

DRAFT HOLMES ROAD

SPD



Holmes Road

Supplementary Planning Document

REGULATION 17

FEBRUARY 2010



Lathams



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Preface

Aerial View - Holmes Road Site Located South of Sowerby Bridge Town Centre



The valley between Sowerby Bridge and Copley is currently the subject of a major regeneration initiative. The Sowerby Bridge Transformational Project (TP) was developed through the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance and seeks to improve economic and social prospects in the area. The Transformational Project forms a significant part of this programme ensuring Sowerby Bridge will see sustained investment brought into the area and directed to specific infrastructure improvements, the opening up of employment land and improved access to the waterfront.

There are a number of constraints that are barriers to the redevelopment of this area including the inadequate road network, flood risk and existing employment uses. The key to unlocking the area for redevelopment is the improved road

network and provision of new employment sites that will be delivered through the TP. The intention of this brief is to bring forward the Holmes Road area as a linked component of the Transformational Project but a component that must await the completion of the new road access from the east.

This SPD has been produced to provide clear planning guidance addressing the constrained nature of the area and facilitating its redevelopment within Sowerby Bridge. Specifically, Holmes Road provides a unique opportunity to extend the existing town centre, improve links with the train station, provide a mix of housing in a sustainable location and create a waterfront destination.

Link between Holmes Road SPD and Sowerby Bridge/Copley Valley Project



1 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The regeneration of Holmes Road emerged out of the Transformational Project (TP) for Sowerby Bridge, which builds on the strategic vision for the Upper Calder Valley. This vision resulted from a long and engaging process of consultation capturing the ideas, and the hearts and minds of local people.
- 1.2 John Thompson and Partners, as part of the Yorkshire Forward Renaissance Towns Programme during 2003, produced individual masterplans for each of the key towns within the Calder Valley. The Sowerby Bridge Masterplan formed the basis for the early stages of the TP covering a large part of the town centre and a number of opportunity sites adjacent to the River Calder.
- 1.3 Overall the TP has a clear purpose; to attract and sustain new investment and economic activity in the valley, specifically the provision of new road infrastructure and river crossings to open up new land for mixed use development. Within the original masterplan the Holmes Road site was identified as key to improving links with the railway station, resulting in a strong vision for the redevelopment of the area being produced.
- 1.4 However, subsequent studies have identified that the Holmes Road area has a number of significant physical constraints that are a barrier to its redevelopment. In order to address those constraints, at the same time as devising a robust planning argument for the site, Holmes Road has been treated independently of the TP.
- 1.5 By providing this Supplementary Planning Document, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (CMBC) and Yorkshire Forward (YF) aim to revitalise this area independently of the TP but with important linkages remaining in place to ensure a holistic approach to the redevelopment of Sowerby Bridge.
- 1.6 The Holmes Road Brief is specifically designed to interpret the aims of the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Initiative and policy E20 of the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP) in relation to the Holmes Road site. One of the main aims of the brief is to ensure the deliverability of the Holmes Road site subsequent to the wider regeneration of Sowerby Bridge.

Location and Description

- 1.7 Sowerby Bridge lies in the foothills of the Pennines and is approximately 3km south west of Halifax in the Borough of Calderdale. It is located at the junction of the main routes to Rochdale, Oldham and Manchester and is within easy commuting distance from Leeds and Manchester. The name Sowerby Bridge references the area's use as a crossing point over the River Calder to the older settlement at Sowerby.
- 1.8 The town is a former woollen and manufacturing centre, which developed due to its location by the River Calder and River Ryburn. Manufacturing declined in the area during the mid-twentieth century as a result of increased competition from overseas markets. More recently, a series of projects have been undertaken to regenerate the town including the reopening of the Rochdale Canal in 2002.
- 1.9 The development site is approximately 8.61 acres (3.48 hectares) and is relatively long and narrow in form. The site incorporates 2 parcels of land that front onto the River Calder; the first being a site north of the River Calder that is triangular in shape and bound by St Ann's Square to the north west, the Rochdale Canal towing path to the north east and the river to the south. The second parcel is located on the southern bank of the River Calder, bound by the river along its length to the north and Holmes Road to the south; across which Sowerby Bridge train station is accessible via a stepped pedestrian access. The northern most site is approximately 20 metres south of the main shopping streets within Sowerby Bridge Town Centre with pedestrian access from Wharf Street via a narrow alley leading to a foot bridge (off Old Cawsey) over the River Calder.
- 1.10 By road, access to the northern parcel of land is from Old Cawsey off Wharf Street and for the southern parcel it is from Station Road (off the A58 Rochdale Road) to the south west and from the east by Mearclough Road via Fall Lane and Canal Road. Access to Holmes Rd from the west is through an arch under a railway viaduct. The arch is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings etc) Act 1990.

- 1.11 The northern parcel is a site, formally home to Lock Hill Mills, that is currently used for residential purposes with a substantial, modern 4-storey residential apartment block, Kingfisher Chase, that fronts onto the River Calder and a number of older 2-storey residential properties further north. There is also a significant proportion of previously developed clear space. The northern parcel of land is under various third party ownerships. However, the Council are currently seeking to acquire a large proportion of the northern parcel and negotiations are ongoing with an existing landowner. The southern site is used for industrial purposes (B1, B2 and B8) with much of the area consisting of 1 and 2 storey industrial premises and hard-standing for parking or outdoor storage. The site is held under 4 different ownerships; moving west to east across the site these are: Dugdale plc, CMBC, Denroyd Ltd and John Coupe Packaging World Ltd. To the far west, Valley Mill, the 4 storey former woollen mill currently occupied by Dugdale plc, is the only building of a significant architectural interest on the site, though it is not listed.
- 1.12 The two parcels of land will hereon be collectively referred to as ‘the site’.

Regional Context



Table 1.1 Journey Times to Sowerby Bridge

Town	Distance	Time By Car	Time By Rail
Halifax	3.5 miles	9 mins	6 mins
Huddersfield	8 miles	20 mins	40 mins
Bradford	11 miles	30 mins	22 mins
Leeds	20 miles	35 mins	50 mins
Manchester	25 miles	40 mins	50 mins

1 . Introduction

Town	Distance	Time By Car	Time By Rail
Sheffield	53 miles	1 hour 10 mins	1 hour 40 mins
London	210 miles	3 hour 50 mins	3 hour 50 mins

Table 1.2 Bus Journey Times from Sowerby Bridge

Destination	Frequency	Journey Time
Sowerby	10 mins	5 mins
Ripponden	60 mins	15 mins
Halifax	10 mins	20 mins
Rochdale	60 mins	40 mins

Local Context



Scope and Role of Brief

1.13 This SPD has been prepared by GVA Grimley and Lathams on behalf of CMBC and YF. The primary aim of the Brief is to provide a clear indication of the scope for comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

1.14 The role of the Brief is:

- to guide and shape the future re-use and re-development of the site;
- to identify the development opportunities and constraints of the site;

- to provide the rationale for the demolition of buildings not worthy of retention and establish the parameters and principles for new buildings at the site;
- to address the physical and design implications of flood risk associated with the site and ensure full compliance with Planning Policy Statement 25: Development & Flood Risk;
- to ensure the aims of the Regeneration Action Area allocation as set out in policy E20 of the adopted RCUDP are delivered;
- to provide a rationale for possible S106 Agreements;
- to ensure the site is not brought forward for redevelopment prior to the delivery of road improvements;
- to act as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for the reuse and redevelopment of the site;
- to redevelop this area to provide employment opportunities; and
- to ensure that the site, currently in different ownerships, is developed in a comprehensive manner, therefore avoiding piecemeal development in line with Piecemeal Development Policy GBE2 of the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan.

1.15 For the avoidance of doubt, it is not the purpose of the Brief to present detailed masterplan proposals for the site.

1.16 The Brief has adopted the following strategic objectives:

- To establish the principle of mixed-use development and to make a positive contribution to the creation of a balanced and mixed community;
- to create a sustainable and high quality development that is appropriate to its context and that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the wider Sowerby Bridge Conservation Area (notwithstanding the fact that the entire site is not included within the CA);
- to extend the town centre and improve pedestrian and cyclist links with the Train Station;
- to maximise the waterfront location, encouraging leisure uses and creating a vibrant and attractive walkway;
- to retain (where appropriate) existing buildings, trees and open spaces; and
- to deliver major community benefits through improving highway safety, efficiency and access to the train station.

Status of the Supplementary Planning Document

1.17 The purpose of this SPD is to show how part of the development plan will be put into practice or give greater detail on policies and proposals than referred to in development plans.

1.18 PPS12 recognises that SPD's may take the form of design guides, area development briefs, masterplans or issues based documents which supplement policies in a development plan document (DPD) (or before a DPD document has been adopted, a saved policy)

1.19 The guidance set out in this draft SPD is based on 'parent' policies that are saved in the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP): Adopted 25/08/06 and should, therefore, be read alongside this document. Cross references to the RCUDP are included to help the users of the draft SPD.

1.20 The SPD will not carry the special statutory status of the RCUDP however national planning guidance indicates that SPDs can:-

- Provide helpful guidance to those preparing applications;
- Be taken into account as a material consideration in the determinations of applications; and
- That the weight accorded to them will increase if they have been prepared in consultation with the public and they have been subject to a Council resolution to approve them for development control purposes.

1.21 SPDs are not subject to independent examination and do not form part of the statutory development plan but should be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement. On adoption an SPD forms part of the Local Development Framework.

2 . Planning Policy and Spatial Strategy

2 Planning Policy and Spatial Strategy

- 2.1 The following section provides an overview of the relevant national, regional and local planning guidance relating to the redevelopment of the site. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but will rather act as a guide to the likely policy issues relating to the area. Other policies may be relevant and subsequent changes in policy may have implications for future development proposals.
- 2.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions must be made in accordance with the statutory development plan for an area. The “development plan” in Calderdale consists of the Yorkshire and the Humber Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 and the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP): Adopted 25/08/06. It has also been established in the courts that national planning policy is a material consideration in the formulation of planning decisions.

Existing building on the Holmes Road site with the Rochdale canal in foreground.



National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements

- 2.3 Government policy on different aspects of planning is set out in series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) which local planning authorities must take into account as material considerations in their decision making process. The relevant PPGs and PPSs to the development site are identified and summarised briefly below. This list is not exhaustive but rather is intended as a guide to the pertinent policy issues.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

- 2.4 PPS1 is intended to provide a strategic commentary on planning policy and sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. At the heart of the planning system is the requirement to determine developments in accordance with policies set out in local development plans.
- 2.5 To deliver sustainable development, the main themes which underpin the Government's approach to the planning framework are social inclusion, protecting and enhancing the environment, the prudent use of natural resources, economic development and promoting good design. In particular, emphasis is placed on the inter-relationship between these themes.
- 2.6 An integral part of the Government's commitment to sustainable development is the re-use of previously developed land and urban regeneration. Mixed-use developments are encouraged in locations that allow the creation of linkages between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places. The appropriateness of development should be determined by the characteristics of the area and be complimentary to its surroundings. High quality and inclusive design should be the overall aim of development proposals to create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation and have well-planned public spaces.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006)

- 2.7 PPS3 advocates the Government's goal of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. To achieve this, the planning system is charged with a number of policy objectives which should deliver high quality, well-designed and built housing to a high standard, mixed in terms of tenure and price to support a wide variety of households in all areas. Housing should be of sufficient quantity to ensure need and demand is met and choice is improved. Developments should be in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and access to jobs, public transport and key services.

- 2.8 In conjunction with the Government's over-arching aims of sustainable development the promotion of brownfield sites and environmental impacts including climate change and flood risk are key considerations for new housing development.
- 2.9 Planning authorities are required to take a visionary and strategic approach to defining the spatial vision for their area, determining their strategy for delivering the vision and joining up planning, housing, economic and community strategies and ensuring all policies are founded on a robust evidence base. The importance of collaborative working between developers and the local authority is identified as key to the success of this approach along with early engagement with stakeholders and the local community.
- 2.10 A key aim of PPS3 is to provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs. Councils are required to set an overall target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided through the life of the plan. In addition, targets in relation to the tenure and mix of affordable housing required should be set along with the range of circumstance in which affordable housing will be required.
- 2.11 CMBC have produced a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation to affordable housing which sets out the above and the councils approach to seeking developer contributions. Regard should be had for this document prior to submitting any planning application for the redevelopment of the site.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (1992)

- 2.12 PPG4 emphasises the Government's key aim to pursue continued economic growth and development in a way that is compatible to environmental objectives and producing a high quality setting. Recognition of the changes in the way that industries and businesses operate has allowed a greater integration with other uses without causing material adverse harm and promoted greater development of mixed-use schemes. Under-used or vacant land is a prime resource for the promotion of the regeneration of towns and cities. PPG4 also states that LPAs should not place unjustifiable obstacles in the way of development that is necessary to provide homes, investment and jobs.

Draft PPS4: Planning for Prosperous Economies (2009)

- 2.13 In May 2009 the government published a consultation draft on the PPS4: Planning for Prosperous Economies. This document carries little weight at this stage. It incorporates proposed changes in Draft PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development (December 2007) as well as the proposed changes to PPS6 (July 2008) and the Government's policy for town centres and town centre uses.
- 2.14 The document continues to direct development towards existing centres, promoting the vitality and viability of centres as important places for communities and stresses the importance of managing centres that appear to be in a state of decline. Suggested amendments relate mainly to the determination of planning applications and new sites proposed for town centre uses through the plan making process are still subject to the tests within PPS6 of need, scale, sequential approach, impact and accessibility.
- 2.15 Although the draft document currently carries little weight in the decision making process, once adopted this policy statement will become a material consideration.

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

- 2.16 PPS6 sets out the most up to date policy position on town centres and retail development. It sets out the Government's key objective of promoting the vitality and viability of town centres by planning for the sustainable growth and development of existing centres and promoting and enhancing existing centres by focusing development in them.
- 2.17 In addition to the key objective of promoting the vitality and viability of town centres, the statement also acknowledges the need to enhance consumer choice to meet the needs of the entire community to support an efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure and tourism sector; and to improve accessibility.

2 . Planning Policy and Spatial Strategy

- 2.18** The Government's wider policy objectives as set out in PPS1 are also referred to in PPS6. In particular, there is an emphasis on promoting social inclusion to ensure that communities have access to a range of main town centre uses and that people's everyday needs are met at the local level.
- 2.19** The guidance acknowledges that proposals for town centre uses (retail, leisure, offices and arts/culture/tourism) located in edge of centre locations, would require a detailed assessment. This assessment should demonstrate the need for the development, that the development is of an appropriate scale, that there are no more central sites for the development, that there are no unacceptable impacts on existing centres and that locations are accessible.
- 2.20** It is also acknowledged that consideration should be given to other relevant matters, such as specific local circumstances, which may be material to the choice of appropriate locations for development. Considerations to be taken into account include: physical regeneration, employment, economic growth and social inclusion.
- 2.21** The northern section of the site is located within the existing town centre boundary, therefore, town centre uses are appropriate here. However, any proposal to locate town centre uses to the southern portion of the site will require a sequential assessment as set out in PPS6.

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation (August 2005)

- 2.22** PPS9 defines the role of the planning system in terms of the protection of biodiversity and the encouragement of geological conservation. Sustainable development should be used to conserve and enhance the natural environment, with biological and geological diversity laying an integral and inclusive part in the design of development.
- 2.23** PPS9 states that: *"plan policies and planning decisions should aim to maintain, and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. In taking decisions, local planning authorities should ensure that appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance; protected species; and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment"*.

"Plan policies on the form and location of development should take a strategic approach to the conservation, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity and geology, and recognise the contributions that sites, areas and features, both individually and in combination, make to conserving these resources".

- 2.24** The sites location, bounded by the river wooded areas, suggests that further assessment in relation to biodiversity should be carried out. In addition, any new development proposed will be required to provide additional enhancements to the existing biodiversity on site.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (2000)

- 2.25** PPG 13 establishes the Government's guidance on transport. The aim is to integrate land use planning and transport planning at all levels to promote more sustainable transport choices and to promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling with the overall aim of reducing the need to travel, especially by car. However, there is a recognition that a car will continue to have an important role to play for some journeys.
- 2.26** Any planning application for the proposed site will need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan promoting sustainable modes of transportation. An innovative approach to reducing the reliance of residents and users of the proposed development on the motorcar is encouraged.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 14: Development on Unstable Land

- 2.27** PPG14 advises local authorities, landowners and developers on the exercise of planning controls over development on land which is unstable or potentially unstable. The aim is not to prevent development, although in some cases this may be the appropriate response, rather it is to ensure that development is suitable and that the physical constraints on the land are taken into account at all stages of planning.

- 2.28** When there are good reasons to believe that instability could make the ground unsuitable for the proposed development, or could adversely affect it or neighbouring land, a specialist investigation and assessment by the developer to determine the stability of the ground and to identify any remedial measures required to deal with any instability may be required before the application can be decided. Given the proximity of the railway bridge, embankment and the river bank, consideration should be given to land stability as part of any submission.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)

- 2.29** PPG15 reinforces the Government's commitment to sustainable development, especially to the preservation of the historic environment. The guidance recognises that in practice the built heritage cannot be preserved unchanged. Therefore, it is important to identify the special nature of the historic environment, to define, in planning terms, the capacity for change and to assess the impact of development proposals alongside other considerations.
- 2.30** Conservation and economic prosperity should be considered as complementary objectives. Historic buildings can be put to good economic use, including commercial and residential uses and contribute to the prosperity of an area. In return, this prosperity can secure the longevity of heritage buildings and add to the continued vitality of conservation areas. The inclusion of conservation areas or listed buildings as an integral component of the proposed development plays a key part in promoting economic prosperity, encouraging inward investment and offering attractive living and working conditions.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990)

- 2.31** PPG16 establishes the Government's objective of preserving archaeological remains. The preferred approach for the preservation of important remains is to ensure they remain in situ. However, this is often not feasible and an archaeological extraction for the purposes of 'preservation by record' may be an acceptable alternative. Potential conflict between development and preservation should be positively planned and managed at an early stage, through consultations and field evaluations.

Draft Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment (2009)

- 2.32** This single new PPS is intended to replace the current planning policy guidance notes (PPG) 15 and 16. The draft PPS is one element of the Government's ongoing programme of heritage protection reform. The draft PPS is central to the Government's aims for heritage reform and reflects a more modern, integrated approach, moving beyond the distinction between buildings and archaeology to embrace the entire historic environment.

Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control (2004)

- 2.33** PPS23 gives advice on the relationship between controls over development under planning law and under pollution control legislation; these systems are separate but complementary. The aim of this advice is to encourage close consultation and prevent duplication and conflict of interest between planning and pollution control authorities. The guidance is of particular relevance to industrial development, disposal sites posing a potential for pollution, and the redevelopment of contaminated land. The guidance covers pollution control in respect of air quality, water quality and land contamination.

Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (2006)

- 2.34** PPS25 states that flood risk should be considered at all stages of the planning and development process. Importance is placed upon the management and reduction of risk through land-use planning.
- 2.35** As expressed in other PPS's, the Government places great emphasis on urban regeneration and the redevelopment of previously developed land. In the past, much industrial development took place alongside rivers and therefore some brownfield land will be vulnerable to flooding. A balanced, flexible approach is needed which addresses the risks of flooding against the benefits of reusing brownfield land and the damage to regeneration caused by under-investment and urban blight. Adequate levels of protection and prudent design of development should mitigate the acknowledged risks of flooding.

2 . Planning Policy and Spatial Strategy

2.36 The aim of the guidance is to strengthen the co-ordination between land-use and development planning and the operational delivery of flood defence strategies and to strengthen the links between land-use planning and land management.

2.37 As part of any planning submission, sequential testing will need to be carried out to show that there are no lower risk sites available for the proposed development and an exceptions test to demonstrate that the development provides wider sustainable benefits to the community which outweigh flood risk.

Regional Policies

The Yorkshire and Humber Plan (2008)

2.38 The Yorkshire and Humber Plan was formally adopted in March 2008. The Plan sets out the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Governments policies in relation to the development of land within the region. The Plan provides a board and long term development strategy for the Region to meet housing needs and address environmental and transport pressures in a sustainable manner.

2.39 Environmental policies ENV1 and ENV3 relate to flood risk and water quality, ensuring pro-active management of flood risk and water resources. Policy ENV5, requires new development to secure greater use of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy. Policy ENV8 requires that biodiversity and geological heritage be safeguarded and enhanced across the region. Finally, policy ENV11 encourages a focus on improving health, recreation and sport across the region.

2.40 Policy E2 relates to economic development, stating that the role and performance of existing city and town centres will be strengthened, and that:

1. *“City and town centres will be the main focus for office, comparison shopping, health, education, casino, leisure, recreation, entertainment, cultural, public services, business services and other uses which generate a high level of people movements.*
2. *Development, environmental enhancements, accessibility improvements, town centre management and promotional activities should take place to create a distinctive, attractive and vibrant sense of place and identity for each centre”.*

2.41 In terms of housing targets, the Plan sets a target of 670 net additions per year to the dwelling stock in Calderdale from 2008 to 2026. In order to achieve this target Calderdale are currently reviewing the availability of land across the area.

2.42 Finally, with regards transport, the Plan encourages improved connectivity and access particularly to employment. However, the emphasis remains on sustainable modes of transport and a need to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle.

Local Policies

Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (2006)

2.43 The site is allocated as part of the Sowerby Bridge Regeneration Action Area, in the RCUDP. In addition, the waterfront area within the site forms part of a wildlife corridor. Therefore, developers should be mindful of Policies E20 and NE15. The majority of the site is currently used for employment meaning that policies GE3 and E5 apply, however, part of the site (to the north of the river) is located within the town centre, therefore, policy GS1 will also apply. Developers must show that the proposed development will be appropriate for the location and support the Council’s regeneration objectives for Sowerby Bridge. This should link in with the Sowerby Bridge Transformational Project and policy E20.

2.44 Policy EP10 deals with contaminated land requiring the submission of a site contamination survey with any application for development on land where there is potential contamination. The current and previous uses on the southern parcel will have contaminated the site therefore any proposal will need to be submitted with a contaminated land survey.

- 2.45** Policy EP20 states that “development will not be permitted if it would increase the risk of flooding due to surface water run-off or obstruction, unless agreements are in place which allow the carrying out and completion of necessary works before the development is brought into use”. The Holmes Road site is adjacent to the River Calder and is at high risk from flooding, therefore, any proposal will have to include a Flood Risk Assessment taking into account local policies and the requirements of PPS25.
- 2.46** The Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP), Policy E20, allocates this area of land as a ‘Regeneration Action Area’. The primary objective of this policy is the development of a sustainable economy for this part of the Borough and to stimulate vibrant social and economic prospects. Residential development as part of a mixed-use comprehensive scheme is identified as appropriate. National and regional policy seeks the provision of Affordable Housing in all new developments in order to address the national shortage of affordable housing.
- 2.47** The Director of Community Services has advised that there is a need for affordable housing in this area. Should there be doubt about the viability of a development a developer would normally be expected to demonstrate this through a Full Financial Appraisal of the development in accordance with the approach set down in the Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing, adopted by the Council in February 2008. This is the approach that will be followed should a planning application be submitted. If a scheme is not viable with the inclusion of affordable housing then this must be clearly demonstrated and documented. Should other policy objectives be given higher priority, then the reasoning must be clearly documented.
- 2.48** Other relevant policies within the adopted Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan 2006 include (but are not limited to):
- E19 - Regeneration Priority Areas in the Upper Calder Valley
 - E20 - Regeneration Action Area: Sowerby Bridge Copley Valley
 - GBE1 - Contribution of Design to the Quality of the Built Environment
 - BE1 - General Design Criteria
 - BE2 - Privacy, Daylighting and Amenity Space
 - BE18 - Development within Conservation Areas
 - GCF1 - Infrastructure and Other Needs Arising from Development
 - EP15 - Development Alongside Waterways⁽¹⁾
 - EP25 - Energy Efficient Development
 - EP27 - Renewable Energy in Development

The Calderdale Local Development Framework (LDF)

- 2.49** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the eventual replacement of the UDP with a new LDF. The LDF will comprise a number of Local Development Documents (LDDs). The LDF together with the Regional Spatial Strategy will provide the essential framework for planning decisions in Calderdale. Whilst the LDF is being produced, the policies of the UDP have been saved.
- 2.50** The most significant documents with respect to the site will be the “Core Strategy” and the “Land Allocations” Development Plan Documents; however, these are not scheduled for adoption until mid 2010 and 2012 respectively.
- 2.51** The saved policies of the UDP therefore continue to constitute the relevant local planning guidance, to be used in conjunction with the regional planning guidance.

1 The “Waterside Development” Supplementary Planning Document was in draft from at the time of writing this brief

3 Context and Analysis

Introduction

3.1 The scale of the site, its visibility from key locations within the town centre and its potential to change the movement and land use patterns within the town all make development of this site of key importance to the future of the town as a whole. It is essential that new development carefully considers how it can positively contribute to the social, economic and environmental transformation of Sowerby Bridge.

Materials

**Rusticated ashlar masonry
(Sowerby Bridge)**



**Contemporary granite setts
with yorkstone paving.**



**Traditional granite setts
(Sowerby Bridge)**



3.2 Sowerby Bridge is predominantly comprised of stone built buildings and structures. The use of stone varies considerably both in terms of surface finish, bonding, coursing and level of detail. The traditional use of stone throughout Sowerby Bridge tends to reflect the status of the building on which it is being used. For example, higher status buildings such as chapels and civic buildings often use ashlar stone with narrow joints and elaborate detail. In contrast simple industrial buildings, sheds and workers housing have little detail and are constructed rough or of riven finished stone. New development in Sowerby Bridge has often used stone crudely in a modular fashion which lacks any understanding of the potential of the material.

3.3 To the south of the River Calder the site is dominated by the stone built Valley Mills. On the north bank the site is dominated by the recent residential development at Kingfisher Chase. Elsewhere within the southern section of the site other buildings are the largely red brick buildings dating from the early 20th century.

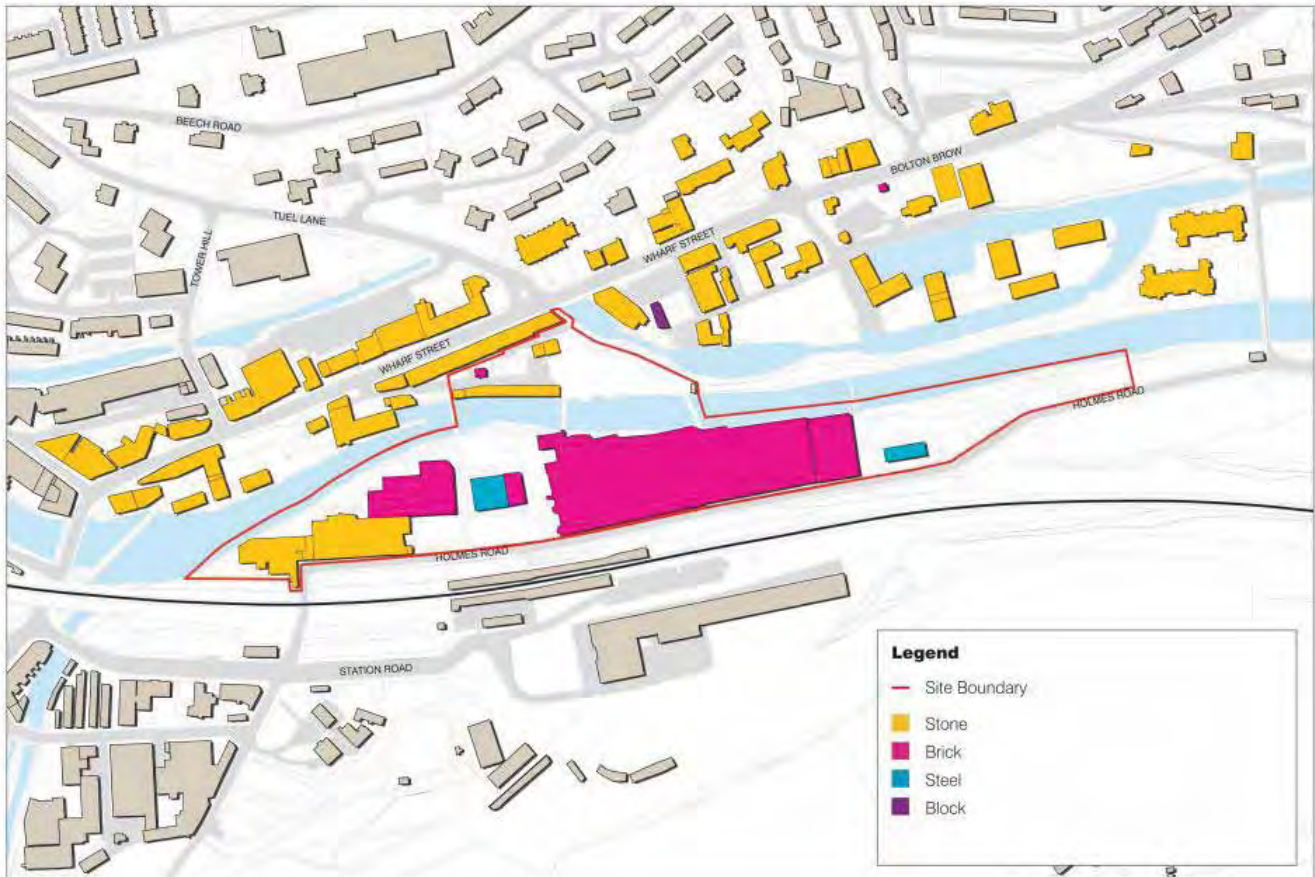
**Riven faced stone
with regular coursing
(Holmes Road railway
arch)**



**Rough finished
irregular coursed
masonry (Sowerby
Bridge town centre)**



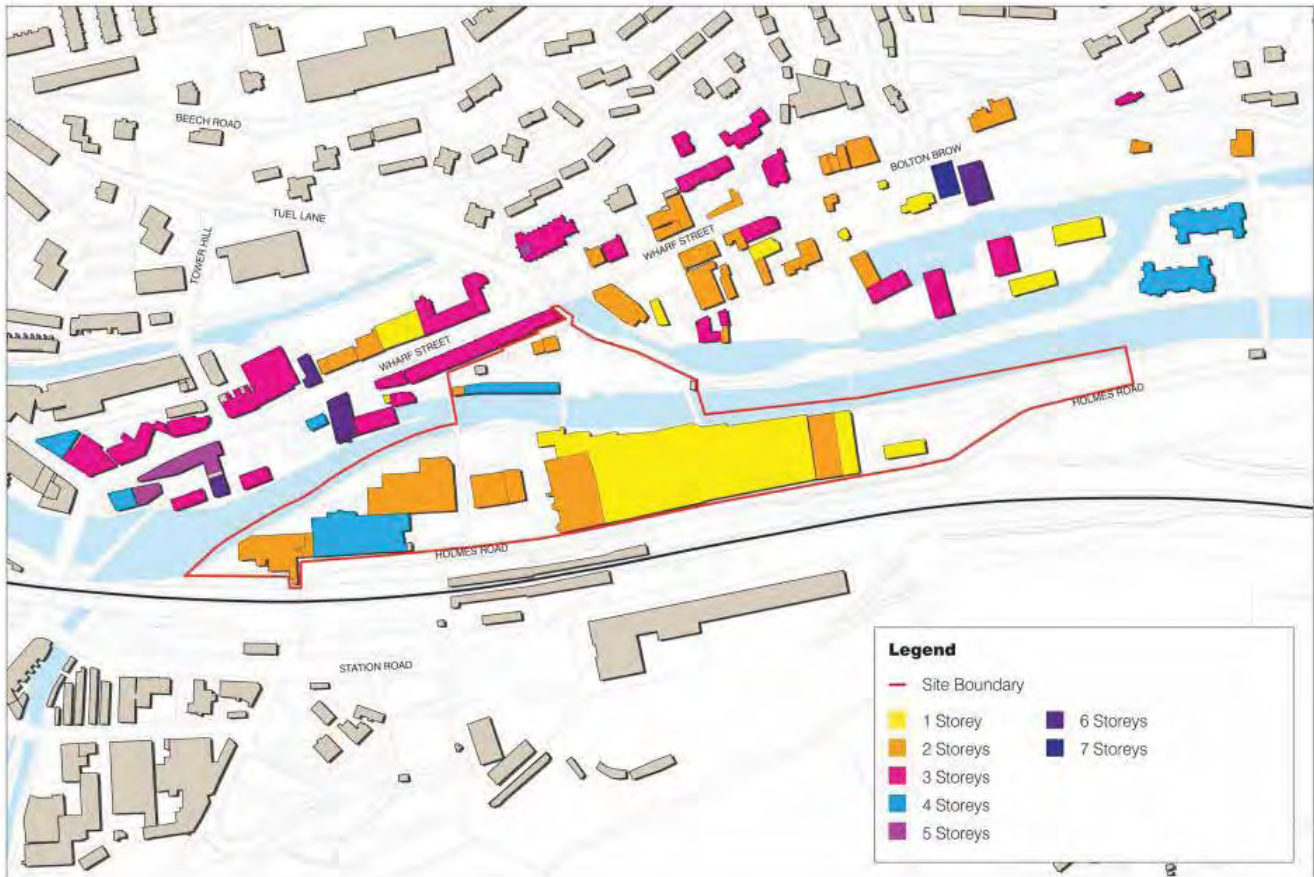
Picture 3.1 Materials



Building Heights

- 3.4** The most imposing building on the site is the four storey Valley Mill, which is now occupied by Dugdale plc. This building is located to the south of the River Calder at the western end of the site. Valley Mill is a four storey stone built mill surrounded by a number of lower buildings of two stories or equivalent. To the east the former Valley Iron Works buildings, now occupied by Denroyd Ltd, consist of a range of two storey and single storey buildings. On the north bank the recent four storey Kingfisher Chase residential development occupies an elevated position overlooking both the river and the southern section of the site. The topography of the site combined with the distribution of trees on and adjacent to the site results in the lower structures often being difficult to see from the north bank of the River Calder and from the town centre.
- 3.5** Within the town centre many of the buildings reach four stories and higher. Some of the tall former mill buildings reach up to six floors and have now been successfully converted to residential use (for example at Sowerby Bridge Mills immediately to the north of Valley Mill).
- 3.6** At the Wharf the collection of three storey former warehouse buildings are overlooked by the former six storey Chapel, which scales the escarpment to the north. The influence of topography on building heights is an important feature of central Sowerby Bridge with fronts and backs often being accessed on different floor levels.

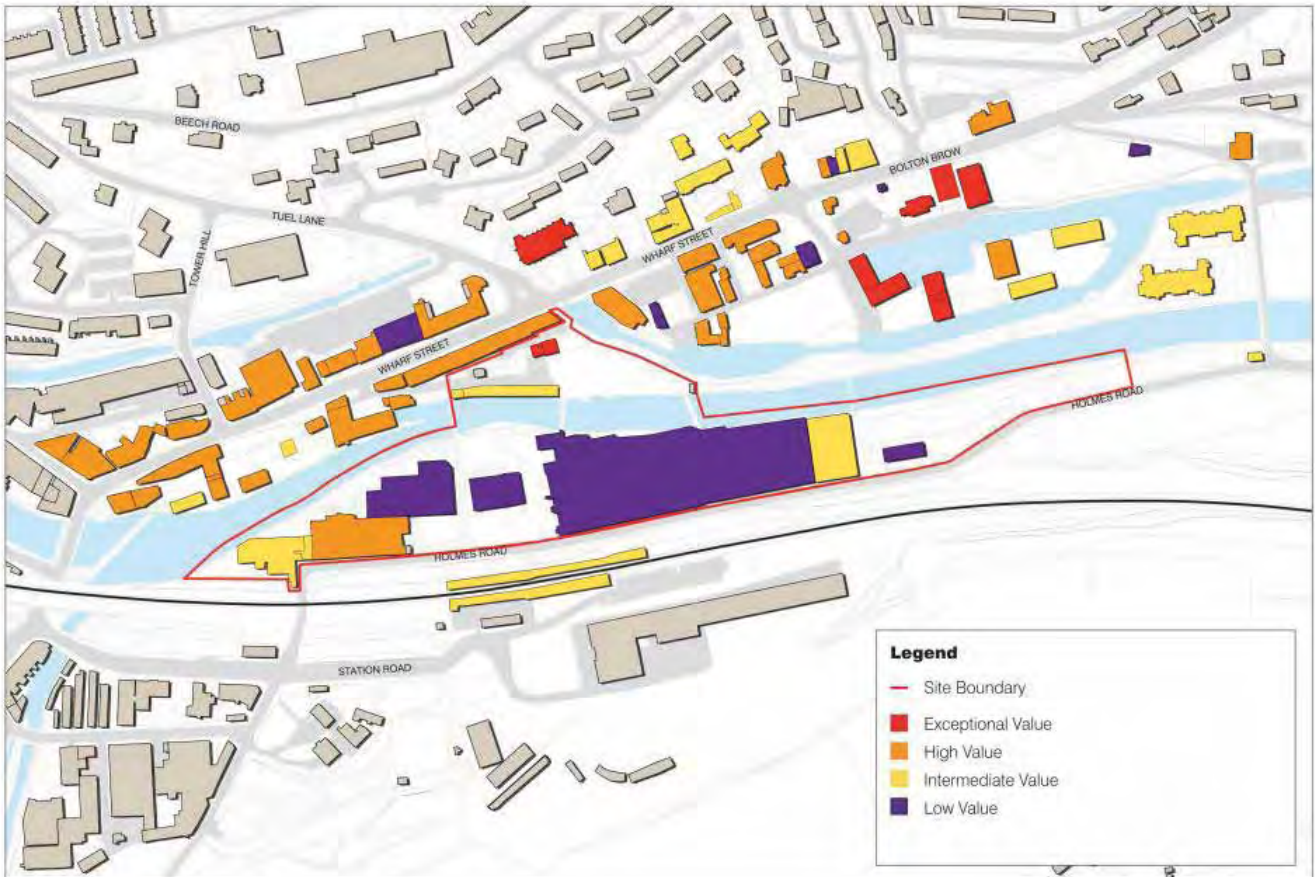
Picture 3.2 Building Heights



Architectural Quality

- 3.7** The historic wealth of Sowerby Bridge from the mid C19th to the early C20th is revealed in both the quantity and the quality of buildings within the town centre that date from this period. The care and attention to detail reflected in many of the buildings that date from this period, is missing from more recent development. The tendency of much of the new residential development in particular to utilise generic house or flat types wrapped in stone with pastiche design, has added little to the overall quality of the place. This approach, where challenged, has led to some successful contemporary interventions (e.g. the glass and steel lift tower at the Wharf). The document 'Building in Context' published jointly by CABI and EH sets out how architects and developers should approach the design of new buildings within the historic environment.
- 3.8** Valley Mill is a typical C19th industrial building with intrinsic historical interest. Its scale, mass and presence set the street scene. This SPD requires that full consideration is given to the retention and economic reuse of this significant building. However, if proposals are put forward that provide a superior alternative to Valley Mill, they will be assessed on their relative merits.

Picture 3.3 Architectural Quality



Sowerby Bridge vernacular



Rochdale canal towpath



Bolton Brow Primary School



Topography

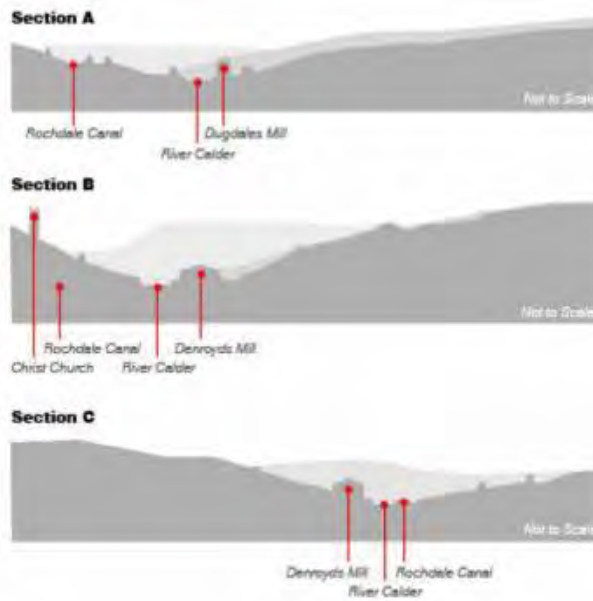
- 3.9 Sowerby Bridge is located at the point where two incised valleys meet, that of the River Calder and that of the River Ryburn. Holmes Road is relatively flat however; the land rises rapidly to the south (by about 130m within 1km). The hills to the south provide a dramatic back drop to the site.
- 3.10 The north bank of the Calder is at a higher level than the south in the vicinity of the town centre. This results in the unusual fall on the footbridge. Beyond the river the land rises slightly more gently to the north but still rises by approximately 60m in 0.5km.

3 . Context and Analysis

Picture 3.4 Map showing Holmes Road area and cross sections shown below.



Picture 3.5 Sections showing levels.



Townscape

- 3.11** The valley, its river, the canal and other transport routes have helped to shape the townscape of Sowerby Bridge. The character of the townscape varies throughout the town but the central core responds to topography by having parallel routes (including the canal) with buildings tightly packed in between. The courtyards and lanes with large buildings overlooking them is another feature of town centre character.
- 3.12** The townscape of the Wharf area is more open with generous spaces separating the buildings. Here the most important open space is the Basin which contains much of the visual interest and activity within the Wharf.
- 3.13** The townscape quality of the southern section of the site is defined by the proximity of the existing buildings to the back of footpath line. This relationship combined with the railway embankment and supporting structure to the south gives Holmes Road itself a slightly claustrophobic feel.
- 3.14** The townscape quality of the northern section of the site is defined by a number of significant large built forms including Kingfisher Chase, Lock Hill House and the terrace along St Anns Square which are poorly connected by semi derelict land. Further derelict land separates Kingfisher Chase and Lock Hill House from the Rochdale Canal to the east.

Public Realm

- 3.15** Sowerby Bridge town centre and the Wharf area contain a number of high quality examples of surviving historic public realm. Historically stone has been used for pedestrian and vehicular surfaces in a variety of formats including sets and flags. The level changes that buildings and spaces have had to address within the town centre have led to external steps and stairs being a strong positive feature of the public realm.
- 3.16** Public realm quality within the northern section of the site is generally poor. The canal towpath is surfaced in unbound hoggin and the Old Cawsey is partially surfaced in stone sets. Elsewhere within the northern section of the site public realm quality is poor with tarmac surfaces and unmade derelict land.
- 3.17** Open space north of the river is inter-dispersed with overgrown vegetation and rubble. The external spaces south of the river are generally covered with utilitarian surfaces, such as concrete, suited to service yards. To the east of the former Valley Iron Works Buildings, the open space, currently used for car parking, is un-surfaced. Moving further eastwards, unmanaged woodland covers the site.
- 3.18** Sowerby Bridge town centre and the Wharf area contain a number of high quality examples of surviving historic public realm. Historically stone has been used for pedestrian and vehicular surfaces in a variety of formats including sets and flags. The level changes that buildings and spaces have had to address within the town centre have led to external steps and stairs being a strong positive feature of the public realm.

The River

- 3.19** The River Calder both divides and unites the two elements of the site. The river acts as a physical barrier between the southern section of the site and the commercial heart of the town and the tourism focus, located at the Wharf, bridged only by the single operational footbridge. Historically, there have been up to three footbridges connecting the south bank of the river to the north bank. The remains of one of these old bridges survive to the east of the existing bridge.
- 3.20** The river provides a remarkable asset for the site and vantage points along its southern bank provide attractive views of the town centre to the north. The eastern end of northern section of the site also benefits from proximity to the Rochdale Canal.
- 3.21** Activity on the river itself includes: canoeing events and angling, however, access to the waterside acts to constrain this important leisure resource. The Rochdale Canal and the canal towpath also provide sources of activity and movement.

Views and Aspect

- 3.22** There are a number of important views of the site from the town centre. Important vantage points include: the view east from Sowerby Bridge (the main road bridge), views south from Wharf Street, Sowerby Bridge Mills and the land to the east of Back Wharf Street and also views south from along the tow path adjacent to the Wharf.
- 3.23** From the southern section of the site there are a number of important views of key landmarks within the town including mill chimneys, most notably the Wainhouse Tower, and the Christ Church tower. The general views north from the site which take in the town are all strong.
- 3.24** The northern part of the site benefits from a south facing aspect over the river towards the dramatic southern valley side and easterly views over the Rochdale Canal.
- 3.25** These views will all be affected by new development and consideration of this impact should form part of the early design stages.

Access and Movement

- 3.26** The southern parcel of the site is situated between the railway line to the south and the River Calder to the north and does not enjoy direct access to the local primary road network. Vehicular access is either by Canal Road from the A6026 Wakefield Road or via Station Road from the A58 Rochdale Road.
- 3.27** The Canal Road/A6026 junction suffers from poor visibility and a steep approach from the valley bottom; this results in few vehicles making the left turn towards Sowerby Bridge due to the acute angle of the junction. The road is narrow, with few opportunities for larger vehicles to pass, resulting in queuing at the junction in peak times when obstructions occur; the bridge across the River Calder is only 3m wide, with heavy vehicles advised to approach from the offside of the carriageway.
- 3.28** Access to and from the west of Holmes Road is restricted by a double-arched railway bridge, with a much lower inner arch. A height restriction of 11'3" (3.43m) is in place, whilst a sharp right turn immediately after the bridge severely limits visibility.
- 3.29** Access to the northern parcel of land is via Old Cawsey from Wharf Street. Old Cawsey is narrow with residents and shoppers regularly using the side of the carriageway for parking. The width of the road is likely to restrict the size of vehicle that can access the site via that route.
- 3.30** The pedestrian footbridge crossing the River Calder provides the only dedicated pedestrian access, although this crosses the southern section of the site and it does not access it directly.

Rights of Way

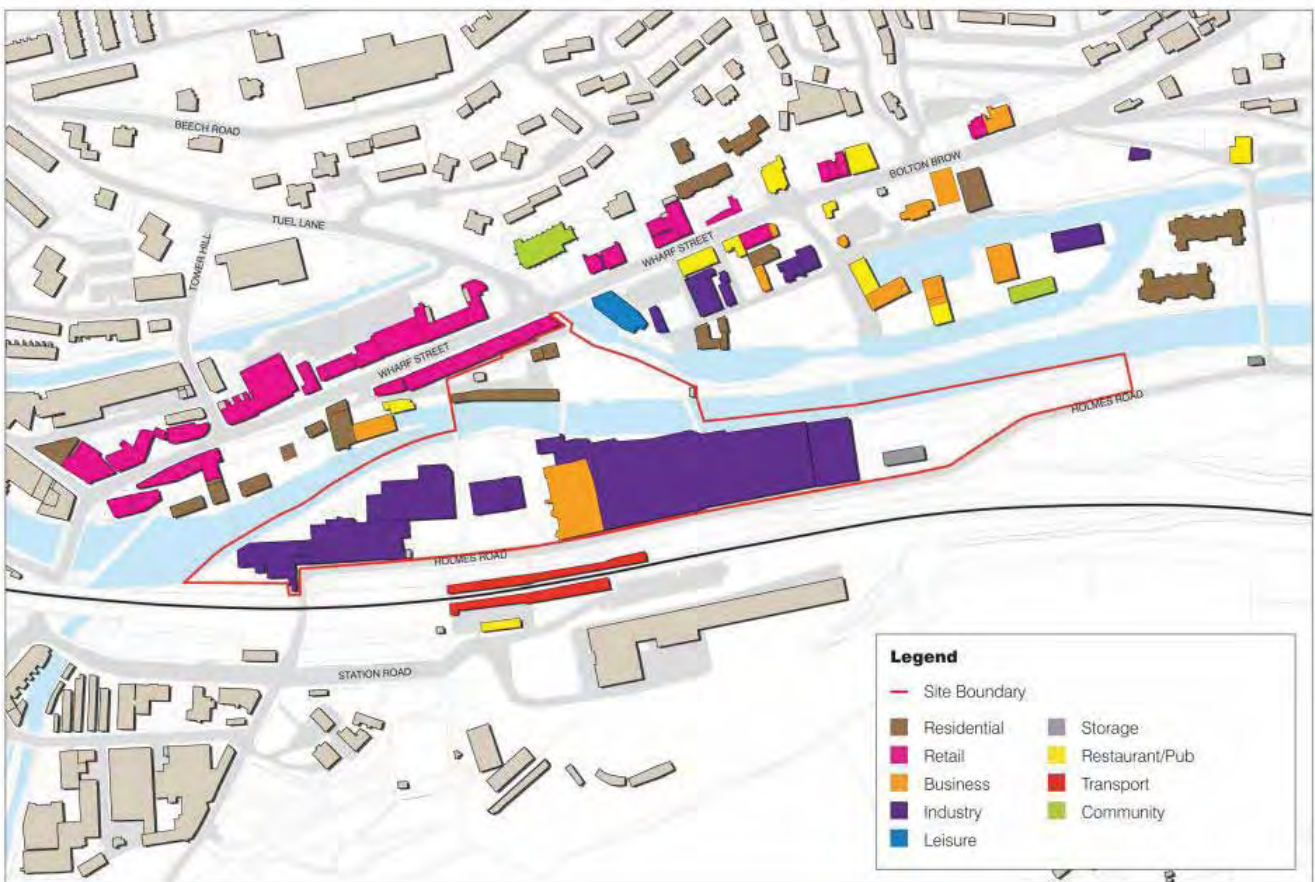
- 3.31** There is only one designated public right of way from the northern section of the site to the southern section of the site. This is the public footpath which runs north-south from Holmes Road via the footbridge over the River Calder to Back Wharf Street. This footpath is currently poorly signed and lit, furthermore, the route is enclosed by tall boundary walls with no surveillance from overlooking making it feel unsafe.

Existing Land Use

- 3.32** The southern section of the Holmes Road site is currently used for employment of various types. The Dugdales operation involves the manufacture of plastics within an environment and premises that are not ideally suited to its operational needs. The upper floors of the mill are used largely for storage. Offices uses are located within the two storey block to the west of the main mill building.
- 3.33** The Denroyds building house a mixture of light industry and storage with the western range of building housing office accommodation.

- 3.34 The northern section of the site is currently between the River Calder and the canal is dominated by derelict land.
- 3.35 The land use patterns to the north of River Calder change markedly with more variety and intensity of use. The town centre contains many mixed use buildings with offices located over retail, some small light industry, food/drink and residential. The Wharf area, located to the north of the eastern end of the site, provides a tourism focus for the town and contains food/drink, leisure, office and residential uses. The waterside activities associated with servicing canal boats and other nearby employment uses all help to Wharf feel like a vibrant working environment.

Picture 3.6 Existing Land Use



Residential development to the east



Sowerby Bridge town centre retail



Employment use within the Holmes Road site



4 Development Principles

- 4.1 There are a range of key planning issues that must be considered as part of any proposals for the reuse and redevelopment of the area.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the full potential of this area will only be fully realised if improved vehicular access can be provided. A link road to Holmes Road from the east is due to be provided through the Sowerby Bridge Copley Valley Development Opportunity and will provide improved access.
- 4.3 Where relevant, any proposal and any assessment undertaken as part of that proposal, would need to take due regard to the progress of that road and the likely impact it will have on the area.
- 4.4 Key issues are summarised as follows:

Land Use and Sustainability

- 4.5 The site is ideally suited to a residential led, mixed use development creating a vibrant, sustainable addition to the town of Sowerby Bridge. The redevelopment and reuse of the site will make a positive contribution to meeting the general principles of sustainability as follows:

Location and accessibility

- 4.6 The site is located at the edge of the urban area of Sowerby Bridge with excellent links to local amenities including, shops, services and jobs. The area is well serviced by public transport with a number of bus routes within walking distance and the Sowerby Bridge train station, adjacent to the site, providing links to Manchester and Leeds every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday.
- 4.7 Development on this site should capitalise on these links and, build on them to ensure the development is fully integrated with the surrounding area. It is particularly important to improve the existing pedestrian route between the town centre and the railway station which crosses the site to encourage pedestrian and cyclist use. Provision within the site should also be made for the secure storage of bicycles. This will ensure the promotion of sustainable modes of transport in line with national, regional and local policies.

Previously Developed Land

- 4.8 The site is brownfield; therefore its redevelopment will be a sustainable use of resources, relieving pressure on greenfield sites in the area.

Housing Density

- 4.9 The existing buildings on the site range in height from single storey to 4 storeys and the scale and massing of the buildings are predominantly industrial in nature. There is scope for large scale buildings and high density development.
- 4.10 However, under policy BE2 the development will still need to provide adequate private amenity space.
- 4.11 Calderdale Council recognise that the site is heavily constrained creating a need to maximise the sites development potential. Policy H10 of the adopted UDP allows for high density development within and around town centres and close to main transport routes, bus and rail stations. The site meets all of these criteria; therefore higher density levels are appropriate here. However, full consideration will need to be made for the local environment, particularly the conservation area.

Sustainable Communities

- 4.12 The reuse and redevelopment of the site creates an opportunity to provide a mix of uses, whilst maximising the existing good access to amenities, services and public transport. The intention of any development proposed should be to provide a vibrant mix of uses, with activity throughout the day and into the evening. Whilst it is

envisaged that the site will be predominantly residential, office and retail uses will be encouraged subject to a robust PPS6 assessment and compliance with local policies S2 and GS1.

- 4.13** There is an opportunity to provide a mix of housing types and tenures on the site providing choice and creating a mixed community with affordable units alongside family housing and professional apartments, in compliance with local policy H11.

Sustainable Construction

- 4.14** Sustainability should be considered and adequately addressed when preparing specifications and throughout the delivery of the development.
- 4.15** Developers should demonstrate in their proposals how they would embrace the principles of sustainability in carrying out this development. This should include achieving the securing 10% of the total energy required for the completed development's ongoing operation from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources and achieve a minimum BREEAM, or equivalent, rating of "very good" and preferably "excellent".
- 4.16** In addition, developers must ensure that at least 10% of the total value of materials used in the build derive from recycled and re-used content (as a minimum outcome); show that the most significant opportunities to increase the value of materials derived from recycled and reused content have been considered and implement good practice where technically and commercially viable.
- 4.17** The developer should establish and maintain a Site Waste Management Plan to minimise the disposal of wastes to landfill, by reducing wastage of materials on site and promoting reuse, segregation, recycling and composting of wastes that arise.

Riverside

- 4.18** An aspiration of this SPD is the creation of both a riverside walk and a new pedestrian link between the town centre and railway station improving accessibility, particularly for disabled people. The provision of a riverside walk and improved links to the town centre and railway station should be treated by developers as an opportunity to add distinctiveness and value to the development, capitalising on both the riverside location and movement between the town centre and railway station. Buildings should be designed to face onto waterfronts in line with local policy EP15.
- 4.19** The riverside walk should be integrated into the overall pedestrian movement system for the site containing consistent design features (such as lighting, wayfinding, seating etc) along its length and changing its character to reflect the nature of the adjacent development. Where possible, physical access to the water course itself should also be promoted. The western end of the walk is anticipated to be the most populated and should be wide enough to accommodate external seating from restaurants. The central section should narrow proving a more direct relationship between buildings and the river, widening to accommodate activity and movement at bridge footings. The eastern section should widen enough to allow riverside planting along the walk allowing this to merge with retained and existing woodland to the east.
- 4.20** In addition to the riverside walk, it is important that existing leisure uses associated with this section of the river are promoted. This includes angling and canoeing. There is currently a number of stringer wires located in this area which are utilised by the local canoe club to set up a slalom course. This facility should be retained to ensure the continued support of these events. Developers should see this as a further opportunity add distinctiveness and value to the development. This is in line with policy ENV11 of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan and local policy OS9.
- 4.21** The proposed development, particularly where adjacent to the riverside, should give full consideration to policy NE15 and protecting the existing wildlife corridor.

4 . Development Principles

Active Frontage

- 4.22 Where appropriate, principle pedestrian routes through the site should be overlooked by active frontages. These may consist of a variety of retail, food/drink, leisure and services. Under-croft car parking should not front onto principle pedestrian routes but may front secondary routes.
- 4.23 Active frontages should be encouraged along the riverside walk, particularly at bridge footings and at the western end of the site where there is the opportunity to provide public open spaces fronting the river.
- 4.24 Within the northern section of the site active frontages or at least over-looking should be provided to new development fronting the Rochdale Canal.

Built Heritage

Listed Buildings

- 4.25 There are a number of listed buildings to the immediate north of the site including nos. 42, 44 & 46 St Anns Square. Listed buildings within the site include Lock Hill House in the northern parcel. Furthermore, the railway arch/bridge that provides vehicular access to the west of Holmes Road is a Grade II listed structure under the Planning (Listed Buildings etc) Act 1990 adjacent to the southern section of the site.
- 4.26 Any alterations to these structures will require Listed Building Consent. In addition, the setting of these listed structures will be a material consideration when assessing planning applications for development on the site in line with national policy PPG15 and local policy BE15.
- 4.27 Although Valley Mill has no statutory protection, careful consideration should be given to its retention and conversion. The building is arguably the only building of architectural merit on the site but can certainly be described as having townscape significance. The building is also a local landmark and is visible from the town centre.
- 4.28 It is an aspiration of the brief to retain the Valley Mill building which forms a local, architectural focal point illustrating the historical industrial heritage of the area. Applications for the demolition of the Valley Mill building will, therefore, need to be accompanied by a financial appraisal justifying its unsuitability for conversion and a full planning application illustrating a suitable replacement scheme which protects the intrinsic value of the Listed Railway Bridge.

Town Hall



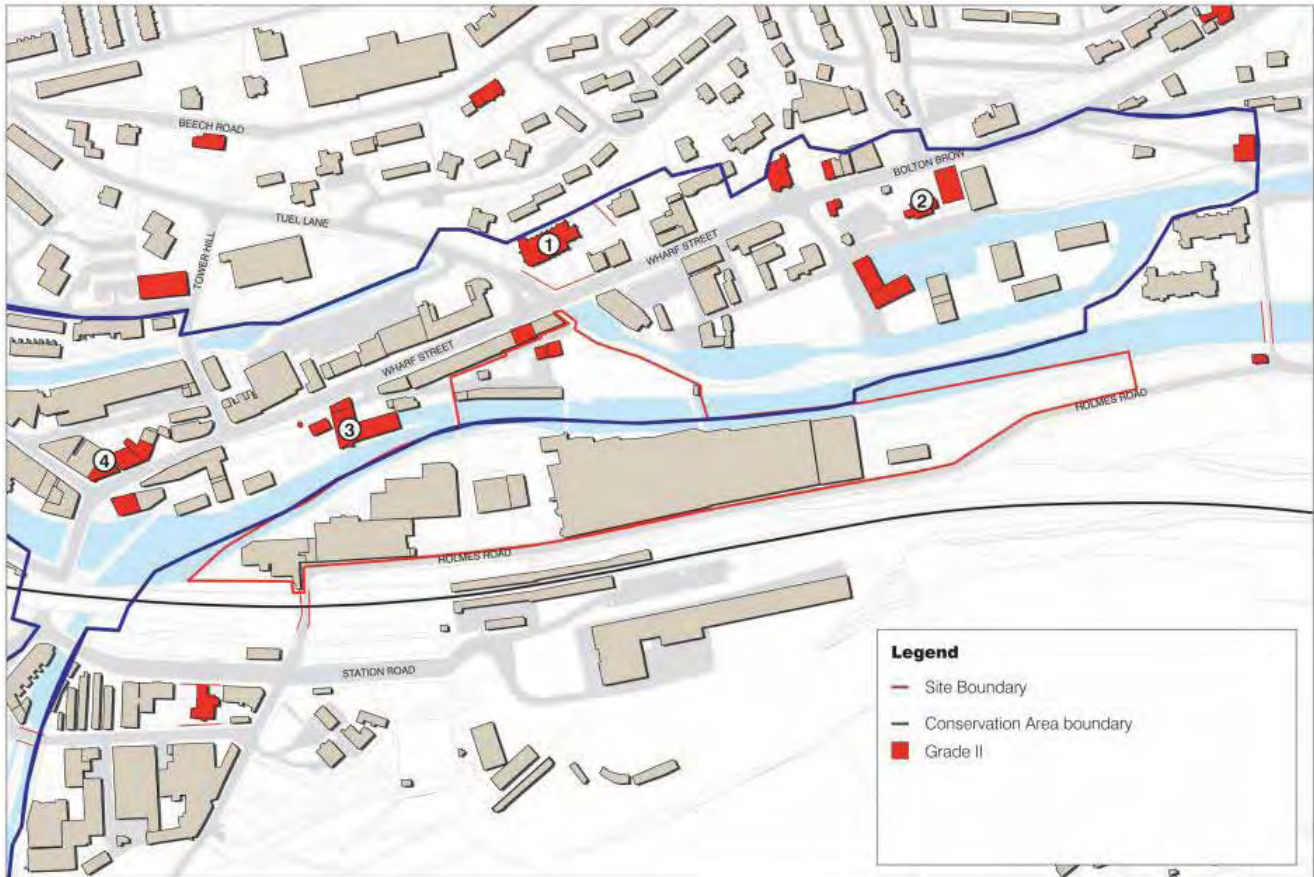
Christ Church



Carlton Mill



Picture 4.1 Listed Buildings and Conservation Area



Conservation Area

- 4.29** The site to the north of the river is located within the Sowerby Bridge Conservation Area which covers the majority of Sowerby Bridge Town Centre. Policy BE18 will therefore apply to any development proposed here.
- 4.30** The area is characterised by its industrial history with mill buildings located adjacent to the river which provided a source of power and water to the mills. The majority of buildings are built from natural, local stone with stone slate roofs consistent within the surrounding area.
- 4.31** A number of major improvement and refurbishment schemes have been carried out within the area including the Riverside Project and Rochdale Canal restoration. As a result the local environment has been improved significantly and any future development will need to compliment this.
- 4.32** The remaining parcel of the site is located directly adjacent to the Conservation Area. Para 4.14 of PPG15 requires development outside of a Conservation Area, which would affect its setting, to have consideration of the areas setting or views into and out of the area. Therefore, any development on the site will need to have regard to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Design

Scale

- 4.33** As stated there are a number of large industrial buildings within Sowerby Bridge. The section of the Conservation Area which covers the northern part of the site contains a number of rows of terrace properties (3 storeys). In

4 . Development Principles

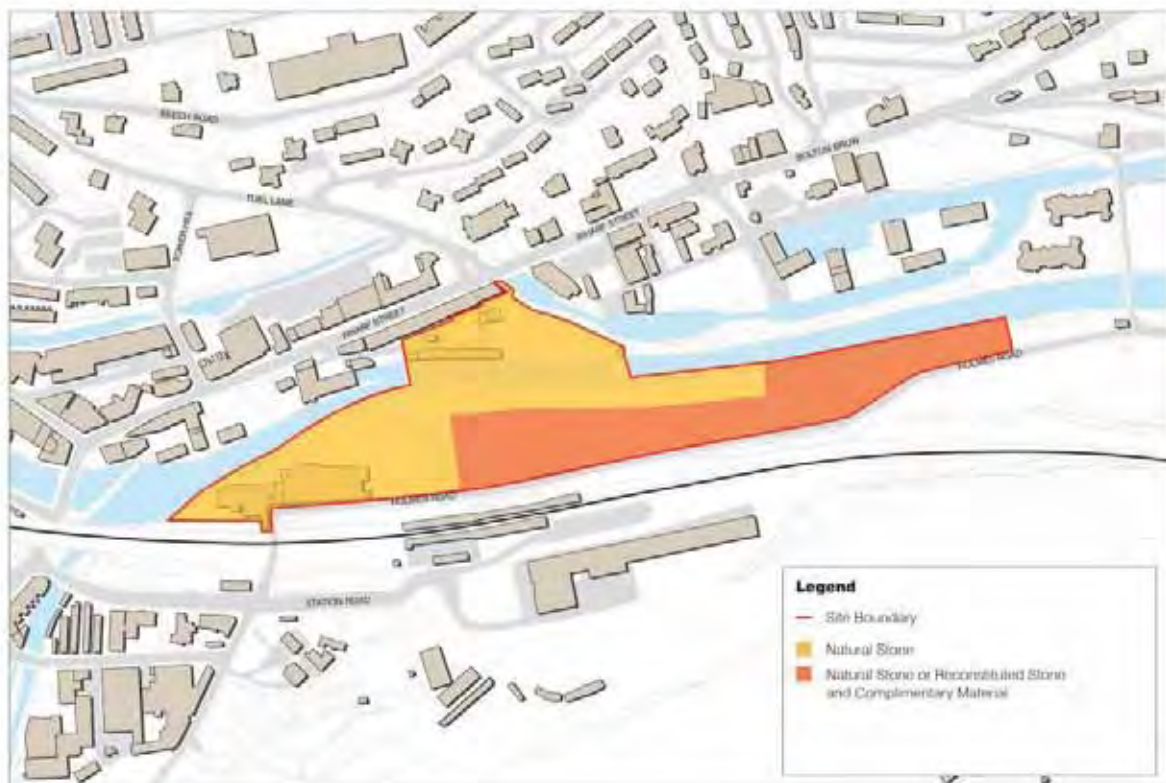
addition, Valley Mill and Kingfisher Chase are 4 storeys. Therefore, there is sufficient scope within the area to allow for large scale properties to be erected in this location.

- 26
- Calderdale MBC | Draft Holmes Road SPD (Regulation 17) February 2010
- 4.34** The height hierarchy established on the site should be respected in principle (i.e. taller buildings in the west with lower buildings in the east). Should Valley Mill be retained it is felt that it could successfully accommodate an additional penthouse level floor taking it up to five stories. Furthermore, new development surrounding Valley Mill could be of a similar mass and scale.
- 4.35** The central section of the site should contain buildings of no greater than four stories, whilst the eastern section of the site should contain buildings of no greater than three stories (i.e. a similar scale to the buildings to the north located at the Wharf).

Materials

- 4.36** The River Calder provides a reasonable degree of separation between the northern and southern parcels of land. Therefore, the use of a range of modern materials can be accommodated on the southern parcel to provide contrast with the Conservation Area (CA). Where new development directly affects the setting of listed buildings or in prominent locations the use of natural stone should be considered to provide continuity with the character of the Conservation Area and allow for the setting of the listed bridge to be protected. Materials used on the northern parcel must follow the recommendations of the Conservation Area guidance.
- 4.37** Furthermore, policy EP15 places emphasis on waterside development making a positive contribution to conserving the character and setting of the waterside. Any materials proposed should adhere to that requirement.

Picture 4.2 Materials



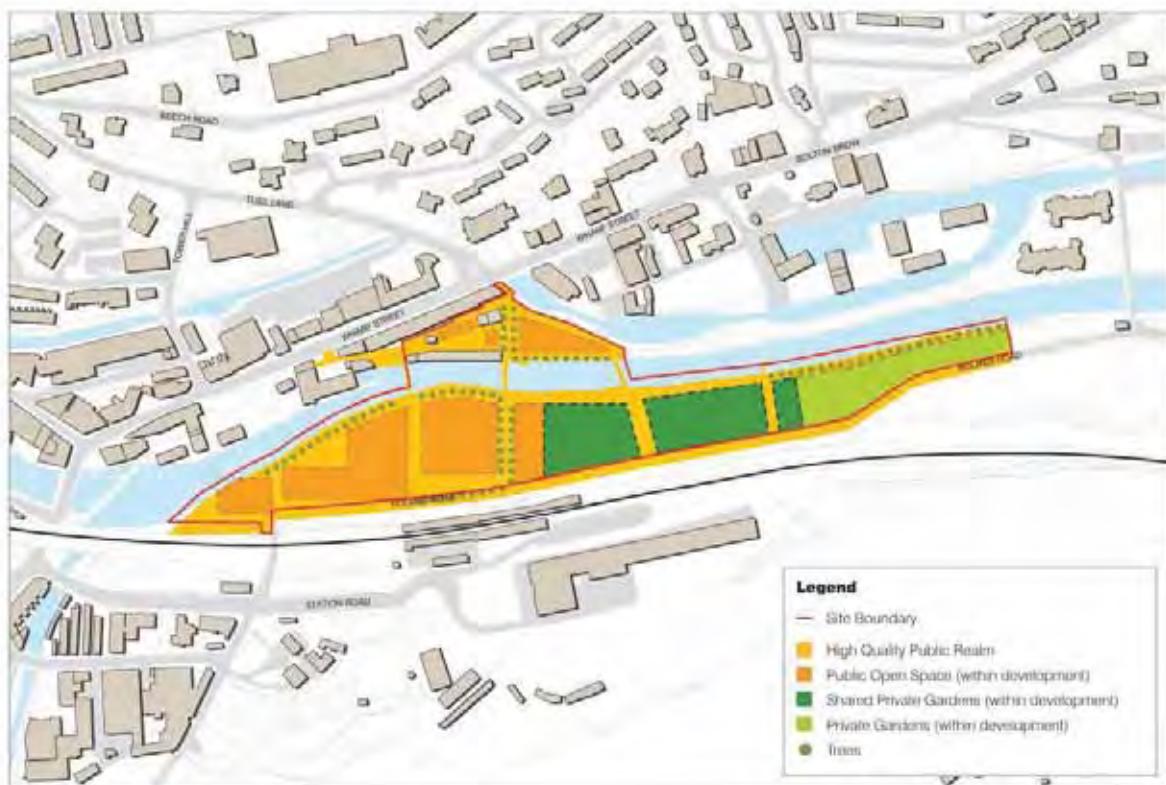
Design

- 4.38** As with materials, a modern approach can be taken adding value to the urban landscape. Surface modulation of elevations and variety within the design, delivered through the use of more than one architect is encouraged.

Public Realm

- 4.39 All new development should be surrounded by high quality public realm. Hard landscaping should demonstrate an understanding of the traditional use of materials within Sowerby Bridge but should avoid pastiche and take into account contemporary mobility and accessibility requirements.
- 4.40 The approach to public realm across the site should reflect residential densities and land use. The higher density northern portion of the site and the western end of the southern portion, should have open spaces which are public. These spaces will ideally be addressed by commercial activity at ground floor helping to enliven (and police) them throughout the day.
- 4.41 The spaces within the central section of the southern parcel, are anticipated as being shared private gardens however other patterns will be considered.
- 4.42 The residential development within the eastern section of the southern parcel should contain private gardens. This area should have well spaced trees linking the character of the riverside walk with that of the adjacent existing woodland to the east.
- 4.43 It is envisaged that trees will be used to help define the distinctive character of the sub areas within the site. Well spaced trees of native origin should be used to help provide shade on the western riverside walk, the station square and the quieter north-south route (immediately to the east of the existing route).
- 4.44 Public art incorporating local distinctiveness is encouraged through the development for this area. The redevelopment of the site must achieve a high quality public realm with clear integration between the site, the railway station and the town centre.
- 4.45 Public art should be limited to a small number of exceptional pieces located at strategically important locations within the site.

Picture 4.3 Public Realm



4 . Development Principles

Ecology and Biodiversity

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 4.46** The site contains a number of trees and it is desirable to retain these where practicable. However, none of the trees within the site are subject to a Tree Preservation Order⁽²⁾; therefore, their removal will not require consent.
- 4.47** An Ecological Scoping Assessment carried out on the northern parcel of the site by Apex Ecology Limited in December 2007, identified the presence of breeding birds and Japanese Knotweed. The report stated that given the presence of breeding birds any construction work should be undertaken outside of the breeding period i.e. March to September. The presence of Japanese Knotweed requires serious consideration and the Environment Agency's 'Knotweed code of practice' should be consulted to find the best course of action in terms of its treatment and removal.
- 4.48** Given the sites current use and its physical structure, it is unlikely that the majority of the site is significant in ecological terms. However, the River Calder is allocated as a Wildlife Corridor in the adopted RCUDP. Furthermore, the existing buildings on site may house bat roosts. Therefore, an Ecological Assessment (including bat survey) will be required as part of any planning application. The assessment should record the habitats on the site and assess the potential for the presence of protected species and, if identified, provide recommendations on protective measures.
- 4.49** The proposed development should also seek to enhance biodiversity both within the landscape setting and new buildings site, in line with policies NE15 and NE18 of the local plan and national policy PPS9.

Archeology

- 4.50** There is evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity throughout the area, nevertheless, following consultation with the Copley Valley Redevelopment Environmental Impact Assessment carried out by Mouchel Parkman (June 2006), it is considered that archaeology is not a constraint to the reuse and redevelopment of the southern parcel of the site. However, the northern parcel was not considered as part of the Mouchel Parkman assessment, therefore, an archaeological survey is likely to be required as part of the planning application process. The survey will seek to establish whether the sites have any underground archaeological potential.
- 4.51** Any strategy to investigate the impact of future development on any possible below ground archaeological remains, especially those of prehistoric or Roman date can only be devised when full details of the actual development proposals become available. As such, new development should have regard for policy PPG16 and the potential need for further assessment, prior to the redevelopment of this site.

Contamination

- 4.52** A Ground & Site Investigation Report was carried out by White Young Green in 2005 and looked at the southern parcel of the Holmes Road site in terms of possible contamination. Information from the study was incorporated in to the Copley Valley Redevelopment Environmental Impact Assessment carried out by Mouchel Parkman (June 2006).
- 4.53** The site now occupied by Dugdale plc was occupied by Valley Iron Works from c1894 but was replaced by Valley Mill c1933. A section of Lock Hill Mills (the mill had premises on each side of the River Calder) and Holme Iron Works have been present from c1919. The eastern most extent of the site was occupied by a cattle market with a club house from c1964.
- 4.54** Site investigations carried out to date are considered to be preliminary investigations, which give an overview of the presence of contamination at the site. These preliminary investigations identified contaminants including lead, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAH's), arsenic and nickel at various locations on the site. The method of remediation of those contaminants depends largely on the chosen use of the site.

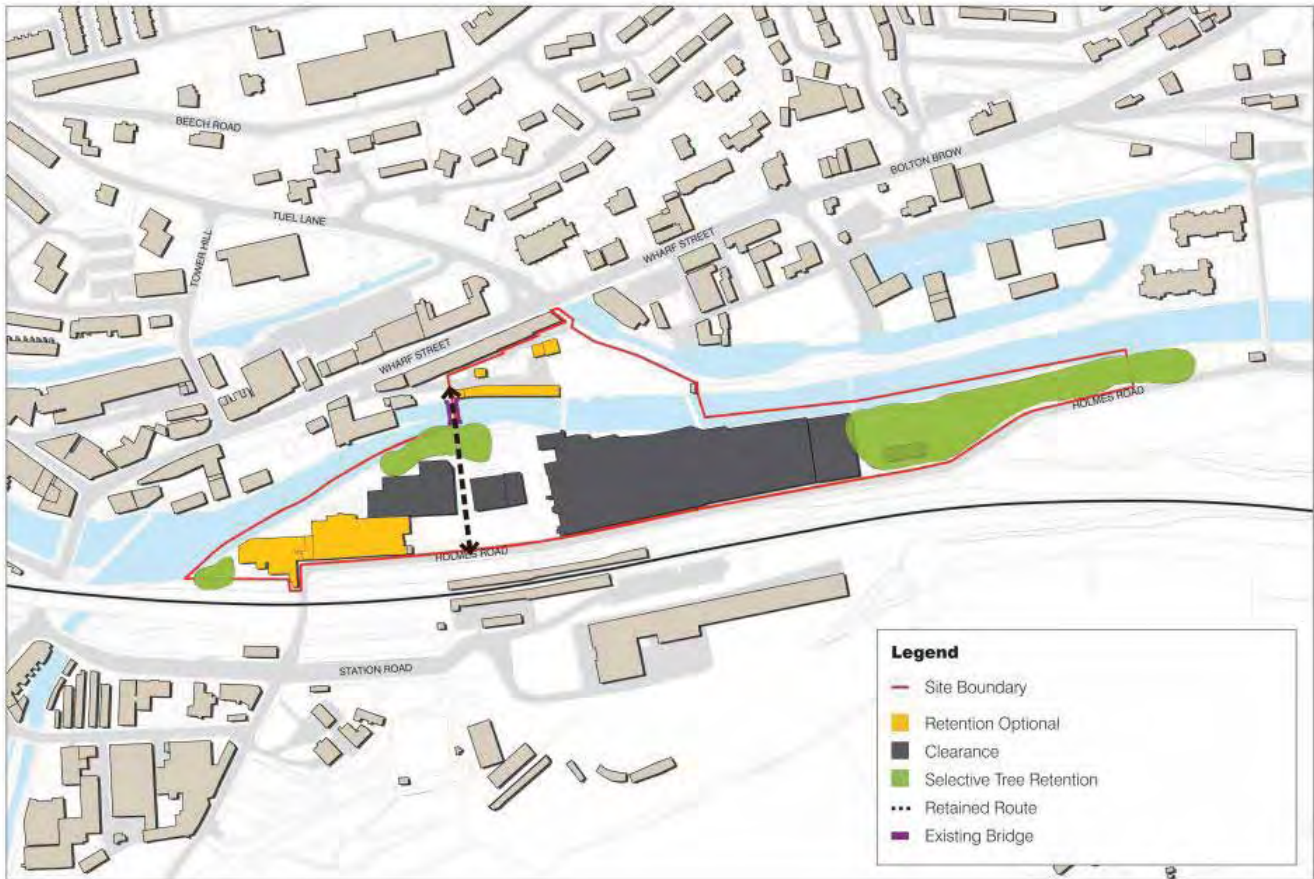
2 Council records were consulted at the time of writing this brief, however, developers are advised to contact Calderdale Council prior to carrying out works to trees to conform that this is still the case

- 4.55** RPS Consultants carried out a Contamination Survey on the northern parcel of the site in February 2007. The report states that due to former potentially contaminative land uses recorded both on the site and in close proximity for over 100 years, there is a moderate likelihood of significant ground contamination.
- 4.56** Once a provisional end use has been confirmed for each area of the site, a detailed ground investigation should be undertaken in order to enable an appropriate conceptual site model and remediation strategy to be designed.
- 4.57** Further intrusive site investigation is required to assess the actual level of contamination although this would not be practically possible until existing structures and hard-standing currently on the site are demolished/removed.

Traffic and Highways

- 4.58** Jacob Babbie carried out a comprehensive Traffic Assessment of the redevelopment in the vicinity of Sterne Mills in 2005, the conclusions of which are outlined below. Although this provides some guidance, a new traffic assessment will be required of the area within the SPD based upon up to date guidance.
- 4.59** The southern parcel of the site is situated between the railway line to the south and the River Calder to the north and does not enjoy direct access to the local primary road network. Vehicular access is either by Canal Road from the A6026 Wakefield Road or via Station Road from the A58 Rochdale Road.
- 4.60** The Canal Road/A6026 junction suffers from poor visibility and a steep approach from the valley bottom; this results in few vehicles making the left turn towards Sowerby Bridge due to the acute angle of the junction. The road is narrow, with few opportunities for larger vehicles to pass, resulting in queuing at the junction in peak times when obstructions occur; the bridge across the River Calder is only 3m wide, with heavy vehicles advised to approach from the offside of the carriageway.
- 4.61** Access to and from the west of Holmes Road is restricted by a double-arched railway bridge, with a much lower inner arch. A height restriction of 11'3" (3.43m) is in place, whilst a sharp right turn immediately after the bridge severely limits visibility.
- 4.62** The northern parcel of the site has not been considered as part of that Transport Assessment but vehicular access is considered to be constrained, due in large part to existing on-road parking on Old Cawsey, the only access point to this section of the site.
- 4.63** Proposals for development on the site should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment which sets out the approach towards sustainability with an emphasis on reducing vehicular trips. The development should be laid out with a clear hierarchy of vehicular access routes. It is suggested that a central east-west access route could efficiently service much of the site. This route should be a two-way shared surface street and should connect to Holmes Road along the alignment of pedestrian routes that lead across the site to the town centre.

Picture 4.4 Retention and Clearance



- 4.64 A secondary access route following similar design principles should provide restricted access to the site via the coach arch through the facade of Valley Mills. Other access points may lead directly to undercroft parking areas and to the eastern residential area.
- 4.65 All on site street design should follow the principles established within the 'Manual for Streets' (Department of Transport and DCLG 2007). Pedestrian traffic and cyclists should be given priority within the development and the impact of the motor car on open spaces and the sense of place should be minimised. Furthermore, all applicants will be required to submit a Travel Plan showing how sustainable modes of travel will be supported with the emphasis on implementing innovative strategies.

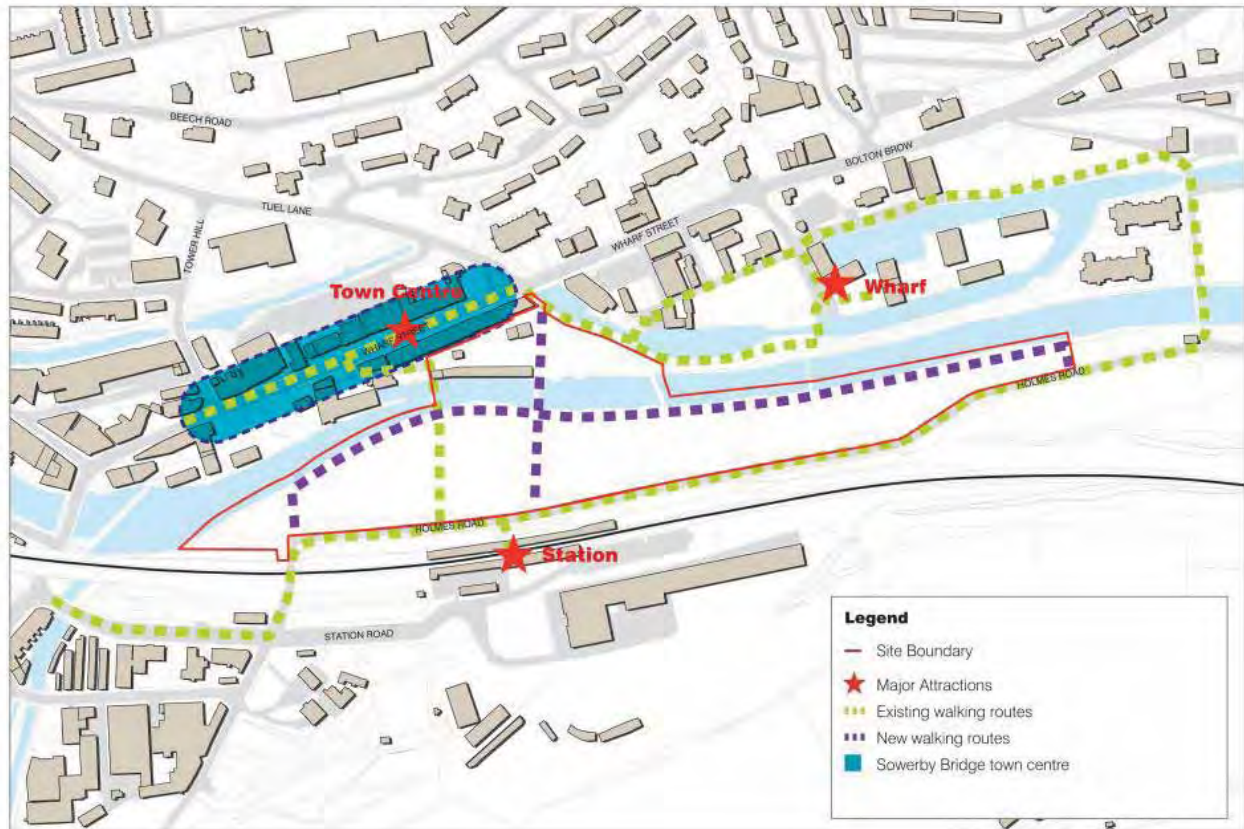
Parking

- 4.66 New development within the western and central sections of the site should contain undercroft car parking at ground floor away from principle walking routes and public open spaces. On street car parking should be considered for a realigned Holmes Road and on new vehicular and shared surface routes within the site.
- 4.67 The development within the eastern section of the site could consider a town house approach with parking incorporated within the design of the individual residential units. A maximum of one parking space per residential unit should be provided.
- 4.68 Residential units should be designed to accommodate secure bicycle storage.

Movement and Access

- 4.69 Integration between both parcels of the site and the train station are encouraged, as are links with the town centre. Where the immediate viability of establishing a new bridge link is not proven, bridge foots and existing access corridors should be protected within the site layout and design.

Picture 4.5 Movement and Access



Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

- 4.70 Pedestrian and cyclist movement around the site should be both permeable and legible; it should be easy to move around and to understand how to get where you want to go. This will require a network of well connected routes to be established with clear straight sight lines. The pedestrian and cyclist movement network will include shared surfaces with vehicular traffic, following Manual for Streets (MfS) principles. A clear hierarchy of streets and routes should be established and expressed through surface treatment, landscape, adjacent uses and route width.
- 4.71 A key aspiration of the SPD is the improvement of the pedestrian and cyclist link between the site and the railway station and town centre. This could be achieved through improvements to the existing access or, subject to approval from CMBC, through the provision of an additional access. In any situation the link should be well lit, well signed and safe for public use. For any works relating to Rights of Way improvements, an application to the local authority will be required under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

Public Transport

- 4.72 Access to public transport should be encouraged and links to existing bus routes and the railways station maximised.

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- 4.73** Sowerby Bridge railway station is located immediately to the south of Holmes Road but can only be accessed via a pedestrian route at that point. Vehicular access is from Station Road, accessed through the Holmes Road railway arch.
- 4.74** Development proposals will need to consider the railway station as a constituent of the SPD. A significant aspiration of the brief is to improve the link between the station and the town centre, in the process improving the stations aesthetic and functional appeal. This could be achieved through the provision of a pedestrian / cyclist footbridge across the river between both parcels of the site.

Sowerby Bridge railway station.



Pedestrian footbridge over the canal.



Bolton Brow looking towards Sowerby Bridge town centre



Utilities

- 4.75** The site is fully serviced by gas, electricity and water/foul sewerage. However, as stated under Flood Risk and Drainage, Yorkshire Water will not allow surface water to drain into existing sewers on Holmes Road; surface water should be drained directly into the River Calder.
- 4.76** Developers are expected to instigate their own negotiations with the relevant Utility Companies over connection and capacity.

Land Use

4.77 This area is covered by policy E20 which encourages 'mixed use town centre focused development'. The overall aim is to encourage mixed use development at ground floor level on the route between the railway station and the town centre , with residential or office uses above and elsewhere.

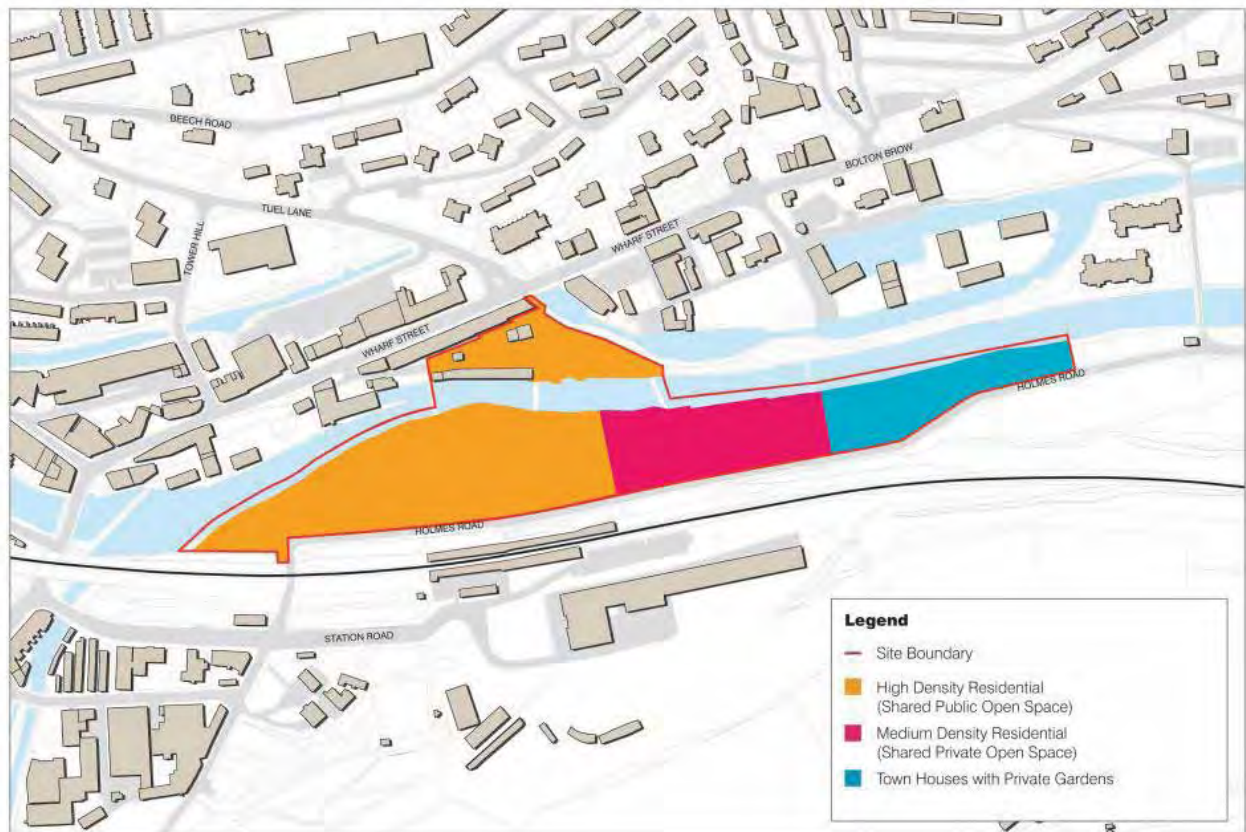
Residential

4.78 The site can be roughly divided into three distinct residential areas. The western section will contain higher density apartments of a character that reflect the existing adjacent mill buildings (ie Valley Mills and Sowerby Bridge Mills). This area will contain a mix of complementary uses at ground floor and may contain mixed use buildings and some non residential blocks containing office space.

4.79 The central section of the site will be slightly lower density apartments laid out in blocks and/or residential terraces. It is envisaged that this area should have undercroft car parking and communal private gardens however alternative development patterns that can deliver a similar 'urban' character will be considered. The northern element of the site should have a similar character.

4.80 The eastern section of the site will have a density compatible with family housing. This lower density will allow the integration of some existing mature woodland within the layout. Residential units should be laid out in terraces. The Council will require affordable housing to be provided as part of any residential development. Early discussion with the Council's Housing Service is recommended to discuss the nature of local housing need and the options for meeting this need.

Picture 4.6 Land Use - Residential



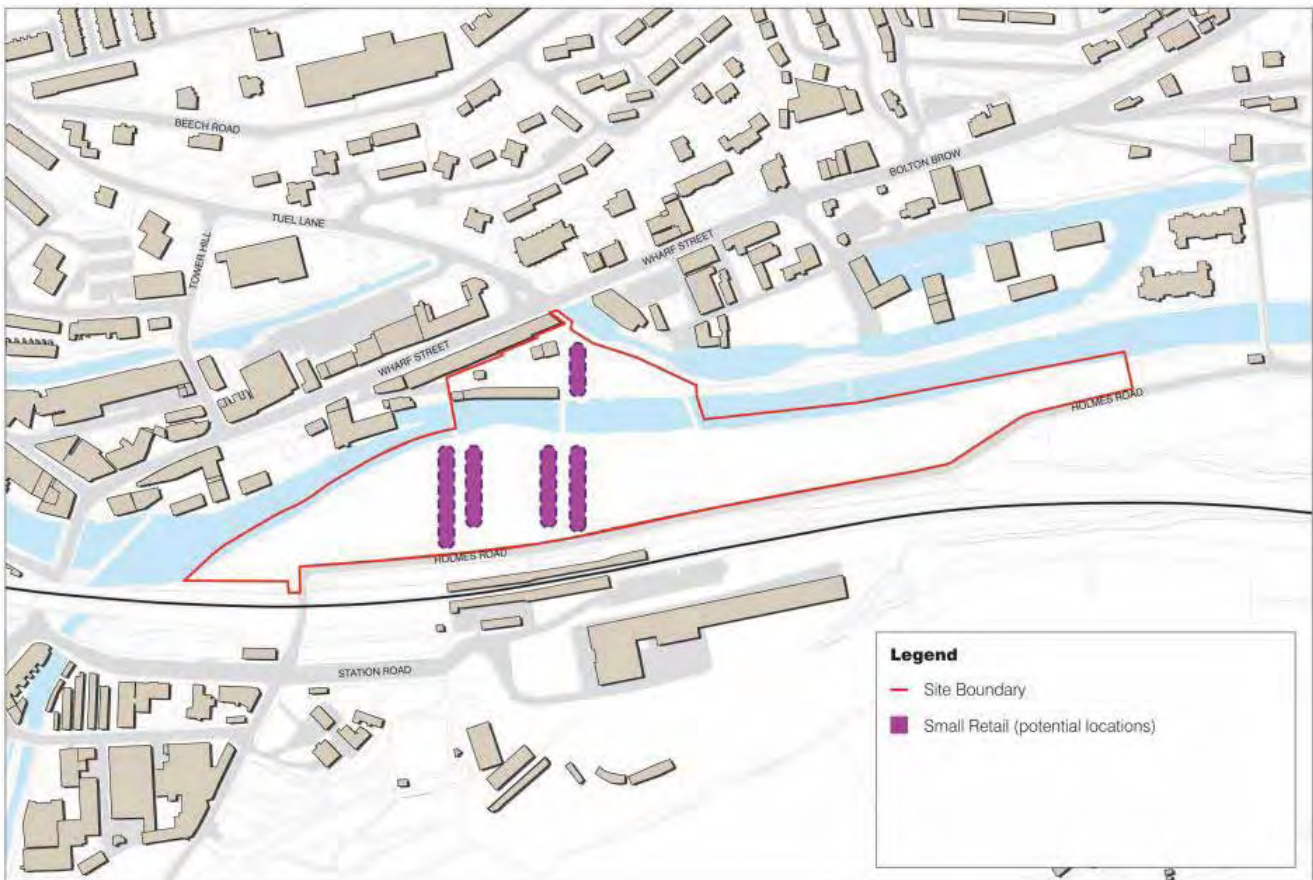
4 . Development Principles

Retail

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- 4.81 The site is not considered appropriate for any large retail units or major food stores, however small retail units not exceeding 10,000ft² that could serve both the new residential and business communities and visitors to and through the site are encouraged. These should be located in well trafficked and highly visible areas including the 'Station Square' and the route from the Station to the town centre.

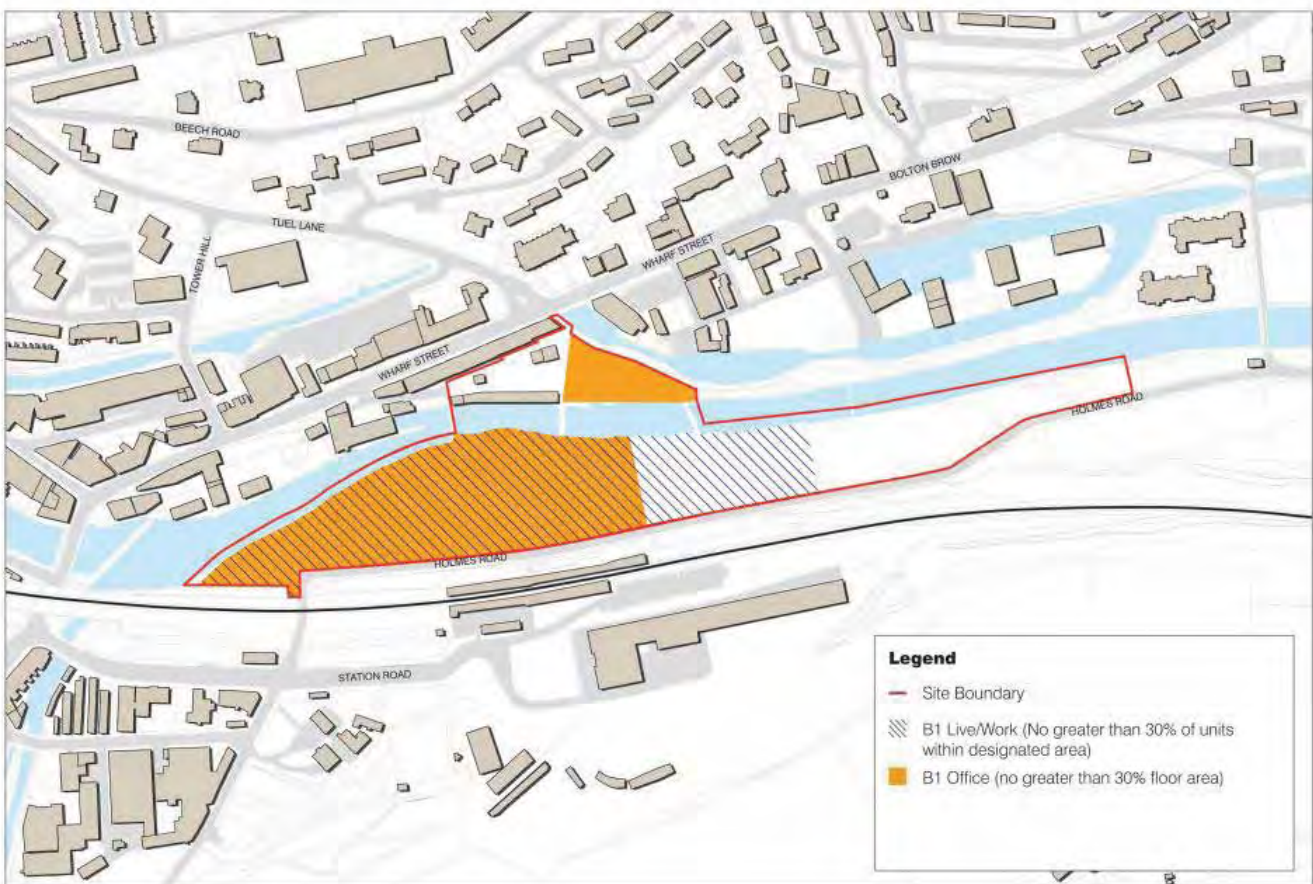
Picture 4.7 Land Use - Retail



Business

- 4.82 Office use is encouraged within the new development. This could be provided either within mixed use blocks or within stand alone office buildings. Any conventional office floorspace should be located within the high density western section of the site. The western section of the site should contain between 15 and 30% office accommodation (B1).
- 4.83 Consideration should also be given to the provision of some live/work units within residential blocks. These can be located within the western and central sections of the site. The eastern section of the site should not contain any office accommodation.

Picture 4.8 Land use - Business

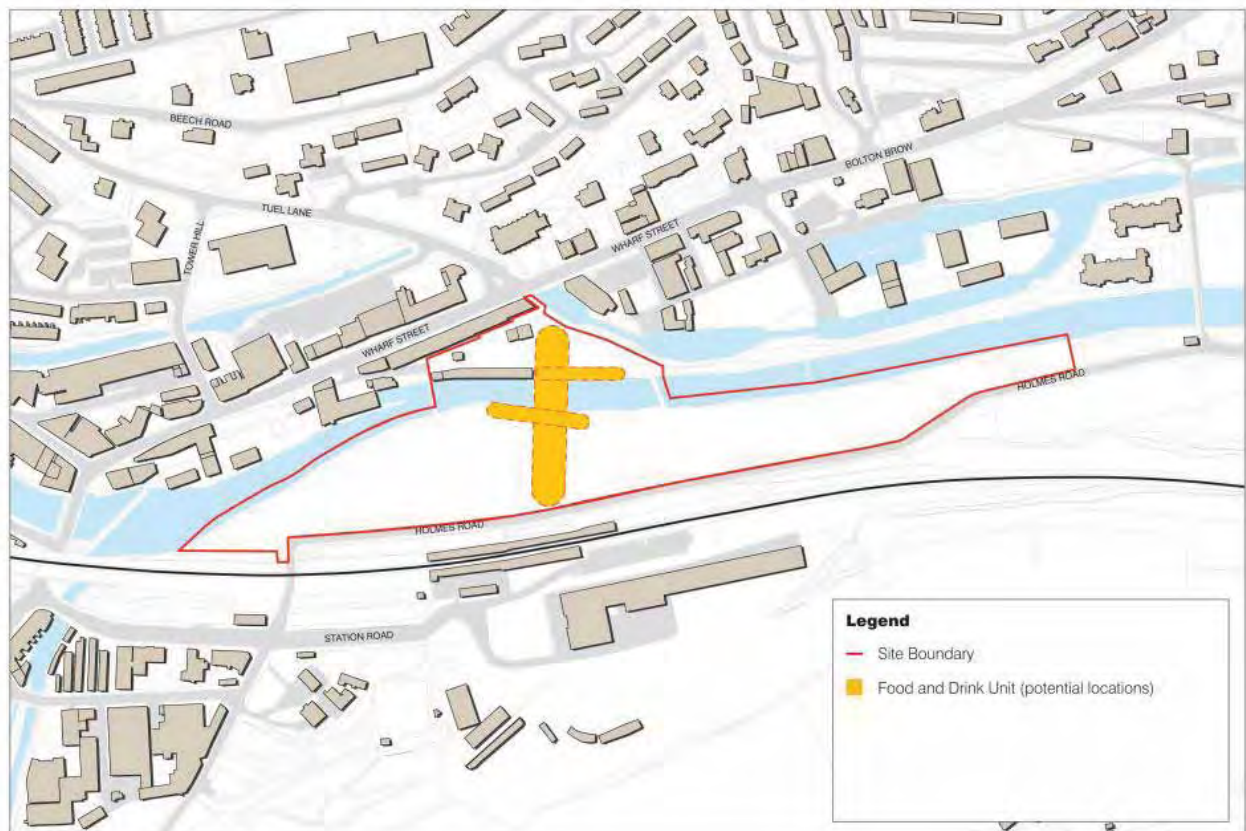


4 . Development Principles

Food and Drink

- 4.84 Food and drink uses should be concentrated within the western section of the site which provides the opportunity to extend Sowerby Bridge town centre to the south. The Riverside Walk, new pedestrian routes linking the town centre to the station and new public open spaces within the western section of the site will all be enlivened by ground floor food and drink activity. The northern section of the site should also contain some river front food and drink uses.

Picture 4.9 Land Use - Food and Drink



5 Design Principles

Conservation Area

- 5.1** The Sowerby Bridge Conservation Area covers much of the town centre and includes the northern parcel of the site. Development of the site will affect views into and out of the Conservation Area and therefore the design and layout of must take this into consideration.
- 5.2** The Sowerby Bridge Conservation Area was designated by Calderdale in 1984 but currently is not supported by a formally adopted Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Calderdale has however produced a leaflet, which briefly highlights the characteristics of the Sowerby Bridge Conservation Area. A formal Character Appraisal and Management Plan would almost certainly reiterate the following points identified in the leaflet:
- The town centre is characterised by its collection of small courtyards and squares;
 - The town centre is built from natural stone walls with natural slate roofs;
 - Natural stone used for external works in many of the public and private spaces within the town centre.
- 5.3** In the absence of a more detailed assessment of the character of the town centre conservation area and in particular the aspects of it directly influenced by the development of this site, applicants should refer to the Context and Analysis section of this document.

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Report

- 5.4** The Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Report produced by John Thompson and Partners for Yorkshire Forward and Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council and was published during 2003. The report includes Masterplan proposals for the towns of Walsden, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge. The various physical proposals for the five towns were subjected to extensive public and stakeholder consultation which resulted in a consensual approach to the proposals ensuring widespread support. The proposals for Sowerby Bridge aim to regenerate the town centre between Wharf Street and the Station through the creation of new mixed use quarter. The key features of the John Thompson proposals that are relevant to the site are as follows:
- Create a new square within the site;
 - create a riverside walk;
 - create a new car park on the with a new footbridge link to the Wharf;
 - create a new footbridge link from the town centre to the site and railway station; and
 - provide mixed use development fronting the river;
- 5.5** Full details of the Sowerby Bridge Masterplan are contained within the appendices.

Better Places to Live

- 5.6** Better Places to Live (ODPM/CABE 2001) is the companion guide to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3). The document builds upon the guidance for good urban design set out in By Design (ODPM 2000) and challenges both developers and local authorities to be more imaginative when considering housing design and layout. The report is comprehensive in its recommendations and guidance however these can be summarised as follows:
- Movement – Provide a movement framework which is safe, direct and attractive to all users;
 - Mix – Provide a rich mix of housing opportunities;
 - Community – Encourage a sense of neighbourhood and community ownership;
 - Structure – Provide a coherent structure of buildings, spaces, landscape and routes for movement;
 - Layout – Ensure that the street layout and design is appropriate to use and layout;
 - Place – Provide attractive and clearly defined public and private spaces;
 - Amenity – Provide pleasant gardens and amenity space;

5 . Design Principles

- Parking – Provide convenient and unobtrusive car parking;
- Safety – Provide a safe and secure environment;
- Space – Provide well planned homes which provide space and functionality;
- Adaptability – Ensure that housing is robust and adaptable to changing requirements;
- Maintenance – Provide an environment which can be well maintained over the long term;
- Sustainability – Ensure that housing is designed to minimise resource consumption;
- Detail – Ensure that detailing of buildings and spaces is well considered.

Code for Sustainable Homes

- 5.7** The Code (DCLG 2006) has been introduced by the Government in order to improve environmental standards and energy efficiency for new housing. The Code is currently voluntary however it is widely anticipated that it will become mandatory in some form in the future if national energy targets are to be met.
- 5.8** The Code measures the sustainability of housing design against various categories and provides the 'whole home' with a rating. The design categories covered by the Code are:
- Energy/CO2
 - Water
 - Materials
 - Surface Water Run Off
 - Waste
 - Pollution
 - Health and Well Being
 - Management
 - Ecology

Manual for Streets

- 5.9** Manual for Streets (MfS) supersedes Design Bulletin 32 and its companion guide "Places, Streets and Movement". It complements Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, providing technical guidance without setting out any new policy or legal requirements.
- 5.10** MfS aims to bring about a transformation in the quality of streets by fundamentally changing the way streets are designed and adopted, including a more collaborative approach between the design professions and other stakeholders. Streets should not be designed solely to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles, instead designers should place a high priority on pedestrians and cyclists along with public transport users.
- 5.11** Once the new infrastructure has been delivered through the TP access, the site will be significantly improved. Furthermore, the change of use on the site from employment to a residential mixed use development will have significant impact on the nature of traffic along Holmes Road. However, access to the site from the west is complicated by the Listed Railway Bridge which reduces sightlines making this area particularly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, any new development as proposed should capitalise on this opportunity to bring MfS principles to the area.
- 5.12** Holmes Road itself, as discussed previously in the document, is a relatively closed and dark area as a result of the large industrial buildings situated along the roads edge and the railway embankment to the south. Developers are therefore encouraged to improve the aspect of the road through both the siting and design of new buildings and through landscape schemes.
- 5.13** In addition, one of the aims of this SPD is to ensure that links between the town centre and the railway station are improved. Therefore, pedestrian access to the railway station on the southern side of Holmes Road should be a key consideration of the design process. Development should be designed to maximise the proximity to the railway station encouraging the use of this mode of transport.

- 5.14** Developers are encouraged to enter into pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Services prior to finalising the design of any proposed development.

Housing Audit

- 5.15** The Housing Audit (Assessing the quality of new homes in the North East, North West and Yorkshire & Humber) CABE 2005 found very few high quality example of new housing within the three northern regions. Only six schemes of the 93 assessed could be considered very good or good. CABE found that many recent housing schemes have begun to reflect urban design thinking but fail to go much beyond the basics. Poor and mediocre schemes tended to suffer from the following weaknesses:

- Legibility – most schemes had a poor relationship between buildings, spaces and routes and also lacked landmark features making navigation difficult for resident and visitor alike;
- Roads and Parking – obtrusive areas of car parking dominated the majority of the scheme having a negative affect on the public realm;
- Sense of Place – few schemes succeeded in creating a distinct and memorable place with many developments having an ‘everywhere but nowhere’ quality.

- 5.16** Recommendations of the report can be briefly summarised as follows:

- A masterplanning approach which defines the structure of the new place, sets out design principles and explains the relationship between housing and open space networks should be followed;
- Masterplans should be supported by robust and detailed analysis and key design principles;
- Highways design should be led by the Manual for Streets and not be Design Bulletin 32;
- Public realm quality will be essential to ensure the overall success of the development.

Car Parking – What Works Where

- 5.17** This guide to residential car parking design (Design for Homes and English Partnerships 2006) evaluates residential parking solutions throughout England in contrasting locations. It notes that the rear court car parking solution default that has emerged since the completion of Old Poundbury is not always successful and can result in route duplication and reduced usage of front door which tends to reduce activity and therefore security on streets.

- 5.18** The guide identifies a number of rules that are applicable for car parking in any location. These can be summarised as follows:

- Aim for quality street design. Parking location is more significant than parking quantity;
- a combination of on plot, off plot and on street parking should be formulated to suit location, topography and market;
- rediscover the street as an efficient and safe place to park;
- maximise the activity between the street and the house to encourage safer and friendlier places;
- don't park at the back of the block until on street and frontage options have been exhausted;
- avoid allocation of more than half all parking spaces; and
- provide cycle parking.

Making Design Policy Work

- 5.19** This study published by CABE (2005) explains how to ensure that design policy is integrated into Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The study identifies five important factors that help to deliver better quality design policy and therefore better quality design. These are:

- Embed design concerns across the LDF policy hierarchy and beyond to the community;
- Treat design as a cross cutting issue which infuses all other policy areas;
- Base design policies on an in-depth understanding of local context and the design process;

- Recognise that design is important beyond the scale of the individual sites and can help establish LDF objectives at different spatial levels;
- Ensure design policy addresses social and sustainable as well as visual and functional concerns.

Use of Architects

5.20 The new development should be designed by chartered architects preferably with recognised skills in working in sensitive locations and in housing design. Furthermore, it is recommended that due to the scale of the site area consideration should be given to employing more than one architectural practice thus ensuring a degree of design variety.

Bridge Exemplars

Halgavor Bridge, Bodmin

This bridge was constructed as a millennium bridge as part of the Cornish Way cycle track and National Cycle Network. It was opened on the 20th July 2001. This suspension bridge has a striking single span of 48 metres and carries a footpath, cycle track and bridleway over the A30 dual carriageway just south of Bodmin, Cornwall.

Trinity Bridge, Salford

Designed by the Spanish engineer Doctor Santiago Calatrava and completed in 1995, Trinity Bridge marks another major inner city regeneration, this time over the River Irwell, which has always marked the invisible border between the Cities of Salford and Manchester. The whole structure rests on one single 40 foot pylon - a kind of tent pole - leaned over at a rakish angle, from which the suspending tension cables hang down to suspend the footbridge deck beneath. Its sculptural appearance and white paintwork inject a striking elegance in an area that has long awaited such a development.

Millenium Walkway, New Mills

After more than two years of planning and fund raising, the New Mills' ambitious Millennium Walkway project was finally completed just before Christmas 1999. The 175-yard long elevated steel walkway spans what The Guardian described somewhat dramatically as 'the last inaccessible place in England', a rocky wall in the 30m deep Torrs gorge, cantilevered out over the fast running river Goyt. Visitors are now able to inspect close at hand not only the enormous railway retaining wall above them, but also the historic Torr Vale Mill on the opposite bank, recognised now as the oldest working cotton mill in the country (from 1788), and listed by English Heritage Grade II*.

6 Planning Obligations

- 6.1** All planning obligations will be negotiated and agreed with the Council as part of the planning application process. The Council will consider the use of conditions and/or a Section 106 Agreement to secure the obligations. In accordance with Circular 05/2005, planning obligations must be:
- relevant to Planning;
 - necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the proposed development;
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and
 - reasonable in all other respects.
- 6.2** The need for planning obligations will be dependant on the amount and type of development proposed. However, it is likely that the following obligations will be required as part of the reuse and redevelopment proposals:

Pedestrian Connectivity

- 6.3** A primary objective of the redevelopment of this area is to improve pedestrian links between the train station and town centre retail area.
- 6.4** This will be achieved through either:
- The provision of a new footbridge, which will be funded through S106 contributions from development north and south of the river. This will take precedence over the other S106 obligations; Or
 - An upgrade of the existing footbridge as a minimum. In this case, a developer must show through a financial appraisal that a new footbridge is not viable.

Affordable Housing

- 6.5** The required provision of affordable housing will be subject to negotiation, with PPS3: Housing forming the basis for these discussions.
- 6.6** The Director of Community Services has advised that there is a need for affordable housing in this area and normally planning applications for residential development would be expected to set out how they are going to meet the requirement for affordable housing. Should there be doubt about the viability of a development a developer would normally be expected to demonstrate this through a Full Financial Appraisal of the development.
- 6.7** This is the approach that will be followed should a planning application be submitted. If a scheme is not viable with the inclusion of affordable housing then this must be clearly demonstrated and documented. Should other policy objectives be given higher priority, then the reasoning must be clearly documented.

Public Open Space

- 6.8** In accordance with the Developer Contributions Towards Meeting Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities SPD (April 2008), all new residential development should provide for the recreational needs of the prospective residents. This can be through either on site facilities or by way of a commuted sum to enhance existing facilities. Currently there is no public open space on the site and access along the waterfront is limited by the existing development.
- 6.9** A significant aspiration of the Brief is to improve access to the waterfront through the creation of a riverside walkway. Therefore, this should be included as part of the design of any proposed development and a commuted sum may be required towards the future maintenance of this space.
- 6.10** Should there be doubt about the viability of a development due to the provision of public open space or a contribution towards its maintenance, a developer would normally be expected to demonstrate this through a Full Financial Appraisal of the development.

6 . Planning Obligations

- 6.11** This is the approach that will be followed should a planning application be submitted. If a scheme is not viable with the inclusion of public open space, or with a contribution towards its maintenance, then this must be clearly demonstrated and documented. Should other policy objectives be given higher priority, then the reasoning must be clearly documented.

Education Contributions

- 6.12** Any proposed development will be assessed to establish the potential impact on local schools from new families moving into the area, in accordance with the Developer Contributions Towards Meeting Education Needs SPD (February 2008). Where the development will lead to an increase in demand for school places over and above current capacity there may be a requirement for contributions towards meeting the shortfall.

Other Obligations

- 6.13** Other possible planning obligations for this site include a contribution towards the upgrade of the railway station.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.14** A contribution to the loss of employment land will not be a requirement of the residential development since policy E20 allows provision for new employment land to the east. A S106 contribution would however be required towards the cost of the pedestrian bridge crossing, a riverside walk and affordable housing.
- 6.15** As previously acknowledged the site is heavily constrained which has clear implications for the operational cost of the development. CBMC will give consideration to specific costs associated with the redevelopment of this site and the subsequent financial returns. Therefore, applicants should submit a detailed financial appraisal with their application.
- 6.16** This financial information will inform the negotiations for planning obligations to ensure that the key aims of this brief namely; the extension of the town centre, increased access to the train station, opening up of the riverside and improvements to public realm, remain part of a deliverable scheme for the redevelopment of the site.