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Supplementary Planning Document

**Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area**

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

April 2007

Part of the **Local Development Framework** for Knowsley



## **STATEMENT OF SPD MATTERS**

### **Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Supplementary Planning Document**

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC) has prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide future development proposals for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area which is allocated in the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan under policy H3 - North Huyton and Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Areas.

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## **Chapter 1 - Purpose of the Supplementary Planning Document**

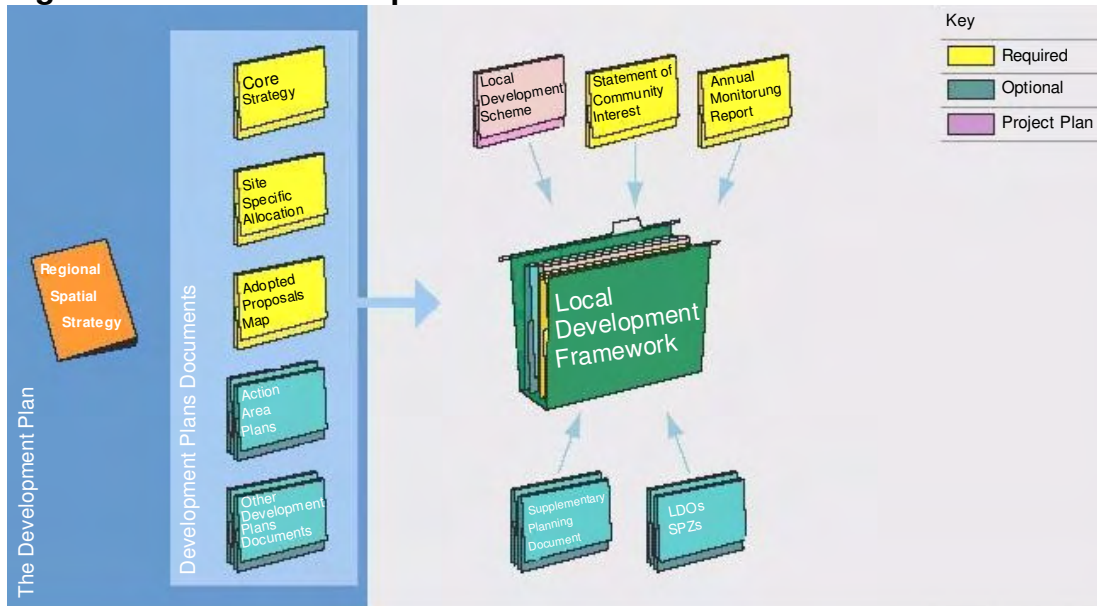
### **Introduction**

- 1.1 This document is the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area, as identified in the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
- 1.2 It forms part of the Knowsley Local Development Framework (LDF) but does not have development plan status. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the area covered by the Action Area.
- 1.3 Chapter 1 of this document describes the role that SPDs play in the development plan system and sets the context for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area SPD.

### **What is an SPD?**

- 1.4 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced changes to the form, content, and procedure for production of development plans. A portfolio of documents known as the Local Development Framework would replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). UDPs that were at an advanced state of production could continue under transitional arrangements. The policies contained within the UDP would be 'saved' for up to three years.
- 1.5 The Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan was adopted on 14 June 2006 under the transitional arrangements. The Tower Hill area of Kirkby was designated as an Action Area in the Knowsley Replacement UDP but this SPD is produced as a document to form part of the Local Development Framework.
- 1.6 The portfolio of documents that form the Local Development Framework include the Regional Spatial Strategy, Development Plan Documents, and non development plan documents including Supplementary Planning Documents. SPDs provide additional detail to policies contained within the development plan. They must not be used to allocate land.
- 1.7 The key documents, which form part of the Local Development Framework, are illustrated in figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1 – Local Development Framework Documents**



Source: ODPM, 2004

- 1.8 The following principles apply to a Supplementary Planning Document:
- a. it must be consistent with national and regional planning policies as well as the policies set out in the development plan documents contained in the UDP or Local Development Framework;
  - b. it must be clearly cross-referenced to the relevant development plan document policy which it supplements (or, before a relevant development plan document has been adopted, a saved policy);
  - c. it must be reviewed on a regular basis alongside reviews of the development plan document policies to which it relates; and
  - d. the process by which it has been prepared must be made clear and a statement of conformity with the statement of community involvement must be published with it.

### **The Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area SPD**

- 1.9 The purpose of the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide additional detail to policy H3 of the Replacement UDP. It will guide future development proposals for the Action Area and form part of the emerging Local Development Framework.
- 1.10 The Tower Hill (Kirkby) SPD will support the Knowsley UDP and will be included in the emerging Local Development Framework for Knowsley that will eventually replace the existing UDP.



- 1.11 This SPD has been produced after analysis of relevant evidence and consultation with stakeholders and local residents. It is also in accordance with the Knowsley Replacement UDP and the Knowsley Guide to Development. The Knowsley Guide to Development has been produced to ensure that the design quality of new investment and development in the Borough is delivered to a high standard. The development guide is available on the Council's website.
- 1.12 The consultation approach and how it has influenced the SPD is included in appendix 1.
- 1.13 A draft version of the SPD was used as the basis for statutory consultation from 13<sup>th</sup> November 2006 to 18<sup>th</sup> December 2006.



## **Chapter 2 - Vision for the Future**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 The Tower Hill area of Knowsley is situated at the northernmost part of the borough in North Kirkby adjacent to the boundaries of Sefton and West Lancashire. Tower Hill was a rural area up until the 1970's when a large public housing estate was built to accommodate part of the overspill from Liverpool. During the 1980's the medium and high rise core was demolished. During the 1990's the remaining low-rise housing was remodelled to alleviate access problems and improve the environment.
- 2.2 Since 2000, the area north of Shevington's Lane has been developed to provide a private housing area comparable in size to the original public housing estate. Although this area is popular with its new residents, it is a cul-de-sac development with no community facilities or public transport penetration and there is a reliance on private car travel.
- 2.3 Put together, these housing areas provide a large village with clearly definable boundaries and the potential to evolve into a desirable and sustainable suburban settlement. The Tower Hill Action Area is focussed on the core of the former public housing estate, contained within Shevington's, Pingwood, Headbolt and Bank Lanes.

### **Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Vision**

- 2.4 The vision for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area is to 'Put the Heart Back into Tower Hill' with the core objective of delivering a high quality, secure environment that has unique identity.
- 2.5 The vision focuses on delivering a new village centre as a catalyst to developing a highly desirable and sustainable suburban settlement out of the original estate and the new private housing north of Shevington's Lane. Housing that has been removed over the years needs to be rebuilt to create a viable and sustainable village for existing and future generations, where people will choose to live in a high quality residential environment, and in so doing establish Tower Hill as a place to be proud of.

### **Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Objectives**

- 2.6 The objectives that will achieve the vision for Tower Hill are:

- a) **Urban Quality.** To provide a single, positive identity for the whole area by restructuring the centre of the estate, following urban design best practice principles, to provide a high quality, sustainable and accessible village centre that provides the focus for the wider Tower Hill regeneration. This requires the delivery of comprehensive development, redevelopment and improvement.
- b) **Community Cohesion.** To create an attractive, safe, and well designed series of neighbourhoods that are well connected to both the centre and to each other. This will include the delivery of a high quality and health promoting public realm that is accessible and provides facilities for all members of the community.
- c) **Sustainable Transport.** To promote sustainable transport options by providing an integrated, well connected structure of roads, paths, cycleways, and public transport facilities that ensure a high degree of permeability and accessibility within the estate and to and from adjoining neighbourhoods.
- d) **Learning Environments.** To enhance access to education and life-long learning, allowing people to achieve their potential and to create high quality learning environments for young people.
- e) **Equity.** To reverse the inward looking nature of the estates and to blur the boundaries between residential areas and communities by delivering a wider tenure choice of popular and quality housing in a balanced and equitable manner. This will include the delivery of essential community facilities, services and infrastructure.
- f) **Environmental Quality.** To retain, enhance, nurture and create distinctive elements of the physical and natural environment. It will be particularly important to deliver an environment that can be effectively managed and to implement a robust long-term management regime.

## Chapter 3 - Strategic and Local Policy Context

### Introduction

- 3.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) must be consistent with the development plan. The Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area SPD should therefore be consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West and the Knowsley Replacement UDP. It should also be consistent with national policy.

### National Policy

- 3.2 National policy is set out in a range of subject specific documents. The SPD has been prepared in conformity with national guidance and statements. Of particular relevance to this SPD are the following documents:
- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1). PPS1 seeks to promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development by making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives. It also seeks to improve people's quality of life and ensure high quality development through good design and the efficient use of resources;
  - Consultation Draft Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to PPS1. The consultation draft sets out how planning, in providing for the new homes, jobs and infrastructure, should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and resilient to the climate change.
  - Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3). PPS 3 seeks to ensure the delivery of decent homes that are well designed and are energy efficient. It also seeks to ensure that development is sustainable;
  - Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres. PPS6 seeks to promote the vitality and viability of town centres. It also seeks to ensure that town centres are accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport;
  - Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. PPS9 sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.

- Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport (PPG13). PPG13 encourages the use of non-car modes of transport, improved accessibility to town centres, and reduction in car travel;
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. PPG17 seeks to provide a network of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities which meet the needs of residents and visitors;
- Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25). PPS25 sets out how flood risk should be considered at all stages of the development process.

### **Regional Policy**

- 3.3 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is currently under review. The SPD should be consistent with the RSS as it currently stands.
- 3.4 Policy SD1 of the RSS designates Knowsley as being part of the North West Metropolitan Area. The North West Metropolitan Area is an area where first priority will be given to development and resources that will significantly enhance the economic strength, overall quality of life, environmental enhancement, and social regeneration of the area. It goes on to say that priority will be given to development which will also enhance the overall quality of life where there are concentrations of social, economic and environmental problems. The emphasis should be on encouraging good quality new development and redevelopment that create improvements to the public realm.

### **Unitary Development Plan**

- 3.5 The Knowsley Replacement UDP has a number of objectives. These include:
- To provide a better choice of housing in terms of tenure, type and market sector which will meet the needs and aspirations of the community.
  - To improve the provision of shopping, leisure and other uses normally associated with town centres, consistent with local needs, whilst protecting and enhancing the viability and vitality of town, district and local centres in Knowsley.
  - To protect, and where possible increase, opportunities for education, recreation, exercise and play for people in the borough where a need is demonstrated.

- To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings in providing land for new development.
- To protect and where possible enhance the contribution made by open space to visual and residential amenity, ecology, culture, communities, health, access and strategic functions of space.
- To stimulate a high design quality in new development which will:
  - Help to create a sense of place and pride in Knowsley and its constituent communities.
  - Respond to and enhance the character of the townscape and landscape; and
  - Make the Borough a more attractive place to live and invest in.
- To ensure that the design of new development:
  - Provides for good levels of amenity and does not cause harm to amenities that ought to be protected in the public interest;
  - Provides a good level of accessibility to the whole community (including the less mobile) making appropriate and safe provision for vehicle parking, walking, cycling and public transport; and
  - Discourages criminal activity.

3.6 Policies CP1 and H3 are specific to the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area. Policy CP1 is a part 1 policy that lists the areas where comprehensive redevelopment and improvement is sought and designates the areas as Action Areas. Tower Hill is one such area. Policy H3 draws the boundaries of the North Huyton and Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Areas and indicates the desired type of developments. Table 3.1 contains Policy H3.

<p>Table 3.1 - Policy H3</p> <p><b>POLICY H3: NORTH HUYTON AND TOWER HILL (KIRKBY) ACTION AREAS</b></p> <p>North Huyton and Tower Hill (Kirkby) are designated as Action Areas and are indicated on the Proposals Map.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These areas are suitable for comprehensive development, redevelopment or improvement including the following:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Improvement, clearance and redevelopment of existing unpopular and/or substandard housing;</li> <li>b. Provision of a wider choice of housing accommodation and improvements to local shopping, open space, leisure, health and other community facilities.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. In the case of North Huyton, the regeneration proposals will also include the provision of new schools and the provision of a jobs, education and training centre / managed workspace facilities.</li> </ol>
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3. The amount of new housing development and demolition within the two areas shall be approximately as follows:  
     North Huyton - up to 1,450 new dwellings (including 1,200 demolition replacements)  
     Tower Hill, Kirkby - up to 300 new dwellings (including 50 demolition replacements).
4. The Council and its partners will carry out master planning exercises for these areas which will identify:
  - The parcels of land to be developed or redeveloped for the different uses listed above;
  - The phasing of each part of the development;
  - The design standards to be adopted (which shall be of high quality);
  - The location of proposed new and/or enhanced public open spaces and community infrastructure; and
  - Proposals for road layout, public transport provision and provision for walking and cycling.
5. Developments will be expected to provide new areas of greenspace or significant qualitative improvements to greenspace; and in order to secure a successful regeneration of the area it is likely that the housing development will include some land which is currently redundant or poorly used urban greenspace, some of which has had development on it in the past.

3.7 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) restricts new housing development, for the whole of Knowsley, to an average of 230 per year to 2016. The limit of 300 new dwellings in Tower Hill has been set in line with this policy. The RSS is being revised and the current draft shows an increase in the required house building rate in Knowsley. If the increased figure remains in the new RSS, there may be a possibility of increasing the number of new dwellings in Tower Hill to over the figure of 300. However, this will not be known until the new RSS is approved in late 2007.

3.8 The whole of the Knowsley Replacement UDP is relevant to development proposals within the Action Area but the following policies are considered to be key considerations:

- Policy OS1: Strategy for Urban Greenspace, Sport and Recreation.
- Policy OS2: Urban Greenspace
- Policy OS3: Quantitative Standards – Public Open Space for General Amenity Use, Allotments and Children’s Play.

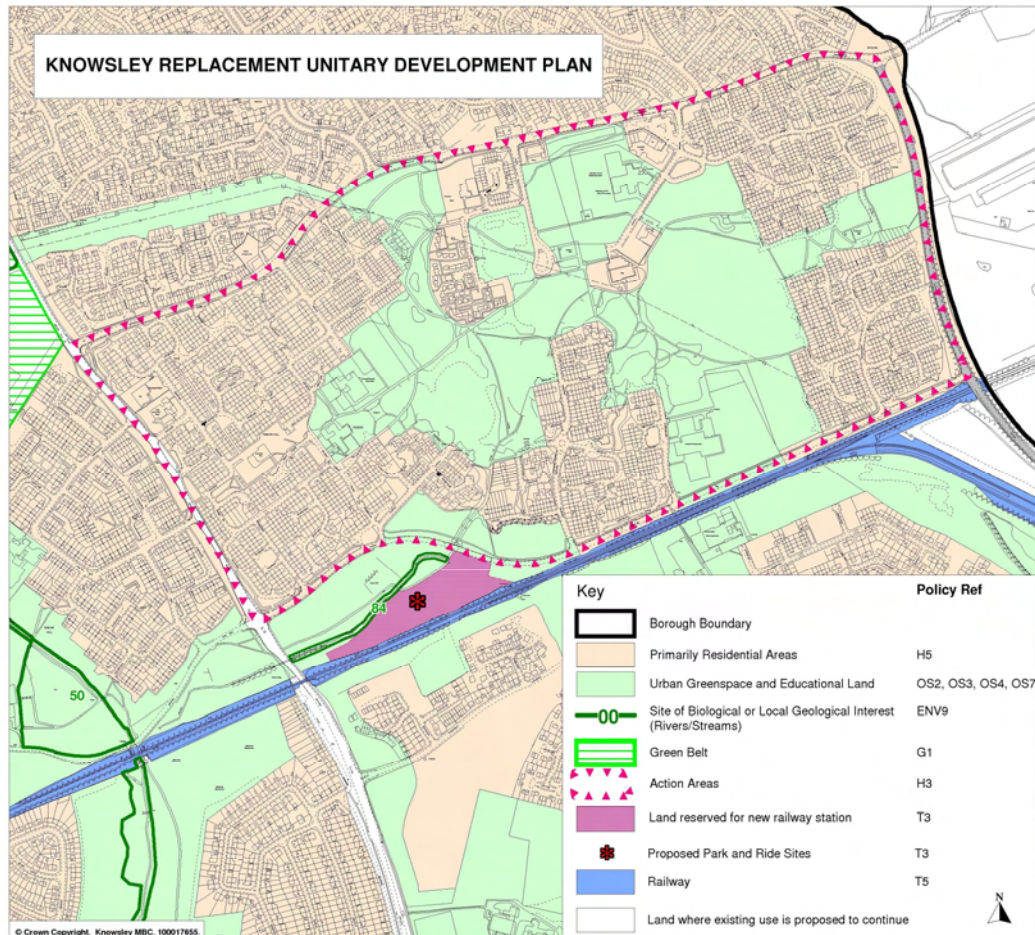


- Policy OS4: Protection of Playing Pitches and Other Formal Sporting Facilities.
- Policy OS5: Public Open Space and Recreational Facilities to Meet the Needs of New Development
- Policy DQ1: Design Quality in New Development.
- Policy ENV9: Protection of Habitats and Designated Sites.
- Policy H5: Development within Primarily Residential Areas.
- Policy S8: Location of Development for Town Centre Uses

3.9 The above policies are contained in full in appendix 2.

3.10 Figure 3.2 contains an extract of the Knowsley Replacement UDP Proposal Map for the Tower Hill Area.

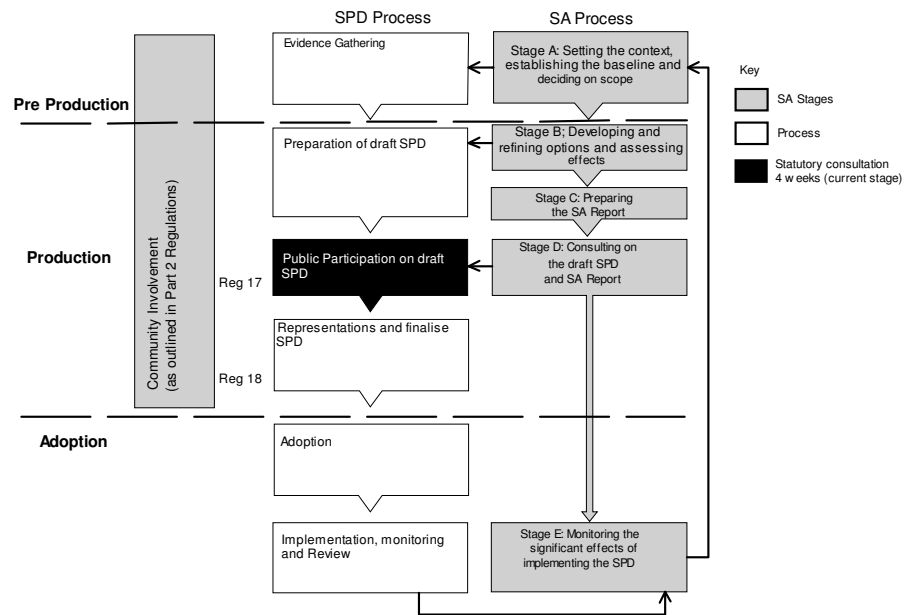
**Figure 3.2 Knowsley Replacement UDP – extract from the proposals map showing the Tower Hill Area.**



## **Sustainability Appraisal**

- 3.11 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) are mandatory for each level of development plan including Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 3.12 SAs are designed to ensure plans and programmes are environmentally and sustainably sound. The SA should appraise the plan in relation to the five principles of sustainable development from *Securing the Future*. These aims are as follows:
- a. Living within environmental limits. Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.
  - b. Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society. Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.
  - c. Achieving a sustainable economy. Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.
  - d. Promoting good governance. Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity.
  - e. Using sound science responsibly. Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.
- 3.13 Figure 3.3 demonstrates the relationship between the SA and SPD processes.

**Figure 3.3 - Relationship between the SPD and the SA processes**



Source: Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, ODPM, November 2005

**Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- 3.14 The European Directive 2001/42/EC required that an assessment be made of the effects that certain plans and programmes will have on the environment. This is known as a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and applies to a wide range of plans and programmes, including land use plans. The effect on the environment has to be significant before the directive applies. Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council has determined that the scale of environmental change in Tower Hill will have a significant impact and therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
- 3.15 The following criteria will be considered under the requirements of the SEA directive, defining the focus and scope for SEAs.
  - a. biodiversity
  - b. population
  - c. human health
  - d. fauna and flora
  - e. soil
  - f. water
  - g. air
  - h. climatic factors

- i. material assets
  - j. cultural heritage, and
  - k. landscape.
- 3.16 The Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area SPD has been the subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in addition to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The requirement to carry out a SA and a SEA are distinct but it is possible to satisfy both through a single appraisal process if it considers social and economic factors as well as environmental issues. This is the approach that is being taken with the appraisal of the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area SPD.

## Chapter 4 - Area Context: Current Spatial Structure and Constraints

### Introduction

4.1 Chapter 4 presents a summary of the spatial planning and development issues that are relevant to the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area. It will enable developers to understand the characteristics of Tower Hill and how it functions. Developers will therefore be able to respond to the unique built and landscape components of the area and deliver development of the highest sustainable quality.

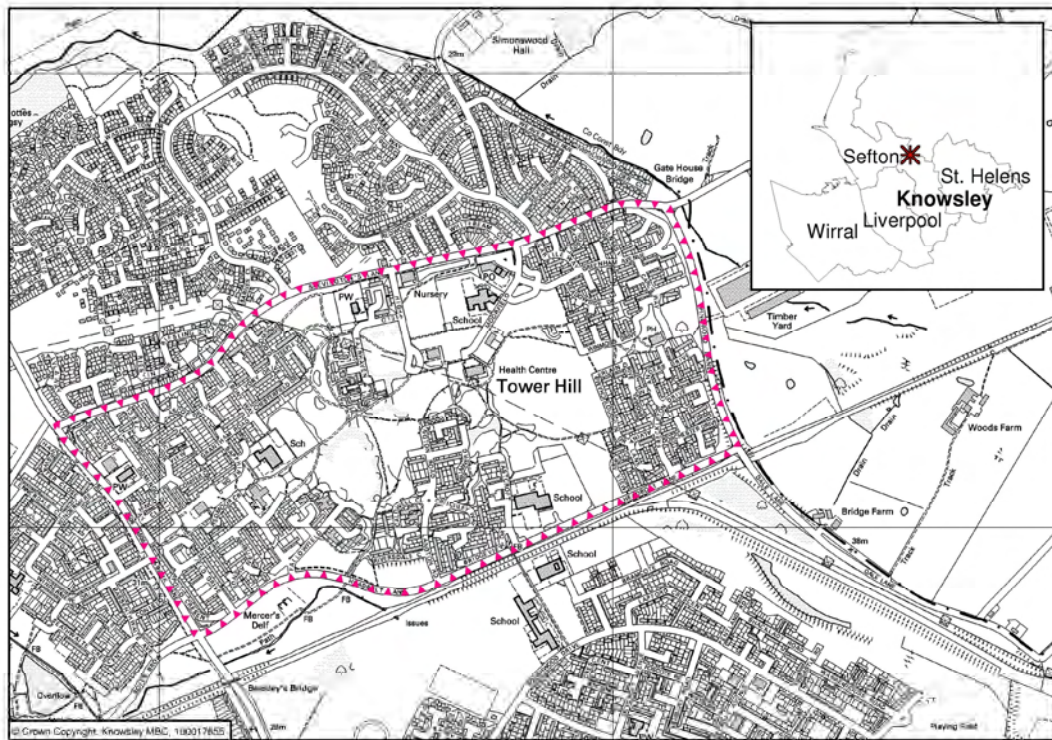
4.2 The chapter is structured as follows:

- a) Area Context: location & development history.
- b) Character: identity & image.
- c) Movement: accessibility & key linkages.
- d) Townscape: urban fabric & architectural quality.
- e) Landscape: function & quality.
- f) Land Ownership.
- g) Local Facilities.
- h) Historical and Nature Conservation.
- i) Drainage.
- j) Overhead Power Lines.
- k) Management of Open Space.

#### **a) Area Context: location & development history.**

4.3 The Replacement Knowsley Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006) designated Tower Hill as an Action Area under policy H3. The Tower Hill area of Knowsley is situated at the northernmost part of the borough in north Kirkby adjacent to the boundaries of Sefton and West Lancashire. It lies to the north of the Kirkby to Wigan rail line between Bank Lane (A506) and Pingwood Lane. Shevington's Lane forms the northern boundary. The area is known as Tower Hill after the former Victorian water tower that was located at the highest point in Kirkby. The location and extent of the Action Area can be seen in figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1- Location and Extent of Tower Hill Action Area**



- 4.4 Tower Hill was a rural area up to the 1970s when a large public housing estate was built to accommodate part of the overspill from Liverpool. The public housing estate consisted of terraced housing, maisonettes, and tower blocks. Shop units formed the ground floor of some of the tower blocks.
- 4.5 During the 1980s the medium and high rise core, as well as the retail and other public facilities, were demolished due to the failure of the estate. During the 1990s the remaining low-rise housing was remodelled to alleviate access problems and improve the living environment under a £26 million Estate Action Programme.
- 4.6 The programme improved a number of negative physical aspects on the estate but was not intended to comprehensively address the urban design needs of the community. The shops at Moorfield were constructed to replace the retail units lost because of the earlier demolitions. The foundations of the former buildings were left in situ and grassed over thereby increasing the size of the open space at the heart of the estate.
- 4.7 Since 2002, the area has attracted additional investment in the housing stock and community facilities. Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT) has invested in elemental renewal programmes and by the end of their



investment programme, in April 2007, they will have invested over £20m. Knowsley MBC have opened four Sure Start nurseries, three multi use games areas and made significant investment in the three local primary schools. A new health and community centre has also been completed.



- 4.8 Since 2000, the area north of Shevington's Lane has undergone extensive development providing a private housing area comparable in size to the original public housing estate. This area is popular with its new residents but has no community facilities and limited public transport penetration.
- 4.9 The Action Area together with the estate north of Shevington's Lane have the potential to evolve into a highly desirable and sustainable suburban settlement.

#### **b) Character: identity & image**

- 4.10 Understanding the character of a place is an essential component of managing successful change. It identifies the positive aspects of a place that need to be protected, enhanced, or nurtured and also identifies the negative aspects that need to be changed or replaced.
- 4.11 Character is about the perception of a place gained from experience of other places. It is about how safe you feel, how easily you can find your way around, how welcoming it is and how successful you believe it is. Whilst not an exhaustive list, it illustrates that the visual image of a place has an immediate impact on a person's perception of it. It is also important to recognise that people's experiences differ leading to conflicting views of these qualities.
- 4.12 Generally, the Tower Hill Action Area has negative characteristics that need to be addressed if the community is to capitalise upon its assets and obtain a high quality, desirable and sustainable place to live. The negative characteristics create a lack of identity and a poor image to persons outside the area. The characteristics of Tower Hill have been appraised in terms of image, permeability, urban quality, 'visitor' interactions, and resident perceptions.
- 4.13 The first characteristic of the area is of a place full of physical barriers and no legibility. Some parts of the area can appear to be dangerous

to visit or move around. The negative impact on permeability deters both residents and potential visitors from accessing parts of the area. This is particularly so in the open spaces and especially when it is dark. The effect is to deter or severely curtail access and movement throughout the area.

4.14 The image of the area is reinforced by guard railing and small unusable areas of landscape and verges. The overall image lacks character or a specific “sense of place”.

4.15 The anecdotal evidence from public consultations and group meetings indicates that there is a very strong community base that is willing to work towards the creation of a better place.



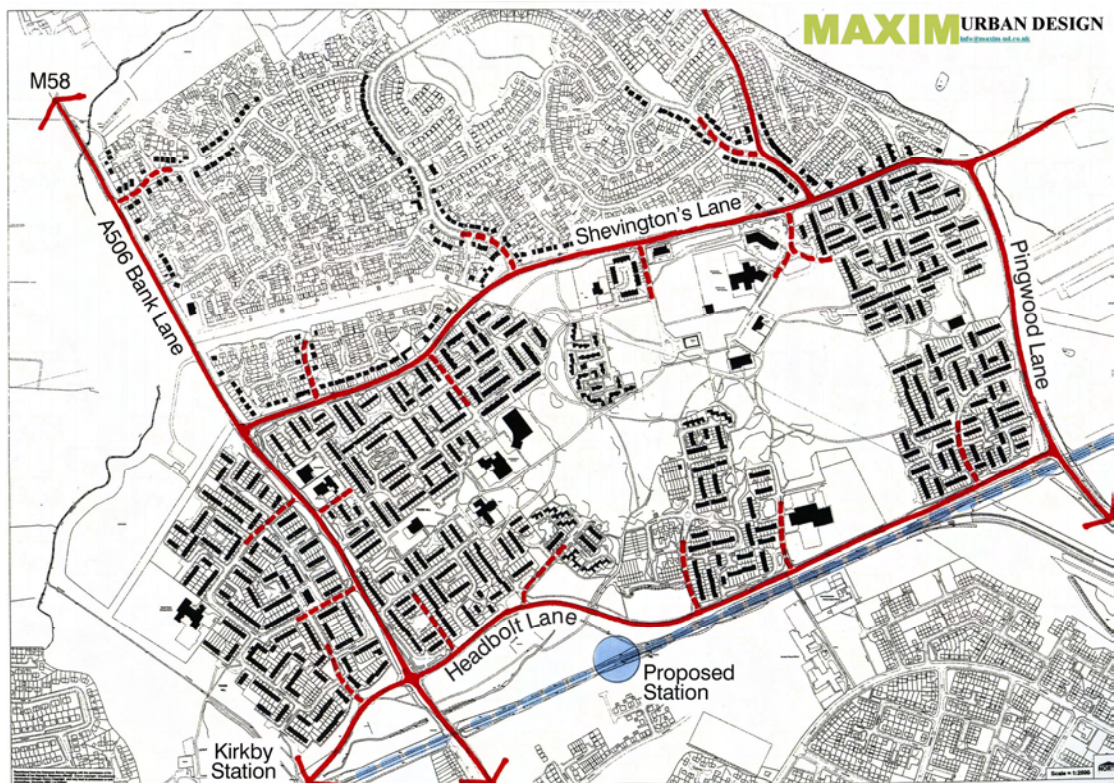
4.16 In summary, the Tower Hill Action Area suffers from poor image and many negative physical characteristics. It does, however, contain a community that wants the area to change.

### **c. Movement: accessibility & key linkages.**

4.17 A movement and accessibility plan for Tower Hill is set out in Figure 4.2. The plan illustrates key transport links and infrastructure and barriers to movement.



**Figure 4.2 Key Transport Links and Infrastructure**



4.18 Accessibility and movement within Tower Hill is discussed under the following headings:

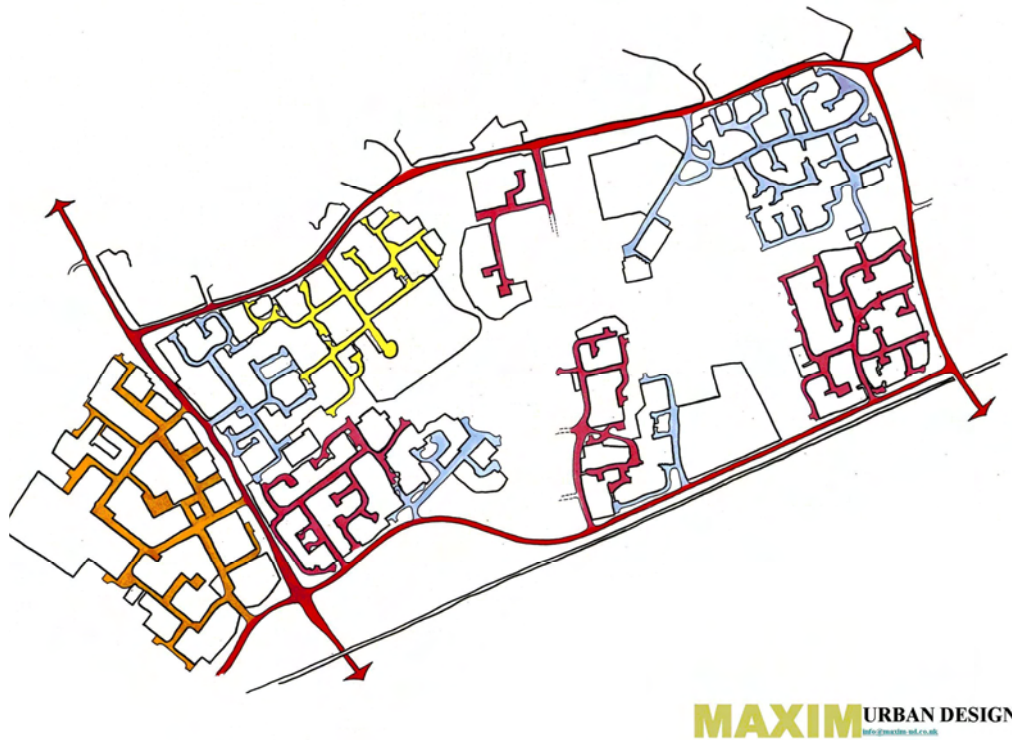
- i) Access points.
- ii) Road hierarchy and layout.
- iii) Road, cycle and pedestrian layout.
- iv) Public transport routes.

**i) Access Points**

4.19 There are nine access points from which the Tower Hill estate can be accessed from the surrounding road network. Each of the nine neighbourhoods having one access point from the perimeter road network. Internal housing layout and highway configuration prevents road connection between the neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods have therefore been created artificially by the road layout.

4.20 Figure 4.3 shows the configuration of the highways.

**Figure 4.3 – Highway Configuration**



## ii) Road Hierarchy and Layout

- 4.21 Strategic Connectors – the A506 Bank Lane forms an important transport corridor into the Borough from the M58 which is 2.3 kilometres to the north. Bank Lane also provides direct access to Kirkby Town Centre 1.5 kilometres to the south. It accommodates significant traffic flows including a large proportion of through and commercial traffic. Bank Lane is a high standard urban all purpose two-way two-lane single carriageway. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit having a limited number of side road junctions with no direct access to individual properties. Parking is restricted along the length of Bank Lane.
- 4.22 Local Connectors – Shevington’s Lane, Pingwood Lane and Headbolt Lane are ‘C’ classified highways that are used for movement within the local area and between the local area and strategic connectors. The roads are good standard urban all purpose single carriageways. They are subject to a 30mph speed limit and have a limited number of side road junctions. They do not provide direct access to individual properties. Parking is restricted along both sides of Headbolt Lane and on significant lengths of Shevington’s Lane. Traffic calming measures exist along Shevington’s Lane in the form of speed cushions and raised

tables. Substantial employment zones exist in the locality to the east of Tower Hill. These roads therefore carry a proportion of through traffic. A 7.5 tonne weight restriction exists on Headbolt Lane and Shevington's Lane confining Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic to Pingwood Lane.

- 4.23 Residential Streets – The Action Area primarily consists of cul-de-sacs that are curved or of irregular form to such an extent that vehicle speeds are naturally restricted. The streets are constructed in contrasting materials from the surrounding network, including pavements and coloured surfacing. This distinguishes the residential environment and aids road safety, the exceptions being Highfield and Moorfield, which are of a higher order, serving commercial and community facilities. Moorfield also acts as a bus terminus.



- 4.24 Each neighbourhood has only one way in and out of it onto the perimeter road network. There are no direct road links between neighbouring areas. This layout discourages vehicle related crime but produces a disconnected and inaccessible estate plan that reinforces the isolation of the different neighbourhoods.
- 4.25 The lack of connection through the neighbourhoods makes it difficult for visitors to navigate through the area. The neighbourhoods are also difficult to service for refuse, delivery and emergency vehicles. The police have particular problems patrolling the area because of the severely restricted accessibility.
- 4.26 The arrangement of cul-de-sacs also means that the public realm is dominated by the roads. This is in the form of turning heads and wide irregular shaped pavements created by the road geometries. The result is a very hard public landscape which is exacerbated by the poor urban form.
- 4.27 The new health and community centre on Ebony Way is effectively based in the Ravenscroft neighbourhood and shares its access with Ravenscroft School. Visitors from other neighbourhoods cannot walk directly to the facilities which encourages unnecessary car use.



### iii) Road, cycle and pedestrian layout

4.28 Within the Action Area, and within its neighbourhoods, pedestrian linkage is slightly better than the car access because there are path links between the hammerheads. However, the neighbourhoods have an insular layout with no legible connections or hierarchy of routes that may lead to a school or a bus stop.

4.29 This problem is compounded by a lack of connection between the neighbourhoods, or the neighbourhoods and community facilities. This is partly a result of the previous demolitions. Many of the footpaths across the open spaces were possibly relevant for the past building layout, but since the demolitions they no longer provide direct or safe linkages. In summary, there is no legible pedestrian network within the area with little connectivity.

4.30 Segregated footway provision is made to both sides of Bank Lane. Pedestrian crossing movements are facilitated by the traffic signal junction installations at Headbolt Lane and Shevington's Lane and a controlled crossing facility north of its southerly junction with Windermere Drive.



Advance stop lines at the traffic signal junctions are provided for cyclists on this strategic connector.

4.31 Segregated footways are provided to both sides for most of the length of Shevington's Lane and to one side of Headbolt Lane and Pingwood Lane. Within Shevington's Lane, pedestrian crossing movements are facilitated by controlled crossing facilities. At Headbolt Lane pedestrian crossing movements are facilitated by a footbridge and a subway. No specific facilities are provided for cyclists on these local connector roads.

4.32 Guard railing was erected along the entire perimeter of Tower Hill following concerns over child pedestrian safety. The dangers along the roads surrounding Tower Hill have, however, largely been alleviated by weight restrictions and traffic calming measures. The barriers now have the negative effect of fencing in the estate and breaking down potential connections into the wider area and thus severely restricting legibility and permeability.

- 4.33 Internally, pedestrian movement is primarily by footways running alongside residential streets and a network of footpaths across the open spaces that link the various residential areas, community facilities and surrounding areas. Little natural surveillance is provided to footpaths, particularly across the open spaces. This generates security concerns and may discourage their use.
- 4.34 The speed restrained environment of the residential streets facilitates safe cycle movements within individual parts of Tower Hill. However, the absence of prescribed cycle links between Tower Hill and the surrounding areas does not encourage wider cycle use.

#### **iv) Public Transport Routes**

- 4.35 A regular bus service operates in both directions along the perimeter roads of Bank Lane, Shevington's Lane, Pingwood Lane and Headbolt Lane. These routes serve several destinations including a link to rail services at Kirkby Station. The perimeter roads operate satisfactorily as bus routes as they provide wide convenient routes that are not subject to on-street parking. Bus stops are provided at regular intervals along these routes with lay-by facilities on Bank Lane, Shevington's Lane and Headbolt Lane. Shevington's Lane contains bus friendly traffic calming features. A bus route terminus is provided at Moorfield.



- 4.36 The cul-de-sac structure of Tower Hill means that bus services cannot enter the estate, except for limited access to the bus terminus. Bus stops are located on the perimeter roads where natural surveillance is limited giving rise to security concerns for both bus users and operators.
- 4.37 Along the southern boundary of the Action Area is a railway line. The nearest station is at Kirkby which is approximately 1 kilometre from Tower Hill. This puts Tower Hill outside of the 800m walking radius for sustainable development. However, there is a proposal within the Local Transport Plan (2006-12) to investigate the feasibility of

electrifying the line adjacent to Tower Hill and developing a station with park and ride facilities. This is at Headbolt Lane adjacent to Fallowfield. If developed, this will bring the whole of the Action Area within the 800m walking radius of a rail station.

**d. Townscape: urban fabric & architectural quality**

- 4.38 The estate was originally developed on a Radburn layout with a central core of high and medium rise flats and maisonettes built around a shopping arcade with pub, community centre and health centre. Following the demolition of the flats, maisonettes and shopping arcades, the remaining areas of terrace housing were re-engineered to provide much needed access.
- 4.39 This approach alone, however, could not deliver a high quality urban solution. It resulted in an ad hoc collection of dysfunctional inward looking housing areas with large barren spaces between and community facilities randomly spread out. The residential accommodation that remains predominantly comprises terraced houses in cul-de-sacs which suffer from poor levels of connectivity. The re-engineering of the estate also included the turning around of some houses to face onto the new roads. It was not practicable to implement this for all dwellings and there are therefore some houses within terraces facing the wrong direction.
- 4.40 The residential accommodation was originally all in Council ownership but the Council's housing stock has since been transferred to a Housing Association, Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT). KHT have demolished approximately 50 houses in the Westcroft area. There are no further planned demolitions.

- 4.41 KHT are in the process of carrying out major investment to improve the remainder of their properties. This is both internally and externally. The work involves remediation of structural problems including roof structure and replacing roof coverings, replacing windows and external repair and paint programme.



- 4.42 In addition to the above, Knowsley Housing Trust is launching an initiative to encourage their existing tenants to buy into a shared equity

scheme in which they can become part owners of their properties with the outright ownership being the final goal.

4.43 In the wider Tower Hill area, in terms of urban fabric, there are three distinct types. First there is the Park neighbourhood, which is outside of the Action Area to the west of Bank Lane. This is largely based on a well connected traditional street pattern with a few cul-de-sacs which could better be described as courts. There is a clear demarcation between public and private areas and there is a clear sense of defensible space. The neighbourhood feels 'normal', is legible, and is well linked to surrounding areas. Its weakest point is along Bank Lane where gable ends stop arbitrarily along the wide boundary. This creates a weak urban edge in terms of aesthetic quality and environmental safety. The pedestrian guard railing along Bank Lane reinforces this quality weakness. The Park neighbourhood, at about 40 houses per hectare, is the most densely developed housing area in Tower Hill.

4.44 Second are the inward looking private housing estates to the north of the Action Area. They are made up of random roads of predominantly detached and semi detached properties. The style of house is not specific to the area and some of the edges are badly designed where they back on to adjoining areas and their gardens just end. The edge along Bank and Shevington's Lanes is made up of adhoc boundary treatments, mostly fences and shrubs of varying design and with varying levels of maintenance.

4.45 Within those estates, the design is mostly open plan and typical of 1990s suburban housing development. There is one very small development area adjacent to Shevington's Lane where there is higher urban quality in the shared surface streets and courtyards. These estates provide the least dense development in the area at about 30 houses per hectare.



4.46 Third is the Action Area. The remaining housing, after demolition, is largely system built short terraces arranged in a right-angled grid form. This form can facilitate the development of a well connected and legible urban form. This has not been the case within the Action Area, however, as the original



design was flawed and the demolition of the tower blocks has made these failings more apparent.

- 4.47 The individual terraces are being improved by KHT to a good standard and will provide good homes. However, when looked at together, the urban fabric is very poor. Generally, 50% of the street frontages within the Action Area have gable ends or back fences facing onto them. This creates an unsafe and sterile environment. This urban form has a negative effect on the quality of life for the residents and creates a poor image to visitors. Within the neighbourhoods, the area feels dark and gloomy because of the shadowing effects of the gable ends and high fences adjacent to the pavements. There is clear definition between public and private space, with little overlooking of the public space. There is, therefore, likely to be a high level of anxiety in the neighbourhoods.



- 4.48 Figure 4.4 shows the Urban Fabric of the Action Area.

**Figure 4.4 – Urban Fabric**



**MAXIM** URBAN DESIGN  
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- 4.49 Generally, the urban fabric and the architectural quality within the Action Area could be described as being very poor. Since the initial demolitions, the area has had a very fractured urban fabric. The neighbourhoods themselves provide a mean density of around 36 houses per hectare (excluding the open spaces).
- 4.50 In summary, the Tower Hill area has a weak and inaccessible urban structure with equally poor quality of urban and architectural design.

**e. Landscape: function & quality**

- 4.51 Tower Hill has a potentially very interesting landscape. It is the highest point in the district and very long views could be enjoyed into both Liverpool and rural Lancashire. It also sits on the transition between town and country presenting an important gateway to Kirkby, Knowsley MBC and Merseyside. The current layout of the area does not, however, capitalise on these assets.
- 4.52 Surrounding the Action Area, the properties are separated from the road by municipal guard rail. Generally there are large areas of highway grass and shrub verges flanking the perimeter roads that are expensive to maintain, of poor visual quality and offer no useful function to the community. Added to this, poor quality back garden enclosures and defensive shrub planting creates both physical and visual barriers in the landscape.
- 4.53 There is generally a poor quality public realm environment within the neighbourhoods. These are dominated by roads and bits of left over space filled with either tarmac or municipal shrubs and grass. The negative spaces are prone to abuse and fly tipping and many are used for bonfires during November. The boundary treatments to many of the houses are also of poor quality. Many of the back fences to properties are worn out and many contain additional security measures such as razor wire.
- 4.54 The best asset within the Action Area is the large open area at its centre. Unfortunately, since the demolition of the core, the open area has become liable to anti-social behaviour. Housing backs on to the land, making



both the space and the houses insecure. The current arrangement of trees and plants has increased security concerns.

- 4.55 Figure 4.5 shows the extent of natural surveillance of the areas of open space.

**Figure 4.5 – Natural Surveillance of Open Space**

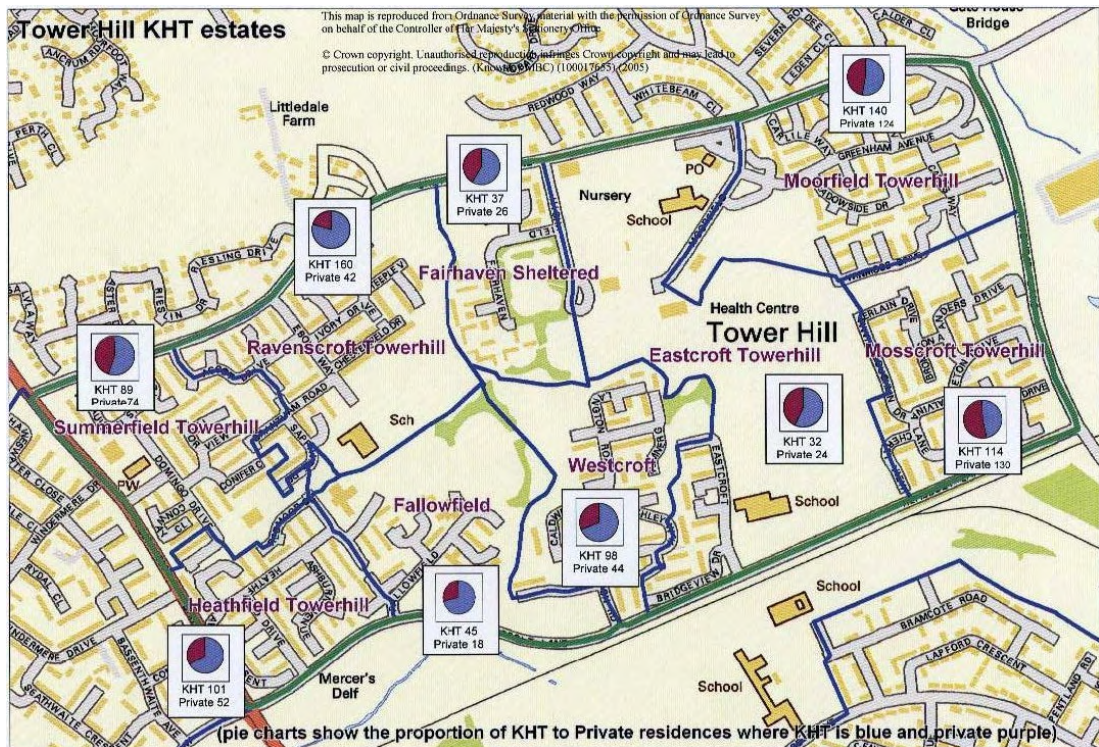


- 4.56 Generally, the open space creates a hole in the estate that divides the community. However, it has the potential to become the hub of a more successful and sustainable community, and as such must be seen as a great future asset.

#### **f. Land Ownership**

- 4.57 The housing stock within Tower Hill consists of houses owned by Knowsley Housing Trust and houses in private ownership purchased from KHT or from the Council prior to the housing stock transfer.
- 4.58 Knowsley Housing Trust own 60% of the dwellings in Tower Hill with the percentage of private purchases varying from 21% in the Ravencroft area to 53% in the Mosscroft area. The number of tenants opting to buy their homes is steady, but should show an increase once KHT commence their shared ownership initiative.
- 4.59 Figure 4.6 illustrates the distribution of house ownership within the Tower Hill.

**Figure 4.6 – Land Ownership in Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Plan**



- 4.60 All non housing land, except the churches and St. Peter and Paul's RC school, is owned by Knowsley MBC. The majority of the open space being owned by the Department of Neighbourhood Delivery with the remainder being owned by the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department. The playing fields attached to schools are owned by the Children's Services Department.
- 4.61 Knowsley MBC also owns many of the other operational buildings in Tower Hill including the community centre and Moorfield shops.

**g. Local Facilities**

- 4.62 The community facilities in Tower Hill are all focused within the Action Area and consist of three primary schools, three public houses, two churches, a health centre and a community centre with sports pitches. There is a secondary school ½ mile away. These facilities are well spread out around the neighbourhoods they serve, but the result is that there is no perceivable centre and therefore identity for the Tower Hill area. These facilities are also seen to belong to the neighbourhoods to which they are attached and not shared facilities for the whole area.
- 4.63 A parade of shops consisting of seven units was constructed by the Council at Moorfield to replace the units demolished together with the flats. Most of the units are let, but on very low rents to maintain the



businesses. Although they are located on Shevington's Lane, they are remote from the majority of the Action Area and the wider Tower Hill community. The chemist has recently moved to the new health centre and one of the units is used by KHT as a neighbourhood office.

- 4.64 It has been suggested that a further supermarket is required for Tower Hill. Prior to a retail planning application being submitted, a Transport Assessment and a Retail Impact Assessment showing evidence of need and impact on Kirkby Town Centre would be required.
- 4.65 Although there are no formal playing fields within Tower Hill, playing fields are attached to Ruffwood School ½ mile away. The quality standards of any new or improved sport facility provision should have regard to Sport England Design Guidance on [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org).

#### **h. Historical and Nature Conservation.**

- 4.66 Tower Hill takes its name from a water tower that formed part of the St. Helens water works pumping station which opened in 1881. The tower has since been demolished but should be the inspiration for public art and branding for the programme.
- 4.67 The Farmers Arms public house is the oldest building in the area. It was situated at the cross roads of the previous alignment of Headbolt Lane and Pingwood Lane.



- 4.68 The Kirkby Brook waterfall is to the south of, and adjacent to, the Action Area. The waterfall is identified as a Site of Geological Interest in the Replacement Knowsley Unitary Development Plan. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires that local authorities have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The

Council will, therefore seek to ensure that development within the Action Area will not adversely affect the waterfall and brook.

- 4.69 A survey should be undertaken to assess the ecological implications of all development. The Ecological Survey should be submitted to support planning applications.

#### **i. Drainage**

- 4.70 There are no water courses within the Action Area. There are, however, two water courses that may be affected by development within the Action Area.
- 4.71 Kirkby Brook runs to the south west of the Action Area. Development should be prevented from encroaching on to the brook. Any development within 8 metres of the brook will require consent from the Environment Agency.
- 4.72 Simonswood Brook runs to the north east of Tower Hill. A small amount of the Flood Zone Map falls within the Tower Hill area.
- 4.73 Sustainable water management will be encouraged using sustainable drainage systems (SUDS). Surface water runoff from new developments can affect the flow regime and quality of watercourses. SUDS can reduce the quantity of surface water runoff, (following more closely the natural drainage for the area), as well as offering an opportunity to remove pollutants prior to entering a watercourse.
- 4.74 SUDS schemes will require adequate pollution control measures before discharge to the water environment.
- 4.75 Any SUDS measures should be fully integrated with the landscaping proposals, with an appropriate overarching management regime. The following additional measures would also be encouraged for any proposal:
- Low water consumption WC's, taps, showers,
  - Potential grey water recycling systems for flushing
  - Green / Brown roofs
- 4.76 Careful consideration should be given to the adoption and long term management of such systems. Agreement on maintenance of drainage systems will be agreed prior to commencement of development.

## **j. Overhead Power Lines**

4.77 A high power overhead electricity line, passing through Tower Hill, imposes a constraint on future development. Developers will need to discuss their proposals with National Grid UK to agree the easement constraints for this section through the Action Area.



4.78 National Grid UK has published a design guide, *A Sense Of Place - design guidelines for development near high voltage overhead lines*, which provides advice on all aspects of design near power lines.

## **k) Open Space**

4.79 The realignment and demolition of properties including the high rise flats created more green space. To save costs, the high rise foundations were left on site and backfilled. The concrete slabs and beams were laid out and covered by earth.

4.80 As part of an Estate Action programme major environmental improvement works were undertaken. The principle for landscaping was to generally green-up the estate, to transform the former prairie type landscape and to prevent unlawful access to cars driving across the green-space. Extensive shrub beds were introduced, along with wildflower areas, pathways and tree planting to create what is known as Tower Hill Park.

4.81 Difficulties in maintaining the extensive shrub beds saw them flourish thus blocking sight lines and threatening community safety. Whole scale removal of some of the shrub beds has now taken place.

4.82 The overall approach to the estate's development has left the open space unplanned with no overall design concept. Movement around the open space is poor and there is a strong perception that the area is not safe. There is a general lack of facilities for young people within the area both in terms of quantity and quality.

## Chapter 5 General Planning, Design and Transport Principles

- 5.1 The principles defined in this chapter inform all future interventions in the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area. The advice is written to reflect current national design guidance and design best practice including *By Design and the Urban Design Compendium*. Reference is also made to the *Knowsley Guide to Development*, the Borough's Design SPD.
- 5.2 Central to the vision for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area is the creation of a viable and sustainable village centre. In order for this to be achieved, there needs to be a restructuring of its physical environment. The developer will need to have an understanding of the way new development fits into its surroundings, how it is accessed, and most importantly the way the urban environment is perceived and valued by the people who live and work within it.
- 5.3 This section of the SPD will therefore provide general planning, design and transport principles that will secure a high quality neighbourhood design and deliver sustainable development.
- 5.4 The chapter is structured as follows:
- a) **Character:** identity and image.
  - b) **Movement:** accessibility and key linkages.
  - c) **Townscape:** urban fabric and architectural quality.
  - d) **Housing:** privacy, amenity and security.
  - e) **Affordable Housing.**
  - f) **Landscape:** function and quality.
  - g) **Street Structure.**
- a) **Character: identity and image.**
- 5.5 As discussed in Chapter 4, the character of Tower Hill is largely negative, a typical 1970s municipal housing estate with unattractive landscapes. It is not a place with its own unique, positive character or image.
- 5.6 The purpose of the SPD is to guide future developments and interventions in such a way as to create a sense of place with a positive character and image. The key opportunity for the area lies at the centre of the estate where there is sufficient development land to create a step change in the quality of the area. It will also set a

template for ongoing improvement into the wider Tower Hill area. This will be achieved by focusing on placemaking and not simply developing a standard arrangement of catalogue buildings.

- 5.7 A Development Framework has been produced to outline the general principles of the development of Tower Hill. Appendix 5 contains the Development Framework.
- 5.8 The Development Framework prepared for this SPD aims to establish a new structure for the village to create a step change in quality and to establish a pattern for future development. It focuses on the Vision of putting the heart back into Tower Hill. Underpinning this new structure are urban design best practice principles established by the Governments design watchdog Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in their publication *By Design*. The principles, when applied together, provide the basis for placemaking. The principles are:
- **Character & Context:** *a place with its own identity.*
  - **Continuity & Enclosure:** *a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished.*
  - **Public Realm:** *a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.*
  - **Ease of Movement:** *a place that is easy to get to and move through.*
  - **Legibility:** *a place that has clear image and is easy to understand.*
  - **Diversity:** *a place with variety and choice.*
  - **Density & Mix:** *a place with critical mass.*
  - **Adaptability:** *a place that can change easily.*
- 5.9 These generic principles of good urban design have been applied to the formulation of the Development Framework in a manner that fulfils the vision for Tower Hill. The approach aims to recreate a village centre that serves the whole area by delivering a high quality, secure environment that has a unique identity. The key structuring principles are:
- the creation of clear connections and legibility,
  - positive public spaces as a focus to the village, and
  - safe streets and spaces delivered through continuity and enclosure.
- 5.10 These elements, when delivered appropriately, will create the characteristics of a successful place.
- 5.11 Within the area, there is virtually nothing positive to use as a design cue to inform the design process of the core development within the Action Area. This therefore presents the flexibility to impose a brand



new image and character on the area. There are however, two features that must be capitalised upon to maximise the value of any development proposal and establish the characteristics of the new centre. The first feature is the large open space that is required as a central park. The second is the fact that it is the highest place in the district and as such there is an opportunity to exploit the long vistas through the core area using both the park and the main links into the wider area.

5.12 In urban design terms the creation of the new centre can be low key, delivering an accessible and safe environment with a legible structure linking seamlessly into the existing housing areas. The character will be suburban with a 'normal' image of a balanced and successful community. Tower Hill is a modern development dating from the 1970's and as such it does not seem appropriate to impose backward looking architectural styles. Architecturally, it would be most appropriate to deliver a scheme of contemporary character that is an exemplar of modern design, minimising its environmental impact and establishing a fresh new image for Tower Hill.

5.13 Reinventing the centre of the Action Area will improve the functional character and performance of Tower Hill and deliver a higher quality image for the community. However, on its own it will not overcome the tremendously negative image of the place as being inward looking unless issues beyond the Action Area are tackled too. It will also not change the character of the existing housing within the Action Area without focussed work in these neighbourhoods too. Potential approaches to resolving some of these issues are discussed below.

#### **b) Movement: accessibility and key linkages.**

5.14 As discussed in Chapter 4, accessibility and connectivity are perhaps the weakest aspects of Tower Hill. Resolving the movement issues are therefore the starting point in the structuring of the Framework Plan for the core of the Action Area.

5.15 The Framework advocates a balanced approach to managing movement by focusing on the road user hierarchy defined in the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and a clear hierarchy of routes as set out in the Knowsley Guide to Development.

5.16 The development of a pedestrian and cycle friendly approach is central to creating a thriving and vibrant environment that will encourage people to use the public realm for a range of activities. It will also radically improve the image of Tower Hill, stimulating investment and fostering civic pride. It will be brought about by the creation of conditions that promote walking and cycling as safe, enjoyable and efficient ways of moving through the area.



5.17 There are a number of fixed elements within the Action Area that provide a guide to preparing the movement strategy. First are the fixed infrastructures which include the perimeter roads; the controlled crossing facilities in Bank Lane and Shevington's Lane, the two



entrances to the loop road through the private estate to the north; the rail line with the proposed new station and the existing footbridge over the railway and Headbolt Lane. Second are the community facilities

which include the schools, health and community centre, sports pitches, shops, pubs, churches and bus terminus.

5.18 The fixed elements establish a hierarchy of desire lines, with a pedestrian and cycle focus. There is a strong concentration of desire lines within the central part of the site, creating a hub with radiating routes into the wider area. This structure provides a strong skeleton on which to base the development of the rest of the Framework as it delivers both legibility and accessibility.

5.19 Security and personal safety issues exist in relation to the subway facility at Headbolt Lane and therefore it shall not be considered as a fixed element, with its removal proposed, although alternative at grade pedestrian and cycle facilities shall be provided.

- 5.20 The second element for consideration is public transport. Merseytravel have expressed a strong desire to maintain the bus terminus at Moorfield to ensure that there is maximum bus penetration in the area. Residential frontages will provide informal surveillance of the space thus improving safety for passengers waiting at stops and drivers waiting at the terminus. In order to ensure the ongoing use of the terminus, it is proposed that improved infrastructure be provided for passengers and washroom facilities be provided for drivers.
- 5.21 The Framework also looks to improve accessibility to the bus services by the maximum number of residents. This is to be promoted by the availability of alternative/extended routes and by locating stops in safer environments. The proposal is to provide an internal link between the bus terminus and the proposed strategic railway station facility at Headbolt Lane.
- 5.22 The proposed strategic rail facility at Headbolt Lane, along with the new bus station in Kirkby Town Centre, are features of the Local Transport Plan 2006-12 Addendum submission to the Department For Transport (DFT). Focusing a bus service link onto the proposed rail facility site will reinforce connectivity from Tower Hill and the extensive residential development to the north of Shevington's Lane, strengthening the bid for this scheme.

- 5.23 The third element for consideration is car access. Access to the new development within the Action Area will be in the form of traditional streets that reinforce priority for sustainable modes of travel, legibility and connectivity. The layout of the streets will be discussed below, but in general terms they will be designed to discourage rat running through the estate and restrain vehicle speeds. Innovative measures will need to be considered along the proposed internal road. This is to discourage through traffic but facilitate bus service movements.



- 5.24 Within the Framework Plan, opportunities have been identified to improve connections within the existing housing areas. The neighbourhood areas will require independent studies to identify opportunities to improve connectivity and legibility. This may include further demolition and restructuring to achieve a satisfactory result.

- 5.25 To reverse the inward looking nature of the estate and to integrate Tower Hill and surrounding residential environments, opportunities exist to enhance pedestrian and cycle links to the perimeter roads from the heads of adjacent cul-de-sacs.
- 5.26 Traffic calmed residential roads and generous park paths will generally provide a safe environment for cycling. However the strong desire lines within the central part of the site may require segregated cycle facilities, particularly along the internal spine road that is to accommodate bus services. Similarly strategic cycle links to/from the wider locality, including Kirkby Town Centre and the residential development to the north of Shevington's Lane, would require suitable segregated facilities.

**c) Townscape: urban fabric and architectural quality.**

- 5.27 The Tower Hill area has a very weak and inaccessible urban structure with equally poor quality of urban and architectural design. Within the Action Area, the urban fabric and the architectural quality could be described as very poor. Since the demolition of the tower blocks, it has had a fractured urban fabric.
- 5.28 The Framework Plan addresses the weaknesses by focusing on the movement issues. This is by establishing a strong skeletal base on which to develop the rest of the Framework to deliver both legibility and accessibility. A requirement of the UDP is to maintain a significant proportion of open space within the Action area. This has led to the concept of using the public realm to reinforce the movement strategy. In effect, the park becomes the hub of the village and also reinforces the movement spokes out into the wider area. The shape of the park is also partly formed by the constraint of the overhead power lines.
- 5.29 Building plots are superimposed on the Framework Plan following a set of basic rules. First they have to reinforce the movement links by providing maximum frontage to every route and the public realm to ensure that it is possible to move through the village and always be overlooked by houses. This will maximise passive surveillance of the core area and thus increase environmental safety and



reduce antisocial behaviour. It will enable people to take responsibility for their environment.

- 5.30 The building plots will be used to back onto existing housing areas, to provide frontage, and to surround school grounds thus providing additional security and surveillance. Putting these things together creates an environment of street frontages that encloses space, reinforces legibility and clearly defines public and private areas. There must not be any dwelling that backs onto a public area.
- 5.31 Following the movement strategy, the development blocks create a deformed grid of small scale perimeter blocks, reconciling the different geometries of the existing housing areas and reinforcing links between them. This has set up a number of cross roads and long straight roads within the plan. It is essential to maintain these elements as they are the basis of pedestrian priority, direct routing and legibility. A balanced approach with pedestrian priority is required, which seeks alternative ways of making traditional junctions safer without compromising the quality of urban design.
- 5.32 In line with guidance from PPS 3: Housing, new residential development will be expected to utilise land in an efficient manner. An overall density for all parcels of land should be a minimum of 30 houses per hectare.
- 5.33 Policy H3 states that up to 300 dwellings can be constructed in the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area. On the basis of the current RSS, no more than 300 dwelling completions will be allowed before 2016. However, in the event of a higher housing figure being approved in the replacement RSS (see paragraph 3.7); it is possible that the figure of 300 may be increased (subject to satisfactory site layout and open space requirements).
- 5.34 All land not developed in the first phase may form a second phase of development and will need to be landscaped to the standards of the main area of public open space, protected and maintained.
- 5.35 New housing should consist of a mix of dwellings suitable for family occupation in the form of terraces, semi-detached and detached properties with suitably sized front and rear gardens. However, it is important to deliver a high quality urban street scene with continuity in architectural form, style, rhythm, scale and massing. Quirky setbacks and abrupt changes in style to provide individuality or minimal gaps between buildings will be at the expense of continuity and will not be acceptable.

- 5.36 New development should be domestic in scale, reflecting the area's suburban characteristics. However, the new development does not have to necessarily match or blend with the adjacent neighbouring townscape in terms of scale massing or style. The majority of new dwellings should be two to three storeys in height, the greater mass being preferable in key locations such as frontage positions – the park, perimeter roads, gateways.
- 5.37 Building elevations represent the main interface between public and private space. To enable natural surveillance and overlooking, the distance between windows and footpaths should not be excessive. Also buildings should maximise opportunities for active frontages through the considered use of windows and doors. Front doors must face directly on to the street and elevations must not have areas of 'blank' street elevations. For example, houses must turn the corner and not have blank gable ends. This is a negative feature of the existing estate. Corners should also be celebrated through the architectural form, to mark entrances to streets aiding legibility.
- 5.38 The Framework illustrates strong building lines which require a continuous treatment with limited clutter. Interest should be added to street elevations through subtle detailing; windows should, for example, be recessed from the face of the outer wall to prevent a 'flat' appearance of the facade. Ad-hoc 'Victorian add-ons' such as porches and dormers which can be a feature of many modern developments often detract from the quality of place. This is usually because they are basic boxes with bits clumsily added on. Most original Victorian houses are elegant and well proportioned. An architectural solution is required, not a standard product.
- 5.39 The choice of construction materials should relate to the sustainability of the scheme and maximise lifetime values. The development must have a long design life and minimise maintenance requirements whilst being cost effective to deliver. There will be a large number of new residents who will not be able to take on large maintenance liabilities. This could lead, in the long term, to the unacceptable deterioration of the development. This may suggest that using traditional materials would be the most appropriate solution in this situation. Such choices are also likely to be attractive to cost conscious consumers. However that is not to say that they have to be used in traditional ways and cannot include more contemporary materials, subject to the requirement above.

- 5.40 The choice and colour of building materials play a fundamental role in determining the character and identity of a place. A limited palette should be employed within specific groupings of dwellings to forge a close identity. Excessive variations in colour and materials within streets must be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that it is an intrinsic component of the design. Within existing streets or infill locations, materials may need to be especially sympathetic to the context.
- 5.41 In the public realm, all boundary treatments must match the buildings in terms of their long design life and design quality. Wooden fences are not an acceptable boundary treatment for front gardens, walls being the preferred option.
- 5.42 If traditional pitched roofs are proposed streets should have a common pitch, however, opportunities to add interest through the use of hipped roofs and gables are acceptable. Examples of interest include symmetrical arrangements of terraces that include a central dwelling with either a gable end or parapet roof. When such traditional roof forms are used, the ridge line should either be parallel or perpendicular to the street. Traditional forms can also be combined with contemporary approaches such as monopitched roofs, but will need to be well planned. Tile or slate should be the predominant roof material and should be used within groupings to create unity. The 'pepper potting' of different roof materials must be avoided.
- 5.43 If a contemporary roofing system is proposed, it will need to be demonstrated that it is appropriate and will deliver a consistent high quality character across the development. This may include a green / brown roof system to help deliver the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS).
- 5.44 The design of houses should allow disabled access for visitors at the very least. This should be facilitated by a level transition from the public realm to building entrances, avoiding any trip hazards and adequate internal circulation to facilitate wheelchair turning space. A proportion of housing will, however, be required to be specifically adapted for disabled residents.
- 5.45 The need for car parking should be integrated in a manner which reduces the visual impact of parked cars on the quality of streetscape and the public realm. Many existing streets suffer from a proliferation of cars parked 'half on' the pavement, causing both damage and obstruction to pedestrians with wheelchairs and pushchairs.



- 5.46 It is a key desire that informal on-street parking should be kept to a minimum in both existing and proposed residential areas and proposals for in-curtilage or on street parking within defined bays is welcomed. In-curtilage car parking should not, however, ruin the consistency of boundary walls against the street edge or produce an open hard landscape. Where in-curtilage parking is introduced, drives should be one car wide leaving the remaining space for gardens and gates with brick piers will be required.
- 5.47 Parking courts are discouraged. If they are required they must be within the curtilage of building blocks, be secure and not visually intrusive and be well landscaped. Car parking areas should always be well lit and overlooked from adjacent dwellings.
- 5.48 A potential new location for retail has been identified on Shevington's Lane adjacent to St. Andrew's church. However, this proposal has not been tested for demand or its impact on retail in the wider area. This position is proposed because it is strategically placed in the centre of Tower Hill and most residents will be within an 800m walking radius of the proposal. It has a high profile frontage on Shevington's Lane, is adjacent to bus stops and will be on a main walking route between the private housing area to the north and the proposed railway station. Careful consideration will need to be afforded to the vehicular access arrangements from Shevington's Lane. The site is unsuitable for housing because the restriction imposed by the overhead power lines would leave a small isolated triangle of housing. However, for a small supermarket, the large area under the power lines could be used for parking. This creates a positive use for this left over piece of land, thus increasing the security of the area and reinforcing connectivity.
- 5.49 Any proposal incorporating retail on this site must be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment that would need to demonstrate an acceptable impact on local centres and Kirkby town centre. It should also be of a scale to meet only local needs and conform to the requirements of policy S8 in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and PPS6 – Town Centres.

**d) Housing: privacy, amenity and security.**

- 5.50 Dwellings should be designed to provide privacy and comfort for existing and new properties. A decent level of privacy is defined by a distance of no less than 22 metres between facing properties with habitable rooms. This standard ensures a decent level of retreat and has been adopted by the Council for many years, however, the rigid



use of this separation distance is likely to result in a uniform and characterless built environment. It is essential, therefore, that this measurement is used as more of a guide than a definitive rule and that opportunities to achieve better enclosure and more interest whilst retaining a decent level of privacy are sought. This may be achieved by varying habitable and non-habitable room layouts within opposing frontages thereby reducing the need for a 22 metre separation distance or the careful positioning of windows to prevent overlooking.

- 5.51 Reduced separation distances between frontages are likely to result in shorter front gardens, which can have the effect of reducing levels of privacy to habitable rooms at street level. To ensure that there is a clear distinction to public and private space there should be either a physical or notional boundary



between the public and private realm. Traditionally this has been achieved in Tower Hill through a boundary wall or hedge and it is likely that new development will replicate such arrangements.

- 5.52 Noise is another factor to be considered in terms of privacy. Noise reduction should form part of the specification for new dwellings, particularly for the following types of noise:
- transmission of sound between dwellings, including mechanical and plumbing noises, where rooms such as kitchens or bathrooms of one dwelling adjoin a bedroom or lounge of another. Internal arrangement should, where possible, ensure that dwellings are “handed” so that rooms of similar use adjoin each other between dwellings. Where this arrangement is not possible, measures should be introduced for added noise reduction;
  - road noise, particularly for dwellings adjacent to strategic and local connectors;
  - rail noise, particularly for dwellings near Headbolt Lane;
  - noise from school playing fields;
  - noise from children’s play spaces;
  - noise from existing and any proposed shops;
  - noise from bus terminus;
  - noise from public houses. Although it would not be reasonable to sterilise large areas of land around public houses, the impact that

extended licensing hours has on occupants of dwellings should not be underestimated. Some constraint on development very close to the public house will be unavoidable.

- 5.53 Lighting consideration is also important. Lighting adjacent to retail outlets, the bus terminus and within children's playspaces should be designed to have minimum impact on dwellings.
- 5.54 The layout of new streets and the design of individual dwellings should be planned in a manner which exploits the interaction between inside and outside. The streetscene should be formed not only by the experience within the public realm but also the views on to it. Ideally, habitable rooms should have an attractive outlook on to street or any private garden space. Pockets of public open space and private gardens should be suitably planned as integral elements of any layout to capitalise on amenity and should not merely be leftover space.
- 5.55 An important design consideration of site planning and building design will be the path of the sun and the effects of light and shade on the quality of indoor and outdoor space. Understanding the function of these spaces and their requirements can lead to more agreeable environments and may also have energy efficiencies. Rooms facing south, for example, will be lighter and warmer in sunnier periods, reducing the requirements for heating and lighting. They may also get too warm in summer months requiring some form of ventilation, preferably natural as opposed to mechanical.
- 5.56 In order to promote wildlife and increase biodiversity, bat bricks, bird nesting boxes, etc., are encouraged.
- 5.57 The incorporation of physical measures to reduce the opportunity for criminal or anti-social behaviour should be discrete and 'designed in' as part of any site planning and detailed design. Such an approach will favour design features that promote natural surveillance and interaction and avoid creating places which are isolated through a well connected network of streets and open spaces. Opportunities to exploit natural surveillance should be considered; open space, streets and car parking areas should relate well to building frontages and entrances and should be overlooked from habitable rooms. Movement linkages should also be based on traditional streets as opposed to segregated roads and pedestrian alleyways since passing traffic can provide passing surveillance.
- 5.58 Private and public open spaces should be clearly delineated to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility. Primarily this will include the control of individual and common curtilages by the creation

of 'defensible space.' This will be achieved through appropriate boundary treatments such as a low wall or hedge which will define front gardens from public areas. At the side and rear of properties a sense of security should be achieved through the considered arrangement of dwellings as a perimeter block so that rear gardens are enclosed by buildings and are not exposed to the street edge.

### **e) Affordable Housing**

- 5.59 In order to bridge the growing gap between the bottom and top of the housing market, Knowsley Housing Strategy 2004-2010 priority 1 requires the provision of new shared and/or low cost home ownership homes in regeneration areas.
- 5.60 The Replacement Unitary Development Plan does not require the provision of affordable housing in new development, however, the Council, as land owner, will negotiate with developers to provide an element of affordable housing as required by the Housing Strategy. For the purposes of this SPD, the definition of affordable housing is the same as that in Appendix B of PPS3 – Housing. A developer agreement will be entered into to secure the affordable housing provision for first and subsequent occupiers.
- 5.61 Whilst prospective developers are invited to present their proposals for the delivery of the affordable housing element, it is envisaged that the affordable housing will be in the form of low cost homes for sale rather than new housing for social rent. In addition, prospective developers are invited to present their proposals for ensuring 'tenure blindness', where low cost home ownership are indistinguishable from outright sale and is fully integrated throughout the new development.



### **f) Landscape: function and quality.**

- 5.62 Public open space development should meet the requirements of policies OS3 and OS4 of Knowsley's Replacement Unitary Development Plan. In July 2002 an open space study was undertaken by PMP on behalf of the Council in accordance with PPG17. The study

showed that, within Tower Hill, there is a surplus of 21.04ha of amenity greenspace, a deficit of 0.19ha of allotments, and a deficit of 0.15ha in the of provision for children and young people. Policies OS3 and OS4 are contained within Appendix 2.

5.63 The Park should meet the following quality vision:

“Parks to have a facility mix, be provided to Green Flag standards, promote biodiversity and be a one-stop community facility locating other community facilities such as skate parks and playgrounds”.

“The park should be welcoming, clean and litter free with well kept vegetation, appropriate lighting and ancillary accommodation and well signed to and within the site.”

5.64 Environmentally sympathetic landscaping works should be carried out to complement the character and setting of the site and the uses to which it will be put, including the use of only native plant species.

5.65 In the proposed park and wider public realm, the landscape will be well proportioned but basic and hardy to withstand potential abuse. Two robust play areas (young children’s playground and skate park) with two reduced areas for informal play are proposed to provide a positive focus for young people. The remainder of the park is reduced to small grass and tree areas between path links with some areas large enough to provide community event space. Either on site or adjacent community buildings should be available for parks staff to enable provision of events and community activity on the site and a base for maintenance work.

5.66 Plenty of seating should be provided along the paths. It is also



proposed that investment be put into school grounds development so as not to deprive the youngest members of the community from the benefit of exposure to nature and a more intimate landscape.

5.67 Providing a positive sense of identity for the area is also important and it is proposed that a significant public arts project be initiated within the public space - putting the ‘tower’ back into Tower Hill. In conjunction with this, a wider public arts / environmental design programme will be

established within the community to develop a sense of pride in improving the wider area.

5.68 The park and the wider public realm links provide the new organising structure for Tower Hill and are thus required as a first deliverable. They will provide a step change in quality for the existing community and a positive environment to attract new residents. The quality of the landscape will be experienced in its proportions and linkages, its designated activities and in its security from overlooking by adjacent housing. It will be robustly built to minimise the effect of any abuse and to maintain its attractiveness and value to the community. In future years, it can be enriched as appropriate.

5.69 As discussed above, pedestrian priority is a key principle in the future design of Tower Hill, and therefore streets should provide a positive outdoor space and be a place for people not just a channel for motorised traffic. Streets should be considered as a key part of the public realm and efforts to manage and calm traffic are encouraged to create more sociable and interesting neighbourhoods.



5.70 The materials that are to be used in the public realm must be fit for purpose and hard wearing, simple and unifying, and sustainable through lifetime costing / valuing. They should provide a hard, dry, non-slip, easily maintainable surface that will carry the load of traffic asked of it. Within the park and the two tree avenues radiating out, it is recommended that the path surfaces are finished with a fine bound gravel surface. The paths within the park must be a minimum of 3.0m wide to accommodate maintenance vehicles. Tactile paving and drop kerbs will be required at all crossing points where appropriate.

5.71 The access requirements of disabled people should relate well to pedestrian routes for more able people. They should follow as direct a route as possible that incorporates gentle gradients of no more than 1:20, where topography does not hinder otherwise. Ramped access will be required in stepped areas and drop kerbs (with appropriate tactile paving) at crossing points. Routes will need wide enough space, unhindered by 'street clutter' to allow safe passage. Surfaces in



particular should be firm and durable, since loose material, pot holes, cracks and puddles will reduce accessibility.

- 5.72 Within the park it is proposed that surplus spoil and topsoil from development areas are used to raise the park by a minimum of 0.5 M above the surrounding roads to prevent car access. The perimeter of the park needs additional protection with a galvanised and painted steel tube barrier to match existing design. 'Gateways' are required through the barrier at all pedestrian entrances to allow pushchair and wheelchair access, but prevent motor cycles.
- 5.73 The park is proposed to be an area of grass and trees, providing an open feel which maximises surveillance and facilitates play and games. A limited number of shrub beds may be introduced. The Town and Country Planning Association booklet on Biodiversity by Design contains a number of imaginative urban design schemes that meet a wide range of environmental and social requirements. If shrub beds are to be introduced, maintenance of the shrub beds will be included within the maintenance agreement for the park. The illustrated avenues are proposed to be Lime trees. They must be at minimum of 25/30 girths, approximately at 5.0m centres and with an underground guying system. The illustrated tree groups are proposed to be semi-mature trees relocated from the existing landscape. Underground guying will be the preferred method of supporting the trees. Any tree planting in the wider area must also follow these specifications. Tree planting in street areas will require 2.0m square metal tree grills if they are not within a soft verge.
- 5.74 All street furniture must be robust and of high quality. Careful consideration should be given to its siting. This will include putting benches where it would be attractive and safe to sit, not cluttering



pavements and causing obstructions and putting signs where they can be read. Lighting will be required along all footpaths, in the streets and the park, to adoptable authority standards and provide a safe pedestrian environment.

- 5.75 Children’s play areas need to be fenced to prevent dog fouling. The surfaces and equipment need to be safe and fit for purpose, and agreed by the local authority. The play ground should follow the latest best practice guidance and include a mix of equipment for children of all abilities. The play areas also require flood lighting to make them attractive and safe to use at night and also to improve surveillance of the space. The flood lighting can be triggered by sensors to prevent energy wastage.



- 5.76 Additional guidance on planning green infrastructure can be found in the Consultation Draft of “The Green Infrastructure Guide for the North West” and “The Countryside in and around Towns – a Vision for Connecting Town and Country in Pursuit of Sustainable Development”
- 5.77 Development of the park should commence following approval of the landscape scheme and future maintenance arrangements. The developer will implement the approved scheme. Joint inspections to take place throughout the development of the park and at substantial completion. Following completion, an agreed maintenance period by the developer will commence. At the end of the maintenance period a further inspection will be undertaken. Maintenance will then transfer to the Council with an appropriate commuted sum payment.

### **g) Street Structure**

- 5.78 Tower Hill’s original structure of a Radburn layout was significantly altered by the demolition of the flats, maisonettes and shopping arcades within the central core. A series of extended curvilinear and other geometrically irregular forms of cul-de-sac now remain. These are each accessed directly from points on the ring of outer strategic and local connector routes that define the action area. Only large barren spaces and a network of footpaths exist between the respective cul-de-sacs.



- 5.79 There is an absence of certain Borough street types that are found elsewhere within the Borough. These have been identified and characterised in the Knowsley Guide to Development as;
- Strategic Connectors - Connecting regions. Bank Lane can be considered as a strategic connector.
  - Local Connectors - Connecting local areas to strategic connectors. Shevington's Lane, Headbolt Lane and Pingwood Lane can be considered as local connectors.
  - Local Routes - Connecting local destinations.
  - Other Routes- Serving access to residential development.
- 5.80 The present cul-de-sac configurations achieve a good safety record within the action area, as they act to restrain vehicle speeds and prevent through traffic. However a balance needs to be struck between safety and an integrated movement framework.
- 5.81 Promoting connectivity and permeability to ensure residents are within easy reach of local shops, public transport, community, and recreation facilities is paramount to the continued success and growth of any area.
- 5.82 Access and movement issues must be considered at all levels; from providing well located and integrated pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes within local areas, to providing or maintaining strategic connectors to allow efficient movement between neighbourhoods.
- 5.83 All development must concentrate on strengthening existing pedestrian, cycle, public transport and vehicular links within the Action Area to create a more sustainable and accessible community by providing solutions to current access and movement constraints.
- 5.84 This will be achieved by focusing upon the road user hierarchy specified in the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and a clear hierarchy of routes as set out in the Knowsley Guide to Development.
- 5.85 Suitable measures shall be introduced that would allow greater bus penetration into the Action Area, currently prevented by the cul-de-sac configurations, but would restrict high volumes of traffic rat-running through the area.
- 5.86 Main pedestrian and cycle routes must be strengthened by providing high quality corridors on likely desire lines, as well as routing slow modes through interesting new high quality areas. Innovative measures to prevent use of such facilities by vehicles or motorcycles shall form an integral part of the design.

5.87 Key trip attractions such as schools, local shops, health and community facilities, and transport interchanges shall act as focal points for the high quality, well lit corridors. Recreational opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists are also important to the Action Area.





## **Chapter 6 Requirements of Development: What to Submit**

6.1 The following will be required as part of a planning application:

- Application Form:** 4 copies of completed application forms;
- Ownership:** Certificate of Ownership confirming that all owners have been notified of the application together with a list of persons who have been notified;
- Plans:** 4 copies of a 1:1250 or 2500 scale site location plan showing the entire application site outlined in red;  
4 copies of a larger scale plan (1:500) showing the proposed site layout including access and car parking arrangements.  
4 copies of floor plans and elevations for all forms of development, for example house types, retail units, community facilities etc.

### **6.2 Planning Statement.**

Information will include how the proposed development accords with policies in the Supplementary Planning Document. It should also include details of consultations with Knowsley Borough Council and wider community / statutory consultees undertaken prior to submission.

### **6.3 Design Statement**

In depth requirements for design statement can be found in Appendix 3.

### **6.4 Access Statement**

An access statement is required for all building that are accessible to the general public. Provision should be made form access, parking, and sanitary conveniences for people with disabilities. Attention is drawn to the legislation to provide access for the disabled. CABE guidance on Design and Access Statements, "Design and Access statements: how to write, read and use them" may assist in this matter.

### **6.5 Transport Assessment (including Travel Plan)**

In accordance with PPG13, a Transport Assessments should be prepared and submitted alongside the relevant planning applications for development. The assessment should illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should also give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking

and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate transport impacts. A travel plan should be included.

#### **6.6 Retail Impact Assessment**

In accordance with PPS6, any proposal incorporating retail will require a Retail Impact Assessment. This will include evidence of need and also outline the impact that the proposal will have on local centres and Kirkby town centre.

#### **6.7 An Ecological Survey**

An ecological assessment should be made for the area affected by development within the Action Area. The report should contain an assessment of the impact that the development will make and long term maintenance and management arrangements for all open spaces.

#### **6.8 Contamination Study**

Land contamination is not expected to be a significant issue, but in line with the advice in PPS 23, a minimum of a desk study and site walkover would be expected. It would be normal to conduct some chemical contamination investigations when geotechnical investigations are carried out. Remediation will be in accordance with conditions attached to planning permissions.

6.9 Details to be submitted for a full planning application must cover all principles of development covered in this Action Area Plan. Applicants are required to consult with the Development Control and Building Control Division of the Council's Planning Department prior to submitting an application.

6.10 At an early stage there will be an opportunity to discuss the phasing, the need for off-site works and to discuss the need for other planning obligation contributions.

## **Appendix 1 - Consultation and how it has affected the SPD**

### **Public Consultation**

#### **2003 – Summer**

A public consultation was undertaken showcasing a previous masterplan produced by Halsall Lloyd. Suggestions from the general public included:

- The need to involve the whole of Tower Hill in the regeneration proposals;
- Increase retail provision – small supermarket;
- Better road penetration into the area and reduction of the number of dead ends;
- Reduction in green area , better security for open spaces with housing facing onto green open space;
- The provision of a central feature;
- Extra care homes for older people possibly in a village type development;
- Improvement of public transport;
- Provide a mixture of housing including low cost/share ownership and for sale;
- Improve facilities for young people;
- Increase security with improved lighting / CCTV.

#### **2005 - 9 November & 7 December**

Two Focus Group meetings took place in which details were given of the findings of the 2003 consultation. A strong desire was expressed by residents to continue to be involved. A need for increased bus provisions and improved lighting / infrastructure was also expressed.

#### **2006 – 30 January to 6 February (mobile exhibition) and 7 to 17 February (static exhibition of Tower Hill Framework by MAXIM urban design)**

The overall perception of the proposal and the plans to regenerate Tower Hill were met with a positive response. A desire existed amongst those attending the events that 'something had to be done'.

An un-quantified verbal response was received from attendees that unless anti-social behaviour or existing motorbike issues were resolved that any investment would be wasted. However, those hosting consultation events were able to discuss the positive nature of the plans, to avoid this initial negative thought turning into a negative response.

The two main issues that the residents wished to discuss were the location of a supermarket and concerns relating to late-night deliveries, anti-social behaviour, traffic; and the proposed pathway through Ravenscroft School. Also discussed was the request that the boxing club be extended to include a gym / sports centre.

188 questionnaires were returned following the exhibition. 78% thought that the plans were clear. 72% thought that changing the mixture of housing tenure would be a good idea. The following is how the respondents rated features of the plan.

	Excellent		Good		Ok		Poor		Very Poor	
<b>Parks/open spaces</b>	66	35%	81	43%	28	15%	6	3%	1	0.5%
<b>Play spaces</b>	66	35%	80	42%	22	12%	12	6%	2	1%
<b>Residential Streets</b>	42	22%	79	42%	38	20%	12	6%	6	3%
<b>Pedestrian routes</b>	53	28%	66	35%	39	21%	15	8%	7	4%
<b>Location of housing</b>	45	24%	78	41%	46	24%	9	5%	3	1.5%
<b>Security/Safety</b>	46	24%	55	29%	47	25%	21	11%	12	6.4%
<b>Overall proposal</b>	59	31%	74	39%	36	19%	7	4%	3	1.5%
<b>Staff at the event</b>	107	67%	63	33.5%	12	6.4%	0	0	0	0

### Stakeholder

Stakeholder meetings comprise Members and Officers of Knowsley MBC., Knowsley Housing Trust, Merseytravel, Schools, and Clergy.

### 2005 - 19 October

Stakeholders were informed of the project's progress and timescale for delivery. Maxim Urban Design gave an outline of design and thought process behind the Framework.

### 2006 - 29 March

An update of the project's progress was given. A Desire expressed to improve public building facades / boundaries.

### Outcomes

- Improved bus terminus in the Framework following discussions between Maxim Urban Design and Merseytravel.
- The project board commissioned DTZ Piedad Consulting to undertake soft market testing to assess the viability of retail within Tower Hill. The consultants reported that no interest was apparent. The Board decided to shelve this issue pending completion of Kirkby Retail Study. It was thought that once a developer is in place that a second retail demand study could be undertaken. Interest from one party has subsequently been received.
- A new sports centre is currently being constructed in Cherryfield Drive, Kirkby. This is to replace the sports centre at Valley Road. Additional sports facilities will shortly be built at Ruffwood School. It is therefore unlikely that the boxing club will be expanded.



## Appendix 2 – Policies OS1, OS3, OS4, DQ1, S1 ENV9, and H5

### **POLICY OS1: STRATEGY FOR URBAN GREENSPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION**

Open space, sport and recreational facility sites will be protected from inappropriate development and proposals to improve existing sites and create new sites to meet identified needs in the Borough will be supported.

New development should:

- a) Protect sites which have existing or potential value to provide for identified local needs;
- b) Improve the quality and/or accessibility of sites where this would address identified deficiencies;
- c) Create new sites where this would address identified deficiencies and resources are available; and

Protect and where possible improve links between sites.

Where needs arise from new developments, planning obligations will be sought to secure new or improved provision and contributions towards future maintenance.

### **POLICY OS2: URBAN GREENSPACE**

1. New development within or affecting areas of greenspace will not be permitted if it would significantly harm any special qualities of the greenspace in respect of the following:
  - a) Visual amenity;
  - b) Residential amenity;
  - c) Wildlife value and environmental benefits;
  - d) Cultural and community value;
  - e) Recreational and health benefits; or
  - f) Strategic benefits.
2. Development within or affecting greenspaces will be permitted where:
  - a) The development would be of a minor nature which would not harm the qualities of the greenspace listed above;
  - b) The development is required in connection with the use of the greenspace (e.g. small changing rooms); or
  - c) Any harm caused by the development would be mitigated, for example, by the provision of replacement facilities which must be of at least as high quality, “fitness for purpose”, and accessibility as any facilities which would be lost.
3. Development must not sever existing, or prevent identified potential, physical and/or visual linkages between adjoining urban greenspaces, and should wherever possible improve them.

**POLICY OS3: QUANTITATIVE STANDARDS - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FOR GENERAL AMENITY USE, ALLOTMENTS AND CHILDRENS PLAY**

- 1) When considering planning applications, the following standards for the provision of public open spaces will be applied as a minimum (not including land formally laid out as playing pitches and other sporting facilities):
  - a) No Substantial Residential Area should have less than 0.5 hectares per thousand residents for general amenity use, 0.05 hectares for allotments and 0.2 hectares for children's play; and
  - b) All households should have access to amenity greenspace, allotments and children's play space within a catchment distance that is appropriate for the users.
- 2) In any part of the Borough where provision falls below the standards set in 1) above, the loss by development of any greenspace (irrespective of its current use) which would be suitable in terms of its size, location and character, to help to make good the deficiency will not be permitted.

**POLICY OS4: PROTECTION OF PLAYING PITCHES AND OTHER FORMAL SPORTING FACILITIES**

- 1) Where a new development would lead to the partial or complete loss of an existing playing pitch or other formal sporting facility, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate that at least one of the criteria listed below is met:
  - a) There is an excess of provision for the sporting use in the area and no evidence of future or continuing need;
  - b) The proposal is for facilities ancillary to the principal use of the site as a sporting facility;
  - c) The proposed development would affect only land incapable of forming part of the facility;
  - d) Alternative provision of at least equivalent quality, quantity, fitness for purpose and accessibility is proposed; or
  - e) The proposal is for a development of such benefit to sporting interests that it outweighs the loss of the existing facility.
- 2) Irrespective of whether any of the criteria set within 1) above are met, development affecting an existing playing pitch or other formal sporting facility will not be permitted if it would result in any of the community areas having less than 1.85 hectares of playing pitches and other formal sporting facilities provision per thousand residents available for public use.
- 3) In any part of the Borough where provision falls below the standards set in 2) above, the loss by development of any greenspace (irrespective of its current use) which would be suitable in terms of its size, location and character, to help to make good the deficiency will not be permitted.

**POLICY OS5: PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT**

1. All new residential developments should be adequately served by public open space, children's play and informal recreation facilities as set out in policy OS3.

All residential developments

2. In all cases, developers will be required to make a financial contribution towards the maintenance of any existing or new open space that is needed to serve the development.

Residential developments within areas of deficit

3. Where a development would result in an area falling short of the standards of provision, or, if already below, to fall further below its standards, a legal agreement will be sought to require the developer either to:
  - a) Set aside and lay out an area of public open space (with appropriate facilities) within the development site sufficient to make up any shortfall that would otherwise occur; or
  - b) Make a financial contribution (in addition to any that is required under 2) above) towards off-site provision which would enable an acceptable amount and quality of public open space, children's play and informal recreational facility to be made available in the area.

**POLICY DQ1: DESIGN QUALITY IN NEW DEVELOPMENT**

New development should be of a high quality design which will:

Site surroundings

- a) Respond to and enhance the characteristics of the immediately surrounding area through the use of appropriate scale, density, massing, height and building lines;
- b) Preserve or enhance views of important landscape features/buildings in surrounding areas;
- c) Protect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers;

Site characteristics

- d) Preserve any existing buildings, walls or structures which (whilst not necessarily statutorily listed), are of intrinsic architectural or historic interest, or which contribute to the character of the area;
- e) Preserve and manage any existing important natural features such as trees, hedgerows, greenspace, ponds, slopes and streams and where possible make use of these as design features;
- f) Include measures to accommodate protected species and their habitats.

### Access

- g) Provide safe and convenient access for all by a choice of transport, including attractive secure and safe defined pedestrian links to any community, employment, public transport and shopping facilities in the area;

### Site layout and landscaping

- h) Achieve an efficient use of land;
- i) Create attractive 'hard' and 'soft' landscaping;
- j) Provide high quality open spaces, designed to be well used and appreciated;
- k) Provide good levels of amenity for occupiers of the development;
- l) Create a clear distinction between the public and private realm;
- m) Include any necessary noise attenuation and flood abatement measures as an integral part of design in new development;

### Buildings and structures

- n) Achieve good design quality in all new buildings and structures in terms of their scale, style, materials, detailing and their relationship with each other;
- o) Maximise environmental efficiency through efficient use of materials and resources, re-use of materials wherever practicable, and the promotion of energy efficiency;

### Links to other approved strategies

- p) Be consistent with the aims and objectives of any regeneration strategy which has been approved by the Council for the area concerned.

### Knowsley Council Design Guide

- q) Be guided by and adhere to the design principles set out in the Knowsley Design Guide

## **POLICY S1: RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

1. Proposals for retail development or other town centre uses which are likely to attract a lot of people and are outside existing town, district or local centres will only be permitted if the applicant has demonstrated the following:
  - a) on an edge of centre site that:
    - There is a need for the proposal; and
    - Any need that has been demonstrated cannot be met by developing land or re-using existing buildings within one or more existing town, district or local centres.

b) on an out of centre site that:

- The criteria listed under a) above have been satisfied; and
- Any need that has been demonstrated cannot be met by developing land or re-using existing buildings within one or more sites on the edge of an existing town, district or local centre.

2. Strategic employment locations will be considered suitable locations for hotels when no suitable sequentially preferable sites in or on the edge of town centres are available or likely to become available in the near future.
3. Development for town centres uses will not be permitted if it would, either by itself or together with other developments and/or existing planning permissions, harm the vitality or viability of any town, district or local centre within the primary catchment area of the development.
4. The development site must, prior to the completion of development, be accessible by a choice of means of transport including public transport, bicycle and foot, and by the less mobile.
5. In considering proposals for major development for retail, leisure or other town centre use, any urban regeneration benefits associated with the development will be considered.
6. Proposals to physically enlarge (or to extend the range of goods which may be sold from within) any existing retail park or any other site on the edge of or outside a town, district or local centre shall not be permitted unless they meet the above criteria.

#### **POLICY ENV9: PROTECTION OF HABITATS AND DESIGNATED SITES**

1. Development proposals will not be permitted if they would destroy or have a significant adverse effect on nature conservation interests within any of the following:
  - a) Any sites which are designated nationally or internationally;
  - b) Locally designated sites including:
    - i. Sites of Biological Interest (SBIs);
    - ii. Sites of Local Geological Interest (SLGIs);
    - iii. Local Nature Reserves;
  - c) Other sites, which include habitats or other features of the landscape, or links between habitats identified as priorities nationally or in the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan.
2. Exceptions from the requirements of 1) above may be permitted (on locally or non-designated sites only) in cases where the applicant has proven:
  - a) That the development cannot reasonably be located elsewhere and

- the benefits of the development would clearly outweigh any harm to the nature conservation or geological value of the site; and
- b) All practical measures will be taken to minimise harm to nature conservation or earth science interests and mitigate any unavoidable harm within or near to the site.
3. Where planning permission is granted planning conditions and/or agreements may be used to ensure the implementation of appropriate measures to compensate for any residual impacts and to enhance the site's management.

**POLICY H5: DEVELOPMENT WITHIN PRIMARILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

1. The Primarily Residential Areas are indicated on the Proposals Map.
2. New development within the Primarily Residential Areas (or proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of existing buildings) which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development (either by itself or in conjunction with other developments) would not:
  - a) Have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance, overlooking, visual intrusion, smells, fumes, on-street parking or other causes; or
  - b) Adversely affect the character or street scene of the area.
3. Windfall housing provision in Primarily Residential Areas will be acceptable in principle if it is for the replacement on a one-for-one basis of housing units which have been demolished and accounted for under the terms of policy H1. Further new "windfall" houses will only be permitted if the release of the site is considered to be appropriate having regard to the requirements of policy H1 and the monitoring of overall housing land supply.

### Appendix 3 – Urban Design Statement

Paragraph 35 of Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) requires that development is carefully planned, consisting of high quality buildings and spaces that support the efficient use of resources.

It is now widely recognised that good urban design not only adds value by increasing the economic viability of development, but also contributes to social and environmental regeneration. Central Government and Knowsley Council are committed to raising the standard of design in the Borough. High quality design is therefore expected from all applications, and for significant developments an Urban Design Statement should accompany the planning application to aid the delivery of good design.

There are a number of documents that are available, produced by the government and other organisations that describe and advise on the principles, benefits and achievement of good urban design. The Knowsley Guide to Development builds on this advice, but in the preparation of an Urban Design Statement, much useful information can be taken from these documents below:

- By Design. Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards a Better Practice (DETR and CABE, 2000)
- By Design - Better Places to Live by Design: a companion guide to PPG3 (DETR and CABE, 2001)
- Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000)
- Places Streets and Movement: A companion guide to Design Bulletin 32 (DETR, 1998)
- The Value of Urban Design (DETR, CABE and UCL Bartlett School of Planning, 2001)
- Towards an Urban Renaissance (Urban Task Force, 1999)
- Secured by Design Standards, available from local CPDA officers or from [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)
- Planning for Sustainable Development (DETR, 1998)
- Design and access statements - How to write, read and use them (CABE 2006)

The Urban Design Statement should be presented in the form of a report to include clear text, diagrams, plans, illustrations and photographs to explain the design teams appraisal and analysis of the site, the development objectives and the preferred design solution. The Urban Design Statement must also demonstrate how it has incorporated the recommendations contained in *By Design* (CABE), most notably the following principles:

- **Character & Context:** *a place with its own identity.*
- **Continuity & Enclosure:** *a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished.*
- **Public Realm:** *a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.*



- **Ease of Movement:** a place that is easy to get to and move through.
- **Legibility:** a place that has clear image and is easy to understand.
- **Diversity:** a place with variety and choice.
- **Density & Mix:** a place with critical mass.
- **Adaptability:** a place that can change easily.

CABE have also recently published a guide to delivering better places: **Delivering great places to live: 20 questions you need to answer** (November 05 - [www.cabe.org.uk/publications](http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications)). For schemes within the Tower Hill Action Area, Knowsley Council would like the new development to gain a 'CABE Standard' for the quality of place that is created. The 20 questions posed are:

### The Building for Life Questions

#### Character

1. Does the scheme feel like a place with a distinctive character?
2. Do buildings exhibit architectural quality?
3. Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?
4. Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
5. Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?

#### Roads, Parking and Pedestrianisation

6. Does the building layout take priority over the roads and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?
7. Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?
8. Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?
9. Does the scheme integrate with existing roads, paths and surrounding development?
10. Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?

#### Design and Construction

11. Is the design specific to the scheme?
12. Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?
13. Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as Building regulations?
14. Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?
15. Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?

#### Environment and Community

16. Does the development have easy access to public transport?
17. Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?
18. Is there a tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community?
19. Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?

20. Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafés?

These 20 questions are reflected in the Framework Plan and throughout this SPD.



#### **4 Summary of Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environment Assessment**

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) have to be produced for each level of development plan including Supplementary Planning Documents.

The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires that an assessment be made of the effects that certain plans and programmes will have on the environment. This is known as a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and applies to a wide range of plans and programmes, including land use plans. The effect on the environment has to be significant before the directive applies. Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council determined that the scale of environmental change in Tower Hill would have a significant impact and therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment was required.

Consultation on the Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environment Assessment (SA/SEA) for the Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was undertaken with the statutory consultees between 26 May and 30 June 2006. The Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environment Assessment was undertaken in line with the Scoping Report and subsequent amendments resulting from the consultation process.

The purpose of the SA/SEA was to evaluate the social, environmental and economic impact of the options contained within the draft SPD. It enabled the options to be developed and refined ensuring that the most sustainable option was chosen and implemented. It also identified measurable indicators that will enable effective monitoring of the SPD to take place so that, if necessary, the SPD can be amended.

As part of the SA/SEA process, three options were considered. Option one was for minimal change. This would give a wider choice of housing accommodation through the erection of 300 new dwellings. Option two was the residents supported option. In addition to the wider choice of housing there would also be improvement to open space, improvement and erection of children's play areas, and the erection of a retail unit. Option three was the same as option two but excluded the retail unit.

Options two and three performed well against all sustainability objectives. The only adverse effect being the reduced quantity of open space, however, planning obligations will be sought to secure new or improved provision and contributions towards future maintenance.

A Retail Impact Assessment will be required to determine whether the additional retail unit is required and that it will not have an adverse effect on other retail units.

## **Appendix 5 – Bibliography**

By Design. Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards a Better Practice (DETR and CABE, 2000)

By Design - Better Places to Live by Design: a companion guide to PPG3 (DETR and CABE, 2001)

Design and Access Statements - How to write, read and use them (CABE 2006)

Knowsley Guide to Development (Knowsley MBC and BDP, 2005)

Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005)

Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (DCLG,2006)

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (DCLG, 2006)

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (ODPM, 2005)

Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport (PPG13). (ODPM, 2001)

Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. (ODPM, 2002)

Planning Policy Guidance 25: Development and Flood Risk (ODPM, 2001)

Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (Submitted Draft) (North West Regional Assembly, 2006)

Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13) (ODPM, 2003)

Securing the Future (DEFRA, 2005)

A Sense Of Place - design guidelines for development near high voltage overhead lines (National Grid UK,2006)

Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000)

## Appendix 6 - Glossary

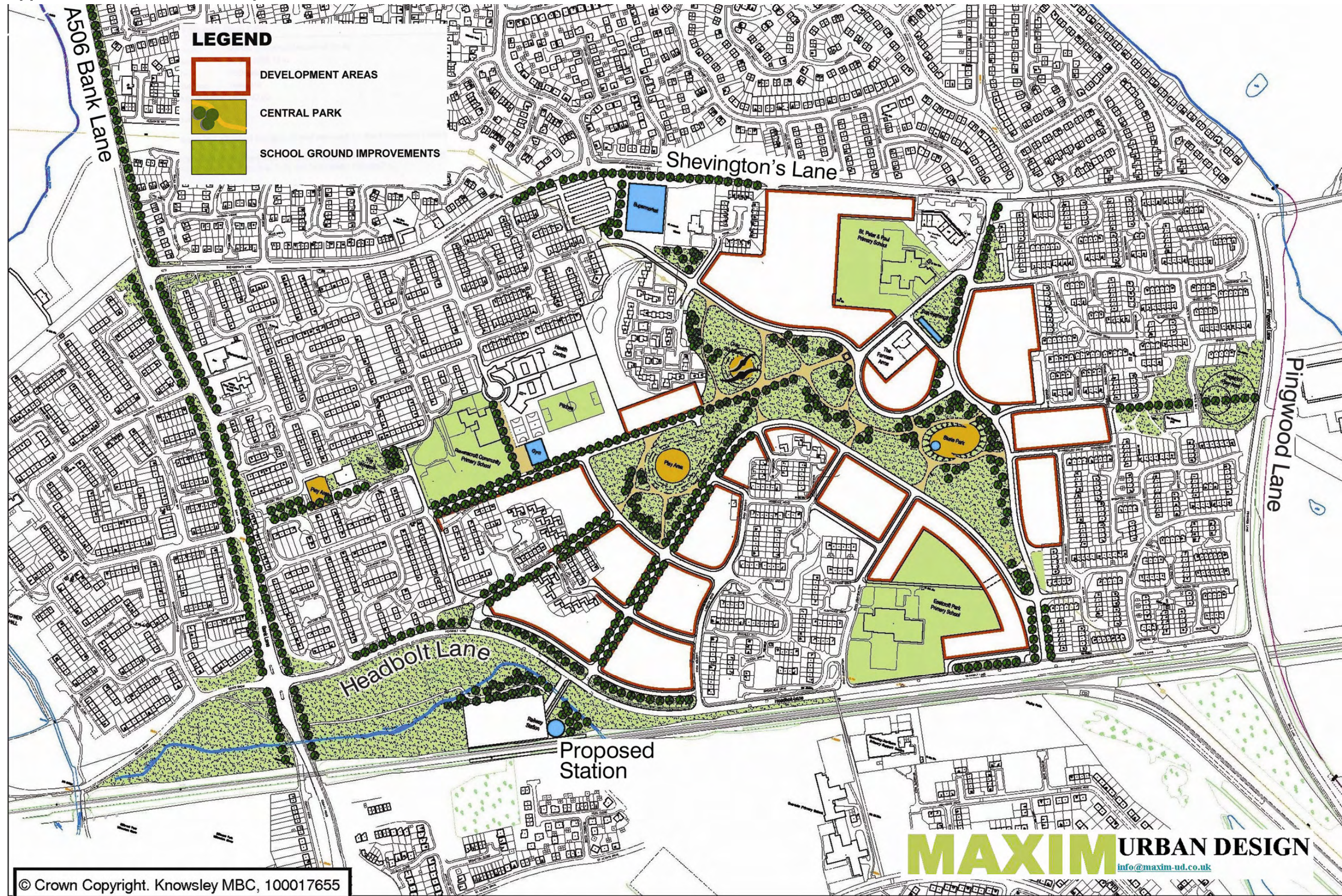
Affordable Housing	
Annual Monitoring Report	A document produced annually that assesses the extent to which the policies in Local Development Documents are being achieved.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	A portfolio of documents that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Local Development Scheme,</li> <li>• a Statement of Community Involvement,</li> <li>• a Core Strategy,</li> <li>• Development Plan Documents, for example housing and employment land allocations,</li> <li>• Supplementary Planning Documents,</li> <li>• a Proposals Map, and</li> <li>• an Annual Monitoring Report.</li> </ul>
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	The government department which has responsibility for planning and local government.
Output Areas (OAs)	This is the smallest area for which tables of results are published in the 2001 Census. Output Areas have an average of 125 households.
Scoping Report	A Report that describes the scope and the methodology to be used in the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires that an assessment be made of the effects that certain plans and programmes will have on the environment.
Super Output Areas (SOAs)	Super Output Areas (SOAs) were created by the Office for National Statistics to provide an improved basis for comparison of statistics across the country. There will be three sizes of Super Output Area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lower level built up of 4 to 6 Output Areas. This level will be used for most purposes.</li> <li>▪ Middle level – built up of 4 to 6 Lower level SOAs</li> <li>▪ Upper level – boundaries not yet determined but will comprise 4 to 6 Middle level SOAs.</li> </ul>
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Supplementary Planning Document cover a wide range of issues on which the council wishes to provide policy guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in development plan documents.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	A document produced to ensure that development proceeds in a sustainable manner through the improved integration of sustainability issues into the plan making process. At the heart of the idea of sustainable development is the principle of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations.

## Appendix 6 - Glossary

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)	A borough-wide statutory development plan which that Council was required to prepare under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It sets out the Council's proposals for the development and use of the land. The current UDP was adopted on 14 June 2006.
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Appendix 7 – Tower Hill Development Framework





Appendix 7 – Tower Hill Development Framework

