



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

NORTH & EAST PLANS PANEL

Date: 10th March 2022

Subject: 21/08506/RM Reserved Matters Application for 785 dwellings relating to scale, layout, appearance and landscaping pursuant to Outline Application (17/02594/OT) at Land off Racecourse Approach Wetherby, LS22.

APPLICANT

T Wimpey
c/o agent

DATE VALID

14/10/2021

TARGET DATE

13/01/2022

Electoral Wards Affected:

Wetherby

Yes

Ward Members consulted

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

POSITION STATEMENT: Members are requested to note the contents of this report on the proposal and to provide views in relation to the questions posed to aid the progression of the application.

INTRODUCTION:

1. This Reserved Matters application is presented to North and East Plans Panel as the proposal represents a significant residential development in Wetherby, is of significant interest within the local community and is one of the larger housing allocations in the Site Allocations Plan.
2. The site is a recognised development opportunity which forms part of the allocation in the Site Allocations Plan (HG2-226) on the northern edge of Wetherby (Outer North East Housing Market Character Area). The site comprises of 55.43 hectares with an identified capacity of 1100 units accompanied by a number of site requirements which are listed below:
 - Highway Access to the site

- Local Highway Network
 - Flood Risk
 - Ecology
 - Listed Buildings
 - Education Provision
3. The application is pursuant to an Outline consent (17/02594/OT) which was granted approval by City Plans Panel in August 2020 subject to a comprehensive list of conditions and the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to secure the delivery of a number of planning obligations. The Section 106 Agreement was completed on 20 September 2021 and the application received outline consent for up to 800 dwellings, primary school, convenience store (up to 372 sqm), PoS and landscaping.
 4. The detailed matter of 'Access' to the site has already been considered and approved by the Council as part of the Outline consent (17/02594/OT), therefore 'Access' is outside of the scope of the current application to which this report relates and as such, will not be revisited.
 5. For clarity, Condition 2 of the outline states approval of the following details shall be obtained by the Local Planning Authority at the reserved matters stage;
 - Scale,
 - Layout,
 - Appearance
 - Landscaping
 6. The current Reserved Matters application seeks consent for 785 dwellings and detailed consideration of the matters above. The application represents a major development due to the site area exceeding 1000sqm and therefore meets the requirement of paragraph 1 d) of the Chief Planning Officer's Delegation Scheme – that is, this is an application for majority development (residential development involving the erection of ten or more dwellings), which is considered sensitive, controversial or would have significant impact on local communities.
 7. However, this report is a Position Statement meaning the application is not reported for determination at this point in time. The purpose of this Position Statement is to inform Members of the proposal, to report on the progress of the application and to seek Members comments on key planning issues associated with this development. The Reserved Matters application will be brought back to North and East Panel for consideration at an appropriate point(s) in due course.
- SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**
8. The site is open countryside on the eastern edge of Wetherby. The application site measures 39.59 hectares of a total proposed allocated site of some 53.43 hectares. The site is in use as farmland with areas of mature ancient woodland towards the centre and around the site.

9. The site is relatively flat with a slight rise from south to north. Sand Beck crosses part of the site towards the centre. In terms of adjoining land uses, the A1(M) motorway forms the western boundary with the Sandbeck Industrial Estate on the opposite side. Wetherby town centre is approximately 1.5km to the west of the site with access achievable along York Road and North Street. To the north and east lies Racecourse Approach with open countryside beyond as well as the nearby motorway junction which also serves the recently constructed motorway service area.
10. The application site partly wraps around the Wetherby Young Offenders Institute which sits immediately to the south and served from York Road. This comprises a vast collection of utilitarian buildings, hard surfaced areas and an all-weather playing pitch and is secured by tall fencing which surrounds the site. Along the York Road frontage is mature tree planting which help screen the institute. On the opposite side of York Road is Wetherby Racecourse which features a collection of sports and spectating facilities including several large spectator stands.
11. York Road is an unclassified road which has a 30mph speed restriction along its western section up to and including the Young Offenders Institute. There are also double yellow lines along the section of York Road immediately in front of the Young Offenders Institute. Beyond this point, the speed restriction is increased to 40mph, where it leads to a roundabout which serves the racecourse and Racecourse Approach (B1224).
12. The site comprises numerous trees, hedgerows and woodland areas. The tree lined avenue that once formed the entrance point to Swinnow Hall (recently demolished) to the north is of particular merit. The application site is also within the setting of Listed Buildings at Ingmanthorpe Hall.

PROPOSAL:

13. The reserved matters application seeks consent for 785 dwellings and the determination of the reserved matters of scale, layout, appearance and landscaping pursuant to Outline Application (17/02594/OT). The application is accompanied by:
 - Location plan
 - Site layout plan
 - Landscape plans and play area details
 - House type document
 - Floor plans and elevations for six housing character areas
 - Garage details (floor plans and elevations)
 - Boundary treatment details
 - Planning policy compliance statement
 - Statement of Community Involvement (draft)
14. The reserved matters submission details a residential development of 785 units comprising of a mix of detached, semi-detached, apartments and terraced dwellings; this includes 713 houses and 72 apartments including
 - 242 x two bedroom units,

- 254 x three bed units,
 - 248 x four bed units
 - 41 x five bedroom units
15. The development will be built out over 8 phases:
- Phase 1 – 2023 to 2025 138 dwellings
 - Phase 2 – 2026 to 2027 99 dwellings (237 cumulative)
 - Phase 3 – 2028 to 2029 102 dwellings (339 cumulative)
 - Phase 4 – 2030 80 dwellings (419 cumulative)
 - Phase 5 – 2031 to 2033 191 dwellings (610 cumulative)
 - Phase 6 – 2034 40 dwellings (650 cumulative)
 - Phase 7 – 2034 47 dwellings (697 cumulative)
 - Phase 8 – 2035 to 2036 88 dwellings (785 cumulative)
16. The proposal will provide for 275 affordable units in a mix of 24 x two bedroom apartments, 122 x two bedroom houses, 105 three x bedroom houses and 24 four bedroom units. The affordable units will be situated in distinct blocks across five locations throughout the site. This meets the affordable housing requirement for the area which requires 35% of the total number of units to be affordable.
17. As proposed and accepted at outline stage, the site will be accessed from three access points taken from Racecourse Approach and a comprehensive internal road layout will serve the development which retains the attractive tree lined 'Avenue' in the south eastern area of the site.
18. The site layout features a central community hub comprising of primary school, retail unit and play area. Existing PROWs are to be retained and connect with new footpaths.
19. The site layout has been designed around the retention and protection of natural features on the site including Cockshot Wood and Sand Beck which sit centrally within the site. A series of connecting green and blue spaces are proposed throughout the heart of the site in the form of wet drainage basins and area PoS. Various NEAPs, LEAPs and LAPs are proposed as well as additional tree planting and landscaping throughout site.
20. In terms of the wider landscaping of the site, additional buffer planting is proposed along Sand Beck and an area of PoS to the south of the site where it meets York Road with areas of amenity grassland to provide areas for recreational activities and to enhance biodiversity with rich meadow and hedgerow planting. Tree and hedgerow planting are proposed along the perimeter of the site.
21. The proposed new primary school and retail store will be the subject of separate planning applications.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

22. 17/02594/OT – Approved August 2020 at City Plans Panel
Outline application for 800 dwellings, primary school, convenience store (up to 372 sqm), PoS and landscaping. The planning conditions attached to the outline consent can be summarised as follows:
1. Time Limit – Reserved Matters to be submitted prior to 22nd Sept 2024
 2. Reserved Matters to be submitted
 2. List of approved plans
 4. Upper limit of no more than 800 dwellings
 5. Design code and masterplan
 6. Phasing plan
 7. Greenspace
 8. Tree protection
 9. Landscape and woodland management plan
 10. Ecological design statement
 11. Construction environmental management plan
 12. Biodiversity enhancement management plan
 13. Bat survey
 14. Bat roosting and bird nesting
 15. Surface water and SuDs
 16. Foul water drainage
 17. Flood risk assessment
 18. Protection water mains
 19. Protection of the public sewer
 20. Surface water drainage
 21. Infiltration feasibility
 22. SuDs drainage scheme
 23. Surface water outfall
 24. Compensatory flood storage works
 25. Phase II Site Investigation
 26. Amended remediation statement
 27. Verification reports
 28. Importing soil
 29. Statement of construction practice
 30. Hours of construction
 31. Air quality assessment
 32. Noise survey
 33. Off-site highway works s278
 34. Ransome strips
 35. Retail Unit Servicing and Car Parking
 36. Electric vehicle car charging points
 37. Retail unit servicing and car parking
 38. Housing mix
 39. Accessible housing
 40. Minimum space standards
 41. Sustainability statement
 42. School – BREEAM rating
 43. Location of the school
 44. Archaeological recording

- 45. Community use agreement
- 46. School travel plan
- 47. Retail Unit - Remove PD

PREAPP/20/00464 – Advice given Sept 2021
800 homes, primary school and shop (class E)

21/08328/COND – Pending consideration
Consent, agreement or approval required by conditions 5, 6, 8, 29, 36, 38, 39, 40 and 41 of Planning Application 17/02594/OT

21/09077/COND – Pending consideration
Consent, agreement or approval required by conditions 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 of Planning Application 17/02594/OT

21/09491/COND - Pending consideration
Consent, agreement or approval required by conditions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14 to planning application 17/02594/OT

21/09541/COND - Pending consideration
Consent, agreement or approval required by conditions 31 and 32 of Planning Application 17/02594/OT

22/00066/COND – Pending consideration
Consent, agreement or approval required by conditions 25 and 28 of Planning Application 17/02594/OT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

- 23. Since receiving Outline consent in August 2020, the Developers have held several online workshops which were well attended by representatives from Taylor Wimpey, Better Wetherby Partnership, Wetherby Civic Society, J R Paley Associates (Architects), Persimmon Homes, Taylor Wimpey and Johnson Mowat, specialist consultants and various Council Officers including from the Design, Nature Conservation, Flood Risk Management and Landscape Teams.
- 24. Workshop 1 took place on 10th September 2020. A general discussion took place with regards to physical site constraints and areas of opportunity which should feed into the site layout and masterplan. A focused discussion took place with regards to process and discharging the planning conditions attached to the Outline consent.
- 25. Other matters such as heritage, geophysical surveys, trial trenching, highways related issues, accessibility, management of greenspace on site and flood risk associated with plots adjacent to York Road we also discussed.
- 26. Workshop 2 was held on 1st October 2020. A detailed discussion took place with regards to phasing, major services and highway matters including

signage, infrastructure, cyclists, resurfacing of the bridleway, crossing points as well as delivery of the school.

27. Workshop 3 was held on the 15th October 2020. This workshop focused on design, layout, character areas, house types and street hierarchy in response to geographical constraints of the site. Other matters such as planting, play areas, housing mix, houses for the elderly and affordable housing were also discussed.
28. Workshop 4 was held on 5th November 2020. This workshop addressed the matter of education provision both on and off site. The location of the school was discussed with issues raised regarding the proximity of the Young Offenders Institute. It was confirmed that the location of the school would be on the south western corner of the site subject to the implementation of a good buffer zone.
29. A wider discussion took place about overall education provision in Wetherby, and it was clarified that the trigger point for the new school would be when there are 400 units on site. However, if there is not enough provision elsewhere in Wetherby then this could change.
30. Workshop 5 took place on 10th May 2021. The architects delivered a presentation on design and discussions included cycle routes, house types, innovation, chimneys, flats, and materials. Other matters such as the Section 106 agreement and planning conditions were also discussed.
31. Workshop 6 took place on 13th May 2021. The workshop addressed the topic of sustainable construction and house types, changing Building Regulations, sustainability measures. An overview of Council policies was provided including housing mix, affordable housing and electric car charging points. A discussion took place regarding glazing, ventilation options. Taylor Wimpey discussed the build out strategy and proposed construction methods/techniques. Carbon reduction, increasing the opportunity for nature and reducing waste in construction were identified.
32. The developer delivered a presentation on house types and materials. The use of traditional and old materials, slate effect roofs, special features in the design, larger Velux windows to balconies were discussed. The issue of solar panels was raised, and it was advised that approximately 1,750 solar panels will be installed across the site. Other matters discussed included provision of sheds, recycling and bins.
33. Workshop 7 was held on 20th May 2021. The workshop involved a focused discussion around sustainability, drainage, flood risk and assessment, greenspace, biodiversity, highways, design, affordable housing, Section 106 Agreement and construction management plans. A discussion then took place regarding obtaining pre application advice and the developer advised that they wanted a design that all parties can agree on would share the pre application advice offered with the Better Wetherby Partnership.

34. Further discussions took place regarding SUDS and discharge into Sandbeck at controlled rates and the use of wet basins. Concerns were raised locally regarding the capacity of the sewage network and potential upgrade works needed before the site is developed. Highway issues were discussed, and the Better Wetherby Partnership raised concerns regarding pedestrian health and safety in particular a need for a crossing on York Road. Council Officers, the Better Wetherby Partnership and Wetherby Civic Society felt that the design proposals were not ambitious enough and lacked innovation.
35. The matter of affordable housing was discussed, and it was confirmed that there will be 274 units spread across the site in accordance with AHP's requirements. A total of 60% will be social rented and 40% intermediate. The Section 106 Agreements and CIL money was discussed and it was agreed that a future meeting would take place between Wetherby Town Council regarding the allocation of future CIL money. The Construction Management Plan was discussed, and a further meeting would be held once the Reserved Matters application was pending consideration with the Council.

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE / HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

36. In addition to carrying out the public consultation workshops, the developers have obtained detailed pre application advice from the Council (PREAPP/20/00464). The pre application enquiry was accompanied by a masterplan and development framework document. The proposals consisted of a large mixed-use development including residential dwellings, primary school, community hub and retail unit (use class E).
37. Supporting information accompanying the enquiry stated that the development would be a sustainable community known as 'Swinnow Park' built out in 3 phases comprising of different character areas, green spaces that interconnect with adjacent parts of land within the housing allocation in the SAP.
38. Advice from Officers was that the overall masterplan was supported in principle; positives included the use of a variety of materials, different character areas to add visual interest and assist with placemaking, retention of PROWs and the tree lined avenue adjacent to the racecourse, protection of Cockshot Wood, comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure including a mix of LEAP and NEAP designed playground spaces and also housing density.
39. Notwithstanding the above, Officers were clear in the advice given at pre-application stage that the proposals were not considered to go far enough in terms of innovation. This did not align with earlier concepts put forward by the developer and supported by the Council and local groups which sought to promote Swinnow Park as an exemplar development for all. Officers reiterated that there has always been an expectation from the Council that the developer would utilise this as a real opportunity to create an exemplar development in Wetherby. It was recognised by the Council in providing pre-

application advice that there were a number of ways the site could be developed to fulfil these wider objectives and the developer was encouraged at pre-application stage to strengthen their proposals and to seek push the boundaries in terms of innovation, green technologies, and house building techniques in response to wider sustainability issues including climate change.

40. Officers suggested ways in which the development could become more innovative with regards to placemaking such as introducing car free areas, centralised waste systems, utilising new low carbon technologies and the creative use of the outdoor areas particularly with regards to the character area titled 'innovation zone'.
41. Other key points raised at pre-application stage in relation to the reserved matters include:

Appearance & Scale

- Initial design concept is considered positive and has directed a well-designed masterplan including 6 different character areas creating identifiable distinctive places linked via design features
- Stone heads and cills should be incorporated on all elevations
- Density and heights of buildings considered appropriate to the wider context
- Increasing the number of apartments on site would allow for a more spacious development to be created
- Development should be high quality and detailing should not represent a broader one-size fits all approach to volume house building seen elsewhere
- Council would encourage a more ambitious approach to housebuilding at this site than has been seen elsewhere due to the unique opportunities this site brings
- Create a sense of identity for the Swinnow Hill development which represents sustainable placemaking
- The proposals put forward replicate of measures which are already commonplace elsewhere
- A move away from traditional house building, in terms of construction techniques and traditional design approach, could be supported here to achieve a unique development
- The area known as the 'Enclosure' could go further with regards to innovative construction or become a dedicated eco-zone

Layout

- The site is designed around a central hub whereby the school and retail element sit in a central location which is attractive to major retailers
- Indicative layout submitted shows a comprehensive network in line with the road hierarchy

- Scheme should look to include more loop roads as opposed to long cul de sacs to improve connectivity for future residents
- Planning application should include diagrams to demonstrate hopper bus routes and safety
- Car dominated frontages in the form of hardstanding to the front of dwellings would be unsupported
- Permeable paving would assist with drainage of the site
- PROWs would be retained and incorporated into the proposed pathways as agreed at the Design Workshops
- Way markers/sculptures to encourage future occupiers and local residents to move around the site via active routes.
- The Avenue will function as an attractive green corridor
- Young Offenders Institute find the location of the new school acceptable and noise can be mitigated
- Mixture of LEAP and NEAP design playground spaces is positive
- Cycle parking at play areas is appropriate
- Care needs to be given to the location of these in relation to conflict with nature conservation particularly the bio-diversity of Cockshot Wood and Sand Beck
- Natural and informal open space encouraged

Landscape

- Green spaces need to work together and successfully link up through the development
- Essential to retain the existing watercourse (Sand Beck) and utilise the natural features on site to create a pleasant environment and one which enhances bio-diversity
- Cockshot Wood is of rich ecological value and the ecological surveys show ground flora exists which evidences it is ancient woodland
- It is important that there is no pedestrian access through Cockshot Woods and that adequate offset distances exist to protect this area
- The tree buffer is also to be extended to retain habitat in its current form
- Dense and mature trees along The Avenue must be retained and this would create an attractive central green corridor through the site and this should be unlit for nature conservation purposes
- The Council advise the use of attenuation basins which would remain wet all year round to enhance biodiversity
- Attenuation ponds must coincide with the lowest points on the landscape
- Scrubland buffer is also required around Sand Beck
- Cross sections should be provided as part of any future planning application
- Incorporating the use of 1 bat/swift box on each dwelling is encouraged with regards to bio-diversity net gain

HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS POST RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

42. Officers have facilitated two workshops with the developer in January 2022.

Workshop 1 - Officers outlined the key issues relating to the proposal, including the need for the application to comply with the latest local and national planning policies.

- General issues
- Ecology
- Landscape
- Design and layout
- Public consultation
- Timeframe for decision

Workshop 2 – focused meeting on design and house types

- Developer presentation on innovation
- Design and layout
- Highways
- Drainage
- Public Consultation
- Next steps

43. The application is still at a relatively early stage in the process and officers are of the view that it is appropriate to present the application to Members of Plans Panel as submitted and seek views on key matters prior to inviting any revisions.

FURTHER PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT POST RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

44. The developer has committed to ongoing community consultation throughout the lifetime of the current Reserved Matters application and with this in mind, they held a public consultation event on Thursday 6th February in Wetherby Town Hall (2pm -7pm)
45. Session 1 was a two-hour (2-4pm) stakeholder Question & Answer Session. The event was attended by an LCC Ward Councillor, Wetherby Town Councillors, Better Wetherby Partnership and Wetherby Civic Society. Matters discussed included:

- Sustainability
- Use of energy/carbon reduction building techniques and the 2021/2025 Building Regs changes
- Use of false chimneys in design
- Phasing and size of the Primary School
- Phasing of site, particularly footpath that connects Carr Lane

- Drainage
 - Air Quality and Noise
 - Site Management and Management Company issues, particularly the greenspaces
46. Session 2 was a three-hour public event (4-7pm) which was well attended. Main topics raised in concern were:
- Provision of additional local services
 - Wetherby is already overpopulated
 - Hopper bus, walking / cycling routes
 - Ecology
 - Design

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

47. Environment Agency: No objections
48. Flood Risk Management: No objections
49. Yorkshire Water: objection – small trees over a section of the public surface water sewer. Proposals to alter/divert a public sewer will be subject to YW requirements and formal procedure in accordance with Section 185 Water Industry Act 1991.
50. Environmental Studies Transport Strategy Team: will be able to comment once the updated Nosie Report (understood to be in preparation) is submitted.
51. Contaminated Land Team: Conditions and Directions were applied to parent application 17/02594/OT and remain active (see Conditions 25 to 28 inclusive). No information relating to contaminated land appears to have been submitted at this stage.
52. Influencing Travel Behaviour Team: Cycle parking needs to be provided for mid terraced properties that do not have a garage, or direct access to a rear garden where a cycle could be stored in a shed. Bus stops for the hopper service need to be shown on the layout plan, also the location of the community noticeboard referenced in the travel plan.
53. Landscape Team: Detailed comments received in relation to play provision, connectivity, pumping stations, private amenity space (apartments), water treatment and amenity SuDs, tree lined streets, street lighting, utilities/planting proposals, bridges over the beck. Tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment required.
54. North Yorkshire County Council: No objections

55. Public Rights of Way: comments received in relation to bridleway, public footpaths 7 and public bridleway 8 - welcome surface improvements and funding to form multi-user route alongside the motorway.
56. Nature Conservation Team: detailed comments received in relation to impact of street/path lighting, buffer to Cockshot Wood, no public access into Cockshot Wood, wider strategy for a nature reserve area, wildlife signage, management plan, meadow seed planting, buffer to north and south side of Sand Beck, green space near York Road should become a meadow area, SuDs features and bird nesting and bat roosting boxes.
57. Local Plans Team: consulted and comments awaited
58. Access Officer: initial comments received. H9 and H10 compliance forms submitted.

PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

59. The application was advertised as a major development and a Departure from the Development Plan and as affecting a PROW. Site notices were posted around the site and the application has been publicised in the Yorkshire Evening Post. The publicity period expired on 10.02.2022
60. As a result of this publication, 4 letters of objection have been received to date, the contents of which are summarised as follows:

Better Wetherby Partnership: detailed comments received:

- Proposed site and properties need to go above and beyond the standard for new homes in order to be an 'exemplar site'
- Climate emergency and reduce carbon emissions from homes and transport
- Lack of public transport and poor bus frequencies
- Air quality and pollution from associated transport
- Brick and block building is carbon intensive
- Gas boilers will be banned from 2025 carbon friendly heating methods should be considered
- Window and door efficiency, highest level of insulation and air tightness required
- Water saving measures should include water butts
- Government guidance sets new energy efficiency standards (2021) which require a 31% carbon reduction
- Chimneys serve no useful purpose
- All properties should have solar panels
- Wood pallets should be recycled/re-used
- South elevations should be well glazed
- Health and wellbeing – private gardens without noise and air pollution

- Location of affordable housing in close proximity to the A1M and will be affected by noise and air pollution
- Centralised waste suggested at workshops
- Footpath needed along the B1224 and south side of York Road
- More information needed in relation to buffer planting
- Innovation area is not innovative
- Suggests other forms of innovation including materials, underground rainwater tanks, district heating and car share schemes
- Planting to increase flora and fauna including climbers on walls positive
- Biodiversity net gain should be increased above target to 20%-30%
- Total number of bird & bat boxes, hedgehog and insect homes needed
- Better Wetherby Partnership do not consider Swinnow Park to be exemplar

Condition 31

- Detailed comments received in relation to the Air Quality report submitted

Condition 32

- Detailed comments received in relation to the Noise report submitted

Leeds Civic Trust

- Strongly objects to the proposed layout, largely on grounds of unremedied issues about connectivity and infrastructural services
- Development would have a negative impact on the existing community in Wetherby
- Transport and congestion
- Overstretched amenity facilities for health care and primary/secondary education would be exacerbated by a layout that makes no attempt to connect the two sides of the A1m via public transport strategy or pedestrian/cycling access
- Maintain objection to the principle of development (17/02594/OT)
- Proposal in breach of Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan
- No evidence of further consultation with the local community to constructively address the primary concerns then raised
- Design and Access Statement provided at Outline Planning stage has now been omitted, when it should have been further developed in the proposed Reserved Matters
- School and retail units should be included in these Reserved Matters, and the layout should acknowledge them as a local heart and focus point for place-making, - not only for the new residents but also for some existing residents on the other side of the motorway
- School and retail unit in direct vicinity with the YOI and should have been in the centre of the layout and connected to a pedestrian bridge over the A1m to improve connectivity
- Placemaking is superficial
- High number of fences and blind gables
- Poor natural surveillance

- House types have no active ground floor presence
- More landscape details needed to make a proper assessment
- Open space for affordable housing largely parking facilities

Wetherby Civic Society

- Road safety and York Road is an accident black spot and risk for school children, pedestrians, and cyclists
- Pelican crossing required on York Road
- All properties require solar panels to reduce carbon footprint
- Provide heat pumps, instead of gas boilers, to provide heating for all dwelling within this estate.
- Lack of bungalows for the elderly
- Only the ground floor apartments are available for downsizers
- Encourage single storey terraced properties
- There should be a sympathetic flow between each character area
- The look of the 'innovation area' will soon date compared to other areas
- Developer encouraged to revisit the innovation area and take design inspiration from surrounding areas
- Archaeological excavation has confirmed significant stone remains of Swinnow Hall and will be lost to housing
- Suggest leaving Swinnow Hall remains as an informal play feature located to the north west corner of the tree lined avenue and expanding this feature for future research
- Swinnow Hall remains an important heritage feature
- Suggest marking out the former Swinnow Hall footprint on stone slabs/gravel with information board to demonstrate its former existence on the site and significant Romano-British enclosure found under the estate
- Strongly oppose the false chimney pots
- None of the dwellings will have fireplaces or chimneys so decorative chimney pots not needed

Local resident

- Concerned about density proposed and desire to get as many houses on site as possible
- Density shouldn't be any larger than neighbouring estates in Wetherby
- Wetherby is a rural community not an inner-city community separated by the A1m
- Increased demand on the sewerage system and increase need to release raw sewerage
- Capacity of sewerage system needs to be increased

Local resident If a variation material is needed this should be red brick with imitation stone quoins (photo of examples submitted)

- This would carry the traditional stone theme as seen in Wetherby

PLANNING POLICY:

61. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making, the Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the adopted Core Strategy (amended 2019), the Site Allocations Plan (adopted 2019), saved policies within the Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP), the Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan (2017), the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVLAAP) adopted in 2017 and Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan (2020). These Development Plan documents are complemented by supplementary planning guidance and documents.

62. The policies below are considered to be most relevant in this instance:

63. Core Strategy (amended 2019):

SP1 - Location of development
SP6 - The housing requirement and allocation of housing land
SP7 - Distribution of Housing Land and Allocations
H1 – Managed release of sites
H3 - Housing Density
H4 - Housing Mix
H5 - Affordable Housing
H9 - Minimum Space Standards
H10 - Accessible Housing Standards
P9 – Local Community Facilities
P10 - Design and Context
P12 - Landscape Quality, Character and Biodiversity
T1 - Transport Management
T2 - Accessibility Requirements
G1 - Enhancing and Extending Green Infrastructure
G4 - New Greenspace Provision
G6 – Protection of existing Green Space
G8 – Protection of species and habitats
G9 – Biodiversity improvements
EN1 - Climate Change and Carbon Dioxide Reduction
EN2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
EN5 - Managing Flood Risk
EN8 - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
ID1 - Implementation and Delivery Mechanisms
ID2 - Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions

64. Saved UDP (2006):

GP5 - General planning considerations
N23 - Open space around new development
N24 - Seeks to ensure that development assimilates into the landscape.
N25 - Site Boundaries
N29 – Archaeology
BD3 - Disabled access and new buildings

BD5 - New buildings and amenity
LD1 - Landscaping
LD2 - New and altered roads
RL1 – Rural land
T7A – Cycle parking
ARC5 – Archaeology

65. The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan (NRWLP):

The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan (NRWLP) was adopted by Leeds City Council on 16th January 2013 and is part of the Local Development Framework. The Plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like trees, minerals, energy, waste and water over the next 15 years, and identifies specific actions which will help use natural resources in a more efficient way. The following NRWLP policies are most relevant for the purposes of this proposal:

AIR1 -Management of air quality through development
WATER1 -Water efficiency, including incorporation of sustainable drainage
WATER 2 - Protection of water quality
WATER4 - Effect of proposed development on flood risk
WATER6 - Provision of Flood Risk Assessment
WATER7 - No increase in surface water run-off, incorporate SUDs.
LAND1 - Land contamination to be dealt with
LAND2 - Development should conserve trees and introduce new tree planting.

66. Site Allocations Plan

The SAP was adopted in July 2019. Following a statutory challenge, Policy HG2, so far as it relates to sites which immediately before the adoption of the SAP were within the Green Belt, has been remitted to the Secretary of State and is to be treated as not adopted. All other policies within the SAP remain adopted and should be afforded full weight.

The most relevant policies from the SAP are outlined below:

HG2 – Allocated Housing Sites (The Site Allocation Plan allocates housing and mixed use including housing, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy SP7)

The application site is an allocated housing site in the in the SAP (ref HG2-226) with an identified capacity of up to 1100 units. The allocation is accompanied by the following site requirements:

- Comprehensive Development Brief
- Highway Access to the Site
- Local Highway Network
- Flood Risk
- Ecology
- Listed Buildings

- Education Provision (2 form entry)

67. Neighbourhood Plan:

Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2028 was made in 2020 and therefore forms part of the Development Plan. Relevant policies in the plan include:

H1: Provide an appropriate mix of housing
 H2: Quality and layout of housing developments
 D2: Connectivity of new developments

68. Supplementary Documents/Guidance:

SPG Neighbourhoods for Living: A guide for residential design in Leeds (Dec 2003)
 SPG Neighbourhoods For Living Memoranda to 3rd Edition (2015)
 SPG Sustainable Urban Drainage (2004)
 SPD Street Design Guide (2009)
 SPG Sustainable Design and Construction - Building for Tomorrow Today
 SPG Guideline Distances from Development to Trees (2011)
 SPD Leeds Parking Policy (2016)
 SPD Accessible Leeds (2016)
 SPD Designing for Community Safety: A Residential Design Guide (2007)
 SPD LCC Achieving Net Gain for Biodiversity - Guidance for Developers (Draft)
 SPG S106 Agreements and Developer Contributions

69. National Planning Policy Framework:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides a framework for Local Planning Authorities to follow when preparing their local plans. The NPPF must be taken into consideration in the preparation of local plans and is a material planning consideration in determining planning applications.

The aforementioned local planning policies have been considered to be sound when viewed in the context of the NPPF.

The NPPF promotes sustainable development and in order to achieve this, breaks down the role of the planning system into three overarching objectives. The NPPF seeks to ensure that development is sustainable and promotes the economic, social and environmental objectives it has outlined.

At the heart of the NPPF there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means for determining planning applications, development should be approved where it accords with an up-to date development plan, or is refused consent where adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

The following sections are most relevant:

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance

70. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) offers guidance in addition to the NPPF. The NPPG advises that reserved matters are those aspects of a proposed development which an applicant can choose not to submit details of with an outline planning application (i.e. that can be 'reserved' for later determination). These reserved matters are defined in Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as:

- 'Access' – the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network.
- 'Appearance' – the aspects of a building or place within the development which determine the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.
- 'Landscaping' – the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes: (a) screening by fences, walls or other means; (b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and (e) the provision of other amenity features;
- 'Layout' – the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development.
- 'Scale' – the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.

71. For the current application, the applicant is seeking the determination of the following reserved matters; 'appearance' 'landscaping' 'layout' and 'scale'. Members are asked to consider these matters only as the principle of development and access already have the benefit of extant planning permission.

Climate Change

72. The Council declared a climate change emergency on 27th of March 2019 in response to the UN's report on Climate Change. The Planning Act 2008 alongside the Climate Change Act 2008 sets out that climate mitigation and adaptation are central principles of plan-making. The NPPF makes clear at

paragraph 148 and footnote 48 that the planning system should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008.

73. As part of the Council's Best Council Plan 2019/20 to 2020/21, the Council seeks to promote a less wasteful, low carbon economy. The Council's Development Plan includes a number of planning policies which seek to meet this aim, as does the NPPF. These are material planning considerations in determining planning applications

MAIN ISSUES:

74. Given that a Position Statement is under consideration and the application is not at Plans Panel for determination at this time, only the key planning issues will be covered in order to focus discussion. The key planning considerations for the current proposal are considered to be:
- Detailed Site Wide Matters
 - Appearance and scale
 - Layout
 - Landscaping

APPRAISAL:

Detailed Site Wide Matters

Overall Housing Number

75. It was considered appropriate to control the number of units at Outline stage via condition therefore an upper limit of 800 units is applicable. Clearly it is desirable within the Council's wider housing supply picture to attempt to achieve as close to the maximum number of units as possible. As submitted, 785 units are proposed which is marginally under the 800 units approved at outline, and therefore the proposed density of the scheme is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other plan policies.

Housing Mix

76. Condition 38 attached to the outline consent requires the developer to demonstrate, as part of the reserved matters application, compliance with Leeds Core Strategy policy H4.
77. Core Strategy Policy H4 requires that developments should include an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to address needs measured over the long term taking into account the nature of the development and character of the location.

78. Maximum and minimum targets for each size of unit are also set out in the supporting text to Policy H4 but overall the policy seeks to ensure that all housing developments provide an appropriate mix of homes to meet the forecast growth of households in different parts of Leeds and across the district. In Leeds, like most other large authorities, the main driver of household growth is single person households and the policy's supporting text table reflects this by seeking a larger proportion of 1 and 2 bed properties (60%) than 3 and 4+ bed homes (40%).
79. The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) has recorded the housing mix delivered since 2012. The monitoring shows that there has been a constant over provision of 1 and 4+bed homes since 2012. The 1 bed overprovision is mainly focussed in the City Centre and is mainly as a result of a high proportion of apartments in overall housing completions (43%). The 4+bed over provision is as a result of developer preference, largely in the outer areas such as Wetherby.
80. Policy H1 of the Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan states that developments of 10 or more, i.e. major residential developments, should:
- a) Contribute an appropriate mix of housing in terms of size, type, tenure and affordability which will help to support identified housing needs including the specific needs of Wetherby's residents taking into account an up to date housing needs survey.
81. Table showing the split between houses and flats:

Type*	Max %	Min %	Target %	Swinnow Park	%
Houses	90	50	75	713	90.83%
Flats	50	10	25	72	9.17%

82. As is shown in the table above, the development as submitted would consist of 713 houses (91%) and 72 apartments (9%). It is noted that 24 of the apartments are located at ground floor level. This split is broadly compliant with the maximum number of houses and minimum number of apartments as set out in Policy H4. However, the split as submitted is 15% under the target for apartments and 26% over the target for houses as set out in the policy. To get closer to the target housing mix, a greater number of apartments and less houses would be required.
83. Table showing housing mix:

Type*	Max %	Min %	Target %	Swinnow Park	%
Houses	90	50	75	713	90.83%

Flats	50	10	25	72	9.17%
Size*	Max %	Min %	Target %		
1 bed	50	0	10	0	0
2 bed	80	30	50	242	31%
3 bed	70	20	30	254	32%
4 bed+	50	0	10	248 x 4 bed 41 x 5 bed	32% 5% TOTAL 37%

84. As set out in the table below, in terms unit sizes, 242 x two bedroom units (31%) 254 x three bedroom units (32%) 248 x four bedroom units and 41 x five bedroom units are proposed (when combined 37%). As submitted, the number of two bed units is 19% under the target of 50%. The number of three bed units marginally exceeds the target of 30% at 32%, however the number of four and five bed units is 22% over the target of 10% as set out in Policy H4. To get closer to the target mix outlined in the policy, some one bed units would need to be introduced and the number of two bed units increased and a decrease in the number of four and five bed units.
85. The overall picture in respect of housing mix is that the proposals raise concerns that compliance with policy H4 could be achieved as currently proposed. The applicant has not, at this stage, put forward a convincing argument that this would be the case. It is the view of officers in light of this that more apartments and more smaller sized units are likely to be required to address these concerns, and in particular demonstrate a compliance with Neighbourhood Plan policy H1 which requires specific need in Wetherby to be addressed.

Question 1: Do Members wish to comment on the proposed housing mix proposed by the applicant in light of the requirements of Leeds Core Strategy policy H4 and Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan policy H1?

Affordable Housing

86. The s106 Agreement attached to the Outline consent requires the delivery of affordable housing in compliance with Core Strategy policy H5.
87. Core Strategy policy H5 requires that affordable housing should be provided at this site (in Zone 1) at a rate of 35% of the total number of units. As guided by the wording of the policy, this should also be a pro rata mix in terms of house sizes and the split between intermediate and social rented tenures and they should be suitably integrated throughout a development site.

88. Table showing Affordable Housing split:

Type*	Housing Mix Proposed %	Affordable mix proposed	%
Houses	90.83%	251	91.27%
Flats	9.17%	24	8.73%
Size*			
1 bed	0%	0	0%
2 bed	31%	122 houses 24 flats	44.3%
3 bed	32%	105	38.18%
4 bed+	37%	24	8.72%
		275	35% overall

89. As submitted, a total 275 affordable units are proposed which would meet the necessary 35% requirement on site. This broadly complies with the ratio of houses and apartments proposed and so can be considered pro rata on this basis. In terms of mix, 24 of the affordable units would be two bed apartments (9%), 122 of the affordable units would be two bed houses (44%), 105 of the affordable units would be three bed houses (38%) and 24 of the affordable units would be four bed houses (9%). It is noted that the current mix proposed is not pro-rata in terms of house sizes; there is an over provision of two bed affordable units (13% more than the mix provided on site), there is also an over provision of three bed affordable units (6% more than the mix provided on site) and a significant under provision of three and four bed affordable units (28% less than the mix provided on site).

90. As is the case in respect of housing mix above, the applicant has not, at this stage, put forward a convincing argument that a deviation from providing a pro-rata mix of affordable units in terms of unit sizes would be appropriate at the site. As such, the overall picture in respect of mix of affordable housing units is that the proposals raise concerns that compliance with policy H5 could be achieved as currently proposed in this respect.

91. The affordable units are located in various locations throughout the site but tend to be concentrated in long rows around the edges of the site and this is particularly obvious to the west near the motorway and to the south adjacent to the YOI. It is understood from the information submitted that seven different affordable house types are proposed and the affordable housing providers prefer that these are grouped together for management purposes

Question 2: Do Members wish to comment on the proposed affordable housing provision, including matters of the house/apartment split, the mix of unit sizes and the location of units across the site?

Minimum Space Standards and Accessibility

92. Core Strategy Policy H9 sets out minimum space standards for dwellings and Neighbourhoods for Living provides guidance regarding housing developments and notes that family houses should have a reasonable level of outdoor amenity space. The proposal is policy compliant with regards to both internal and external space standards.
93. The developer has submitted information with regards to Policy H10, which sets out accessible housing standards and states that 30% of dwellings meet the requirements of M4(2) 0 and 2% of dwellings meet the requirements M4 (3) of Part M Volume 1 of the Building Regulations. Comments are awaited from the Access Officer in this regard to clarify which dwellings meet these standards specifically.

Appearance and Scale

94. The PPG defines –
- Appearance** as “The aspects of a building or place within the development which determine the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture”
- Scale** as “The height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings”
95. As guided by the NPPF at chapter 12, paragraph 126, the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.
96. Paragraph 127 goes onto state that neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers. Paragraph 128 states that to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high-quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety.

97. Furthermore, paragraph 130 provides a series of principles that should be followed to ensure developments are of good quality. Policy P10 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and is appropriate to its context. This advice is also contained within Building For Tomorrow Today SPD (2011).
98. Policy H2 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals for new housing developments should demonstrate high quality design and layout which reflect Wetherby's character and that respond to its current needs. The relevant parts of the policy are d) to j) which states for all housing developments, this means:
- d) Reflecting the character, setting and context of the site in relation to landscape, townscape, building types, grain of plots and streets.
 - e) A layout that demonstrates a coherent and legible structure or hierarchy of routes and spaces.
 - f) The massing and built form to ensure that a sense of place has been created and that there is sensitivity in terms of townscape design in respect of edge treatment, entrances, enclosures, frontages, heights and rooflines.
 - g) Landscape design that contributes to a sustainable sense of place, such as play areas, shelters, biodiversity and wildlife corridors, verges, street trees and water.
 - h) Materials and details relating to the design and context for walls, roofs, openings, paved surfaces and signage - incorporating locally sourced, distinctive and manufactured materials wherever practical.
 - i) Sustainable principles such as the curtilage storage of waste and recyclable material, home-working and the durability, energy efficiency and adaptability of buildings over time.
 - j) Ensuring new development is close to and effectively integrated with the existing built up area.
99. In terms of appearance and scale, the residential aspect of the scheme would include five different character areas creating identifiable distinctive places spread out across the site which would be linked via design features to create a high-quality development. A variety of different house types are proposed within each character area including detached, semi-detached and terraced properties together with apartment blocks.
100. Each character area would have a different design approach; the largest character area is 'The Paddock' with the greatest number of houses overall spread out across four areas of the site. The dwellings in this character area vary in size, measuring two storey in height and tend to be detached however a number are semi-detached and short rows of terraced properties are also proposed.
101. The dwellings tend to be constructed out of a red brick with stone heads and cills and some of which have a front gable feature. However buff brick is proposed on key points such as gateway entrances. The dwellings would

have a grey concrete roof with modest flat roof dormers offering accommodation in the roofscape and Juliet balconies.

102. The area referred to as 'The Grandstand' is indicated as having a more modern design; some of the dwelling would be taller two storey dwellings with flat dormer windows in the roof space. A mixture of semi-detached and detached dwellings are proposed and these are indicated as be constructed out of a light coloured stone with a grey concrete roof.
103. The area referred to as 'The Stables' are indicated as more traditional in terms of their design. These dwellings tend to be detached; however short rows of terraced dwellings are proposed. Materials proposed include course stone, terracotta roof rille complete with chimney and simple openings with cream casement UPVC windows.
104. The area referred to as 'The Parade' follows the prominent tree lined avenue adjacent to the Racecourse. The dwellings have a distinct rural appearance; the dwellings are shown to be constructed out of a weathered stone with slate effect roof complete with stone chimneys and terracotta pots. Sash style windows are proposed with olive green windows and doors. Full stone heads and cills are also proposed. A mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties are proposed.
105. Finally, the area referred to as 'Innovation' comprises of modern houses and apartments. The houses tend to be tall, three storey dwellings with Velux balconies to front constructed out grey brick with contrasting white render and black rainwater goods. The apartments adopt a modern and industrial urban style with exposed metalwork balconies.
106. It is acknowledged that the developer has carried out extensive consultation with key stakeholders and representatives of the community prior to submission of the application. During the workshops, the wider approach to break up the site by creating individual character areas of high design quality was supported by all parties. The Council including officers from the Design Teams was also supportive of an approach that sought to move away from traditional volume house building in parts of the site to create a truly exemplar/innovative design approach which would be unique to this location.
107. Whilst it may be argued that the overall appearance and scale including materials, roof designs and mix of house types within the character areas is achieving a varied mix, which would introduce some visual interest to streetscapes, officers remain unconvinced that the current proposals would push the boundaries of innovation or would result in a development of very high quality in terms of architecture or design. The advice offered to the developer at pre-application stage was that the approach is distinctly average and lacks the necessary ambition and whilst the scheme has evolved positively since this advice was offered, there remain concerns as to whether this has gone far enough.

108. At the recent meeting with the developer noted at paragraph 45, the term 'innovation' was explored and in response, the developer has produced a *draft* innovation strategy which is yet to be formally submitted. The strategy would involve a package of sustainability measures including:
- Significant blue and green infrastructure including wet SuDs basins and management company
 - Over provision of greenspace
 - Development of an informal nature reserve
 - Bat and bird boxes on 50% of the dwellings
 - Water butts to each dwelling
 - Bee bricks, bug hotels, hedgehog highways
 - Extension and protection of Cockshot Wood
 - Efficient gas boilers
 - Phased carbon emission savings 75% of the development will fall under the Future Homes Standards (introduction an ambitious uplift in the energy efficiency of new homes through Part L of the Building Regulations by 2025)
 - Solar panels to every dwellings
 - High level of air tightness
 - 100% low energy lighting
 - Design features such as bespoke canopies and Velux balconies in the innovation area
 - Responsible sourcing of 90% of materials
 - Hopper bus, electric vehicle solutions and E bike hire
 - Footpath and cycle links
 - Pollution and noise barriers
 - Recycling centre
 - Library stations for book sharing
109. As was identified at the pre-application stage, there are a number of ways development can be considered to be innovative. On the whole, the *draft* strategy worked up is one largely based on the creation of a low carbon development which utilises modern technologies to move away from fossil fuel consumption in the houses proposed, alongside an approach to provide extensive green infrastructure, rather than innovative design or construction technologies. Prior to the introduction of the Future Homes Standards in 2025 it is anticipated that this will focus on the delivery of a highly efficient gas boiler heating system with low emissions, followed by the introduction of greener alternatives in the later phases of the development when boilers on new builds will be banned. The *draft* strategy includes the formation of an informal nature reserve incorporating the various wet SuDs basins and surrounding green spaces which is also considered to be particularly positive. Wider benefits include enhanced habitats for biodiversity and innovative solutions for the end user such as a recycling centre and E bike hire. As an approach this is considered to be innovative within the spirit of previous discussions and is a positive response from the applicant in relation to concerns from the Council and the local community. However, there is a question as to whether 'innovation' should also extend to design, car parking and/or other matters.

Question 3: Do Members wish to comment on the general approach to create different character areas and design proposals advanced by the applicant?

Question 4: Do Members feel satisfied that the proposals will deliver a high-quality development and the approach with regards to ‘innovation’? If not, where would Members priorities lie in seeking further enhancements in these respects?

Question 5: Are Members satisfied that the appearance and scale of the development will create a beautiful and distinctive place with a consistent and high-quality standard of design as per NPPF guidance?

Layout

110. The PPG defines:

Layout – the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development

111. Section 12 of the NPPF highlights the importance of good design, and paragraph 130 provides a series of principles that should be followed to ensure developments are of good quality. Policy P10 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and is appropriate to its context whilst policy P12 seeks to protect the character, quality and biodiversity of Leeds’ townscapes and landscapes. Relevant UDP policies include (but are not limited to) GP5, BD2, N25, LD1 and LD2. Core Strategy Policy G9 is relevant due to the sites function within the habitat network. Neighbourhood Plan Policy D2 seeks to ensure connectivity of new developments.

112. Proposals for new development should seek to demonstrate how good connections with the rest of the town and surrounding countryside will be achieved through the provision of, where appropriate:

- a) Short, direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists connecting the new development to the rest of the town. This may include upgrading existing routes that connect to the development to make them attractive and safe for pedestrians and cyclists
- b) Links to existing rights of way and cycle routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- c) Good access to public transport, by locating development as close as possible to existing bus routes and providing good pedestrian access to bus stops
- d) Good connections within the development area itself, so a choice of connections to the wider town is provided

113. In terms of layout, it is acknowledged that the application site is generous in size and the development will be visible from Racecourse Approach to the east, York Road to the south and also the A1M to the north and west. Two

new access points are to be taken from Racecourse Approach; access is a matter which Members of City Plans Panel have already considered acceptable therefore access does not form part of the matters considered within this Report – as it cannot be revisited for consideration as part of any future Reserved Matters application.

114. It is noted that the access already approved via the outline will change the character of the road network in the area. With regards to vehicular access, the indicative layout submitted shows a comprehensive network in line with the road hierarchy (connector streets, local residential streets, shared surfaces and private drives) and street design. It is recognised that the Avenue is an attractive and prominent road running through the south west corner of the site in north to south direction which links the development to York Road opposite Wetherby Racecourse. The retention of this feature is considered to contribute positively to the layout.
115. Concerns exist in relation to the road layout particularly the amount of cul de sacs and advice offered at pre application stage by the Council was that the layout should look to include more loop roads to help vehicles move freely around the development. It is also noted that some of the spine roads are not wide enough to accommodate the necessary footpaths and verges on both sides.
116. The developer was encouraged to consider introducing 'car free' areas within the development in the workshops and at pre application stage. Centralised areas of parking have been introduced in two areas on site to avoid car dominated frontages which is a positive approach however officers still have concerns that too many of the plots elsewhere within the site would have parked cars to the front of properties and that this has led to a significant number of streets appearing cramped or being car dominated. The amount of car parking will comply with guidance contained within the Street Design Guide.
117. The application site includes a definitive footpath running west to east and also a non-definitive footpath running north to south. The layout shows a network of pedestrian and cycle routes are also proposed which are segregated from traffic and provide access links to facilities. It has evolved via the Design Workshops that PROWs would be retained and incorporated into the proposed pathways. This is a positive change. Whilst it is acknowledged that the development would be heavily reliant on travel by car active travel routes are reflected in the layout including potential way markers/sculptures to encourage future occupiers and local residents to move around the site via active routes. Officers have encouraged the need for a separate dedicated cycle way adjacent to Racecourse Approach. A plan for cycleways should be agreed which takes into account the verge space needed for tree lined streets as per NPPF guidance.
118. It is acknowledged that highway safety remains a key concern locally. Dense and mature trees along The Avenue will function as an attractive green corridor which would be used by future occupiers to access York Road and

the associated bus stops on foot. Community representatives and Ward Members seek more comfort in relation to pedestrian safety and throughout the workshops and public consultation have requested a new pelican crossing and associated footpath and bus stop improvement works to ensure accidents are avoided and future school users can cross York Road and move around the development safely. These are matters which should be explored further under the umbrella of the outline consent.

119. The masterplan for the site has been designed around a central hub whereby the school and retail element sit in a central location which is attractive to major retailers. In terms of layout it is not considered ideal to locate the shop adjacent to Wetherby Racecourse in terms of highway safety. The location of the school in relation to YOI has also been discussed at length in the workshops and it is understood that noise levels from certain areas of the YOI could be sufficiently mitigated and that the YOI find the spatial relationship of the new school acceptable.
120. Provision of public open space and green space is controlled by conditions attached to the outline. In response to earlier pre-application advice offered, the layout proposed seeks to retain and protect Cockshot Wood and Sand Beck and incorporate a number of wet SuDs basins are also proposed. A mix of LEAP and NEAP design playground spaces are proposed and that these are spaced out adequately across the site to encourage connectivity and placemaking. The approach is, on the whole, positive and has responded as such to comments offered by the Council and interested parties at the pre-application stage. The Landscape Team have highlighted that some of the LEAPs are not adequately integrated or bounded and appear to be 'floating' around the site and may lead to conflict with road users and that others have poor surveillance. These are detailed matters where improvements should be sought. Cycle parking provision at the play areas is also proposed.
121. In terms of connectivity, the Landscape Team have identified some areas where pinch points occur between plots and disjointedness on the paths (plots 469/468-408-312) and fragmented strips of grass are positioned between surfaces (plots 436-433). A circular footpath along the south eastern side of the site would have the potential to improve connectivity and facilitate access for disabled users.

Question 6: Do Members wish to make any comments on the layout proposed with regards to the provision of green spaces, connectivity, health, and wellbeing?

Question 7: Do Members wish to make any comments on the layout in respect of car parking provision?

Landscaping

122. The PPG defines:
Landscaping - the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes: (a) screening by fences, walls or other means; (b) the

planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and (e) the provision of other amenity features”.

123. Section 12 of the NPPF highlights the importance of good design, and paragraph 127 provides a series of principles that should be followed to ensure developments are of good quality. Policy P10 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and is appropriate to its context whilst policy P12 seeks to protect the character, quality and biodiversity of Leeds’ townscapes and landscapes. Relevant UDP policies include (but are not limited to) N24, N25 and LD1. Core Strategy Policy G9 due to the sites function within the habitat network.
124. Sand Beck and Cockshot are identified as important natural features for retention as part of the development. Earlier advice offered to the developer was that the success of the development would be dependent on a high-quality landscaping scheme. A comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure is proposed which incorporates the watercourse and ancient woodland on site to create a pleasant environment for residents and wildlife and one which enhances biodiversity. The tree buffer is also to be extended to retain habitat in its current form. This is considered to reflect earlier advice offered that the green spaces need to work together and successfully link up through the development.
125. Existing dense and mature trees along ‘The Avenue’ are shown to be retained and will create an attractive central green corridor through the site to make a positive contribution with regards to placemaking. It is understood that this would be unlit for nature conservation purposes. In terms of general landscaping, the masterplan indicates an area of PoS to the south of the development with footpath. The Nature Conservation Team have suggested that the western parcel nearest the YOI be developed as an informal greenspace and natural/wild flower meadow area which is a good opportunity for nature due to its close proximity to the SuDs basin. Tree and hedgerow planting is also proposed along the perimeter of the site.
126. Cockshot Wood is of rich ecological value and the ecological surveys show ground flora exists which evidences it is ancient woodland. As such, pedestrian access through Cockshot Woods has been designed out of the proposals. Adequate offset distances of (average 30m) have been introduced to protect this area. Mechanisms to prevent pedestrian access through the ancient woodland has been considered and the best way to deal with this would be via signposting and information boards to explain the importance of the wood to future occupiers and walkers. This could connect into the other greenspaces across the site and create a pleasant walk and feed into a wider strategy of public information/ education across the site and development of the informal nature reserve.
127. In terms of blue infrastructure, attenuation basins proposed and 3 out of the 5 that would remain wet all year round to enhance biodiversity as well

incorporating viewing platforms to creating a pleasant environment for future occupiers. Attenuation ponds will coincide with the lowest points on the landscape and as such the location of these are now agreed. The incorporation of attenuation ponds across the site have a wider function with regards to carbon capture which has wider benefits in terms of climate change, pollution and biodiversity. The developer is willing to incorporating the use of 1 bat/swift box on 50% of the dwellings. Management of this area can be controlled via condition but the developer has been advised to liaise with local nature groups and to inform future residents of the importance of this area with regards to biodiversity. Comprehensive development of the site is expected to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.

128. Plot planting and internal boundary treatment would be controlled via condition, as could the management of the greenspaces and drainage attenuation basins. The Landscape Team have provided details comments which can be summarised; some of the green spaces appear quite stark and could be richer in terms of Green Infrastructure.
129. Significant concerns exist in relation to lack of private amenity space serving the apartments. This element of the development is not in accordance with the formula in Neighbourhoods for Living SPD and is virtually non-existent except for modest strips of grass surrounding the buildings. This element of the scheme is not considered acceptable and will need to be reconsidered in line with NPPF guidance and that contained within the Neighbourhoods for Living SPD.
130. There is an opportunity to design blocks that take advantage of the multifunctional blue green and blue infrastructure and become a feature rather than the existing basic functional approach. The quality of this particular area of the scheme is let down the scheme compared to other areas of building design.

Question 7: Do Members wish to make any comments on the landscape proposals with regards to biodiversity and linkages between SuDs drainage basins and greenspaces?

Question 8: Do Members wish to comment on the level of private amenity space proposed for the apartments?

CONCLUSION:

131. As noted above, the proposal represents a significant residential development in Wetherby, is of significant interest within the local community and is one of the larger housing allocations in the Site Allocations Plan. The success of the development will rely heavily on achieving an appropriate scale, appearance, layout, and landscaping scheme on site.
132. It is recognised that the developer has continued to engage with both the Council and local community following the granting of the outline consent. The

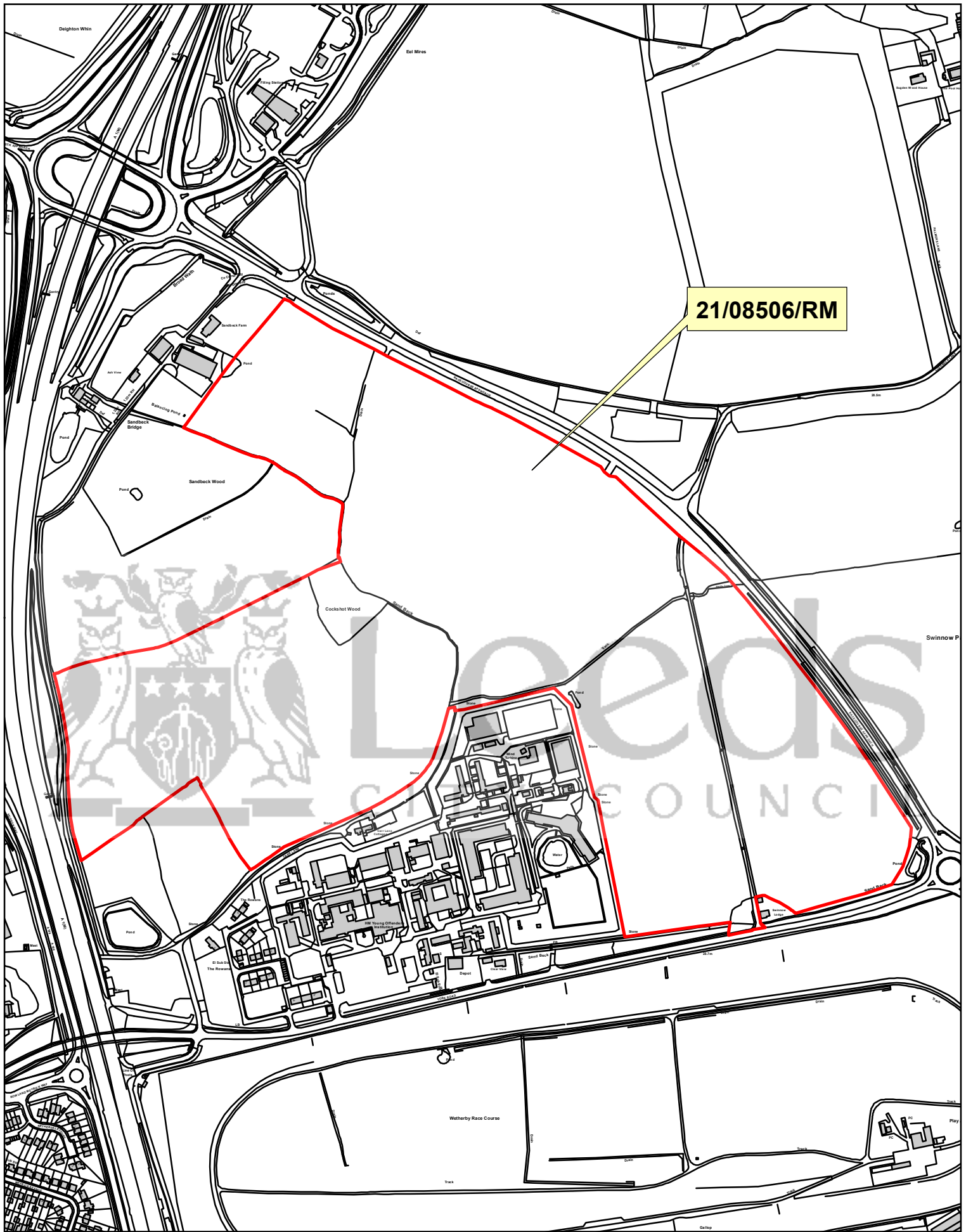
approach of the developer to date in respect of public/community engagement has been comprehensive and has allowed for detailed discussion and engagement with local community representatives. The importance of this should not be understated and the developer should be commended for their approach in these respects.

133. Throughout the public engagement exercises and during discussions with the Council at the pre-application stage the developer has been keen to impress on interested parties that they recognise the opportunities of developing the site and the developer has sought to emphasise an approach which follows an innovative approach to housebuilding. It is certainly recognised that in respect of the delivery of modern technologies to address wider climate change objectives, and in the provision of green infrastructure at the site, the developer is seeking to make significant inroads in these respects. However, there is a question as to whether this goes far enough or whether more is needed given the opportunities which exist in respect of these or other matters.
134. The general layout put forward and approach to develop distinct character areas is considered to be a positive approach and has responded to issues and concerns raised by the Council and local community representatives to date. The benefits of the proposal also include housing delivery in Wetherby in accordance with the SAP, 35% of units on site will be affordable, all dwellings will comply with minimum space standards, retention of important habitats and creation of new opportunities for biodiversity through a comprehensive network of blue and green infrastructure as well as opportunities to improve connectivity in the area and enhance the PROW network.
135. However, there are clearly issues to be resolved in respect of housing mix and the mix of affordable units. It is likely that to resolve these matters, alongside issues such as car parking domination in some parts of the site and the lack of private amenity space for apartment blocks, that meaningful changes will be required. Officers also feel there is still room for improvement with regards to the proposed design of the development and whether there is a need to push boundaries further with regards to innovation.
136. With the above in mind, Members are respectfully requested to provide answers to the questions posed in the main body of this report, all of which are reproduced below for ease of reference and to offer any additional comments that they consider are appropriate regarding this development proposal:
 1. Do Members wish to comment on the proposed housing mix proposed by the applicant in light of the requirements of Leeds Core Strategy policy H4 and Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan policy H1?

2. Do Members wish to comment on the proposed affordable housing provision, including matters of the house/apartment split, the mix of unit sizes and the location of units across the site?
3. Do Members wish to comment on the general approach to create different character areas and design proposals advanced by the applicant?
4. Do Members feel satisfied that the proposals will deliver a high-quality development and the approach with regards to 'innovation'? If not, where would Members priorities lie in seeking further enhancements in these respects?
5. Are Members satisfied that the appearance and scale of the development will create a beautiful and distinctive place with a consistent and high-quality standard of design as per NPPF guidance?
6. Do Members wish to make any comments on the layout proposed with regards to the provision of green spaces, connectivity, health, and wellbeing?
7. Do Members wish to make any comments on the layout in respect of car parking provision?
8. Do Members wish to make any comments on the landscape proposals with regards to biodiversity and linkages between SuDs drainage basins and greenspaces?
9. Do Members wish to comment on the level of private amenity space proposed for the apartments?

Background Papers:

Application file: 21/08506/RM & 17/02594/OT



21/08506/RM

NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

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