

# Re-inventing Radcliffe

## Next steps

In the Summer of 2003 Bury Council commissioned a team led by urban designers URBED to develop a vision for Inner Radcliffe.

This leaflet describes the next steps, which have followed the 'Re-inventing Radcliffe' study. It is published as a basis for public consultation.

Radcliffe is a town with ancient roots. Originally a Roman settlement at a fording point over the River Irwell on the road from Mancunium to Ribchester it developed as the Saxon town of Rad-clive (Red Cliff) built around a Manor House and the Radcliffe Tower. The current town thrived in the Victorian era as Radcliffe Bridge growing from 2,500 at the start of the 19th century to 17,000 by the end. Compared to its bigger neighbours it remained small and was still referred to as a village. Its growth started with textiles but grew to be dominated by the paper industry and, together with Ramsbottom, it became the main papermaking centre in the region.

The papermaking industry continued into the mid 1990s when it employed 2,000 in the town. The collapse of this industry has been abrupt and brutal. Radcliffe Paper

Mill closed in 1998 and has since been developed for housing while The East Lancs. Paper Mill closed in 2000. The people of the town have recovered reasonably well from these blows and many have found work elsewhere. However, the town centre itself has suffered.

In its heyday Radcliffe was a thriving market town with a broad range of shopping. This was based on the large number of people living and working close to the centre. People tended not to travel far so this captive market allowed the town to develop a broad range of shopping, a market, and an important parish church and civic facilities despite its proximity to Bury and Bolton. It may have been small but it had all the accoutrements of a town; a town council with a mayor, local newspaper and chamber of commerce.



**Radcliffe today:** Whilst much has changed the town retains a strong local character with a local paper (although no longer based in the town), large modern Civic Suite, impressive Parish Church, library and most of all a strong sense of community spirit and identity. However, its future cannot be based on recreating the past. Today most of the employment and quite a lot of the housing that surrounded the town centre have gone, and people can now easily travel to surrounding towns for shopping and services.

Radcliffe will never be able to recreate the town centre it once had. The Reinventing Radcliffe study, therefore, proposed an alternative vision that saw Radcliffe as a sustainable urban neighbourhood within the Greater Manchester conurbation. An interesting and creative place to live and work in north Manchester.

An attractive, reasonably high-density community, linked into the conurbation by the Metrolink and with a thriving town centre serving local shopping needs based around a reinvigorated market.

This strategy is based on making Radcliffe a good place to live by improving the range and quality of housing, the attractiveness of the centre, the quality of local facilities and a new school. The strategy is based on new housing around the town centre to 'repair' the damaged urban fabric of the town and to increase the number of people within walking distance of the centre. Initially it is inevitable that many of the people moving into the new housing will work outside the town with many commuting by Metrolink. However, over time the attraction of the town as a place to live will also attract businesses. Some may be set up by people living in the town, others

will be attracted out of Manchester by lower costs and the availability of a skilled workforce. The strategy may, therefore, start with Radcliffe as a good place to live but over time it will also generate jobs.

Since the Reinventing Radcliffe study was adopted in 2004 Bury Council has been extremely proactive and successful in taking forward its recommendations and the four sites described in this newsletter represent a huge step forward in implementing this strategy. Overleaf you will find details of the following schemes:

- **The SUN Quarter:** A development in the very heart of the town that provides for a possible new library, gallery and museum, a redeveloped market, bus station and 190 apartments to transform the facilities and image of the town centre.
- **The East Lancs. Paper Mill:** A

masterplan for the former paper mill that includes a new school to replace the existing two schools on a prominent riverside site. The scheme also includes office and employment space to create 270 new jobs together with up to 500 new homes and apartments to create an entire new neighbourhood. The proposals include playing fields for the school on the E'es site following its restoration.

- **The former schools sites:** The proposals include new housing on the Coney Green and Radcliffe High School sites. This will increase the number of people living around the centre as well as generating the money to develop the new school.

These projects present an unrivalled opportunity to implement the Reinventing Radcliffe strategy.

# 3 Sites Masterplan

## Coney Green

The proposals for Coney Green are that it should be developed for housing (around 250 homes). The masterplan is a development of the plan included in the Reinventing Radcliffe vision. This includes medium density apartments on Spring Lane facing the Metrolink station with slightly lower density housing to the north towards the canal. This includes the following elements:

- Apartments: New apartments on Spring Lane in three and four storey blocks.
- Housing: A mix of semi-detached and terraced housing to the north of the site running towards the canal.
- Play areas: Two new play areas in the north western and north eastern corners of the site overlooking the canal.
- Landscaped gateway: A small open space on Spring Lane to preserve the existing mature trees.
- Community Square: A new square (although it is a triangle)

in the heart of the scheme to create a community focus.

- New access: It is proposed to create a new traffic-light controlled junction that also serves the Metrolink station.
- Green route: The green route, which runs along the former railway line from the north, has been incorporated into a new avenue through the scheme.



## Radcliffe High

The Radcliffe High School site is also seen as a residential site. The masterplan is a more formal composition than Coney Green based around the landscaped square that forms the entrance to the school at the end of Abden Street. The plan is based around a set of urban blocks of terraced housing with possibly

flats on the corners leaving a generous landscaped strip along the canal. The aim is to create a masterplan that feels like an extension to the Abden Street neighbourhood but also has its own distinct identity. This includes:

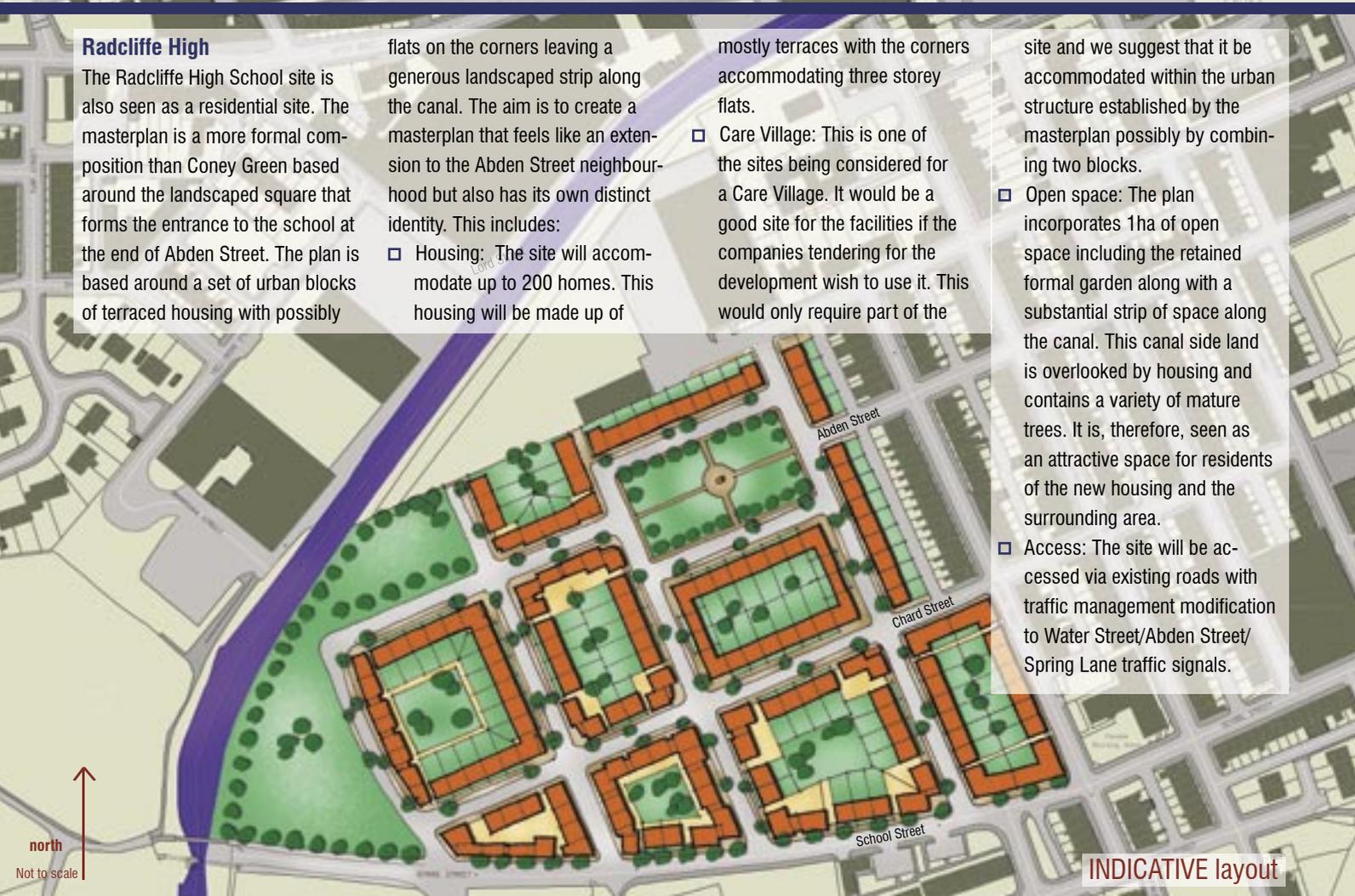
- Housing: The site will accommodate up to 200 homes. This housing will be made up of

mostly terraces with the corners accommodating three storey flats.

- Care Village: This is one of the sites being considered for a Care Village. It would be a good site for the facilities if the companies tendering for the development wish to use it. This would only require part of the

site and we suggest that it be accommodated within the urban structure established by the masterplan possibly by combining two blocks.

- Open space: The plan incorporates 1ha of open space including the retained formal garden along with a substantial strip of space along the canal. This canal side land is overlooked by housing and contains a variety of mature trees. It is, therefore, seen as an attractive space for residents of the new housing and the surrounding area.
- Access: The site will be accessed via existing roads with traffic management modification to Water Street/Abden Street/Spring Lane traffic signals.





INDICATIVE layout Not to scale

### East Lancs. Paper Mill

The vision for the paper mill site is for it to become an entirely new quarter for Radcliffe with a mix of housing and apartments along with the school and employment uses in a riverside setting. The masterplan is designed around a traditional street-based layout to ensure that the scheme is integrated with the rest of the town. It retains one of the lodges on the site and a spine of green space linking it to the E'es site. This involves the following elements:

- Riverside School: A new secondary school and playing fields at the end of Rectory Lane to replace the two existing schools. The creation of this school in a striking building in a riverside setting is very important in changing the image and attraction of Radcliffe.
- Office uses: 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, which could include live/work development.
- Industrial uses: 8-10,000m<sup>2</sup> of industrial space consisting of single-storey units around a yard in the eastern part of the site.
- Housing: Around 500 homes including a broad mix of different types of housing and apartments.
- Open space and recreation: The scheme includes new playing fields on the E'es site and the relocation of the bowling green and the cricket pitch next to Radcliffe Tower. The scheme itself includes 1.34ha of open space including the retention of one of the lodges as a resource for wildlife. The open space will include 3 local play areas.
- Buses: Provision will be made for buses to be diverted through the site at the start and end of the school day. The route will run along Church Street East from Sandford Street to Cock Clod Street.
- Access to the school: The main route to the school for pedestrians will be down Rectory Lane although this will be closed to school traffic. The main vehicle access to the school will be via Cock Clod Street.
- Access strategy: The access strategy is to provide multiple points of access so that people can enter and exit the site in the direction that they wish to travel. This will disperse traffic across the system rather than it being concentrated on a couple of junctions.

# SUN Quarter Radcliffe Town Centre Development Brief

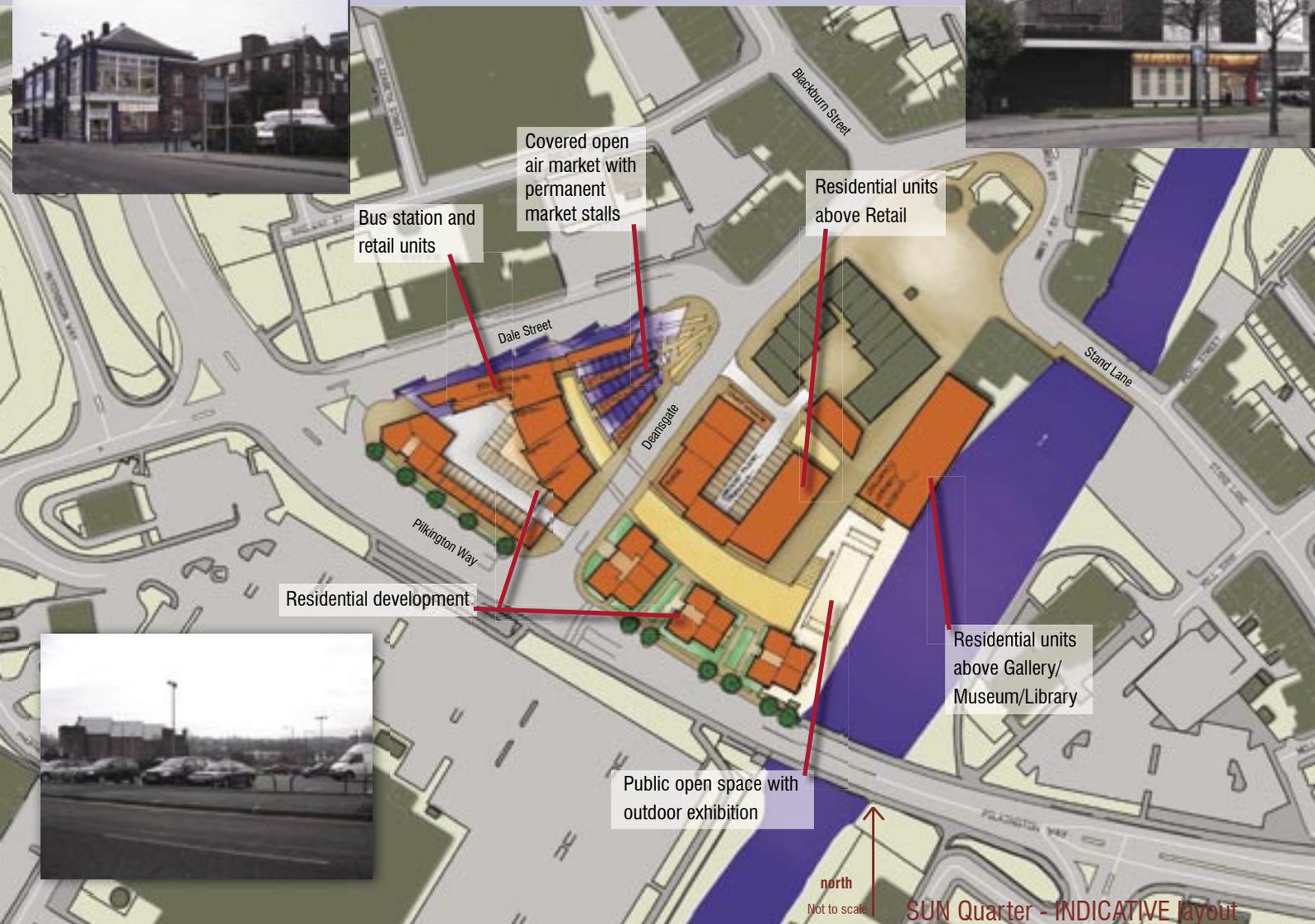
The vision for the SUN quarter is of a high-density mixed-use development in the heart of the town that fills the ugly gap between the shops and Pilkington Way. The ground floor of the scheme is occupied by facilities that will add life to the town – new local shops, the market, a library and a gallery/museum. This will create more reasons for people to come into the town and make it much livelier throughout the day. On the upper floors the scheme accommodates apartments so that there are also people living in the heart of the town.

This includes the following elements:

- A new bus station: The Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive are proposing to build a new bus station and a scheme has been agreed with them on Dale Street. This will be a modern structure with ticket office.
- A new market: Next to this we are proposing a new covered market on the site of the Post Office delivery office (which is to be relocated). The market will

comprise of 19 mini-shop lock-up units with glass canopies between the stalls providing weather protection.

- Extended Deansgate: A new street to run through the heart of the site to take traffic off Dale Street. This will involve a new traffic light junction on Pilkington Way.
- The former site of Kwik Save will be redeveloped for a mixed-use block. The ground floor could be shops. The upper floors would be developed for apartments.
- Library, Gallery and Museum: The proposals for a major new gallery in Radcliffe are unfortunately not viable. However, it is proposed to create a smaller facility as the ground floor and basement of a residential block on the site of the old market. This would house the Rückriem sculptures that have been bequeathed to Radcliffe along with the museum and exhibits on the Irwell Sculpture Trail. Outside would be a sunken sculpture garden next to the river.



## What do you think?

Before finalising proposals for the next steps of the Re-inventing Radcliffe Strategy we want to know what you think of the proposals. Please use the enclosed reply slip to let us have your comments or visit the Bury website [www.bury.gov.uk/bury/ReinventingRadcliffe](http://www.bury.gov.uk/bury/ReinventingRadcliffe)



Environment and Development Services  
 Craig House, 5 Bank Street,  
 Bury, BL9 0DN  
 t: 0161 253 5274  
 e: H.Aitkin@bury.gov.uk

Report produced for Bury Council by a team led by URBED with King Sturge and TPP.  
 URBED - 10 Little Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1HR. [www.urbed.com](http://www.urbed.com)

