



JohnsonMowat
Planning & Development Consultants

Kirklees Local Plan Examination

Stage 4 Hearings

Matter 30

**H94 – Land west of Henry Frederick Avenue, Netherton
Redrow Homes (Yorkshire) Ltd and Portman Land Limited**

January 2018



This Hearing Statement should be read alongside previously submitted Local Plan consultation responses including:

- Kirklees Draft Local Plan January 2016 Response:
 - o Netherton Site Advocacy Brochure – January 2016 (including indicative Masterplan)
 - o Optima Access Appraisal – January 2016
- Kirklees Publication Draft Local Plan December 2016 Response

a) Has the impact of the proposal on the historic environment been adequately assessed and appropriate mitigation measures put in place?

1.1 There is no further information to add beyond that submitted to the Publication Draft Local Plan in relation to the impact of the site on the historic environment. The text is repeated below for ease.

1.2 In summary, it is considered that the Council and Redrow Homes / Portman Land have given adequate consideration to the historic environment. The indicative masterplan included within the January 2016 Advocacy Brochure retains the long distance views to Castle Hill along the footpath corridor along the southern boundary of the site. Clearly the preparation of a planning application and detailed design layout will address the historic environment in further detail, in consultation with the Council's conservation team and Historic England as necessary. To date, Historic England have identified that the site will have no impact on heritage assets, which is a view shared by our Heritage Consultant as detailed / repeated below.

Previous Comments to Publication Draft Local Plan:

1.3 We note the uncertain neutral effect against the heritage objective and also note that Historic England have rated this site as 'green' in terms of the potential for effects on the historic environment and state it is considered unlikely to result in any harm to any designated heritage asset.

1.4 A review has been undertaken of relevant historic environment baseline data falling within the vicinity of the site. The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) holds no records within the site boundary. A number of listed buildings fall within the historic cores of South Crosland to the west and Netherton to the east and south-east. These buildings reflect the linear character of historic development within both settlements and address the main streets of Midway and Church Lane. Those in closest proximity to the site, to the north side of Church Lane and each grade II listed, included the former Vicarage (list entry number 1134321), national school (1210448) and Church of the Holy Trinity (1313827) all constructed in the mid-19th century.

1.5 The site has no substantive inter-visibility with those designated heritage assets falling within its proximity given topography and intervening built and landscape form. It does not form part



of, or facilitate, any significant views towards or from the designated conservation areas within South Crosland and Netherton. Whilst development will remove an area of agricultural land it is not considered that this holds particular heritage significance within the wider setting of the two settlements and sufficient land will be retained to the west to protect the contextual historic setting of South Crosland. Given these considerations the development will not adversely impact upon the setting of known designated heritage assets within the vicinity.

- 1.6 The Castle Hill scheduled monument (1009846), and grade II listed Victoria Tower (1210385), situated around 2.5km to the east of site, are sensitive and highly prominent landmarks within the locality and the wider Kirklees and Huddersfield Area. The heritage values of both assets are to varying degrees represented in views available from within and across the site most notably from the public right of way running to south of the site. The significance of the Castle Hill site is reflected in Local Plan evidence studies including the Castle Hill Setting Study (2015) produced on behalf of the Council by Atkins Ltd.
- 1.7 The setting study provides an extended description of the heritage values of the Castle Hill site and its immediate and extended setting. In terms of views westward from Castle Hill the study notes that these take in a mixed landscape with the urban conurbation to the south of Huddersfield town centre forming a considerable component. This suburban character is broken up by the wooded river valleys of the Colne and Holme and by areas of farmland and woodland along with the moorland ridges beyond. Pockets of urban development are noted at Netherton and Honley. No views towards the Hill are noted within the study which take in or are facilitated by the site.
- 1.8 Views of the monument and listed tower are available from within the site and from the footpath to the south and these views become more prominent moving westwards as landform rises towards South Crosland. In views from Castle Hill the site can be seen as part of the pocket of agricultural land separating South Crosland and Netherton although it is in part screened by foreground built development in the latter settlement. In views towards and from the Hill the proposed development will be seen as part of the urban built form of Netherton and will be in keeping with the existing mixed urban and rural character. The visual separation formed by the agricultural land between the two settlements will not be substantively impacted in views from the Hill. Views from within and adjoining the southernmost section of the site may potentially be interrupted by new built form. The new development will however provide opportunities for new publicly available views of the monument along new roads and within open space provision. Overall no substantive impacts upon the wider setting of the monument will arise.
- 1.9 It is therefore concluded that the development, on an in principle basis, raises no heritage issues which would prevent allocation. This accords with the conclusions reached by both the Council and Historic England.



b) Has the impact of the proposal on biodiversity, including Dean Wood Local Wildlife Site, been adequately assessed and appropriate mitigation measures put in place?

- 1.10 It is considered that the biodiversity impacts of the proposed housing allocation have been adequately assessed. The wording of the allocation site H94 in the Allocations and Designation Publication Draft makes specific reference to a buffer zone for Dean Wood Local Wildlife Site, and makes reference to a 20m buffer required to the north of the site. This is clearly shown on the indicative masterplan contained within the January 2016 Advocacy Brochure. It is not considered that any further mitigation is required.
- 1.11 The Council's response to representations received (EX17) for site H94 refers to the site bordering Dean Wood Local Wildlife Site to the north but states that it is large enough to incorporate a buffer to protect sensitive environmental habitats.
- 1.12 Ecological surveys will be progressed as part of the preparation of a planning application, for submission upon adoption of the Local Plan.

c) Is the site available and deliverable in the timescale set out in the Council's housing trajectory?

- 1.13 The site continues to be available, with Redrow Homes and Portman Land continuing to be committed to the delivery of the site. The updated housing trajectory in the Housing Supply Topic Paper December 2017 (EX30.2) includes delivery of the site at a rate of 30 dwellings per annum from 2020/21, with the site being completed within 5 years up to 2024/25. We recognise that the trajectory does not constitute a phasing policy, it is merely indicative and should not constrain sites from coming forward earlier than stated. We have no objection to the delivery of the site from 2020/21 onwards. Redrow Homes envisage preparing a planning application upon adoption of the Local Plan, with background ecological survey work being undertaken in the forthcoming seasonal survey windows. A planning application could feasibly be submitted in Summer 2018, therefore the site is certainly deliverable within the Council's housing trajectory timeframe.

d) What effect would the proposed boundary change and allocation have on the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it? Are there exceptional circumstances that justify altering the Green Belt? If so, what are they?

- 1.14 Whilst the proposed Green Belt boundary change and allocation of the site will inevitably have an effect on the Green Belt and encroach into the countryside, it is considered that the boundary change represents a reasonable and proportionate extension to Netherpton, with little or no impact on the purposes of including land in the green belt, with the opportunity of creating a strong new defensible green belt boundary on the western edge of the site. The indicative



masterplan clearly shows boundary landscaping along the western boundary of the site which will form the new settlement limit to Netherpton and Green Belt boundary. It is considered that this creates a clearly defensible Green Belt boundary.

1.15 The NPPF five Green Belt purposes are assessed against this site as follows:

1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;

Site H94 is constrained to the north by Dean Wood which forms a strong boundary feature to contain development, and is enclosed to the south by existing housing.

2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;

The allocation of site H94 and extension of Netherpton will not reduce the gap between Netherpton and South Crossland given the existing development immediately south of the site which extends further west towards South Crossland than site H94.

3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

Whilst encroachment will be inevitable, the extension of the settlement is proportionate and the proposed new Green Belt boundary will create a clear defensible green belt boundary.

4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;

The removal of site H94 from the Green Belt in principle will not raise any heritage issues which prevent its allocation. See more detailed response to question a.

5. To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The Council encourage the development of brownfield sites in the District, but acknowledge that additional land is required to meet the district's housing and employment land requirements. The removal of this site from the Green Belt will not undermine the re-use of brownfield and non-green belt land elsewhere in the district.

1.16 It is considered that there are exceptional circumstances to justify altering the Green Belt, which relate to the requirement to meet the objectively assessed need for housing.

1.17 We note the Council's comments in response to representations received on the Publication Draft Local Plan, which are relevant to this question.

"The Local Plan seeks to encourage the development of brownfield sites but acknowledges that a brownfield only approach will not meet the district's housing and employment land requirements alone, meaning that greenfield and green belt sites and land also need to play a role in meeting these needs... Exceptional circumstances exist to amend the green belt boundary as this site is required to meet the objectively assessed need for housing in the district. After due consideration of all relevant non-green belt alternatives, the need to promote sustainable development patterns, the role



and function of the green belt and the specific characteristics of this site, it is deemed that in this instance the benefits of facilitating housing development on the site outweigh the loss of this part of the green belt.”

- 1.18 The above text is also included in the Council’s Site pro-forma for green belt release sites (EX13). The pro-forma refers to the little risk of sprawl given that it is contained by landform and trees to the north and by development on Church Lane to the south. Reference is made to the numerous field boundaries that provide opportunities for limited expansion without undermining the role and function of the green belt in this location.