

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Doncaster Road, Darfield

July 2024



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Document Record

Date	Revision	Completed By	Checked	Notes
July 2024	0	VS	VS	

Section 1: Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by JRP on behalf of our client Keepmoat Homes and Saul Homes.

The report accompanies a hybrid planning application for residential development on land at Allocation HS78 Doncaster Road, Darfield.

Proposed Development

The proposed development scheme that is the subject of this application and its rationale is more fully explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) but can be summarised as follows: -

Hybrid planning application comprising of the following:

'Area 1' includes the northern and eastern part of the site and is proposing the erection of 260 dwellings (93 Saul Homes/ 167 Keepmoat Homes) with detention basin, associated infrastructure and landscape. Permission for Area 1 would be sought in full.

Area 2 includes the southern field, to the south and west of the woodland. Permission for this phase would be sought in outline, with all matters reserved.

Background

Since 2004, the Government has undertaken major reforms of the planning system, a key aim of which is to strengthen community involvement in the planning process. The Localism Act received Royal Assent in November 2011 and gives new rights and powers to communities and individuals through the planning process. The Act introduces a requirement to conduct pre-application consultation in certain circumstances and places a duty on the Applicant to take account of responses.

Section 2: Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) sets out the national policy approach to community engagement.

Paragraph 16 states that plans should, amongst a list of other things, *'be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees.'*

Paragraphs 39 to 46 refers to early engagement at pre-application stage.

Paragraph 131 advises how effective engagement with communities, local authorities and other interested parties can help is fundamental to the creation of high quality places which are acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 137 confirms that the approach recognised by the Local Planning Authorities and states that

'Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve design that take account the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive, and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.'

Section 3: Purpose of Consultation

The Applicant was keen to obtain the views of the community and stakeholders to help shape proposals and to keep them informed of progress. This has been central to the preparation of the proposals for the site and has ensured that the Government's objectives for community consultation have been fully embraced.

This Statement documents the consultation process, feedback and demonstrates how it has informed the proposals. The pre-application consultation is in addition to the statutory consultation that will be undertaken by the Council following the submission of a planning application.

Section 4: The Consultation Process

The Applicant has entered into pre-application discussions with the following:

- Local Councillors and Local Residents
- Barnsley Council officers

The pre-application process was invaluable in establishing the key concerns and considerations and allowed us to progress and evolve our scheme accordingly.

Pre-application Request

As part of the process of developing proposals for the site, it was the Clients intention to enter into pre-application discussions with the Council.

This included discussions on the design proposals, validation requirements for the application in addition to screening with regards to potential EIA implications.

Responses were received from the Local Authority which provided comfort that consultation could proceed. A summary of the comments obtained through the formal pre-application process can be seen in Appendix C of this document.

Local Councillors

Email correspondence was issued to the Darfield representatives in order to advise of the intention to undertake community consultation.

An invitation was also extended for us to meet with and discuss proposals with the Local Councillors before the public consultation was undertaken

A briefing was provided to Councillor Osborne in advance of the event. Councillor Osborne reserved any comments towards the proposals and advised that the intention was to meet with and discuss with his constituents and to ensure that we fully understand the breadth of emotion and opinions towards the development proposals.

Community Consultation

A leaflet was issued to existing properties inviting them to a Public Consultation Event to discuss the design proposals and the intention to progress with a planning application. A copy of this leaflet can be seen in Appendix A.

The Event was held on Thursday 27th June 2024 between 3pm and 8pm at The Strawbridge's Garden Centre, Doncaster Road, Darfield which is positioned directly opposite the development site. The presentation material is shown at Appendix B.

The event was extremely well attended and provided a valuable insight to the team and helped highlight possible issues.

Residents were encouraged to give feedback on the proposals by way of completing a feedback form. The form could either be completed at the Event or email comments sent afterwards.

In addition to the event, the information was uploaded onto the website (www.jrpassoc.co.uk.co.uk) which remains live today and allows residents to view the proposals and provide feedback.

Throughout the consultation process there has been an intention to respond to consultation feedback in a meaningful way and, where practicable, provide information and address concerns.

Section 5: Feedback

The comments received are summarised below.

Comments
<p>No development is needed in Darfield – Darfield does not need more housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is there a need for new housing when there are so many empty • Lots of brownfield areas to build on • The site does not need to be developed • Building on greenbelt is all about money • The development will be negative environmentally and in terms of infrastructure
<p>Lack of local services i.e. Doctors and Dentists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough medical facilities / educational facilities. These are overwhelmed and understaffed • Lack of joint up thinking in terms of infrastructure, services and development • The hospital is already in a poor state without additional pressure – A and E, social care • Not enough shops
<p>Layout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starter Homes do not fall into ‘affordable homes’ • Further on site meetings requested to consider individual home impacts • Boundary queries raised in respect of existing ditches and boundary treatments / maintenance • Do not want social housing on the site • Will all of the bridleways and footpaths be kept on site • Bungalows should be provided along the eastern side to be more considerate to the existing bungalows and their residents
<p>Highways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising accidents along the main roads • Dozens of accidents on Doncaster Road • Access points are silly due to blind bend • Traffic lights or roundabout needed • Level of traffic through Darfield is already too much • Increased traffic and parking • Require increased bus links and better services. The buses are now full of people from

Thurnsco and Goldthorpe
<p>Flood Risk and Drainage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding occurs on Alba Road and the pond will add to it
<p>Ecology considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is environmental critical land which would jeopardise our integral natural habitat and contribute to ecological degradation • Wildlife and plants will be under stress • Bees are within the woodland • All woodland should be retained on site
<p>Utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage and electricity in the lower part of Darfield is already in a poor state. Yorkshire water attend frequently already without the increased demand
<p>Consultation Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The format is poor and should have had representatives from the Council attending.

Section 6.0 Responding to Feedback

This section provides further details in respect of the comments received and provides responses / actions for the development as we progress towards the application.

Principle of developing the site – why in Darfield

The majority of the application site falls within a 'housing allocation' (ref: HS78) as defined in the adopted Local Plan. Local Plan Policy H1 states that at least 21,546 new homes are to be built during the plan period (2014 – 2033). Local Plan Policy H2 states that 1370 new houses are to be developed within the Wombwell area.

The principle of developing the site with residential development is therefore established subject to the proposals meeting the wider local plan policy requirements. This would be considered through the course of the application process. As the development team explained at the event and demonstrated through the Barnsley Council Housing Allocation map, housing allocations are being progressed elsewhere within the District and this is not just in Darfield.

Lack of local services i.e. Doctors and Dentists

There is now a deepening crisis in dental care, leaving people struggling to get treatment or regular check-ups on the NHS. Calling on the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England for greater ambition and urgency from NHS dental reform plans to create a fair and inclusive dental service.

The NHS has long carried a stubbornly high number of unfilled vacancies, a problem that far predates the pandemic.

As of March 2023, there were 112,498 vacancies in secondary care in England. Of these, 8,549 vacancies were medical, amounting to 8% of all medical posts. This vacancy rate is similar to the one seen a year ago (7.9%). The greatest proportion of vacancies remains in nursing, with 40,096 unfilled posts (nearly 10% of all nursing posts). Care is delivered by multi-disciplinary teams, so nursing shortages directly impact the medical workforce who must take on a greater burden of work as a result.

High vacancy rates create a vicious cycle: shortages produce environments of chronic stress, which increases pressure on existing staff, and in turn encourages higher turnover and absence. This unfortunately is something that has become apparent

through the consultation process with residents advising that they are unable to obtain appointments with their GP surgery or even become registered at the local Dentist.

This unfortunately is a national issue and not one solely being experienced within Darfield.

The development team understands the frustration on this matter and will be working with the Local Authority through the course of the application to further understand this issue and determine what actions are in place moving forward. Should it be determined that a financial contribution is required as part of the development then this will be discussed. To date, no mention has been made in this regard by the Local Authority and a requirement to allow the development of this site.

This is a similar situation in respect of school capacity. Initial pre-application discussions have confirmed that there is a shortfall in primary and secondary education within this area.

As part of any application, a more detailed assessment will be made upon which will assess the population to be generated. Additional data is considered in respect of current school places available and population figures. A financial contribution will then be required by the developer which will be secured by a legal agreement. The LPA would then be the ones to determine where and how those monies are spent. This is beyond the developer's power.

In respect of a lack of facilities within Darfield, the site has been allocated within the Local Plan without the addition of further shopping facilities.

The site is in a very sustainable location due to its proximity to local bus stages and rail station which provides connections to Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, Leeds, and Wakefield that have a multitude of amenities, facilities and other transport opportunities. The site is also within walking distance of the many local facilities and amenities within Darfield and cycling distance of those essential services within Wombwell. Therefore, the site conforms to current Government directives for ensuring developments are located in a sustainable location.

The proposed population would therefore support the existing facilities.

Ecology

Concern was raised as part of the consultation in respect of the loss of land and the impact on biodiversity.

Whitcher Wildlife have been commissioned and are working with the applicants in order to mitigate the impact of the development.

Whilst the main enhancements to the site should be achieved by habitat management, enhancement and creation, all of which will contribute towards biodiversity net gain, there will also be an expectation to provide biodiversity enhancements for fauna on the site, which will not contribute directly, but instead provide qualitative benefits. The site offers opportunities for this and it is encouraged that these are explored further to increase the ecological value of the site. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Creation of log, stone and soil piles around the site to provide habitat for reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.
- The inclusion of integrated bat boxes within all new properties.
- The inclusion of integrated bird boxes within all new properties.
- The inclusion of integrated bee bricks within all new properties.

These will be included as part of the development proposals.

Highways

Significant concern was raised through the consultation event in respect of Doncaster Road where it was advised that the speed is too high and accidents are experienced.

A highway consultant has been employed to review the existing highway network and the junction capacity assessment.

Initial discussions have been held with the Local Authority Highways departments where it is advised that the following improvements to Doncaster Road would be appropriate along Doncaster Road: -

- Ghost Island Arrangement with right turn lane, including traffic island and pedestrian refuge island that can accommodate cycles.
- Traffic Calming measures such as red surfacing and SLOW markings
- It is proposed to provide a footway across the site frontage along Doncaster Road and Barnsley Road, connecting both proposed access junctions via the external footway network. From the Barnsley Road junction it is proposed to provide a footway connection to the nearby bus stop.

The A635 Doncaster Road access proposals do include the widening of Doncaster Road along the site frontage to accommodate the new right turn lane. The right turn lane also includes a pedestrian refuge island to the east, which will be 3m in width to assist cyclists crossing Doncaster Road from the development to the north side shared footway/ cycleway. The pedestrian refuge will include illuminated bollards and refuge beacon. Tactile paving will also be provided on both sides of the road and within the refuge island.

Further comments were raised in respect of doing more for safety. This included discussions on the speed limit which has already been reduced from National to 50 m.p.h.

The potential 40mph speed limit reduction on Doncaster Road has been discussed previously with Barnsley Council in respect to the site access, and from previous meetings would not generally be supported due to potential speed limit enforcement issues. The applicant team had a Road Safety Audit carried out recommended a reduction to a 40mph speed limit.

Given local concern, the applicant is happy to continue discussions with Barnsley Council Highways Officers to advise that they are happy to introduce a reduced speed limit and gateway feature on Doncaster Road access scheme. This however would need to be considered appropriate by the Council.

In terms of Barnsley Road, speed surveys in the vicinity of the site access show speeds at around 34mph, which concludes that there would be no need to pull forward the reduced speed to the access.

Bus Services

Concerns were raised in relation to the level of bus services within the locality.

The bus stop located closest to the proposed development site is known as 'Barnsley Road / Doncaster Road' and is situated approximately 111 metres to the southeast of the proposed Barnsley Road access. This local fare stage has the benefit of a flagpole, timetable case and passenger shelter.

There is also a bus stop located on the A635 Doncaster Road around 155m west of the proposed site access. This includes tactile paving and flag pole.

The following services are identified:

Number	Route	Typical Frequency			Provider
		Mon – Fri	Sat	Sun	
218	Rotherham Town Centre / Interchange – Barnsley Town Centre / Interchange	30 mins	60 mins	N/A	Stagecoach Yorkshire
218a	Rotherham Town Centre / Interchange – Barnsley Town Centre / Interchange	60 mins	60 mins	N/A	Stagecoach Yorkshire
219	Doncaster Town Centre / Frenchgate Interchange – Barnsley Town Centre / Interchange	60 mins	60 mins	120 mins	Stagecoach Yorkshire
219a	Doncaster Town Centre / Frenchgate Interchange – Barnsley Town Centre / Interchange	Infrequent	Infrequent	N/A	Stagecoach Yorkshire
X19	Doncaster Town Centre / Frenchgate Interchange – Barnsley Town Centre / Interchange	30 mins – 60 mins	60 mins	60 mins	Stagecoach Yorkshire
481	Worsborough Bridge – Kendray	School service only	N/A	N/A	Peter Hodgson Travel

There are bus services that provide links to the settlements of Rawmarsh, Swinton, Manvers, Goldthorpe, Darfield, Ardsley, Spotborough, High Melton, Harlington, Thurnscoe, Great Houghton, Stairfoot, Grimethorpe, Worsborough Bridge, Ward Green, Monk Bretton, Worsborough Common, Lundwood, Cundy Cross and Kendray. In addition, there are links via bus to the interchanges at Rotherham, Mexborough, Barnsley and Doncaster Frenchgate which provide opportunities for travel to destinations further afield by sustainable means.

The development would include a bus route within the site if required. It is envisaged that the internal loop road that connects Doncaster Road and Barnsley Road access points would satisfy this requirement. Any bus stop infrastructure and internal routing would be agreed with South Yorkshire PTE and the LPA.

Therefore, the level of traffic generated by the proposals can be accommodated and will have no material impact on the safe operation of the local highway and will not significantly add to any congestion at the peak times on the local network.

Layout

Comments during the consultation on the layout design were limited however this section highlights the comments that were raised at the event.

Starter Homes do not fall into ‘affordable homes’

The application will provide affordable homes which would be a range of social rent and discount for sale.

The scheme provides a wide mix of accommodation with a range of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings. This would allow a wide choice of accommodation for a wide demographic including first time buyers.

Further on site meetings requested to consider individual home impacts

As the application progresses the applicant would be happy to further meet and discuss the proposals with those residents and contact details are on file to allow that contact to be made.

Boundary queries raised in respect of existing ditches and boundary treatments / maintenance

The question on how the boundaries are determined is on a site by site basis and the initial stance would be to go to the legal boundary. Where ditches are present or where boundaries are already in place then the applicant is happy to look at this on an individual basis. Again, this is a matter that can be further discussed and agreed with the individual owners as the development progresses.

Do not want social housing on the site

At the consultation there was a clear concern over the types of residents that would be permitted to live in the affordable homes and how this would impact on the wider community. This was particularly connected to the provision of 1 bedroom homes.

The affordable units are designed in a way that would be indistinguishable to the open market and have been pepper potted throughout the site. The provision of affordable housing is a requirement on all new developments.

Will all of the bridleways and footpaths be kept on site

The existing formal footpaths / Public Right of Ways have been identified and will be retained as part of the development proposals. There is a diversion proposed along the route of the existing Public Right of Way around the new detention basin. Although this route will change, the ability to walk through the site remains.

Bungalows should be provided along the eastern side to be more considerate to the existing bungalows and their residents

The housing mix has been carefully considered as part of the development with the provision of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes.

Although the development does not provide bungalows, there is a provision of M4(3) accessible homes being proposed on site. M4(3) sets a standard for wheelchair accessible homes, known as “Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings”. The M4(3) requirement is achieved when a new dwelling provides provisions for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and have the ability to use any private outdoor space, parking and communal facilities. Those types of units are being provided on this site as opposed to bungalows.

Careful consideration has been given to existing residents to ensure we do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The development fully considers the impact of the scheme in respect of flood risk and drainage.

The scheme proposes a sustainable drainage solution in the form of a detention basin.

The basin is proposed to be located to the South of the development, using the closest highway as a reference point this is based to the West of Alba Close.

The basin is located to the South of the development as this is both the low point of the development allowing the rainwater to drain in a piped system by means of gravity and also based to the West of the watercourse that will be the ultimate connection point for the development.

The basin has been sized to accommodate 1 in 100yr + 40% climate change – for an understanding the 1 in 100yr is referred to as a 1% flood event as there is a 1% annual chance that this will happen within a year period. We then have a 40% allowance above this storm to account for climate change over the lifetime of the development.

The basin then has a further 0.5m of space (referred to as freeboard) above this water level to the basin top, to ensure that no surrounding areas would be at risk of flooding.

The proposed discharge rate (agreed with the local flood authority) is based on what is referred to as a green field rate – this ensures that the discharge rate from the development is no more than the run-off already created from the field, that through natural flood routes already discharges into the watercourse. This ensures that local and residents downstream of the watercourse and at **NO** increased flood risk.

The existing sewers are the responsibility of Yorkshire Water who have been consulted as part of the development proposals. They will continue to be consulted through the course of the formal application process and will be made aware of the concerns raised through this consultation process. The assessments undertaken will ensure that the development does not cause harm to the drainage network.

Electricity

Concerns were raised in respect of the existing network and the low electricity levels. This is especially a concern with the provision of EV charging points to each property. Careful assessments will be undertaken, and discussions held with the distribution companies to ensure sufficient power can be provided to the site. New substations will likely be required on the site. This ensures that there will not be additional pressure on the existing system.

Noise Impact through construction phase

As part of any consent, a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be undertaken and considered by the Local Authority. This will set out how the development would be constructed, identify working times, delivery and construction routes and will ensure minimum disruption to existing residents within the Local Area. The requirement of such a plan would be secured by planning conditions.

Quarry Land and ability to build upon

A site Investigation Report has been commissioned as part of the technical supporting documentation.

This included investigations and inspections of historical and geological maps and information provided by the British Geological Survey, and the Landmark Information Group, and QGIS. In addition, site inspections and detailed / intrusive investigations have been carried out. A summary of salient geo-environmental issues is provided within the report together with recommendations for the foundation design of the development. The reports and investigations have confirmed that the site can be developed without concern.

How long is the proposed time line.

The timeline for the development is dependent upon many factors such as planning and sales rates. Given the amount of housing proposed it is envisaged that this would be a 4 to 5 year

build period for Phase 1. Some elements are, however, out of the developers' control however best endeavors' will be made to develop the site within this anticipated timeframe.

The applicant would welcome a positive relationship with local stakeholders so that any concerns may be raised and dealt with immediately.

Section 5: Summary and Conclusions

The pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant has met the requirements set at the national and local level.

This exercise has enabled the applicant to understand the key issues of the local community and to ensure that those concerns are addressed wherever possible.

A significant number of concerns raised unfortunately relate to the overall principle of developing the site with residential development. The site is a location where the Local Authority has determined it is appropriate for housing, which will help to address the local housing need.

Hopefully this document, however, explains how local matters and concerns are being heard, can be reviewed and further discussed to ensure they are addressed as we move forward towards a planning application.

The Applicant is committed to collaborating with the local community as far as is possible to develop proposals and to ensure that any concerns are addressed.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C