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I. Introduction

In May 2009 the Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan (AAP) consultant team conducted a series of consultation events in Cinderford. The events were designed to engage key stakeholders and members of the local community in order to inform the development of a masterplan which would, in turn, provide the basis for the Area Action Plan Preferred Option.

This report is structured to reflect the 5 consultation events which took place in May, as well as a section dedicated to analysis of public responses from members of the public over the whole consultation period.

The consultation feedback is structured as follows
- Officers and members’ briefing;
- Drop-in consultation;
- Market stall consultation;
- Stakeholder workshop;
- Youth conference;
- Questionnaire responses;
- Summary of written submissions;
- Summary of qualitative feedback; and
- Conclusions and next steps

2. Exhibition materials

At each of the consultation events, a set of materials was used to help illustrate and gain feedback on the work being carried out for the Cinderford Northern Quarter AAP. The materials were:

- An exhibition presenting the scope of the project, the three options put forward for the Northern Quarter and the rationale behind them.
- A plan of the Northern Quarter on which participants were asked to place suggestions on post-it notes.
- A model of the site showing the key geographical features which structure the site – its terrain, the lake and river, and existing roads. The options were then illustrated on this model with coloured blocks corresponding to the land uses shown in the options on the exhibition. Participants were encouraged to consider the different options, as well as variations on them, by setting the coloured land use blocks out on the model in different combinations.
Cinderford Northern Quarter Masterplan and Area Action Plan

Project background

The work we are doing now follows on from important work which has already been done, including the Local Plan Review (2005) and Cinderford Business Plan (2007).

Find out more

The consultation period on the draft plans starts on Monday 18 May 2009 and ends on Friday 19 June 2009. We are starting the consultation period with two public events:

- Drop-in session at Steam Mills School - Monday 18 May, 4pm to 7pm; and
- Market stall at the Triangle, Cinderford – Tuesday 19 May, 9.30am to 2pm.

We are also holding meetings with Councillors, local interest groups and young people to present our ideas and hear what they have to say.

From Wednesday 20 May 2009 until Friday 19 June 2009 the exhibition will be on display in the Bella Vue Centre in Cinderford and can be viewed between 9:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday.

Your comments

We are really interested to hear what you have to say about the draft masterplan. Once you have had a chance to look at the plans please answer the questions on the leaflet and return it to us by Friday 19 June 2009. There is also a box to leave it in at the exhibition, you can post it to us at the address below.

There are the companies leading the preparation of the masterplan and AAP:
- Alan Baxter and Associates (lead consultants responsible for masterplanning, urban design and transport);
- ERM (responsible for environmental and sustainability inputs); &
- urban Practitioners (responsible for planning and consultation).

You can also use the following contact details to get in touch with the team if you have any questions about the project:

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All the documents about this project including this exhibition and the questionnaire leaflet are available online and you can visit either of the websites to download them:
www.cinderfordregeneration.org
www.fdean.gov.uk

Welcome to the exhibition

Thank you for taking a few minutes to look at this exhibition. We are here to find out what you think about our ideas for the Cinderford Northern Quarter.

The Forest of Dean District Council has appointed a team of consultants to prepare a Masterplan and Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Northern Quarter in Cinderford. The new masterplan for the Cinderford Northern Quarter will ultimately guide both public and private investment into the former coal mining sites to the north west of the town. It will also form the basis for an Area Action Plan to control all development in the area.

It is really important that we find out what you think about the plans. We want to hear your views on the draft designs and ideas. We are also planning to come back for more consultation this autumn with our final draft report which will be called the Preferred Options document.

Area Action Plan (AAP)

The consultation period on the draft plans starts on Monday 18 May 2009 and ends on Friday 19 June 2009. We are starting the consultation period with two public events:

- Drop-in session at Steam Mills School - Monday 18 May, 4pm to 7pm; and
- Market stall at the Triangle, Cinderford – Tuesday 19 May, 9.30am to 2pm.

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Project website

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www.cinderfordregeneration.org
www.fdean.gov.uk

Business Plan (2007): Route of new road and uses

The Business Plan identified a preferred option in terms of road alignment and land uses for the Northern Quarter. Both the route of the road and uses were tested through a process of consultation and technical work. Although the final Business Plan was the starting point for the current Masterplan and AAP the project team has looked at the options again to make sure that the preferred option is still the best approach for the Masterplan.

The original requirement for a new link road in this area was identified in the Cinderford Transport Study back in 2001. The existing junction at Nailbridge is difficult to use, and all the heavy traffic has to use the road through Steam Mills and past the primary school. The team working on this project has worked with the area which was done for the Business Plan in 2007. We want to be sure that the road alignment which was chosen in the preferred option was the right one and we will do the following things:

1. Reduce traffic on the A4136 Steam Mills Road, especially at the primary school and in Steam Mills;
2. Minimise additional pressure on Nailbridge junction;
3. Provide access to the Northern Quarter;
4. Provide a new gateway to Cinderford;
5. Provide access for all types of transport, including public transport;
6. Limit its environmental impact; and
7. Be in accordance with The Forestry Act.

Option D on the road alignment options plan was selected in the Business Plan as the preferred route. When testing the road options against the criteria above, it was confirmed that this route should be taken forward in the masterplan. The exact alignment of option D has been refined further in the masterplan options to respond better to the topography of the site and anticipated traffic patterns in relation to trips to the town centre and Forest Vale business park. Connecting the new road to Bredensmore Road will provide good links to both Forest Vale business park and the town centre.

The business plan’s preferred option is a 4km alignment, 196ha housing and coal college connections. It is located southwest of the Business Plan boundary area and is either away from the AAP masterplan.
The Northern Quarter is a special place in a wonderful location. There are beautiful woodlands and open spaces, but the area also has an important social and industrial history.

Our Vision:

“...will become an attractive destination for local people in Cinderford and surrounding communities. It will make the most of the beautiful landscape and will set high standards for design and sustainability. Set within a green campus environment, the Northern Quarter will feature a range of new facilities including a college. The development will also bring wider benefits to the area including a new road access that will reduce traffic impact on Steam Mills and Newtown."

Themes: The vision is supported by eight themes:

1. SUSTAINABLE PLACE-MAKING
   “The Northern Quarter will be a great place to live, work, study and relax. A mix of land uses will be included and it will be important that these are well-designed and carefully located.”

2. ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT
   “The new link road through the site will play a vital role in providing access to the new development, but will also create a new and better link into Cinderford. Access for pedestrians, cyclists and buses will also be improved.”

3. EDUCATION AND LEARNING
   “The Royal Forest of Dean College, currently based in Cinderford, is considering moving to a new location so that they can bring all their facilities into one campus. This site would be ideal for what they need and should provide a great place to study.”

4. LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY
   “Based on guidance in the new planning system it is important that we propose things which we can deliver. We will work with stakeholders, developers and the public to ensure that sustainability is at the heart of the proposals.”

5. LIVING AND THE PUBLIC
   “The Northern Quarter will be a great place to live. We will make the most of the beautiful landscape and will set high standards for design and sustainability.”

6. HEALTHY LIVING, TOURISM AND LEISURE
   “A range of leisure activities such as walking and cycling will be encouraged, alongside opportunities to promote access to the forest for leisure, tourism and education.”

7. INTEGRATION WITH STEAM MILLS AND CINDERFORD TOWN CENTRE
   “The new development will enhance the surrounding area, with connecting streets and good transport links. The new development can work with the existing communities by supporting existing facilities and by providing new ones which everyone can use.”

8. DELIVERY AND PARTNERSHIP
   “The Northern Quarter is in a beautiful environment including woodland, open space and water. The landscape also reflects the long history of mining in the area. These things will give the area the unique character which will make it a special place.”

Key principles: The Masterplan is based on two sets of principles:

1. The Northern Quarter as an exemplar community
   - A ‘place’ in the forest;
   - Reduction of traffic on Cinderford, Steam Mills, Ruardean, Drybrook and the wider area;
   - A good network for walking and cycling.

2. Movement Framework
   - A new north-south spine road;
   - Reduction of traffic on Steam Mills Road;
   - Provision of public transport between the college, employment areas, local community and the wider area; and
   - High sustainability targets for all development.

Themes:

- A new link road through the site which will also create a new and better link into Cinderford. Access for pedestrians, cyclists and buses will also be improved.
- The Royal Forest of Dean College, currently based in Cinderford, is considering moving to a new location so that they can bring all their facilities into one campus. This site would be ideal for what they need and should provide a great place to study.
- Based on guidance in the new planning system it is important that we propose things which we can deliver. We will work with stakeholders, developers and the public to ensure that sustainability is at the heart of the proposals.
- The Northern Quarter will be a great place to live. We will make the most of the beautiful landscape and will set high standards for design and sustainability.
- A range of leisure activities such as walking and cycling will be encouraged, alongside opportunities to promote access to the forest for leisure, tourism and education.
- The new development will enhance the surrounding area, with connecting streets and good transport links. The new development can work with the existing communities by supporting existing facilities and by providing new ones which everyone can use.
- The Northern Quarter is in a beautiful environment including woodland, open space and water. The landscape also reflects the long history of mining in the area. These things will give the area the unique character which will make it a special place.
- There are beautiful woodlands and open spaces, but the area also has an important social and industrial history.
Our Vision:

"The Northern Quarter will become an attractive destination for local people in Cinderford and surrounding communities. It will make the most of the beautiful landscape and will set high standards for design and sustainability. Set within a green campus environment, the Northern Quarter will feature a range of new facilities including a college. The development will also bring wider benefits to the area including a new road access that will reduce traffic impact on Steam Mills and Newtown."

Themes: The vision is supported by eight themes:

**THEME 1: SUSTAINABLE PLACE-MAKING**

“The Northern Quarter will be a sustainable new development that respects and enhances the area’s important landscape, habitats and cultural heritage. A Sustainable Development Framework is being prepared which will ensure that sustainability is at the heart of the proposals.”

**THEME 2: ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT**

“The new link road through the site will play a vital role in providing access to the new development, but will also create areas and better links into Cinderford. Access for pedestrians, cyclists and buses will also be improved.”

**THEME 3: EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

“The Royal Forest of Dean College, currently based in Coleford, is considering moving to a new location so that they can bring all their facilities into one campus. This site would be ideal for what they need and would provide a great place to study.”

**THEME 4: LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY**

“The Northern Quarter is in a beautiful environment including woodland, open space and water. The landscape also reflects the long history of mining in the area. These things will give the area the unique character which will make it a special place.”

**THEME 5: LIVING AND WORKING**

“The Northern Quarter will be a great place to live, work, study and relax. A mix of land uses will be included and it will be important that these are well-designed and carefully located.”

**THEME 6: HEALTHY LIVING, TOURISM AND LEGACIES**

“A range of leisure activities such as walking and cycling will be encouraged, alongside opportunities to promote access to the forest for leisure, tourism and education.”

**THEME 7: INTEGRATION WITH STEAM MILLS AND CINDERFORD TOWN CENTRE**

“The new development will link into the surrounding area, both connecting streets and good transport links. The new development can work with the existing communities by supporting existing facilities and by providing new ones which everyone can use.”

**THEME 8: DELIVERY AND PARTNERSHIP**

“Based on guidance in the new planning system it is important that we propose things which we can deliver. We will work with stakeholders, developers and the public to create a plan which has broad support and we can all help to deliver.”

Key principles: The Masterplan is based on two sets of principles:

1. The Northern Quarter as an exemplar community
   - A ‘place’ in the forest;
   - Northern United, the Lake and the Forest are recognised as key assets;
   - An amenity hub for Cinderford, Steam Mills, Ruardean, Drybrook and the wider area;
   - A community built around college and employment;
   - Only a small area (18%) of the total site area will be developed; and
   - High sustainability targets for all development.

2. Movement Framework
   - A new north-south spine road;
   - A new east-west link between Northern United and Steam Mills;
   - Reduction of traffic on Steam Mills Road;
   - Provision of public transport between the college, employment areas, local community and the wider area; and
   - A good network for walking and cycling.

Summary

1. New civic spine to Cinderford with the college / activity centre, hotel and offices located on a new road connecting to Cinderford Town Centre.

2. College / activity centre set close to the lake and related to landscape. The college will have an open campus character with green spaces and water bodies between the buildings, offering spectacular views.

3. Hotel located at the northern gateway to Cinderford.

4. Steam Mills and New Town revitalised with new business spaces and housing connecting through to new civic spine.

5. The Northern United site will provide opportunities for high quality business space.

6. Option 1 assumes the following mix of uses:
   - 36% residential (approximately 130 dwellings),
   - 44% employment; and
   - 20% college / amenities.

Cinderford Northern Quarter Masterplan and Area Action Plan | Consultation Report | August 2009
Option 2
Campus at the centre for employment and housing

Summary
1. College / activity centre creates a central landmark for a place to live and work set in natural landscape.
2. New employment uses will be located along the spine road.
3. High quality green business uses in lake and landscape setting.
4. Steam Mills and New Town consolidated with sustainable housing, closely linked to the forest, lake, college / activity centre and business uses.
5. Hotel located by the lake.
6. Character of the Northern United site retained and regenerated through sympathetic employment uses.
7. Option 2 assumes the following mix of uses:
   - 26% residential (approximately 100 dwellings);
   - 56% employment; and
   - 18% college / amenities.

Option 3
A distinctive local community

Summary
1. College / activity centre forms a new northern gateway to Cinderford, drawing from the forest as a key asset and connecting to Steam Mills.
2. East-west link connects the Northern United site to Steam Mills and New Town via new business space, the college and housing.
3. Higher proportion of housing creates a self contained community connecting lake with Steam Mills.
4. Northern United site becomes a destination for green hotel/ tourism and exemplar sustainable housing.
5. Business space provided on selected brown field sites throughout the development.
6. Option 3 assumes the following mix of uses:
   - 40% residential (approximately 150 dwellings);
   - 39% employment; and
   - 21% college / amenities.
3. Officers’ and members’ briefing

The officers’ and members’ briefing took place at the Forest of Dean District Council offices in Coleford on Monday 18 May 2009. The event provided an informal session where officers and members could meet representatives from the consultant team in person to ask them questions about the project and the masterplan proposals. By way of assistance an exhibition presented the scope of the project, the three options put forward for the Northern Quarter and the rationale behind them.

The event was attended by 29 people, including members of the project team. During the course of the session a wide range of issues were discussed regarding the programme of work and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each option.

4. Steam Mills drop-in consultation

The drop-in consultation was held at Steam Mills School on Monday 18 May 2009. The drop-in consultation was open to the public, and had been advertised in the local press and other media. In addition the event was publicised among younger people at a number of local schools, which had incorporated a series of lessons and projects based around the regeneration of the Cinderford Northern Quarter into their geography curriculum. The young people who attended this event brought their parents.

A number of suggestions were made at the event as follows:

- Concern at the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using Steam Mills Road which is a nuisance to residents (x2);
- Provision of allotments;
- Flooding of houses around the river and the need to deal with this issue before constructing any new homes there;
- The need to keep existing bus routes on Steam Mills Road in view of the proposed new road through the Northern Quarter;
- Use of local builders in the construction of new development;
- Provision of a restaurant and/or cafe around Steam Mills lake;
- Support for the location of the college and hotel on the raised ground next to Steam Mills Lake;
- Wind turbines at the Brickworks site;
- Make the new route through the site the most attractive for HGVs; and
- Create a beach for swimming at Steam Mills lake, and provide picnic tables for its enjoyment.
5. Market stall

The market stall took place on Tuesday 19 May in the centre of Cinderford. Assisted by the exhibition, the model and the comments plan of Cinderford, members of the consultant team answered questions and informed members of the public of their work over a four hour period. In addition, during this time, the team distributed around 750 leaflets to residents and visitors.
Cinderford Northern Quarter Masterplan and Area Action Plan | Consultation Report | August 2009
6. Stakeholder workshop

The stakeholder workshop took place on Tuesday 19 May at the Miners’ Welfare Hall in Cinderford. The purpose of the stakeholder workshop was to engage with and bring together a series of key stakeholders who had been identified during the baseline analysis as being crucial to the formation of a robust masterplan and AAP. 39 people attended the event including consultant team staff.

The event was introduced by Steve Walker of Urban Practitioners who gave a brief introduction to the AAP and an update on the programme of work ahead via a presentation. Following this, Vivek Nanda of Alan Baxter Associates gave a full explanation of the three options considered.

After this, the participants were given a short period to consider the options via the exhibition and model, and to answer questions of the consultant team.

The audience then split into smaller groups for workshop discussions.

Each group was issued with a worksheet showing the three options which they were encouraged to annotate with their suggestions in text and as diagram. The working groups were facilitated by a member of Urban Practitioners and Alan Baxter Associates.

Key topics which arose at the stakeholder workshop are summarised as follows:

**Young people:**
- Provide something for teenagers

**Natural assets and landscape:**
- Make a feature of the stream
- Footpath around lake
- Lake is the most important feature
- Retain edges of the lake for wildlife
- Provide ‘edible landscape’ for college

**Land uses:**
- Keep activity in town centre
- Light industry is good re-use of buildings

**Transport:**
- Tramway into town
- Apply speed limit to new road
- Car park at lake is poor use of site – high quality apartments
- Improve linkages between college and school

**College**
- Option 1 best college location with best links to the landscape.
- Need to provide playing fields for the college?

**Visitor facilities and tourism**
- Provide a University level visitor centre – ecology/geology
- Rebrand hotel and multi-purpose facility
- Good hotel location near the lake

To conclude the working groups, each group presented their key messages and suggestions back to the wider group. This allowed everyone in the room to appreciate the broad scope of responses from the entire stakeholder group.
The following groups were represented at the workshop:

- Butterfly Conservation;
- Cinderford Football Club;
- Cinderford Town Council;
- Dean Forest Voice;
- ET Parker;
- Forest Artists’ Network Design Group;
- Forest of Dean District Council;
- Forest of Dean Friends of the Earth;
- Gloucestershire County Council;
- Gloucestershire Naturalists’ Society;
- Heywood Community School;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Northern United Group;
- Police;
- Real Ideas Organisation;
- Ruspidge and Soudley Parish Council;
- Two Rivers Housing; and
- Royal Forest of Dean College.
7. Youth conference

The youth conference took place on Wednesday 20 May. It was established through links with 7 local schools and was attended by 56 people, including a mix of primary and secondary school pupils and staff.

In advance of the event the regeneration of Cinderford had been addressed as a topic within the curriculum in the local schools, allowing the students to give a number of complex issues consideration over a series of weeks. As part of this work, pupils had worked in groups at each school to create a short presentation to communicate what they perceived to be the key issues, and to provide some of their views on these. These presentations were given at the start of the conference.

Steve Walker of Urban Practitioners gave a short presentation to explain the Cinderford Northern Quarter AAP project, to highlight some of the issues which had been identified by the consultant team, and to describe the three options which had been put forward.

Following the presentation, the
students were encouraged to examine and discuss the three options with consultants. In addition to the exhibition and model a graffiti wall and options worksheet were available to record comments. Play dough was provided at the comments board for students to model their ideas.

Graffiti wall

We don’t want Cinderford’s Northern Quarter to...

The graffiti wall received 44 responses, mostly regarding the impact of proposals on the natural environment, and reflecting concerns at the type of new development which would be provided. Concerns relating to the environmental impact of new development included loss of local wildlife habitats from new development, the impacts of human activity in terms of pollution and the loss of natural character, scenery and views. Regarding new development the main concerns were for the quality of new buildings and the loss of existing local character, including historic sites. There was concern that future uses would detract from the quality of the area, particularly restaurants and fastfood outlets, and there was a desire to see an appropriate mix of uses, rather than large industrial buildings or housing estates.

We want Cinderford’s Northern Quarter to...

There were 90 responses to this question, a large proportion of which related to provision of a wider range of shops and leisure/entertainment facilities. The natural environment was recognised as an important asset with much leisure/entertainment potential, for example, as a nature reserve/park/publicly accessible garden. There was considerable support for promotion of tourism (infrastructure) within the area (Information office, hotel, youth hostel). Improvements to public realm quality and community safety and cohesion were also keenly sought.

Options comments

The following comments were made regarding the three options.

Option 1

- A pond to sit around
- Mazes
- Wildlife hospital

Option 2

- Wildlife area near the Brickworks
- Provide a school in the forest
- The college is in a great place
- We don’t want the lake to be contaminated.
- Locate the hotel near the lake but not too near.
- We don’t want the college on the hill
- Put new swimming pool on car park site
- More wildlife areas needed

Option 3

- New road
- Doctors and dentists fronting the A4136
- Hotel at good location
- Wildlife area to the north of the lake
- We need more ways through the forest
- We want the hotel to be near the road
- More footpaths in the forest and around the lake
- Provide drainage around the river
8. Questionnaire responses

The following analysis is based on feedback in the 37 questionnaires which had been returned by the end of the consultation period.

Vision and themes

67% agree or strongly agree with the vision and themes. Only 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Of those that disagreed, some considered that the vision and themes placed insufficient emphasis on the Northern Quarter as a living, working area. Others suggested that there is too much emphasis on the area as a leisure destination and that the development themes are incompatible with biodiversity and habitat character. Only one questionnaire indicated fundamental opposition to the principle of development in the Northern Quarter.

Uses and activities

The questionnaire asked people to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the provision of certain uses and activities in the Northern Quarter. Overall there was strong approval for the mix of uses proposed.

- 83% strongly agree or agree with tourism / recreation
- 78% strongly agree or agree with college / activity centre
- 77% strongly agree or agree with renewable energy production
- 75% strongly agree or agree with a hotel
- 85% strongly agree or agree with employment and business uses
- 67% strongly agree or agree with affordable housing
- 56% strongly agree or agree with housing

Design principles

People were asked to rank the design principles which they considered to be most important for the masterplan. Scores were attributed to each principle based on their ranking which has enabled an overall ranking of the principles as listed below:

1. Respect for the forest and its wildlife;
2. High standards for green buildings and energy generation;
3. Use of local building materials and styles;
4. Improved road access in to the Northern Quarter and Cinderford;
5. High quality modern design and architecture;
6. Integration of social and cultural heritage (equal with);
7. Close integration with Steam Mills and Newtown (equal with);
8. Better bus and cycling links to Cinderford; and
9. Promoting the Northern Quarter as a new destination in its own right.

Masterplan options

The exhibition included three options which illustrated alternative ways that the different parts of the Northern Quarter could be designed. The questionnaire asked people to identify what the best option was in terms of eight categories. The table below illustrates the proportion of people selecting each option as preferred.

The table shows the clearcut preferred options (dark green), marginal preferred options (light green), acceptable options (amber) and options which had a low approval rating (red). The results are listed below:

- New homes – option 2 preferred;
- College / community activity centre – option 2 was marginally preferred;
- Business – option 2 preferred;
- Existing communities – option 2 preferred;
- Wildlife / environment – option 2 marginally preferred;
- Tourism and leisure – option 2 preferred;
- Transport and access – option 3 preferred; and
- Northern United – option 2 preferred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses and activities</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New homes</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College / activity centre</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing communities</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife and the environment</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and leisure</td>
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<td>58%</td>
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<td>Transport and access</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern United site</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average rating of option</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Returning this form

Once you have had chance to look at the plans please answer the questions on the leaflet and return it to us by Friday 12 June 2009. There is a box to leave it in at the exhibition, or you can post it to us at one of the addresses below. You can also use these contact details to get in touch with us if you have any questions.

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1. Vision and themes

- Strongly agree: 27%
- Agree: 12%
- Neutral: 18%
- Disagree: 3%
- Strongly disagree: 4%

2. Uses and activities - college / community activity

- Strongly agree: 18%
- Agree: 11%
- Neutral: 14%
- Disagree: 11%
- Strongly disagree: 19%

2. Uses and activities - housing

- Strongly agree: 40%
- Agree: 11%
- Neutral: 14%
- Disagree: 6%
- Strongly disagree: 18%

2. Uses and activities - affordable housing

- Strongly agree: 49%
- Agree: 18%
- Neutral: 9%
- Disagree: 6%
- Strongly disagree: 18%
2. Uses and activities - employment and business uses

2. Uses and activities - hotel

2. Uses and activities - tourism and recreation

2. Uses and activities - renewable energy production
3. Design principles scored according to priority

- Promoting the Northern Quarter as a new destination in its own right
- Close integration with Steam Mills and Newtown
- Better bus and cycling links to Cinderford
- Improved road access into the Northern Quarter and Cinderford
- High quality modern design and architecture
- Integration of social and cultural heritage
- Use of local building materials and styles
- Respect for the forest and its wildlife
- High standards for green buildings and energy generation
4. Masterplan options - new homes

- Option 1: 35%
- Option 2: 36%
- Option 3: 26%
- Alternative idea: 3%

4. Masterplan options - college / community activity centre

- Option 1: 38%
- Option 2: 36%
- Option 3: 31%
- Alternative idea: 5%

4. Masterplan options - business

- Option 1: 17%
- Option 2: 69%
- Option 3: 10%
- Alternative idea: 4%

4. Masterplan options - existing communities

- Option 1: 17%
- Option 2: 55%
- Option 3: 24%
- Alternative idea: 4%
4. Masterplan options - wildlife and environment

- Option 1: 20%
- Option 2: 26%
- Option 3: 11%

4. Masterplan options - tourism and leisure

- Option 1: 11%
- Option 2: 41%
- Option 3: 26%

4. Masterplan options - transport and access

- Option 1: 41%
- Option 2: 25%
- Option 3: 3%

4. Masterplan options - Northern United

- Option 1: 61%
- Option 2: 11%
- Option 3: 3%
9. Written submissions

More detailed written submissions have been received from the following groups:

- Forest of Dean Friends of the Earth;
- Gloucestershire County Council;
- Steam Mills Anglers; and
- James Swanson, Hartpury College.

Feedback from each group is summarised below.

Forest of Dean Friends of the Earth

The FODFOE response promotes a series of projects and initiatives in the Northern Quarter under the overarching banner of a “nature first” approach. The submission suggests that these are examined through the development of an outline feasibility study including a detailed assessment of environmental conditions.

Proposals are summarised as follows:

- Restoration of Northern United as an environment Centre for schools, college students and visitors with an emphasis on tourism and education in relation to habitats, species, geology, hydrology and history. The proposals suggest a number of possibilities for monitoring and recording species and habitat information.
  - The proposal emphasises the importance of vistas and natural beauty with an opportunity to promote green fingers into the town centre from the Linear Park following historically and naturally authentic edges and routes.
  - The submission promotes a new visitor and information centre and provision of route maps.
  - The submission also encourages the greening of the industrial estate areas as a means of attracting new businesses.
  - Provision of smaller starter units with exemplar sustainable design features.
  - Promoting environmental skills such as coppicing which could form the basis of products such as furniture and baskets.
  - The submission identifies the role that environmental activity and volunteer schemes could play in improving skills for young people and the unemployed, as well as aiding the mental wellbeing of people suffering from depression and promoting a sense of pride in the local area.
  - Local nature and landscape is acknowledged as having the potential to unite the local community, and also act as a focus for funding and partner bodies at a regional and national scale.

In addition to specific proposals and suggestions for environmental projects, the FODFOE submission also makes a number of observations in relation to the FODDC Local Plan and the Local Plan Review specifically the Inspectors comments in relation to Pre-Inquiry Change to the (R)F. Cinderford 17 site.

These comments and Local Plan Inquiry references are extremely important and will be considered in detail as part of the development of a formal preferred option for the Northern Quarter. However, it is important to note that the purpose of the project is to contribute to the preparation of a new Local Development Framework which will replace the adopted Local Plan.

Whilst the issues discussed in the Inspectors Report are of relevance and will feed into the evolution of a preferred option, the current masterplan and design process is not tied to the conclusions of the Local Plan Inquiry.

The submission also registers concern in relation to flooding and hydrology, suggesting that the site would not be appropriate for housing.

The submission concludes by quoting the concluding remarks of the Inspector in relation to the challenge of achieving economic regeneration whilst taking advantage of the strengths. The sentiment of these statements has resonance with the approach being taken on the AAP and Masterplan with a focus on the principles of good design and sustainability.
Steam Mills Angling

The Angling Club rent the lake from the Forestry Commission and comprise an overall membership of about 450 people. The group made a number of suggestions for projects or initiatives:

- New lake for disabled and young anglers (south on brickwork clay extraction land).
- Provision of a new level track / pathway.
- Use spoil in lake to create shallower conditions.
- Creation of a new building with amenities and education centre.
- Restrict access to lower pool in relation to newt population.
- Improvements to Linear Park walk.
- Upgrades to existing path.
- Creation of wildlife sanctuary for spawning / nesting.
- Provision of information boards.
- Increase stock of fish.
- Designate as a quiet and peaceful area.
- Create floating islands with rushes.

Gloucestershire County Council

GCC acknowledge that the preferred option should include elements rom all three options. GCC highlight the key principle of situating major uses on the site where that can be most easily served by public transport. GCC also support permeable development to encourage cycling and walking.

GCC highlight the lake as the key asset for the site and recommend that the college and hotel are situated in this location. Renewable energy is also supported as a key principle.

Further specific feedback is listed below:

- Parking - need to clarify college parking requirements and ensure that a prime site is not occupied by parking.
- Activity centre - this should be close to one of the main routes through the development with easy access by public transport.
- Northern United - GCC indicative that housing is not supported at the Northern United site in relation to transport issues associated with the site’s isolation from the rest of the area.
- Waste - GCC comments highlight the need for more specific consideration of on-site waste management, particularly biowaste. Potential for renewable energy generation through a district heating network is highlighted as a possibility.
- Minerals - GCC highlight that the study area includes a significant deposit of coal, fireclay and red bruning brick shale. This issue has been followed up in a series of more detailed meetings and discussions.
- Hotel / tourism - GCC support the provision of a high end hotel with conference and meeting facilities and high quality food offer.
- Education and community facilities - a general issue to be considered is the potential S106 requirements associated with the development.

GCC highlight the lake as the key asset for the site and recommend that the college and hotel are situated in this location. Renewable energy is also supported as a key principle.

Further specific feedback is listed below:

- Parking - need to clarify college parking requirements and ensure that a prime site is not occupied by parking.
- Activity centre - this should be close to one of the main routes through the development with easy access by public transport.
- Northern United - GCC indicative that housing is not supported at the Northern United site in relation to transport issues associated with the site’s isolation from the rest of the area.
James Swanson, Hartbury College

James Swanson highlighted out a number of environmental issues associated with the Northern Quarter proposals. The key issues raised were as follows:

- If present, a population of Atlantic Salmon, a European Protected species under the Habitats Directive, and other habitats, will need to be positively protected.
- Mitigation measures will need to be put in place to address flooding downstream, water abstraction, water quality and designated sites downstream.
- The College does not support construction of a new access road for Cinderford and a smaller access road to the Northern United site as these potentially cross foraging routes for European protected species and does not meet the South West Region’s sustainability objectives. The College would like to see an option which does not include new roads.
- The report should provide more information on the protected species at the site and the on impacts of development on them. It should also provide more information on mitigation measures, monitoring of these, and monitoring of construction work for potential damage.
- Habitat enhancement and creation could include:
  * Improved management of the Linear Park
  * Designation of the Linear Park and wider area as a Statutory Local Nature Reserve
  * Access improvements to the Linear Park
  * Establishment of a Cinderford Nature Conservation Volunteer group
  * Improved public realm, open space an environmental management of Cinderford itself.
- The proposals should be assessed in relation to the population of Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats across the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley.
- Concerns that the relocation challenges for the Forest of Dean College could have adverse impacts on the proposals.
- The Hartpury College submission also requests that the proposals should be accompanied by data on the total size of area development, varying size of development footprints, locations and types of access road.

These comments have been fed into the emerging masterplan. However, in response to these comments, the consultant team issued a response to point out that:

- The Baseline Report will be amended with up-to-date flooding information commissioned by the Forest of Dean District Council.
- Hydrology mitigation measures are currently being devised in consultation with the Environment Agency. However, these may include land-raising, culverting or de-culverting, alternative flood plains, sustainable urban drainage, grey water recycling and rain water harvesting.
- The spine road alignment is along a firebreak section and the road options have been reassessed with Gloucester County Council at the start of 2009 using up-to-date traffic counts on Steam Mills Road. The proposed road addresses movement constraints at Nailbridge junction and to provide better access to the Northern Quarter for all modes of transport. The location and type of access road will be tested as part of the AAP and SA work.
- A new vehicular access road is necessary to provide good access for new development, although the aim is primary to encourage walking and cycling.
- Protected species are identified in the Baseline Report and mitigation measures are being designed with environmental consultants, Natural England and other stakeholders.
- All the proposals have been screened against impacts on Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats, and the consultant team is working with bat specialists to ensure that developments will not impact negatively on the existing bat population. This will include a screening against Habitat Regulations.
- The Linear Park suggestions are noted, but biodiversity management regimes will need to be set up for areas which fall within the proposal site boundary.
- The development footprint is the product of local plan allocations, a 2007 Business Plan and site constraints.

The report should provide more information on the protected species at the site and the on impacts of development on them. It should also provide...
10. Summary of qualitative feedback

This section provides a summary of the most common responses which were submitted via the questionnaire and during the consultation events themselves.

College

- Notwithstanding the strong support for a college / activity centre on site, there was a mixture of feedback regarding locating the college and hotel next to lake.
- Provide college playing fields.

Lake

- The lake is the most important asset.
- There should be no development directly abutting the lake due to the possible pollution impacts, and the edges should be retained for wildlife.
- Greater use could be made of the lake by providing picnic tables, a restaurant or café, a beach at the edge of the lake, a footpath round it.

Biodiversity and landscape

- Many are concerned about the impact of development on the natural environment, in terms of loss of habitat and character.
- There is a need for high quality and sensitive design.
- Natural features should be protected, enhanced and made more accessible.
- There was support for a wildlife/ecological/geological visitor centre for a wide range of ages.
- Fireclay reserves should be protected.
- Allotments could be provided.

Hotel, tourism and leisure

- There is support for a hotel/hostel on the AAP site. This should be located near the college with good road access.
- Natural environment should be seen as a tourism asset with potential – a setting, a focus for environmental attractions and in its own right.
- Other low-environmental impact tourism suggestions included a Maze and Go Ape.

Other land uses and activities

- The AAP could support uses which provide for teenagers and young people.
- A wide range of shops and entertainments are desired, and there is a need for community infrastructure as well as affordable housing.
- Two questionnaires indicated support for locating a supermarket in the Northern Quarter rather than the town centre.
- Light industry could provide a good re-use of many buildings on the site.
- Tourism could provide a strong base for a revitalised local economy.

Transport and movement

- HGV movements should run through site rather than via Steam Mills Road.
- Existing bus routes on Steam Mills Road should be maintained irrespective of the creation of a new road.
- Apply a speed limit to the new road.
- Any new/relocated car park should not be located on a valuable part of the site.

- Linkages should be improved between the college and the school and there is scope for general public realm enhancements.
- Prioritise green travel with designated routes.

Sustainability

- Provide of wind turbines on brickwork site.
- Use local builders for construction.
- Promote high-end technology and green industries.
- Building design should reflect the natural qualities of the forest.

Other low-environmental impact tourism suggestions included a Maze and Go Ape.
10. Conclusions and next steps

Questionnaire feedback indicates that option 2 is viewed as a sensible starting point for the masterplanning process.

Following this review of consultation responses, the consultant team will be considering issues of sustainability, planning, delivery, viability and design in greater detail with a view to generating a preferred option.

A number of specific areas clearly require more detailed review and analysis. The key issues are listed as follows:

- Relationship between lake, college and hotel;
- Waste and renewable energy;
- Biodiversity and landscape impact;
- Accessibility and linkages; and
- Development and viability issues.

There will be a further stage of consultation on the preferred options report in Autumn 2009.