



**JohnsonMowat**  
Planning & Development Consultants

**UBRIQUE INVESTMENTS LTD**

**STORTHES HALL, STORTHES HALL LANE,  
KIRKBURTON, HD8 0WA**

**HOUSING ALLOCATION MDGB1**

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF  
BUILDINGS AT STORTHES HALL AND CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO 261  
RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE LODGE COTTAGE  
FOR A RESIDENTIAL USE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS ON LAND SOUTH OF  
STORTHES HALL LANE (THE MATTER OF ACCESS AND LAYOUT FOR  
DETERMINATION ONLY)**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**DECEMBER 2023**



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Ubrique Investments Ltd  
Storthes Hall, Kirkburton, HD8 0WA

Statement of Community Involvement

Date: December 2023

Johnson Mowat  
Planning & Development Consultants  
Coronet House  
Queen Street  
Leeds  
LS1 2TW

t: 0113 887 0120  
e: [hello@johnsonmowat.co.uk](mailto:hello@johnsonmowat.co.uk)  
w. [www.johnsonmowat.co.uk](http://www.johnsonmowat.co.uk)





## 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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- a) the date on which this assessment was undertaken; and
- b) the date on which the final report is delivered.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

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- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Johnson Mowat on behalf of Ubrique Investment Ltd to detail the community consultation undertaken in relation to the proposed development at Storthes Hall, Storthes Hall Lane, Kirkburton, HD8 0WA.
- 1.2 The document supports an Outline Planning Application for the demolition of Storthes Hall and residential development of up to 261 dwellings and redevelopment of the Lodge cottage for a residential use and associated works on land south of Storthes Hall Lane. The matter of access and layout only are for consideration at this stage.
- 1.3 The Site does not fall within any identified settlement, it is a standalone major developed site in the Green Belt and designated for housing under reference MDGB1 in the adopted Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019). Storthes Hall is unique within Kirklees as it despite its housing allocation, it remains within the Green Belt, with Policy LP59 setting out that the redevelopment of Storthes Hall will be required to limit its impact on the Openness of the Green Belt.
- 1.4 The Site is currently operational as a student campus with associated convenience store and stand-alone dining/drinking establishment. There are now substantial voids in accommodation buildings that reflect the decline in student numbers on this relatively remote site. We are informed that purpose-built student accommodation in the main town is sufficient to cater for future student accommodation needs without this site, hence its Local Plan designation.
- 1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting information:
- Design and Access Statement and supporting plans – Parker Peel;
  - Planning Case Report – Johnson Mowat;
  - Climate Change Statement (part of the Planning Case Report) – Johnson Mowat;
  - Topographical Survey – Holden Surveys;
  - Heritage Statement – MB Heritage;
  - Transport Statement – Optima;
  - Travel Plan – Optima;
  - Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy – Dart Engineers;
  - Health Impact Assessment – Johnson Mowat;
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Assessment – Enzygo;



- Bat Survey Report – Enzygo;
- Arboricultural Survey – Enzygo;
- Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment – Iain Tavendale;
- Landscape Plan – Urban Wilderness;
- Air Quality Assessment – SLR; and
- Geoenvironmental Appraisal – Lithos.

1.6 Johnson Mowat have been engaged in a series of local discussions with the Local Planning Authority and stakeholders regarding the development proposals.



## 2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

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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 (2023)

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was first published in March 2012 and since revised with the most recently update coming in September 2023. 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 preapplication 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 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.”*

2.3 The Applicant has sought to follow the advice of the Framework, in undertaking early engagement with both the Local Authority and local community.

#### Localism Act (2011)

2.4 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)

2.5 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 (2019)

2.6 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.

2.7 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.

- 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. It is recognised that through the adoption of the Local Plan, allocation MDGB1 will have undergone extensive consultation with both the local community and technical officers at Kirklees Council.



## 3.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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### Pre-application Consultation

- 3.1 A pre-application enquiry was submitted to the Council in order to obtain planning and technical advice prior to the submission of a formal planning application. A pre-application was submitted on behalf of the Applicant on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in order to obtain planning advice on an indicative scheme for circa 300 dwellings. This submission consisted of a covering letter and illustrative masterplan document explaining the design principles.
- 3.2 On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, a Team Leader informed us that the pre-application would be allocated to Case Officer Richard Riggs, who was set to join the Local Authority on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Following introductions with the Case Officer in September, consultee comments were provided from the following departments in November 2022:-
- Ecology;
  - Environmental Health;
  - Highways Development Management;
  - Highway Structures;
  - Strategic Housing;
  - Trees;
  - Waster Strategy; and
  - West Yorkshire Police.
- 3.3 A pre-application meeting was held on-site on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 with Johnson Mowat, Richard Riggs (KC Planning Officer), Adam Darwin (KC Highways), Nick Goddard (KC Landscape), Ward Members (Cllr Bill Armer and Cllr John Taylor), Parker Peel Architects and representatives of the Applicant. The Council informed of a number of key site specific constraints, which are summarised below for clarity:-
- Green Belt – the critical assessment will relate to impact on openness and difference between the existing against proposed built volume, rather than relating to an indicative capacity figure set out in the Local Plan.



- Trees – significant number of trees are subject to a TPO. The majority are located to the edge of the site, any harm to those trees to be mitigated against. It was accepted some loss may be unavoidable.
  - Highways and Access – the site currently operates on a one-way flow for car and buses with the southern access point being further constrained through a combination of mature trees and heritage features (Lodge House, Gate piers and associated wall).
- 3.4 Further discussion was had with regards to the following topics; housing mix, internal highways layout, access, sustainable construction, urban design, public open space, off-site highways, public consultation and Section 106 contributions.
- 3.5 Following the site-visit, a follow up meeting was held with Johnson Mowat, Richard Riggs, Danisa Baloyi (KC Housing Strategy Officer), the Applicant and Space Partnerships (a Registered Provider) . This meeting was solely focused around the topic of affordable housing.
- 3.6 It was agreed that the policy requirement was to deliver 20% affordable housing in a range of tenures, as set out below:-
- 55% Affordable rented;
  - 20% Shared Equity; and
  - 25% First Homes.
- 3.7 However, the Council were in agreement that the 20% total requirement could be reduced through a compliant Vacant Building Credit (VBC) where the vacant floorspace at Storthes could be legitimately demonstrated.
- 3.8 It was accepted that some affordable housing requirement would still remain following the application of VBC, which led to discussion around the benefits of providing this on-site or off-site. The Council informed that their preference was for 100% to be provided on-site.
- 3.9 It was contested whether the prospect of affordable housing in this location would be attractive to Registered Providers, and whether social housing would be better suited to a location with greater services within walking distance. The Applicant informed of their ownership of Ashenhurst, a vacant student accommodation site in Kirklees which was currently being utilised as part of an emergency housing strategy trial by the Council, and the potential to utilise that site for providing affordable housing.



- 3.10 The Council requested greater detail on the potential of the Ashenhurst site for off-site affordable, and detail regarding the interest from Registered Providers to take on affordable housing at Storthes Hall in light of its location.
- 3.11 It is considered that all of the technical matters raised within the Councils pre-application response have been addressed in the supporting technical documents that form part of this Outline application submission.

### **Community Consultation 2023**

- 3.12 The Applicant made initial contact with Ward Members through the pre-application process and some attended the site visit as detailed above. On 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Johnson Mowat informed Ward Members of the upcoming community consultation to allow them advance sight of the consultation material prior to the public being made aware of the proposals. It was confirmed that Cllr Taylor would post details of the proposals on his social media channels to raise awareness within the local community.
- 3.13 Due to the scale of the proposals, lack of immediate neighbours and level of consultation undertaken in the allocation of the land in the Local Plan, it was deemed the most appropriate method of engagement would be via a leaflet drop to local residents.
- 3.14 The key aims of the consultation were:-
- To inform local residents of the proposals; and
  - To obtain feedback prior to submission of the application.
- 3.15 A leaflet drop was undertaken on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to inform local residential of the intention to submit a planning application to the Local Authority in due course. The leaflet provided a copy of the site layout 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 direct to Johnson Mowat via the website feedback form or direct via email.
- 3.16 The consultation leaflet containing the details of the proposed application and site plan was delivered to 100 properties in close proximity to the application site. Further leaflets were placed in the reception area at Storthes Hall, at the Venue and electronic copies were sent to the neighbouring sports clubs to make them aware of the proposals.
- 3.17 An electronic copy of the letter and proposed site layout was made available on the Johnson Mowat website, to ensure any interested stakeholders had an opportunity to



review the material and provide comment. The website can be viewed at the following URL:-

<https://johnsonmowat.co.uk/public-consultations/storthes-hall>

- 3.18 It is considered that the consultation undertaken on the proposed site layout has involved all the relevant stakeholders, including the council, landowners, developers, the local community and other interested parties.