



JohnsonMowat
Planning & Development Consultants

STRATA HOMES LTD

LAND OFF WESTGATE, CLECKHEATON

HOUSING ALLOCATION MXS9

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF 194 NO. RESIDENTIAL
DWELLINGS**

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Strata Homes Ltd
Land off Westgate, Cleckheaton

Statement of Community Involvement

Date: May 2021

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LIMITATIONS

The assessments and interpretation have been made in line with legislation and guidelines in force at the time of writing, representing best practice at that time.

All of the comments and opinions contained in this report, including any conclusions, are based on the information obtained by Johnson Mowat Planning Ltd during our investigations.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Johnson Mowat on behalf of Strata Homes Ltd to detail the community consultation undertaken in relation to the proposed development of Mixed Use Allocation MXS9 at Cleckheaton, Huddersfield.
- 1.2 The document supports a Full Planning Application for the residential development of 194 dwellings at Westgate, Cleckheaton.
- 1.3 The site adjoins the settlement of Cleckheaton and is allocated as MXS9 in the Local Plan Proposals Map in the adopted Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019).
- 1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting technical documents which form this Full Planning submission.



2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Planning shapes the places where people work and live, so it is right that people should take an active part in the planning process. The applicant recognises that national planning policy is evolving to make community involvement an essential component of planning. The approach taken towards consultation for these development proposals has been strongly influenced by the latest Government policy, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Kirklees Council's specific guidance on community consultation for planning applications.

National Policy

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2019)

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework was first published in March 2012 and since revised in late July 2018 and later updated in February 2019. With regards to pre-application consultation, the document states:

- “39. *Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.*
40. *Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they do offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications’.*
41. *The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.”*



43. *The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.*

LOCALISM ACT (2011)

- 2.3 The Localism Act received royal assent in November 2011. The Localism Act aims to reform the planning system to make it clearer, more democratic and more effective. In order to further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduced a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for very large developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals.

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT (2004)

- 2.4 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced significant changes to the planning system. One of the changes means that Councils must carry out effective and useful consultation so that decisions are made in consultation with people affected by them.

Local Policy

Kirklees Council's Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.5 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires each local planning authority to prepare a 'Statement of Community Involvement', the Council adopted its first SCI in September 2006. A review of the SCI was undertaken in September 2015 and more recently in December 2019 as a result of:-

- Changes to planning legislation and regulations;
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements and compliance;
- Updated information on how the council will support Neighbourhood Planning groups in the district.

- 2.6 An addendum was published in September 2020 which outline how Kirklees Council will consult on Planning Policy during Pandemics and other crises. Some of the consultation methods set out in Kirklees Council's adopted SCI are not possible during crises such as global pandemics, due to the risk to employees, councillors and members of the public. These, and their position within the current SCI, are set out below:



- (Paragraphs 1.7, 2.17, 2.18) The Council will explore other ways of making consultations accessible to those without access to the internet, seldom heard groups, and those with visual impairments, such as increased use of representative community groups where these are active and telephone consultation.
- (Para 2.11) The Council are unable to provide hard copies of planning policy documents for public viewing at Huddersfield Civic Centre and Dewsbury service centre as these are currently closed to the public.
- (Para 2.17) The Council are unable to conduct physical exhibitions or use site notices. The ability of councillors to communicate with their communities may vary. The Council are unable to allow physical public attendance at council meetings.
- (Paragraphs 2.27, 3.1, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10) The SCI sets out various expectations of Neighbourhood Planning forums, such as regular meetings and conducting their own consultation. How this is arranged may vary from forum to forum. Elections and referenda are currently on hold nationally until May 2021, which will impact the progression of neighbourhood plan adoption.

2.7 It must be appreciated that these barriers to public consultation are not exclusive to the Council and that applicants are required to find innovative ways to overcome social distancing restrictions during a global pandemic. Johnson Mowat sought to do this through a leaflet drop and associated webpage, with opportunity to review site specific material and provide constructive feedback on the proposals.

2.8 The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is to set out how Kirklees Council will work with local communities and stakeholders to develop planning policy documents such as the Kirklees Local Plan or guidance on specific issues.

2.9 This report outlines the methods of consultation that have been used with the local community, the results and issues generated, and the way in which the various issues that were raised have been responded to. This statement of community involvement is submitted in support of the planning application for the development of Mixed Used Allocation MXS9 at Westgate, Cleckheaton.



3.0 PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

Kirklees Council Pre-application Response

- 3.1 An initial meeting took place between Johnson Mowat and Bill Topping (former Kirklees Council Planning Officer) in early 2020. This meeting was positive in understanding the constraints in remediating this long-standing brownfield site, with indication that the Council were pleased with the initial design and layout of the proposals at an early stage.
- 3.2 A formal pre-application response was received on 14th December 2020 from Nicholas Hirst, following Mr Topping's retirement. This included feedback on various material planning considerations, including residential and visual amenity, and highways.
- 3.3 A pre-application meeting took place virtually via Microsoft Teams on 18th December between Case Officer Nicholas Hirst, Cleckheaton Ward Councillors, Strata Homes and Johnson Mowat. This discussion was useful in addressing Case Officer concerns and shaping the proposed layout of the scheme. Both the Case Officer and Ward Councillors assisted in advising on the community consultation which was to be undertaken.
- 3.4 The main points of discussion can be summarised as follows:-
- Planning Policy (loss of existing employment units, allocation land not within red line boundary);
 - Design (layout, density, green space, house types, materials);
 - Technical Issues (flood risk, car parking);
 - Commuted Sums;
 - Viability; and
 - Community Consultation.
- 3.5 The matters raised at pre-app have been accounted for in the revised detailed design proposals and subsequently addressed in the Planning Case Report and Design & Access Statement.



Community Consultation Leaflet

- 3.6 Due to the scale of the proposals, and social distancing restrictions in place due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, it was deemed the most appropriate method of engagement would be via a consultation leaflet drop to local residents.
- 3.7 The key aims of the consultation were:-
- To inform local residents of the proposals; and
 - To obtain feedback prior to submission of the application.
- 3.8 A comprehensive leaflet drop was undertaken to local residents to inform them of the intention to submit a planning application to the Local Authority in due course. The leaflet provided a copy of the site location plan and detailed information on the proposals for the site. The leaflet encouraged any comments regarding the proposed design and layout of the proposals to be submitted.
- 3.9 Details were provided for the receipt of comments by the public which could be submitted via the dedicated website page or via email. Furthermore, a series of technical documents intended to be submitted in support of any forthcoming application were made publicly available on the website.
- 3.10 The consultation leaflet containing the details of the proposed application and site plan delivered to approximately 250 households adjoining the application site on 23rd December 2020 (a copy is included at Appendix 1). The details included a link to the website for electronic copies of the leaflet and supporting plans / drawings.
- 3.11 An electronic copy of the consultation leaflet was sent to the Local Ward Councillors on the 23rd December 2020 and informed them of the details of the consultation. No responses were received from Local Ward Councillors to the leaflet drop, however they did attend the pre-application meeting prior to the leaflet drop.

Website

- 3.12 Johnson Mowat have a dedicated website page for Land off Westgate, Cleckheaton (MXS9) containing details of the proposed scheme (including the leaflet and illustrative site layout).
- 3.13 The website went 'live' on the 23rd December 2020 to coincide with the leaflets sent to local residents and closed for comments on the 8th January 2021. This was extended beyond the benchmark 14 day consultation period, following consultation with local ward



councillors to ensure the consultation was not disrupted by the timing within the Christmas period.

3.14 As of the 18th May 2021 there were 247 downloads of the electronic leaflet, 297 downloads of the site layout.

3.15 The address for the website page is:

<http://www.johnsonmowat.co.uk/consultations/land-off-westgate-cleckheaton/>

Publicity of the Proposals

3.16 Following the leaflet drop on the 23rd December 2020, the Telegraph & Argus published an article on the proposals for the land at Westgate on 31st December 2020 and provided details of the consultation which Johnson Mowat were undertaking on behalf of Strata Homes. The mixed response from local residents is reflective of the consultation responses which Johnson Mowat received directly.

3.17 The publicity of the consultation process in the Telegraph & Argus further expanded our audience and ensured that as many interested parties could provide comment on the proposals as possible.



4.0 CONSULTATION REVIEW

Consultation Outcomes

4.1 Johnson Mowat is pleased that a number of people engaged with the consultation process for the proposed site and provided comments during the pre-application process. As of the 8th January 2021, from the community consultation exercise, 9 comments were received via the website forum.

4.2 Key issues by residents were as follows:-

- (i) Concern – the capacity of local facilities to support an increase in the local population.

Response – the allocation of the site in the recently adopted Local Plan ensured that its sustainability of location was examined thoroughly, with an independent inspector welcoming the sites allocation. It is anticipated that significant S106 costs will be generate from this development, which can be put towards improving facilities in the local area.

- (ii) Concern – development increasing the risk of flooding in the area.

Response – the proposals seek to make the most efficient use of land, with the large areas of the site which are in Flood Zone 2 and 3 being designated as Public Open Space. This follows pre-application discussions with the Case Officer and Local Ward Councillors to ensure that no development comes forward in areas at high risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy accompanies this submission.

- (iii) Concern – highway safety on already congested Westgate road and sufficient parking provision on site.

Response – pre-application discussions with Kirklees Council did not show any significant concerns in relation to highways. The application is supported by a Travel Plan and Transport Assessment. The Design and Access Statement and Site Layout Plan demonstrates that there has been adequate parking provision made across the site.



(iv) Positive comment – the development blends well with surrounding environment and is sympathetically designed. The removal of the disused brownfield sight is welcomed.

(v) Concern – overlooking of proposed new dwellings onto the properties off Quarry Road.

Response – the development has been designed to comply with Kirklees Council Local Plan policies in relation to separation distances and scale of development. Furthermore, a row of mature trees along Quarry Road will help to provide screening between proposed and existing properties. The design and scale of development is assessed in detail within the accompanying Design & Access Statement.

(vi) Request – provision of affordable housing on-site.

Response – as outlined in the Planning Statement, and on the Consultation Leaflet, the proposals seek to comply with Kirklees Council Local Plan requirement of 30% on-site affordable housing.



5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The community consultation exercise has been worthwhile in informing local residents of the proposed residential development in Cleckheaton, that being the residential development of 203 dwellings at Westgate, Cleckheaton. Following the community consultation exercise, the quantum of development being proposed was reduced to 194 dwellings.
- 5.2 Both the local residents and Local Councillors have had the opportunity to have an input into the development proposals before the planning application is submitted. The consultation has also informed the residents of the next stage of the planning process in advance of the planning application. Strata Homes are committed to maintaining a dialogue with the local community throughout the process.
- 5.3 The comments received following the consultation event have been important in finalising the scheme prior to submission to the Local Authority.



APPENDIX 1 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION LEAFLET

Community Consultation Leaflet

Land off Westgate, Cleckheaton (MXS9)

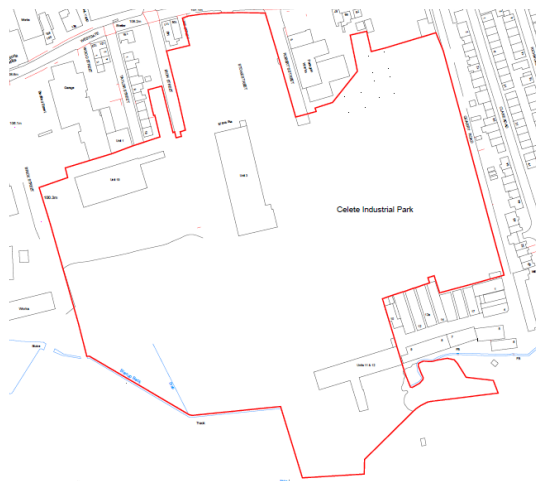
On behalf of Strata Homes Ltd, we write to inform you of the future development proposals for much needed family housing on land off Westgate, Cleckheaton (MXS9).

The subject site is a mixed use allocation (MXS9) within the Kirklees Local Plan (2019). The gross site area is 6.46Ha, Strata Homes intend to utilise this space in delivering 203 No. residential properties including the provision of open space.

The proposal is situated in a sustainable location within a short walk to public transport and all local facilities. The sustainability of the location and principle of development on the site has already been established through the consultation process and subsequent examination of the Kirklees Local Plan leading to the site's allocation.

The development team are seeking to submit an full planning application for a residential development consisting of the following:-

- Delivery of much needed family housing (203 No. Dwellings)
- Including the provision of 30% Affordable Homes on site.
- Landscaping across the site.
- Provision of a green corridor to the centre of the site and an extensive area of Public Open Space to the south.



Location Plan

You are invited to review the indicative site layout (on the overleaf) and provide us with your thoughts, comments and ideas.

A copy of the site layout can be downloaded from the Johnson Mowat website together with an electronic feedback form for submitting any comments. Please visit:

www.johnsonmowat.co.uk/consultations

Alternatively, comments can be emailed to:-

hello@johnsonmowat.co.uk

The website will close for comments on **8th January 2021**.

Following the close of this consultation, the development team will review and consider all comments received prior to the submission of a formal full planning application to Kirklees Council.

Please note that due to the extent of public consultations undertaken, we are not always able to enter into individual dialogue.



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PTO for Site Layout and House Type Examples

Land off Westgate, Cleckheaton (MXS9)

Site Layout and House Type Examples



Land off Westgate, Cleckheaton (MXS9)