

Development Plan Representation -

Kirklees Draft Local Plan Development Plan Document

On behalf of Fairclough Homes

(Ryecroft Lane, Scholes – Site H38)

January 2016



I. Introduction

Spawforths have been instructed by Fairclough Homes to submit representations to the Kirklees Draft Local Plan Development Plan Document.

Fairclough Homes welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Kirklees Draft Local Plan and is keen to further the role of Kirklees within the Leeds City Region and Yorkshire and Humber as a whole.

As you are aware, Fairclough Homes has significant land interests in the area and has made representations to earlier stages of the emerging Local Plan.

Fairclough Homes would like to make comments on the following topics/sections/policies in the Draft Local Plan:

- Spatial Development Strategy
- Site Allocation – H38 Ryecroft Lane, Scholes
- Appendix 3 – Housing Delivery and Phasing Table

In each case, observations are set out with reference to the provisions of the Framework and where necessary, amendments are suggested to ensure that the Local Plan is made sound.

Fairclough Homes welcomes the opportunity for further engagement and the opportunity to appear at the Examination in Public.

We trust that you will confirm that these representations are duly made and will give due consideration to these comments.

Please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss any issues raised in this Representation further.

2. National Planning Policy Context and Tests of Soundness

The Government's core objectives as established through the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) are sustainable development and growth. Paragraph 14 of the Framework stresses the need for Local Plans to meet the objectively assessed needs of an area. The core planning principles are set out at paragraph 17. These include that planning should make every effort to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and businesses that the country needs. Plans should take account of market signals and allocate sufficient land to accommodate development within their area. The key focus throughout the Framework is to build a strong, competitive economy and to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes.

In relation to Local Plan formulation, paragraph 150 of the Framework states that Local Plans are the key to delivering sustainable development which reflects the vision and aspirations of local community. The Framework indicates that Local Plans must be consistent with the Framework and should set out the opportunities for development and provide clear policies on what will and will not be permitted and where.

In relation to the examination of Local Plans, paragraph 182 of the Framework sets out the tests of soundness and establishes that:

The Local Plan will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. A local planning authority should submit a plan for examination which it considers is “sound” – namely that it is:

Positively prepared – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;

Justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;

Effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and

Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

This document therefore considers the content of the Kirklees Draft Local Plan on behalf of Fairclough Homes in light of this planning policy context.

3. Spatial Development Strategy

Fairclough Homes is encouraged by the Spatial Development Strategy but is concerned with regards to the prioritisation of previously developed land.

3.1. Test of Soundness

Fairclough Homes considers that Kirklees Draft Local Plan is **unsound**.

Which test of soundness are comments about?			
X	Positively Prepared	X	Effective
X	Justified	X	Consistency with National Policy

3.2. Justification

Fairclough Homes is encouraged that the Spatial Development Strategy sets out to meet housing and employment needs through urban extensions and the recognition that greenfield sites will need to accommodate a significant proportion of that housing need.

However, Fairclough Homes **object** to the prioritisation and sequential approach alluded to in the 12th bullet point which is reinforced in the supporting text through paragraph 4.5, which states:

The draft Local Plan seeks to meet housing and employment needs with a priority for the delivery of brownfield sites. As there is not sufficient deliverable and/or developable brownfield supply to meet needs throughout the plan period, a sequential approach to land release is set out including brownfield sites followed by greenfield sites within settlements (where not required for open space uses), urban extensions and detached green belt sites.

Fairclough Homes would like to highlight that the Framework only refers to “encourage” the re-use of previously developed sites (para 17) and that the Framework encourages the use of sustainable greenfield sites to meet housing growth and to “boost significantly the

supply of housing” (para 47). Furthermore, appropriate and sustainable greenfield sites should not be overlooked in favour of unsustainable brownfield sites. The policy should therefore be reviewed to focus on encouragement rather than prioritisation and a sequential approach in order to accord with the Framework.

3.3. Proposed Change

To overcome the objection and address soundness matters, the Council should:

- Re-word the 12th bullet point of the Spatial Development Strategy to “encourage” the re-use of previously developed land.

4. Housing Allocation: Site H38 – Land to the East of Ryecroft Lane, Scholes, Holmfirth

Fairclough Homes supports the allocation of Site H38 – Land to the East of Ryecroft Lane, Scholes, Homfirth for residential development.

4.1. Test of Soundness

Fairclough Homes considers that Kirklees Draft Local Plan is **sound**.

Which test of soundness are comments about?			
X	Positively Prepared	X	Effective
X	Justified	X	Consistency with National Policy

4.2. Justification

Fairclough Homes **supports** the allocation of Site H38 – Land to the East of Ryecroft Lane, Scholes, Holmfirth for residential development.

Fairclough Homes considers the proposed housing allocation is available, suitable and achievable and therefore in accordance with the Framework is a deliverable site able to come forward in the short term.

The deliverability and benefits of Fairclough Homes’ site at H38 is as follows:

Overview of Proposals

The site is located on the edge of an established residential area and benefits from easy access to a range of services and facilities located within local centres. Huddersfield is also within easy reach via public transport. There are bus stops located nearby and there is a primary school within Scholes itself.



The principal highway access could potentially come off Scholes Moor Road or Sandy Gate. Within the site is an existing playground/recreation ground which will be retained.

Deliverability

The site is available, suitable and achievable and is deliverable in accordance with the Framework and represents a sustainable residential opportunity on the edge of an established residential area.

Availability

Fairclough Homes considers the site is available for development now.

Suitability

The proposed development can make an efficient and attractive use of the land. The site represents an excellent opportunity for future housing and development as it is Protected

Open Land and safeguarded for long term development in the UDP. This site allows housing to be delivered within an appropriate and sustainable location within Scholes and the Kirklees Rural area.

The site is located within a highly sustainable location on the edge of Scholes. The site's development would clearly accord with the emphasis set out in the Framework, particularly concerning the need to make more efficient use of land. The site benefits from being located close to a range of services and facilities including a post office, schools, pubs, employment opportunities and other community facilities.

Achievable

Fairclough Homes considers that development on this site is achievable and there are no known environmental constraints to site delivery.

Accessibility

The main access into the site can be taken from Scholes Moor Road, but equally an access can also be formed from Sandy Gate. It is considered that a safe and suitable accesses can be created into the site, and that the development would not have a significant detrimental impact on the local highways network. There is therefore no insurmountable constraint with regard to impact on local highways and access.

The site has good accessibility being in close proximity to the A635 and A629, which provides routes towards Huddersfield and Sheffield. The site also has good accessibility towards the A628 Woodhead Pass to Manchester. The site is adjacent to a number of bus stops which provide access to routes, including towards Huddersfield Town Centre and Homfirth. The site is close to services and facilities, including schools, post office and employment opportunities. The site is approximately 1 mile from Holmfirth and 7 miles from Huddersfield Town Centre.

Effective Use of Land

Although the site is greenfield, the site is Protected Open Land for long term development in the UDP and the proposed scheme will utilise and enhance existing infrastructure. Although the site is not previously developed it is currently under-utilised. The site is easily accessible and the proposed main access is off Scholes Moor Road. The scheme is therefore making an efficient and effective use of land and infrastructure.

Delivering a Flexible Supply of Housing

The Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to meet their full objectively assessed housing need. The site at Rycroft Lane, Scholes will reinforce the housing supply for the short to medium term and address the Districts housing needs in the early and middle periods of the Local Plan.

A Positive Response to the Key Objectives of the Framework

The Framework sets out that the Governments key housing policy goal of boosting significantly the supply of housing and proactively driving and supporting sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. The Framework explains that the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as extensions to towns, and creating mixed and sustainable communities with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. Sites should also make effective use of land and existing infrastructure.

- The proposal responds positively towards national guidance
- The site is appropriate for accommodating housing growth, being an expansion of an existing settlement.
- The proposed site is accessible to existing local community facilities, infrastructure and services, including public transport.
- The site has been assessed and is available, suitable and achievable for development.

Benefits of Rycroft Lane, Scholes

The development of the site would provide significant benefits. The site would provide housing that would meet the needs of the Kirklees Rural area. Therefore this site provides a unique opportunity in a sustainable location utilising an existing area of Protected Open Land for long term development.

In accordance with the Framework this representation has shown that:

- The site is suitable for housing.
- The proposal will deliver high quality housing.
- The proposal can provide a good mix of housing commensurate to the demand and need in the area.
- The scheme uses land efficiently and effectively.
- The proposal is in line with planning for housing objectives.

- The site is within a sustainable location situated in close proximity to facilities and services and also to bus stops for local bus routes.
- The proposal will deliver public open space.

The proposal is an appropriate site to provide for the housing needs of the District in the short to medium term and allocation of the site would confirm its potential to help continue the provision of a balanced housing supply in the District in sustainable locations. The site can deliver a full range and mix of housing and a sustainable community. Development of the site would deliver housing and affordable housing. Kirklees needs to have a robust housing trajectory and the site at Ryecroft Lane, Scholes, would assist with this delivery in the short term. The site is situated within a prime location suitable for residential development and as such would facilitate the development of land in a more effective and efficient manner. Development of the site would not harm or undermine the areas wider policy objectives, but seeks to reinforce the need to develop sites within sustainable locations as a priority.

The site is available, suitable and achievable and therefore deliverable in accordance with Framework Footnote 11.

4.3. Proposed Change

- No change

5. Appendix 3: Housing Delivery and Phasing Table

Fairclough Homes is encouraged by the Housing Delivery and Phasing Tables set out in Appendix 3 but is concerned that there is no justification for the tables and these appear out of context with the Draft Local Plan.

5.1. Test of Soundness

Fairclough Homes considers that Kirklees Draft Local Plan is **unsound**.

Which test of soundness are comments about?			
X	Positively Prepared	X	Effective
X	Justified	X	Consistency with National Policy

5.2. Justification

Fairclough Homes **supports** the identification of site H38 Land to the East of Ryecroft Lane, Scholes, Holmfirth delivering homes in the short term from 2017 onwards but is **concerned** about the purpose of Appendix 3 Housing Delivery and Phasing Table. There is no preceding text, explanation or justification to the table or link to a Local Plan Policy. The only reference in the draft Plan is towards a housing trajectory in paragraph 7.24 but no explanation as to how this was derived or whether it was devised from Appendix 3. Fairclough Homes would **object** if this table were to be used to phase or manage the release of sites. Fairclough Homes suggest that some explanatory text to explain that the table is “indicative only” and “will not be used for Development Management purposes”.

5.3. Proposed Change

To overcome the objection and address soundness matters, the Council should:

- Include explanatory text to explain that the table is “indicative only” and “will not be used for Development Management purposes”.