



Development Brief

St Mary's Regeneration Project, Oldham

Final Draft Version 2

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PREPARATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Oldham MBC
Oldham & Rochdale Housing Market Renewal
English Partnerships
Gleeson Regeneration
Contour Housing Group
Triangle Architects
Bradley Clare: Cost Consultants
Environmental Design Consultants



THE BRADLEY CLARE PARTNERSHIP



CONTENTS

PART ONE

- 1.1 Foreword
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Oldham context and policy background
 - 1.3.1 'Oldham Beyond' - A Vision for Oldham Town Centre
 - 1.3.2 The Oldham Replacement Development Plan
 - 1.3.3 The advent of Housing Market Renewal
 - 1.3.4 History of the regeneration proposals
 - 1.3.5 St Mary's and the Oldham context
- 1.4 A Vision for the Regeneration in St Mary's, Oldham

PART TWO: MASTERPLAN AND URBAN DESIGN

- 2.1 Appreciating the Context
 - 2.1.1 General context
 - 2.1.2 Key site characteristics
 - 2.1.3 Connections and interfaces
 - 2.1.4 Local distinctiveness and urban gain
- 2.2 Appreciating the Context: The Vision
- 2.3 Appreciating the Context: The Objectives
- 2.4 Creating an Urban Structure: The Vision
- 2.5 Creating an Urban Structure: The Objectives
- 2.6 Making Connections: The Vision
- 2.7 Making Connections: The Objectives
- 2.8 Building a Sustainable Community: The Vision

- 2.9 Building a Sustainable Community: The Objectives
- 2.10 Detailing the Place: The Vision
- 2.11 Detailing the Place: The Objectives

PART THREE: SUSTAINABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Inclusive Housing Proposals: The Vision
 - 3.1.1 Market analysis, housing need and demand
 - 3.1.2 Range of housing opportunities
 - 3.1.3 Affordable housing
- 3.2 Inclusive Housing Proposals: The Objectives
- 3.3 Energy considerations, building services and performance: The Vision
- 3.4 Energy considerations, building services and performance: The Objectives
 - 3.4.1 Energy
 - 3.4.2 Lifecycle
 - 3.4.3 Water
 - 3.4.4 Acoustic Privacy
 - 3.4.5 Integrated Cabling
- 3.5 Green Specification Issues: The Vision
- 3.6 Green Specification Issues: the Objectives
 - 3.6.1 EcoHomes: The Environmental Rating for Homes
 - 3.6.2 General Requirements



PART FOUR

4.1 The Design Process

4.1.1 The Design and Project team

4.1.2 Feasibility and Option Appraisal

4.1.3 Outline Design and Masterplan

4.1.4 Final (Planning Application) Design

4.2 Reference Document Summary



PART ONE

1.1. FOREWORD

Once an area of poor quality terraced housing, the St Mary's area is for a second time in fifty years facing a significant redevelopment. Let us be frank, the concepts attempted in the 1960's did not work. This time we must get it right both in terms of the quality of the building design and construction and the sustainability and stability of the community who will live there.

The expression of our time is 'Urban Renaissance' and we have a unique opportunity, capitalising on the resources available in Oldham and Rochdale through the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder initiative, to make the achievement of both its aspirations a reality. St Mary's should set the standard as both boroughs seek to transform the quality of life for many of their residents right at the outset of the HMR initiative.

It is intended that the St Mary's project will be characterised by an excellence in urban design combined with high standards of environmental sustainability.

It should incorporate provision of a varied mix of houses and apartments with a range of sizes and variety of tenures which will help create a stable and sustainable community providing affordable housing opportunities for a wide range of households, including young people wishing to take advantage of living adjacent to the town centre.

Oldham Council is delighted to have the opportunity to be working in partnership with Gleeson Regeneration, Contour Housing Group, English Partnerships, CABE and the Oldham/Rochdale HMR Executive on this exciting new development.

I am confident that our shared commitment to design excellence and sustainability will deliver the type of high quality homes at St Mary's that all the communities in the borough of Oldham need and deserve. This brief will help us achieve our aim.

*Councillor Jeremy Sutcliffe
Cabinet Member- Environmental Services, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council*



1.2. INTRODUCTION

This document provides a Development Brief for a housing site (hereafter referred to as "the site") in the St Mary's area of Oldham, which is located on the northern edge of the town centre.

Parts of the inner areas of Oldham and Rochdale have recently been designated as a Pathfinder Area under the Government's Housing Market Renewal (HMR) initiative. This designation reflects the relatively poor quality environment and weak housing market that characterises much of the area. Assisted by very substantial central government funding, the primary goal of the HMR initiative is to achieve, through a varied range of interventions, a radical transformation in the housing market in the area over a fifteen year period. This in turn can underpin the creation of more prosperous, sustainable, stable and integrated communities in which a wide range of people choose to make their homes.

This unique opportunity for Oldham presented by HMR is further complemented by the planned extension of the successful Metrolink tram system into the town and the ambitious proposals for Oldham Town Centre and other parts of the town included in the "Oldham Beyond" masterplanning work by URBED et al recently commissioned by the Oldham Local Strategic Partnership and the North-West Development Agency.

To achieve the central goals of HMR it is widely recognised that a major step change in the design quality of new housing in Oldham needs to be achieved. The prominent and highly accessible development site at St Mary's, located as it is immediately adjacent to Oldham Town Centre and at the gateway to the first wave HMR intervention area of Derker, offers the ideal opportunity to deliver a high profile, exemplar development of high quality, affordable housing that can provide an 'early win', help create a new market for town centre living, stimulate follow-on investment, and set the standard for other schemes.

Oldham Borough Council, Gleeson Regeneration, and Contour Housing Group have entered a partnership to deliver the scheme with full support and involvement from Oldham/Rochdale HMR and English Partnerships.

Following the key action principles set down by the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE), all partners are committed to the broad objective of delivering a good mix of affordable and highly liveable housing within a scheme that delivers excellent standards of urban design, architecture and sustainability.

CABE have set down KEY ACTIONS for successful housing market renewal.

These include the following:

- Develop proposals that will create places of distinction and that make sense as a network of settlements.
- Recognise the value of good design and its role in regeneration - by placing it at the centre of the decision-making process from the outset
- Place sustainable development at the heart of thinking and action on the urban environment - by designing communities with resource-efficient homes and that encourage sustainable lifestyles.

From "Building Sustainable Communities: Actions for Housing Market Renewal" - CABE et al, 2003.



1.3. OLDHAM CONTEXT AND POLICY BACKGROUND

1.3.1. "Oldham Beyond" - A Vision for Oldham Town Centre

'Oldham Beyond' is a major visioning study commissioned by the Oldham Local Strategic Partnership and the North-West Development agency from a multi-disciplinary team of consultants led by planners and urban designers Urbed. The study includes a masterplan for Oldham town centre which proposes a new urban structure and an extensive package of highly aspirational but achievable projects aimed at achieving a step-change in its image, function and attractiveness.

A key theme of the vision deals with town centre living. It sees the town centre as 'an aspirational place to live for people wanting the convenience of a town centre and access to the city via Metrolink whilst being within easy reach of the moors.'

The masterplan identifies the 'top of the town' area as ideally suited to new residential development and the St Mary's site in particular as the location for the first phase of such development with the potential to be a 'poster scheme' for a new residential market in Oldham. The plan suggests that the housing should be targeted at young buyers, by being aspirational but affordable, of striking appearance and highly sustainable.

The masterplan also includes proposals to redesign and downgrade St Mary's Way to reduce its effect as a physical and psychological barrier to pedestrian movement. It is suggested that the new housing should front onto the road and orientate towards the Town Centre. A major new Green Walk running through the heart of the Town Centre and linking the major green spaces of Alexandra Park to the south and Oldham Edge to the north is planned to run immediately past or through the St Mary's site.

1.3.2. The Oldham Replacement Development Plan

During 2003, in line with the rapidly evolving national agenda on the subject driven by the ODPM, CABI and others, Oldham Borough Council has committed to a much stronger emphasis on urban design and sustainability for all new development in the Borough as a key feature of its Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Second Deposit Draft).

1.3.3. The advent of Housing Market Renewal

During 2003 Oldham Borough Council, together with Rochdale MBC, were invited by central government to become one of nine Housing Market Renewal (HMR) initiative Pathfinder. The Pathfinder has submitted a prospectus outlining radical proposals to transform the housing markets of Oldham and Rochdale over the next fifteen years, with detailed plans over the next two years. As part of the submission the Pathfinder has been awarded £53.5 million in March 2004 for an initial 2 year programme.



Achieving excellence in both housing design and urban design is a key objective for HMR and the St Mary's scheme constitutes a key development opportunity within the Pathfinder area and provides a clear opportunity to establish a commitment to high quality design. In recognition of this Oldham Council, Gleeson Regeneration and Contour Housing Group have agreed to a comprehensive review of the existing approved scheme with a view to achieving a step-change in design quality and a review of the target market for the development. Given the known site constraints and the economic constraints of the local housing market, to assist this process additional gap funding from both English Partnerships and the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Executive will be considered, if appropriate, to achieve the aims of all parties.

1.3.4. History of the Regeneration Proposals

The site, which extends to approximately 2.5 hectares, comprises cleared land that was formerly occupied by part of the St Mary's housing estate developed by Oldham Council in the 1960's. The residual St Mary's estate occupies the area broadly defined by Lord Street to the west and the development site to the east. The properties demolished to create the cleared site primarily consisted of medium rise, deck-access flats set in extensive open space.

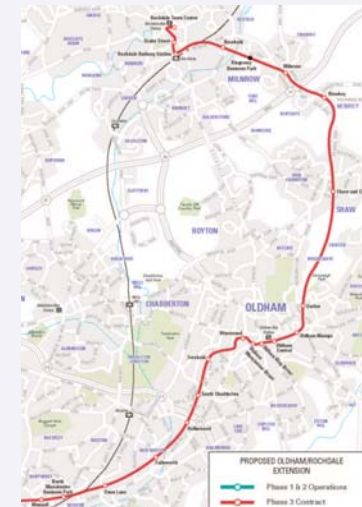
The proposal to redevelop part of the site for new housing is part of a package of measures put in place by Oldham Borough Council for the regeneration of the whole St Mary's estate which includes a range of improvements to both the retained properties and the public realm. Those improvement works have now been substantially completed.

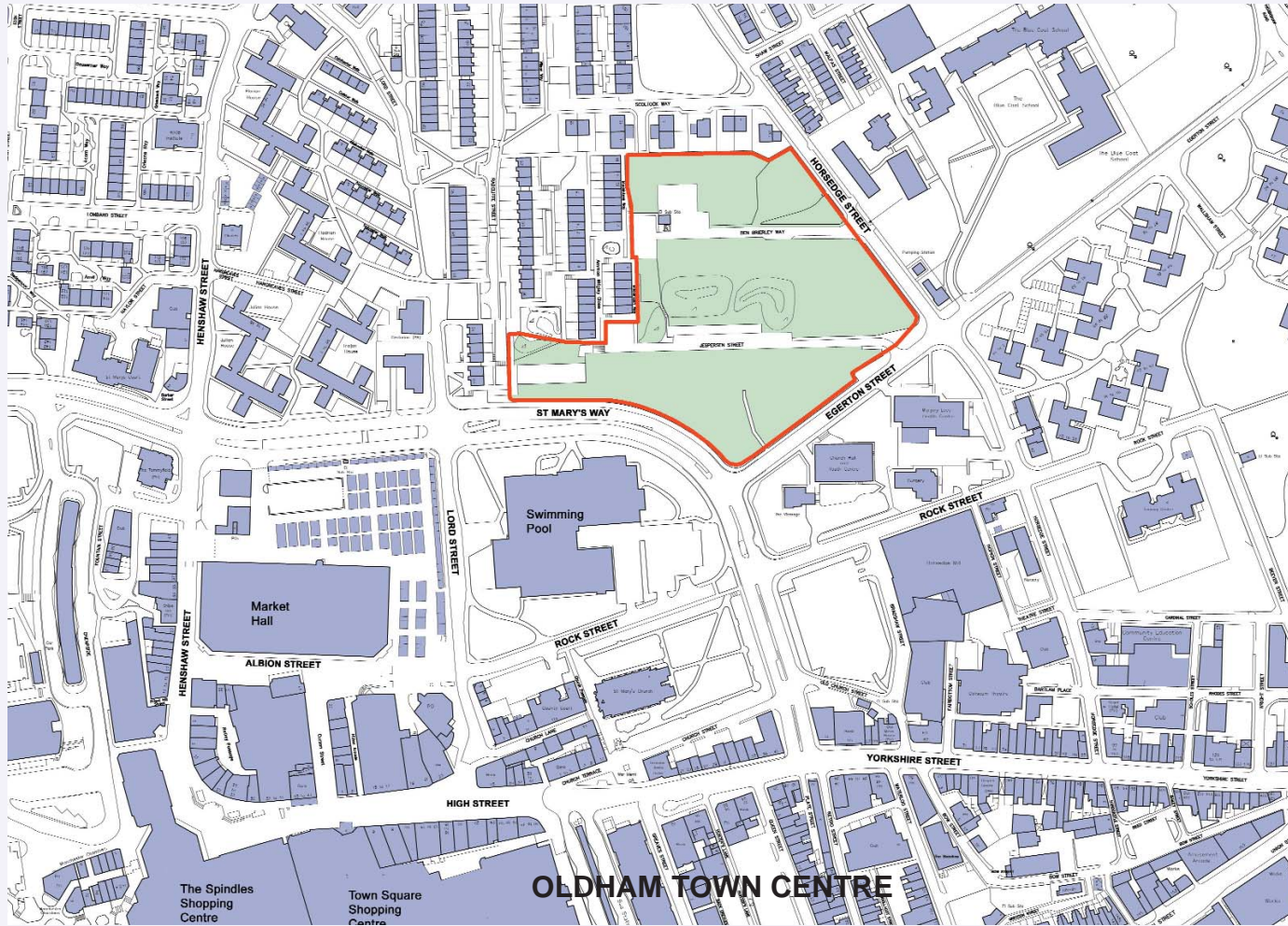
An earlier planning brief for the site was issued by Oldham Borough Council in March 2001 and, following a competition, Gleeson Regeneration were selected as preferred development partners. Contour Housing Group will partner Gleesons and the Council to provide an agreed component of social housing as part and parcel of the scheme. The Council's Planning Committee resolved (subject to the signing of a Section 106 agreement) to grant full planning permission for a housing scheme by Gleesons in April 2003.

1.3.5 St Mary's and Oldham context

The St Mary's neighbourhood is a residential district immediately adjoining Oldham town centre to the south and bounded by the open space of Oldham Edge to the north. The neighbourhood of Derker area lies to the east and the Coldhurst/Westwood area to the west.

The St Mary's ward itself is 103rd (out of 8,414 wards nationally) in the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) indices of Deprivation 2000. Oldham Borough is 38th out of 354 districts nationally. St Mary's position indicates an area of low incomes, high unemployment, health deprivation, poor levels of educational achievement, skills and training and poor access to services.





Site Location Plan



1.4. A VISION FOR THE REGENERATION OF ST MARY'S, OLDHAM

The vision for the redevelopment of the St Mary's site envisages an innovative, imaginatively designed and economic high-density housing scheme that challenges established conventions and achieves the step-change in design quality and market perceptions needed to meet the objectives of the Housing Market Renewal programme for Oldham and lead the development of a new market in town centre living.

It is intended to achieve a scheme with award winning potential that is recognised as being at the cutting edge of best practice in terms of urban design and standards of environmental sustainability and which provides an exemplar for future HMR schemes in Oldham/Rochdale and throughout the North-West.

The St Mary's development will be a visually striking and innovative housing scheme that trades on its highly accessible town centre location to offer a new concept in affordable living that will be attractive to a wide range of households including young professionals. The development will serve to attract or retain economically active households close to the town centre and act as a bridge between the centre and adjacent residential areas.

At the same time, the scheme will include a varied mix of sizes, types and tenures of properties that will form the basis of a stable, safe and truly sustainable community and will be carefully designed to link in with the existing housing areas adjoining, which will benefit from enhanced public spaces and more attractive links to the town centre.



PART TWO: MASTERPLAN AND URBAN DESIGN

The Masterplan Process will be based on a robust set of urban design principles that will ultimately deliver high quality, sustainable buildings and public spaces.

This section outlines the key issues in working towards achieving this aim including: evaluation of the characteristics of the site (Appreciating the Context); achieving urban design quality (Creating an Urban Structure); developing a well connected site with high levels of permeability (Making the Connections); ensuring sustainability through higher densities and flexibility and adaptability of the built form (Building a Sustainable Community); and making certain that these issues are carried forward into the detailed design (Detailing the Place).

2.1. APPRECIATING THE CONTEXT

The requirement is to achieve a housing development the design of which fully optimises the potential of the highly accessible town centre location of the site, together with its situation, topography and aspect, and which achieves an informed and sensitive response to context.

2.1.1. General Context

The development site forms part and parcel of the predominantly residential district of St Mary's that historically extended north from the Town Centre towards the open expanse of Oldham Edge. Much of the area was redeveloped during the 1960's but it still retains a relatively strong sense of identity and community.

To the south the site immediately abuts Oldham Town Centre from which it is physically separated by the busy dual carriageway known as St Mary's Way. Together with Egerton Street this route effectively forms a northern by-pass for the Town Centre.

The central shopping zone of the Town Centre lies within 200m. of the site. Dominating the immediate prospect from the southern boundary of the site is the bulk of Oldham Sports Centre with the Grade II* listed St Mary's (Oldham Parish) Church set in attractive public gardens beyond.

To the west and north the site is bounded by existing residential areas. Immediately to the west is the retained area of the St Mary's Council housing estate. These are exclusively two-storey terraced houses built on a rigid north-south axis to a "Radburn" layout. They occupy a slightly elevated position in relation to the site. The main access routes to the town centre from this area of housing are Radcliffe Street and Lord Street which have a strongly north-



south alignment. Scoltock Way currently appears to provide the main cross route from the area to Horsedge Street.

Immediately to the north of the site, on Scoltock Way, are a row of recently completed elderly persons bungalows. These overlook an area of public open space to their north laid out in the form of a simple "green" with tree planting. Further north, on Horsedge Street and beyond, is the residue of the extensive area of red brick terraced "workers" housing dating from the late Victorian period that once extended continuously outwards from the Town Centre (the northern boundary of which was historically defined by the line of Rock Street) on rising ground towards the open expanse of Oldham Edge.

To the east beyond Horsedge Street, set in extensive grounds behind dominant stone boundary walls, is the Blue Coat School (C of E; 11-18 year olds), the main building of which is listed. This is a very popular and successful school with a borough-wide catchment.

To the south-east of the site beyond Egerton Street is the St Mary's Church Hall, the Marjory Lees Health Centre and another area of Council housing (i.e. the Egerton Street estate.)

2.1.2. Key Site Characteristics

The site is elevated and enjoys an open aspect to the south with some good distant views.

The site has a southerly aspect and is not overshadowed by neighbouring buildings or landforms.

The elevated and open character of the site means it is a fairly exposed location that can often be windy. This presents challenges for microclimatic design.

The site contains a significant number of semi-mature trees on its southern and eastern boundaries. These have significant townscape value.

The public highways that serviced the previous housing are still in situ and are currently used on an informal basis for car parking. There is an additional area of car parking to the north of the site fronting Horsedge Street.

There is an electricity sub-station at the western end of Ben Brierley Way.

The site contains no other topographical, natural or man made features of note.



2.1.3. Connections and Interfaces

The development site is regarded by the local community as part and parcel of the St Mary's neighbourhood.

However the clearance of the housing on the development site has understandably left something of a "frayed edge" where the retained housing interfaces the site. These houses have communal parking and a pedestrian only access to their eastern frontages and very much face onto the site.

The northern boundary of the site is defined by the solid fence line of the rear gardens of the Scoltock Way bungalows.

A key feature of the development will be its highly accessible location close to Town Centre facilities, including public transport nodes. At present St Mary's Way and Egerton Street undoubtedly form a barrier to north-south movement. The main pedestrian crossing points are located at the junction of St Mary's Way with Lord Street and on Egerton Street close to its junction with St Mary's Way (St Mary's Way is then crossed just south of its junction with Egerton Street).

The St Mary's Way and Egerton Street frontages of the site are prominent and important in townscape terms. The St Mary's Way/Egerton Street and Egerton Street/Horsedge Street site corners are particularly prominent.

2.1.4. Local distinctiveness and urban grain

The surrounding area north of St Mary's Way is broadly characterised by a dense urban grain. This includes the residue of the older Victorian terraces laid out in perimeter blocks on a broadly rectilinear street pattern together with various low-rise, relatively high-density variants of 1960s/early 1970s Council housing schemes.

Although the housing immediately adjoining the site is two-storey, the Burnley Street estate immediately to the west of St Mary's has three-storey blocks fronting St Mary's Way as has the Egerton Street development to the east of the site.

All the existing housing has an essentially traditional appearance with simple massing and pitched roofs.

To the south of St Mary's Way within the Town Centre there is a pattern of larger scale buildings with more incidence of landscaping. The incidence of frontage landscaping is fairly characteristic of St Mary's Way generally.

The locally occurring palette of materials is essentially brick (mostly reds and browns) with the notable exception of the St Mary's properties which have a rendered finish.



2.2. APPRECIATING THE CONTEXT: THE VISION

The intention is to deliver:

- A new housing area that positively addresses St Mary's Way and expresses a strong connection to the town centre whilst at the same time integrating and linking well with the existing housing areas to the north and providing an effective 'bridge' between the latter and the town centre.
- A high-density housing development that reflects the traditionally dense urban grain of the surrounding area and is appropriate for an edge of town centre location.
- A new housing area that takes full advantage of the elevated south-facing situation of the site to create a more sustainable development.
- A new housing area that creates a new place with a distinctive and attractive character of its own that will strengthen local identity.

2.3. APPRECIATING THE CONTEXT: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

- Create a place which faces St Mary's Way and connects strongly with the town centre.
- Create a place that has a visually striking appearance and strong physical presence when viewed from St Mary's Way and creates good townscape with a strong landscape structure on the St Mary's Way/Egerton Street frontages.
- Create a place that provides strong focal points in townscape terms at the junctions of St Mary's Way/Egerton Street and Egerton Street/Horsedge Street.
- Create a place with good integration, both functionally and visually, with the existing housing adjoining to the north and west, and the incorporation of attractive, safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian links between the two areas.
- Create a place characterised by a dense urban grain reflecting the essentially urban rather than suburban character of the surrounding area.
- Create a place that optimises shelter for both private and public space given the relatively exposed nature of the site.
- Create a place that optimises passive solar gain based on the site's southerly aspect.
- Create a place that optimises the potential for views out from the site to the south-east.
- Consider exploiting opportunities for windpower given the exposed and elevated nature of the site.

Context is crucial. It is about understanding the position of development and how to position a development. This involves a range of considerations. High quality places will only emerge if the approach if the approach is cohesive and inclusive

Urban Design Compendium



2.4. CREATING AN URBAN STRUCTURE: THE VISION

The term urban structure refers to the pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings, open space and landscape which make up an urban area. It is the inter-relationship between all these elements, rather than their particular characteristics that bond together to make a place.

A well planned urban structure provides the foundations for detailed design of the constituent elements.

At St Mary's a suitable urban structure needs to be created which will provide a coherent framework to achieve the following:

- *Integration* : connection and overlap with surrounding areas
- *Functional efficiency* : so that individual elements (buildings, streets, open spaces etc.) work together as part of an efficient network of linked spaces.
- *Environmental harmony* : creating development forms that are energy efficient and ecologically sensitive.
- *A sense of place* : creating somewhere that is recognisably distinct but simultaneously strengthens identity.

2.5. CREATING AN URBAN STRUCTURE: THE OBJECTIVES

The development is to achieve the highest possible level of urban design quality. The design should achieve the following ten key objectives:

- **Context and Character**
Achieve a development exhibiting an appropriately informed and sensitive response to site and context and one which will have a genuine and highly distinctive sense of place in its own right.
- **Continuity and Enclosure**
Achieve continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by built development and strong landscape elements which clearly define private and public areas and create attractive streets and other spaces of good townscape quality.

Good urban design, imaginatively used, helps to make places attractive to live. Urban structure is the pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings, open spaces and landscape which make up an urban area.



- **Quality of the Public Realm**
Achieve carefully designed and well detailed public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe and uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including children, and disabled and elderly people.
- **Contribution to Urban Greening**
Achieve a development that incorporates a high quality landscape structure, fully integrated into scheme design from the outset, that contributes to good townscape, enhances residential amenity and makes a substantive contribution to urban greening.
- **Legibility**
Achieve legibility through a development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.
- **Ease of Movement**
Achieve high standards of accessibility and local permeability by making a place that is outward looking, connects well with surrounding areas and is easy to move through, putting people before traffic.
- **Adaptability**
Achieve adaptability through designs that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.
Achieve an urban layout which may be reasonably extended into surrounding areas in future development whilst linking with existing patterns.
Achieve building plots which can be adapted or replaced in the future without detrimental effect on urban design or environmental performance
- **Diversity**
Achieve an appropriate mix of types and sizes of residential accommodation that can help facilitate a balanced and inclusive community and maximise choice.
- **Architecture**
Achieve a richness and variety of architectural expression within the development which pays careful attention to matters of detailed design and the use of materials, with a view to giving visual delight and fully contributing to the creation of a high quality public realm.
Achieve buildings the design of which embodies high standards of environmental sustainability.



- **Durability**

Achieve a highly durable development by choosing design solutions that will deliver robust, low maintenance solutions both for buildings and the public realm.

Other Requirements

- Based on the perimeter block concept, the development must provide a clear grid of streets that gives potential for possible expansion of the housing area in the future and free movement for pedestrians and cyclists through the area whilst at the same time having regard to crime prevention and community safety objectives.
- The development must achieve streets and other spaces that achieve a good sense of enclosure, active frontages, attractive vistas and an appropriate pedestrian scale.
- The development must provide attractively designed streets and other public spaces that are located and designed to benefit both the existing community and new residents and assist the physical and social integration of the wider neighbourhood.
- The development should provide sufficient and appropriate open space for the anticipated user groups (i.e. both existing and future residents.) In particular, the location and design of the existing proposal for a 'kick-about pitch' should be reviewed as part of the design process. The continuing requirement for such a facility should however be assumed.
- The development must incorporate a strong and coherent landscape structure, incorporating a varied range of robust, low-maintenance landscape features (and plentiful tree planting; including a number of specimen 'landmark' trees). These features should be designed in from the outset and will make a strong contribution to urban greening, optimise wildlife value, and provide an element of contact with nature for all residents.
- In discussion with Urbed, the design of the scheme shall consider the incorporation of the proposed 'Green Walk', linking Alexandra Park to Oldham Edge, within or adjoining the development.
- The development must create streets and spaces that will deliver a good microclimate for living in terms of access to good levels of sunlight and shelter from wind.



2.6. MAKING CONNECTIONS: THE VISION

The success of any new development depends on how well connections work. The measure of their success is not just their functional performance, but how they contribute to the quality and character of the urban area and the lives of the people who live there.

At St. Mary's, the goal is to build a place that links well with the surrounding residential areas and the town centre, and that delivers a highly accessible and permeable housing area which provides a safe, welcoming and attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists and ensures that their needs are prioritised over those of the car.

The scheme design will actively encourage walking and cycling in preference to the use of the car by providing a safe, convenient and highly attractive environment for the former.

The layout of the scheme design will not be 'highways led' and will instead seek to incorporate the use of 'tracking' and 'home zone' principles which aim to create good townscape and an attractive pedestrian environment in which car drivers are forced and encouraged to drive at very slow speed (i.e. as low as 10mph) within the development.

Simple adherence to rigid road geometry will be avoided and buildings and landscape elements will be used to create a network of spaces created including streets, squares and courtyards.

Junctions will be kept tight, with buildings and the footway defining space at a junction, not the rigid requirements of vehicular movement.

Importantly, car parking will be handled in an imaginative and innovative way to provide secure and convenient facilities for residents and their visitors without undue visual intrusion in the public realm.

So designed, the streets should thus be perceived as important public spaces that accommodate not only the circulation and parking of motor vehicles, but walking, cycling, play and other social interaction.

Getting the movement right affects uses and activities, density, security and the impact of the development on neighbouring places.

Urban Design Compendium



2.7. MAKING CONNECTIONS: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

- Layout design to incorporate 'tracking' and home zone' principles to create an attractive pedestrian environment and achieve effective traffic calming. Design to encourage driving speeds well below 20mph as a target.
- All car parking to be located and designed to be secure, convenient to use AND so as not to dominate spaces in front of dwellings or inconvenience pedestrians or cyclists.
- Communal car parking courts not to exceed a maximum of 12 spaces, to be well overlooked, attractively laid out, well lit and where possible to be designed with some houses or apartments taking direct access from the parking court.
- Overall car parking provision should not exceed 150%.
- Visitor parking to be provided on-street in bays; streets to be designed to discourage parking where not intended (this is to be achieved without the excessive use of bollards and other street furniture.)
- All dwellings (houses and apartments) to have access to secure, covered cycle storage to encourage ownership and use.
- Dwellings to be serviced directly from the street; the siting and design of facilities for refuse storage requires careful consideration; to be convenient to use but not visually obtrusive in the public realm. Alternatively, communal collection arrangements need special consideration.
- Adequate access for service and emergency vehicle must be designed in.
- Vehicular access to be taken from Horsedge Street only.
- Provision should be planned in for communal satellite dishes to avoid proliferation and visual clutter.



2.8. BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: THE VISION

Given its highly accessible location it is essential to make efficient use of the site by building at high density.

Good urban design and housing design should produce housing that is very resource efficient in operation and seeks to exploit potential to make use of renewable sources of energy.

The housing should provide high quality living conditions and the design should prioritise flexibility and adaptability to accommodate changing needs and lifestyle preferences of residents.

Flexibility, Adaptability and Change

Dwellings and hence housing areas should have a long life to avoid becoming prematurely obsolete. They must be sufficiently flexible in use that they can satisfy the needs of differing family circumstances and can be adapted to meet changes in needs and aspirations; to also accommodate changing social, technical and economic conditions.

Flexibility

- All dwellings should be capable of differing types of internal arrangements; i.e. open plan/cellular.
- Dwellings should be able to accommodate differing household priorities, eg. home office; homework study; workroom; playroom; a guest room.
- It should be possible to personalise dwellings to suit individual families' preferences, life style and faith.

Adaptability

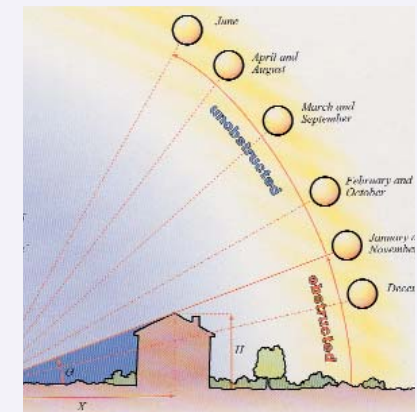
- The design and form of construction should enable houses to be adapted to accommodate changes in family circumstances eg. mobility/disability.
- The disposition and arrangement of homes should enable the extension of houses without compromising the amenity of adjoining owners.

Change

- Dwellings should be able to accommodate changes over time in socio-economic circumstances, family growth or contraction and changing perception of needs/affluence/expectations.
- The development should be able to accommodate technological advancements.

It will be essential for all development, especially new housing developments, to respect the principles of sustainable development and address potential impacts on the environment alongside social and economic goals.

ODPM, 2003



The design must achieve a place that gives people ready access to green space and greenery and makes accommodation for wildlife.

A high importance is to be given to:

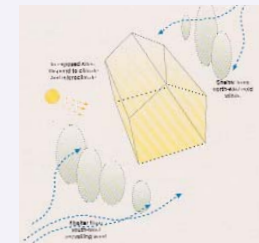
- ensuring future residents receive the benefit of an attractive green environment.
- helping create a more agreeable local microclimate and to assist with pollution control.
- ensuring that the development of the site serves enhance rather than diminish local biodiversity.



2.9 BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

- The development is to achieve a minimum net residential density of 75 dwellings per hectare.
- The design should seek to optimise the natural topography of the site to devise a three-dimensional site layout and form of buildings which optimises the benefits of passive solar gain, conservation of energy and renewable energy potential whilst achieving other important density and urban design objectives.
- The form of development should allow direct sunlight penetration to principal public spaces and all private gardens and balconies.
- The form of development should help create a microclimate providing wind shelter and urban heat storage, raising ambient external temperatures. The design of the build forms should assist in encouraging natural airflow to disperse pollutants and improve thermal comfort for pedestrians and occupants.
- Design buildings to optimise access to daylight to reduce the need for artificial lighting and the potential for passive solar gain to reduce the need for space heating.
- Achieve compact and linked building forms that will achieve heat conservation through reduced external surface areas.
- The scheme design should seek to provide shelter from winds.
- The design should seek to orientate as many properties as possible to facilitate the future installation of solar panels and pvcs even where not initially installed.
- Reduce site-runoff and water wastage through landscape design and other measures.
- Maximise the beneficial ecological impact of the development in terms of urban greening and provision for wildlife.
- Design to minimise disturbance from extraneous noise (particularly traffic noise on St Mary's Way).
- Ensure ground conditions are fully investigated and any required remediation measures are fully implemented.



- All houses shall have a fully enclosed, secure private rear garden of a minimum size of 50m², incorporating a screened private sitting space. All apartments shall have access to a well designed shared amenity space (secure, sheltered, private and with a sunny aspect) and/or useable private balcony spaces.
- Internally, dwelling designs shall exhibit a high level of flexibility and adaptability to accommodate changing family circumstances, social preferences and technological advances.
- The scheme design will ensure that all dwellings achieve an 'excellent' Ecohomes rating.



2.10. DETAILING THE PLACE: THE VISION

Detailed design is where the identity and quality of a place is finally won or lost. Successful places that residents take pride in and other people enjoy being in are characterised by a public realm that works well; feels and indeed is safe and secure; is visually attractive and stimulating; and which is clearly standing the test of time in terms of durability and ease of maintenance.

It is important that the detailed design of both the buildings and the public realm are successful, and most particularly the interface between them. Buildings and open space should go 'hand in glove'. The building elements include elevations, corner treatments, roof lines, doors and windows and materials. The public realm elements concern the street; the pavement; the square; planting; street furniture; lighting and public art. The interfaces are the steps; the walls; the front gardens; entrances; hedges; windows and doors; the hinge between the horizontal and the vertical planes.

It is essential that careful attention to design detail creates a distinctive and successful place that can confidently be expected to stand the test of time.

2.11. DETAILING THE PLACE: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

- Streets and other spaces to achieve good streetscape and an appropriate pedestrian scale.
- Achieve a variety of streets and spaces of differing character within the development to reinforce legibility and sense of space.
- Provide active frontages that provide good depth and relief in building surfaces, no blind frontages and few passive ones.
- Achieve richness and diversity in architectural expression that draws on high quality contemporary design ethos.
- Provide good lighting to all public and semi-public spaces; particularly parking courts.
- Recognise the importance of corner plots and design accordingly.
- Pay careful attention to the 'interface zone' between dwellings and the street; provide well designed defensible space; specify high quality boundary treatments; and avoid visual dominance by parked cars.
- Achieve good townscape with good views and vistas.
- Achieve a strong landscape structure that helps define a sense of place, contributes to urban greening and contributes to local biodiversity.

The detailed design of urban space means attending to the building line and three dimensional mass that helps create the character of streets, brought to life with planting, street furniture, public art and a whole host of other ingredients that give these spaces their warmth and vitality

Urban Design Compendium



- Create a durable, low-maintenance public realm.
- Make a careful choice of the palette of paving materials and street furniture together with careful attention to detailing to achieve a high-quality public realm.
- Achieve a high level of security against crime and high standards of community safety through design.
- Design principles in respect of the above criteria need to be clearly indicated at masterplanning/feasibility stage. All details to be fully expressed through detailed external works drawings submitted as part of the planning submission.



PART THREE: SUSTAINABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Planning for a sustainable future remains a key objective achieved through promoting housing choice and integrated tenures (Inclusive Housing Proposals) and emphasising the role of sustainable urban design in reducing whole life costs, including improved performance in building specifications and energy consumption (Energy Considerations, Building Services and Performance and Green Specification Issues).

3.1. INCLUSIVE HOUSING PROPOSALS: THE VISION

3.1.1. Market Analysis, Housing Need and Demand

The St. Mary's development presents the opportunity to transform the existing weak housing market in this part of Oldham, establish new opportunities and create renewed housing demand.

In this way a sustainable community can be created and the existing neighbourhood can be supported and developed.

The Pathfinder Project prospectus includes five objectives:

Two of the objectives cover things that the Pathfinder project can achieve through its own activities:

- to transform the housing choices to meet current and future demand, providing modern attractive homes, through clearance, remodelling and redevelopment.
- To achieve and sustain an excellent standard for existing retained housing focusing especially on priority neighbourhoods.

Two objectives are things that the Pathfinder Project can influence but whose achievement depends on the activities of the Partners in Action and others:

- to improve the image, safety and attractiveness of neighbourhoods so people will be proud to live there and choose to invest.
- to improve substantially the quality of life of local people by increasing employment and leisure opportunities, and transforming their educational attainment and health.

And a further objective underpins everything the Pathfinder will do to improve local communities:

- In all that we do, we will work together to achieve community cohesion, creating places where a range of people can live happily together.

The creation of successful residential environments is about more than visually attractive design. It is also about providing opportunities for homes which respond to people's needs and providing a framework within which communities can be established and grow.

By Design: Better Places to Live:
DTLR and CABE



3.1.2. Range of Housing Opportunities

The development should provide dwellings for the broadest possible cross-section of the community, including families and single people, of differing age groups. Differing levels of affordability need to be accommodated together with special needs housing.

In achieving a broad distribution of dwelling type, regard is to be given to developing government policy, household development projections, the need of the regional economy and local housing needs.

Accommodation should be included for households that have family members with physical disabilities or limited mobility; or dwellings be capable of being adapted to meet such needs.

Although St Mary's has traditionally comprised family accommodation exclusively, the area is adjacent to the town centre and the new development should include some accommodation for households that would take advantage of the range of social, cultural and recreational facilities that are nearby.

It is accepted that mixing housing tenure tends to provide social diversity and sustainable communities; consequently housing of differing types and tenure should be spread across the development. Exclusive enclaves are to be avoided. The need to accommodate varied lifestyles across the range of housing type and settings is also required.

3.1.3. Affordable Housing

Affordable housing should be the provision of good quality housing which encourages residents to become involved in running their own homes and communities. This empowers individuals and contributes to the positive regeneration of neighbourhoods.

The housing should meet residents' expectations and reach beyond basic requirements. Affordable housing should be about building homes, re-building communities and establishing a sense of ownership and pride in St. Mary's.

The housing should be well designed and integrate into the estate with no obvious differentiation between the tenures. It should improve the quality of life for the residents and the wider community, help to reduce crime by designing out the potential for criminal activity, foster community cohesion and significantly reduce management and long term maintenance costs.

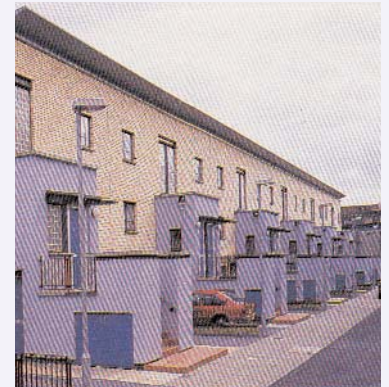
The vision should be one of a vibrant community, meeting the needs of modern society. It should be environmentally sustainable.



3.2. INCLUSIVE HOUSING PROVISION: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

- The provision of a wide range of affordable housing opportunities that can accommodate varied lifestyles, and offer a high level of accessibility and/or potential for adaptability for the mobility impaired and the elderly.
- Any social housing provision should be 'pepper potted' throughout the development and there should be no overt differentiation in appearance between market and social housing.
- The scheme design should also achieve good integration of houses and apartments across the site (e.g. with apartment blocks used to 'bookend' rows of housing).



3.3. ENERGY CONSIDERATIONS, BUILDING SERVICES AND PERFORMANCE: THE VISION

The development will provide comfortable, light, airy, well-soundproofed, resource efficient homes that provide living conditions of the highest standard.

3.4. ENERGY CONSIDERATIONS, BUILDING SERVICES AND PERFORMANCE: THE OBJECTIVES

3.4.1. Energy

The design should provide reliable thermal comfort in all homes with very low net energy use and running costs (if any) in order to provide an exemplar model for energy efficient housing design in the region and to minimise CO2 emissions. The design of dwellings should be able to accommodate the requirements of whichever method/s of on-site renewable energy production is selected in a fully integrated design solution.

The design of dwellings should maximise the potential for passive solar heating and energy conservation methods whilst conforming to the Urban Design strategy.

The detailed design and workmanship of the construction should be monitored and tested to ensure that the full energy saving benefits of the specifications are being achieved in practice.

10% (minimum) of energy requirements of the development should be achieved on-site from renewable resources.

3.4.2. Lifecycle

All operating systems and controls employed to enhance environmental and energy performance should be easy and economic to use, maintain and replace in the long term by ordinary householders and RSL's

3.4.3. Water

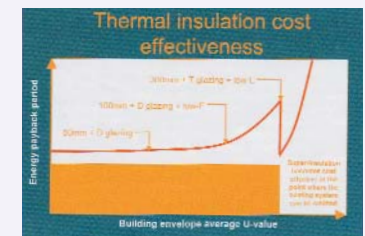
The building designs should accommodate the integrated use of alternatives to treated water where viable. The impact of rainwater on the mains drainage system should be minimised by the use of alternative methods and landscape design.

3.4.4. Acoustic Privacy

The buildings should be designed to provide a good standard of acoustic privacy to residents from within the property, adjoining properties and external sources.

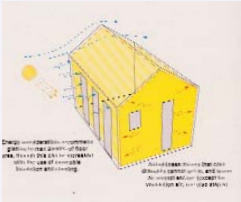
A green approach to the built environment involves a holistic approach to the design of buildings: that all the resources that go into a building, be they materials, fuels or the contribution of the users need to be considered if a sustainable architecture is to be produced.

Robert and Brenda Vale



3.4.5 Integrated Cabling

The building designs should accommodate the integrated distribution of cabling networks to allow for future technological demands of the occupants.



3.5 GREEN SPECIFICATION ISSUES - THE VISION

The designs for buildings and public realm works are to utilise environmentally friendly materials and methods of construction. Materials should be of a high quality and robustness with low maintenance requirements for a long adaptable life. The materials used should be safe and healthy for humans during their production and use.

3.6 GREEN SPECIFICATION ISSUES: THE OBJECTIVES

The proposed development should include/achieve the following:

3.6.1 EcoHomes: The Environmental Rating for Homes

To specify materials in accordance with the 'Green Guide to Specification' and the Green Guide to Housing Specification' sufficient to contribute to an overall EcoHomes 'Excellent' rating. All C rated materials to be avoided where possible.

3.6.2 General Requirements

- Carry out appraisal of all materials and systems with regard to full life cycle environmental impact
- In selection of materials appraisal to be made of:
 - low embodied energy
 - ethical and sustainable sourcing and production
 - local labour and skills
 - pollution and toxicity in production and use
 - waste minimisation
 - recycling and recyclability
 - health and safety
 - availability
 - cost - immediate and life cycle
- Feasibility stage to consider suitable targets for design life of buildings and key building components
- Carry out 'ENVEST' assessment by registered assessor

EcoHomes considers the broad environmental concerns of climate change, resource use and impact on wildlife, but balances these against the needs for a high quality, safe and healthy internal environment.

EcoHomes



PART FOUR

This brief provides the framework for development of the St Mary's site outlining the aspirations, aims and objectives for the proposed development. This section provides the context to the design process through feasibility to masterplan stage, resulting in an innovative vision for the design of this housing scheme and forming a detailed delivery plan for implementation.

4.1 THE DESIGN PROCESS

4.1.1 The Design and Project Team

Following completion of the Design Brief and endorsement by all appropriate bodies and agencies, the Design Team will commence the Design Process. This will consist of four stages, each incorporating consultation as outlined below, in partnership with the Project Team.

For these purposes the Design Team will consist of:

- Triangle Architects
- Environmental Design Consultants
- to be commissioned
- Lead Designer and Design Managers
- Specialist Environmental Design Advice
- Landscape Architect

in association with:

- Bradley Clare Partnership
- Wilkinson Cowan Partnership
- Gleeson Regeneration
- Other Specialist Consultants
- Cost Consultants/Project Managers to Oldham MBC
- Cost Consultants to Contour Housing Group
- In-house cost estimation and other Specialist Design Advice
- As and where appropriate eg. Civil/Structural Engineers, Services Engineers, Landscape Architects

The Project Team will consist of the Design Team outlined above but in addition will comprise of:

- Oldham MBC Economic Development
- Oldham MBC Planning and Environmental Services
- Oldham and Rochdale Housing Market Renewal
- English Partnerships
- Gleeson Regeneration
- Contour Housing Group

How can we ensure that our towns and cities are developed and regenerated to be sustainable for the future? This is one of the greatest challenges facing those involved in planning and development.

A Sustainability Checklist for Developments: A common framework for developers and local developers and local authorities



A local Design Review Panel (membership to be confirmed but to include CABE representation) will be established to review and comment on each stage of the design process starting with the Development Brief. Consideration will be given to seeking a review of the later design stages with CABE at the national level in view of the strategic importance of this development to the Oldham/Rochdale HMR Pathfinder initiative.

4.1.2 Feasibility and Option Appraisal

- This stage of design work will broadly correspond to the RIBA Workstage A and B.
- The Design Team will digest and analyse the brief in all respects and commence detailed examination, prioritisation and clarification of performance criteria as necessary.
- Diagrammatic studies in response to the brief and site will be prepared.
- Best practice examples will be reviewed, including selected research/study visits.
- Design option appraisals will be prepared, with evaluation against both the Vision and Objectives (Performance Criteria) contained within the brief.
- At this stage of the process a housing mix for the site has not been specified and this will be expected to be informed by the feasibility stage. The urban form and layout of the site will inevitably inform the housing mix. Contemporary relatively high-density apartments should be accommodated along the main town centre frontages of Egerton Street and St Mary's Way, which reflect modern trends and aspirations for town centre living. The majority of the remainder of the site should consist of more conventional family housing typologies that interrelate with the existing housing provision.
- Options will also be specifically assessed by EDC for optimization of the performance criteria outlined in Part 3 of the brief, Sustainable Housing Development.
- Recommendations for a preferred Option(s) with supporting reasons will be made by the Design Team and discussed with the Project Team and other organizations/agencies as necessary.
- An Option for further design development will be selected by the Project Team.

The feasibility study will provide:

- A financial appraisal of the development scheme providing a cost model for the development at this stage, identifying any gap funding that may be required.
- An analysis of how the scheme meets the requirements of English Partnerships BETA Gap funding scheme.
- A property market analysis of Oldham, which outlines the projected demand for property types in this area.
- A detailed programme to deliver the scheme.
- A definitive programme for implementing the Masterplan stage.
- Identify if the scheme is deliverable by the developer partner subject to the conclusion of key processes including the legal agreement, planning, road closures and gap funding.



Consultation

- At this stage, consultation will be limited to 'internal' agencies/organizations e.g the Project Team but will incorporate preliminary liaison with the Design Panel including CABA via its regional advisor. It is not envisaged that wider consultation with residents, neighbours and other stakeholders will be necessary at this stage.

Outputs

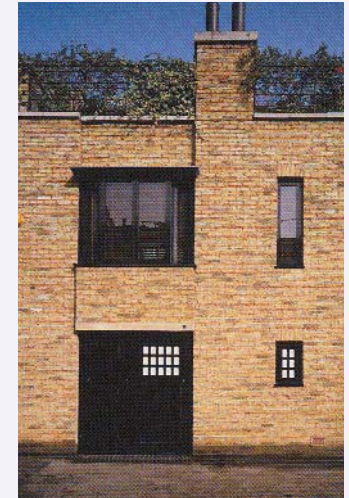
Ten copies of the final masterplan document, including all associated plans, together with an electronic version of all documentation.

4.1.3 Outline Design and Masterplan

- This stage of design work will broadly correspond to the RIBA Workstage C.
- The Design team will further develop the selected design Option into an Outline Design and Masterplan for the site.
- The Masterplan will be generated as a 3 dimensional urban design, with supplementary sketches, models, (CAD and/or physical) illustrations and precedents.
- The Masterplan and Outline Design will be accompanied by an Outline Design Statement which will:
 - explain/amplify key design characteristics and themes and include preliminary information on mix, density, open space provision, access and movement, landscape and context etc.
 - Explain how the Masterplan will deliver the Vision by evaluation against the Objectives/Performance criteria contained within the Brief.
- A Report will accompany the Masterplan and Outline Design which will include preliminary indications of an appropriate delivery strategy, referring to issues of procurement and programme; cost evaluation and funding strategy. A post-completion, management strategy will also be included.

Consultation and Assessment

- Dialogue with other members of the Project team will be continuous throughout this stage.
- It is envisaged that liaison and consultation at the completion of and during this stage of the design work will be more intensive and extensive than for Stage 1 design work. It will include:
 - Assessment, led by OMBC and EP, that the proposed design meets the Vision and the Performance Criteria contained within the Brief. Engagement with the local Design Panel and potentially CABA nationally at an appropriate time will be critical at this stage. -Assessment by the direct Client bodies, led by Gleeson Regeneration and Contour Housing, that the proposed scheme meets their criteria for marketability, and in particular Section 7 of the Brief.



- Consultation with Council members and other council project teams and departments, as necessary.
- Preliminary ECO Homes assessments.
- A preliminary CABI assessment (see above).
- Consultation with the local community, neighbours and other stakeholders, building on already established local groups and organizations but also through an appropriate programme of open meetings, to be agreed.

4.1.4 Final (Planning Application) Design

- This stage of design work will broadly correspond to RIBA Workstage D.
- The Design Team will develop/amend the Outline Design and Masterplan, incorporating outcomes from the consultation and assessment exercises outlined above, into a fully developed, three dimensional design, sufficiently detailed for the purpose of submitting a Full Planning Application.
- The final design will include all aspects of the housing and urban design proposals in sufficient detail to demonstrate thoroughly how the project will deliver the Vision and meet the Objectives/Performance Criteria established in the Brief.
- Final details of dwelling types, sizes and numbers will be established by the Stage 3 design.
- The final design will be accompanied by a Final Design Statement which will amplify/expand the design issues referred to in the Outline Design Statement prepared in Stage 2.
- An accompanying report will finalise all details of project delivery including programme, procurement, cost viability, funding and management strategy.

Outputs

Ten copies of the feasibility/option analysis report, including all associated plans, together with an electronic version of all documentation.



4.2 Reference Documents

Affordable Housing - Better by Design, Housing Corporation and CABE
Analysis of waiting lists for the area held by FCHO and Contour Housing Group
A Sustainability Checklist for Developments: A Common Framework for Developers and Local Authorities: BRE, DTLR, DTI
Breaking Old Ground: BURA Guide to Contaminated Land Assessment and Development: BURA, NHBC, RICS Foundation
Building Sustainable Communities for Housing Market Renewal: CABE, et al 2003
By Design. Better Places to Live; A companion to PPG3: DTLR and CABE
By Design. Urban design in the planning system; towards better practice: DETR and CABE
Creating Sustainable Communities: ODPM
Designing Out Crime; Secured by Design
DETR Home Zones: A Planning and Design Handbook: Mike Biddulph
EcoHomes: The Environmental Rating for Homes: BRE
Environmental Site Layout Planning: Solar Access, Microclimate and Passive Cooling in Urban Areas: BRE, JOULE, DETR
The Green Guide to Specification: BRE
The Green Guide to Housing Specification: BRE
Home Zone Design Guidelines: Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers
Housing Market Renewal Prospectus for the Oldham and Rochdale Pathfinder (December 2003)
Meeting Part M and Designing Lifetime Homes: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Oldham Borough Council's Neighbourhood Profile for Central Oldham, Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action
Perceptions of Privacy & Density in Housing: Design for Homes, Popular Housing Research
Places, Streets & Movement: A Companion Guide to Design Bulletin 32:
Planning For Passive Solar Design: BRECSU (BRE), DTI, DETR
Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3): DTLR
Results of the MORI Survey commissioned by OMBC
Results of market research commissioned by Gleeson Regeneration
Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention: ODPH & Home Office 2004
Scheme Development Standards: Fifth Edition: Housing Corporation
Towards an Urban Renaissance: Final Report of the Urban Task Force: Design and Density
Urban Design Compendium: English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation
Urban Design Guidance: Urban Design Group

