

CABINET

25th March 2002

**Manor Farm Housing Site
Site Development Guidance**

Report of the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services

1 Purpose of Report

To seek the approval of Cabinet to adopt the 'Manor Farm Housing Site - Site Development Guidance', as supplementary planning guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan.

2. Summary

Manor Farm is part of the wider Hamilton urban extension to the north-east of the city, which is allocated in the City of Leicester Local Plan (1994), and the draft replacement Local Plan (2001), for residential development.

This guidance relates to the western part of Manor Farm only, which is allocated for housing development and open 'green space'. The eastern part of Manor Farm (the location of the community uses and the proposed town centre commercial zone), will be subject to separate guidance that will be produced at a later date.

The Site Development Guidance will be used to guide the design and future layout for this part of Manor Farm to ensure that a high standard of development is achieved.

The guidance includes requirements, which seek to:

- retain the Manor Farmhouse and the open land to the south (including the medieval fishponds);
- secure a very high quality in the design and layout of buildings and spaces to produce a quality housing development, which has a clear sense of identity and community;
- achieve the provision of an element of affordable and accessible housing in the new development;
- protect and incorporate features of landscape and ecological importance in the new development; and
- ensure that the development properly contributes towards the future provision of a range of community facilities and services (including a bus service, community and leisure facilities, additional education facilities etc) in the area.

A community consultation exercise on the draft supplementary planning guidance was carried out from end December 2001 to early February 2002. The Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the draft guidance at its meeting on 20th February 2002.

The details of the consultation process, and the comments of the Scrutiny Committee, are set out in the Supporting Information.

The consultation process raised many community concerns and anxieties, relating to this site and the wider Hamilton development. As far as possible these have been detailed and addressed in the supporting information. A number of changes have been made to the guidance following the Scrutiny Committee meeting, to reflect issues of concern.

3 Recommendations

CABINET is requested to:

- (a) consider the comments made via the consultation process;
- (b) consider the comments made by the Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 20th February 2002; and,
- (c) adopt the Manor Farm Housing Site – Site Development Guidance as supplementary planning guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan.

4 Financial Implications

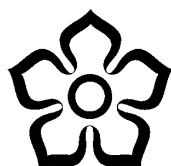
There are no financial implications directly relating to the report itself. The impact of the Site Development Guidance on the City Council as the landowner of Manor Farm will be the subject of separate reports.

5. Report Author/Officers to contact:

Nigel Reeves, Urban Design, E&D.

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**Peter Connolly,
Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services.**



Leicester
City Council

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PAPER 1 - SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Report of the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services

1. Details of Consultation Process.

The consultation period commenced at the end of December 2001 and lasted until early-February 2002. The following parties were consulted:

City Council Departments

Director of Arts & Leisure

City Archaeologist - Arts & Leisure Department

Director of Housing

Director of Social Services

Director of Education

Site Owner and Interested Parties

A copy of the draft guidance was sent to the landowner (Leicester City Council – Property Services).

Adjoining and neighbouring residents.

An information leaflet (attached) was posted to approximately 80 properties, within and neighbouring the site. Copies of the draft guidance were made available to all local residents and other parties who requested a copy.

Ward Councillors.

Copies of the leaflet, and the draft guidance, were sent to local ward councillors in the Humberstone ward.

Community Groups

A copy of the leaflet, and the draft guidance, was sent to the Humberstone Village Community Forum.

2. Consultation.

A total of 4 letters were received about the consultation leaflet.

One from a business located on Thurmaston Lane overlooking the site, refers to:

- support for the development of the site for housing, but expresses concern about road safety;
- the need for a 20mph speed limit along the whole of Thurmaston Lane and traffic lights at its junction with Gipsy Lane;
- the need for a footpath along Thurmaston Lane; and
- hedgerow protection (looking for consistency, as the consultee had been refused permission to remove hedges on his own site).

Response

The issues raised above concerning highway safety and suitability of the highway network and infrastructure for future development, will need to be addressed in the traffic impact assessment/transport assessment, that will have to be submitted before any planning applications can be determined. If it is found that any additional works are required to the highway in the immediate vicinity of the site, these will be secured via planning agreements/conditions.

The guidance shows that the hedgerows at Manor Farm will be protected.

Three letters were received from local residents living adjacent to the site, concerned with:

- road safety;
- traffic congestion;
- a preference for the land to remain as a working farm;
- concerns about protection of hedges, trees and wildlife;
- worry that when building work starts, rainwater will drain downhill causing flooding in the Humberstone Drive/Gipsy Lane area and damage to properties in this location;
- the need for buffer zone for properties backing onto the open space;
- the future of Manor Farm East; and
- the amount of proposed facilities – schools, health, leisure and social facilities.

Response.

As stated previously, issues relating to road safety and additional traffic generated by future development, will be considered in the Transport Assessments.

Most of the land, which is currently leased for farming purposes, is allocated for residential development, therefore it is unlikely to be viable as a working farm in the future.

Separate planning guidance will be prepared in due course for Manor Farm East. Planning permission was granted in 1999, for three places of worship on part of this site. This is mentioned in the guidance and shown on the location plan.

Manor Farm will contribute to additional primary school places and towards the provision of additional bus services. A contribution of £50,000 towards wider sports and leisure facilities in Hamilton will be combined with contributions from other sites.

It is not intended that the open space to the south be made into a formal public park. Rather informal public access to this land is likely to be considered, along pathways leading from Humberstone Village to the new housing site. Public access is likely to be at a fairly low level. The security of individual property owners, whose boundaries back onto the proposed open space though, is a matter for the respective owners rather than the City Council.

Future planning applications will be subject to consultation with the Environment Agency to ensure that measures are in place to prevent additional surface water run-off from any new development.

A representation from Humberstone Village Community Forum was received on the draft site development guidance:

- It would prefer the concept of leaving this land free from housing or commercial development, to be designated instead as a farm park to the south and a nature area to the north; and
- It is concerned that Greenfield development is in opposition to the Government's views.

However if development of the site is necessary, it wishes to make the following comments:

- It fully agrees with the retention of the farm house and the green area to the south, including the medieval fish ponds;
- The village forum has already planted trees at the beginning of the footpath (along the eastern site boundary) – providing this section is retained, future deviations to link the path with pedestrian or cycle bridges would be acceptable;
- It agrees that no buildings should obscure a view of Manor Farm and therefore fails to understand the necessity of extending the S.E. corner of the housing boundary;
- The £50,000 allocated for community benefits should not be 'diverted' to Hamilton but should be retained within Manor Farm;
- Concern that we could be building a 'third class' estate with a high density of homes (50 houses per hectare compared to 25 in existing parts of Hamilton);
- Also concern that the rest of Hamilton will be served by a quality bus service, but Manor Farm will only be served by an extension of the existing services through Humberstone Village; and

- Unclear about who will develop this site – City Council, Housing Associations or Private Developers.

Response.

This site was allocated in the adopted City of Leicester Local Plan (1994) and also the draft replacement Local Plan (2001) for residential development. The open land to the south will be retained as green space. The guidance could possibly allow the farmhouse and farm buildings to be used as a farm park, if a suitable scheme emerged in the future.

Under the 'Residential Development on Greenfield Land' Direction (2000), should the City Council resolve to approve any future planning applications then they must first be notified to the Secretary of State, to check compliance with PPG3 (Housing). This could result in the application being 'called-in' and a public inquiry held. This amongst other things requires new development to be built at higher densities than is currently being achieved in suburban areas such as Hamilton, to ensure a more efficient use of housing land.

The comments about the retention of the farmhouse and open land are noted. The southern part of the footpath, where tree planting has taken place, will not be affected.

Generally open views of the farmhouse will be retained from the south. The land to the south east has always been allocated for development in the adopted Local Plan.

All development sites in Hamilton are expected to contribute towards the provision of the wider community and leisure facilities in this development area. Therefore Manor Farm is expected to provide a contribution on a pro-rata basis, dependent on its size relative to other development sites.

Flexibility is contained in the guidance to allow either an extension of existing bus services, or an extension of the new high quality Hamilton bus service to serve this site.

It is not known who will develop this site, until planning permission is obtained and it is then marketed.

The Greater Humberstone SRB 6 Management Committee has written in support of the proposals in the guidance for recreational and community facilities for this site.

They also have advised that the SRB 6 Programme has received a request to support a feasibility study to develop Manor Farm as a City Farm Park.

Response.

The guidance could potentially allow the re-use of the farm and outbuildings for the above, subject to detailed planning and design issues being addressed. The

decision on whether or not the land would be made available for such usage, is the responsibility of the landowner – Property Services (Leicester City Council).

Leicester City Council (Property Services) has made the following comments in its capacity as the landowner of the site.

- Regarding the retention of the farm buildings, they wish us to be aware of the practical difficulties in keeping the buildings secure and vandal-proof once they are vacated. Previously, other farm buildings in Hamilton suffered similar problems and had eventually to be demolished;
- It is intended to provide an emergency link from Colin Grundy Drive into the site, to allow more than 150 houses to be built, but it is not certain if this will be capable of adoption – further research on this point is required;
- The amount of community benefits - in particular the suggested Education and Arts & Leisure contributions – needs to be justified. These amounts have to be fair and reasonable. From a City Council (Capital Programme) point of view, any payments via planning obligations would mean that the City Council is prioritising this expenditure ahead of other corporate priorities;
- It would be unreasonable to incorporate further open space requirements within the land allocated for residential, because of the large area of open space being retained to the south;
- It is accepted that an alternative management regime is required for the open space to the south, but alternatively this land could still be capable of being used for grazing purposes;
- The timing of the Transport Assessment and future landscape and ecological surveys was questioned;
- It is accepted that sustainable development features – energy efficiency, water conservation etc – should be encouraged, but this needs to take account of practicality issues; and
- Need to ensure that densities in excess of 30 dwellings per hectare are achieved – 175 dwellings on 6.1 hectares is only 28.6 per hectare.

Response.

The farm buildings lie within the Old Humberstone Conservation Area, where there is an expectation that the existing character of the conservation area will be retained. It is therefore important that a suitable alternative use is identified for these buildings as soon as possible, so that they are not empty and subject to potential vandalism

It is accepted that further design work for the emergency link will be needed. This will also need to be extended to consider bus access.

The contributions to community benefits are considered to be fair and reasonable and reflect the need for community facilities and education that will be generated by this development. They are broadly in line with the levels of community benefits achieved on other sites in Hamilton.

While a large area of open space is being retained to the south of Manor Farm, there will still be the need for more local play areas and open space, within short walking distance and well overlooked by housing.

If the open space can be leased for grazing purposes this may be an acceptable management regime for the open space.

The question about the timing of transport and ecological surveys is currently being discussed, but will be required before planning applications on this site can be fully considered.

The housing densities must be in excess of 30 dwellings per hectare (net), otherwise planning permission is likely to be refused. The figure of 28.6 is a gross rather than a net figure and will rise above the 30 per hectare minimum target once an allowance for open space and significant landscape buffer strips is included.

3. Comments of the Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

The site development guidance was reported to the above Committee on 20th February 2002. Members of the Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report and raised the following concerns:

- This site should be seen in the context of the whole of Hamilton rather than as an individual development site – concern that Hamilton is currently developing in a ‘piecemeal’ fashion;
- Worry that the open land dividing the housing site from Humberstone Village, will not be fully protected from development;
- Encouraged that the medieval fishponds will be retained and the requirement for a high design quality;
- Unhappy about the desire for some three storey housing in this development;
- The requirements for higher densities set out in the guidance is a retrograde step – people need space to sit out/reasonable sized gardens;
- The leisure and community facilities are being developed in small patches – needs to be a leisure strategy developed for Hamilton that focuses on the bigger picture. Also concerned about where the £50,000 earmarked for sports and leisure facilities, will be held and spent;
- Need for the pedestrian footbridge across Hamilton Way, linking the site and Humberstone Village to the District Centre, to be built before any houses are occupied;
- A pedestrian crossing over Lower Keyham Lane will also be needed, to enable proper connections between the site and Humberstone Village,
- The education contribution must provide proper permanent accommodation and not more mobile classrooms;
- Need to take design and layout ideas from the Poundbury development, where a high quality has been achieved;

- Concern that, when Hamilton library is built, the local library in Humberstone will be closed;
- We should be actively seeking to protect the farm buildings for damage and vandalism and not simply accepting that they will just be allowed to fall into a poor state of repair; and,
- Would like to think that new development will meet City Council policy on energy efficiency.

Responses to issues raised by Scrutiny Committee.

In respect of the Committee's concerns about the piecemeal development of earlier parts of Hamilton, strenuous efforts are being made in the latest phases to improve the quality of the design and layout, particularly in the way that the built form relates to the main public areas. This can be seen in most recent planning applications for housing development at North Hamilton and Quakesick Valley. The overall development is guided by policies contained in the City of Leicester Local Plan (1994) and the draft Replacement Local Plan (2001). Read together with the guidance produced for this site and others, Hamilton will eventually develop in a more coherent manner.

The open land to the south of the Manor Farmhouse is allocated in the Local Plan as Green Space. Policies in the Local Plan specifically protect it from inappropriate development and ensure that its open character will be retained. In addition the medieval fishponds are of important archaeological interest, which provide added importance that this land is retained in its open state. Therefore the open space buffer will be retained.

The issues relating to: design and layout; density of development; and, the encouragement of some 3-storey housing are very much inter-related. Government guidance on planning for new housing set out in PPG3 (Housing), requires all new development to be built at a net density of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare. Development below this threshold should be refused. This is to ensure that new housing development makes the most efficient use of land to reduce the amount of 'greenfield' land take in the future. In connection with this the government has also produced best practice guidance to ensure that new residential development (built to a relatively higher density) will still be designed to create a high quality environment (including both private and public space) in terms of the design and layout. This builds on much recent good urban design practice, including the development at Poundbury in Dorset. This shows that you can build high quality residential environments, including 3-storey housing, at higher densities than standard suburban development. Development at Manor Farm and other phases of Hamilton are following and will be expected to follow this guidance.

Strenuous efforts are currently being made to bring forward community and leisure facilities at Hamilton – both at the District Centre and within the individual housing areas. Each housing development site is expected to contribute (on a pro rata basis, based on the size of the development site) towards, education, improved bus services and leisure facilities at Hamilton. The £50,000 that is earmarked for sports and leisure provision will be paid directly to the Director of

Arts & Leisure and cannot be used for any other purpose or transferred to other schemes outside of the area.

The City Council is also seeking the provision of a new library at the District Centre, which will be the focus for the Hamilton development. I am not aware of any decisions taken about the future of Humberstone library.

The contributions towards additional educational facilities are intended to create proper permanent extensions to existing schools, rather than portable buildings.

Discussions are currently taking place with the Hamilton Trust to provide the pedestrian bridge over Hamilton Way, to provide much better connections to Manor Farm and Humberstone Village. It is intended to try to implement it as soon as possible, but until the road/footpath connection to the extended Colin Grundy Drive is available, the bridge will not connect up to the surrounding highway network.

The traffic assessment will consider all highway improvements that could potentially be required in the immediate vicinity of the site. The guidance will be amended to include the need to consider a new pedestrian crossing at Lower Keyham Lane.

The proper protection of the Manor Farm buildings will be expected once the farm is vacated and in any subsequent development proposals.

We will continue to strongly encourage the provision of measures to improve energy efficiency in new development, but currently we can only impose higher standards than the existing Building Regulations by agreement with any future developer.

The guidance has been strengthened to reflect comments made at the Scrutiny Committee relating to the protection of the farm house and also the creation of better pedestrian links to Humberstone Village and the District Centre.

4. Implications Contained in this Report.

Equal Opportunities.

The above requirements seek to ensure that all public areas in the development (e.g. streets, parks, public open space and play areas) are fully accessible and available to all sections of the community.

The requirement for an element of affordable housing should ensure a better mix and balance within the community.

Legal Implications.

There are no direct legal implications for the City Council contained in this report. Any future development, or land disposal agreements that the City Council may pursue, will be the subject of further reports.

Sustainability & Environmental Implications (including EMAS).

The guidance includes measures to encourage sustainability in the new development (e.g. higher densities and lower parking standards to ensure the more efficient use of land, energy efficiency in new buildings).

The development will contribute to meeting the following EMAS targets:

- 8.1 Creation of additional publicly accessible green space.

Crime & Disorder Implications.

The guidance includes measures to engender community safety and security (e.g public spaces well overlooked by houses).

Human Rights Act.

No direct implications

Elderly People/People on Low Incomes.

The guidance includes measures to enhance public transport and provide affordable housing within the development.

5. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

City of Leicester Local Plan (1994)

Draft Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan (2001)

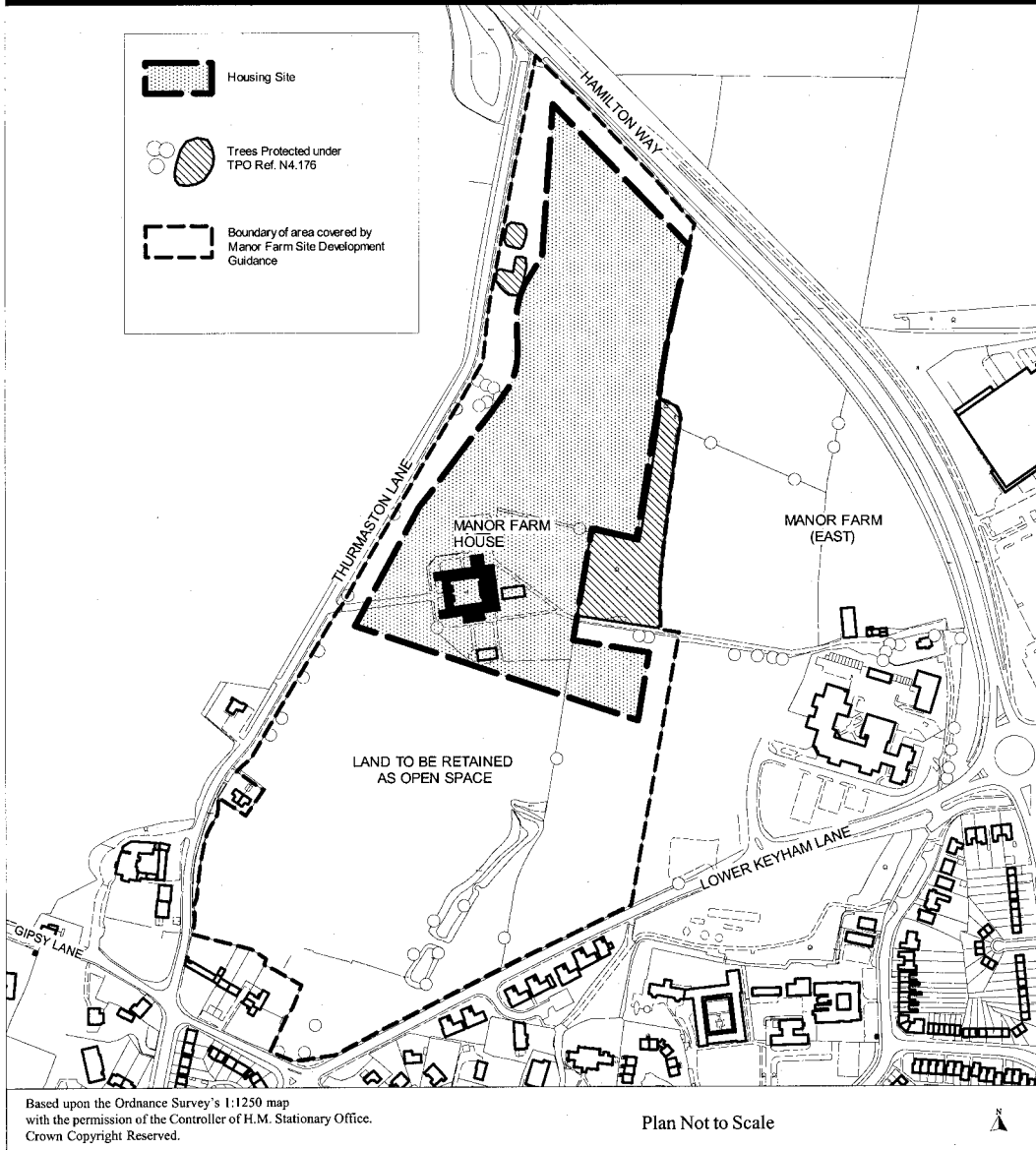
6. Attached Documents.

'Manor Farm Housing Site – Consultation leaflet'

Manor Farm Housing Site – Site Development Guidance (Draft)

**Peter Connolly,
Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services.**

Manor Farm Housing Site



Manor Farm, Hamilton.

1. Purpose of leaflet

The purpose of this consultation leaflet is to provide information about the proposed development of the western part of Manor Farm for housing and open space.

An outline planning application for residential development was submitted in June 2000, and will be considered by the City Council in the near future.

The City Council is also in the process of producing Site Development Guidance for the site. This sets out the City Council's main planning and design requirements for its future development, which will then be given to prospective developers to assist and guide them in drawing up detailed designs. These requirements are summarised in Section 4 below.

2. Why develop here?

The northern part of the site is allocated in the adopted City of Leicester Local Plan (1994) for housing development, with the area to the south allocated as green open space. The Manor Farmhouse and immediate surroundings is allocated as a potential development area (office, business uses etc). The draft replacement Local Plan (2001) retains the housing and open space designation, but shows the farmhouse allocated for housing.

Over the next 15 years, about 15,000 homes will need to be built in Leicester to meet the city's housing requirements. Even though the City Council is seeking to achieve a greater proportion of housing built on 'previously used' land (following Central Government Guidance), not all of it can be provided in these locations. Therefore some 'greenfield' land such as Manor Farm will have to be developed.

3. What will be done to protect the environment?

The southern half of the site including the farm house is located within the Old Humberstone Conservation Area. New development will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of this area.

The Manor Farm site also contains a large number of trees and also woodland, which are protected by tree preservation orders. Mature hedgerows will also be retained. Although this site is not identified as a site of importance for nature conservation, the City Council will require full surveys to be carried out before any detailed planning permissions (permission for the layout of roads and houses) can be considered.

A management scheme for the open space area to the south of the farmhouse, will also need to be agreed. This will deal with its future maintenance to ensure that the existing landscape quality (including the medieval fish ponds) is retained and enhanced. Public access will also be encouraged, although this will need to be properly managed (the opportunity to incorporate the Millennium Memorial footpath proposal will also be considered).

4. How will Manor Farm be designed?

The City Council's key planning and design requirements for Manor Farm are:

- The retention and sympathetic re-use of the farmhouse and its immediate surrounds (this could include uses such as residential, office/ research and development, health centre, day nursery, training centre etc).
- The housing area to the north of the farmhouse must be designed to a very high quality, particularly in the placement of

buildings and groupings of buildings, and how they can be used to create attractive streets and public spaces.

- All streets and public areas must be fronted/ overlooked by buildings to improve security and the feeling of well-being in the development.
- The main vehicle access will be off Thurmaston Lane.
- The layout of the housing area will comprise a continuous network of streets to provide ease of access by foot, cycle and bus, and these will be designed to keep vehicle speeds uniformly below 20 mph. Connections to the eastern part of Manor Farm and to Hamilton District Centre will also be created.
- A housing density of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare will be required (reflecting Central Government Guidance), although care must be taken to avoid a hard built development form to the edges of the development.
- The provision of a range of housing types and tenures including affordable housing to meet the City's housing needs, to ensure that a balanced community is achieved in this development.
- New housing should demonstrate increased levels of energy efficiency and water conservation.

5. What do you think of the proposals for Manor Farm?

More details about the City Council's approach to development at Manor Farm can be found in 'Manor Farm Housing Area - Site Development Guidance'

This document is currently in draft form and the Council would welcome your views and ideas about it. If you would like to comment on the proposals contained in this leaflet or receive a copy of the above guidance, please contact:

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Leicester
City Council

Comments should be returned to the above address by 1st February 2001.

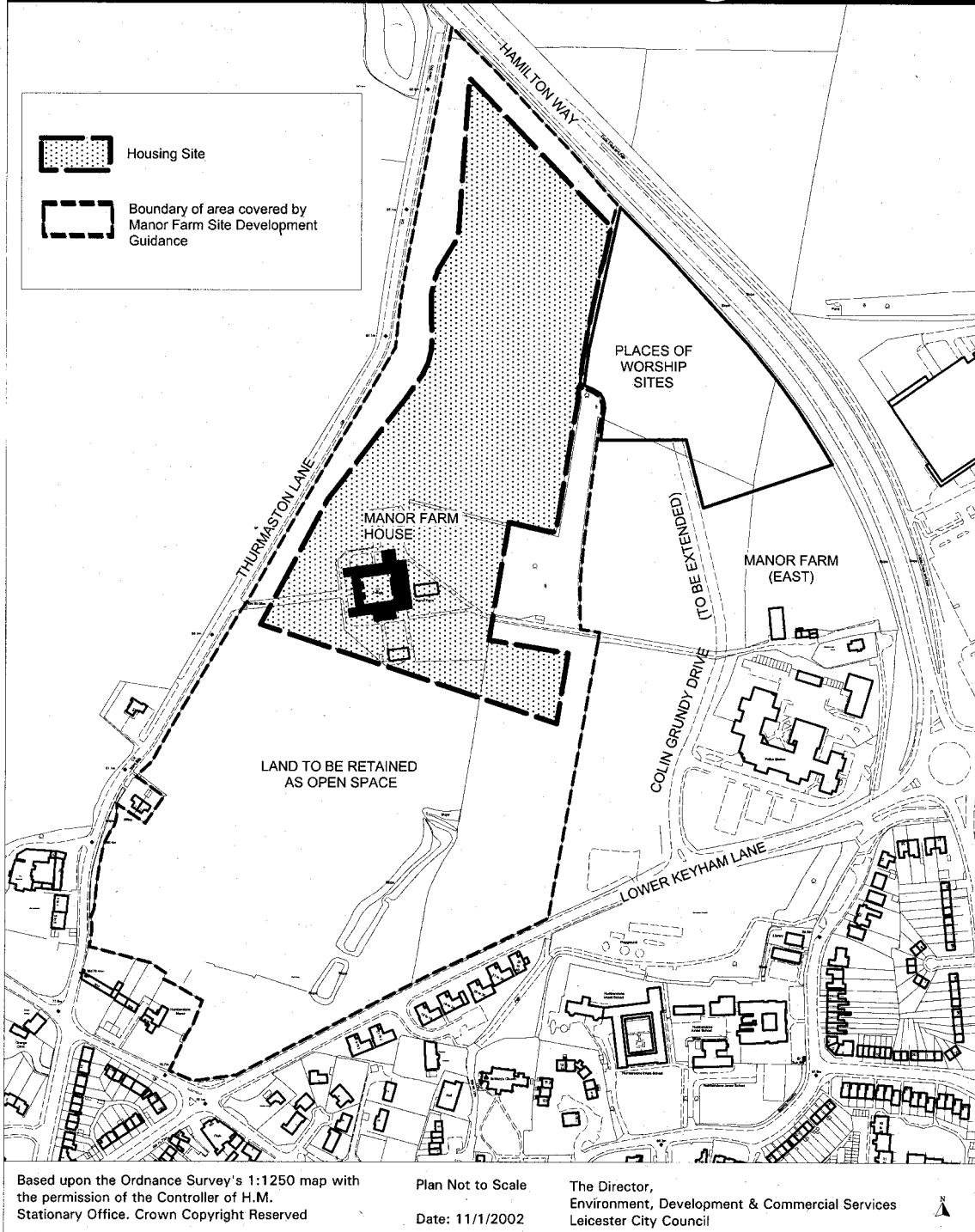
Manor Farm Housing Site Site Development Guidance

(draft)

Environment & Development
Leicester City Council

March 2002

Manor Farm Housing Site



PLAN 1: SITE LOCATION

1.0 Introduction.

The Manor Farm housing site is allocated for residential development and for green open space in the adopted City of Leicester Local Plan (1994) and the draft replacement plan (2001). It is situated in the Hamilton development area, which is a major urban extension to the north east of the City.

The housing site is part of the larger Manor Farm development area, the remainder of which is allocated for community and leisure uses. Separate guidance will be prepared for this part of the development area in due course.

This guidance sets out the City Council's planning and urban design requirements for the future development of the housing site. Its principal aim is to ensure that the future design and layout of Manor Farm creates a stronger sense of identity and character than is found in earlier parts of Hamilton. It also seeks to retain the strong landscape character of the southern part of the site.

2.0 Site Area, Location and Character.

The site measures a total of 17.2 ha (42.5 acres). The total amount of land allocated for residential purposes is 6.1 ha (15 acres). It is currently used for agricultural purposes (mainly for grassland/livestock grazing). The site location and its immediate surroundings, are indicated on Plan 1

The site is situated approximately 350 metres to the west of the recently constructed Hamilton District Centre. The part of Manor Farm allocated for community and leisure uses lies between the housing site and the District Centre.

Hamilton Way (the outer ring road) separates Manor Farm from the District Centre. A footbridge is proposed to be constructed, to link these two sites. Hamilton Way runs in a cutting along the north east boundary of the housing site. Thurmaston Lane (which is now a cul de sac) runs along the western site boundary. Humberstone village lies to the south of Lower Keyham Lane. Quakesick Valley (another development area in Hamilton) lies immediately to the north of Hamilton Way.

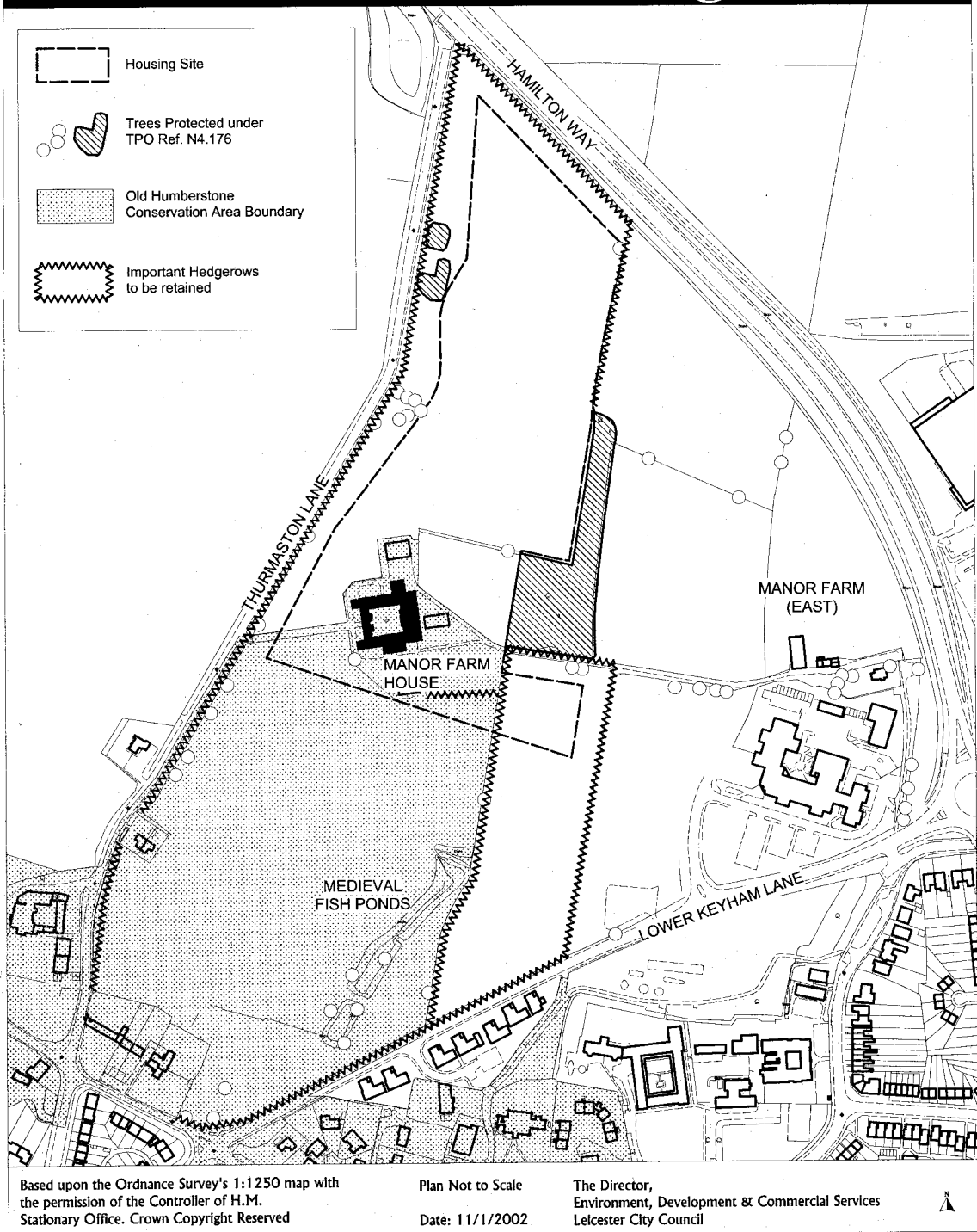
The farmhouse and ancillary buildings at Manor Farm are located on top of a small ridge in the centre of the site. The land falls gently to the north, although it becomes slightly steeper close to Hamilton Way. The landform is much steeper and more undulating to the south of the farm, which also contains the remains of medieval fishponds.

There are mature hedgerows, which currently form a series of field boundaries around, and within, the site. There are also a number of individual trees, groups of trees and woodland, protected by the Manor Farm and Church Farm Tree Preservation Order 1988 (N4.176). These are indicated on Plan 2.

Plan 2 shows the key landscape features present on this site. It is expected that these will be retained in any new development proposals.

The southern part of the site (including the farmhouse) is located within the Old Humberstone Conservation Area. Humberstone Manor (Listed - Grade 2) lies immediately to the south of the site. The conservation area boundary and the listed building, are shown on Plan 2.

Manor Farm Housing Site



PLAN 2: SITE FEATURES

3.0 Planning History.

Development at Hamilton began in the late 1980s and almost 1000 houses have now been completed.

An outline planning application for residential development on the housing site was submitted in May 2000 (Ref 2000 0686). This is still awaiting determination.

Other notable planning permissions immediately adjacent to the site include 3 places of worship (Refs: 1998 0756, 1998 0760 and 1998 0986) granted permission in January 1999), on land immediately to the east of the housing site. Permission to construct an extension to Colin Grundy Drive to serve the above sites (Ref: 1998 1095) was granted in March 1999. Work to implement these permissions has yet to be started.

4.0 Land Uses and Planning Policies.

The Manor Farm housing site is allocated in the adopted City of Leicester Local Plan (1994) and the draft replacement plan (2001) for residential development (Policy H01).

Although this site would fall for consideration under the DTLR 'Residential Development on Greenfield Land Direction (2000)', work to assess the City's urban housing capacity has indicated that the long standing urban extensions (Hamilton and Ashton Green) are still likely to be required to meet the city's housing requirements. This issue will be considered further when the planning application is determined and also checked for general compliance with the guidance and principles in PPG3 by the Secretary of State, which is a requirement of the above direction.

Although housing will comprise the main land use in this development, the City Council may consider development proposals which include a small (no more than 10% of the net developable area) proportion of Class B1 (a and b) Uses, such as offices, studios, research & development workshops. These can help to meet the increasing requirement from people who wish to live and work in the same location, or to be able to work from home but need some administrative or technical support. These uses may also be appropriate as an alternative use for the existing Manor Farmhouse and adjoining buildings.

Policy HO6 requires the provision of an element of affordable housing within major housing development – the target figure in Leicester is at least 30% (See Section 7.5)

Policies H07 and H08 seek the provision of access housing and wheelchair housing in new housing developments.

Policy BE06 requires that new development within, or adjoining, a Conservation Area must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Policy BE07 states that demolition of buildings within a conservation area will only be considered if it does not make a positive contribution to it.

Policy BE01 requires that sites with archaeological significance are assessed and evaluated. Planning permission will be refused for development that will seriously damage important archaeological remains.

Policies UD01 to UD05, UD07 and UD10 to UD 12 seek a high quality of design and layout in the new development.

The hedgerows and woodland within the development site, and open space to the south of Manor Farm, are allocated as 'green space' to which Policies ST10 and GE09 apply. These policies seek to enhance the wildlife, landscape and environmental sustainability of the city. Policy UD13 requires the protection of the existing landscape features.

NB. All policies referred to above are set out in the draft replacement City of Leicester Local Plan (2001), which was placed on public deposit between October and December 2001.

5.0 Archaeology

Although the Leicester Sites & Monuments Records (SMR) does not list any archaeological remains within the development area, recent archaeological investigation immediately to the east, has revealed the presence of significant remains adjacent to the current site. Indeed the archaeological investigation of these areas has demonstrated the probability that these remains extend into the development area.

The proposed development of the Manor Farm Housing Area will significantly impact upon the likely archaeological remains. **It is therefore recommended that prior to the submission of any planning application the area is archaeologically evaluated, by geophysical survey and trial trenching, to assess the presence, extent, character and significance of any buried archaeological remains.**

The assessment should be used to assist in the development of detailed layout proposals, designed where possible to avoid and/or limit impact to important remains. In any event, where a development impact is likely upon significant archaeological deposits, the developer will be required to make appropriate provision for the investigation and recording of the affected remains.

It is also recommended that any potential developer discuss the necessary archaeological provisions with the City Archaeologist at the earliest opportunity.

6.0 Highway Restrictions to Development.

This site abuts Thurmaston Lane and runs alongside Hamilton Way. Access is currently off Thurmaston Lane, however this road is currently a cul-de-sac and in poor condition. Since Thurmaston Lane is a cul-de-sac then the maximum number of dwellings allowed off a single point of access is 150 (based on the existing highway standards)

The main vehicular access is still likely to be from Thurmaston Lane. **Therefore a maximum of 150 dwellings can be constructed on this site, if the only means of access is from Thurmaston Lane (see proviso below).**

Planning permission exists for the construction of an extension to Colin Grundy Drive, in the eastern half of the Manor Farm development site (not covered by this guidance), but which has not yet been started. To build more than 150 dwellings then it must be demonstrated that two satisfactory points of vehicular access to adoptable standards off different parts of the highway can be achieved.

Further highway design requirements are set out in Sections 7.4, 8.3 and 8.4.

7.0 Planning Obligations and Community Benefits.

DETR Circular 1/97 provides guidance on the provision of community benefits to which developers may reasonably be expected to contribute to. The circular suggests that such benefits could include essential community, educational and recreational facilities.

Each development site at Hamilton will be expected to contribute towards facilities to serve the area as a whole. The appropriate level of contribution will relate pro-rata to the size of each development site.

The recently concluded Section 106 Agreement for North Hamilton contains requirements for a new primary school, subsidies to support public transport, a financial contribution to a new library at the District Centre and a financial contribution to provide additional leisure facilities.

The developer of the Manor Farm Housing Site will be expected to provide contributions for community benefits as set out below.

7.1 Education Requirements (Draft).

It is estimated that up to 175 dwellings could eventually be constructed at Manor Farm (depending on the final design), leading to the need for an additional 39 primary school places generated by this development. The Manor Farm housing site lies within the priority area boundary for Kestrels Field Primary School. This school is currently at or near full capacity. **Therefore a contribution in the region of £200,000 to £250,000 is likely to be necessary, to enable additional provision to be made available at either Kestrels Field or other nearby primary schools.**

The above amount, will be confirmed in consultation with the Director of Education, when the eventual number of dwellings is known.

7.2 Leisure & Community Requirements. (Draft)

- **A commuted sum of £50,000 will be required to provide additional leisure facilities in the Hamilton area.**

A final decision has not yet been made about how this commuted sum will be used, but it could support either additional leisure facilities at the District Centre or sports changing facilities at the District Park. Both are close to the Manor Farm development site.

- **A minimum of 1.0 ha of public open space and play space (based on an estimated population of 375) will be required within the Manor Farm housing area.**

Policies GE12 – GE14 and R11 in the draft replacement CLLP indicate a target figure of 2.6 ha of public open space and play space per thousand population to be provided in all new housing developments. The actual amount and location will need to be agreed when the site development master plan is drawn up (See Section 9).

- **The number and location of LEAPs (Local Equipped Areas for Play) and LAPs (Local Areas for Play), must be considered as part of the integral design of Manor Farm. This must meet the NPFA (National Playing Fields Association) criteria and guidelines (in terms of maximum walking distance to playspace), as a minimum requirement.**

At least one LEAP must be provided in this development, located in the focal area (identified on Plan 3), and sited to ensure that all housing within the development is within a 400 metre pedestrian route or 240 metres straight line distance of it. If a significant amount of housing lies outside of the identified area a second LEAP may be required.

In addition LAPs will also be required throughout the development to provide small areas of unsupervised open space for young children, as defined by the NPFA.

The design of both the LAPs and LEAPs must meet the criteria set out in the NPFA Minimum Standards for Outdoor Playing Space. The approval of the City Council of the design and matters in respect of adoption (including long term funding of maintenance) will be required.

The design of these facilities should be agreed by the City Council, particularly if the adoption of the play areas by the City Council is required.

An indication of the form and location of the public open space, and the preferred location of the LEAPs, are shown on Plan 3. The size and location of LAPs will be determined when detailed planning applications for individual sites are made.

7.3 Public Transport and Highways.

A quality bus service, starting at Hamilton District Centre, serving the various housing developments in Hamilton and running direct to the City Centre, will be provided following the commencement of house building at North Hamilton (estimated date for start of bus service – Summer 2002).

The option to extend the quality bus service into Manor Farm must be investigated further, when detailed planning permissions are considered.

Therefore either:

- (a) A contribution of 6 months subsidy will be required towards the operation of the quality bus service (£280,000 p.a – index linked from April 2000); or,**
- (b) A contribution towards the extension of existing bus services to serve the Manor Farm Housing Site (not to exceed the amount set out in (a) above), shall be provided.**

7.4 Affordable Housing.

DETR Circular 6/98 encourages the provision of a range and mix of house types and tenures within new housing developments to ensure mixed and balanced communities.

Policy H06 in the draft replacement Local Plan sets a target figure of at least 30% of all dwellings on new development sites, to be provided as affordable housing. For the purposes of this policy affordable housing encompasses both subsidised (rented or shared ownership) and low-cost market housing. The City Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing (adopted January 2000) contains detailed information on housing need in the City.

In view of the clearly identified housing need in the City, the target figure of 30% will be sought as part of the proposed development of the site. At least 50% of this total should be rented affordable housing provided by a Registered Social Landlord.

Financial evidence will be expected to be provided by the developer of any particular abnormal costs or other mitigating factors associated with this development that might justify any reduction in the above target figure (as set out in para 10 of Circular 6/98).

Further information on housing mix, current rent levels etc., that should be achieved in this development to meet current housing needs, are set out in Appendix B.

8.0 Site Layout and Urban Design Requirements.

New housing development at Manor Farm should seek to create a sustainable form of residential development, strongly encouraged in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 March 2000 (PPG 3). There should be a particular emphasis on *quality* in the new development, with a place designed for people, which is distinctive, safe, accessible and pleasant and which makes the most efficient use of land.

The early phases of Hamilton are characterised by typical suburban development, which tend to lack a clear sense of identity or focus.

The main planning and urban design requirements to be incorporated in the development of the Manor Farm housing area are set out below and are illustrated on Plan 3:

8.1 The conservation and enhancement of historic features and landscape (including Manor Farmhouse).

(a) Manor Farmhouse.

The southern part of the site (including Manor Farmhouse, which is not listed) lies within the Old Humberstone Conservation Area. Therefore, any future housing development to the north of the farmhouse must preserve, and/or enhance, the character or appearance of the conservation area.

In addition consent for demolition of a building in a conservation area will only be granted if it does not make a positive contribution towards the character and appearance or the architectural or historic interest of the area.

Manor Farmhouse sits on top of a low ridge and can be viewed from a number of locations both within and outside the conservation area. It is an important landmark feature and also provides a reference to the former agricultural use of the land. It thus makes a positive contribution to the area and should be retained.

The City Council will expect the Manor Farmhouse, and its ancilliary buildings, be retained and a sympathetic alternative use found for it, in any future development proposals for this site.

Uses for this building could include residential or Class B1 (a)&(b) – office/research and development. Other uses could include some uses within Use Class C2/D1 (e.g. nursing home, health centre, day nursery, art gallery/exhibition hall, non-residential education and training centre), but this would be subject to a detailed consideration of any proposal.

The City Council will expect the proper protection of the Manor Farm buildings, particularly during the interim period between the farmhouse being vacated and a new use being found for it. It is essential that an alternative use is found for it as soon as reasonably possible, and it is not left vacant for a long period of time.

(b) Land to South of Manor Farmhouse.

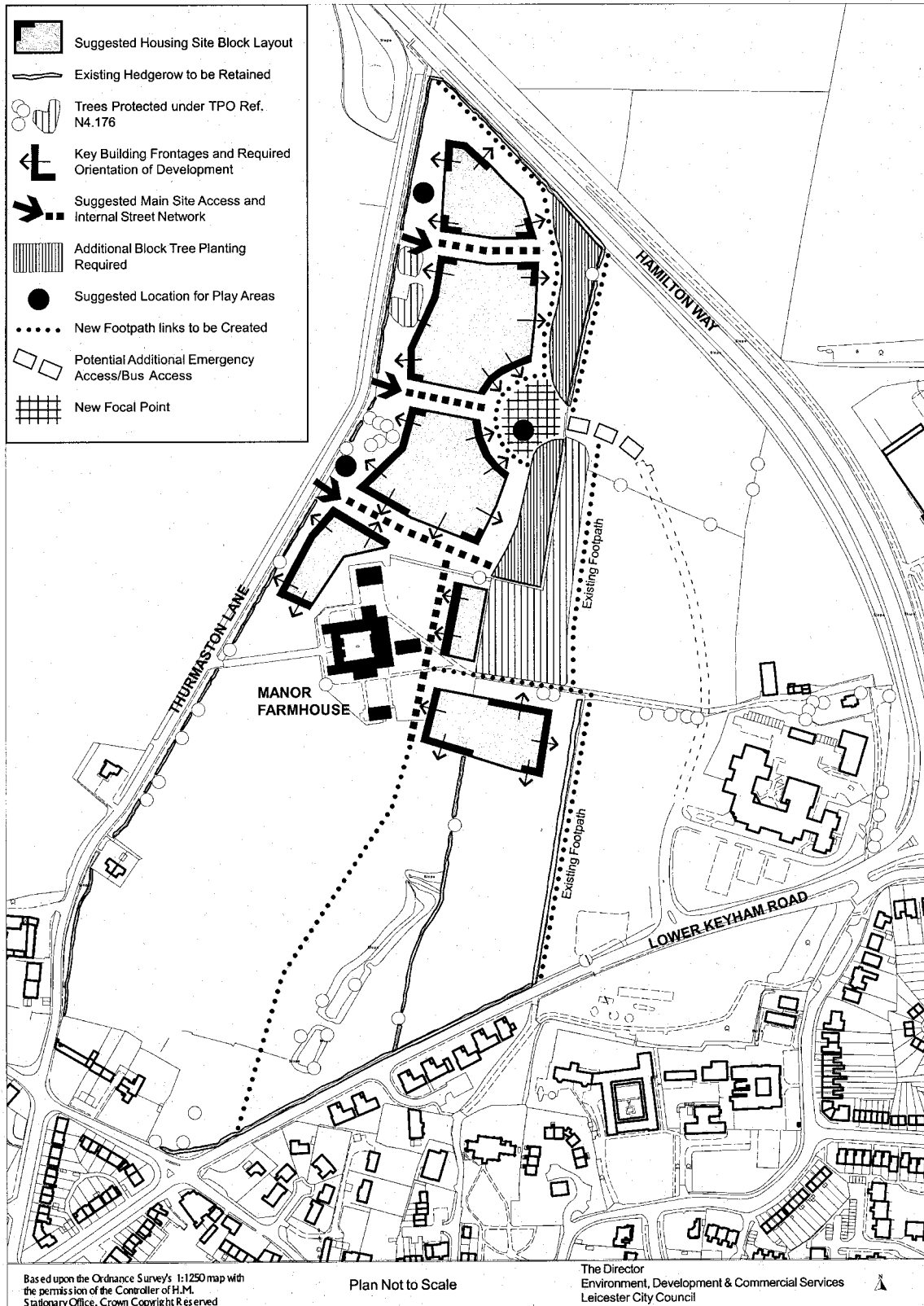
The open land to the south is of significant landscape, historical and architectural character. It is currently managed as open grassland/grazing, but this is likely to become non-viable as a separate agricultural unit when Manor Farm is developed. Therefore an alternative management regime will need to be implemented to ensure its retention in its current form and not allow it to become overgrown. Informal public access to this land (but avoiding the sites of archaeological interest) will also be required.

Plan 3 shows the location of a potential desire line across the site, where a new path could be created.

The Humberstone Village Forum also has long-term plans to create a Millennium footpath linking Humberstone Village with Barkby Village. This currently passes along the eastern site boundary. There is an opportunity to bring this route through Manor Farm, either past the farmhouse or further north through the northern part of the housing site, to eventually run down to the proposed pedestrian/cycle crossing over Hamilton Way.

The creation of proper public access and footpath routes across these sites will be a key requirement of the overall management plan for Manor Farm.

PLAN 3: SITE LAYOUT & URBAN DESIGN REQUIREMENTS (DRAFT)



8.2 The Creation of a Distinctive Place and Character.

A place with character engenders a sense of identity and encourages the formation of a distinctive community or neighbourhood. **Therefore, the design and layout of the housing development site must meet a number of important planning and design requirements.**

- **The Manor Farm housing area must be designed to a very high quality, particularly in terms of the placement of buildings and how they define routes and public spaces** (e.g. roads, play areas, open space).
- **All routes and public spaces must be fronted by buildings** to improve safety and a feeling of well-being.
- **At key locations** (e.g. around key focal points or at road junctions) **a special architectural treatment will be required** to create a high quality character and to improve the identity of the area.

The new housing areas in Manor Farm should, in the main, comprise a perimeter block layout (i.e. streets fronted by houses – including terraced, semi-detached and detached -with private space such as gardens located at the rear of the block). This is to ensure that houses provide a positive relation to the street and public areas.

The key detailed design requirements for the housing area, are set out below:

- **Housing must be oriented to provide direct overlooking from their frontages over streets and other public space.**
- **Each street should be designed to have its own distinctive character, through the use of a common design theme in terms of building massing, use of materials and the detailing and design of elevations.**
- **House frontages should generally be positioned close to or at the back of the footway, to create a better sense of street enclosure.**
- **There should be a clear definition between private and public space, where front gardens abut the street and at the back of buildings. This should be achieved using railings and/or fences.**
- **Parking spaces should generally be located at the sides of houses, rather than in front of the building line (where they would be prominent in the streetscene).**
- **A limited amount of on-street parking will be acceptable, providing that some widening of the carriageway is achieved.**
- **Corner buildings in new development will be expected to contribute positively to the quality of the public realm. The design of corners that results in gaps, blank walls or fences will not be acceptable.**

It should contain a **variety of housing types, form and tenure** to provide visual interest and provide for a range of social and physical needs of residents.

The housing site should also **include a key focal point within it** to create a focus for socialising, recreation and orientation. It may comprise either hard paving and/or grass (designed as a crescent or village green) but should be of a size sufficient to allow trees to be planted, which will mature to a substantial size. It would also be an appropriate location for play space and play equipment. A suggested location is indicated on Plan 3.

Development around this focal point should include the following elements:

- Higher density development (e.g. in the form of 3 storey and terraced houses), with houses oriented to front onto and overlook this space
- A high quality of design and layout of the buildings fronting this space (in terms of building massing and placement, elevations, materials and detailing).

The City Council will positively encourage developers to use recent good practice guidance on housing layout and design produced by DTLR, including:

'By Design - Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice' (CABE/DETR, 2000), and,

'By Design – Better places to live: A companion guide to PPG3' (CABE/DTLR 2001)

8.3 A Place that is Easy to Move Through.

Guidance in PPG13 (Transport) requires that, for housing developments in excess of 100 dwellings, a Transport Assessment (TA) must be prepared.

A Transport Assessment will be required for any future detailed planning applications for the Manor Farm housing site, because it is likely to contain more than 100 dwellings.

A key requirement of the TA will be to give details of improved access by public transport, walking and cycling and to reduce the need for parking associated with the development. Early discussions with the City Council are recommended to 'scope' the requirements and content of the TA.

The development will also have an impact on the junctions including Gipsy Lane/Thurmaston Lane and Lower Keyham Lane, which have been subject to several accidents. Therefore the TA will be required to fully assess the impact of development on the highway and to identify the necessary highway improvements to mitigate the impact of traffic. As part of the TA the existing facilities, including public transport, cycling and for pedestrians, need to be identified and measures introduced to improve these facilities and reduce car usage. Connections by these modes of transport to surrounding areas, in particularly Humberstone Village and the District Centre, will need to be considered.

Thurmaston Lane in general lacks pedestrian footways and any development along this road would require general enhancements and improvements, including adequate street lighting and provision of footpath/cycleways.

The City Council will encourage the use of 'Places, Streets & Movement' (DETR 1998), which is identified in PPG3 as a source of good practice guidance on the layout and design of new development, in particular relating to highway design issues.

'Places, Streets & Movement' suggests that when designing new residential layouts, the design of the spaces and places should be considered first and the layout then adjusted to meet highway needs. This should result in the area being developed based primarily on the needs of people rather than the motor car.

The layout of Quakesick Valley should comprise a continuous network of streets and routes, to produce the maximum level of connectivity and accessibility throughout the development. These should provide direct connections between the major places in the development particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Vehicular access to the site will be from Thurmaston Lane (subject to the highway restrictions set out in Section 6.0). The main highway design requirements are:

- The design of the streets should ensure that maximum connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is achieved via a connected street network.
- Streets should be designed to keep vehicle speeds uniformly below 20 mph.
- Where traffic levels are likely to be relatively low, some cross roads may be permitted within the overall street network.
- In a limited number of cases cul de sacs may be permitted to allow the development of awkwardly shaped sites.
- Direct connections to surrounding areas must also be achieved from this development, including new connections to the footpath system surrounding the site, so that residents can easily access other parts of Hamilton as well as Humberstone village.
- The needs of people with disabilities must be taken into account. The Council's Guide "Paving the Way" provides detailed advice on this subject.
- ***Residential streets should be 5.5m wide, with 1.8m wide footways***

The design of roads in the Manor Farm housing area should also allow for access by buses. This could either be from Thurmaston Lane or from the Colin Grundy Drive extension. In the second option a 'bus only' restricting barrier will be required to be provided by the developer, and this will have to be adopted as part of the highway.

8.4 Sustainable Development.

(a) Density.

Recent guidance, set out in PPG3 (2000), requires new housing development that is more efficient in terms of the amount of land used. The current density of housing at Hamilton is between 25-30 houses per hectare (net), which is considered to be too low.

The City Council will seek to achieve housing built at higher densities at Manor Farm as required in PPG3. This must be in the range of 30-50 houses per hectare (net).

Development below 30 dwellings per hectare (net) will not be permitted.

Care will be needed to avoid a hard built form to the edges of development, particularly when viewed from open land to the south of Manor Farm

(b) Car Parking

PPG3 also states that a car parking standard exceeding more than 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling is unlikely to reflect the Government's emphasis on securing sustainable residential environments. This view is shared by the City Council.

The draft City Council Vehicle Parking Standard (Oct 2001) sets the following maximum levels of car parking provision for Manor Farm:

<u>Bedrooms</u>	<u>Max no. of spaces</u>
1	1
2	2
3 plus	2

'Places Streets and Movement' and 'By Design' guidance, suggests a number of design options to accommodate parking (In-curtilage, courtyard and possibly on-street) and how these areas should be designed to increase surveillance and thus reduce security problems.

(c) Energy Efficiency

New buildings should demonstrate good practice in energy efficiency and water conservation.

Residential development should achieve a National Home Energy Rating of 9 or above. Non residential development should achieve a "very good" rating in terms of energy efficiency under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM 5/93).

(d) Water Management.

Sustainable water management techniques should be incorporated into design and infrastructure proposals, including the use of storm water control and 'grey water' utilisation systems.

8.5 The retention, protection and enhancement of key features of landscape interest.

The requirement for the implementation of a management plan for the open land to the south of Manor Farmhouse is set out in Section 8.1(b)

Key features of landscape and nature conservation interest must be retained and incorporated into the development of Manor Farm.

Detailed planning applications must therefore:

- **be accompanied by full landscape and ecological surveys (including a survey of the condition of all protected trees); and**
- **protect sensitive sites, minimise impact and identify appropriate mitigation measures for lost habitats and features.**

A high quality of landscape design will be required in the public realm. Future development proposals must therefore meet the following detailed design requirements:

- New planting will be expected to make a specific contribution to development - to provide interest on streets, to soften buildings, to create structure and delineation or to establish landmarks.
- Planting proposals should form part of an integrated design approach, involving the co-ordination of overall layout, access, hard landscaping, lighting, services and street furniture.

- Plant species should be appropriate to local ground conditions and consideration given to their long term growth characteristics and maintenance requirements.

8.6 Community Safety.

The safety of the community using this new development is particularly important, especially for people moving on foot and cycling through the development. This can be achieved by adopting the following design and layout principles:

- Development should have active ground floor uses, with entrances directly off the street
- Development should be positioned to directly overlook public areas (streets, footpaths, public open space etc)
- Avoid exposing the backs of buildings to public areas, which poses a security risk and provides a lack of surveillance over these areas
- Boundary fences to rear gardens should not be located next to public areas

8.7 Public Art

The City Council will seek the provision of new works of art within the development to add interest, enjoyment and value to the public realm. There exists a good opportunity to plan for the inclusion of a significant work of art as part of the open space focal point. This would add considerably to the distinctiveness of the development and the sense of place.

Developers will be expected to liaise with the Council's Public Arts Officer before submitting planning applications to ensure the integral consideration of public art with the planning, design and construction process.

8.8 Future Maintenance.

At an early stage of design all public, or semi-public spaces, should be designated, so that adoption and maintenance proposals can be established and agreed. Space that has no explicit function should be designed out.

The proposed arrangements for long term maintenance, including standards and funding, should be established at an early stage.

Committed sums will be sought for the proper maintenance of public landscaping and open space, if the intention is to hand it over to the City Council.

9. Design Statement.

Detailed planning applications must be accompanied by a design statement (as set out in PPG1 - Annex A), showing in more detail how the above site layout principles and development requirements will be provided.

10. Consultation

It is important that the contents of this guidance are understood and, ideally, accepted by a range of interested parties. To this end, this guidance will be subject to consultation with the following groups:

- landowners;
- local residents;
- local ward councillors;
- development industry representatives; and
- other interested bodies.

The results of consultation will be considered in the preparation of the final form of the guidance, which will be presented to the City Council's Cabinet for adoption. A full report on the results of consultation will be available by the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services.

11. Contacts

Early discussions between owners/potential developers (including the City Council) are encouraged in order to facilitate proposals that are as inclusive and as comprehensive as possible.

For all planning matters (including pre-application enquiries) please contact:

Fabian D'Costa (East Area Team),

The Development Control Group,
Environment, Development & Commercial Services,
Leicester City Council,
New Walk Centre,
Leicester. LE1 6ZG

Tel. (0116) 252 7276 or 7286

For all issues regarding the planning and design of Hamilton, please contact:

Nigel Reeves (Urban Design Group)

Environment, Development & Commercial Services
Leicester City Council,
New Walk Centre,
Leicester. LE1 6ZG

Tel. (0116) 252 7239

