

East of Otley

The Site Allocations Plan carries forward, from the UDP, land at East of Otley, Off Pool Road, for mixed use development (Plan Ref MX1-26), comprising housing (550 homes) and employment (5 ha), conditional on the construction of an Eastern Relief Road, adding the proposal for a school.

The land was originally allocated, in the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review (2006), in accordance with UDP Policies H3-3A.30 and E4(20), for housing, employment and greenspace uses, subject to requirements covering relief road construction and production of a planning framework.

Public opinion in the town has long been and continues to be against this development and comments made during Neighbourhood Plan consultations have largely reflected this view, while offering little in the way of positive ideas as to how the development should be shaped. Various detailed comments were however made, during the Policy Intentions Document consultation, in respect of the timing and phasing of the relief road and regarding the location of commencement works, gradients and cycle lanes. As a result of general opposition to the development, only some 48% of respondents to the 2017 draft plan consultation supported the proposed policy setting out key guiding development principles. This is nonetheless a sizable majority compared to the 29% who opposed the policy. The many detailed comments made by respondents were also invaluable in helping to refine initial policy ideas.

The town council, its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and constituent task groups have given serious consideration to the basic principles which should underpin the development, particularly in respect of how it integrates with Otley's existing built fabric; how it works with the existing landscape and its natural features; and how it allows for continued and much-valued access to surrounding countryside.

The greatest concern relating to this development is probably its impact on traffic congestion within Otley and the wider area, particularly given the unknown consequence of other planned (and unplanned) developments in Otley and the surrounding areas. Residents are acutely aware of the sensitivity and unpredictability of Otley's roads, a concern that is increased by the absence of a detailed traffic model of the town and the local road network, based on a detailed survey of current traffic flows. It is recognised that a completed relief road can be expected to improve traffic flows round the town. However, the concern is the additional local, commuter and through traffic that both the relief road and the East of Otley development will generate and the consequent need to identify in advance any areas of congestion that may result from the new traffic patterns. This concern also applies during the construction period prior to the opening of the relief road. More



positively, completion of the relief road may create significant opportunities to make traffic improvements within the town centre – but these also need to be identified and assessed. The bigger picture needs to be properly understood. An outline brief for a required comprehensive transport study is set out at Appendix 8.

The development also raises legitimate concerns about flooding and pollution. Run-off from the Chevin, emergent groundwater and rainfall need to be buffered on the site, without creating unplanned flooding, and be discharged with no increase in off-site flooding. The rigorous application of existing LCC flooding and development policies, as referenced in Section 5.1 ('Surface Water Flooding'), will be expected in order to address these issues. Long-term drainage and landscape management, carried out in accordance with agreed plans, will be key to ensuring that implemented flood control measures continue to operate satisfactorily. Further, the site contains old tips that need to be remediated to eliminate any pollution risk to residents or the pollution of waterways.

The development also offers considerable opportunities, for example as a demonstrator or exemplar site, for implementing the Leeds Climate Change Strategy. This could include adopting the highest environmental and energy conservation standards for new housing (see 'Green Environment' Community Actions) and the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in car parking spaces and ideally for all dwellings, building on existing LCC planning guidance (ref LCC Parking SPD) and its intention to translate this into a future Core Strategy policy requirement.

East of Otley represents the most significant development within Otley over the next 10 years, and arguably beyond, and is likely to have profound impacts on the town on many levels. It's key housing, employment, relief road and school components must each be developed in a way which minimises impact upon the existing town and community, while maximising benefits for both current and future residents. Each component must also be set within a broader planning framework to ensure that there is compatibility between components and that impacts and benefits are addressed holistically, both for east of Otley in the widest sense and for the town as a whole. Policy MU1 below sets out a series of key guiding principles for the development designed to achieve these aspirations.

POLICY MU1: EAST OF OTLEY KEY GUIDING DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

To be supported, development at East of Otley, as identified on The Neighbourhood Plan Map, must be undertaken in accordance with the following requirements:-

An Agreed Strategic Approach

- i. Preparation and agreement of the following four documents, including public consultation as part of the preparation process, prior to or accompanying the submission of any planning application. These four documents will address the key guiding principles for development identified within the remainder of this policy:-
 - a. a comprehensive development brief and concept masterplan.
 - b. a comprehensive transport study (to be informed by the outline brief at Appendix 8).
 - c. an outline design code
 - d. an infrastructure delivery plan.

Design Concepts

- ii. Integration of the development with the rest of the town and its facilities.
- iii. Creation of a genuine 'village-like' feel with a local, neighbourhood 'community hub', including green spaces and a shop.

- iv. Identification of a green infrastructure framework as the basis for the development (see 'Green Infrastructure and Greenspace').
- v. Development of a unique 'East of Otley Brand', to create a distinctive sense of place, reflective of the organic growth of Otley, including:-
 - a. visual interest across the development;
 - b. unregimented layout, featuring irregular neighbourhoods each with a distinct architectural character;
 - c. progression of character areas from traditional in the north (reflecting Otley's stone Victorian heritage and adjacent conservation area), to contemporary in the south, but with an underlying architectural unity (see 'Building Design Code').
- vi. Respecting key views towards, away from and within the site as seen from locations that are freely accessible to members of the general public (see Appendix 5).

Building Design Code

- vii. Varied building design throughout the development to avoid standardised house types and plots.
- viii. Building heights and skyline in tune with the existing Otley environment, with buildings of two, two and a half and, in exceptional circumstances, three storeys, but only where justified by detailed design analysis.
- ix. Provision of predominantly semi-detached and terraced housing with proportionately fewer detached dwellings, flats or apartments.
- x. Careful choice of form, materials and colour palette, reflective of existing local variety and quality.

Eastern Relief Road

- xi. Alignment of the relief road broadly as per the UDP allocation indication.
- xii. Construction of relief road in a single phase and completion within 5 years from commencement of construction.
- xiii. Provision of all motorised vehicular access to the development from the relief road.
- xiv. No motorised vehicular access between the development and East Busk Lane or the Cambridge Estate, with the possible exception of barrier-controlled access for bus and/or emergency vehicles.
- xv. Provision of a separate two-way cycle track along the internal/west side of the relief road plus pedestrian route.

Green Infrastructure and Greenspace

- xvi. The green infrastructure framework to be based on existing landscape/habitat features and Public Rights of Way (PROW), incorporating:-
 - a. new greenspace;
 - b. children's play facilities;
 - c. walking and cycling routes;
 - d. wildlife habitats and features;
 - e. 'green bridges/tunnels' at relief road crossing points.
 - f. Equivalent re-provision and/or improvements, in the event that the development directly impacts on the Otley Town FC, Old Otliensians RUFC and/or Otley RUFC ground and sports facilities and/or access to them.

Footpath and Cycle Links

- xvii. Enhancement of existing pedestrian (including all PROW) and cycle routes into the town centre and provision of new routes, together with bridleways, embedded into the site's green infrastructure.
- xviii. Retention of PROW as 'rural routes', embedded into the site's green infrastructure, incorporating cycle routes where feasible and minimising surface-level highway crossing points.
- xix. Integration of the route of the Wharfedale Greenway, in liaison with Greenway partners.
- xx. Retention of East Busk Lane as a walking and cycling route, embedded into the site's green infrastructure, incorporating a 'green bridge/tunnel' crossing of the relief road and connection to Wharfedale Greenway.
- xxi. Compliance with Policy TT1 in respect of the identified Otley cycleway and footpath network as shown on The Neighbourhood Plan Map.

Employment Provision

- xxii. Location of employment area(s) for easy access to the relief road and designed to avoid nuisance to residents with appropriate screening and buffering.

Education Provision

- xxiii. Location of school to maximise non-motorised vehicular travel from its catchment.
- xxiv. Location of school to facilitate direct motorised vehicular accessibility from the relief road, complemented by adequate parking and drop-off provision.

Environment

- xxv. The former tip sites at Ings Lane (where it lies within the site) and East Busk Lane to be remediated in line with best practice.
- xxvi. Provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in parking spaces in accordance with the latest assessment of local need.

