

**Consultation Response from KC,
Conservation & Design**

2025/92776 land at, Eastfield, Shepley, Huddersfield, HD8 8HB

Outline application, with all matters reserved, for residential development with associated open space, landscaping, drainage infrastructure and associated works

Date Responded: 18/3/26

Responding Officer: SC

Responding Ref:

A Heritage Statement has been submitted Ref. P24-1419 to fulfil the requirement in paragraph 207 of the NPPF for the 'applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affect, including any contribution made by their setting'.

In terms of comments from Conservation and Design Team there are two **listed structures** quite near the proposed development site including the War Memorial (60m southwest) and Shepley First School (70m west).

There is potential for less than substantial harm to the setting of the **War Memorial**. War Memorials Trust have also submitted comments regarding the setting. The Heritage Statement confirms that the '**setting** contributes to the significance of the asset including;

- The enclosure within which the memorial is located;
- The settlement of Shepley to the north of the asset which the memorial is designed to look over and from where the soldiers commemorated on this memorial were from; and
- The immediate surrounds of the edge of the enclosure, which features a mix a woodland and agricultural land'.

The statement also refers to the 'tranquil environment where visitors can sit and contemplate the memorial and its meaning, as well as allowing the monument to be appreciated from all angles.'

Any proposals should be designed to mitigate harm by retention of mature trees on the boundary, appropriate extra landscaping at this end of the site and sensitive siting of elements of the development away from the memorial site with buffer of open space as set out in the Heritage Assessment. The proposal states potential for benefits through woodland management, repair of footpaths and contributions to the maintenance of the memorial enclosure.

Shepley First School is quite nearby, an impressive former Board School dated 1896 of Free Northern Renaissance style. There is potential for the proposed development to cause harm to the setting of the Grade II listed school, within the Conservation Area, which is at a distance of around 70m.

This proposed residential site is quite close but not adjacent to **Shepley Conservation Area** (70m) and it is noted that more recent residential development has occurred on the edge of Shepley.

The site is visually contained by the tree belt which screens views from the east, south and partially from the west into the site. Views from the north are mostly obscured by built form. Some long-distance views show the site in context with the built form of Shepley from higher ground. Plate 4, on P.7 in the Heritage Statement shows that the Scheme would be visible in longer distance views. The Statement considers that it 'would be seen firmly within the context of the extant built form and would not break the skyline, still being seen in the context of the valley floor.'

Victoria Mills (non-designated heritage asset) industrial mill complex is still in use for commercial/manufacturing uses. The proposal provides a buffer of open space to reduce noise issues, which seems reasonable.

The Heritage Statement concludes the following.

'The Scheme would not result in the loss of any features associated with functioning of the mill and the elements which contribute the most to significance that is the physical fabric, will also not experience any harm. As the Site is not considered to make any contribution to the significance of this asset, it is considered that the proposed Scheme would not result in any harm to the significance.'

A Statement of **Archaeological Potential** and Significance concludes on P. 16

'5.33 There is a lack of evidence from within the Site and surrounding area for activity relating to the prehistoric and Roman periods. Whilst this cannot be said to state with certainty there is no evidence

for activity of these periods, the sloping nature of the Site makes it unattractive as a place of permanent settlement and it is not located in proximity to any watercourses or natural resources.

5.34 As such, it is considered that the potential for archaeology of these periods is low.

5.35 For all of its recorded history, the Site has been utilised as agricultural land. There is no indication of any built form within the Site which would be of interest. It is considered that any archaeological remains which may exist within the Site would be related to agricultural activity and be of local interest only.

5.36 A geophysical survey is proposed for the Site, to be undertaken when the crops are harvested.'

It is recommended to consult WYAAS to see if they recommend any conditions regarding archaeology.

The Heritage Statement makes an assessment of the **Setting** of 11 listed buildings, **Shepley Conservation Area** and other non-designated heritage assets in Section 6, P. 17.

In the absence of a Conservation Area Appraisal, the Statement P.18 has identified the special interest of the Conservation Area includes,

- 'The legibility of the historic layout, appreciated as a cluster rather than the ribbon layout;
- The survival of 19th century historic fabric; and
- The important open spaces within the boundary such as those at Cliffe House.'

The Statement also identifies the Setting of the Conservation Area includes,

- 'The valley location which provides the topographical context for built form;
- Recreational land in the surroundings, including that connected with buildings within the boundary; and
- Surrounding agricultural land insofar as it forms part of views which contribute to the significance and allow the understanding of the special interests.'

The Statement concludes at 6.17,

'Therefore, it is not anticipated that the proposed scheme would result in any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.'

However, Conservation and Design Team consider that the proposed housing development has potential to cause some harm to views (particularly in winter) from the Conservation Area and also harm to the setting of the Conservation Area at Firth Street (by Shepley First School) and the Public Right of Way to the listed war memorial. The existing setting from this part of the Conservation Area is a rural setting surrounded by open fields, hedges, trees, woodland and agricultural buildings.

There is potential for cumulative impact and harm to the setting of the Conservation Area by classifying this site as greybelt land. The character of this area surrounding the Conservation Area is very rural and generally it would be preferred if brownfield sites could be developed first as a priority before greenbelt or greybelt. The level of harm is considered to be less than substantial of a moderate to minor level and should be weighed against the public benefits. The public benefits should be the highest proportion of affordable housing (35% minimum) possible but also the highest quality of development particularly in relation to materials, design, landscaping and accessible greenspace.

If it is concluded that this site would satisfy the NPPF requirements to be classed as greybelt land to allow some development, it is imperative that the development should be of the highest quality in terms of materials, design, landscaping, scale, layout, form, massing and details.

It is recommended that any new development should preserve the setting and special character of the historic settlement and Conservation Area. The character of settlements can be preserved by safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Any proposed new development should;

- Retain woodland boundary settings and include appropriate extra soft landscaping and stone

boundary walls.

- Site the development appropriately according to topography so avoid new dwellings at higher points
- Reflect the strong local distinctiveness of Shepley Conservation Area in terms of materials, scale, form, design, by utilising local natural stone and natural slate.

The Heritage Statement includes Section C2 from the National **Design** Guide as follows;

"Well-designed places and buildings are influenced positively by:

- the history and heritage of the site, its surroundings and the wider area, including cultural influences;
- the significance and setting of heritage assets and any other specific features that merit conserving and enhancing;
- the local vernacular, including historical building typologies such as the terrace, town house, mews, villa or mansion block, the treatment of façades, characteristic materials and details - see Identity."

The **Design and Access Statement** provides the context and Assessment Understanding the local character at P.34 to inform design and materials. This is generally buff coloured stone. It is not recommended to follow the housing materials immediately by the Site at Eastfield and Lea Drive which include red brick and render, dark red/brown pantiles as these are not part of the local distinctive palette of materials. As this proposal is to build on grey belt/green belt into open countryside it is recommended that local natural stone should be utilised to assimilate the development better to the edge of the Conservation Area at Firth Street. Natural slate should be utilised for roofs, as the red tiles or other concrete tiles would appear out of context particularly on the rising hillside. Windows and doors are more appropriate if set back within a reveal not flush with the walls.

The reinforcement of green routes and tree belts outlined in the Masterplan would be welcomed, and more planting of trees in groups within the site would help to reduce the impact of the new development on the open countryside.

From information submitted with the **Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal** the following sections are relevant.

LVIA "7.20 It is predicted that any views towards the proposed development from this group of properties would consist of the upper parts of the dwellings and rooflines, especially from those properties which are located on a greater elevation at the southern part of the group."

This statement demonstrates that any housing should incorporate high quality natural traditional materials for roof cover eg natural slate and natural stone walls, so the development could assimilate into the landscape and character of the settlement.

LVA 7.30 "the new planting associated with the proposed development would have become established, going some way in reducing the visual impact by screening and softening built form."

The strengthening of planting on the perimeter and within the site would help to reduce the impact of the new housing.

Section 7.55-7.60 refers to the intervisibility between Shepley First School, Shepley Methodist Church and the proposed housing site stating that views into the site would be available from the eastern

extents of Shepley First School, South East side and rear of the school building, and from the adjacent football pitch and tennis courts. Intervisibility would be more prominent during winter months, there are proposals to incorporate and enhance vegetation along the site boundary to strengthen the edge to the woodland to reduce the impact from moderate adverse effect to minor-moderate adverse effect by year 15 with the establishment of planting.

In conclusion the less than substantial harm to heritage assets in this case should be weighed up against any public benefits proposed for example the level of provision of affordable housing and the materials, design and landscaping need to be of the highest quality, appropriate to the nearby Conservation Area, to justify development on this site.