Manchester City Council
Report for Information

Report To: Economy Scrutiny Committee – 5 September 2012

Subject: Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley Planning and Development Framework – Outcome of Public Consultation

Report of: The Chief Executive
The Head of Strategic Development

Summary

This report seeks to inform the Economy Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of the public consultation with local businesses and residents with respect to the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley Draft Planning and Development Framework.

It also seeks the views of the Scrutiny Committee’s approval and endorsement of the revised Planning and Development Framework for Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley.

Recommendations

1. Note the comments received from local businesses, residents and other stakeholders in this report; and

2. Approve the concept, vision and regeneration principles set out in the revised Planning and Development Framework with the intention that it is taken into account by the Planning and Highways Committee when determining future planning applications relating to these areas.

Wards Affected:

Cheetham, Harpurhey, Miles Platting, Newton Heath

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Strategy Spine</th>
<th>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Performance of the economy of the region and sub region</td>
<td>Investment in the regeneration of the area will contribute to meeting the new build housing targets for the City and city region and thereby play a key role in the City’s economic development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaching full potential in education and employment</td>
<td>Significant long term investment in the area will be targeted to attract employment opportunities for local people building on work already undertaken by the regeneration team for the area</td>
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Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect

Estate redesign and environmental improvements will improve connectivity across the Collyhurst estate and help design out crime and thereby improve the quality of life for local people.

Neighbourhoods of Choice

The regeneration of the area will provide a greater tenure mix, increased housing choice and an improved environment that will promote Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley as a neighbourhood of choice.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue
None

Financial Consequences – Capital
None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

2. Report to the Executive (6\textsuperscript{th} April 2011) – ‘Procurement of capital works to deliver decent homes to Council Housing.


1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council has previously endorsed the regeneration of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley as a strategic priority for North Manchester, Manchester and the wider region.

1.2 The transformation of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley is a significant residential and commercial development priority for Manchester’s next phase of transformation. The vision is to create a high quality sustainable place with a distinct modern identity and to build on its locational advantage in order to expand and diversify the residential market in the City Centre. Key objectives include increasing the local population by 10,000 residents over the next ten years and developing a series of neighbourhoods that are exemplars of low carbon development within Manchester.

This ambitious vision is underpinned by two strategic objectives –

- The area will be an attractive place offering a diversity of housing choice for working households with easy access to public and private services, leisure and cultural facilities;
- Existing residents can continue to benefit from the prosperity and jobs being created in the city region.

1.3 In October 2011 Executive approved a draft Planning and Development Framework to take to consultation with key stakeholders. The Framework is intended to provide the spatial, planning and policy context for this area of the City. This report provides feedback on the outcomes of this consultation together with a revised document for approval.

2.0 Public Consultation - Responses

2.1 The consultation exercise relating to the draft Framework was managed alongside the public consultation in relation to the refresh of the North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF). There is a separate report elsewhere on the agenda in relation to the outcome of the SRF refresh public consultation. The North Manchester SRF and the Collyhurst/ Lower Irk Valley Planning and Development Framework taken together provide the planning and policy context for the continued growth and regeneration of the northern parts of the City. Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley together with other parts of North Manchester provide significant opportunities at scale for new residential developments in support of the city’s growth objectives.

2.2 The public consultation enabled key stakeholders to discuss and give their views on the proposed vision, objectives and priorities outlined in the draft Planning and Development Framework. Engagement was achieved via open days in local venues, drop in sessions, face to face meetings and feedback via the City Council’s web site.

2.3 A total of 137 written responses were received from residents and businesses during the public consultation period, which closed over the summer.
2.4 The responses received from local businesses, residents and other stakeholders fall into 4 broad subject categories:

- General principles
- Residential Issues and Services Provision
- Public Realm and Infrastructure
- Businesses and Employment

2.5 These responses are summarised in the section below.

3.0 General principles

3.1 Residents and local businesses were asked if the vision, objectives and key proposals for the area were the right ones.

3.2 The feedback confirmed that:

- The Vision and objectives were on the whole welcomed and there is a recognition that Collyhurst as a place had not secured the levels of investment which other neighbourhoods had over the last couple of decades.
- Some businesses and employers felt that the draft document did not give enough weighting to their importance within the area and that more emphasis needed to be made on retaining and creating jobs with established local employers.
- There was some scepticism that the place could be transformed without a concerted effort to improve the image of the area and that it would prove difficult to attract the levels of investment required unless some initial improvements could be seen in the short term.

4.0 Residential Issues and Services Provision

4.1 The need to address the implications of population growth now and for the future was identified as crucial to any future development. Residents and businesses were pleased the draft framework acknowledged their concerns around the need to improve local services. These included shops, better medical facilities, the need to improve or upgrade existing primary schools and community based facilities for children and young adults.

4.2 The majority of stakeholders shared the view that there was a need to address crime and vandalism by redesigning elements of the existing layout of the Collyhurst estate.

4.3 Residents stressed the importance of completing the Decent Homes Improvement Programme which begun across the Collyhurst estate in 2010.

4.4 Having new homes built within the vicinity was seen as a positive as long as they provided the right mix of affordable homes for rent and purchase. It was also stressed that the type of new homes built should be of a good standard and quality that would deliver improved efficiency and lower energy bills.
5.0 Public Realm & Infrastructure

5.1 Stakeholders agreed with the principle of improving transport links and connectivity to other areas of the city in order to make the area more attractive to working families wanting to remain or settle in the area.

5.2 Respondents also agreed with suggestions to improve existing green spaces and parks and making the most of the river side location for the area to realise its full potential. The unique geographic feature of the Irk valley was highlighted as a key attraction within the area.

6.0 Local Businesses

6.1 Local employers provided some support for the overall initiative but with some elements of doubt and concerns expressed around the implications for local jobs and businesses in the area.

6.2 It was recognised by many taking part in the consultation, that in the current economic climate it would be a challenge for the City Council to bring investor partners on board.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The overall outcome of the consultation was supportive of the vision and priorities and the framework document has been updated to take account of the views summarised in the paragraphs above.

7.2 The context within which the draft Planning and Development Framework is being developed is fully consistent with the Council's regeneration objectives for the city. The Framework will sit alongside the Local Development Framework and the North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework to support the longer term future development of the area and to be taken into account by the Planning and Highways Committee when determining future planning applications relating to these areas.

7.3 An OJEU compliant procurement process has now started in order to attract investment partners to deliver the initiative and a report will be brought back on the outcomes of this process once completed.

8.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

8.1 New developments within the area will comply with DFA2 requirements and improvements to the road and pedestrian routes will improve access to and within the area

(b) Risk Management
8.2 The programmes and projects under the responsibility of the City Council will comply with the Manchester Method and thereby have robust risk management processes in place.

(c) Legal Considerations

8.3 The programme will be delivered following standard practice on the procurement of physical regeneration projects. A representative from the City Solicitor will continue to advise on legal aspects of the area’s regeneration and is a member of the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley Programme Board.
Planning and Development Framework for Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley

October 2012
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1. Introduction

Background and Purpose of this Document

1.1 This document presents a Planning and Development Framework to guide the future regeneration and development of the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley areas of North Manchester.

1.2 It builds on the City Council’s emerging Core Strategy and Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for North Manchester and progresses earlier work presented in the Irk Valley Local Plan, the Collyhurst Local Plan and Public Finance Initiative proposal.

1.3 The Framework seeks to position the strategic opportunity presented by the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley areas of North Manchester by utilising the strategic evidence base to make a case for investment in this important location on the northern edge of the city centre. North Manchester is extremely well located to undertake the role of offering high quality residential neighbourhoods with easy access to the significant employment opportunities in the wider sub region eg, City Centre, Etihad Campus, Airport, Salford Quays etc (circa 100,000 new jobs to be created across the city region in the next 20 years). The document provides an analysis of the physical and socio-economic characteristics of the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley areas and sets out the strategic context and policy framework that will underpin future development under the headings set out below.

- Development context
- Vision and opportunity
- Strategic regeneration priority
- Neighbourhood Types
- Issues and Challenges
- Development, Design and Phasing
- Summary

1.4 Figure 1 is an aerial photograph illustrating the location of the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst initiative area.
1.5 Figure 1: Aerial view of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley
2. Development Context

2.1 Figure 2 illustrates the location of the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst. The plan shows the strategic road and rail routes that serve the area together with some of the key development projects and proposals within close proximity.

2.2 The Lower Irk Valley is very well positioned with excellent transport links via road, rail, metrolink connections to the wider sub region and major employment areas such as Etihad Campus, Central Business Park, the Airport and Airport Enterprise Zone, Salford Quays and a plethora of new and existing city centre commercial development initiatives notably Spinningfields, NOMA and Victoria Station.
3. **Vision and Opportunity**

3.1 The transformation of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley is a significant residential and commercial development priority for Manchester’s next phase of transformation. The vision is to create a high quality sustainable place with a distinct modern identity to build on its locational advantage in order to expand and diversify the residential market in the city centre. Key objectives include increasing the local population by 10,000 residents over the next ten years and developing a series of neighbourhoods that are exemplars of low carbon development within Manchester.

3.2 This ambitious vision is underpinned by two strategic objectives -

- The area will be an attractive place offering a diversity of housing choice for working households with easy access to public and private services, leisure and cultural facilities;

- Existing residents can continue to benefit from the prosperity and jobs being created in the city region.

3.3 The regional centre and neighbourhoods immediately surrounding it are critically important to the ongoing regeneration of North Manchester and the wider Greater Manchester (GM) conurbation. Investment in North Manchester over the last decade has been successful in providing greater quality neighbourhoods and housing for working families reversing the trend of population decline, developing greater connectivity to surrounding employment opportunities in the sub region and growing the local tax economy of the inner city.

3.4 The regeneration of the area is an exciting opportunity due in part to the availability of well connected development land which will be brought to market through a range of new and innovative development models designed to develop investor and resident confidence in this important area. The area is also very well positioned to take advantage of its location adjacent to the City Centre and in particular the planned investment in the NOMA, Victoria Station and Strangeways initiatives which combined will offer a significant number of jobs. It is envisaged that the Initiative within the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst will provide over 2,000 new homes, the refurbishment of over 1000 existing properties, improved retail and public services provision, including schools, enhanced transport and pedestrian routes together with open space and local environment improvements.
3.5 The regeneration of Collyhurst will help to repopulate the area by a combination of investment in the existing homes, the provision of new housing and replacing some of the current poor quality housing stock with an attractive housing offer available across a range of price bands and tenures.

3.6 The Lower Irk Valley area is underdeveloped and as such presents an exciting opportunity to create a new mixed residential and employment area which could become an exemplar in low carbon standards. This framework seeks to capitalise on the assets of the river valley and deliver a modern, vibrant new community with attractive green space and excellent walking/cycling facilities for residents wishing to live in a high quality environment on the edge of the city. The area also houses a range of indigenous employment uses together with businesses which rely on the city centre and provide a significant number of jobs for local people. The redevelopment of the area will work with existing businesses to safeguard local employment and ensure appropriate employment uses are integrated with the longer term aspirations. In this sense Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley provide a truly unique opportunity to deliver a new community with exceptional environmental credentials.

3.7 Manchester City Council and its partners have created the appropriate platform for the area’s regeneration through direct investment in major infrastructure improvements such as new roads, schools and community facilities plus significant improvements to open spaces and the local environment. Transport for Greater Manchester are also investing in a new Metrolink line and major bus improvements (including a new Quality Bus Corridor) to and from the Lower Irk Valley / Collyhurst. These improvements will provide speedy connections to the city centre and other major employment areas, opening up the labour market to residents and businesses alike.

3.8 The Council’s Local Development Framework identifies the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst as a key Strategic Housing Location which has major capacity for change. The Vision involves the development of a number of large capacity co-located sites, where pressure in the market can be used to support regeneration objectives and where major transformation is already underway. The area has a major advantage - the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst have within their boundary a substantial asset in terms of land - including a high proportion in public ownership close to existing employment, which is unparalleled anywhere in the city region.

3.9 The Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst therefore provide a significant opportunity to redevelop, repopulate and redefine a large and under utilised area in order to meet
the City’s economic objectives for future growth. This attractive opportunity has the potential to make the most of existing assets (including public land and transport access) and reinforce key employment drivers across the city region.

3.10 Strategic investment in Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley has the potential to trigger capacity, economic dynamism, and a significant level of existing investment to deliver a new and sustainable community in the heart of North Manchester, Manchester and the city region. Critically, it is also the place where investment in housing and commercial space has the potential to have a direct impact on local economic activity. Together these drivers can come together to deliver transformational change of a lasting and sustainable nature in this so far underdeveloped area of the City.

3.11 Experience has taught us that in areas of Manchester where there has been a sustained regeneration effort, some communities have been able to buck the inner-area tendency of high disconnection from the labour market. Hulme is perhaps the best example of this. Our Vision is that Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley will be the next.
4. **Strategic Regeneration Priority**

4.1 Manchester is one of only six local authority areas in England (and the only one outside the South East) to have recorded population growth of over 10% in the five year period 2005-10.\(^1\) A combination of this and the propensity of available (part publicly owned residential development) land means that inner areas of the City, such as Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley, will continue to be the focus for most of the City Region’s population growth over the next twenty years.

4.2 The emerging Core Strategy for Manchester prioritises housing development at Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley as one of a minority of locations capable of delivering new housing development at the required scale to keep pace with population and employment growth in an exceptionally well connected location close to job opportunities.

4.3 Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley offer a number of opportunity sites with the potential to drive the continued regeneration of the regional centre and deliver on growth objectives. This Framework also offers the opportunity to diversify the current housing offer and add to the mix by providing choice to current and potential residents.

4.4 The Regeneration of the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst is therefore a key strategic priority for the economic well-being of not only Manchester but also the wider Greater Manchester conurbation and North West Region. The Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst have the potential to link the city centre with North Manchester, potentially providing an illuminating economic transition into the north of the City. This proposition is reflected in the development partnership led by Manchester City Council with the support of the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and Network Rail, who have significant land interests in the Lower Irk Valley which they are keen to develop for residential uses.

4.5 The next Section of this framework outlines the Council’s corporate objectives, policies and plans and highlights the synergies between the Lower Irk Valley, Collyhurst and allied regeneration initiatives across the city centre, city region and wider North West.

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\(^1\) Office for National Statistics – UK Population Growth 2010
Greater Manchester is the UK’s largest city in both population and economic terms after London. Greater Manchester is in the top 20% largest economies (by GVA) in the European Union, with GVA growth over the last decade behind only Dublin, Helsinki (both capital cities) and Barcelona.2

Following strong growth over the past decade, the conurbation generated around £46 billion per annum of total GVA, almost a fifth of the total economic output of the North of England, and created over 90,000 additional jobs (1998–2008).3

The Greater Manchester conurbation is the most densely populated part of the region, with over 3 million people living in an area of 1,200 km². Manchester with a population of approximately half a million, is the largest of the ten Greater Manchester districts, but in a relatively small area of 117 km².

Manchester suffered a decline in employment from the 1950s reflecting a changing industrial base and consequent employment patterns. This triggered a decline in the local population, economic activity and community infrastructure, leaving a process of economic restructuring which remains underway today.

Today a number of residents still suffer from socio-economic deprivation levels that are amongst the worst in the UK. Deprivation is particularly acute in North Manchester, with Harpurhey ranked the second most deprived ward in the country.4 Worklessness currently affects nearly a quarter of the working-age population. Providing housing close to jobs at Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley will not in itself solve this problem, but the impetus it provides is one element of the City’s approach to addressing economic inactivity; a key objective of the Community Strategy.

Much of the City’s deprivation is focused around the conurbation core. However, this also provides the focus of many of the major growth opportunities within the City. For example, in recent years population decline has been reversed and a strong correlation has emerged between new build housing and those areas of the conurbation that have seen a growth in the number of working households. Delivery of new high quality housing close to forecast future jobs is therefore seen as a fundamental component of efforts to support regeneration and reduce dependency locally.

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2 Eurostat 2010  
3 Office for National Statistics – Regional, sub-regional and local gross value added - 2009  
4 Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011 Update
4.12 Over the next twenty years it is predicted that 100,000 additional jobs will be created across the city region. Opportunities including those at the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst will play a vital role in delivering these jobs and in doing so will lead the economic recovery of Manchester and the wider city region.

4.13 The City is committed to breaking the relationship between poor quality housing, poverty and worklessness that currently exists in a number of inner area communities. This framework therefore aims to create neighbourhoods of choice which meet the needs of existing communities as well as being attractive to new and former economically active residents from elsewhere.

**The Community Strategy - Manchester A World Class City**

4.14 Three key objectives are at the core of the Manchester Community Strategy. All Mancunians:

- will reach their full potential in education and employment;
- will enjoy individual and collective self esteem and mutual respect;
- will live in neighbourhoods of choice.

4.15 Success will be judged by the following criteria:

- There will be more people living in Manchester;
- They will live longer, healthier and happier lives;
- They will be wealthier;
- The city will be one of mixed communities;
- It will be diverse and stable.

4.16 The Council will achieve these objectives by promoting and supporting sustainable communities, delivering high quality services and developing strong partnerships to promote initiatives of real, long term benefit and by actively involving local people. These ambitions are described in more detail in a suite of Strategic Regeneration Frameworks covering the North, East and South of the city.

**North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework**

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5 GM Local Economic Assessment Commission for the New Economy 2011
4.17 In Manchester the conurbation core is the focus of economic restructuring and growth, offering the largest office market outside London and an environment that is attractive to financial & professional services, with the connectivity and infrastructure to attract the skilled labour needed by these sectors from across Greater Manchester and beyond.

4.18 Located on the north eastern side of the regional centre, Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley include amongst their neighbours, Central Salford with the adjacent development of Salford Quays/ Trafford Wharfside which has a mixed office, industrial and logistics offer, and includes MediaCityUK, with a specific focus upon the BBC, creative & digital industries. On the Eastern side the Commonwealth Games legacy is transforming SportCity and the Etihad Campus into a world class sporting destination in partnership with Manchester City FC. To the South and Wythenshawe, Oxford Road, where the Corridor Manchester comprises Europe’s largest concentration of knowledge assets, including Universities, hospitals, and Manchester Science Park, the Airport and Enterprise Zone. Finally, one of the UK’s top ranked retail offers is within easy reach in the city centre. The refreshed 2011 Strategic Regeneration Framework for North Manchester sets out the vision to “create a series of high quality sustainable communities each providing a broad range of living facilities and services that meet the life demands of existing and new residents.” This vision is underpinned by two key objectives relating to people and place.

- Residents will fully benefit from the prosperity and jobs in North Manchester, the City and across Greater Manchester
- North Manchester will be an attractive place to live and raise a family, with easy access to public services, leisure and cultural opportunities.

4.19 North Manchester is located on the doorstep of all these key developments, a number which are located within the boundary itself. These Projects include:

- A £30m academy in Collyhurst with 1200 places. The new school is sponsored by British Telecom as a communication academy and opened in September 2010;
- Significant investment in existing housing stock within Collyhurst by Northwards Housing over the next 4 years to bring these houses up to the Decent Homes Standard. This will add to over £14m investment already made by Urban Splash to refurbish three residential towers in Collyhurst to create 186 one and two bedroom apartments for sale.
Two new metro-stations and quality bus routes along Rochdale Road, improving access to the City Centre, Airport, MediaCity:UK and other major employment areas. Planning permission has been obtained for the two stations and works are expected to be complete by 2012;

- Development of a new 400,000 sq.ft national headquarters of the Co-operative Group in proximity to the city centre accommodating 3000 staff.

4.20 A series of complementary interventions have been put in place to provide pathways into employment and training within the area. These include CIS / NOMA, the Strangeways redevelopment, Victoria Station, Manchester Fort and the Central Retail Park. It is in this local employment context that this framework seeks to identify a development platform for a new community able to access all of these key employment markets around the City and sustain the local businesses already located in Collyhurst.

4.21 The vision and objectives of the SRF are tied to five strategic investment opportunities across North Manchester. The first of these opportunities is the existing neighbourhood of Collyhurst together with the Lower Irk Valley. It is noted that these areas provide significant opportunity for housing growth and investment and will therefore make a major contribution to Greater Manchester’s housing requirements over the next twenty years.

Collyhurst and Irk Valley Local Plans

4.22 The Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley Local Plans flow from the North Manchester SRF and provide the strategy for transformation by identifying long-term regeneration priorities and actions. The Local Plans were developed through collaborative engagement based upon community consultation exercises and workshops with Stakeholders.

4.23 The Collyhurst Local Plan was approved by the Council in December 2006 and the Vision and key points remain the same. The regeneration of Collyhurst is of major importance in driving investment from the city centre northwards into Harpurhey and has guided physical change and investment within the area in line with established objectives and priorities. It also provides a framework for the co-ordination and implementation of services.
4.24 The Irk Valley Local Plan identifies the Irk Valley as a location for residential development and open space/recreational use. In this way it should be consolidated as a corridor in which employment, recreation and housing can co-exist.

4.25 The proposals contained within this framework provide a platform to link the two plans with a new economic development strategy for the whole of the north of the City. By connecting the land assets of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley with the labour market in the city centre, this development framework has the potential to bridge areas threatened by worklessness and economic inactivity with areas of prosperity and opportunity. In doing this, the framework looks to link objectives in the Collyhurst Local Plan with Manchester’s wider economic success, an essential regeneration outcome for both residents, business and employers locally.

**A Sustainable Solution**

4.26 The regeneration of Collyhurst and the lower Irk Valley will be driven by its physical transformation. The creation of neighbourhoods of choice will contribute to the economic growth of the city and reconnect the area into the wider urban fabric.

4.27 However if a new community is to be delivered which meets the quality standards required, the natural environment as well as the bricks and mortar have to be improved. In addition to the prudent use of natural resources, any new development will need to be environmentally sensitive and exceptionally well connected through high quality public space and sustainable walking and cycling routes.

4.28 Improving the quality of open space that links neighbourhoods to each other and to adjoining areas is critical to the success of the framework. At present, much of the open space within Collyhurst is disjointed, poorly defined and unused. It is often poorly lit, lacks adequate maintenance and is hidden from view which has led to concerns about personal safety and antisocial behaviour.

4.29 However, the area contains excellent opportunities to use open space as a means of connecting neighbourhoods, creating a distinct identity and developing a modern attractive landscape setting for residential development and recreational facilities. The Irk Valley and its tributary Moston Brook for instance link together a network of open spaces across North Manchester from the city centre to Heaton Park.

4.30 The challenge is to create a much clearer-defined open-space structure that links the residential areas via streets to local play areas, sports areas, parks and open spaces.
It is essential that the open space is of a higher quality, better maintained, safer and more secure.

4.31 The existing green infrastructure across the Irk Valley provides the perfect platform to develop the green, open space credentials of new development. Going forward this framework looks to support work to protect and enhance parks as ecological assets and key destinations with a range of quality recreational facilities including active (sports and play spaces) and passive (nature trails and natural parks) functions.

4.32 Creating a riverside trail within the Irk Valley and a recreational route along the disused railway line will go some way to improving the image and identity of parks and green spaces contributing to a revitalised community spirit, a sense of place and quality townscapes that are attractive to new and existing residents.
5. Collyhurst Neighbourhoods

5.1 This section presents the context for regeneration and development within the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley areas together with an analysis of the various characteristics of the different neighbourhoods.

5.2 The Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst are located adjacent to a number of suburbs that are currently in the process of regeneration. The Miles Platting PFI area lies to the south and east of Collyhurst and is currently undergoing comprehensive redevelopment, with 1,520 homes already refurbished and an additional 1,000 family homes to be built over the medium term. The area is also within easy reach of the major Sport City development in East Manchester. To the north of Collyhurst lies Harpurhey, and the recently opened Manchester Communication Academy.

5.3 Currently the Lower Irk Valley comprises a mixture of derelict and underutilised sites, some active employment uses, car parks, open space and a number of housing sites (both recently developed and vacant sites). Many of the sites are in multiple ownership with large pieces of land in the southern part of the area owned by the Council and Network Rail.

5.4 Together, Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley offer the opportunity to respond to the mix of pressures across the whole market ranging from urban living in the regional centre, through a mix of family, affordable and professional housing in the city centre fringe, to quality areas of choice in more suburban settings.

5.5 The social housing in these areas, with the exception of the maisonettes which are due to be demolished and possibly some of the cottage flats, will be improved to the decent homes standard during the next 4 years (subject to government funding).

5.6 Collyhurst can be divided into a number of sub areas.

- The edge of city centre where economic and demographic conditions have converged to accommodate a younger and, over time, more affluent population. These areas are shifting the traditional extent of the private rented sector and offer an urban living lifestyle which can not be replicated elsewhere in the city region. This locality has seen significant investment and provides a key opportunity to create places which bridge the transition from apartment led urban living, adjoining the centre, to new ‘family-friendly’ central locations.
- **The Lower Irk Valley** which has over 2 decades, emerged as a location of choice for some residential groups, and where diversification of tenure is now a key strategy as set out in the Collyhurst local Plan. The opportunity here is connected to the level of investment in place-making that has already gone into the area along with the significant investments such as the redeveloped CIS and Metrolink. This area has huge potential to create new residential neighbourhoods and a mix of employment uses taking advantage of the river valley, location and access to jobs.

- **Northern parts of Collyhurst** where a well connected residential environment for families could be created, taking advantage of the existing green space and open topography of the Lower Irk Valley area. These neighbourhoods to the north of the regional centre have the potential to provide real areas of choice for people to live. The adjacent neighbourhoods of Higher Broughton, Broughton Park, Prestwich, Crumpsall and Cheetham Hill have a hugely diverse range of properties the strengths of which could be replicated, along with excellent transport connections and relatively affordable prices. Development around these clusters has the potential to act as an affordable counter-balance to the housing demand and pressure more evident in the southern half of the conurbation.
6. Issues and Challenges

Existing Housing Stock

6.1 Amongst the most challenging issue (for the northern parts of Collyhurst in particular) is poor quality housing stock. Throughout the postwar period, the domination of council owned homes has meant that the neighbourhood has lacked choice and in recent years this has contributed to a loss of population, particularly working households. Existing residents who have wanted to purchase their first property, or move to a larger property, have had little option but to move out of the area and this has played a significant role in the area’s overall decline.

6.2 At present, there is a significant tenure imbalance, with 89% of the 1,418 homes in the area in council ownership. Additionally, the layout is poor creating an inward looking community which has become increasingly isolated from the wider area.

6.3 The quality of the housing and the available tenure options offered are intrinsically linked to the attractiveness of the neighbourhood and its ability to support new and existing working households in the the area. Developments in similar locations in the City such as at Beswick and in Moss Side have demonstrated that a higher quality and improved local housing offer has the potential to significantly improve a number of neighbourhoods across the conurbation core. Major intervention and improvements to existing homes is therefore required to address the existing tenure imbalance and poor layout so as to initiate the wider regeneration and repopulation of the neighbourhood.

Housing Demand

6.4 The recent economic downturn and its consequent effects on local housing supply suggest that housing and regeneration efforts must be more than ever highly integrated with the economic development strategy for the City. Where this has been done successfully in other places it has demonstrated that where efforts have been made to improve housing stock, local economic stimulus has followed with positive effects for business and the council tax base across the City.

6.5 Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley are well located to access to transport and employment in the regional centre. In addition, population and household growth suggests that over the next twenty years internally generated demographic demand
will lead to a particular growth in demand for smaller households. House building needs to cater for an ageing population along with the young adult groups who need an affordable sales market close to jobs. Moreover, economic sectors set to grow in the recovery will include substantial groups of people whose housing needs could be met by Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley if the product is right.

6.6 Substantial new housing supply remains a vital need in the inner city neighbourhoods. Recent reviews of land availability demonstrate that Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley combined provide capacity for circa 2420 homes (with a significant potential New Homes Bonus revenue stream attached) across a site area of approx 75.43 ha.

6.7 Affordable housing options will also remain an important part of the mix. Some of these households, including families and first-time buyers face multiple barriers to entering owner occupation. Taking many forms, including direct financial incentives, shared ownership, shared equity or rent-to-buy, these initiatives which improve pathways to owner-occupation will be an important part of the strategy in the redefined Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley, to get the City’s housing market to function more fluidly again.

Viability of future development and managing risk

6.8 Clearly, development viability is a key consideration in delivering future regeneration in the area. A soft market testing exercise has indicated that there is strong market interest in these areas from a variety of private sector operators keen to work in partnership with the City and other landowners, in order to deliver transformational change across the wider area. Work is also underway to work alongside investors and lenders to explore innovative models to deliver housing and minimise the challenges presented by lack of finance. This work is ongoing and will help support the delivery of the Framework objectives.
Improving Road and Pedestrian Access into the area

6.9 Road and pedestrian access into the area and connectivity to the wider environs needs to be improved together with the riverside environment which has strong potential to become a major attraction. However, the area is broadly well connected to the wider region by existing road networks, rail, metrolink and motorway links.

Ground conditions and the need for further site investigation work

6.10 Detailed site investigation information is available for the northern parts of Collyhurst but more work is required in those parts of the Lower irk Valley closest to the city centre.
7. Development Principles

Introduction

7.1 The following planning and design principles will guide the future regeneration and development of the area. These principles respond to the vision articulated in Section 3 of this document together with the strategic and policy context and local analysis summarised in sections 2 and 4.

7.2 The planning and design principles have been used to inform the planning and development framework described in section 8.

Broad Principles - Housing

7.3 Fundamental to the regeneration of the LIV and Collyhurst areas is the restructuring of the housing market. As a strategic housing location there is an opportunity to diversify the housing offer with a particular emphasis on medium density (40-50 dwellings per hectare). There will be some flexibility to support those developments that contribute to the regeneration of the area, and in response to its location abutting the city centre. High density, sustainable and well designed developments are therefore likely to be appropriate in parts of the Lower Irk Valley, (typically 75 units per hectare). However the provision of family homes should remain the focus. New housing development must not be viewed in isolation and proposals should be designed having regard to the wider context and townscape. It is the character of an area and its relationship with neighbouring existing or emerging developments that will also determine appropriate densities and form.

7.4 There is currently a limited housing choice, predominantly limited to apartment development in the city fringe and Council housing in the north. The Planning and Development Framework seeks to create a mix of housing types and tenure across the area to:

- Deliver an attractive range of new homes that will provide flexible accommodation to meet the lifetime requirements of individuals and families looking to stay or move to the area;
- Replace housing stock that is either obsolete or in low demand with modern and attractive homes that meet the requirements of residents;
- Achieve the Decent Homes Standard in the existing stock to be retained.
- Develop underused land within the Council housing to increase residential densities and provide quality family housing of mixed tenure and
- Remodel some areas of the Council housing to improve housing choice, roads access, address anti-social behaviour, poor quality of life and reconnect these neighbourhoods back into the wider area.
- Develop a mix of high quality housing types and tenures and in particular increase the proportion of family housing for owner occupation across the rest of the area;
- Improve the quality of development along the Rochdale Road frontage;
- Integrate the development of apartments across the City Fringe, the most southern part of the Lower Irk Valley and opportunity sites along Rochdale Road;
- Provide a range of quality homes that people can afford to live in. This involves developing different affordable housing and shared equity options, seeking to ensure that there is no differentiation in the quality of houses of different tenure;
- Bring the latest in design innovation to new property development in the area that meets the latest design, green low carbon and quality standards;

**Broad Principles - Planning**

7.5 There are currently negative perceptions attached to parts of the area particularly around the social housing in the north. The following planning principles seek to create a new community which is able to:

- create an identity and sense of place that makes a positive contribution to the urban fabric of the City;
- create high quality mixed neighbourhoods as gateways to North Manchester building on the exceptional locational advantages close to the city centre within the landscape of the Irk Valley and the unique feature of the River Irk;
- create and sustain neighbourhoods of choice that can attract and retain an economically active population;
- create a place where people and families want to live and invest with good access to employment and training opportunities, providing high quality local services and schools with active and involved residents;
- develop an environmentally sustainable area with improved energy efficiency;
• create socially integrated neighbourhoods by improving the choice, quality and mix of housing, providing modern homes for rent and sale at a range of values, types and sizes retaining existing residents and attracting newcomers;
• reduce the incidence of crime and disorder and create safe and secure neighbourhoods through excellence in design and neighbourhood management;
• Bring derelict and under utilised brownfield sites back into productive use to create new residential communities in close proximity to the city centre that will transform the character of the LIV area;
• Work to ensure that existing employment uses across the study area are sustainable over the longer term;
• Create new mixed employment and residential neighbourhoods; and
• Enhance development presence at key arrival points into the area.
8. Development Framework

8.1 This section presents the Development Framework for the Collyhurst and the Irk Valley areas (Figure 3). The Plan identifies key development opportunities that have the potential to deliver over 2,000 new homes over the next 10-15 years together with improvements to the environment, infrastructure and local services and retail offer.

8.2 This plan presents a concept for delivering the vision for the area and highlights the following key proposals:

- Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley should both be developed through an integrated vision and masterplan for the whole area in order to create sufficient scale to attract investment provide new and improved homes, open spaces, community facilities and shops.
- Across the whole area approximately 2400 new homes could be built, at least 350 of which could be built in the northern parts of Collyhurst.
- There are early opportunities to develop new homes on existing council owned land at Osborne Street, Hammerton Road, Paget Street and on the Rochdale Road frontages.
- The decent homes improvements to existing Council homes will continue in line with the already agreed programme.
- All new developments and improvement works will seek to implement opportunities to reduce and deter crime.
- A new development providing space for local retail and community services of between 6000 to 10000 square metres should be provided along Rochdale Road next to existing shops and facilities to create a new local cluster.
- There are a number of key road and pedestrian/cycle routes that connect the area to the city centre and north Manchester which need to be retained and improved. New or improved routes which provide better access and circulation around Collyhurst Village in particular are also needed And should be evaluated.
- Open public spaces that reinforce the unique identity of Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley will be enhanced.
- Investment will seek to create employment opportunities for local people building on work already undertaken in the area.
New developments will include best practice in green design and technology, including water and waste management, and energy efficient technology.

Figure 3 - Development Framework

9. Delivery and Phasing

9.1 The planning and development framework has assessed the development opportunities for marketing and delivering housing, commercial and community projects in both the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst areas, including the opportunity to pool land assets and bring development opportunities to the market. This has
included a consultation exercise with developers and investors to seek their broad views on the development potential of this area.
10. **Summary**

10.1 This Planning and Development Framework has set out the context for development and presented the physical and socio-economic characteristics of the Collyhurst and Lower Irk Valley areas.

10.2 The vision is to create a high quality sustainable place with a distinct modern identity to build on its locational advantage in order to expand and diversify the residential market in the city centre. Key objectives include increasing the local population by 10,000 residents over the next ten years and developing a series of neighbourhoods that are exemplars of low carbon development within Manchester.

This ambitious vision is underpinned by two strategic objectives –

- The area will be an attractive place offering a diversity of housing choice for working households with easy access to public and private services, leisure and cultural facilities;

- Existing residents can continue to benefit from the prosperity and jobs being created in the city region.

10.3 The vision involves the development of a number of large co-located pieces of land, where pressure in the market can be used to support regeneration objectives and where major transformation is already underway. The Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst has within its boundary a substantial asset in terms of land - including a high proportion in public ownership close to existing employment, which is unparalleled anywhere in the city region.

10.4 In summary this Framework,

- Identifies the Lower Irk Valley and Collyhurst as one of only a minority of locations in the city region able to accommodate forecast population and employment growth over the next twenty years

- Identifies a series of opportunity sites which together can transform the housing offer and provide additional commercial development opportunities with the potential to renew and drive forward the economic recovery of Greater Manchester
• Takes advantage of the available and well connected development land which will be brought to market through a range of new and innovative development models designed to stimulate confidence in this area

• Connects the land assets of Collyhurst and the Lower Irk Valley with the labour market in the city centre providing a bridge between areas threatened by worklessness and economic inactivity with areas of prosperity and opportunity. The document also aims to safeguard local employment and integrate appropriate employment uses in line with the long term aspirations for the area

• Brings together the available land opportunity with a significant stock of existing investment to deliver a new and sustainable community in the heart of the city region

• Provides a platform to develop the relationship between new build housing and those areas of the conurbation that have seen growth in the number of working households

• Develops a diverse framework for sustainable urban living (including an apartment market for rent which has scope for growth) along with a mix of family, affordable and professional housing in more suburban settings

10.5 These localities include some of the most significant and strategically important land assets in Greater Manchester. They will be an important element in presenting a case for future Government support and their transformation along with the associated investment is as much about the economic impact as it is about the immediate place-shaping / housing market impact in the area.

10.6 The future development of the Irk Valley and Collyhurst will provide a new residential offer on the edge of the city centre and inner areas of North Manchester. These areas must once more contain the attributes which potential buyers value, so that people actively choose to live there. Nowhere else in the city-region contains the sites, investment in transport and other strategic infrastructure to provide the level of new housing required. This area also has an unparalleled access to employment opportunities within easy reach. The ambition contained in this development framework is therefore one which will enable the transformation of Collyhurst and the Irk Valley as a place for existing residents to thrive and contribute to the economic growth potential of Manchester and the City Region.