



Preston Planning Framework

Draft for approval

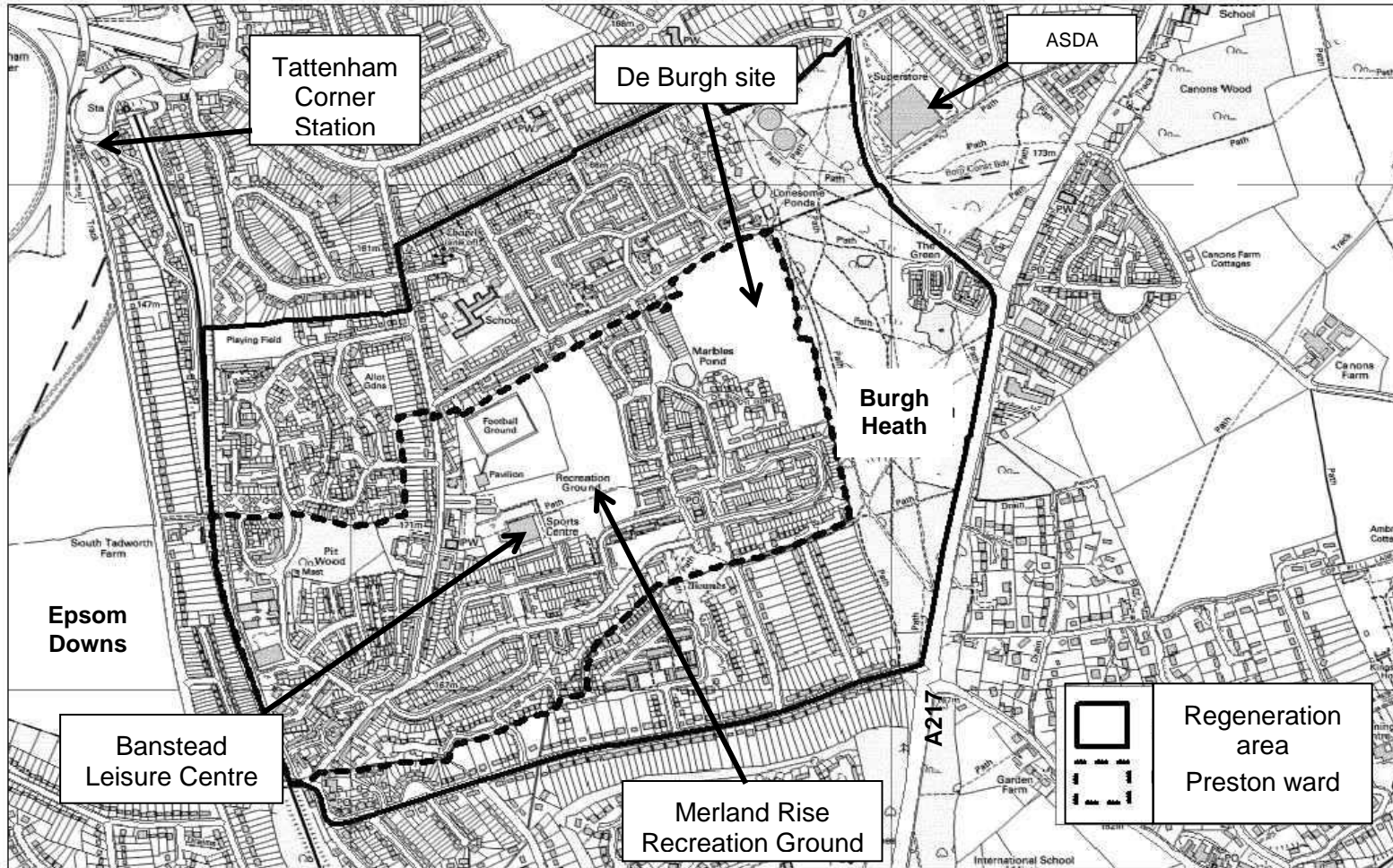
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CONTENTS

1. Introduction and Background
2. Vision and Objectives
3. Design and Sustainability Principles
4. Site Specific Policy Principles
5. Merland Rise Recreation Grounds
6. De Burgh site and surrounding area
7. Other Potential Development Sites
8. Delivery and Funding

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Preston regeneration area is located to the north of the Borough and is composed of the Preston ward and its immediate surrounding area (refer to figure 1). Burgh Heath and the A217 to the east and rail tracks to the west form its restricting boundaries. Shelveys Way and Chapel Way form its southern and northern boundaries respectively. The Council's Corporate Plan (2011/15), Community Plan (to 2020) and emerging Core Strategy set out the strategic vision for Preston as an area identified for regeneration.
- 1.2 Preston faces a range of socio-economic challenges. Most significantly Preston has been identified as the most deprived ward in the Borough and the fourth most deprived ward in Surrey in the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It also ranks within the most deprived 10% in Surrey (12th overall) and in the most deprived 20% in the country. The area was designed prior to the rise in car ownership and has evolved over a number of years resulting in a general lack of design coherence.
- 1.3 There are a number of issues affecting the quality of the physical environment in the Preston regeneration area, most notably:
 - Housing that is not meeting the needs of the local residents
 - Poor quality local services and facilities (a lack of any community focus both physically and socially)
 - Public spaces and the street scene needs improvement (poor quality public realm, lack of clear boundaries to private / public spaces and open space, heavy on-street car parking which restricts vehicular movement, poor pedestrian and cycle routes)
 - Limited connectivity across and beyond the regeneration area
- 1.4 These issues have been identified through consultation exercises and previous masterplanning work, providing a substantial evidence base on which this Planning Framework is based. The issues are considered in more detail in Appendix B.
- 1.5 This Planning Framework is being prepared to address these challenges and build upon the advantages present to secure the regeneration of Preston.



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Figure 1: Preston ward and regeneration area boundary

Consultation and engagement

- 1.6 Work on the regeneration of Preston dates back to 2004 when the Preston Regeneration Masterplan was produced. This involved extensive public consultation and included a walking audit, an exhibition, a dedicated project website, questionnaires and a newsletter. The masterplan was later used to inform the preparation of the draft SPD in 2006, which was subject to public consultation and a Sustainability Appraisal. Both the Masterplan and SPD informed the Preston Planning Framework.
- 1.7 The draft Preston Planning Framework was approved by the Council's October 2011 Executive for public consultation, which took place between November 2011 and January 2012.
- 1.8 Various consultation activities were undertaken including a press briefing, exhibitions, staffed consultation events and public meetings. Emails, letters and leaflets were also sent to stakeholders and information provided on the Council's website, libraries and Help Shops.
- 1.9 There was general support for the Framework, but a few areas of concern were raised. Comments included the following:
 - The need for additional housing was questioned by some and its impact on infrastructure (road, schools, health services, etc.). The need to ensure quality design, including an acceptable building height, was a point made by many residents, in particular those bordering Merland Rise Recreational Ground and Burgh Heath.
 - Concerns about congestion and road access throughout the area were the most common transport issues raised. There was also a strong support for public transport improvements including other means to reduce congestion and improve parking provision.
 - The amount of green space that could be lost through the proposals for Preston was raised as a concern. There was support for improving the Merland Rise Recreation Ground and for protecting existing green spaces including the woodland and Burgh Heath.
 - There was generally a positive response to the provision of new community facilities in the area. Provision of a new leisure centre with pool was the top investment priority identified by respondents. There was considerable support for the provision of a community/sports hall. However, there was some concern raised about the depth of the replacement pool being less than the current pool.
- 1.10 Details of the comments can be found in the consultation statement prepared alongside this framework.

Appraisals undertaken

- 1.11 A *Sustainability Appraisal* is a process designed to ensure that social, environmental and economic impacts are considered in the process of formulating planning policies and proposals; and that the outcome of that consideration is reported. This also includes the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 1.12 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Preston Planning Framework found that the proposals would make a positive contribution to the objective of providing suitable housing, supporting well being and enhancing the environment.
- 1.13 A *Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)* of land use plans is required under the European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive), as transposed into UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (The Habitats Regulations 2010). Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) provides for the protection of 'European Sites' (also known as 'Natura 2000' sites), which are sites of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community.
- 1.14 This screening stage assesses whether effects may be significant. Where significant effects are present (or possible, as determined by this screening assessment) an Appropriate Assessment will consider whether the plan will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site.
- 1.15 The screening assessment concluded that the draft Preston Planning Framework would not have a significant adverse effect on any of the European Sites, and therefore does not warrant the need for an Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken specifically for this Planning Framework.
- 1.16 An *Equalities Impact Assessment* is used to ensure that individuals and teams consider the likely impact of their work on residents and take action to improve strategies, procedures, projects and functions where necessary. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Planning Framework. It identifies that the Planning Framework paves the way for significant changes and improvements to the Estate and will improve facilities for the local community. It will therefore have a positive impact on a number of equality target groups.

Status of Planning Framework

- 1.17 The Development Plan for Reigate & Banstead is comprised of the Borough Local Plan and the South East Plan (until it is abolished). The Council is presently preparing both its Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (DMP) document, which will provide the policies (strategic and local) necessary to guide development envisaged for Preston. However, as the timetable for regeneration in Preston is running ahead of the Development Management Policies (DMP) DPD timetable, this Planning Framework has been prepared to serve as an interim policy mechanism and should be read in conjunction with the emerging Core Strategy and the Borough Local Plan. In due course the contents of the Preston Planning Framework will be incorporated into the DMP, forming part of the Local Development Framework for the Borough.
- 1.18 The Framework draws on previous work carried out by the Council in the Preston Regeneration Masterplan (2005) and the Draft Preston SPD (2006) and will inform and steer interested parties, including decision makers, members of the community and developers.
- 1.19 In the interim, to maximise the robustness of the Preston Planning Framework, it has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, Executive approval (October 2011 consultation draft), a period of formal public consultation (between November 2011 and January 2012) and further Executive approval in April 2012 as a final version revised in light of responses received. This lends planning weight to the document in the planning application decision-making process.

Next steps

- 1.20 The Council will investigate how to deliver the proposals in this planning framework and will work with development partners. Consideration will be given to various delivery mechanisms including the option to pursue an outline planning permission for Merland Rise Recreation Ground. This would be beneficial in providing greater certainty for existing residents as to the type and scale of development. This Planning Framework will inform any future planning applications made by the Council or indeed any other party.
- 1.21 It is anticipated that the Merland Rise Recreation Ground would be available for phased development from 2013 and will proceed in advance of the De Burgh School Playing field site. Completion of the new leisure centre and community facilities is targeted for mid 2014. Whilst some of the housing projects will be delivered as part of the comprehensive site development, the

timing is dependent on market conditions. Further detail on delivery and funding is set out in section 8.

2. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Council's vision for the Preston area as set out in the Joint Statement of Intent: *'The proposed regeneration of the Preston area will transform the local environment, making it a more desirable, healthier and safer place in which to live, work and play for this and future generations. The quality and choice of housing will be greatly enhanced, with new housing for market sale, a greater range of affordable housing and improvements to existing homes. A new community "hub" will be created providing a focus for social, leisure and community activity. The area will benefit from environmental improvements and will be better connected, with improved access throughout the neighbourhood and to local destinations. High standards of design and environmental sustainability will be maintained throughout the regeneration process'*.
- 2.2 Section 1 briefly sets out the background and challenges that Preston faces and Appendix B expands upon these. To deliver the vision, address the challenges and build up the opportunities, the regeneration of Preston will be based around the following three objectives:

- ***Improve housing for new and existing residents***
- ***Creation of a new community hub***
- ***Improve infrastructure and open space***

Improve housing for new and existing residents

- 2.3 The Borough Council needs to provide housing to contribute to the Borough's current and future needs. This is recognised in the emerging Core Strategy. Within Preston there are two primary sites suitable for the delivery of new housing; the De Burgh site and part of the Merland Rise Recreation Ground. On the basis of the current Borough Local Plan policy (Ho9A) a 30 to 50 dwelling unit per hectare housing density would present the opportunity to deliver between 240 to 400 new homes on both sites; between 90 and 150 on part of the Merland Rise site and 150 - 250 on the De Burgh school playing fields site. Raven Housing Trust sites can deliver an additional circa 25 units.
- 2.4 Across the borough as a whole, there is a shortage of affordable housing. The Council has established an interim approach for seeking affordable housing

until the Local Plan is formally replaced by the Core Strategy. The interim approach takes into consideration the existing Borough Local Plan and Planning Policy Statement 3. The Council's emerging Core Strategy policy on affordable housing requires up to 30% of affordable housing units to be provided. However both the Council's interim policy and the emerging Core Strategy policies for affordable housing allow for exceptional circumstances in the requirement of an alternative level of affordable housing. The emerging Core Strategy gives due consideration to regeneration areas where an alternative level of housing may be sought to achieve a more balanced community. This planning framework promotes the following housing tenure mix in response to its current context; 75% of new housing will be private market housing with a 25% affordable housing requirement.

- 2.5 The provision of affordable housing also requires a careful balance between rented units and shared ownership units. The emerging policy approach seeks a mix of tenure, including rented, and a mix of sizes and types that meet the current assessment of housing needs. For the Preston Regeneration area an affordable housing requirement of 15% shared ownership and 10% rented (preferably social rented) housing is considered to be in line with the interim and emerging policy. This will enable some residents to access homes at an affordable rental level, while also encouraging those that are able, to get on and move up the property ladder. To further encourage access to the property market, the Borough Council is interested in talking to Registered Providers with existing rented units on the estate about the scope to make some of these available for shared ownership, in particular where existing tenants move into new rented accommodation.
- 2.6 Appendix A provides detail surrounding the principles of affordable housing provision in the Planning Framework area. It includes a number of reasons in favour of Raven Housing Trust, which owns the majority of the existing affordable housing in the area, being the provider of the new affordable housing in the area, although the Borough Council cannot be prescriptive on this issue.
- 2.7 The Local Lettings policy for the Preston Regeneration area ensures that existing local residents are given priority when allocating new rented homes. Particular consideration will be given to existing tenants who are in overcrowded accommodation or families in flats¹.

Creation of a new community hub

- 2.8 A critical mass of new facilities located centrally would provide a focus for and create a heart of the community. The Merland Rise site is most suited to

¹ Refer to the Council's Local Lettings Policy

provide such a 'community hub', as it is in the ownership of the Council, has existing community facilities located on it and is centrally located within the regeneration area.

- 2.9 The Council has carried out consultation and viability testing to determine the most suitable leisure uses to accommodate on the Merland Rise site. It is proposed that the existing run down leisure centre will be replaced by mid 2014 with a new centre comprising: a 25m x 6 lane pool, a teaching pool, a 50 station fitness gym, 30 person exercise/dance studio, crèche, cafeteria and wet & dry change facilities. Subject to funding, an integrated sports hall and youth and community facilities will be developed in partnership with Surrey County Council, creating a hub for community activities.
- 2.10 Current Borough policy Re10 allocates Banstead Sports Centre for improvement and policy Cf3 encourages the provision of community facilities where demand arises or where demand cannot be met by existing stock. Borough Local Plan policy Re12 encourages new provision of sporting, leisure and cultural facilities where it does not make the existing traffic conditions significantly worse. The proposed re-provision of the community facilities and the leisure centre is considered necessary to meet current and future needs of the local population. A few more additional facilities would be provided, which would not significantly increase traffic in the area. The proposals for a community hub with a leisure centre are therefore considered to be consistent with existing Borough policy.

Improve infrastructure and open space

- 2.11 The proposed growth of Preston will put additional pressure on the road network, which will require improvements to be made to the road network. On street parking is a particular issue in Preston, causing congestion on access roads and bus routes. Highway improvements will therefore be required to accommodate the new developments, for example: road widening, junction improvements and improved parking provision. This should be supplemented with a Community Travel Plan that supports sustainable transport (walking, cycling and public transport).
- 2.12 To support bus access into the area, parking restrictions should be introduced in appropriate locations and formalised parking bays (e.g. parallel or right angle bays) should be created along bus routes. Pedestrian and cycle routes that link key facilities, within and adjacent to the area, will be improved, in particular, the links across Burgh Heath to the A240 (ASDA, and towards the Beacon school). There are a limited number of existing employment opportunities in and around the Preston regeneration area including the industrial estate (Pitwood Park), ASDA, and the areas of Tadworth and

Tattenham. The emerging Core Strategy identifies Pitwood Park for intensification of its existing use. Improvement of linkages to such employment opportunities will improve accessibility to local residents.

- 2.13 Whilst Preston enjoys a range of open spaces, they are generally of a poor quality. It is a priority to improve the amenity value of open spaces, in particular transforming the Merland Rise Recreation Ground into a safe and accessible space with a range of play and landscape features. Green space around housing and highways will be more clearly defined and landscaped to maximise the amenity value for residents. Outdoor play and informal sports facilities will be encouraged on existing and new sites.
- 2.14 Existing habitat and heritage sites (e.g. ponds, ancient woodland, hedgerows, and archaeological sites) should be preserved and promoted through appropriate interpretation and community involvement.

3. DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 This section sets out the design and sustainability principles, for development across sites in the Preston area. The principles expand upon the regeneration objectives and give more detail on how these should be delivered. Any proposals for new development should also comply with relevant policies in the Borough Local Plan, including (but not limited to):
- Policy Ho9: Design and Layout
 - Policy Ho9A: Housing Density and Making the Best Use of Land
 - Policy Ho13: Maintenance of Character and Amenity
 - Policy Mo7: Car Parking Strategy and Standards
- 3.2 The overall design and layout of the proposed development should be of a highest quality in urban design, architectural and environmental standards, ensuring that new development is fully integrated, physically and socially, with the rest of the Preston Ward. Whilst there are specific policy principles that will apply individually to each site, there are a number of cross cutting policy principles that are applicable:

Housing

Housing Density

- 3.3 An assessment of the development potential of areas in Reigate & Banstead, captured in the Design and Parking Review (2008), revealed that Preston has a low quality environment with opportunities to deliver development and environmental improvements. It identifies the appropriate housing density for Preston with exceptional circumstances that allow for a little flexibility. Current

Borough Local Plan policy (Ho9A) requires a density between 30 and 50 dwelling units per hectare (dph).

Housing Density

Housing provision is expected to be at a density between 30 and 50 dwelling units per hectare. Lower densities are allowed only where enhancement to the townscape is demonstrated.

Affordable Housing

- 3.4 The amount of affordable housing sought in Preston differs to that of the Council's current and emerging policy. The emerging Core Strategy policy provides the flexibility for an alternative approach in Preston (refer to paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5). This will provide more housing diversity in the area and will provide a greater range of accommodation for local people at an affordable price. In addition it is essential that the affordable housing units provided are dispersed in and amongst private housing in order to create a more integrated and balanced community.

Affordable Housing

- a. Developers will be expected to meet an affordable housing requirement of 15% shared ownership and 10% rented (preferably social rented) housing on all developments of 1 hectare or 15 units and above. (Refer to Appendix A for more details).
- b. Affordable housing should be dispersed within the private housing to create a balanced, integrated and mixed community.
- c. The majority of rented affordable housing units should to be family units of 3/4 bedrooms.

Housing Type

- 3.5 The regeneration area has approximately 2,800 dwellings, 75% of which are made up of terraced houses and flats and resulting in many young families not having access to gardens. The split in housing type promoted is centred on the need to address the imbalance in the provision of houses to flats and to improve access to gardens. The approach would therefore seek majority of rented affordable housing units to be family units of 3/4 bedrooms and an 80/20 percentage split of houses to flats. The Council's Local Lettings policy also gives particular consideration to existing tenants who are in overcrowded accommodation or families in flats.

Housing type

Market housing units should be a mix between small and medium sized family homes (80%) and apartment blocks (20%), creating the opportunity for a diverse community.

Housing Height

- 3.6 New proposals for housing need to complement and blend in with the surrounding environment. The height and character of new development will therefore need to be carefully thought through given the housing densities and other requirements set out above.

Housing height

- a. In providing housing, developers should build new homes to a maximum of four storeys (including ground floor). This height would not be acceptable in certain locations – (see site specific policies for further detail)
- b. In doing so, developers must ensure that new housing development respects and complements the existing surrounding environment.
- c. Height restrictions will be imposed to maintain the character of the area and facilitate passive surveillance (see site specific policies for further detail).

Housing Design

- 3.7 It is recognised that the design of housing plays an important function in the creation of community. Compliance with Council's relevant planning guidance must therefore be adhered to.

Housing Design

All new development should be compliant with the Council's policies on design contained within its Borough Local Plan, Local Distinctiveness Design Guide, Surrey Design Guide and any other relevant guidance.

Improving open spaces

- 3.8 Whilst there is a range of green space within Preston, many of these spaces are poorly landscaped and have few facilities. There are a number of landscape principles, which are applicable to all improvements in the Preston area:
- a. *Within development sites, create new open spaces that contribute to a network of interlinked green spaces across the regeneration area –*

high quality open space, providing a range of functions, should be incorporated within the designs for the regeneration sites

- b. *Provide a clearer distinction between public and private space* so that residents can enjoy access to private/communal gardens.
- c. *Establish 'positive' edges to streets and public open spaces* - to provide natural surveillance and contribute to more secure public space. Reinforcing open spaces with landscaping and tree lined pedestrian paths/cycle paths will be encouraged. Linkages of cycle and pedestrian paths through the neighbourhood will be encouraged.
- d. *Strengthen and protect existing habitats and heritage features* - Detailed landscape and arboreal surveys should be undertaken to ensure ancient hedgerows, copses, ponds and Burgh Heath are sensitively managed and reinforced with new planting.

Garden provision

- 3.9 In Preston many families with children are without gardens. The Council's Local Lettings policy prioritises local people for new homes with particular consideration given to existing tenants who are in overcrowded accommodation or families in flats.

Garden provision and amenity space

The Council will expect housing to be provided with high quality open spaces. This should include garden space for houses, green squares, amenity green spaces, courtyards and green corridors, as well as cycle/pedestrian links with planting to encourage biodiversity and connectivity.

Securing resource efficient and sustainable designs

- 3.10 Recognising that the Preston area will increase in population through the planned development on the identified development sites, this theme seeks to ensure that new development will be accessible, respect the existing scale and character of the area and enhance Preston so as to benefit both the existing and expanded community. The proposed developments present an opportunity to provide housing that is energy efficient and cheaper to maintain for future residents.
- 3.11 To support the local response to the challenges of climate change, it is important that new development within the Preston regeneration area contributes towards achieving more efficient use of resources in Reigate & Banstead. As the population's age profile gets older, houses will better meet changing needs if they are adaptable 'Lifetime Homes'.

Sustainable Design

The focus should be on:

- a. designing new developments, as a minimum, to the current Code for Sustainable Homes standard with regard to energy and water. Maximising energy and water efficiency and options for the inclusion of renewable technologies will be encouraged.
- b. designing new developments to facilitate and encourage recycling.

Improving movement and accessibility

- 3.12 Central to sustainable development is making sure development, services and facilities are easily accessed. The provision of good linkages ensuring connectivity within the area and with the immediate surrounding area is therefore important. There are opportunities to create new and improved links, both for pedestrians and vehicles, to knit the Preston area back into its surrounding Surrey context and enhance access to economic opportunities for local people.
- 3.13 General environment and highway improvements will be necessary in order for the road network to support the increased level of usage anticipated by new development in Preston. Improvements need to be made within the Preston regeneration area and beyond to ensure connectivity and ease of movement.

Improving Movement and Accessibility

In support of sustainable transport choices and improvement of road infrastructure, the following would be expected:

- a. measures to reduce the congestion caused by on-street parking, in particular on bus routes and/or where this will be exacerbated by new developments. This may include road widening, off street parking provision, parking restrictions and possibly the provision of some layby parking. This would improve bus access into the Preston area. Routes identified as a priority include: Chetwode Road, Merland Rise and other bus routes.
- b. the Sunday bus service is limited and there are no services in the late evening. The isolated nature of Preston makes this a critical issue and improved links are required to all major towns nearby for regeneration to be successful. Evening and weekend bus links to Sutton, Epsom, Banstead and Redhill are considered to be particularly important, as are train links to central London.

- c. blockages created on minor roads by on-street parking may require a footway that allows for potential vehicle overhang.
- d. convenient, direct and pleasant pedestrian routes between key facilities must be provided. Of particular importance:
 - The route from De Burgh to Merland Rise Recreation Ground and the new community hub.
 - The route from Epsom Downs Primary School to the new play and community facilities at Merland Rise Recreation Ground.
- e. links to and from the wider Preston area and facilities further afield (such as ASDA, the Beacon School and Tattenham Corner village centre) will also need to be upgraded where possible.
- f. new developments should facilitate sustainable transport choices through the provision of convenient, safe and secure, high quality cycle parking.
- g. a community travel plan will be required to encourage non-car travel.

Parking Provision

- 3.14 The parking standards applicable for proposed new development must be consistent with the Council's Borough Local Plan adopted standards.

Parking provision

- a. provide car and cycle parking for new development that is consistent with the Council's current adopted parking standards in the Borough Local Plan 2005. This should also be informed by a detailed parking study,
- b. new developments are expected to facilitate sustainable transport choices through the provision of safe and secure cycle parking and the provision of car club spaces,
- c. car parking provision must not dominate designs for new development; however it should be located in areas that benefit from natural surveillance.

- 3.15 Parking provision in the Preston area has been identified as a particular problem area where parking on verges has become the norm. Options to improve parking provision are being explored by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council in partnership with Surrey County Council.

4. SITE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Sections 5 to 7 set out the principles applicable to the sites identified for development and enhancements. The principles already set out in section 3 will have relevance to each of these sites except where a site specific principle amplifies requirements set out in section 3.
- 4.2 Two primary potential development sites, part of Merland Rise Recreation Ground and De Burgh school playing field site, have been identified in this area. Some Raven Housing Trust sites are also identified for future development. All these sites have the potential to contribute to the local housing need, as set out as the Borough's housing target in the emerging Core Strategy and by providing a mix of market housing types, to create a more diverse and balanced community.

5. MERLAND RISE RECREATION GROUND

Site Description

- 5.1 Merland Rise Recreation Ground is centrally located in the regeneration area and is predominantly bordered by Merland Rise (road) to the west, Chetwode Road to the north, Acres Gardens and Longmere Gardens to the east and residential units to the south. This site is identified as having the potential for development. It is a large (8ha), poorly defined recreation space in Reigate & Banstead Borough Council's ownership and is enclosed by significant lengths of residential rear boundaries abutting it. A third of the site is currently leased to Banstead Athletic Football Club (BAFC), which provide a football field and other indoor facilities. Two thirds of the site is minimally landscaped. It is a poorly used recreation space in part due to a fear of crime.

Preferred Option: Merland Rise Recreation Ground

This site will provide high quality new housing, a community hub with leisure centre and an enhanced recreation space with play areas for children and teenagers.

Designations and Issues

- 5.2 The entire site is designated as urban open land in the Council's Borough Local Plan 2005. This policy designation normally resists the loss of urban open land. Development on this piece of land would therefore be considered a departure from current planning policy.
- 5.3 Previous public consultations and studies have identified this space as not being used to its full potential, which often results in fewer visits being made.

This may be attributed to the poor quality of space and lack of facilities provided that may restrict the users choice of activity.

- 5.4 The Council's Open Space Assessment identifies a deficiency (quantity) in general amenity space in the area. A quantitative loss of open space would therefore not be desirable. However, where deficiencies do exist, the open space assessment recommends that enhancements be made or open spaces be used for numerous purposes (multi-functional).
- 5.5 The regeneration benefits to be gained from the provision of housing and community facilities on this site are considered to be of greater value for the local residents than the existing open space in its current form. The proposals would lead to a reduction in the size of the recreation ground but will seek to ensure that a large portion is retained and enhanced so that it is fit for purpose as a recreational space and contributes to the amenity value of the area. To ensure that regeneration benefits are balanced with the loss of some urban open land, it is essential that the portion of the site used for development purposes contributes to the following objectives of:
- providing passive surveillance through the provision of residential units overlooking the open space;
 - providing a new and improved community hub and leisure centre;
 - enhancing the remaining open space;
 - providing linkages (pedestrian and cycle paths) to key access points; and
 - providing play facilities for children of all ages including toddlers and teenagers.

Housing Provision

- 5.6 Part of the Merland Rise Recreation Ground site has the potential to deliver housing to contribute towards the need identified through the Council's emerging Core Strategy evidence base. This new housing would provide passive surveillance by overlooking the open space thereby helping to address safety issues which have been identified. New housing would be of benefit to the local people by providing a mix of housing tenure and type of units. The Housing policy principles set out in section 3 will apply and based on 30 – 50 dwelling units per hectare will result in approximately 90 – 150 dwelling units on this site. Further requirements for building heights are set out below.
- 5.7 The building height in the Preston area ranges between 2 and 4 storeys (including ground floor). In proposing new development, a maximum of 4 storeys across the proposed area would therefore seem appropriate to blend in to the current environment and facilitating seamless development. However, in providing additional housing units in the area, care should be taken to ensure that this does not prejudice existing residents. Careful

consideration must therefore be taken regarding the building heights proposed. There are certain areas where higher building heights would be considered appropriate, but there are areas where they would not. The following guidance should be followed:

Housing

Any housing built adjacent to the Merland Rise Recreation Ground should be of sympathetic design:

- a. houses should be built to front onto the edge of the recreation ground to provide passive surveillance and thereby minimise the existing potential for anti-social behaviour;
- b. building heights should also be observed on this site to blend in with the established built form;
- c. development will be permitted only for houses on the north east corner of Merland Rise Recreation Ground. Maximum height permitted is 2 storeys – (see figure 2);
- d. development will be encouraged for flatted schemes of a maximum of 4 storeys (including ground floor) on certain locations – (see locations illustrated in figure 2).



Figure 2: Building height restriction on the Merland Rise Recreation Ground



Figure 3: one possible layout of the proposed developments on the recreation ground

Community Hub

5.8 In recognition of the poor quality of the existing facilities, it is acknowledged that the enhancement and/or re-provision of the current facilities are necessary. The Merland Rise site is in the Council's ownership and is centrally located in the regeneration area. The site, currently occupied by the community buildings together with adjoining recreation space, creates a substantial development opportunity for creating a community hub. It is in the ideal location to provide a grouping of community facilities to serve the current and future population of Preston. Employment opportunities will be created by the new community hub and leisure centre. There is an opportunity to enhance the underused existing open space and address associated safety issues. A number of objectives to improve the Preston area could therefore be met on this particular site with the Council's commitment to invest in these facilities.

Community Hub including leisure centre

The community hub (including leisure centre) will be located on the Merland Rise site (to the north of the current leisure centre site).

The purpose of the hub is to serve as a community focus for the area. The facilities will be affordable with a management strategy designed to reduce vandalism and promote local use. There are a number of measures that should be undertaken to ensure that the local centre is a successful hive of activity. These are that:

- a. a grouping of activities is built up through the number of amenities available;
- b. a sufficient variety of services is available;
- c. pedestrian/cycle links to the centre from the rest of the area and the

- d. De Burgh site are strengthened to make it easier to walk/cycle to; a high degree of accessibility to and within the hub from important destinations (such as the De Burgh site, the train station, bus stops) must be provided, thereby supporting public transport and sustainable travel.
- e. sufficient parking spaces are provided for staff and users.
- f. Design and layout should be consistent with Borough Local Plan policy Cf2 (Community facilities – Design and Layout) and Re2 (Recreation – Design and Layout).

5.9 The Council’s leisure centre review established that the existing leisure centre in Preston is coming to the end of its design life and the preferred solution is to build a new centre on an adjacent site. Re-providing the leisure centre is seen as the catalyst for regenerating Preston and for delivering the community hub on the Merland Rise site.

5.10 The potential uses within the community hub include a leisure centre (with 25m pool, teaching pool, 50 station fitness gym, exercise/dance studio, crèche, cafeteria and separate wet & dry changing facilities), a youth centre and community meeting rooms. The site could therefore house a variety of uses to create an active community hub. Accessibility of the site is key to its function and will therefore require ease of access and the provision of parking sufficient to serve the needs of users and staff.

Enhancements to the open space

5.11 The recreation ground does not currently fulfil its potential as an amenity for local people. It lacks character and feels unwelcoming with uneven ground and a poor definition of spaces. Many of these properties adjacent to the recreation ground have their back gardens facing the recreation ground which does not assist in creating a safe overlooked environment. Enhancements to the open space can address a number of issues for this site and the area as a whole.

5.12 The presence of a copse, south east of the Merland Rise Recreation Ground adds value to the area. This wooded area provides a different type of green open space and should be retained and protected for the benefit of the local residents.

Enhancements to the open space

Developers will be expected to:

- a. provide attractive frontages and passive surveillance through new housing development around the eastern and southern edges of

- the Recreation Ground.
- b. provide new formal pathways, cycle paths and structural landscaping, designed to create a more attractive park environment.
- c. consider subdividing the space to create a series of areas that can be designed to have their own character features, such as improved children's play area, kick-about area, sensory garden and picnic areas;
- d. reprovide play areas and a skate park for children and teenagers as part of the enhancement of the recreation ground.
- e. retain and protect the copse.

Improving linkages and accessibility

5.13 It is essential that this site is easily accessed (by all including emergency vehicles) and has the necessary parking spaces provided for future residents, staff and users of the leisure and community hub facilities.

- *Link between Merland Rise Recreation Ground and Epsom Downs Primary School:* St. Leonard's Road is a main access to Epsom Downs Community Primary School running off Chetwode Road, which might include repositioning the safe crossing point on Chetwode Road, both to improve safety and to improve bus access along Chetwode Road.
- *Link between the new community hub and Marbles Way/the eastern side of the Preston Estate:* A link already exists as a tarmac path crossing the Recreation Ground. Whilst well used in the day, the route does not benefit from overlooking and is consequently considered by many as unsafe in the evening. However, it is a very important link and would become more so when a critical mass of facilities is established as the new local centre on Merland Rise. It is proposed that this existing path be formalised as a road (through route) of sufficient width to serve as access to the community facilities.

Improving linkages and accessibility

Direct linkages to and from the Merland Rise Recreation Ground site that contribute toward efficient travel time and safe routes for local residents must be provided and must be of high quality standards. This would provide local residents with a positive travel experience and would encourage sustainable travel.

In doing so developers will be expected to provide linkages between the site and its immediate environment and further afield to public transport access points and other services and facilities:

- a. multiple access points to the site are required ensuring access to all (including emergency vehicles);
- b. a road forming an east-west axis across the Merland Rise

Recreation Ground to ensure access to the community facilities to be provided and will improve movement across the Preston area. This road should be well lit, tree lined and overlooked by buildings to provide a safer and more attractive route.

- c. an improved link between Epsom Downs Primary School and the Merland Rise Recreation Ground and the new local community facilities to be provided.
- d. further opportunities for improving the permeability through the area must be explored.

6. DE BURGH SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 6.1 The De Burgh school playing field site is located south of Chetwode Road and west of Burgh Heath. The site appears as an open field surrounded by residential use to the north, south and west. The De Burgh school playing field site used to be part of a Surrey County Council Secondary School. This school was considered to be in surplus and was closed in 1990 following the amalgamation with Nork Park School to form the Beacon School on the Nork Park site. The part of the site formerly occupied by the school buildings was developed in 2001 for housing leaving 6 hectares of land available for development. The site has been safeguarded for housing and is identified in the Borough Local Plan as such. It is proposed that the Borough Local Plan designation be retained.
- 6.2 The De Burgh site offers a particularly significant opportunity to maximise the benefits of development so that some of capital received from its sale can be used to fund other improvements in the Preston area. The site backs onto Burgh Heath and therefore any development must be sensitively designed to complement this green space, with appropriate design guidance.

Preferred Option: De Burgh school playing fields site

This site will provide high quality new housing with high quality open spaces.

Housing Provision

- 6.3 The 2005 masterplan recommended a green corridor connecting Marbles pond and Merland Rise Recreation Ground to Burgh Heath. The housing density sought will be as per the Borough Local Plan, i.e. between 30 and 50 dwelling units per hectare with 15% shared ownership and 10% rented (preferably social rented). Such densities could result in the delivery of between 150 and 250 residential units. All housing policy principles set out in section 4 above will apply to this site except for an amplification on the housing height policy:-

6.4 Whilst structurally part of the built up area of Preston, the site presents its longest boundary (east) with Burgh Heath. The De Burgh school playing fields site backs onto Burgh Heath (Site of Special Scientific Interest - SSSI). The open character of the site is valued by local people, and this long boundary should be used to retain visual and physical links with the Heath so the new development benefits from proximity to this valuable asset. Any development on this site must therefore be sensitively designed to complement Burgh Heath.

Housing Provision

Developers should seek to ensure that:

- a. any housing adjacent to Burgh Heath is of a sympathetic design and in doing so, the potential for anti-social behaviour should be minimised;
- b. building heights should also be observed on this site to blend in with the existing built form and so as not to diminish the natural landscape value of Burgh Heath.
- c. the building heights of houses along the edge of Burgh Heath do not exceed 2 storeys (including ground floor) - refer to figure 3 below:



Figure 4: Building height restriction on the De Burgh school playing fields site

Open Space

- 6.5 The provision of open space on this site is important to create a sustainable, high quality housing development.

Open Space

In addition to policy principle on 'garden provision and amenity spaces' as part of new housing provision, development on this site must be consistent with the following policy principles:

- a. significant areas of high quality green space should be retained on the De Burgh site to create a public, landscaped space, overlooked by the town and mews houses.
- b. provide an open-space corridor through the development, connecting Marbles Pond and Merland Rise Recreation Ground to Burgh Heath and serving as a 'green-corridor' to allow wildlife to move between habitats. This will need to be considered in the context of the local biodiversity.
- c. the provision of outdoor play areas or a contribution in relation to the development proposed will be sought.

Linkages and accessibility

- 6.6 It is important to ensure that this site is connected to its immediate and surrounding environment, thereby providing ease of movement through the area and direct access to economic opportunities, services and facilities within the area. An improved route across the site that links to the current access across the Heath to the A240 will provide safer pedestrian and cycle access to the ASDA supermarket, public transport provision along the A240 and the Beacon School. There is also potential to improve the existing route through Burgh Heath for pedestrians and cyclists.

Linkages and accessibility

Developers are expected to:

- a. undertake a detailed traffic impact assessment to:
 - o identify the best access point/s with least impact on the existing road network.
 - o identify the impact on the surrounding environment,
 - o set in place mitigation measures to address the impact,
- b. maximise the opportunity to enhance pedestrian and cycle access through the site to the Heath. This could take the form of a green tree lined route leading from Marbles Pond to Burgh Heath. This must be well designed to maximise user safety.
- c. provide multiple points of vehicular and pedestrian/cycle access to this site ensuring ease of access for residents (travelling on foot/bicycle or by car) and service vehicles;

- d. the design of the streets within the development must be consistent with the Local Distinctiveness Design Guide and Surrey Design Guide principles.

7. OTHER POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

7.1 Raven Housing Trust has identified 5 potential development sites:

- A. Cuddington Close
- B. Longfield Crescent
- C. Longmere Gardens
- D. Broad Walk
- E. Marbles Way

7.2 Two of these sites (Cuddington Close and Longmere Gardens) which are identified as suitable for residential development border sections of the Merland Rise recreation ground. If Raven were to develop their sites at the same time as the developments on the recreation ground, there may be opportunities for synergies between the two sites. An indication of how this might work is set out in Appendix A (Table 3).

A. Cuddington Close

7.3 The site is located just off Marbles Way and is currently used as a car park and works depot. The flats around Longfield Crescent and the environment they create received strong criticism during past public consultation events. Many residents indicated the unsuitability of some housing in the area for modern family needs. Since the original Masterplan these blocks have been acquired by Raven Housing Trust and significant work has been undertaken internally to bring them up to the Governments' Decent Homes Standard. Up to 15 houses/flats could be delivered on this site (refer to Appendix A).



Figure 5: Cuddington Close site

B. Longfield Crescent

7.4 The Longfield Crescent site is presently occupied by garages and an old estate office/workshop and is adjacent to a large green space (large verge) to the east. Between 6 and 8 housing units could be delivered on this site (refer to Appendix A).



Figure 6: Longfield Crescent site

C. Longmere Gardens

7.5 The site is accessed by Longmere Gardens (a one way street). It is an old garage scheme that could potentially deliver up to 4 houses (refer to Appendix A).



Figure 7: Longmere Gardens site

D. Broad Walk

7.6 The site is currently occupied by a few flats garages, open space, an old estate office, ancillary accommodation, garages and a retail unit on the

ground floor. It is located at the corner of Broad Walk and Long Walk. This site could deliver a number of houses/flats.



Figure 8: Broad Walk site

E. Marbles Way

7.7 A site in Marbles Way has been put forward as a development site. The site is currently occupied by garages but has the potential for the delivery of an improved retail offer adjoining the existing parade and the potential for flats above.



Figure 9: Marbles Way site

7.8 Generic policies set out in section 3 will be applicable to all the Raven Housing Trust sites. A transport assessment will be required to support a planning application for each potential development site. The detail of the transport assessment required will be dependent on the scale of development proposed, which will be assessed on a site by site basis.

8. DELIVERY AND FUNDING

- 8.1 The physical regeneration of Preston will be delivered through a mixture of private and public funding for development. This section gives some background on the different types of funding available for the regeneration. It then sets out the individual regeneration projects. An indication of the scale of the projects and the likely sources of funding are also given. As there is a limited amount of funding, the public funded regeneration projects have been given a priority ranking.

Funding

- 8.2 The funding package for regeneration in Preston is very closely linked with the sale and development of the two key sites for housing: Merland Rise Recreation Ground (part) and De Burgh.

Funding Source	Notes on funding
Private investment	New housing developments (and integrated infrastructure) on Merland Rise Recreation Ground (part) and De Burgh will be funded and delivered by private developers – subject to market demand
Reigate & Banstead Council capital	Funding partially dependent on the sale of Merland Rise Recreation Ground (part). Funding reserved for Leisure Centre
Surrey County Council capital	Funding dependent on the sale of De Burgh site. Funding to support improvements to community / youth facilities, highways and public realm.
New Growth Points	Central government funding to support infrastructure improvements (available from 2012/13)
Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy	Funding contributions towards infrastructure improvements that support the new housing developments e.g. highway improvements, support for community facilities (usually available post development 2014/15+) (Note: Some of these improvements may alternatively be directly delivered by developers.)
Other	Additional funding opportunities will be explored for example sponsorship and trust/lottery funding for environmental improvements

Delivery

Projects to be delivered through Private Development

- 8.3 The following projects are all associated with the development of housing on part of Merland Rise Recreation Ground and the De Burgh site:

- New housing at Merland Rise Recreation Ground
- Road across Merland Rise Recreation Ground
- New physical/visual link De Burgh – Marbles Pond – Recreation Ground
- New Housing at De Burgh site
- Development of new public open space at the De Burgh site
- New housing on identified sites: Cuddington Close, Longfield Crescent and Longmere Gardens
- Off street parking and other highway improvements required to deliver improved access to a new development.

8.4 Some of the projects will be delivered as part of the overall site development, as specified in the planning conditions. The timing of these projects will be subject to housing market conditions; however it is anticipated that Merland Rise Recreation Ground will be available for phased development from 2013. Development on De Burgh site will follow at a later date.

Projects led by Public sector

8.5 The following projects contribute towards the delivery of the three physical regeneration objectives for Preston (improve housing, create new community hub, improve infrastructure and open space). Some of these are closely associated with the proposed housing developments. The order of priority has been updated in light of public consultation.

Projects led by the public sector
High Priority projects
New Leisure centre with pool
New youth and community facilities, including sports hall
Improvements to Merland Rise Recreation Ground
Travel strategy measures linked to new development e.g. promoting sustainable transport
Highway improvements linked to new developments e.g. Road widening, junction improvements, on street parking
Improve pedestrian & cycle links to A240 across Burgh Heath
Medium Priority projects
Improvements to parking provision/ restrictions on narrow roads to facilitate bus access
Footpath improvements to key facilities within and adjacent to the Preston

area
Landscaping of public and private green space around housing and highways
Lower Priority projects
Improve the physical environment of Marbles pond and Lonesome pond
Preserve and enhance ancient trees and hedgerows
Create more outdoor play and sport facilities
Provide interpretation to enhance access to biodiversity and heritage features
Improvements to public transport in the evenings and at weekends

- 8.6 The funding of many of these projects is either directly or indirectly (via S106 / Community Infrastructure Levy) linked to the sale and development of part of the Merland Rise Recreation Ground and the De Burgh site. Where projects are wholly S106/CIL funded, they may be delivered by the private developer.
- 8.7 The timing of these projects will therefore also be dependent on development timescales. Projects linked to the Merland Rise Recreation Ground are expected to proceed in advance of those linked to De Burgh. The target date for completion of a new leisure centre and community facilities is mid 2014.

9. SOURCE DOCUMENTS

- Borough Local Plan (R&BBC, 2005)
- De Burgh Site – development brief headings (SCC, 2006)
- Developing a low carbon energy strategy for Preston (ESD, 2008)
- Development Management and Site Allocations DPD Issues and Options (R&BBC, 2010)
- Draft Preston Regeneration SPD (R&BBC, 2006)
- Emerging Core Strategy (R&BBC, 2009)
- Emerging Core Strategy (R&BBC, 2012)
- Leisure Centre options (R&BBC, 2010/11)
- Preston Area Final Transport Assessment (Project Centre for R&BBC, 2011)
- Preston Equalities Impact Assessment (R&BBC, 2012)
- Preston Regeneration Masterplan (Urban Practitioners, 2005)
- Preston Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (R&BBC, 2012)
- Preston Sustainable Energy Feasibility Study (ESD, 2007)
- Preston Sustainability Report (R&BBC, 2012)
- Reigate & Banstead Local Distinctiveness Design Guide (R&BBC, 2004)
- Surrey Design Guide (SCC, 2002)

Appendix A: Affordable Housing

Choice of affordable housing provider

The original Preston Area Regeneration Masterplan (2005) highlighted issues in the area that arose from having a number of major (and other minor) social housing providers in the area, namely (at that time) Raven Housing Trust, London Borough of Sutton and London Borough of Merton. One of the Masterplan Proposals was “*Establishing one social landlord for social housing in the area*”.

This Proposal was subsequently carried forward into the draft Preston Regeneration SPD 2006 and the 2007 Joint Statement of Intent.

Subsequent to the 2005 Masterplan, Raven, in partnership with the Council, acquired the LB Sutton and LB Merton properties in the Area, thus creating the one major social housing provider sought by the Masterplan.

In the Preston regeneration area, Raven currently owns approximately 34% of all properties, 87% of the social rented housing, and 95% of all the affordable housing.

Given Raven’s dominance in the area, Raven are responsible for the management of a significant part of the area outside of individual houses and block of flats. Introducing a new landlord can only confuse the existing management arrangements for existing and new residents. The Council and Raven also operate a Local Lettings Policy for Preston, arising from some of the issues highlighted in the various reports over the years.

Across the whole area there may be opportunities for some existing social rented housing to be replaced with other tenures, including shared ownership or market housing to help create a mixed community throughout Preston with an equal number of units being re-provided on the De Burgh site or other potential sites. This approach would be subject to agreement with Raven Housing Trust, which owns the majority of the social housing on the estate, and are likely to be involved in the provision of the new affordable housing on the major development sites.

Having regard to the above, and the many community initiatives that Raven are involved in in the area there are strong housing and social reasons for Raven to be the provider of the new affordable housing in the area. Introducing a new landlord into the area would run counter to the proposals in the original masterplan and subsequent acquisitions by Raven.

Whilst there are very good reasons for Raven to be the affordable housing provider on the new developments, the Council cannot be prescriptive on this issue. Both the Borough and County Council have statutory obligations in relation to the sale of sites which they own. However, if a provider other than Raven was to be proposed, the Council would need to give careful consideration before approving that provider. Matters to be considered would include:

- whether they are one of the Council’s Preferred Partners;
- past commitment and performance in the Borough; current homes within the Borough;
- local management base and arrangements for interaction with tenants;
- management arrangements for external space;
- rent levels;
- nomination arrangements;
- agreement to the Local Lettings Policy arrangements;
- participation in community initiatives; and other criteria.

Affordability

It is important that both the rented and shared-ownership homes are as affordable as possible to meet the needs of local people.

Rented affordable housing

Ideally the rented homes should be provided as social rented housing with rents set at Target Rents. For social rented housing it is anticipated that rents² are likely to be in the region of:

1-bed flat	2-bed flat	2-bed house	3-bed flat	3-bed house	4-bed house
£110pw	£115pw	£130pw	£125pw	£140pw	£160pw

However, given the recent changes to the affordable housing funding regime, the Council accepts that the rented homes may have to be provided as Affordable Rent, subject to the rent levels being acceptable. Taking account of the Council’s Interim Tenancy Strategy³ etc. it is unlikely that the Council will accept Affordable Rented homes unless the rents⁴ are below the following levels:

1-bed flat	2-bed flat	2-bed house	3-bed flat	3-bed house	4-bed house
£140pw	£170pw	£180pw	£175pw	£190pw	£200pw

² “Rent” includes all rent, service and management charges; and is based on 2012/13 levels

³ Available on the Council’s website.

⁴ “Rent” includes all rent, service and management charges; and is based on 2012/13 levels

Shared-ownership housing

The shared-ownership housing should be provided on such terms as will allow the majority of households in the Borough in need of affordable home ownership to purchase. Homes should therefore be offered for initial sale at 25-30% equity with rent no more than 2.75% of the retained equity.

Sizes & standards

All affordable homes should meet the latest requirements of the HCA irrespective of availability of grant funding. Homes should be provided that meet the following minimum sizes:

1-bed flat	2-bed flat	2-bed house	3 bed flat	3-bed house	4-bed house
50m ²	70m ²	76m ²	80 m ²	90m ²	100m ²

Design & location

The external appearance of the affordable homes should be designed on a similar basis to the surrounding new homes, and should normally be distributed throughout the development in small clusters, with no one cluster exceeding 20 affordable homes or 10 rented homes.

Nominations

The Council will require nomination rights to all of the affordable homes, and it is likely that households in the Regeneration Area will be given a degree of priority for some of the homes.

Number and type of units

Table 1: Affordable housing provision on Merland Rise Recreation Ground and Raven sites

	Merland Rise Rec Ground	Raven sites¹	Total
<i>Estimated no. of units</i>	130	25	155
Base case: shared ownership 15%, rented 10% on large sites i.e. MRRG; (Raven small sites 100% rented although no requirement for affordable housing)			
Shared ownership	20	0	20
Rented	13	25	38

Sub total	33	25	58
Option 1: Raven deliver 10 (77%) of the MRRG rented properties on their sites. RBBC substitute shared ownership for the 10 rented to maintain same overall level of affordable housing.			
Shared ownership	30	0	30
Rented	3	25	28
Sub total	33	25	58

¹ The Raven sites included in these figures are Cuddington Close car park site (Up to 15 units: 7 flats, 8 houses), Longfield garage site (Between 6 & 8 units) and Longmere Gardens garage site (up to 4 units: houses). Note there may be additional Raven sites brought forward at a later date e.g. site adjacent to Marbles Way shops and Chavecroft (Broad Walk) site – these could potentially be developed in association with De Burgh site.

Table 2: Indicative breakdown of proposed affordable housing provision – Base case Merland Rise Rec Ground (130 units)

	1 bed flats	2 bed flats	2 bed house	3 bed flat	3 bed house	4 bed house
Rented (13)	0	2	2	2	5	2
Shared ownership (20)	4	8	6	0	2	0
Market	9	1	13	0	45	29
Total	13	13	21	2	52	31

Note:

- If number of units reduces then reduce rented/shared ownership flats first.
- If number of units increases then retain similar proportions.

Table 3: Indicative breakdown of proposed affordable housing provision – Option 1 Merland Rise Rec Ground (MRRG) and Raven sites (130+25 units)

	1 bed flats	2 bed flats	2 bed house	3 bed flats	3 bed house	4 bed house
MRRG Rented (3)	0	0	0	0	0	3
MRRG Shared ownership (30)	4	12	13	0	3	0
Market	7	1	12	0	49	29

MRRG Total	11	13	25	0	52	31
Raven Rented ⁵ (25)		2 minimum	2 minimum	2 minimum	5 minimum	

⁵ Minimum numbers of types and size across Cuddington Close, Longfield Crescent, Longmere Gardens

APPENDIX B: Challenges

Housing that is not meeting the needs of local residents

The regeneration area is home to a residential neighbourhood of approximately 2,800 dwellings (approximately 6,700 residents). Terraced houses and flats make up more than 75% of the total dwelling stock in Preston (compared with only 38% across Reigate & Banstead as a whole). The majority of these homes were built in the 1950s, as social housing. There are also a smaller number of modern infill housing schemes.

Since its original construction, many social rented homes have subsequently been sold under the right-to-buy, thereby moving toward a greater mix within the area. The percentage of affordable housing in the regeneration area currently is approximately 36% (31% social rented) with Raven Housing Trust being the principal registered provider in the area. This remains one of the highest concentrations in the Borough and is thought to be inconsistent with PPS3 and its requirements for mixed communities.

Preston ward is made up of two defined Local Super Output Areas (LSOA) (005A & 005B). Preston 005B LSOA is ranked as the second worst in the Borough in the Living Environment domain (category of IMD). It is also ranked worst in terms of the Indoors sub-domain, which particularly considers social and private housing in poor condition and percentage of houses without central heating. The 2007 IMD suggests that Preston 005B ranked third worst in the Borough with reference to housing in poor condition.

Preston experiences almost twice the level of overcrowding compared to the Borough average. The area also has a significantly lower proportion of under-occupied dwellings than the RBBC average. Overcrowding and lack of access to gardens are particular issues for families with children.

Poor quality local services and facilities

There currently is no identifiable 'heart' in the Preston area. Services and facilities are scattered making them less convenient for people to access. Employment opportunities associated with these facilities are consequently difficult for people to access. Marbles Way is home to a few shops that serve the local area. There are two GP surgeries serving local residents – one on the western side of the regeneration area and one near to Tattenham rail station. The Merland Rise site (recreation ground) is home to a number of stand alone community facilities including the Banstead Leisure Centre, the Phoenix Youth Centre, the Tattenhams community centre and a Football club. There is a need to create a recognisable

heart to Preston to improve accessibility and to give the area a sense of identity⁶. In doing so, access to facilities and employment opportunities will be greatly improved.

Accessible outdoor sports provision in Preston is currently considerably below the Borough average⁷ and the national standards. Banstead Leisure Centre provides only indoor sports facilities and the Football Club pitches are not accessible to the general public at present.

The stand-alone community facilities on the Merland Rise site are currently in poor condition, are not integrated, and are of an inflexible design to either meet the current or future needs of residents. Provision of play areas for children also appears to be insufficient, in particular around the flatted areas where children do not have access to private gardens. Given the socio-economic⁸ background to Preston and how residents feel about the area it is important to ensure the provision of high quality, purpose-built community facilities in the heart of Preston, which cater for these local needs.

Poor quality public spaces and street scene

Within Preston there are a number of large grassed areas and open spaces of poor quality and amenity value. This is further compounded by uneven road surfaces and footpaths. There is poor delineation between public and private open spaces, in particular surrounding blocks of flats on the estate. The Council's Open Space Assessment (2011) identifies a low provision of parks and natural green space⁹ in the immediate area but is in close proximity to the Downs in Epsom. The general lack of defensible space and inadequate delineation between public and private open spaces results in valuable spaces not being used, i.e. large grassed verges around flats are maintained but remain unused for recreation purposes.

The Preston Regeneration Masterplan identifies the recreation ground to be a large open space in poor condition and is noted as underused. At present a third of the recreation ground is leased to a privately run Banstead Athletic Football Club (BAFC), which is not publically accessible and by being fenced off with barbed wire, is not welcoming in appearance.

Other aspects of the street scene in certain areas of Preston also need further improvement. In many places the public highway is narrow, creating access issues when combined with on-street parking. Parked vehicles reduce the width of the streets, preventing two-way traffic, emergency vehicles, buses and service vehicles

6 The Preston Masterplan consultation reflected a general lack of 'sense of community' and a general disregard for the physical environment was noted.

7 PPG17 Open Space Assessment (2011)

8 Refer to Annex 1 for the socio-economic analysis of Preston

⁹ Includes grasslands (such as downlands, commons and meadows) scrub, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands & derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits) and woodland.

from passing through. Such pinch point areas include Chetwode Road to the north of the De Burgh site, Chetwode Road on approach to the St Leonard's Road junction, and Shelveys Way, as well as many of the side roads. With the proposed future development on the De Burgh site, these pinch points could be made worse and therefore need to be addressed as part of the development proposals.

Limited connectivity across and beyond the regeneration area

Preston has relatively good car access to the strategic road network with the A240 and A217 providing direct access to the M25. However, Preston has poor connectivity with its immediate environment, including the village centres of Tattenham Corner and Tadworth and open spaces such as Epsom Downs. Two rail stations serve Preston (Tattenham Corner and Tadworth). They are both located approximately 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from the study area, but are not easily accessible via a direct route. Whilst the bus service to Epsom and Banstead has been improved, the public transport provision in the area remains limited in the evening and on Sundays. Inadequate public transport in the area leaves residents feeling isolated and prevents young people from accessing nearby towns. Pedestrian routes in general appear poor with the safer pedestrian routes running along the main vehicular routes. Signage and directions in the area are also poor.

There are currently poor and/or limited pedestrian and cycle connections to some key amenities. In addition the dispersed pattern of existing facilities/amenities and the lack of a centre make it difficult to achieve an efficient cycle and pedestrian network. Connectivity to economic and employment opportunities and key amenities beyond and within the Preston regeneration area is also limited.