desk top work and assessing third additional information which it currently being prepared by third parties.

It is also recommened that further study on archaeology, built heritage and ecology will be undertaken to fully understand the implications these may have on developing the site.