

**URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK  
LONGSANDS QUARTER  
(Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Urban Design Framework examines the redevelopment opportunities on land in and around Longsands College, the Regional College, the site of the open air swimming pool, and the Almond Road Surgery and Health Centre. It presents the planning policy context for the redevelopment of this area, which includes the creation of a new Health Centre for this part of St Neots.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the draft Framework and approve it for consultation purposes. Once representations have been considered and reported to Cabinet, it is intended to adopt the document as Interim Planning Guidance.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Almond Road surgery cannot expand on its site. The adjacent clinic is similarly constrained. The Cedar House surgery is close by and has similar problems. The Primary Care Trust, together with the two surgeries, would like to create a new Health Centre in this location, serving this part of the town.
- 2.2 The Town Council owned swimming pool has recently been closed down, and the pool has been filled in.
- 2.3 The Regional College wish to sell off land to the north of their college buildings for residential development. In 2001 they applied for outline planning permission for such development, but permission was not granted.
- 2.4 A small amount of Longsands College playing field will be brought into the development site, and this will allow funds generated to be ploughed back into providing high quality leisure facilities in the area.
- 2.5 As part of redevelopment proposals at Longsands College, the District Council wishes to develop a small multi media business centre that will be attached to the college.
- 2.6 Almond Road is a narrow residential street, and currently serves the Regional College, Priory Infant School, the Almond Road surgery and the Health Centre. Any redevelopment proposals should help to alleviate traffic problems on this road.

### **3.0 THE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 The purpose of this Urban Design Framework is to ensure that all of these aspirations can be brought together to create well planned and appropriate developments on site.
- 3.2 Particularly important is the creation of an exciting and interesting focus to the development in this part of St Neots, creating a new health centre on the site of the old swimming pool.
- 3.3 The Framework sets design parameters for the successful development of the site, ensuring that future proposals achieve imaginative and distinctive solutions. Indicative layouts are shown that illustrate what could be achieved, although the implementation of any individual element would be dependent on appropriate resources being identified. Indeed the framework is flexible to allow individual elements to proceed as resources become available but without prejudicing the overall vision.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Production of an Urban Design Framework is best practice and will help to secure the most appropriate form of development over this large area. If Cabinet approves the document, there will be a period of consultation with the local and statutory bodies. Any comments or changes will be brought back to Cabinet before it is adopted.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That the Cabinet approves the Framework as draft Interim Planning Guidance for a period of public consultation.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations June 2002

Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPG Sept 2004

Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment SPG Sept 2004

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