SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

BYKER DESIGN PROJECT:

ST LAWRENCE SQUARE

FEBRUARY 2008
A. Vision and Objectives

1. This Supplementary Planning Document relates to a specific site that has been the subject of a design-based initiative promoted by Newcastle City Council.

2. The use of a Supplementary Planning Document is intended to ensure that development of the site by partners of the City Council delivers an outcome that meets its vision and objectives through implementation of a specific design.

3. Adherence to the requirements of this Supplementary Planning Document will provide benefits to many key stakeholders associated with this site. These include and are not limited to:
   
   1. Delivery of a shared vision & objectives for the Council and the community through clear communication & efficient implementation of requirements.
   
   2. Increased certainty for development partners through establishment of a clearly defined model of development which is acceptable to the Council and the community.

4. Acknowledging the detailed proposals contained in this Supplementary Planning Document, the involvement already undertaken in producing them, and the potential benefits identified in the preceding paragraph, all proposals for this site should be in accordance with this SPD. Proposals should seek to maintain, and wherever possible to enhance, the design vision described in this document.

5. The Council will monitor the outcome and effects of this Supplementary Planning Document in accordance with the mechanism set out below in order to ensure effective delivery of the vision and objectives for the site.

Vision

6. The Council has pursued an innovative approach to developing this site in order to achieve delivery of a specific vision. We believe that this vision addresses the challenges and ambitions of the local community, the wider city, and even the national & global context. Our vision for this site is to deliver:

   1. A quality development that respects & enhances the unique assets of existing place & community through a design-led process of engagement.
2. A place which truly contributes to all aspects of the Council’s wider vision for a vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable and modern European city.

3. A place which facilitates & promotes sustainable living through an innovative public-private development partnership.

Objectives

7. In 2005 the Council invited open entries to the “Byker Design Competition”, seeking ideas that would address the following specific objectives:
   1. Environmental Sustainability
   2. Urban Density
   3. Mixed Use and Diversity

8. A further aspect of the competition was an expectation of continuing the spirit of community involvement modelled in the original Byker Estate redevelopment. Following the competition there has been a process of design development that has involved representatives of the local community.

9. The design described by this Supplementary Planning Document is presented as a proposal that addresses the following key development issues:
   1. The objectives of the competition, as refined through a process of developing the detailed design for this specific site.
   2. The vision & aspirations of the City Council in seeking development on this site.
   3. The views of the immediate community represented through a process of dialogue with the Architects, the Council and other key stakeholders.
   4. Key practicalities such as finance and engineering associated with development, tested by a set of assessments carried out on behalf of the Council.

B. Relationship of SPD to parent policies

10. This Supplementary Planning Document [SPD] is a part of the Local Development Framework [LDF] for Newcastle as described in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) of April 2007.
11. The “parent” policies to this SPD are those saved from the adopted Unitary Development Plan [1998] as described in paragraphs 49-53. As when these policies are superseded by those in forthcoming LDF Development Plan Documents, the successor policies will then apply.

12. The majority of the land proposed for development has been used for housing until recently. This area is not allocated for any specific purpose on the UDP Proposals Map and therefore no new allocation of use is required for housing development. The issues around that part of the site shown as open space on the Proposals Map is dealt with later.

C. Project Framework

Background and Context

13. As described under “Vision and Objectives” above, the Byker Design Project resulted from a design competition. This open competition sought urban design proposals for two main sites, South Byker and St. Lawrence Square, as well as proposals for the existing housing in the south of the Byker Estate.

14. Letts Wheeler’s scheme was short-listed along with 4 other proposals to the second stage of the competition. In March 2006 it was selected as the preferred scheme. Since September 2006 Letts Wheeler have been working in consultation with Newcastle City Council, local residents and the statutory authorities to develop these proposals into a scheme that is supported by all stakeholders in the project.

15. This site is approximately 1.5km from Newcastle City Centre. The elevated, southerly sloping site extends to 4.63 hectares and has easy access to the River Tyne and the East Quayside. The site is bounded by Walker Road to the south, Albion Row to the west, St. Michael’s Road to the north and Rodney Street to the east.

16. The site is currently predominantly City Council owned land, including adopted public open space, and private residential properties which are subject to ground leases from the Council. There is a small proportion of ex-Council residential properties in private ownership having been acquired by the tenants under the Housing Act.

17. The existing site consists of three areas of land around an existing 1.5 hectare triangular shaped urban park. Along the SW and NW sides there are terraces of Tyneside flats. These flats turn their backs to the park and are accessed from service roads, which run parallel to
Walker Rd and Albion Row. On the third side of the park the site consists of an area of open land between the park and the ‘Byker Link’ cycle route.

Community Involvement

18. A commitment to involving the community is a central aim of the Byker Design Project based on the belief that ‘All communities should be involved in the decisions that affect them’ (Engagement Strategy, 2006, Newcastle City Council). In line with this commitment, a Community Engagement Strategy for the whole Byker Design Project has been produced which offers some practical ways of upholding the ethos of participatory design and a framework to guide in the development of detailed project plans.

19. Details of community engagement activity specifically related to the St Lawrence SPD can be found in the appended Consultation Statement.

Relationship to other project elements

20. St Lawrence SPD is one of a number of physical elements which combine to make up the wider Byker Design Project. The elements which will brought forward at later stages of the project, subject to funding approval, include:

1. Refurbishment of the Bolam Coyne building within Byker Estate;
2. Improvement to areas of public realm within South Byker
3. New-build housing adjacent to the South Byker estate

21. Other non physical elements of the project currently being undertaken by the project team are

1. Community Facilities review will audit the number, type, size, use and funding of existing community facilities within the wider Byker Ward. This information may be used at a future date to determine whether adequate provision exists to support the needs of the new community who will be living in the new properties being built in South Byker and St Lawrence, along with the changing requirements of the existing population; and
2. Establishing a Project Account will be part of the agreed business plan for the wider Bridging Newcastle-Gateshead Strategic Commission area, which will allow for the cross subsidy of projects ringfenced within it.
D. Development Brief

Basis for Guidance on mix and tenure

22. The guidance on housing mix and tenure on the St Lawrence site is based on an assessment of local housing market and needs. The City Council’s housing market analysis carried out by the surveying company King Sturge and on a series of related reports setting out the key drivers for new build in sub markets. Specific references are set out below

The housing potential for the site is governed by its location and by the local housing market and its stock. In these respects, the scheme at St Lawrence should reflect the fact that Newcastle City has more Social Rented housing than both national and regional averages. Therefore, although this scheme should provide an affordable housing contribution, it is anticipated that this will be mainly in the form of an intermediate affordable housing solution.

The scheme is anticipated to be capable of delivering a high proportion of market housing. The market research carried out by King Sturge suggested that:

“We are confident that although not primary the site is well located. Prices within the city centre have risen and remained out of the reach of many first time purchaser and families. St Lawrence Square is an excellent opportunity to provide a design led residential development that will be within the budget of many purchasers.”

Housing Tenure

23. The expectation for this site is that it will comprise a mixed tenure development, incorporating market and affordable housing.

The dwelling mix proposed reflects both housing needs in the locality and the requirement for the site to be designed and developed to a quality standard. The expectation throughout the Design competition and the design briefs has been that the St Lawrence scheme will deliver a housing mix focused on family housing. This objective is based in part on the assumption that family housing will underpin a sustainable community and improve the tenure balance in the area. The experience of recent developments, particularly apartment schemes, has been that a high proportion have been sold to investors who do not necessarily provide the optimal mode of ownership for achieving sustainable areas.
Affordability

24. The provision of contributions for specific facilities within and around the site will also need to be addressed through the use of ‘Section 106’ agreements. These may include contributions to affordable housing, highways works (including the adjacent cycle way), open space/children’s play facilities and the provision of public art. Details of the specific requirements and costs of any planning obligations will be set out in the site marketing particulars.

Specific requirements under this SPD

25. The following points set out the details of the SPD in relation to mix and tenure:

   i. The City Council is keen to explore innovative means for delivering affordable homes. This could include equity holding arrangements as well as shared ownership and discount market housing. This may require the involvement of a social housing provider such as a Registered Social landlord (RSL) and developers are encouraged to have early dialogue with the City Councils’ Strategic Housing Division, who will help guide through the local procurement arrangements.

   ii. The site will attract an affordable housing contribution as part of the Section 106 process. It is expected that the affordable housing contribution will be viable and not hold back development. Should there be any disagreement about the likely viability of a scheme, the Council will require the developer to present their financial appraisal on an open book basis, which may be reviewed by an independent assessor at the developer’s cost.

   iii. The affordable housing contribution will be at least 25% of the total number of units. The development however must provide at least 18 social rented units of which 14 must be 2 bedroom apartments to accommodate those residents who want to remain in their community. The remainder will be in the form of either Shared Ownership units (New Build Home Buy) to be purchased by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) or be Discount Market housing.
iv. If affordable housing is to be provided on a Discount Market basis, this will be on the basis of 25% discount to the open market value of respective units. The City Council will also require the developer to enter into a covenant fixing subsequent sales of the Discount Market units to 75% of the concomitant open market value of the respective units.

This SPD does not specify how the affordable housing units will be accommodated within the new scheme. It is likely that any Social Rented tenants being re-housed will be offered housing towards the smaller end of the unit scale. However, it is anticipated that households occupying intermediate affordable housing will be accommodated in units across the range of types and sizes. It is therefore a matter for final resolution between the developer and the City Council.

26. In line with the underpinning principle of community participation within the project, guidelines for continued dialogue between residents of the St Lawrence area and the developer chosen to deliver the scheme will be included within the developer agreement.

**Urban Design principles**

27. The design that is presented in this document is a refinement of the original competition entry. The key urban design principles are described fully in the Design Appendices, and have been shaped through dialogue between the Council, local residents and Letts Wheeler Architects.

28. The design principles closely adhere to good urban design practice contained in the guidance documents referenced in national Planning Policy Statements 1 and 3, applied to the specific characteristics of the site and the aspirations of the brief.

**Transportation**

29. The Council believes that this site is well suited to development which both meets current expectations of transportation, and provides potential for greater reliance on sustainable transportation in the future. The site has been previously occupied by residential development and provides potential for convenient access to transport networks.

30. The location of the site and current level of transportation provision offer a number of attractions to potential developers & inhabitants:
31. Newcastle city centre is close – Greys Monument is approximately 1.1 miles away. Private vehicle and public transport linkages to the city are generally good, and are being examined for further improvements linked to regeneration proposals such as this site. Dedicated cycle and pedestrian linkages are also generally good, including access to traffic-free routes.

32. Newcastle city centre has excellent access to the national transport network. International transport [air and sea] is located within 8 miles of the city centre and can be accessed easily by both the road network and public transport. A section of the National Cycle Network passes within 200 metres of the site.

33. The nearest local centre is also the nearest district centre – shops and services on Shields Road are less than half a mile away. In addition to road and public transport links there is a direct dedicated pedestrian and cycle link from the site to this centre.

34. Planning Applications associated with this site will be required to submit a Transportation Assessment Report. This should assess fully the transportation requirements of the proposed development and identify any provisions that are required to support the development. Developers should contact the Council’s Transportation Development Team for advice regarding this Report.

35. The proposals contained here include detailed design of highway spaces within the site following the “Homezone” principles published by the Institute of Highway Engineers. The Council will require the developer to implement the detailed design in accordance with these principles and the published Adoption standards of the Council, and to apply for & implement the classification of these highways as “Homezones”.

Open Space and Recreation

36. The council will require developers to provide detailed specifications for the provision of open space and recreation facilities. As well as the formal St Lawrence park in the centre of the site, an area of land between the formal park boundary and the Byker Link cycleway has been classed as ‘park and gardens’ as part of an audit carried out for the City Council’s Green Spaces Strategy (April 2004). The land in question consists of a grassed area to the east of the site between St Lawrence Park and the Byker Link cycleway, and covers approximately 0.8 Hectares. An analysis of this land has been carried out as recommended within PPG 17 “Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation”. This has shown that the area of land in
question is surplus to requirements, and that the site can be developed subject to a planning obligation to secure replacement provision (appendix 5).

37. Any sporting facilities for the development should either be provided on the site and/or via a S.106 agreement for off-site works. The provision of sport/recreation facilities will be guided by a Local Needs Assessment undertaken by the City Council in accordance with PPG17.

38. A tree/ecological survey should be carried out of the park area, and this should be submitted with any development proposals and planning applications for the site. As part of any landscaping scheme, consideration should be given to introducing more species rich and structurally diverse vegetation (such as wildflower planting, shrub layers etc) around the balancing pond and existing tree areas. Areas for new tree planting should also be considered. Similarly, the provision of habitat and planting improvements should be considered along the cycle link/wildlife corridor.

Sustainability

39. As identified in the Vision & Objectives set out above, addressing issues of sustainability is a key element of the brief for this development.

40. “Sustainability” is a concept with several aspects. The UK government set out four aims for sustainable development in its 1999 strategy and refers to these in Planning Policy Statement 1 [see below]. The Policy Statement directs that these aims should be pursued in an integrated way. The sustainability appraisal associated with this Supplementary Planning Document outlines the degree to which the Council considers that the proposals meet the aims of sustainable development.

41. The competition brief and proposals here have set out to particularly address issues of environmental sustainability in development. The design appendices illustrate an integrated resolution of the following requirements which must be achieved by the development:

1. Reduced energy consumption. Through an integrated package of thermal insulation, ventilation, passive cooling, lighting and appliances the development will achieve a low level of energy consumption based on the 3 supply options identified in section 4.5 of the Design Statement found at appendix C. Reduced carbon emissions resulting from energy supply, by employing renewable energy installations that will
provide not less than 20% of the development's predicted electricity load, and by working with the Council to utilise and enhancing as far as possible the District Heating system.

2. Reduced carbon emissions for constructing the development ["embodied energy"], to a level of 12kg/CO2/m2 through a package of measures.

3. Reduced potable water consumption. To achieve a performance of 5m3/person/year through an integrated package of measures.

4. Rainwater management. To reduce predicted storm-water runoff from the site by 50%.

5. Integrated Environmental performance. To achieve an overall rating of “Excellent” under the Ecohomes 2006 appraisal model. To implement a package of measures that address waste management, pollution, and health concerns as detailed in the appendices.

**Maintenance and Management**

42. The Council will require developers to ensure that provision for managing and maintaining the development in an appropriate manner is implemented. This should include:

1. Adoption of appropriate highway spaces, constructed to an appropriate standard, by the Local Highway Authority.

2. Management and maintenance of planting areas outside of private plots by appropriate organisations.

3. Management and maintenance of communal areas within buildings by an appropriate organisation.

4. Management and maintenance of communal infrastructure by and appropriate organisation, including: renewable energy installations, local energy networks, site-based drainage installations.
E. Planning Policy Context

National Policy

43. The Government's national policies on aspects of planning are set out in Planning Policy statements (PPS). PPS1 "Delivering Sustainable Development" states that planning should promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development. It emphasises that local planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of quality inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

44. The Government's policies on Housing are set out in PPS 3 and supporting documents. This expands upon the advice given in PPS1 and specifies that local planning authorities should facilitate the efficient delivery of quality development through the use of (e.g.) detailed masterplans and community participation techniques. PPS 3 reflects the Government's commitment to improving the affordability and supply of housing in all communities, and this is supported by the "Delivering Affordable Housing" policy statement (November 2006). In relation to sustainable development, the Government's commitment to this is set out in the "Code for Sustainable Homes" (December 2006).

45. PPS3 also states that where family housing is proposed, it will be important to ensure the needs of children are taken into account in that there is sufficient provision of recreational and play areas. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 "Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation" encourages local planning authorities to incorporate open space in new development and seek opportunities to improve the value of existing facilities. Details of the specific requirements and costs of any planning obligations will be set out in the site marketing particulars.

46. The development site is previously developed 'brownfield land' with the associated issues relating to this type of site. Advice on the "Development on land affected by contamination" is enclosed in Annex 2 of PPS 23 "Planning and Pollution Control". The history of quarrying on the site also raises issues of stability, and advice on this matter is contained with PPG 14 "Development on Unstable Land".

47. PPS22 relates to "Renewable energy" and emphasises that developers should consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy projects in all new development. The
Companion Guide to PPS22 provides further information on the provision of renewable energy in the built environment, and in particular the scope for urban installations.

**Regional Policy**

48. Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) was published in 2002 and runs to 2016. It became the RSS for the region in September 2004 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. RSS (RPG1) is in the process of being revised and Proposed Changes to the submission draft revised RSS of June 2005 were published in May 2007 by the Government Office. Both current and draft revised RSS strongly support the regeneration of urban areas through the redevelopment of centrally located brownfield sites and the provision of renewables on-site.

**Local Policy**

49. The development plan for Newcastle consists of RSS (as above) and the saved policies from the adopted Unitary Development Plan (1998). The following saved UDP policies are those most directly relevant to this SPD, but others will also apply.

50. The LDF Core Strategy is in preparation and may be adopted by the end of 2008. Any planning application determined after its adoption will need to comply with its policies. Whilst is very likely that this SPD will itself comply fully with the Core Strategy, any prospective developer should check on progress of the Core Strategy and its contents as necessary in mid to late 2008..

51. Policy H1.3 - Where appropriate, the Council may seek to enter into planning obligations with a developer for a suitable provision of affordable dwellings in new developments for people on lower incomes

52. Policy SD1 states that "The city council will work towards environmentally sustainable development which meets the economic and social needs of the city." This is supported by Policy SD1.1, which identifies methods of reducing energy consumption, and Policy SD1.4 which encourages the use of renewable energy.

53. Policies OS1.4 and OS1.5 relate to the protection of open space. On the basis of the assessment carried out in accordance with Diagram 1 of PPG17 (Appendix 5), it is considered that the proposals comply with these policies under the provision of Policy OS1.5(D).
54. The Byker Link cycleway is identified as a wildlife corridor by Policies NC1 and NC1.7. Any planning applications for the site will therefore need to assess the impact on wildlife.

F. Other Relevant Plans & Documents

Regeneration Strategy (November 2006)

55. This is a broad strategy to achieve and sustain lasting improvements to the City’s quality of life and to promote economic growth in the City. This SPD supports the outcomes identified within the Regeneration Strategy and the Corporate Improvement Plan in terms of joining mainstream resources to regeneration activity.

   - www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/communitystrategy

Housing Strategy (November 2006)

2. This supports, and helps to drive, the wider Regeneration Strategy for the City. This is the long term vision for housing up to 2021 and beyond.


The Tyne & Wear Local Transport Plan (November 2006)

4. This sets out the visions and strategies for transport for the period up to 2021, in line with the planning horizon of the Regional Spatial Strategy. An implementation programme has been developed which outlines the partners’ planned investment through the first five years of this period.

5. www.tyneandwearltp.co.uk/

Housing Market Renewal (Pathfinder) – Bridging Newcastle Gateshead

56. The Byker Ouseburn Strategic Commission is one of ten within the Housing Market Renewal area known as Bridging Newcastle/Gateshead (BNG), established in 2003. A map of the area can be found at appendix e. The intervention area covers a significant part of the East End of Newcastle and includes the Byker Estate, Fossway Lower Ouseburn Valley, Shields Road
and St Anne’s. Housing market renewal is at the heart of the process of transformation. By 2021 the population here will have grown by 4,000 led by the development of 2,000 new homes, over 80% for private ownership.

57. The location of the Byker/Ouseburn strategic commission area and the sites targeted for interventions create a link in a corridor of current and future redevelopment and regeneration activity between the strong housing market in the City Centre/East Quayside, the Byker area and the Walker Riverside strategic commission. The St Lawrence site sits in an advantageous position, with the intention being to forge close linkages to development in the Lower Ouseburn Valley to the west and Western Gateway site to the east, part of the Walker Riverside regeneration programme.

**Biodiversity Action Plan**

58. The Newcastle Biodiversity Action Plan [“Your Wildlife”, 2001] identifies actions to protect, maintain and improve the biodiversity [or “wildlife”] in the city. Developers should ensure that their detailed proposals and operations accord with the general and specific provisions of this plan.

59. The Biodiversity Action Plan includes specific action plans for Species and Habitats, which are relevant to the proposals in this Supplementary Planning Document:

60. The proposals currently indicate the possibility of constructing an open balancing pond as part of the on-site drainage management system. The provision of this feature is subject to ground investigations, and will also require proposal of suitable safety features to protect persons from any relevant dangers. If this pond is implemented, the developer should consult the Ecology Officer regarding construction and detailing in relation to wildlife issues.

61. Developers will be required to undertake protection [such as tree protection measures etc] of all significant planting and wildlife within the site and adjacent landscape areas in accordance with legislation protecting these features.

Green Space Strategy

62. The Green Space Strategy recognises that provision & maintenance of these assets could be improved, and identifies what Newcastle City Council needs to do. It aims to Involve, Improve & Protect green spaces, and makes a direct link between the aims of regeneration programmes and successful provision of these spaces as a factor in attracting people to live and work in Newcastle. Quality of Life, Wildlife, Economic value, Health value, and Education value are all associated with good green spaces.

63. Commuted sums that cover maintenance of any new adopted areas constructed as part of the development will be required as outlined elsewhere in this document.

1. www.newcastle.gov.uk

Climate Change Strategy (emerging)

64. Developing a Climate Change Strategy is one of the Council’s priorities for 2007-08 onwards under the Environment and Sustainability Portfolio. The Council is already committed to a number of actions related to environmental issues, which are directly relevant to and addressed as part of the proposals in this Supplementary Planning Document. The approval of a Climate Change Strategy should not lead to any further requirements being imposed on the scheme.

Tyne Gorge Study

65. The “Urban Landscape Study of the Tyne Gorge” (2003) was commissioned by English Heritage, CABE, Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council. This is used to inform the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents for the Gorge and other relevant development studies. It is also used when considering planning applications that may affect key viewpoints of the Tyne Gorge, and this will therefore be a consideration when evaluating development proposals for the St Lawrence site.

1. www.newcastle.gov.uk

Infrastructure Planning

66. The following infrastructure issues have been considered in drafting this proposal, as directed by Planning Policy Statement 12.
67. The mains drainage system in the local area has been operating at or near capacity over recent periods, and improvement works to enhance capacity are being planned by Northumbrian Water Limited following consultation with Newcastle City Council regarding developments planned for the future. With the limitations on current capacity and likely pressures on future capacity in mind, the designs proposed include provision of site-based infrastructure to minimise the impact of surface water flows from this development into the mains drainage system. These are described in the Design Appendices, and are subject to agreement of detailed technical design factors prior to implementation.

68. In line with the objectives and vision for the project, the minimisation of carbon emissions through extension and enhancement of the existing Byker Estate District Heating system is being proposed. Details of this approach are contained in the Design Appendices.

G. Requirements for Submissions

69. The Council expects a high standard of submissions in the Planning Application[s] which will contain the full detailed proposals required subsequently for this site.

70. Details of the appraisal of submissions will be provided within the marketing particulars which will take into account compliance with the SPD, the deliverability of the scheme and the business case.

H. SPD Implementation, Monitoring, Review

71. The Council intends to market the land assets associated with this proposal to a private development partner. Development of the land will be implemented through both conditions to the land contract and the requirements of this Supplementary Planning Document as appropriate.

72. The Byker Design Project is monitored and managed through a Steering Group established for this purpose, which includes representatives of relevant stakeholders and community representatives.

73. It is proposed that the Byker Design Project Steering Group, with the support of Council Officers, will monitor the delivery of the proposals within this Supplementary Planning Document. Until such time as development proceeds, the document will be formally reviewed.
by the Steering Group not less than annually following the date of approval, and any recommendations for amendment agreed by this Group.

I. Appendices

74. The following information is attached as appendices to this Supplementary Planning Document:

1. Consultation Statement
2. Sustainability Appraisal
3. Design Statement
4. Byker Ouseburn BNG Strategic Commission Map
5. Open Space Assessment