



JohnsonMowat
Planning & Development Consultants

Kirklees Local Plan Examination

Stage 4 Hearings

Matter 30

H2730a – Land south east of Hermitage Park, Lepton.

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 Lepton Site Advocacy Brochure – January 2016
 - o Site Access Appraisal (Optima) – January 2016
- Kirklees Publication Draft Local Plan December 2016 Response:
 - o Written Response
 - o Transport Addendum (Revision 1)
 - o Amended Illustrative Masterplan (December 2016)

a) How do sites H2730a and H2684a relate to each other? Should they be combined in a single text box / policy and a joint Masterplan required?

- 1.1 We acknowledge that there is a relationship between H2730a and H2684a, with the obvious overlap being the shared boundary and potential access link between the two sites. Despite the overlap, it is not considered that there is a need for the two sites to be combined or a joint masterplan prepared.
- 1.2 It is accepted that there are cumulative impacts on the highway network from both the sites and Redrow and Portman accept that contributions will be required towards the proposed new roundabout at Penistone Road / Woodsome Road. However, it is unnecessary to combine the sites which could result in holding back H2730a on grounds of the required highway works, when in fact part of site H2730a can in the main be delivered immediately from a separate access off Hermitage Park.
- 1.3 Redrow Homes and Portman Land are content to continue with individual discussions with Kirklees Council regarding the delivery of site H2730a, as are those representing the landowners of site H2684a.
- 1.4 Redrow Homes and Portman Land would be happy for the policy wording of the individual sites to make reference to neither site ransoming each other in order to hold back the collective delivery of both the sites.

b) How does the proposed new roundabout at Penistone Road / Woodsome Road fit with the Indicative Masterplan for Rowley Lane (December 2016)? What are the implications for site phasing?

- 1.5 The December 2016 Indicative Masterplan for Site H2730a shows a potential link to site H2684a, which will be accessed via a proposed new roundabout. It is accepted that the delivery of H2730a will require an appropriate contribution towards the costs of the proposed new roundabout and Redrow Home and Portman Land are happy to contribute to it as deemed



necessary. It would be acceptable to include reference in the policy text for H2730a to an appropriate and proportionate contribution towards the proposed new roundabout.

- 1.6 As referred to in question a, there is not considered a need to combine these two sites due to the potential consequence of holding back H2730a due to the delivery of the proposed roundabout. Whilst we do not object to the reference in the policy to the primary access via site H2684a, this is on the basis that a secondary access is also accepted from Hermitage Park. It is indeed likely that part of site H2730a will come forward in advance of the roundabout, with access taken from Hermitage Park. This will be of an appropriate and acceptable scale, and could make a contribution to the roundabout highway works as necessary.
- 1.7 The early delivery of part of site H2730a should not be held back by the delivery of the proposed new roundabout.

c) Is there sufficient provision to ensure that development on sites H2730a and H2684a does not cause unacceptable impacts on biodiversity and local habitats?

- 1.8 It is considered that the biodiversity impacts of the proposed housing allocation H2730a have been adequately assessed. The wording of the allocation site H2730a in the Allocations and Designation Publication Draft makes specific reference to a 20m stand-off distance from Lepton Great Wood and reference to maintaining hedgerows and protected trees within the site.
- 1.9 Furthermore, Submission Document SD4 – List of Additional Modifications to the Publication Local Plan AD-MM10 includes the insertion of additional wording within the Site Specific Considerations part of Policy H2730a. Redrow Homes and Portman Land do not object to the proposed additional text, which states:
- “Avoidance, mitigation and/or compensation measures may be required to address any identified adverse ecological impacts in line with Policy PLP30. Such measures may involve the retention of habitats.”
- 1.10 The indicative masterplan clearly shows a woodland buffer along the full length of the eastern boundary of the site, as well as the retention of existing trees and hedgerows within the site with interconnecting green corridors. Larger areas of open space are proposed in the southern part of the site abutting Beldon Brook and in the northern part of the site to the rear of properties off Rowley Lane. Given the policy wording relating to the woodland buffer, the main modification to the policy text and the indicative masterplan showing the buffer and green corridors, it is not considered that any further mitigation is required.



1.11 The requisite ecological surveys will be progressed as part of the preparation of a planning application for site H2730a, for submission upon adoption of the Local Plan.

d) Has the impact of the proposal on heritage assets been adequately assessed and addressed? Should protection and mitigation measures linked to the Heritage Impact Assessment (LE98) be specified in the Plan?

1.12 The Council's Heritage Impact Assessment (LE98) identifies Crow Trees Grade II listed building as requiring assessment. Crow Trees is a private dwelling in secluded grounds, which abuts the north western boundary of the site. It is considered that the site specific heritage impact assessment outlines the key considerations and future detailed design work during the application stage will address the mitigation measures outlined. The requirement for a Heritage Impact Assessment is listed within the 'reports required' section of Policy H2730a. It is not considered that any additional wording is required within the Policy text.

1.13 Although not referred to in the Heritage Impact Assessment, the indicative masterplan has had consideration to the long distance views towards Castle Hill, which will be further explored during detailed design considerations.

e) Are the sites available and deliverable in the timescales set out in the Council's housing trajectory?

1.14 We can only comment on Site H2730a and can confirm that the site continues to be available, with Redrow Homes and Portman Land continuing to be committed to the delivery of the site.

1.15 The updated housing trajectory in the Housing Supply Topic Paper December 2017 (EX30.2) includes delivery of the site at an average rate of 50 dwellings per annum from 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. That said, we disagree with the timing of H2730a and in particular the timing in relation to the delivery of H2684a, which commences in 2020/21. Given that Site H2730a has the ability to start delivery from a secondary access off Hermitage Park, there is no reason why site H2730a cannot commence delivery at the same time as H2684a from 2020/21 onwards. Redrow Homes envisage preparing a planning application upon adoption of the Local Plan. A planning application could feasibly be submitted any time from Summer 2018. It is therefore considered that the site is available and deliverable.



f) What effect would the proposed boundary changes and allocations have on the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it? In particular, how would the existing gap between Lepton and Highburton be affected? Are there exceptional circumstances that justify altering the Green Belt? If so, what are they?

1.16 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 Lepton, 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 along Beldon Brook to the south of sites H2730a and H2684a.

1.17 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 H2730a is constrained to the east by Lepton Great Wood which forms a strong boundary feature to contain development. The land is also contained to the west by existing development.

The Council in their site Pro-Forma refer to the fact that while the site is an area of countryside its degree of containment limits its relationship to the wider countryside.

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

The allocation of site H2730a and extension of Lepton further south will not reduce the gap between Lepton and Highburton given the existing development off the A629 Penistone Road / Dogley Lane in between Lepton and Highburton, to the west of site H2730a. A significant gap will be maintained.

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 along Beldon Brook will create a clear, long term/ permanent, defensible green belt boundary.

The Council's Site Pro-Forma for Green Belt releases in relation to this site states "This large site is contained by the edge of Lepton to the west, Lepton Great Wood to the east and follows field boundaries, so there is little risk of sprawl or further encroachment.

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

The removal of site H2730a from the Green Belt in principle will not raise any heritage issues which prevent its allocation.

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.

1.18 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.

1.19 We note the Council's comments in the Pro-Forma for Green Belt releases in specific relation to this site, and the exceptional circumstances, which states:

“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.”