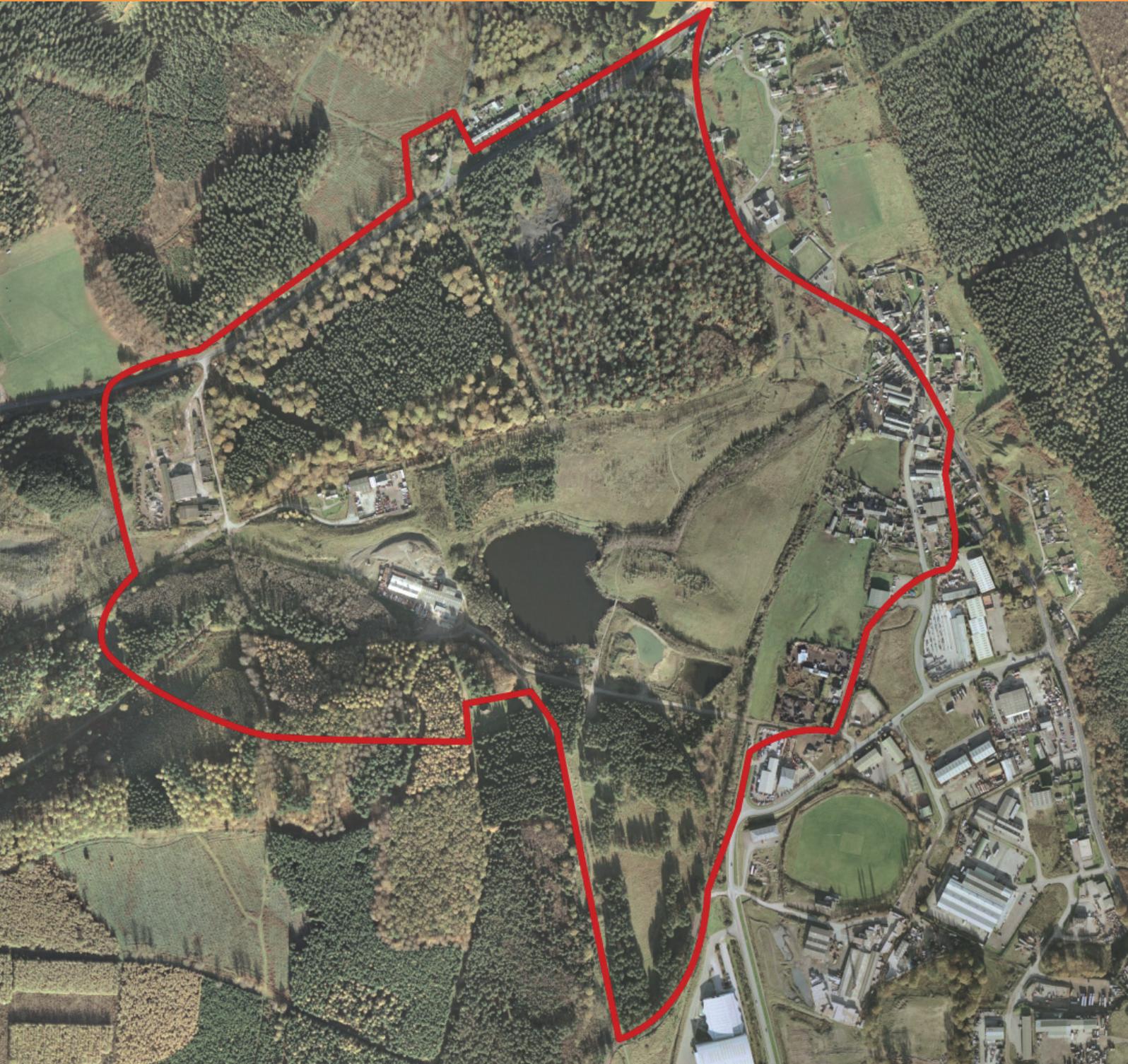




# Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan (AAP)

Adopted Version . 23rd February 2012





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# Contents

# 1 . Preface

## 1 Preface

The Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) has appointed a consultant team led by Alan Baxter Associates and Urban Practitioners to produce an Area Action Plan and Masterplan for the Northern Quarter in Cinderford. The consultant team also includes environmental consultants, ERM. The Area Action Plan will be a Development Plan Document in the new Local Development Framework for the Forest of Dean. It contains the following key elements:

- Vision and objectives for the Northern Quarter;
- Overview of background to the AAP;
- Area Development Framework;
- Spatial development principles and policies; and
- Illustrative masterplan.

This version of the AAP is the adopted version containing the recommended changes supported by the Inspector following the Examination of the AAP.

For further information, please contact the following address:

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or telephone 01594 812645

Documents referred to in the text may be found in the [Evidence Base](#) which is available from the council website [www.fdean.gov.uk](http://www.fdean.gov.uk) or by request from the email address above.

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February 2012

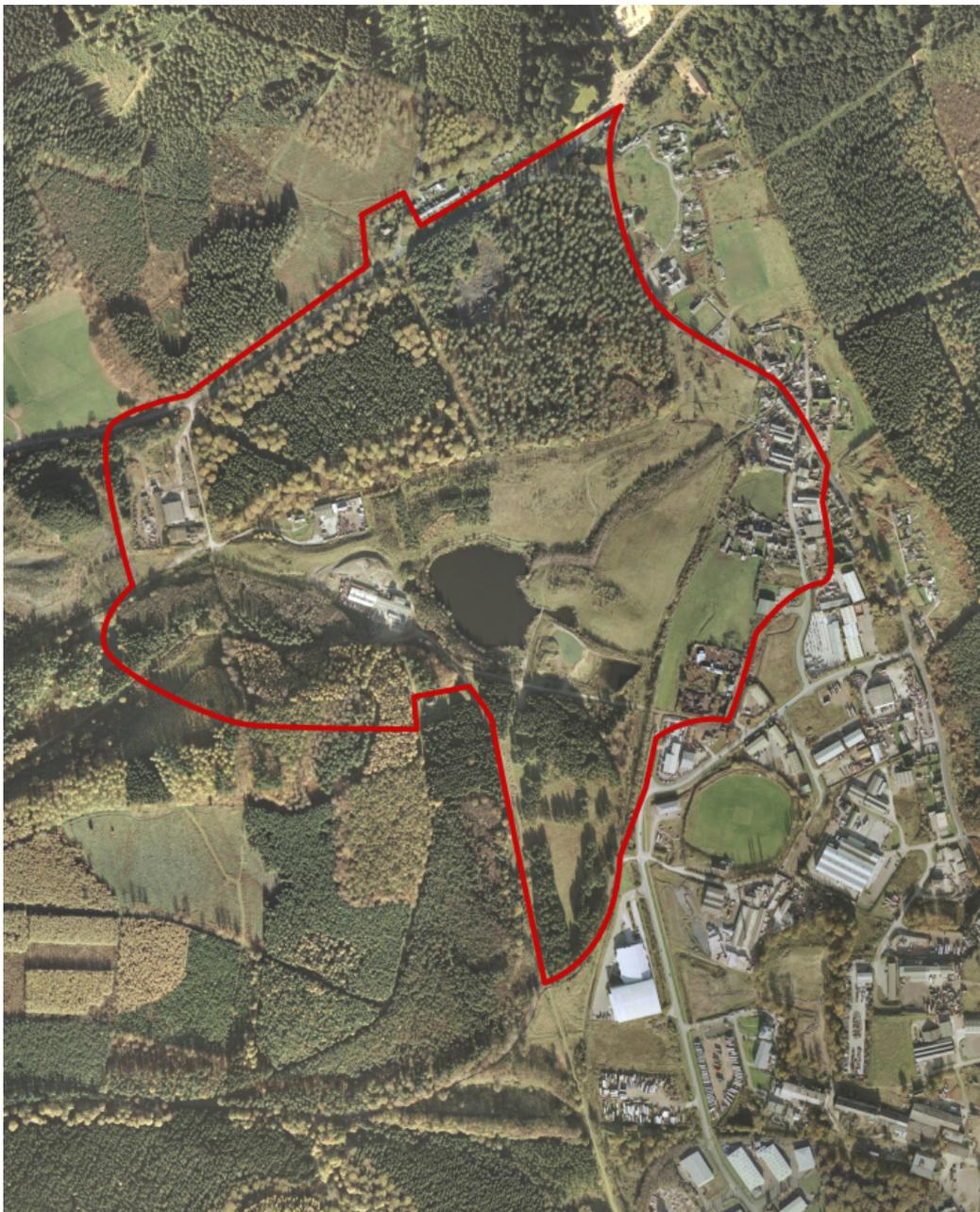
# 1 . Preface

## 2 . Introduction

### 2 Introduction

#### Location

- 2.1** Cinderford sits within the western edge of the Forest of Dean between the River Wye and the River Severn. Its surrounding centres are Gloucester, 23 kilometres to the northwest, Cheltenham, 35 kilometres further northwest, and Bristol, approximately 64 kilometres to the south. Within the Forest of Dean Cinderford is neighboured by Coleford, a town of comparable size 8km to the south west.



**Figure 1: Aerial view of Northern Quarter**

## 2 . Introduction

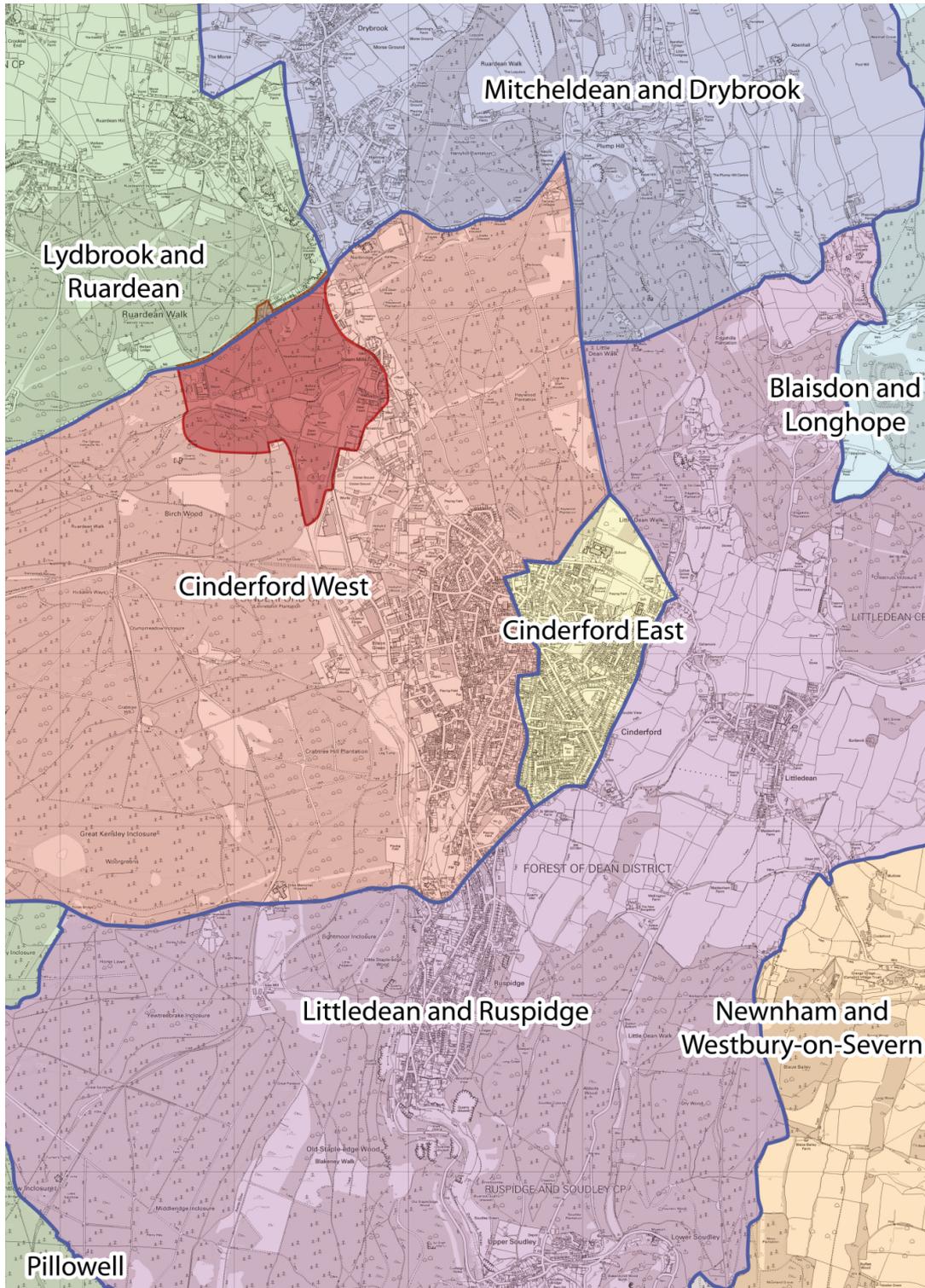


Figure 2: Northern Quarter in relation to ward boundaries

## 2 . Introduction

### AAP position in LDF

- 2.2** The Area Action Plan sits within the FoDDC Local Development Framework (LDF), the Council's suite of Local Development Documents (LDDs) and will contain a list of policies specific to the Northern Quarter area which will be used to judge planning applications which come forward for the site. The AAP, once adopted as Development Plan Document (DPD), replaces the specific guidance for the Northern Quarter which is outlined in the adopted Local Plan (2005).
- 2.3** Area Action Plans are designed to address areas of significant change, including sites where regeneration opportunities need to be sensitively balanced with conservation concerns. They ensure that development is of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for its location.
- 2.4** The AAP has been developed in line with the FoDDC Core Strategy. The Core Strategy defines the District wide spatial strategy and overarching planning policy guidance for the Forest of Dean.
- 2.5** The AAP places a major focus on delivery and implementation. The document will play a vital role in defining a framework that will enable the allocated Coalfield funding (and other public sector resources) to be carefully targeted.

### Planning Policy Context

- 2.6** The AAP has been prepared in accordance with the national planning advice, which exists principally in the form of Planning Policy Statements (PPS). These set out the government's general policy and indicate which subjects should be considered by more locally based planning policies. They have largely replaced the former Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs). The statements cover issues from general sustainability, through specialist areas such as flood risk, housing and archaeology, to general themes such as the preparation of LDFs, and "rural areas". Because they set out national policy there is no need to repeat their contents as local policy in this LDF.
- 2.7** The central development document within the Local Development Framework is the Core Strategy, which sets out the vision and strategic objectives for the spatial development of the District. The Core Strategy includes the amount of and broad locations for future housing and employment use. Policies within this document apply to the whole of the local authority area and are not site-specific. Once adopted, all other Development Plan Documents including AAPs must be in conformity with the Core Strategy.
- 2.8** The Core Strategy proposes regeneration measures which could increase the range of employment in the town, raise the quality of development and make the most of Cinderford's exceptional surrounding natural environment. The Strategy identifies the Northern Quarter as a suitable location for mixed use development, to be delivered through a masterplanning and AAP process. The Quarter could accommodate workspace, educational provision, community space and housing, and development should be located on previously developed land and sites containing underused buildings.

## 2 . Introduction

### Core Strategy

The Core Strategy Submission Document outlines the following targets for Cinderford on a town wide basis:

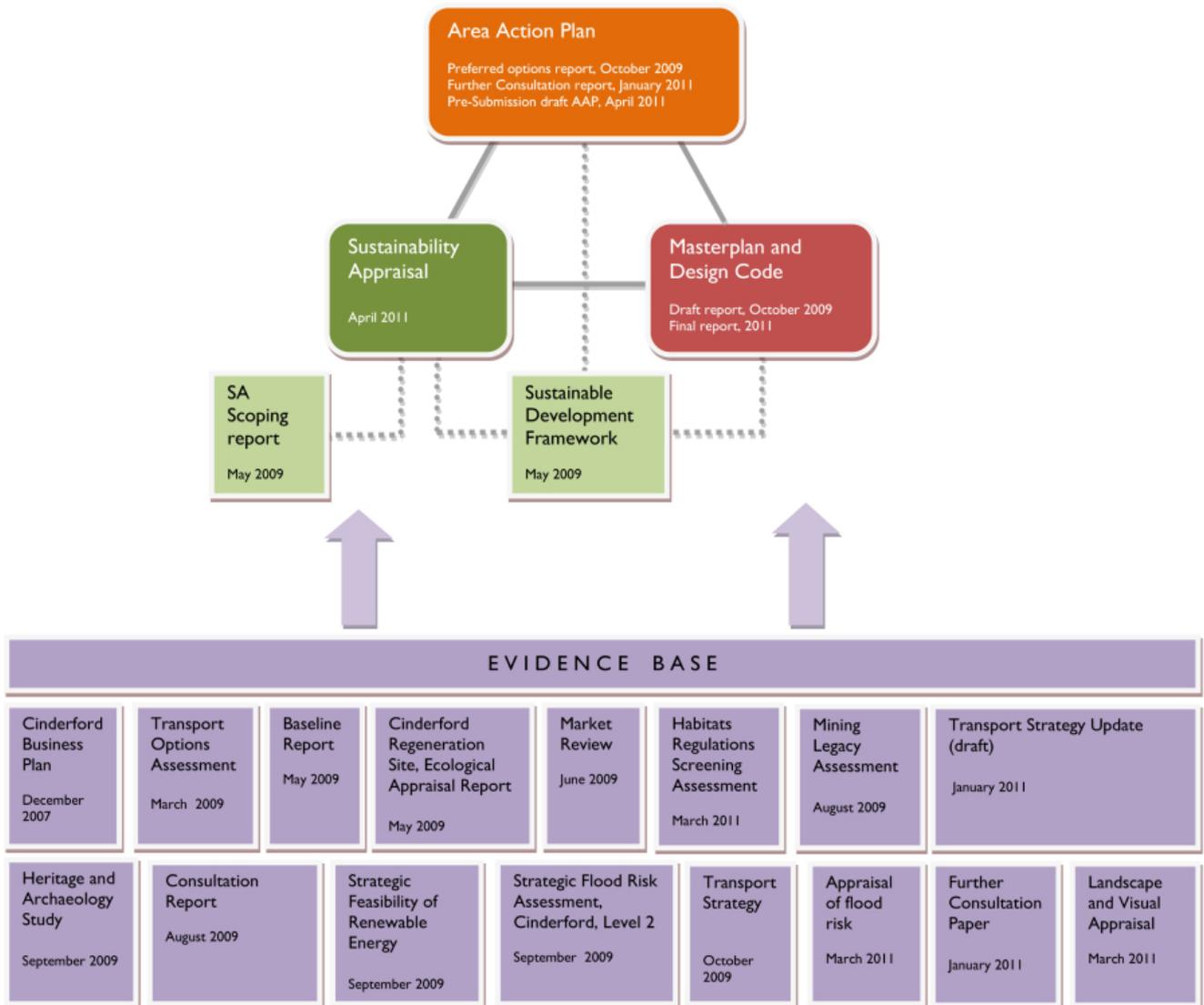
- About 1050 dwellings over the period to 2026;
- 60% on previously developed land
- 40% affordable housing on sites over 10 dwellings/0.3 ha.
- 26ha of employment land to be developed, including sites for educational use, recreation/tourism/leisure, a biomass plant, office and other uses centred on the Northern Quarter mixed development.

The Core Strategy outlines the following vision for the Northern Quarter in policy CSP.11: *“The Cinderford Northern Quarter will be allocated as an area for mixed development to lead the regeneration of the town. Land will be set aside for approximately 175 dwellings, about 6ha of employment and 3.5ha for mixed uses. These will include cultural, educational and recreational provision together with ancillary service space. All will be set within the forest environment and will lead on innovation, design and energy efficiency.”*

### Family of Documents

- 2.9** The emerging AAP policies have been formulated in tandem with an iterative masterplanning process which has examined a number of different ways of developing the site, taking into account environmental sensitivities, opportunities for good quality urban design and regeneration priorities. The final AAP policies are designed to guide development so that it will respond to these opportunities and constraints, whilst allowing space for innovative design and flexibility in the face of future market conditions.
- 2.10** The final Masterplan and design code document will provide an illustration of the proposed development scenario for the Northern Quarter as set out in the AAP. It is important to emphasise that other approaches and design solutions could also meet the requirements of the AAP. The following diagram illustrates the family of documents that have been prepared in relation to the Northern Quarter site.

## 2 . Introduction



**Figure 3: Diagram illustrating the family of documents being prepared for the Northern Quarter**

- 2.11** The Sustainable Development Framework (SDF) is an overarching project-level framework which identifies the ways in which the Cinderford Masterplan goes towards meeting local, regional and national sustainable development objectives.
- 2.12** The SDF has also informed the options appraisal process in ensuring that the AAP and Masterplan are being developed with a consistent overall strategic sustainability approach.

### Scope and content of AAP

- 2.13** The AAP contains a series of policy statements and designations which will support the delivery of the vision for the site, in response to a number of planning objectives and constraints identified through earlier work.
- 2.14** The overall scope and objectives for the document are set out below:

## 2 . Introduction

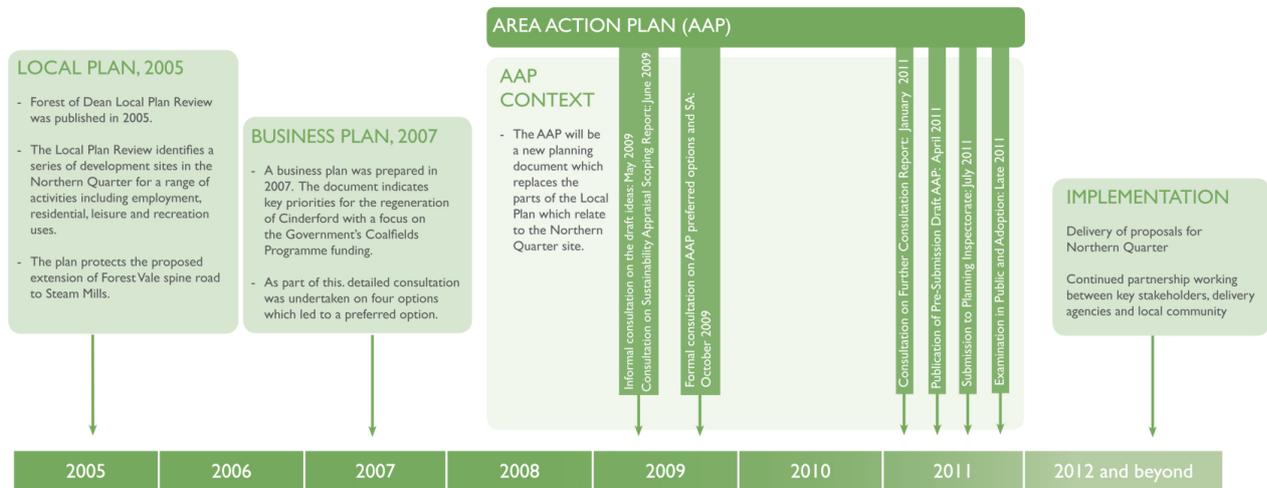
1. To define a clear context and background for the emerging proposals. This entails the following:
  - Description of the recent history of proposals and strategies for the site;
  - Concise summary of the key issues and opportunities identified through the baseline phase of work;
  - A review of alternative options considered to date;
  - Summary of consultation feedback to date; and
  - Overview of planning policy and guidance including the FoDDC Core Strategy.
2. To define a clear statement of vision and objectives for the Northern Quarter.
3. To identify a series of guiding statements and principles across a series of topics. These will cover a range of general area-wide principles as well as site-specific spatial principles
  - Area Development Framework - Overall spatial plan identifying key areas of opportunity including development sites, environmental assets and key routes and connections;
  - Development principles and policies;
  - Area-wide policy principles and statements covering a range of thematic topics;
  - Indicative masterplan - illustrative masterplan for the preferred scenario; and
  - Implementation and monitoring - approach to implementation including phasing and project priorities / additional studies and workstreams.

### Stages in AAP development

- 2.15** The Preferred Options report for the AAP was prepared after a significant process of consultation and engagement. The plan was prepared on behalf of the Cinderford Regeneration Board and endorsed by the Forest of Dean District Council. The Preferred Options report identified a number of key proposals and interventions and considered alternative options to deliver underlying aspirations and objectives. An extensive period of formal and informal public consultation was held from May through to the end of 2009, and the results collated for the next stage of plan making.
- 2.16** In the period following the formal consultation, a number of external factors have had an impact on the AAP strategy. This raised the following questions about specific aspects of the masterplan:
- The way in which important transport infrastructure and the proposed new highways are delivered to help facilitate development; and
  - The way in which the key education use will be delivered and its precise location.
- 2.17** Following a period of discussion with key partners, the Council has gone a long way towards resolving these issues and now has greater certainty about how the proposals can be taken forward for the benefit of the area. Changes to the Preferred Options report and masterplan were proposed in the Further Consultation Report (January 2011).
- 2.18** The Pre-Submission Draft of the AAP has been updated in response to the following:
1. Preferred options consultation feedback (2009)
  2. Ongoing stakeholder engagement (2010)

## 2. Introduction

3. Further Consultation Report consultation feedback (2011)
4. Integrated process of Sustainability Appraisal (2011)
5. Additional technical baseline reports (2011)
6. Assessment of proposals (HRSA, Appraisal of Flood Risk) (2011)



**Figure 4: Northern Quarter timescales**

### Consultation

**2.19** Non-statutory public consultation was carried out in May and June 2009 to inform the development of Preferred Options. The consultation included a five week public exhibition which set out the findings of the baseline analysis along with the three Masterplan options, providing variations on the Preferred Approach developed from the Business Plan. The exhibition was accompanied by a questionnaire where members of the public could give feedback on different aspects of the Masterplan proposals.

**2.20** In addition, a series of events were held in Cinderford to publicise the AAP project and to gather feedback from particular stakeholders and groups within Cinderford. These were:

- Officers and members' briefing at the FoDDC Offices in Coleford;
- Drop-in consultation for members of the public at Steam Mills School;
- Market stall consultation in the centre of Cinderford;
- Stakeholder workshop with statutory stakeholders and local interest groups;
- Youth conference attended by pupils from local schools;

**2.21** At each event, participants were encouraged to comment on the proposals and make alternative suggestions where necessary.

## 2 . Introduction

**2.22** In October 2009, statutory consultation was undertaken on the Preferred Options report. This feedback, alongside ongoing informal engagement with stakeholders informed the preparation of the Further Consultation Report in January 2011. The purpose of consultation on this interim report was to consult upon the preferred options which were specifically:

- The alignment of the spine road; and
- Location of the education use and associated facilities.

**2.23** The AAP was submitted for Examination in July 2011, the Inspector's Report was received in December 2011 and the Plan was adopted (with changes recommended by the Inspector) following a resolution of the Forest of Dean District Council in February 2012.

### Sustainability Appraisal

**2.24** Sustainability is a major focus for the Masterplan and Area Action Plan, and the project is proactive in bringing sustainability issues to the fore. Early in the programme ERM prepared a Sustainable Development Framework (May 2009) which established key sustainable regeneration objectives which could inform the masterplanning work from the start, and to provide a non-statutory framework against which the masterplans could be assessed. The regeneration objectives are categorised into the four strands of Economic, Social, Environmental and Resource sustainability. You can view the Sustainable Development Framework document from FoDDC website [www.fdean.gov.uk](http://www.fdean.gov.uk) on the Cinderford Regeneration pages.

**2.25** Informed by the Sustainable Development Framework, the AAP has been subject to a process of statutory sustainability appraisal. It is an iterative process, and begins with the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which provides a detailed review of plans, policies and baseline information to generate a series of sustainability objectives against which the Masterplan can be judged. The SA Scoping report has been subject to consultation with statutory consultees English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Natural England, and their responses have been fed into the masterplanning process.

**2.26** Sustainability appraisal has been undertaken at each stage of the AAP process including the Preferred Option and the Further Consultation Report.

**2.27** The full Sustainability Appraisal for this version of the AAP and the scoping report, including the sustainability objectives for the Cinderford AAP, are available from FoDDC website [www.fdean.gov.uk](http://www.fdean.gov.uk) on the Cinderford Regeneration pages.

## 3 . Vision and objectives for Cinderford

### 3 Vision and objectives for Cinderford

#### Vision

- 3.1** The vision for the Northern Quarter AAP is to create a new destination in the Forest of Dean that will change the perception of what is deliverable. The vision is distinctive to the Forest and seeks to achieve high standards of design and sustainability. The vision has been defined as follows:

#### **Vision statement**

*“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 an educational facility. The development will also bring wider benefits to the area including a new road that will reduce traffic impact on Steam Mills and Newtown”*

#### Themes

- 3.2** The Vision is supported by eight themes, which are in accordance with the strategic aims for Cinderford as defined in the Cinderford Business Plan. The Vision and Themes were subject to review during the May 2009 consultation process.

#### **Themes**

##### **Theme 1: Sustainable Place Making**

The Northern Quarter will be a sustainable new development that respects and celebrates the area’s important landscape, habitats and cultural heritage. A Sustainable Development Framework accompanies the Masterplan to guide the design of the Masterplan at all levels.

##### **Theme 2: Accessibility and Movement**

A 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.

##### **Theme 3: Education and Learning**

An educational facility will offer a large range of higher education opportunities and create a great place to study and learn. The occupant will be Gloucestershire College, which has made a key

## 3 . Vision and objectives for Cinderford

investment decision to relocate to the Northern Quarter. This new central location will allow Gloucestershire College to bring all their Forest of Dean facilities together on one campus.

### **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. The Masterplan will be designed to respond to the landscape setting and to take active measures to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the site.

### **Theme 5: Living and Working**

The Northern Quarter will be a great place to live, work, study and relax. The Masterplan will provide a mix of residential, community and employment uses which will be carefully designed and located.

### **Theme 6: Healthy Living, Tourism and Leisure**

A range of leisure activities such as walking and cycling will be encouraged, alongside a hotel, café and eco-visitor centre to promote access to the forest for leisure, sustainable tourism and education.

### **Theme 7: Integration with Steam Mills and Cinderford Town Centre**

The new development will be linked to the surrounding area, with connecting streets and good transport links promoting sustainable modes of travel. The new development will 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 the plan is deliverable. The Masterplan is designed working closely with stakeholders, developers and the public to create a plan which has broad support and is realistic.

## **Objectives**

- 3.3** The vision and themes are supported by a series of specific objectives. The objectives follow the structure of the themes and are intended to provide a clear direction for the more detailed policy statements in chapter 7.

### 3 . Vision and objectives for Cinderford

#### **AAP objectives**

##### **Theme 1: Sustainable Place Making**

Objective 1: To promote high standards of sustainable design including climate change adaptation and mitigation and renewable energy provision

Objective 2: To realise the site's potential as a local amenity centre for surrounding communities

##### **Theme 2: Accessibility and Movement**

Objective 3: To unlock the development potential of the site through the development of a new spine road which will enhance the accessibility of the Northern Quarter and Cinderford

Objective 4: To achieve sustainable transport patterns through improved accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and buses

##### **Theme 3: Education and Learning**

Objective 5: To facilitate the regeneration of the Northern Quarter through the development of an educational facility to serve Gloucestershire College

##### **Theme 4: Landscape, Environment and Biodiversity**

Objective 6: To ensure that development respects the area's important landscape, habitats and cultural heritage

Objective 7: To protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Northern Quarter

##### **Theme 5: Living and Working**

Objective 8: To deliver an appropriate balance of employment, residential, community and leisure uses across the site

##### **Theme 6: Healthy Living, Tourism and Leisure**

Objective 9: To promote a wide range of leisure activities in the Northern Quarter to promote access to the forest

##### **Theme 7: Integration with Steam Mills and Cinderford Town Centre**

Objective 10: To ensure that the development is carefully integrated with Steam Mills, New Town and Cinderford Town Centre in terms of amenities and physical connections

##### **Theme 8: Delivery and Partnership**

Objective 11: To ensure that the plan is deliverable and has a broad base of support

- 3.4** The following matrix provides a coherent framework to ensure that the Area Development Framework and draft policies in chapters 6 and 7 cover the full scope of priorities identified by the themes and objectives.

### 3. Vision and objectives for Cinderford

Objectives		1. High standards of sustainable design	2. Local amenity centre for surrounding communities	3. New spine road	4. Sustainable transport patterns	5. development of an educational facility	6. Respects landscape, habitat and cultural heritage	7. Biodiversity value	8. Appropriate balance of uses	9. Leisure activities and access to the forest	10. Integration with Steam Mills and Cinderford	11. Deliverability
<b>Development principles and policies</b>												
Northern Quarter strategic role	1. Strategic Amenity Hub											
Delivery	2. Cross-cutting approach to sustainability											
	3. Phasing											
	4. Partnership working											
Character area statements	5. Developer contributions											
	6. Northern Quarter character areas											
Urban design	7. Masterplan and Design Codes											
	8. Key design principles											
	9. Sustainability and design standards											
	10. Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy											
	11. Heights and density											
	12. Heritage											
	13. Views and vistas											
Transport, movement and accessibility	14. Accessibility											
	15. Road hierarchy and link road											
	16. Pedestrian network											
	17. Cycling network											
	18. Public transport											
	19. Parking											
Land use and activities	20. New educational uses											
	21. Employment uses											
	22. Residential development											
	23. Hotel and visitor facilities											
	24. Ancillary retail uses											
	25. Health, community uses and social infrastructure											
Environment and landscape	26. European Nature Conservation Designations											
	27. Flooding											
	28. Sustainable drainage systems											
	Mining (informative statement, not policy)											
	30. Contaminated land and groundwater											
	Minerals (informative statement, not policy)											
Waste and energy	Waste (informative)											
	33. Renewable energy											

Figure 5: Matrix illustrating relationship between policies and objectives

## 4 . Area Development Framework

### 4 Area Development Framework

- 4.1** The purpose of the Area Development Framework is to identify the overarching spatial principles for the Northern Quarter. The following diagrams illustrate the main interventions and proposals which respond to opportunities and constraints highlighted in chapter 3, and the vision, themes and objectives for the area as identified in chapter 5.
- 4.2** The Area Development Framework outlines the broad spatial framework which sits above the specific planning policy guidance in the AAP, and the indicative masterplanning and urban design guidance in the Masterplan and Design code document.
- 4.3** The key principles are highlighted under four main headings:

#### Place

- The Northern Quarter will be transformed as a place in the forest;
- The site will become a local amenity centre for the surrounding communities of Steam Mills, Drybrook, Ruardean and Cinderford; and
- A new community will be built around a mixed-use centre and employment space including new offices, a hotel, an education facility to serve Gloucestershire College and an eco/visitor centre.

#### Landscape

- The lake and the forest are recognised as key assets;
- The development is situated between the forest edges on former brownfield land; and
- Watercourses and floodplain become green fingers in the development.

#### Movement

- A new spine road will serve Cinderford and the Northern Quarter;
- A new east-west link will be created between Northern United and Steam Mills;
- Reduction of traffic on Steam Mills Road;
- Provision of public transport between the education facility, employment areas, local community and the wider area; and
- A good network for walking and cycling.

## 4 . Area Development Framework

### Sustainability

- High sustainability targets for all development: Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and rising, BREEAM excellent for non-residential development as a minimum.
- Provision of an energy centre and renewable energy technologies across the site.
- High levels of affordable housing.
- Provide a range of land uses to support economic development
- Develop social integration of communities.



**Figure 6: A place in the forest**



**Figure 7: Movement Framework**



**Figure 8: Landscape Connections**

## 4 . Area Development Framework



Figure 9: Overall Masterplan Framework

## 4 . Area Development Framework

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### 5 Development principles and policies

#### Overview

**5.1** The following section sets out a series of draft planning policies for the Northern Quarter. These policies identify the key principles and criteria which comprise the preferred option from a planning perspective. Illustrative plans from the Masterplan report are included to support the planning principles. The draft policy statements have been informed through detailed consideration of the following elements:

- National, regional and local planning policy hierarchy (including the emerging FoDDC Core Strategy);
- Comprehensive evidence base review;
- Integrated process of sustainability appraisal;
- Iterative masterplanning exercise;
- Consultation on emerging Masterplan approach; and
- Consideration of deliverability and viability issues.

**5.2** The policies are grouped under eight thematic areas listed as follows:

- Strategic role of the Northern Quarter;
- Delivery;
- Character area guidance;
- Urban design;
- Transport, movement and connectivity;
- Land use;
- Environment and landscape; and
- Waste and energy.

#### List of policies

**5.3** Each policy statement is accompanied by a concise overview of the key issues and opportunities associated with the policy statement and relevant background details as appropriate. Indicative images and details from the Masterplan are used to illustrate the approach.

#### List of policy statements

##### Northern Quarter strategic role

Policy 1: Strategic amenity

Policy 2: Cross-cutting approach to sustainability

##### Delivery

Policy 3: Phasing

Policy 4: Partnership working

Policy 5: Developer contributions and procurement

##### Character area statements

Policy 6: Northern Quarter Character Areas

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Urban design**

- Policy 7: Masterplan and design codes
- Policy 8: Key design principles
- Policy 9: Sustainability and design standards
- Policy 10: Landscape and biodiversity strategy
- Policy 11: Height and density
- Policy 12: Heritage
- Policy 13: Views and vistas

### **Transport, movement and connectivity**

- Policy 14: Accessibility
- Policy 15: Road hierarchy and link road
- Policy 16: Pedestrian network
- Policy 17: Cycling network
- Policy 18: Public transport
- Policy 19: Parking

### **Land use and activities**

- Policy 20: New educational uses
- Policy 21: Employment uses
- Policy 22: Residential development
- Policy 23: Hotel and visitor facilities
- Policy 24: Ancillary retail uses
- Policy 25: Health, community uses and social infrastructure

### **Environment and landscape**

- Policy 26: European Nature Conservation Designations
- Policy 27: Flooding
- Policy 28: Sustainable drainage systems
- Policy 29: Contaminated land and groundwater
- Policy 30 Mining legacy
- Policy 31 Sterilisation of mineral resources

### **Waste and energy**

- Policy 32 Waste
- Policy 33: Renewable energy

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Northern Quarter strategic role

#### Policy 1: Strategic amenity hub

- 5.4** The Council is seeking to promote the development of the Northern Quarter as a strategic amenity hub serving Steam Mills and Cinderford, also providing a destination for surrounding villages such as Ruardean Hill and Drybrook. The term strategic amenity hub reflects the multiple roles that the Northern Quarter will fulfil at a local and district scale in terms of function and character.

#### Policy 1

##### Strategic Amenity Hub

Development proposals should clearly demonstrate their contribution to the role and function of the Northern Quarter as a strategic amenity hub. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that they contribute to the following aims:

- To provide an accessible centre for employment and higher education;
- To enhance linkages with surrounding communities and villages, particularly Steam Mills and Cinderford;
- To provide local facilities and amenities to serve the existing and new population;
- To provide additional housing including affordable provision;
- To celebrate the green forest setting; and
- To realise the full potential of the Northern Quarter as a visitor destination

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 2: Cross-cutting approach to sustainability

- 5.5** The AAP and Masterplan have the potential to deliver upon many of the sustainability objectives outlined in the hierarchy of national, regional and local policies and strategies; addressing overarching aims in a way which responds to regional priorities and local needs.
- 5.6** The overarching Sustainability Framework for the Northern Quarter has been identified through a review of operating principles highlighted in the 'General Sustainability Checklist' of the South West Sustainable Development Framework and the South West's Sustainability Objectives for Developments. These have been juxtaposed against the strategic objectives outlined in the Cinderford Business Plan and the Forest of Dean District Council Sustainability Criteria to demonstrate alignment between regional and local objectives. In addition the Framework has been informed by an assessment of the key sustainability issues and opportunities arising from a review of the evidence base.
- 5.7** The preparation of the AAP and Masterplan has been fully integrated with a process of Sustainability Appraisal whereby proposals have been assessed in terms of their short, medium and long term impact and the nature of these effects alongside an assessment of mitigation measures required to maximise positive impacts and to minimise negative impacts as appropriate.
- 5.8** The Sustainable Development Framework and Sustainability Appraisal have been prepared specifically with the intention purpose of appraising a strategic planning document and a high level Masterplan. It is beyond the scope of the AAP, Masterplan or sustainability documents to resolve all site specific issues. In that context, the AAP seeks to identify issues which need to be considered, resolved or mitigated in the course of preparing and submitting a planning application for the Northern Quarter.

### Policy 2

#### Cross-cutting approach to sustainability

The Council will require all proposals to place sustainability at the heart of their rationale and design process. Applicants will be expected to make detailed reference to the Sustainability Statement which accompanies the Masterplan, the Sustainable Development Framework and the Sustainability Appraisal report in preparing proposals. Proposals should be proactive in responding to sustainability issues highlighted in the AAP and accompanying SA. It is anticipated that an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required and this will be supported by appropriate studies or strategies in relation to the assessment, reconciliation or mitigation of key environmental issues. Specific details are identified under the thematic policies that follow.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Delivery

#### Policy 3: Phasing

**5.9** The implementation of the Masterplan will be phased, balancing the amount of land uses being released to the market and creating a development which grows naturally over time without feeling unfinished. The proposed phasing is indicative and relates in the first instance to the release of development plots and associated infrastructure. It does not include the remediation of the site and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures, which have to be prepared in more detail and will be required to be implemented and established prior to development of site areas and routes.

#### Areas independent of the main phasing strategy

**5.10** The site contains areas which mainly due to existing uses and activities are independent of the phasing of other areas of the Masterplan. It is proposed these areas are not linked to a specific phase and should be developed as and when the market conditions and landowner plans allow. They will need to be developed in accord with the AAP and its guiding Masterplan and Design Code.

**5.11** The areas are listed as follows:

- Plots to the west of Newtown Road.

It is expected that the following existing employment uses will remain but could be developed in line with the Masterplan at the owner's discretion:

- The brickworks and operational area surrounding
- The residential unit and breaking yard / garage north of the brickwork.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

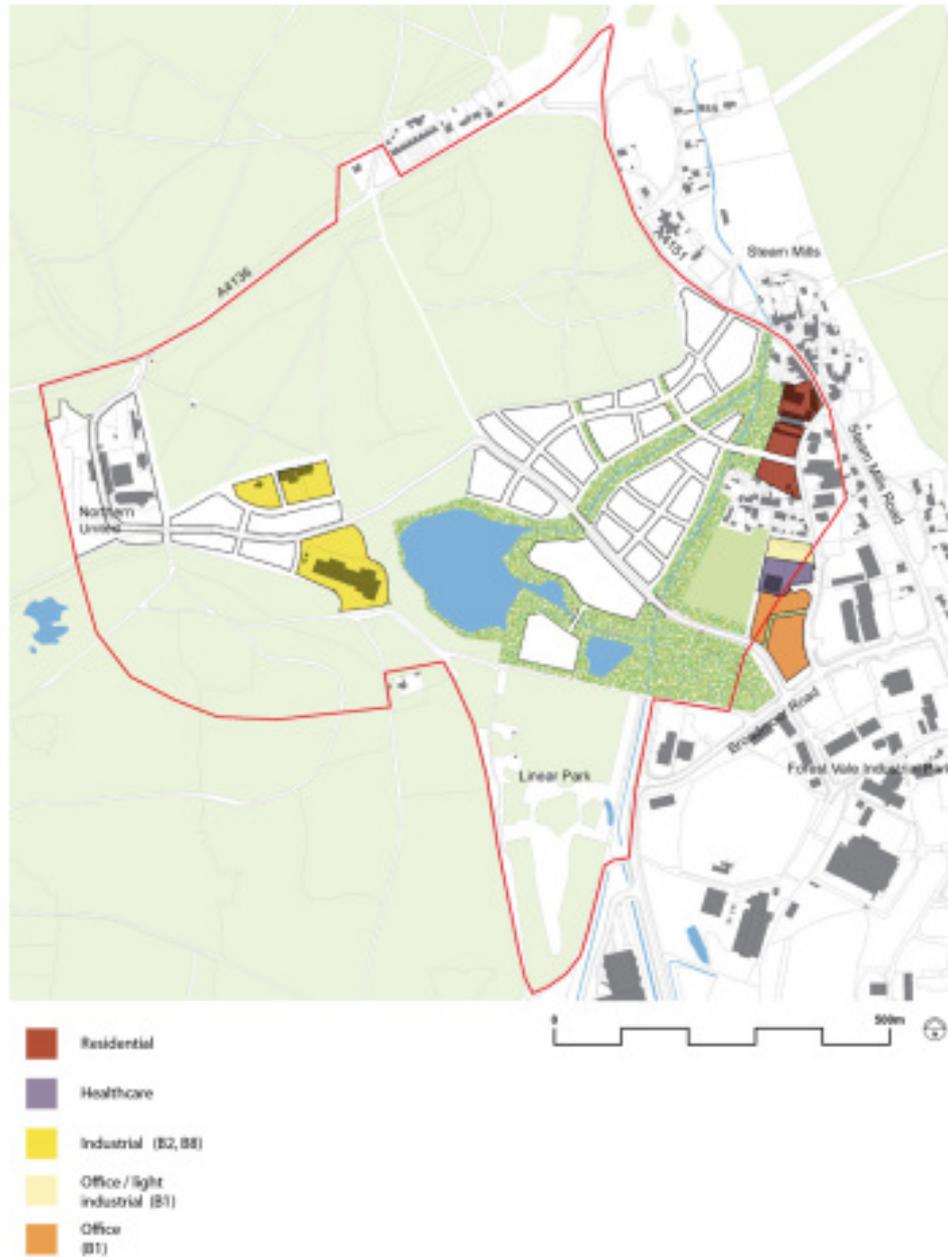


Figure 10: Phasing - independent areas

## 5 .Development principles and policies

### Phase 1 (2011 - 2015)

**5.12** The development will commence with the construction of the main spine road. This will be an early win, as it improves the access to Cinderford and relieves traffic on Steam Mills Road. The first development will then follow with the following uses:

- Education facility;
- Visitor centre; and
- The Northern United site and adjacent employment sites

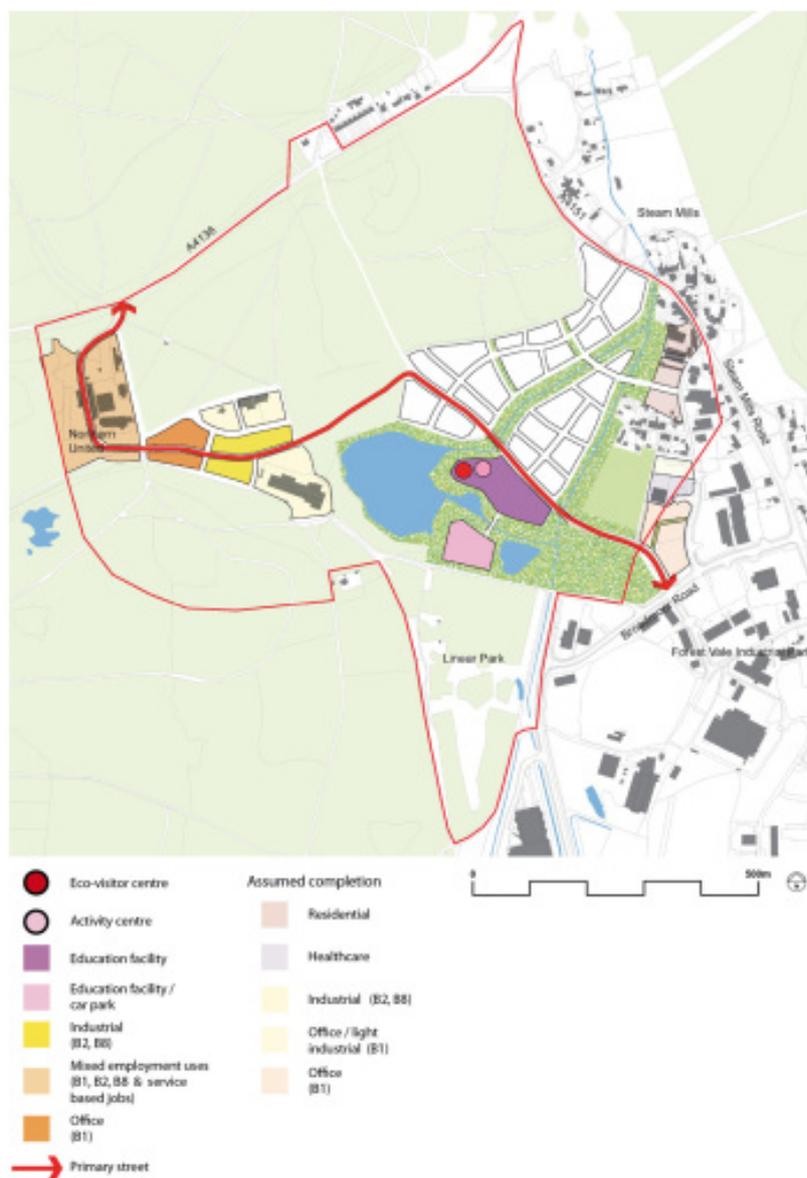


Figure 11: Phase 1

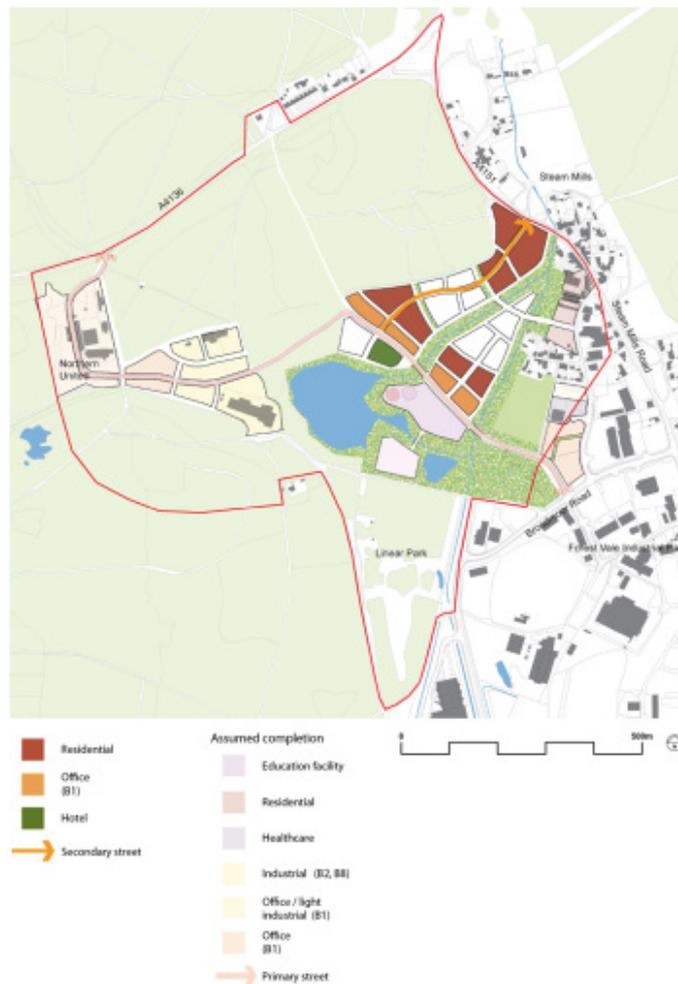
## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Phase 2 (2016 - 2019)

**5.13** Phase two sees the extension of development along the main spine road and along Steam Mills. The main infrastructure for this phase is the creation of an east-west link between the spine road and Steam Mills.

**5.14** The second phase will contain the following uses:

- Offices;
- Residential; and
- Hotel



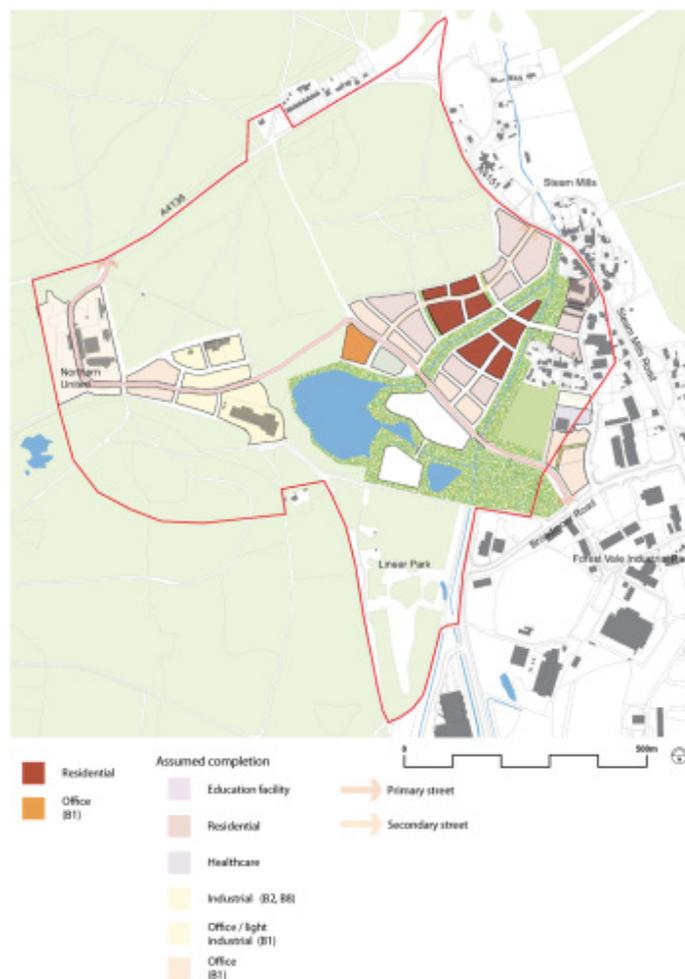
**Figure 12: Phase 2**

## 5 .Development principles and policies

### Phase 3 (2019 – 2022)

**5.15** The third phase will include the development of the remaining land for residential development between the spine road and Steam Mills. Further land will also be released for office uses during this period. In addition, this phase includes one development plot close to the lake. It is anticipated that by the time this plot comes forward, it will have to meet high standards in terms of sustainability and design quality. This will support sensitive integration of the development with the lake’s setting. The third phase will include the following uses:

- Residential; and
- Offices



**Figure 13: Phase 3**

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Phasing of the landscaping and green infrastructure works

**5.16** The implementation of landscaping works is influenced by four parameters:

1. Extent of site remediation works;
2. Phasing of the development;
3. Landscaping proposals or strategy including any related to SUDs; and
4. Biodiversity mitigation proposals.

**5.17** The first, third and fourth items will evolve as the Masterplan progresses and it is premature to prepare a spatial phasing plan for the landscape and green infrastructure works at this stage. However, in line with legislative requirements relating to protected species mitigation requirements will have to be implemented and established prior to development.

### Policy 3

#### Phasing

The implementation of the Masterplan will be phased broadly in accord with the plans above, balancing the amount of land being released to the market and creating a development which grows naturally over time without feeling unfinished. The proposed phasing is indicative and relates in the first instance to the release of development plots and associated infrastructure.

It does not include the remediation of the site, biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures, green infrastructure (such as SUDs), or play space and allotment provision which will be prepared in more detail at the next planning stage and should take into account site wide issues. In addition, where applicable these features may be required to be implemented and established in advance of development occurring to mitigate potential impacts.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 4: Partnership working

**5.18** The Northern Quarter benefits from a wide range of stakeholder interests.

**5.19** FoDDC Council is the lead public sector authority in terms of plan making and development control functions with support from Gloucestershire County Council in relation to strategic issues such as highways and education provision.

**5.20** From a delivery perspective, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has played an instrumental role in identifying the Northern Quarter as a priority for regeneration through the National Coalfields Regeneration funding programme.

**5.21** The Forestry commission has a key interest in the site both as a landowner and also through the management and stewardship of the forest land.

**5.22** In addition to the public sector bodies, a series of local organisations and stakeholder groups have interests in the site. These include the following:

#### **5.23** *Town and Parish Councils*

- Cinderford Town Council
- Ruardean Parish Council
- Littledean Parish Council
- Mitcheldean Parish Council
- Ruspidge & Soudley Parish Council
- Drybrook Parish Council
- Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils

#### **5.24** *National bodies*

- The Coal Authority
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Environment Agency

#### **5.25** *Local and regional groups*

- Benefice of Drybrook, Lydbrook and Ruardean
- Business Link Gloucestershire
- Butterfly Conservation
- Campaign For The Protection Of Rural England
- Cinderford Methodist Church
- Cinderford Regeneration Board
- County Moth Recorder
- Dean Forest Voice
- Disability Forum
- Forest Artists Network
- Forest of Dean Community Church
- Forest Of Dean Local History Society
- Forest of Dean LSP

## 5 . Development principles and policies

- Forest of Dean Music Makers
- Forest Voluntary Action Forum
- Friends of the Earth
- Friends of the Forest
- Gloucestershire Bat Group
- Gloucestershire Branch, Butterfly Conservation
- Gloucestershire Constabulary
- Gloucestershire Naturalists' Society
- Gloucestershire Old Persons Assembly
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
- Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust
- NHS Gloucestershire
- Heywood Community School
- Northern United Group
- Real Ideas Organisation
- Royal Forest of Dean College
- Steam Mills Angling Club
- Steam Mills School
- Two Rivers Housing
- Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Tourism Association
- Young Gloucestershire

**5.26** These stakeholders have a key role to play in the implementation of proposals for the Northern Quarter both in terms of consultation and involvement in regeneration and initiatives and projects which come forward to support the physical renewal of the site.

### Policy 4

#### **Partnership working**

The Council will continue to work closely with the Homes and Communities Agency, Forestry Commission, Gloucestershire County Council, Cinderford Regeneration Board and other public sector partners to facilitate the regeneration of the Northern Quarter. The Council will also maintain links with a range of local stakeholders in taking implementation plans forward. This will include on-going consultation and engagement to assist in the development of more detailed proposals and involvement in regeneration projects and initiatives.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Policy 5: Developer contributions and procurement**

**5.27** In terms of S106 contributions, the AAP will follow the District-wide approach rather than providing a specific Northern Quarter approach. In terms of procurement, the following policy reflects a proactive approach to ensuring that the procurement process is sustainable in physical and economic terms.

#### **Policy 5**

##### **Developer contributions and procurement**

The Council will work with Gloucestershire County Council to negotiate developer contributions in line with the District-wide approach to contributions. Schemes will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with consideration of wider regeneration and infrastructure priorities.

The Council will encourage commitment to sustainability through the procurement process.

Developers should incorporate initiatives such as Local Labour in Construction clauses, Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) sourced timber and low carbon footprint supply chain programmes which would favour locally sourced materials.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Character area statements

#### Policy 6: Northern Quarter Character Areas

**5.28** The Northern Quarter comprises five distinct character areas, defined in part by their geographical character and in relation to their proposed function.

**5.29** The masterplanning exercise has determined five character areas which are listed as follows:

1. Northern Quarter Centre
2. Steam Mills Village West
3. Northern United Enterprise Park
4. Forest Vale North
5. Linear Park

## 5 . Development principles and policies

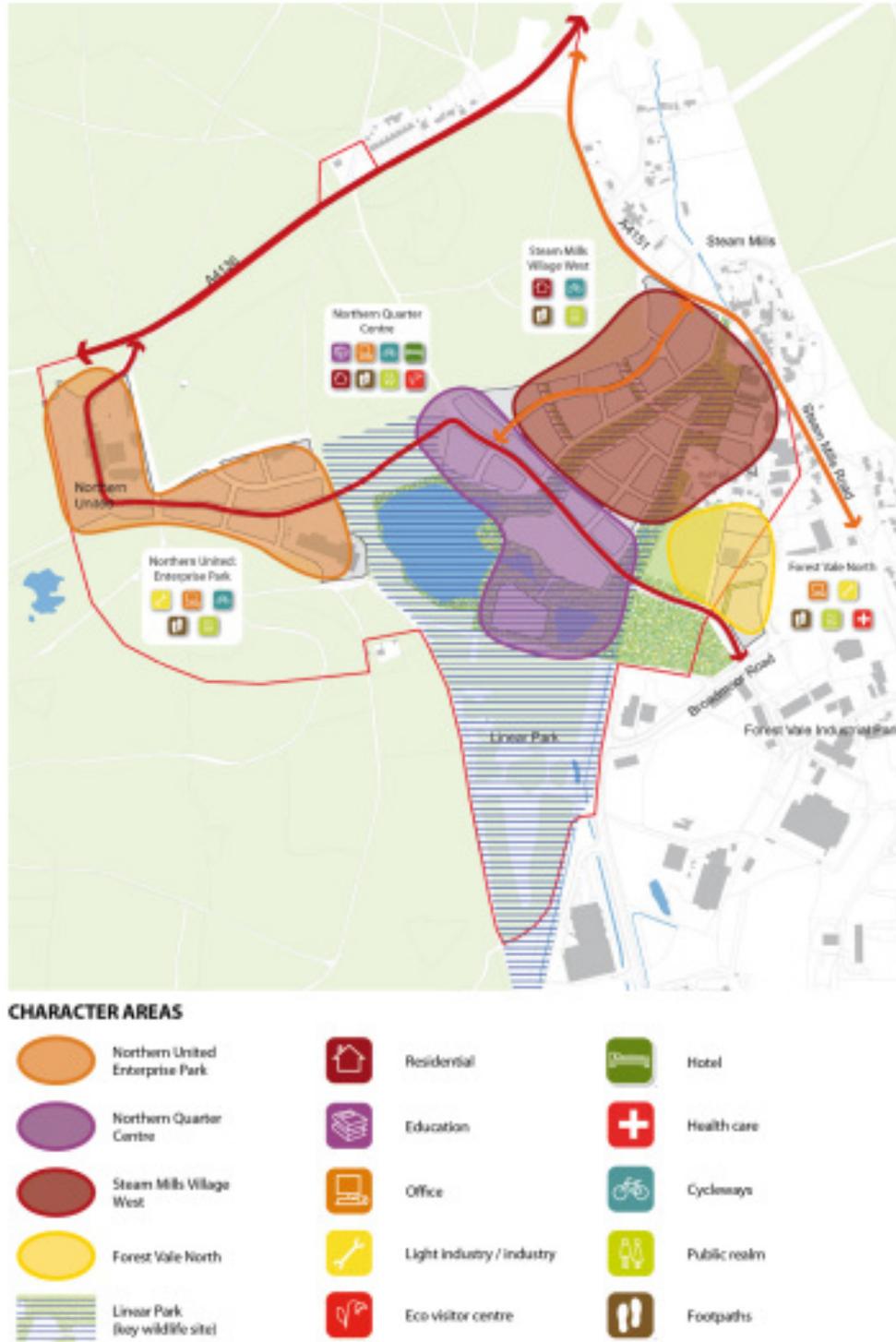


Figure 14

## 5 . Development principles and policies

**5.30** The following statements define the overarching character in terms of design, landscape and function which is envisaged.

### Policy 6

#### **Northern Quarter character areas**

Proposals for the Northern Quarter should have due regard for the character areas as defined below. The character areas are intended to provide a general description of activities and character. There is likely to be a degree of overlap between adjacent areas and character area boundaries should not be interpreted or applied rigidly.

#### **Northern Quarter Centre**

This is the mixed-use core of the Masterplan, located along the main movement route. The mixed uses of this character area include the education facility to serve Gloucestershire College, high quality employment space, a hotel and an eco-visitor and activity centre - the most suitable for this accessible and prominent area.

#### **Steam Mills Village West**

This character area forms an extension to the existing communities of Steam Mills and Newtown. It will be a new residential neighbourhood at the Forest edge, interfacing directly with the forest, green fingers, water courses and floodplain. Public spaces and access areas will reflect the more quiet and homely qualities of this place.

#### **Northern United Enterprise Park**

Northern United Enterprise Park is the area of the former Northern United Colliery and includes several existing and future employment sites between Northern United and the lake. The character area will aim to intensify the employment uses while continuing the employment legacy of the site. The nature of these employment uses will be sensitive to the landscape setting and to the mining history of Northern United. The AAP encourages mixed employment uses in this area with a range of use classes being acceptable. In addition to the B1, B2 and B8 uses, the Northern United site could accommodate tourism or heritage related activities which create service-based jobs. The site could accommodate small and medium sized businesses or a single larger operation. It is important that the development is sensitive to the forest context, mining heritage, miners' memorial, ecology and the need to maintain a degree of public access to and through the site.

#### **Forest Vale North**

A small character area to the south-east, it is a seamless continuation of the Forest Vale Industrial Park and will contain office and light industrial employment space. In addition to the business uses, a new healthcare facility will be located just south of Newtown. Large areas of the character area are in the functional floodplain and will only contain uses compatible with the floodplain.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Linear Park**

The Linear Park character area is the northern end of the entire Linear Park, stretching north to south at the west of Cinderford. The park is characterised by a mix of grass lands, woods, ponds and heritage features. Its greatest asset is the lake in the development area. The Linear Park is a place for recreation and contains a variety of habitats, and will be preserved in its natural-rural state. The site also contains large amounts of forest, which has not been identified as a character area as such because it merges seamlessly with the surrounding forests outside the site boundary.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Urban Design

#### Policy 7: Masterplan and design codes

- 5.31** As indicated in section 2, the Masterplan and design code document represents a key element in the family of documents for the Northern Quarter. Whilst it does not have statutory status in itself, alongside the Sustainable Development Framework it has played a vital role in assimilating baseline information and consultation results in developing a detailed design approach for the Northern Quarter.
- 5.32** In areas of importance for protected species and habitats, the design code must accommodate the particular requirements of the relevant species and be in accordance with Policy 10.

#### Policy 7

##### Masterplan and Design Codes

Development proposals should accord significantly with the indicative Masterplan drawings in the AAP and the design code which is being prepared in parallel. The Council will consider the adoption of the Design Code as a Supplementary Planning Document following the adoption of the Area Action Plan. Proposals which come forward in isolation from the AAP, or prejudice the successful implementation of the proposals will be treated as premature. The Council will require developers to pursue design and development solutions which adhere to the approach set out in the AAP.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 8: Key design principles

**5.33** A series of design principles have been developed to provide a set of criteria for the Northern Quarter. The principles have been informed by the unique context of the site, the vision and its supporting themes, and the design criteria for creating sustainable places.

#### Policy 8

##### Key design principles

The Council will require development proposals to adhere to the following design principles:

- **Creating a Sustainable Place** - A development that is well balanced in terms of economic, environmental and social sustainability. Inclusion of high standards of renewable energy provision and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures including flood adaption and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- **A Place in the Forest** - Strengthening the connections to the Forest via physical links, strategic views and a source for construction, energy, education and wellbeing. Keeping alive the culture of the Forest through protecting the mining legacy and bringing it into new uses.
- **Transport Principles** - Promote sustainable transport
- **Access and Movement** - Creating a new road that reduces the traffic impact on Steam Mills and which provides access for the site. The new road is to provide a new gateway to Cinderford and improve public transport connections, which will have a larger catchment area. The movement network is designed to create permeable connections which link into the existing network, most notably to Cinderford, Steam Mills, Northern United, Drybrook and Ruardean. The movement network is also designed to encourage walking and cycling, as well as low traffic speeds.
- **Education and Learning** - Facilitating a new education facility to serve Gloucestershire College at the heart of the development in a well connected location. A low carbon development of exemplar design quality that will be a source of local pride.
- **Living and Working** - Creating an attractive area as an 'amenity hub' with a wide catchment to Cinderford, Ruardean, Steam Mills and Drybrook for businesses, with good access, an attractive landscape setting, strong urban form and links to the education facility. Promoting fine grain and mixed-use residential and low carbon development which is affordable, well connected and suitable for all ages and a sustainable lifestyle.
- **Integration with Steam Mills and Cinderford** - Adding variety to the existing types of residential, business and education space through new development, which is well connected through good transport links. Sharing new and existing communal facilities and creating new residential development as a natural growth from Steam Mills.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

- A Place of Character - Drawing on the design characteristics typical of Cinderford, such as informal street layouts, simplicity of dwellings, local materials and an interface with the Forest and lake, and utilises this key asset to inform the character of the Northern Quarter. There should also be a clear distinction between public and private realm, a legible street hierarchy with strategic views and vistas.

It is expected that proposals will be supported by a coherent design rationale which demonstrates how proposals respond to the principles.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 9: Sustainability and design standards

**5.34** The present guidance as defined by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is set out below.

#### Quality Places

**5.35** The HCA provides advice on creating quality spaces using the following design, planning and assessment tools:

Design Statements	Design statement adhering to the principles of UDC and UDC2	Guidance through all design stages
Building for Life;	Building for Life Silver or Gold	Criteria at Outline Planning to Reserved Matters stage  Awarded after 50% of homes being completed
Inclusive design	Access statement, taking an inclusive approach to design and adhering to the principles of inclusive design guidance note	Guidance for Outline Planning to Reserved Matters Stage
Secure by Design	Developments designed by Secured by Design principles and accredited by the local constabulary	Consultation from Outline Planning to Reserved Matters Stage. Accreditation at Reserved Matters Stage
Integration of Tenure	Tenure-blind development (maximum of 6 social units together)	Standard through all design stages
Car parking	Maximum parking as set as the minimum parking provision of the local authority. Design in accordance with <i>Manual for Streets</i> and <i>Car parking: what works where</i> guides.	Guidance and standard through all design stages

**Table 1**

#### Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play

**5.36** This standard has been published by Fields in Trust and provides guidance on play equipment, as well as the number, location and size of outdoor play spaces for children of different ages. The guidance does not differentiate between high density urban development and areas where most dwellings have access to private outdoor space. It is therefore recommended to apply the guidance in a flexible manner to ensure all residents have equal access to green spaces as defined in the publication.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Quality Places

**5.37** The HCA guidance and standards on creating quality homes and buildings are:

Code for Sustainable Homes	CSH – Level 4 as a minimum and increasing with statutory change over time.	Standards at Reserved Matters Stage. Awarded post 1 year occupancy.
BREEAM	Excellent for commercial or other building types	Reserved Matters Stage. Awarded....
Lifetime Homes	All 16 standards for Lifetime Homes must be achieved	Standards at Outline Planning and Reserved Matters stage
Building specification	BRE Green Guide to Specification between A-C	Standards at Reserved Matters and detailed design and construction stage.
Overheating	Testing required on overheating – for living areas < 1 percent of occupied hours are over an operative temperature of 28°C. Bedrooms <1 percent of occupied hours are over 26°C.	Reserved Matters stage and post construction stage.
Space Standards	1 Bed/2 person homes 51 sq m 2 Bed/2 person homes 66 sq m 2 Bed/2 person homes 77 sq m 3 Bed/2 person homes 93 sq m 4 Bed/2 person homes 106 sq m  Also requirements for room dimensions and balconies	Outline Planning and Reserved Matters stage
Fire Safety	Statement of fire safety	Reserved Matters stage

**Table 2**

**5.38** It should be noted that Standards progress over time and could change from those set out above by the time development commences on site. It is envisaged that the design standards will be reviewed at each phase of the development, to ensure the development complies with the standards promoted by the HCA at that time. Standards will need to be reviewed and when any scheme is submitted at outline planning stage.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 9

#### **Sustainability and design standards**

The Council will require all development in the Northern Quarter to adhere to high standards of design in terms of quality of the built environment, individual buildings, construction quality and delivery, plus landscaping. All design standards will be required to be in accordance with the standards promoted by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Council at the time of submitting an outline planning application for the Northern Quarter.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 10: Landscape Biodiversity and Public Realm

- 5.39** There is an overall aspiration for the Northern Quarter landscape to maintain its rural-natural character. The Masterplan seeks to provide strong green links and generous buffer zones between habitats and development sites whilst taking advantage of views and recreational footpaths.
- 5.40** The Masterplan will seek to mitigate and where possible enhance the biodiversity and the extent of existing habitats, specifically for species typical in the area. Of particular relevance to a site wide biodiversity strategy will be the sensitive development of the spine road and Northern United area to respond to the significant lesser horseshoe colony known to be in the area. To date, a mitigation strategy has been implemented to encourage the use of an artificial roost outside of the derelict Northern United areas. The future development of the detailed landscape and biodiversity strategy will need to take full account of seasonal data relating to the behavioural patterns of this species to deliver the following principles:
- Avoid light spill, recreational disturbance and construction disturbance upon the roost and associated flight lines;
  - Maintaining access to feeding grounds and suitable connectivity via bat flight routes to these locations;
  - Providing suitable means of crossing proposed infrastructure to maintain flight routes

#### Lesser Horseshoe Bat primary bat corridor requirements

Sited on alignments of established corridors

Dark flight ways with a maximum lux of 0.1

Effective woody vegetation structure of a suitable width for species to follow shelter and forage

Enhancement to establish additional suitable corridors

- 5.41** In addition to bats, there are known to be other protected species and species of local importance in the area of the AAP. Therefore, in developing a biodiversity strategy, the principles of connectivity (particularly to existing habitats in the wide area around the site) permeability and increased carrying capacity within retained habitats will be essential (including consideration of offsite mitigation if required). It will be important to the success of the biodiversity strategy that a long term maintenance approach is identified. The outline strategy has shown how these elements can be achieved in principle.
- 5.42** The landscape and biodiversity strategy is high level and it is recommended that more detailed landscape plans, mitigation measures and management plans are developed at a more detailed design stage in line with guidance from the Landscape Supplementary Planning Document prepared by FoDDC in 2007. Elements of the biodiversity may need to be established to demonstrate mitigation success prior to development.
- 5.43** The two key landscape assets – the forest and the lake with its tributaries – have shaped the layout of the Masterplan. The development will be bordered by the forest on two sides with the forest edge providing a backdrop to the streets adjacent to it, and footpaths entering the forest and connecting to the surrounding countryside and other settlements.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

- 5.44** The lake is at the heart of the development and it will be designed and managed to provide a number of wetland habitats including aquatic planting and marginals around the lake fringes, wet meadow open space surrounding it and a scrub/wet woodland mosaic towards the periphery. It is intended that this will enhance the biodiversity level of this area and increase its carrying capacity for wildlife, including bats. Appropriate mitigation regarding potential lighting impacts on wildlife in proximity to the lake and associated habitats will be established, for instance reduction of lighting in this area, baffle boards, and directional lighting. The brickworks is currently screened by mature trees and this screen is to be retained.
- 5.45** The brook feeding the lake and the outlet stream both create wetland corridors that permeate the development as 'green fingers', as well as the Engine Brook. At the northern end of the green fingers, near Steam Mills, a 'village green' is proposed. This area should be managed as an amenity grassland and may contain small play areas, footpaths and benches, though it should retain some of the character of the green fingers connecting to it. The landscaping of the green fingers should have minimal intervention to the existing habitats where possible and thereafter include reed beds, marginals and wet woodland scrub vegetation making up a valuable ecological asset for the site. Access to these areas will be via self-compacting gravel footpaths connecting to the existing network around the lake. The pre-submission draft has recognised the value of the existing riparian zones and increased the buffers around existing water courses to demonstrate a consistent offset of a minimum 10m and to respond to "on the ground" habitat areas. In addition the flood and biodiversity value of minor watercourses known on the site has been recognised.
- 5.46** Old Engine Brook is currently an engineered channel with functional floodplain abutting to it. The landscaping of this area would be encouraged to assist the hydraulic reconfiguration of the Old Engine Brook, with a primary focus on reducing the current risk of flooding to surrounding areas, encouraging a naturalised channel form and enhancing watercourse and riparian habitats. There is enhanced opportunity for this within the pre-submission draft with the maintenance of land to the east of the brook.
- 5.47** Within the development, most of the streets will be planted with trees. Formal avenue planting is proposed on the main spine route, as noted above the east west section of the this route through to the junction at the entrance to the Northern United Site will have additional mitigation designed to maintain and improve the functionality of the Northern United lesser horseshoe bat roost . As part of this mitigation approach, flexibility will be maintained to explore a spine road alignment to the south of the existing buildings on the east west section. In addition, two tertiary routes contain a margin to create green links between the forest and green fingers. Tree species will be chosen based on their suitability for the site's growing conditions and to create a variety of character across different streets. The car park to the south of the site will be encouraged to incorporate deciduous tree-planting and minimal, directional lighting to try and encourage biodiversity value and integrate with the surrounding linear park.
- 5.48** Ongoing engagement will be encouraged with local groups, such as environmental groups (e.g. Friends of the Forest and Friends of the Earth), The Gloucestershire Bat Group, Steam Mills Angling Club, Butterfly Conservation, Gloucestershire Naturalists' Society, Forest of Dean Council, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, local schools and youth organisations to prepare more detailed proposals and to involve them at implementation stage and maintenance work.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Squares

**5.49** The plan proposes several squares as part of the development. The largest square and most urban in character is proposed in front of the education facility to serve Gloucestershire College. A secondary, smaller square is proposed in the residential development in the Steam Mills Village West character area. Smaller nodes can be developed throughout the development, depending on more detailed design studies.

### Play space and allotments

**5.50** Appropriate levels of play space and allotment provision are desirable and should be provided locally as opportunities arise to meet the needs arising from residential development within the AAP area. This should be based on appropriate local standards.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 15: Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 10

#### Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy

The Council will require development proposals to define a sensitive and carefully considered landscape, biodiversity and public realm strategy which respects the Northern Quarter's natural rural and woodland character, biodiversity value and key natural/landscape assets such as the forest, grasslands, Steam Mills lake and tributaries. Proposals would need to incorporate the following:

- Strong semi-natural green links and buffer zones including the retention of core or existing wildlife corridors to allow a connected biodiversity network (particularly those areas identified for specific bat species mitigation);
- Responsive approach to key views and promotion of footpaths and green corridors;
- Mitigation and enhancement of habitats and biodiversity including increasing the carrying capacity of retained habitat areas to mitigate potential impacts on protected species (such as reptiles); and
- Maintaining riparian buffer zones and minimising intervention (including outfalls and crossings) and incorporating enhancements to ecological value of these features.

The Council will require development proposals progressed in accordance with the AAP to be accompanied by detailed landscape and biodiversity implementation strategies and programmes which set out landscape proposals, detail mitigation, licensing requirements and enhancement measures to biodiversity, together with management tools such as additional biodiversity enhancement checklists, biodiversity/ landscape management/ long term and maintenance plans.

The strategy must ensure that the following criteria are achieved:

- The site is not left untreated after remediation works for longer than one planting season;
- The site remains accessible for the public before and after remediation works and is treated to retain its amenity value;
- Key habitats, feeding areas and commuting corridors for protected species are maintained and where possible enhanced; and
- Biodiversity mitigation measures related to protected habitats and species, identified to date and as supplemented by appropriate future survey, must accord with requirements of current legislation and good practice guidance. In addition, the requirements of Policy 26 must be taken into account.

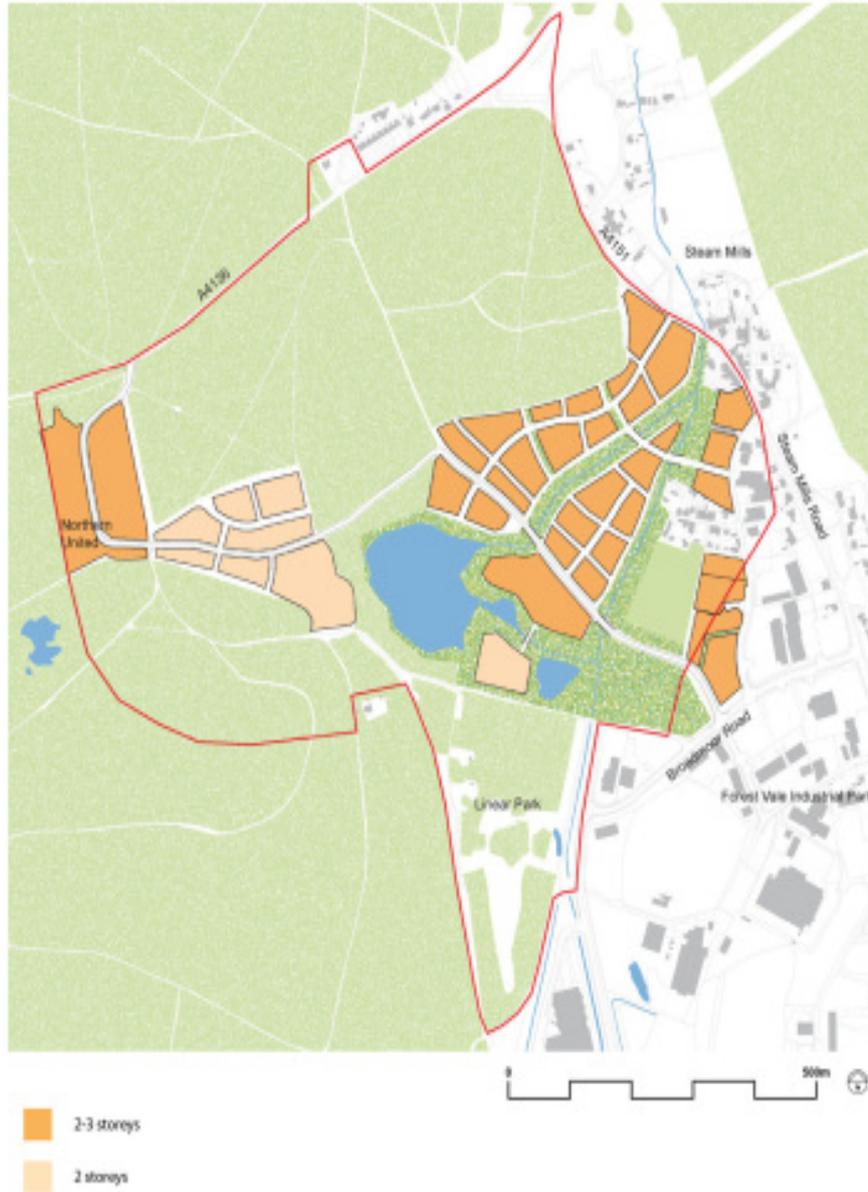
## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 11: Heights and massing

#### Height

- 5.51** The proposed heights of the development illustrated in the Masterplan are broadly in line with the predominant heights of Cinderford, which are between 2 and 3 storeys for residential and commercial buildings. Around the lake, building height must protect the setting of the area and should demonstrate how this will be achieved whilst being limited to no more than three storeys. In the character area of Forest Vale North, a maximum building height of 3 storeys for employment uses will be permitted. In the character area of Forest Vale North, a maximum building height of 3 storeys (or equivalent height) for employment uses will be permitted.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



**Figure 16: Indicative Building Heights**

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Density

- 5.52** The density for the Northern Quarter will reflect the suburban character of the development whilst creating a sustainable development. They also reflect the average density of existing development in Cinderford, ranging broadly between 20 and 40 dwellings per hectare.
- 5.53** The densities of the Masterplan respond to the locations of the residential development, with lower densities / open campus type development closer to the natural assets of the lake and forest fringe. This is to protect the setting of the lake from over development and to create a green transition with larger gardens and higher biodiversity value. Higher densities can be achieved along the main movement corridor and within the existing built context of Steam Mills.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 17: Indicative density plan

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 11

#### **Height and Density**

The Council will require development proposals to provide a clear rationale and justification for the proposed approach to height and density. Proposals should be sensitive to setting in the context of the surrounding built environment, topography and key views. In broad terms it is expected that densities and heights will step down to the lake with the greatest densities adjacent to the existing Steam Mills, Newtown and Forest Vale areas. Overall, across the areas to be developed for housing, a density of 30 dwellings per ha would be appropriate.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 12: Heritage

- 5.54** The Northern Quarter site contains buildings with heritage value and sites with potential archaeological value both on the site and on its edges. However, there are no nationally or locally listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and designated conservation areas.
- 5.55** A heritage and archaeology report produced by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) in September 2009 identifies buildings with heritage value and potential valuable archaeological sites; this report has been used in drafting this policy. All proposals for the buildings identified with heritage value in the GCC report will require early liaison with English Heritage. All proposals for development on or near archaeological sites identified in the GCC report will require early liaison with the GCC Archaeological Team.

#### Steam Mills village and Newtown

- 5.56** Steam Mills village and the small settlement of Newtown - on the eastern side of the Northern Quarter site - developed in the 1840s around a corn mill. Several of the older buildings in the settlements are of heritage value through contributing to a sense of local identity, distinctiveness and history of the area. Consideration should be given to the retention of these buildings and all proposals for demolition, alteration or extension should be carefully balanced against the buildings historic interest and the viability for repair and re-use. These buildings are:
- The carpet warehouse on the corner of Steam Mills Road / Newtown Road is a substantial stone built property which forms a landmark on Steam Mills Road. Through an alternative community and/or commercial use it could become a focal point for the Steam Mills West neighbourhood.
  - The house on the corner of Steam Mills Road / Newtown Road
  - The group of 19 century cottages on the eastern side of Steam Mills Road to the north of the carpet warehouse
  - Haywood Engine Works on Newtown Road
  - Broadmoor Chemical Works
  - Group of cottages in Newtown
- 5.57** It should be noted in the current plans for the Northern Quarter no alterations are proposed for any of the above heritage buildings in para 5.59 apart from the Haywood Engine Works, which are proposed for demolition.

#### Northern United

- 5.58** The Northern United Colliery was opened in 1933 and closed in 1965, the last deep mine to close in the forest. Many of the key colliery buildings survive today, such as the pithead baths, canteen, offices, chain store, iron store, carpenters' shop, blacksmiths' shop, electricians shop, stables and the explosives store. Some of the surviving buildings are in use as a recycling and waste facility, but most are vacant and in a very poor state of repair.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

**5.59** In February 2011, the Minister for Tourism and Heritage confirmed that the Northern United Colliery buildings are not suitable for listing following consultation with English Heritage. In their advice report dated 11 February 2011, English Heritage cited the following principal reasons for their recommendation not to list Northern United:

- Architectural interest: the buildings, including the pit-head baths, are very plain and utilitarian in style, and do not show any sense of architectural pretension
- Date: the pithead baths in particular are late in date and derived from earlier prototypes
- Historic interest: the colliery, though the last deep mine to survive in the Forest of Dean, is not of special historic interest in the national context
- Intactness: the surviving buildings have all undergone significant losses and alteration associated with their post-mine usage; in addition, the buildings have largely been stripped of their interior fittings
- Coherence: though a wide range of buildings remain on the site, all of those associated with the processing of coal have been demolished, leaving only the welfare and administrative functions legible in the surviving elements

**5.60** The large shed in the centre of the buildings is not a historic building and could be demolished.

**5.61** The Miner's Memorial on the Northern United Site must be kept in-situ.

**5.62** The buildings at the Northern United Colliery are not of sufficient architectural interest and are not intact enough to merit designation in the national context. However, they are undoubtedly of a high degree of local and regional significance as, though incomplete, the site has the most extensive remaining complex of pit buildings in the Forest of Dean district, and is part of the last deep mine in the area.

### Archaeological value

**5.63** Any development that could affect a site with potential archaeological value must involve full archaeological mitigation including evaluation, excavation and recording in advance of any development involving ground works. These areas are:

- All of the buildings identified under paragraph 5.55
- Northern United Colliery buildings
- Hawkwell Brickworks
- All of the mine shafts and open cast mining areas in the site boundary identified by GCC
- Other miscellaneous sites identified by GCC

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 12

#### **Heritage**

Development proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the Northern Quarter heritage context and make appropriate reference to the Heritage and Archaeology Report prepared by Gloucestershire County Council and other sources.

Proposals will be assessed in terms of historic value, structural integrity and viability considerations in the context of wider regeneration objectives for the Northern Quarter.

Proposals for demolition, alteration or extension of buildings identified as having heritage value in the Heritage and Archaeology Report (GCC, 2009) will require a clear justification and should be supported by a clear mitigation strategy.

All proposals for development on or near archaeological sites identified in the GCC report will require early liaison with the GCC Archaeological Team to understand requirements for full archaeological mitigation involving evaluation, excavation and recording in advance of any development involving ground works.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Policy 13: Views and vistas**

- 5.64** The lake and its wider setting are a key asset for the Northern Quarter. Proposals have been developed to protect key views of the lake, and to draw on its potential with carefully located development, maximising and framing views to it. Other important local views are in the area of the floodplain along Old Engine Brook and the green finger between the lake and Steam Mills as set out in the plan.
- 5.65** An important current vista is the bath house of the Northern United site which is a local landmark. This vista is to be maintained should the bath house be retained.
- 5.66** It is also proposed that Gloucestershire College's new education facility should create a prominent vista for long distance views on the approaches to the development, emphasising the importance this use will have for Cinderford in the 21st century.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



**Figure 18: Views and Vistas**

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 13

#### **Views and vistas**

Development proposals should provide an assessment of the impact of development on key views and vistas in the Northern Quarter. Where appropriate, the Council will require the provision of verified views from agreed locations in order to assess visual impact. In considering impact on views, proposals will be assessed in terms of their scale, bulk and massing. Opportunities to create new landmarks which are sensitive to existing character and landscape will also be encouraged.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Transport, movement and connectivity

#### Policy 14: Accessibility

**5.67** The Northern Quarter site benefits from a good strategic location adjacent to A4136 and Steam Mills Road. However, the full potential of the site is constrained by the internal and external highways network and the relatively poor level of public transport accessibility. The proposed development will provide an effective public highway network which will unlock the development potential of key sites. In this context, development must be carefully planned and phased to ensure that infrastructure is of a sufficiently high standard to accommodate the range of uses outlined under the land use heading below. Specific guidance and interventions are identified in policies 14 to 19 below.

#### Policy 14

##### Accessibility

Development proposals for the Northern Quarter should seek to achieve a step change in the level of accessibility, both in terms of internal connections within the site, and external connections to the town centre and surrounding settlements. Proposals should demonstrate a clearly articulated movement framework and ensure that transport plans adhere to the broad framework established in the AAP. Proposals should seek to enhance all forms of transport, with a particular emphasis on sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Notwithstanding the commitment to sustainable modes of transport, proposals should also enhance the quality of road connections through the site as this is a key constraint to realising the full potential of the Northern Quarter.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 15: Road hierarchy and link road

#### Primary route

- 5.68** Work on the Business Plan and Masterplan has indicated that the main north-south connection should be in the form of a new spine road between the A4136 in the vicinity of the existing Northern United junction and Broadmoor Road. This new route will provide an alternative to Steam Mills Road for accessing Cinderford. The vision for the route is to create a new street fronted by built development along the majority of its length, passing areas of open landscape and forest edge. This spine road will serve as a main public transport route for buses approaching and leaving Cinderford from the north. It will serve predominantly areas of employment, the new Gloucestershire College campus, the hotel, the visitor centre, the secondary and the tertiary street network.
- 5.69** There is flexibility to adjust the alignment of the north-western section of this route in response to the findings of future habitat surveys which will be required as detailed design proposals are prepared.
- 5.70** It should also be noted that the preferred options report illustrated part of the spine road in an alternative north-south alignment passing through the Hawkwell Enclosure. Although this is no longer a requirement or proposal in the AAP, it is possible that this route could be delivered in the longer term if found to bring additional benefits in line with the policies in the AAP such as the downgrading of other sections of the route.

#### Secondary and tertiary network

- 5.71** A secondary street links the new spine road with Steam Mills to the west and will be the main access for the residential development on the site.
- 5.72** The tertiary network is linked to the primary and secondary network and serves the residential development blocks. The network will include shared surfaces and respond in a flexible manner to its environment, such as the forest fringe or green fingers.

#### Habitat mitigation measures

- 5.73** Both the primary network and secondary network are aligned through areas of high ecological sensitivity, being in the forest or at the forest fringe and through the Northern United site. The street design will be developed in accordance with the requirements of Policy 10 to include mitigation measures to reduce the severance these structures could bring for certain species, in particular bats. This will be achieved through the initial identification of key bat flight routes which will be subsequently maintained via green links. These could include culverts beneath the road, aerial crossways though additional tree planting, and green bridges via wires. Appropriate planting, fencing, and bollard lighting will accompany these green links to funnel bats to crossing points and encourage them to cross at height above the level of traffic.
- 5.74** In areas used by protected bats species, lighting will have to be designed in order to reduce the disturbance of the bats. This could include the reduction of lighting to a safe minimum, baffle boards, use of bollard rather than pole lighting, and directional lighting.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 19: Street Hierarchy

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 15

#### Road hierarchy and link road

##### Road hierarchy

Development proposals for the Northern Quarter will be expected to respect the broad hierarchy of primary and secondary routes outlined in the Masterplan movement framework. The following factors will be considered when assessing proposals:

1. Impact on areas of high ecological sensitivity, including bats;
2. Provision of appropriate mitigation measures to address environmental issues such as severance of commuting routes and disturbance of feeding grounds;
3. Specific issues relating to the quality of access and egress to specific sites based on their functional and operational requirements; and
4. Maintain a minimum 10m offset from watercourses.

All proposals should be developed in general conformity with the broad alignment outlined in the AAP unless otherwise agreed by the Council and their partners. However, there is flexibility for adjustment of the north western section of the spine road alignment, if required to mitigate impacts on protected species (e.g bats). Such changes would need to accord with the requirements of the Forestry Act.

The precise alignment of routes and junction arrangements will be determined through detailed design and technical assessment.

##### Spine Road

In order to unlock the full potential of the Northern Quarter, the Council will require the comprehensive development of the site to be carefully coordinated with the construction of a new spine road. The Council will pursue the following objectives when assessing detailed designs for the road and adjacent development alongside the route:

- The new route should have a street-based character not that of a traffic dominated by-pass; and
- The design of the street section should seek to avoid, minimise, or compensate (in that order) any impact on forest land and protected species.

The design of the street section must demonstrate to a high standard how the four primary bat corridor routes to/ from the roost sites will be maintained and protected during and after the construction of the spine road. Any further primary bat corridor routes that may be identified prior to development will be similarly maintained and protected. Key factors will include:

1. A detailed scheme of vegetation protection and landscaping, including the phasing of works demonstrating that woody vegetation structure within and surrounding primary bat corridors will be in place prior to development being undertaken and maintained after development is completed.
2. Artificial lighting must be designed to maintain effective dark flight ways for Lesser Horseshoe bats within primary bat corridors

## 5 . Development principles and policies

3. Minimum surface paths and road widths appropriate to the function of the road within primary bat corridor areas to minimise the degree of severance
4. When needed create new road crossing structures such as culverts and gantries to maintain primary bat corridors designed with suitable expert advice and according to best practice guidance
5. A detailed programme of monitoring for no less than three summers following the construction in each of the primary bat corridor areas. The programme should specify contingency procedures and responsibility for implementation should the monitoring reveal the crossings are not being used by numbers of lesser horseshoe bats comparable to those identified in the baseline surveys of 2010/ 11.
6. Suitable provision for the long term management and maintenance of all vegetation and road crossing structures that are required to maintain primary bat corridor routes.

### **Junction onto A4136**

The junction of the spine road and the A4136 is to be located in the vicinity of the existing Northern United junction. Detailed analysis of traffic flows at this junction should be used to determine its design. This is likely to require a more detailed assessment of the assignment and distribution of strategic and site based traffic and modelling of traffic flows at the junction for future years.

The design of the junction must demonstrate to a high standard how the primary bat corridors at the entrance to the Northern United site and crossing the A 4136 from the roost sites, will be maintained and protected as dark crossing points during and after the construction of the junction.

### **Junctions at Broadmoor Road**

Further detailed analysis of traffic flows at the junction of the Spine Road with Broadmoor Road and the junction of Broadmoor Road with the Gloucestershire College campus car park access should be carried out to determine the design of these junctions. This is likely to require a more detailed assessment of the assignment and distribution of education related traffic and modelling of traffic flows at the junctions for future years.

### **Passenger drop-off facilities**

With passenger access to the Gloucestershire College campus from the Spine Road, it is likely that vehicles will stop to drop off or pick up students. The design of the access arrangements and car parking for the education facility should seek to address these issues.

### **Off site highways**

Further analysis of the traffic impacts of development of the Northern Quarter on the junction of the A4151 Cinderford Bridge junction should be carried out in consultation with Gloucestershire County Council.

Further analysis should also be carried out of potentially increased traffic flows in surrounding minor roads such as Speculation Road/Whimsey Road with a view to potentially closing these to through traffic

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Policy 16: Pedestrian network**

- 5.75** Walking and cycling will be fundamental in the design of the new Northern Quarter developments and how they link to the adjacent existing settlements around Cinderford and the forest landscape. The AAP and Masterplan aim to incorporate best practice and quality design to promote walking and cycling. This will include the incorporation of incentives to encourage these sustainable forms of travel, to be designed into the Masterplan at the outset.
- 5.76** Fundamental to the Masterplan, will be the creation of pleasant, safe and walkable environments. Irrespective of the character area, or type of development, the aim is to ensure connectivity with existing neighbourhoods and permeability through new sites.
- 5.77** Formal walking routes through the site will link with more informal, traffic free paths in the landscaped and forested areas. The main recreational routes within the site are around the lake and along the green fingers, linking to the recreational facilities of Steam Mills, the primary school and the forest.
- 5.78** Most of the site is within a 5-minute walking distance from the Northern Quarter Centre. This includes the new residential development at Steam Mills West and the existing Steam Mills village. Only the Northern United site is approximately 10-minute walking distance from the Northern Quarter Centre.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 20: Pedestrian Network

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 16

#### **Pedestrian network**

The Council will require all proposals to place an emphasis on the creation of high quality pedestrian routes that ensure good connections between the Northern Quarter and surrounding settlements and Cinderford town centre. In line with the Masterplan, proposals should make use of, or provide where necessary, good quality pedestrian routes within and to and from the Northern Quarter. These will connect to the wider network of formal and informal routes to surrounding settlements and forest. More detailed audits should be carried out of routes between the site and the town centre to identify and implement specific improvements to reduce potential barriers to walking. It is anticipated that all new homes in the Northern Quarter will be situated in close proximity to local employment sites, shops, schools, community and health facilities and leisure facilities. In addition all new homes should be within 5 minutes walking distance (400m) of a bus stop. A pedestrian link should be provided between the Gloucestershire College campus and bus stops in Steam Mills Road before the education facility is in use.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 17: Cycle network

- 5.79** Whilst the hilly topography of the site and surrounding area is not ideally suited to cycling, recreational cycling is popular in the forest. One of the main aims therefore, will be to encourage cycling as a mode of transport, wherever possible. The Masterplan encourages the following measures<sup>0</sup>:
- Providing safe and secure cycle parking adjacent to residential units, employment sites and other community amenities, such as at shops and the Gloucestershire College campus.
  - Ensuring the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure, including sheltered bicycle stands, quality road surfacing and safe, well-lit routes.
  - Providing showers, changing facilities and lockers at workplaces.
  - Introducing community bike rental initiatives and bicycle training programmes.
- 5.80** The majority of the cycle network are planned to be on quiet streets and a smaller proportion on traffic free paths.
- 5.81** The main north-south connections will be on the new spine road and Steam Mills Road. It is envisaged that these connections will be extended to serve the communities of Drybrook and Ruardean Hill, as well as to Cinderford town centre.
- 5.82** Two connections will link the development and surrounding communities with the forest trails. One connection runs east-west along the forest fringe between the bowling green at Steam Mills and Northern United. The other connection will run between Steam Mills Road and the lake, providing a link to the existing cycle network in the Linear Park.
- 5.83** Additional connections are also recommended to provide links to the proposed new National Cycle Network Routes 42 and 44 to the east and southwest of the site. These will require low-level improvements to existing trails and paths through the forest and to the east of Steam Mills Road.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 21: Cycling Network

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 17

#### **Cycling network**

The Council will require proposals to encourage cycling as a sustainable mode of transport in the Northern Quarter. In order to encourage cycling, quiet streets and cycle paths corresponding to those in the Masterplan where appropriate linking to the wider network should be provided. Secure cycle parking, suitable lighting and good quality surfaces should be provided. The Council will also encourage a coordinated approach to enhancements to cycle connections into the town centre which are outside of the AAP boundary.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 18: Public Transport

- 5.84** The proposed bus routing is illustrated in the diagram below. Given that the new spine road will provide an alternative access road into Cinderford from the north, key bus routes that currently run along Steam Mills Road will be diverted through the site, stopping at the new bus hub in the Northern Quarter Centre.
- 5.85** A new transport hub is to be introduced at the Northern Quarter Centre, on the main spine road and adjacent to the Gloucestershire College campus and employment sites. All diverted services through the new development and potential student buses will stop at the facility. The new transport hub is not considered to be a terminus.
- 5.86** Bus services could be improved by a number of initiatives to make these more attractive and to encourage people to reduce their use of private vehicles. The proposed improvements are as follows:
- Increase service frequencies – Increase of service frequencies and creating ‘bus corridors’ is vital to changing the mindset of commuters and ensuring that bus travel really is an option.
  - Community transport - Provision of services for people with disabilities or living in remote locations without access to mainstream public transport services.
  - Student Buses – buses can be introduced to provide a service for students from the main Gloucestershire College catchment areas.
  - Quality bus corridors – New bus fleets and basic infrastructure, including quality bus stops and real time indicators. The quality of service and travel experience will make people want to use buses.
  - Real-time information – Real time information available within dwellings via telephone or internet. Travel information can be made readily available by a local authority operated website or one-stop centre.

## 5 . Development principles and policies



Figure 22: Public Transport

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 18

#### **Public Transport**

The Council will require comprehensive redevelopment of the Northern Quarter to incorporate a series of initiatives to enhance the quality of public transport accessibility on site. Proposals should include a new public transport hub to serve the Northern Quarter Centre. This should be supported by improvements to bus services in terms of service frequency and information and the provision of additional routes to support the role of the Northern Quarter as a strategic amenity hub.

Proposals for rerouting of bus services from Steam Mills Road through the site should ensure that the location of stops and pedestrian links are as convenient as possible for passengers using existing stops in Steam Mills Road. Any proposals to reroute bus services should also compare the journey times to ensure that a reasonable balance is reached between convenience to site occupants and disincentive to existing passengers

Opportunities afforded by the introduction of new routes serving the site to the wider network strategy should be taken. Therefore, there is flexibility on the detail of routes.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 19: Parking

- 5.87** The provision of good public transport and facilities for walking and cycling proposed in the Northern Quarter will offer people an alternative to using the private car. Whilst it is envisaged that this will encourage a shift away from car usage, it is recognised that there will still be a requirement for car parking within the development for its various mix of land-uses.
- 5.88** Car and cycle parking in the new development will be in accordance with Gloucestershire County Council's Parking Standards. Actual parking space provision will be confirmed following confirmation of the development area schedule.
- 5.89** The car parking associated with the Gloucestershire College campus will be located within the education site and on a site to the south connected via a pedestrian bridge. The design of the car park should be sensitive to the waterside setting and include tree planting to minimise visual impact and links to the linear park for recreation.
- 5.90** Careful consideration should be given to car parking on the Spine Road in the vicinity of the Gloucestershire College campus site to allow for the likelihood of students being dropped off near the main pedestrian entrance and to discourage inappropriate on-street parking. This is also likely to require a S106 contribution towards any necessary Traffic Regulation Orders.

#### Policy 19

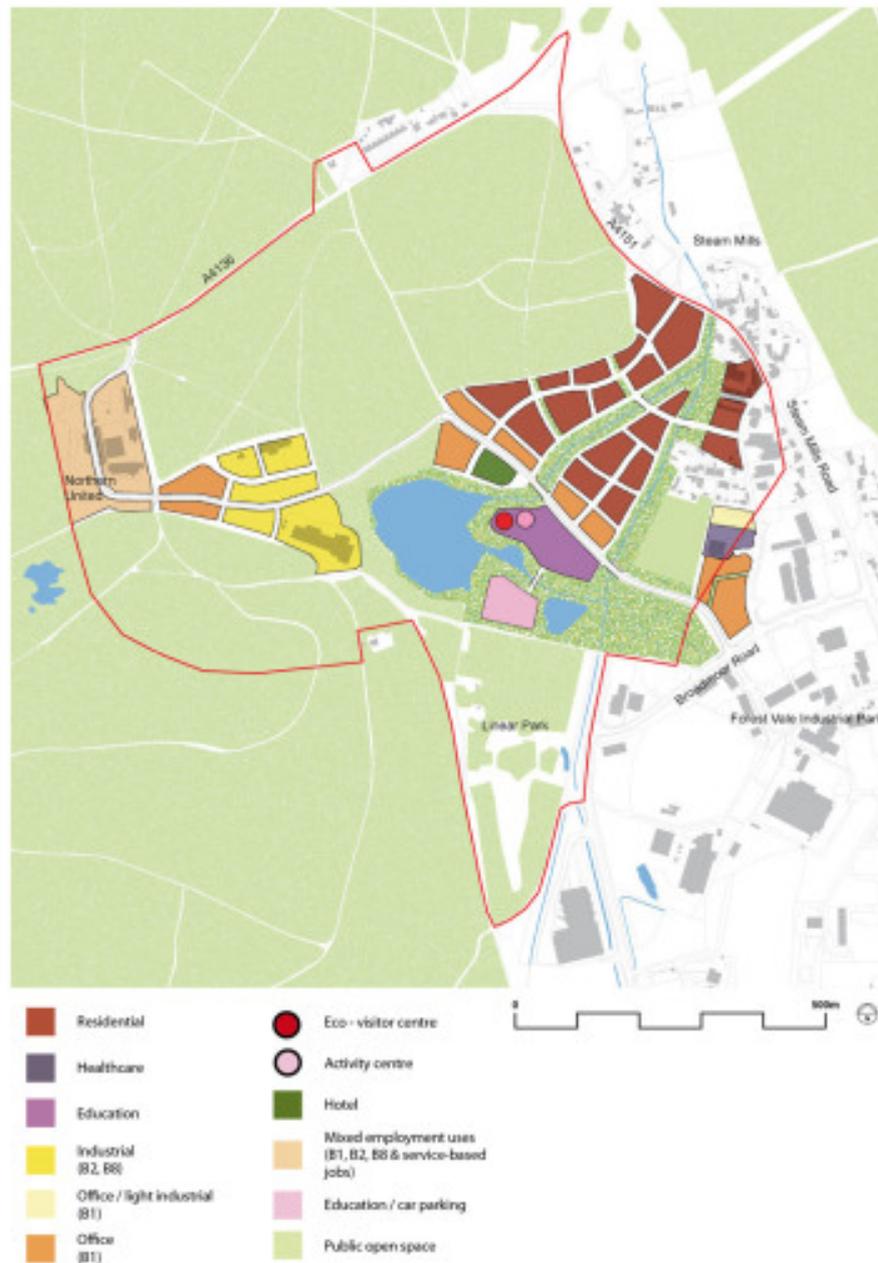
##### Parking

Proposals will be required to conform to any standards used by the Council for car parking provision. A range of parking types could be appropriate in the Northern Quarter including on-street parking, commercial car parks, in-curtilage parking or garages. Proposals should seek to ensure that all parking is subject to high standards of design including landscaping and overlooking by active frontages to provide natural surveillance.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Land use

**5.91** The following plan illustrates the indicative mix of uses proposed at the Northern Quarter.



**Figure 23: Land Use Proposals**

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 20: New educational uses

- 5.92** Educational uses are considered to be a key element in the overall mix of uses in the Northern Quarter in the AAP. Gloucestershire College (with which the former Royal Forest of Dean College merged in February 2011) has examined the Northern Quarter site as an option for College relocation, alongside a range of alternative relocation sites in the Forest and an option to refurbish existing buildings *in situ*. The results of this feasibility and due diligence exercise enabled the College's Board of Governors to approve a recommendation to relocate the College to the Northern Quarter in July 2011. This is a significant decision and will form a key part of the AAP's first phase of delivery.
- 5.93** A new Gloucestershire College Campus will be an essential catalyst for the regeneration of the Northern Quarter. It is envisaged that this will be located in a prominent and easily accessible place on the site. The new Gloucestershire College Campus AAP will be providing a unique and vibrant environment for further education and adult learning for the Forest and its wider catchment. Strong links with the hotel, business spaces and environment, both in terms of curriculum and physical links, will be sought. The new Campus will be of the highest standard of contextual and environmental design, contributing to a low carbon future for Cinderford.

#### Policy 20

##### New educational uses

The Council will expect development proposals for the site to be anchored around a major new Gloucestershire College Campus and activity centre. Proposals for the College Campus will be assessed to ensure that they meet the following criteria:

- The new Gloucestershire College Campus is located in an accessible and prominent location, within the Northern Quarter Centre character area;
- Linkages between the curricula of Gloucestershire College and other activities in the Northern Quarter such as the hotel and visitor facilities are maximised;
- The new College Campus is carefully integrated with surrounding uses and with due regard for landscape amenity and key views;
- Incorporation of out of hours use and flexible spaces for community use; and
- Attainment of high quality design and sustainability standards to underline the role of the College Campus as an exemplar for the Northern Quarter and wider Forest of Dean.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 21: Employment uses

#### Office uses (B1a)

**5.94** Cinderford currently lacks a supply of high quality office space and a key objective is to achieve a step change in the offer of higher quality employment space in the town. The planned improvements to broadband in the area will help to enable the AAP especially the education and employment uses. The Masterplan proposes that new office development should be located in prominent and accessible places along the main street, drawing on the attractive environmental setting of the lake and the forest. Office uses will also be scattered throughout the employment-led character areas of Northern United Enterprise Park and Forest Vale North, making the link between light industrial and office based industries. The office space will be a leading example high quality low carbon employment space, providing excellent places in a green environment for local business to thrive. The range of office space should be between 100 to 250 sq m net internal floor space.

#### Light industrial uses (B1b/c)

**5.95** The Masterplan proposes that light industrial uses would be best located in the employment led character areas of Northern United Enterprise Park and Forest Vale North and units should range between 100 and 1000 sqm gross external floor space. They present an expansion of the existing light industry in Cinderford, which has a strong legacy in the town.

**5.96** Policy 6 identifies the range of mixed employment uses that might characterise Northern United Enterprise Park. These include B1, B2 and B8 uses as well as tourism and heritage uses which would generate service based employment.

### Policy 21

#### Employment uses

The Council has allocated the provision of approximately 6.75ha of employment uses within development proposals for the Northern Quarter. Office uses (B1a) should be focused in the Northern United and Forest Vale North character areas, and along the spine road with an appropriate range of unit sizes. A mix of other employment uses including light industry (B1b/c) and service based jobs are allocated within the Northern United Enterprise Park and Forest Vale.

All proposals for employment uses should seek to set high standards in terms of sustainability and design. Office development and light industrial uses should be characterised by a high quality external environment which supports the integration of the surrounding setting provided by the Forest and natural environment.

Proposals for development at the Northern United site will be required to retain and enhance the bat roost in the former office building. If it is demonstrated that this cannot be achieved a replacement roost must be provided and be in use by lesser horseshoe bats prior to its closure. In addition, prior to the closure of the bath house roost a new summer and winter roost in a suitable location, to a standard which clearly an enhancement for the bat roost it replaces, must be in use by lesser horseshoe bats. Suitable provision must be made for the long term maintenance of all replacement roosts. Proposals must also demonstrate how the bat corridor crossing the current access from the A4136 will be maintained, protected and kept dark.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 22: Residential development

- 5.97** The Core Strategy identifies a strategic need for approximately 175 residential dwellings within the Northern Quarter which will contribute to the town-wide total of 1,050 dwellings over the period to 2026. If the 175 to be provided on the Northern Quarter is taken into account only about 267 of these have yet to obtain planning permission or be allocated.
- 5.98** Residential development will aim to create an exemplar new neighbourhood which will support a sustainable, affordable and low carbon lifestyle in this semi-rural location. The Masterplan assumes a high level of affordable housing (target 40%) and support all stages in life by providing a mix of family homes and apartments, with a presumption that the majority will be housing.

#### Policy 22

##### Residential

The Council will encourage the provision of approximately 175 residential dwellings within the Northern Quarter. Residential development should be focused in the Steam Mills Village West character area and also as part of a wider mix of uses in the centre. The majority of residential development should be in the form of housing with some flatted accommodation as appropriate with regard to market conditions and housing need. The District-wide affordable housing target of 40% will be applied as a starting point for negotiations with an expectation that affordable dwellings will be distributed evenly across the neighbourhood. Flats and affordable housing should be distributed evenly across the site and delivery phases. Residential development should provide safe, secure accommodation; that will provide natural surveillance and encourage ownership of spaces and defined defensible spaces.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 23: Hotel and visitor facilities

- 5.99** The Northern Quarter has significant potential as a visitor destination both in its existing context as an attractive natural location adjacent within the Forest of Dean. From a viability perspective, the proposed mix of uses on the site will generate a critical mass of demand for a hotel facility.
- 5.100** The hotel will be a high quality facility for Cinderford including a restaurant or pub. The Masterplan indicates that the hotel should be located next to the lake to make the most of the attractive views, but is also visible from the new main road, which is an important commercial consideration.
- 5.101** The Northern Quarter has an attractive and interesting landscape both from the perspective of environmental value, but also in relation to the historic legacy of mining on the site. There is a major opportunity to nurture recreational and educational activities as a way of celebrating the site's unique landscape assets. Adjacent to the hotel and lake, the Masterplan proposes an eco-visitor and activity centre. This centre will provide a flexible space for tourist information, education about the forest, local heritage and environment. It could also provide space for local clubs and organisations as well as including teaching, exhibition, storage and catering space.

#### Policy 23

##### Hotel and Visitor facilities

The Council will encourage proposals for a hotel and visitor facilities in the Northern Quarter. Development will be required to be situated in an accessible location to ensure maximum use of the proposed hotel and adjacent eco-visitor and activity centre. The Council will support the provision of additional ancillary facilities such as a high quality restaurant / bar at the hotel and a café at the visitor centre. Opportunities to make connections between visitor facilities and educational activities should be maximised. Proposals should ensure that they result in safe and secure facilities. The Council will encourage engagement with local community groups in the development of proposals for the visitor centre.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### **Policy 24: Ancillary retail uses**

**5.102** In line with PPS4, the existing town centre is the focus for retail development in Cinderford. As such, retail uses are not anticipated to be a major component of the Masterplan. However, there is an important role for smaller retail units to be integrated as part of office or residential development to cater for the local demand. Retail development competing with the town centre will not be permitted on the site.

#### **Policy 24**

##### **Retail uses**

Proposals for ancillary local retail uses will be considered as part of a wider mix of uses in the Northern Quarter. The Council will resist any retail development proposals which could have a negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of Cinderford town centre or impact on the town centre's position within the District retail hierarchy .

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 25: Health, community and social infrastructure

- 5.103** The County Council and other providers will review development proposals as they come forward at an outline planning stage to consider the potential impact on education, youth, libraries, care and community services including the emergency services. Infrastructure needs will be considered when the timing, scale and nature of proposed new developments are more certain so that these can be balanced against actual capacities and services at that time.
- 5.104** Based on discussions with the County Council at the options development phase, it is anticipated that 175 additional dwellings in the Northern Quarter would result in a yield of approximately 47 primary children. As the proposals are worked up in more detail, the County Council would work with partners to establish how these additional pupils are accommodated in the school network. Ideally, these pupils would be accommodated at Steam Mills primary school which is currently at capacity. It is anticipated that pre-school and secondary pupils will be easier to accommodate in terms of education planning.

#### Policy 25

##### Health, community and social infrastructure

The Council will encourage the provision of health and community uses as part of a wider mix on the site. Developers will be required to be proactive in working with the public sector to identify and provide for social infrastructure requirements, building these into detailed plans for the site.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Environment and landscape

#### Policy 26: European Nature Conservation Designations

**5.105** Five European designated sites (including Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites) lie within a 15km radius of the AAP area. The closest of these, the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites Special Area of Conservation (SAC), is just 1.5km away. The SAC supports the greatest concentration of lesser horseshoe bats in Britain, totalling about 26% of the national population, covering a network of both breeding and maternity roosts. These five ecological protection areas, established under the 1992 Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC), are subject to special environmental protection in the UK under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the 2010 Regulations).

**5.106** The five sites are:

- River Wye / Afon Gwy SAC;
- Severn Estuary / Mor Hafren SPA, Ramsar and SAC;
- Walmore Common SPA;
- Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites / Sadleoedd Ystumod Dyffryn Gwy a Fforest y Ddena SAC (including component SSSI sites); and
- Wye Valley Woodlands / Coetiroedd Dyffryn Gwy SAC.

**5.107** Development plans and proposals have been screened for impacts they might have on these sites as part of the sustainability appraisal process, and it is important that further assessment of detailed design proposals is undertaken in the same way.

**5.108** The Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report supports this process by setting out the particular qualifying interest features, sensitivities and threats relating to each site and with the conservation objectives which set out the desired management targets of the site and qualifying features and aim to conserve the integrity of the site. It identifies source impact pathways from the masterplan and records potential significant effects on the European sites. The Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report also sets out where mitigation measures and future assessment that may be necessary to ensure this AAP does not have a likely significant on these designations. These have been incorporated into the following policy to ensure a robust assessment approach.

#### Policy 26

##### European Nature Conservation Designations

In accordance with the 2010 Regulations, development proposals will need to identify any significant effects of development on European sites in the AAP area and surrounding buffer zone of 15 km and potentially more for some effects such as water pollution and identify if these are likely to occur alone and in combination with other plans and projects. Mitigation measures may need to be considered as part of this assessment. Where significant effects are considered likely to occur, the need for an appropriate assessment will be triggered in accordance with the 2010 Regulations to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the European site. The assessment must be directly related to the conservation objectives for the site.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

Detailed plans will need to undertake the above assessment and consider the inclusion of the following to define a position whereby there is no likely significant adverse effect on European sites:

- Development of site level mitigation in accordance with Policy 10 and 15 and the completion of the initial identification of key bat flight routes to inform the detailed design of AAP features;
- Air dispersion modelling of energy centre design details, in relation to thermal processes with emissions to air with the potential to pollute protected habitats and species;
- Dust mitigation strategies during construction in accordance with good practice;
- Detailed wider area traffic modelling to confirm flow changes on the A48 in the area Walmore Common and the Severn Estuary;
- Construction water and drainage management protocol in relation to run off which seek to prevent the siltation and reduction of water features in the AAP which have direct connection to the Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar.

Proposals should also set out any necessary mitigation measures and any other measures deemed appropriate by relevant local and statutory bodies, including Natural England and the Environment Agency to prevent impacts on European Nature Conservation Designations.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 27: Flooding

**5.109** In accordance with PPS25, a sequential risk-based approach should be taken to determine the suitability of land for development in flood risk areas, with development prioritised in areas with the lowest probability of flooding. To apply the Sequential Test, it is necessary to demonstrate the rationale behind site selection, both in terms of selection of the overall area for development, and in terms of allocation of appropriate land use within the site boundary. The rationale behind selection of the Cinderford Regeneration Scheme site as an area for new development, to facilitate the regeneration of Cinderford, is reported within this section.

**5.110** A number of potential development sites were considered for development by Forest of Dean District Council. The area to the north of Cinderford (including Steam Mills and the Northern Quarter) and Cinderford town centre are the major opportunities available for redevelopment. It was considered that, given the relative scarcity of developable land within the town centre and the constraints on its expansion, it was necessary to develop the northern area in order to meet the additional employment opportunities identified as being crucial to the population of Cinderford and its regeneration objectives. Additional benefits associated with the Cinderford Regeneration Scheme site considered during the decision making process included the following.

- The site is located on the periphery of the existing town and will therefore improve the balance between local population and employment, reduce the need to travel, and help to address particular social and economic weaknesses in the town.
- The site includes the Steam Mills area, and will therefore ensure that the particular needs and requirements of Steam Mills residents can be addressed. Links between the proposed development and the existing communities will ensure that benefits to surrounding communities are promoted.
- The site includes areas of brownfield land (especially former coalfield land in the Northern Quarter) identified as having potential for redevelopment.
- Whilst parts of the site fall within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b, the majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, and is therefore considered to be at a low risk of flooding. Issues associated with flooding of the surrounding communities introduce potential opportunities for the Scheme to achieve one of PPS25's core overarching goals of alleviating existing flood risk.
- The site has the advantage that its development would not significantly impact on the Forestry Commission's operations, in contrast to the surrounding areas which are largely under Forestry Commission control.
- The site incorporates land likely to be required in developing possible access routes, both north to the A4136 and south to Forest Vale Road and Cinderford itself.
- Part of the site is located within the LinearPark, an area extending the length of Cinderford along its western edge, which provides new recreational and ecological opportunities. The site within LinearPark still contains areas that have not been fully restored and do not have great historical value. At the same time, the setting of this area is exceptional, incorporating features such as a lake and being bounded by high quality forest with well established trees. There remain some aspects of the current site, which betray the former industrial nature of

## 5 . Development principles and policies

the area, and offer opportunities for landscape and visual, conservation and development improvements.

### Policy 27

#### **Flooding**

The Council will require development proposals to demonstrate how the risk of flooding is minimised and will not exacerbate risk to the site and neighbouring land, adopting the flood risk management hierarchy of assess - avoid -substitute -control -mitigate. Development proposals should have regard to all forms of flooding and should identify opportunities for reducing flood risk overall. The Council acknowledges that there may be opportunities through the naturalisation and betterment of the Old Engine Brook to improve the existing flood profile of the area. Such a process of naturalisation may facilitate additional areas which are suitable for development. Any alterations to the flow regime and flood plain will need to be agreed with the Environment Agency.

Detailed issues of site specific flood risk management and mitigation will be resolved and reviewed in more depth at the outline planning stage. Forest of Dean District Council will expect the developer to work closely with the Council, Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission to ensure that the proposals are acceptable from a flood management perspective.

New development must be adequately protected from flooding with users not being exposed to significant flood risk. It should be designed so that it is not dependent on the emergency services or others for rescue and evacuation. Proposals should seek to maximise opportunities for flood alleviation both within the site boundary and the wider area in accordance with the aims and objectives of sustainable flood risk management. Flood alleviation works should also seek to enhance amenity and biodiversity value. Proposals should seek to reduce surface water runoff to Greenfield rates (or as close as possible on Brownfield sites) through the implementation of SuDS to provide flood risk reduction and improvements to water quality.

Suitable watercourse buffer zones (of at least 10 metres) around main watercourses (lake tributaries) will be applied during construction and operation in order to meet flood risk, water quality and ecological objectives and Environment Agency requirements. There is will be a presumption against additional culverting. Where active minor watercourses/drainage channels are identified on site these should remain open and be incorporated into development with appropriate buffers (consideration should be given to the Forests and Water Guidelines: Fourth Edition (Forestry Commission, 2003)).

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 28: Water Quality, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Foul Drainage

**5.111** In line with the overarching policy commitment to achieving an exemplar development in terms of sustainability and in accordance with current flood risk and water management policy, SuDS will be integrated within the designs for the Northern Quarter. The Council will support an approach whereby surface water run-off is managed as near it's source as possible. There are a range of techniques available in the development of SuDs including green roofs, rainwater harvesting, soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds and wetlands. SuDs can not only reduce flood risk by attenuating runoff rates but also improve the quantity of run-off from a site. SuDs features can also offer benefits in terms of promoting groundwater recharge, water quality improvement and amenity enhancements. Careful consideration of how SuDS will operate will be required with detailed consideration of issues relating to geology and contamination. SuDS proposals should be progressed in consultation with relevant bodies including the Environment Agency and will require approval from the Council in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act (2010).

**5.112** All drainage systems will be designed in accordance with the application of the SuDS Hierarchy and to be of sufficient capacity to convey a 1 in 100 year storm event plus climate change. The drainage design will have the objective of reducing runoff to greenfield runoff rates unless this is proved to be unfeasible, in which case a percentage reduction will be agreed with the Environment Agency. Building Regulations on Drainage and Waste Disposal support a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer.

**5.113** The SuDS hierarchy of techniques is set out below which the Council will support;

1. Use of green roofs, rainwater harvesting and grey-water re-use within new developments.
2. Surface water drainage to be attenuated through the use of infiltration techniques such as soakaways unless ground conditions are proven (through undertaking appropriate tests) to be inappropriate due to insufficient porosity and/or gross contamination is present.
3. Surface water drainage is attenuated through the use of above ground sustainable drainage techniques such as swales, attenuation ponds (both formal and informal as part of the general landscaping design), green detention areas and/or areas of permeable paving (especially within parking and pedestrian areas). All these methods can be designed into site layouts without the need for permeable ground conditions.
4. If the above cannot contain the full attenuation volumes required, consideration can be given to the use of oversized tanks to provide attenuation in addition to soakaways, swales, ponds etc.
5. Only if none of the above methods/options are possible and demonstrated as such, then consideration can be given to the use of oversized tanks. It should be noted that tanks do not provide water quality treatment/amenity value and may require more costly maintenance than above ground features.

Note: It should be noted that in order to provide sufficient water treatment of surface water as many SuDS techniques as possible should be used within the proposal.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

- 5.114** Further information on SuDS can be found in PPS25 and, in the CIRIA document such as C697 “The SuDS Manual” and the Interim Code of Practice for Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- 5.115** The current low flow pressures on the catchment are fully acknowledged. Any water requirements during the construction phase will be met through sustainable sources. No abstractions will occur during low flows and waters will only be abstracted during construction and operation under appropriate permits and in accordance with permit conditions.
- 5.116** As the scheme moves forward there will need to be further research regarding the sewerage system and the appropriate waste water treatment mechanisms for the site. Liaison with Severn Trent Water will be required to establish the suitability of options. Severn Trent identified in consultation to the Core Strategy that they will need exact development details to assess capacities and restrictions within the network and that point in time additional investment can be identified. In general, problems with the surface and foul water systems were not foreseen, however requirements with regards to the separation of clean and foul water in current drainage design should be acknowledged.
- 5.117** The provision of suitable mitigation thorough construction (and operational drainage) to maintain and where possible enhance water quality within the site water features and downstream will be an important aspect of the scheme development, particularly with regards to maintaining the viability of these features for aquatic species.

### Policy 28

#### Water Quality, SuDS and Foul Drainage

Development proposals will be expected to incorporate a SuDS strategy. This should form part of a more detailed drainage strategy for submission at outline planning stage. Individual developers will be required to commit to the strategy during construction works. The strategy will promote, and be in accordance with, the aims and objectives of PPS25, the Floods and Water Management Act (2010), good practice guidance and will apply the SuDS Hierarchy. All drainage systems chosen will take specific account of ground quality and flood risk and will be sized appropriately to accept the design event plus allowance for climate change congruent with design life. In developing the drainage strategy, consultation with and approval from relevant bodies will be required.

Construction Environmental Management Plans will be required to detail management and mitigation approaches that seek to prevent adverse impacts on water quality and sediment loads to the onsite drainage network and local watercourses.

In relation to foul drainage, consideration of sewerage capacity in consultation with Severn Trent Water will need to be undertaken within the next stage of the masterplan’s development to ensure that sufficient infrastructure and capacity is available. The main objective of such a consideration is to prevent an unplanned increase in sewerage discharges in the wider network so as to maintain and where possible improve water quality.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Mining

- 5.118** The baseline report identified a number of potential key constraints associated with past mining on the site. Key issues include contaminated groundwater, the extensive coverage of the site with loosely compacted fill material to depths of up to 30m and the existence of shallow mine workings, a number of shafts and associated voids. Developers should note that intrusive site investigation and development works which intersect, disturb or enter any coal seams, coal mine workings or coal mine entries may require the prior written permission of the Coal Authority.
- 5.119** Gloucestershire County Council is the Minerals and Waste planning authority and is responsible for the determination of applications for filling in of void spaces or free mining.
- 5.120** Forest of Dean District Council will encourage development proposals to be supported by ground investigations to determine the extent and condition of the fill to establish the need for deep piles or ground improvement techniques to deal with the ground conditions. In addition, the Council will encourage proposals to be supported by the mapping, assessment and appropriate treatment, filling in of any remaining mine entries and/or voids. Any mineral related proposals within the Masterplan area will be considered in light of the overall regeneration objectives for the area and relevant policies within the Area Action Plan, Forest of Dean Core Strategy and Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan (until such time as it is replaced by the Minerals Core Strategy). Any proposals for freemining of the site would require support and consent from the Forestry Commission (Deputy Gaveller) and planning consent from the Council.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 29: Contaminated land and groundwater

**5.121** The baseline assessment identified that the AAP site is set upon and around former colliery works and other historic and current industrial land uses. Therefore there is potential that the planned development sites may be on contaminated land. The AAP is at a strategic level and therefore site investigations have not been undertaken at this stage. However, regeneration and the planning regime allow contamination issues to be addressed and can ultimately result in betterment providing the correct approach is taken. In terms of protection of controlled waters guidance in PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control, Annex 2: Development on Land Affected by Contamination should be referred to and considered prior to the submission of any planning application. In line with PPS23 all planning applications should be submitted with at least a preliminary risk assessment, when contamination is a potential issue. Preliminary risk assessments and site investigations should be in accordance with the Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11) The results of site investigations and risk assessments will determine the extent of remediation works required prior to development occurring. In so doing, the AAP will support the improvement of contaminated land where proposed development overlaps areas of identified contaminated land. Where development occurs on formerly contaminated brownfield sites, the AAP will contribute to sustainable landuse and reduce the need to develop on greenfield sites.

#### Policy 29

##### Contaminated land and groundwater

The Council will require proposals to accord with the aims and objectives of PPS 23 and the procedures set out in The Model Procedures for the Management of Contaminated Land (CLR11, 2004) in relation to site investigation and the onward remediation of development areas. All such investigations will be required to account for contamination and the potential for interaction with groundwater.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 30: Mining Legacy

#### Mining legacy

**5.122** The Cinderford Northern Quarter has previously experienced mining activities which have left an environmental legacy. This legacy has the potential to lead to public safety hazards unless there is awareness and any risks have been fully considered, with appropriate treatment/mitigation measures being incorporated within new developments. The AAP area may be affected by former mine workings at shallow depth, and there are also recorded mine entries and a former surface coal mine site within the plan boundary. In line with the requirements of PPG14 Development on Unstable Land (1990), the AAP therefore seeks to ensure that land is thoroughly investigated for mining legacy problems, with any issues then being appropriately treated to ensure that future development is safe and stable.

#### Policy 30

##### Mining Legacy

The Council will require development proposals to be supported by ground investigations to determine the extent and condition of the fill to establish the need for deep piles or ground improvement techniques to deal with the ground conditions. In addition, the Council will encourage proposals to be supported by the mapping, assessment and appropriate treatment of any remaining mine entries and/or voids. Any mineral related proposals within the Masterplan area will be considered in light of the overall regeneration objectives for the area and relevant policies within the Area Action Plan, Forest of Dean Core Strategy and Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan (until such time as it is replaced by the Minerals Core Strategy). Any proposals for freemining of the site would require support and consent from the Forestry Commission (Deputy Gaveler) and planning consent from the Council.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 31: Sterilisation of Mineral Resources

**5.123** The Northern Quarter site is known to contain a number of important mineral resources including coal and fireclay. Fireclay is identified in Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and Materials as a being a scarce resource and that where practicable, prior extraction of clay should be encouraged where built development is planned.

#### Policy 31

##### Sterilisation of mineral resources

In considering development proposals in the AAP area there will need to be consideration of the impact that the proposal may have on the sterilisation of the mineral resources present including coal and fireclay. Where possible, practical and environmentally acceptable the potential extraction of mineral resources prior to the commencement of development should be actively considered. Where the prior extraction of mineral resources would assist in the mitigation and remediation of mining legacy and land stability issues in advance of development the Council will look to support proposals which raise no significant adverse effects on the locality.

**5.124** The Northern Quarter has been actively exploited as a source of minerals and there is potential for future proposals to come forward to extract additional minerals. Whilst such extraction is of benefit to local businesses, proposals require careful management to ensure that they do not have detrimental impact on landscape, amenity, biodiversity value or the character of proposed development as it comes forward.

**5.125** The County Council is currently preparing a Minerals Core Strategy for Gloucestershire. This is likely to identify Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) which are defined areas of known mineral resource that will be safeguarded from development which would sterilise the mineral resource. It is anticipated that the Hawkwell Enclosure site in the Northern Quarter will be assessed as part of this process. At this stage it is not known whether a MSA designation will be made.

**5.126** All mineral applications are determined by Gloucestershire County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) having regard to the Minerals Core Strategy.

**5.127** Forest of Dean Council will work alongside the Mineral Planning Authority to avoid inappropriate sterilisation of valuable minerals resources within the area, in particular fireclay and coal.

**5.128** In general terms, Forest of Dean Council considers extraction operations to be less appropriate in the context of regeneration proposals for the Northern Quarter. The Council consider the following issues to be relevant in relation to extraction proposals:

- The proposed extraction will require support from the Forestry Commission and the requisite Forestry Commission consents.
- The proposed extraction will require planning permission from Gloucestershire County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA)
- The Council will require proposals to assess the level of impact on the environment in terms of habitat and biodiversity value.
- The level of impact on adjacent land uses (both existing and planned) in terms of visual amenity or acoustic disturbance should also be assessed.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

- Potential extraction prior to commencement where appropriate.
- The Council will assess the level of significance of these impacts in making an informed decision in the context of the overarching regeneration objectives for the site, the economic benefits of extraction and national guidance in MPS1.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Waste and Energy

#### Policy 32: Waste

- 5.129** It was recognised in the baseline study (May 2009) of the Northern Quarter that within the existing Gloucestershire Waste Local Plan 2002 to 2012, there are two potential waste sites at Forest Vale Industrial Estate, one of which falls within the Masterplan boundary. There is also a waste transfer operation at the Northern United site although this site was not allocated in the Waste Local Plan. Since then consultation has been undertaken with Gloucestershire Minerals and Waste policy team to ensure that the Masterplan development accords with the upcoming Waste Core Strategy which will replace the existing Waste Local Plan.
- 5.130** In relation to specific waste facility site allocation within the Masterplan area, it has been confirmed with the County Council that neither Northern United or Forest Vale are likely to be identified as strategic waste allocations within the Waste Core Strategy.
- 5.131** In relation to construction waste, the majority of sites within the Masterplan will be required to produce Site Waste Management Plans in accordance with the Site Waste Management Plans Regulations 2008, which apply to all construction projects exceeding £300,000 in value. In addition, designing out waste will be an important aspect of the waste management strategy and it is anticipated that design development will utilise the range of tools available from WRAP such as Designing out Waste - A Design Guide for Buildings.
- 5.132** In order to assist this process and to support the sustainable management of waste arising across the site, the potential for a shared on site central Materials Recovery Centre should be explored through the development of the Masterplan. This would be a facility where materials can be brought by contractors for segregation, sorting and storage prior to re-use and recycling, further recovery or disposal. It is anticipated that as a minimum provision should be made during construction for the materials to be segregated for reuse, recycling and safe disposal throughout the Masterplan development.
- 5.133** Waste will also be managed through utilisation of Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM criteria to ensure the provision of suitable space and separation at source of waste streams. As a specific operational waste management option there is potential for the utilisation of green waste from the Masterplan, in combination with other green waste, to generate biogas as a fuel for the energy centre through anaerobic digestion. The viability and scale of this option will need to be explored in more detail to ensure it accords with the wider design requirement and specifications of the Masterplan in relation to energy demand. Operational waste management and the facilities utilised will be agreed with Gloucestershire County Council in accordance with the Waste Core Strategy.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 32

#### Waste

Any waste proposals will be considered in the context of the Forest of Dean Core Strategy and their prevailing policies such as those in the Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy. Suitable design and mitigation measures will be essential to ensure that any facility does not have a negative impact in terms of visual, environmental or landscape amenity. The Council will encourage the provision of an on site waste facility, such as an anaerobic digestion plant with potential for combined heat and power. In addition materials recovery to increase re use and recycling of commercial and industrial waste will be encouraged to divert this waste stream from landfill throughout the construction period.

Note: under policy 9, a sustainable approach to waste will be facilitated through the application of standards in the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM.

**5.134** Gloucestershire County Council is the Waste Planning Authority and has authority for strategic waste planning in the area. As a consultee, the Council will encourage the provision of an on-site waste facility, such as an anaerobic digestion plant with potential for Combined Heat and Power. The decision to support a waste facility will be made in accordance with the waste hierarchy. A materials recovery centre to increase reuse and recycling of commercial and industrial waste will be encouraged to divert this waste stream from landfill throughout the construction period. Any such proposal will be considered in the context of the Forest of Dean Core Strategy and the Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy. As noted in policy 9, a sustainable approach to waste will also be facilitated through the application of standards in the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM. Suitable design and mitigation measures will be encouraged to ensure that any facility does not have a negative impact in terms of visual or landscape amenity.

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 33: Renewable Energy

**5.135** The effective integration of renewable and low carbon energy will be an essential part of the Cinderford Northern Quarter, not only in relation to achieving a more sustainable development but also in delivering against design standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes.

**5.136** With regards to the operational energy consumption of the site there, a two tiered approach will be taken to minimising the carbon emissions of the future development.

1. Minimising energy demand – buildings proposed on site will be required to achieve certification standards that place an emphasis on energy demand (e.g. Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM).
2. Supply of heat and power from renewable energy technologies.

**5.137** A strategic review of renewable technologies for the Masterplan area has favoured a biofuel (either biomass or biogas) boiler/Combined Heat and Power (CHP) system for macro on-site generation, with supplementary energy requirements being met through building level technology such as geothermal, solar or wind. In response to this, the Masterplan incorporates a plot allocation for the CHP plant. A detailed energy study should be undertaken at the outline planning stage to clarify the technology, size, potential environmental effects (air quality) and infrastructure requirements of the energy centre.



**Figure 24: Indicative Energy Centre Locations**

## 5 . Development principles and policies

### Policy 33

#### **Renewable Energy**

All new development (10 houses/1000msq or over) will be expected to incorporate renewable technologies to provide at least 20% of the predicted energy requirements. Where possible, this should incorporate the use of the proposed energy centre, where this not an option, the provision should be made utilising building level micro-generation. The 20% standard is a minimum and additional renewable energy provision should be provided as appropriate to meet the relevant CSH or BREEAM standards adopted at the time of development. The AAP expects energy efficiency to be a priority within building design.

## 6 . Implementation, monitoring and review

### 6 Implementation, monitoring and review

#### Monitoring and next steps

- 6.1** The AAP will be monitored by the Council on an annual basis through their Annual Monitoring Report. The document will be monitored in relation to the proposed phased approach set out above and the specific indicators set out in the Sustainability Appraisal report.
- 6.2** Following successful adoption of the AAP it is anticipated that several outline planning applications would need to be prepared for key parts of the site. These would include the following suite of documents:
- Masterplan (Design and Access Statement / Drawings);
  - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
  - Transport Study;
  - Ecological Appropriate Assessment; and
  - Planning Report.
- 6.3** It is anticipated that the outline planning application and subsequent applications will provide further more detailed information, refining and expanding upon the approach set out within the Masterplan whilst adhering to the broad parameters established by the AAP.

#### Projects

- 6.4** Gloucestershire College (with which the former Royal Forest of Dean College merged in February 2011) has examined the Northern Quarter site as an option for College relocation, alongside a range of alternative relocation sites in the Forest and an option to refurbish existing buildings *in situ*. The results of this feasibility and due diligence exercise enabled the College's Board of Governors to approve a recommendation to relocate the College to the Northern Quarter in July 2011. This is a significant decision and will form a key part of the AAP's first phase of delivery.
- 6.5** Gloucestershire County Council as local highway authority has also established a Cinderford Spine Road Project Team that will lead the design and construction of the new highway. This infrastructure investment is being funded by the Homes and Communities Agency. It is likely that the spine road will be delivered in a phased approach. The first phase will see the southern section of the new road being implemented to enable access for the new College development.
- 6.6** NHS Gloucestershire is leading £1.1M investment to develop a new kidney dialysis treatment centre to serve Forest patients. NHS is currently tendering for a new service provider and will be taking control of their new site this year and plan to have a fully operational treatment facility in June 2012.
- 6.7** A local housing developer and significant land owner on the eastern gateway of the AAP area, is working to bring forward a proposal for new housing. The current proposal would enable the conversion of a landmark building in this location to create a new mixed-use development with commercial floorspace at ground level and residential units above, along with 25-30 new homes at this important gateway to the new Steam Mills Village West AAP character area. This site is a designated housing site within the Forest of Dean District Council Local Plan.

## 6 . Implementation, monitoring and review

6.8 The following table provides an overview of the priority projects which will launch the implementation of the AAP during 2011/12. The table identifies details of the projects and key partners who will take these forward:

	Project title and details	Partners (lead in bold)
1	Spine Road design and construction	<b>GCC/ HCA/ Developers</b> FoDDC Natural England
2	Gloucestershire College design and construction	<b>Gloucestershire College/ Skills funding Agency/ GCC/ HCA</b> FoDDC
3	Northern United Enterprise Park	<b>HCA/ Developers</b>
4	Eco/ Visitor Centre concept development	<b>FoDDC/ HCA</b> , Forestry Commission, GCC Potential involvement from groups such as Friends of the Forest, friends of the earth, Northern united Group, Dean forest Voice and Real Ideas Organisation.
5	Specialist health facility Development of new treatment centre	<b>NHS Gloucestershire service provider</b>
6	Steam Mills Village West - design and development of new mixed use housing units	<b>Developer/ HCA/ FoDDC</b>
Outline planning applications and supporting documents		
	Detailed design and masterplanning	FoDDC, HCA, GCC, Gloucestershire College, developers
	Design and Access Statement	
	Mitigation strategies	
	Environmental impact assessment	
	Appropriate Assessment (Ecology)	
	Flooding studies	
	Sustainable Drainage Strategy	
	Renewable energy Strategy	
	Ground investigation	
	Site investigation	
	Landscape	

**Table 3**

FoDDC- Forest of Dean District Council, HCA- Homes and Communities Agency, GCC- Gloucestershire County Council;



