**Pre-application Advice Report**

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| **Site Address:**  Owlthorpe Site E | **Pre-app enquiry ref:**  **19/00544/PREAPP** |
| 1. **We understand your proposal to be....**   Residential development layout showing 82 units | |
| 1. **Advice[[1]](#footnote-1)**   **In this section we will say what we think about your proposal. This will include our view about the likelihood of permission being granted and what might be done to improve the prospects, where relevant.**  **Principle of Residential Development**  Core Strategy policy CS24c seeks to maximise the development of previously developed land but in the period 2025/26 allows for housing on certain green field sites including the Owlthorpe township.  The application is promoted as a housing site in “Housing Sites (C,D,E) Moorthorpe Way, Owlthorpe Planning and Design Brief” updated Nov 2017, which has undergone public consultation and has been approved by the Planning and Highways Area Committee. This location is identified in the brief as site E.  The site is an allocated site for housing in the Sheffield Development Framework pre-submission proposals map 2013 which has limited weight as the council is preparing a new local plan.  The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) proposals Map shows part of the site allocated for housing, part for a local centre and part open space. The shape, size and location of the designations do not reflect any actual features or development proposals on the ground. In this case the UDP proposals map carries limited weight as it does not wholly comply with the Core Strategy.  The site is accessible by bus and tram and is close to the Drakehouse and Crystal Peaks retail facilities and therefore is a sustainable location for housing.  Development of the site for housing will also help Sheffield to meet its 5 years housing requirement where there is currently a shortfall. Therefore it is clear that the principle of housing development is supported by planning policy.  Core Strategy policy CS26 aims to make efficient use of land for new homes, and sets out appropriate density ranges for locations depending on accessibility. The site is near to a Supertram route and therefore the appropriate density range is 40 – 60 dwellings per hectare. The proposal for 82 new homes on the net developable area of 2.53 hectare represents a density of around 33 dwellings per hectare, and therefore conflicts with the objectives of the policy. The policy allows for densities outside the appropriate range to be allowed in situations where the proposal achieves good design, reflects the character of an area or protects a sensitive area. Subject to the details of the final design there is a good prospect that we will conclude that the proposal will meet these criteria.  Policy CS41 requires no more than 50% of the homes to be of a single house type. The submitted layout proposes 8% 2bed units, 34% 3 bed units, 51% 4 bed units and 5% 5 bed units. Although 3 bed units are slightly above 50% this is not considered to be a major concern.  **Layout/Design**  An overall masterplan has been supplied post meeting. This is useful but will need to take into account the conclusions on the provision of play/sports facilities and the link road, see below. When finalised it would be desirable to liaise with property colleagues and explain how the phasing of the various elements of infrastructure eg the provision of play/sports facilities, suds and the formalisation of footpath connections shown on the masterplan is expected to be delivered so that we can be clear about what needs to be secured as part of this application.  The proposed layout and arrangement has a clear structure with the side routes coming off the main spine, however:  - A number of instances of frontage parking are of concern, for example No 36 – 39, No 12-17, and No 61-65 where parking could be rearranged to the side and houses brought forward to create a better relationship with the street/focal open space.  - A lot of frontage parking is proposed along the main spine route, which is a concern.  - There is a general lack of boundary treatments, which is a concern. Boundary treatments should be provided to reinforce the street edge and local hierarchy, eg main spine road, crescent and softer edges . Consideration should be given to softer boundaries to the green edges of the site such as hedges and railings with more urban edges provided to the focal spaces and main spine road such as buildings and masonry boundary walls. Tree planting would help to create green fingers extending into the site connecting with the woodland.  - It appears that the selection of house-types does not have a relationship with the hierarchy of space/ street, which is a missed opportunity.  - There is an opportunity for the layout to create pinch points at corners along the main spine route to the other circulation routes, reinforcing local legibility within the layout.  - There are a number of instances of left over open space especially to the side of the houses which may be better incorporated within private gardens.  - Contemporary simple housing design that creates a distinctive character is sought on this site rather that repeating the indistinct suburban housing found through much of the surroundings. This would be more on the lines of your Stannington brickworks scheme and Abbeydale Road scheme other examples of this more contemporary approach were tabled at the meeting such as Cricket Inn Road and Sheffield Housing Company sites. These schemes exhibit larger scale windows with deep reveals and a more contemporary approach. Facing brickwork could be a quality brown brick to respond to the more rural context. Character could be created to different areas of the site by grouping simple changes to brickwork detailing and boundaries eg around the focal space.  - Plot 50 appears crammed in due to the proximity to the potential link road (see below,) overlooking of neighbouring garden, car parking does not appear to work and there is a lack of defensible space to the front of the house should the link road go ahead, suggest this plot is removed.  Detailed assessment of the layout will be dependent on levels information and what that means in terms of retaining features. Large retaining structures should be avoided and level areas should be provided in gardens adjacent to the houses. The levels appear challenging off the turning head at the rear of the doctor’s surgery and the feasibility of the layout is questioned in this location.  Breathing space should be provided to the footpath to the side of plot 82 ie. mown strip for security and planting to soften the side boundary.  Frontage car parking on a number of the units seems to cover the full width of the frontage with no obvious routes for pedestrians and no flexibility to soften the frontage.  Side boundary walls facing on the public realm should be more robust and higher quality than simple timber fencing.  **Access Issues**  Due to sickness highway comments could not be provided at the meeting and these will follow as soon as possible.  However the site sales brochure, page 8 included the following text in relation to the link road.  cid:image001.png@01D4E0A5.F8FB4730  I understand that politicians are keen to ensure that the link road is capable of being delivered in the future should the requirement arise and therefore we will need to be satisfied that this is achievable for any layout we permit.  I will be seeking confirmation from highways that the design of the main spine road through the site has been designed to accommodate a link road function. Also whether any footpath connections need improving, there is a walking and cycling route in need of improvement indicated in 2013 Pre-Submission Proposals Map and this is also indicated in the opportunities and constraints plan and the urban design framework in the planning brief. I will be asking highways to consider whether lighting should be provided to the cycle link along the eastern boundary of the site and whether any improvements are needed to junctions around the site eg Donetsk way and Moorthorpe Gate.  **Inclusive Access**  It is important to adopt inclusive design standards as an early stage in the design process. Design standards applicable to this proposal include –   * ‘Inclusive Mobility’, Department for Transport * ‘Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving Surfaces’, Department for Transport * BS 8300-1:2018 'Design of an accessible and inclusive environment - Part 1: External environment - Code of practice'   The conventional streets shown serving much of the development are very welcome. A network of dropped kerb pedestrian crossings with areas of blister paving to DfT standards will need to be provided (and existing crossings upgraded).  The existing footway on the east side of the street to the west of the medical centre - providing pedestrian and vehicle access to the centre - will need to be retained but is not shown on the layout.  Shared space streets (with protected spaces) and shared surface streets should comply with the matrix of street design vs vehicle flows agreed with the Council's Access Liaison Group, including entry treatments or 'gateways' to –   * clearly signal the change of priority to drivers * include tactile warnings to safeguard visually impaired pedestrians from walking out into the carriageway of the conventional street * provide inclusive routes for pedestrians entering and leaving the shared space or shared surface street or passing by. * The areas of public open space will need to be developed into inclusive amenity areas.   **Landscape**  The main cause of concern for the indicated layout on this site is the North-west corner where the road layout may impact on the trees off site; as such we will be looking for:  • Existing topographical survey showing levels, services, boundary features, structures, trees etc.  • Proposed levels [& sections] for the site, focussed specifically on changes at the edges/in proximity to trees.  Generally we would be looking for the following:  1. A tree survey which should include species, age, height, spread, visual contribution, whether protected, assessment of condition and recommendation for tree work in accordance with BS 5837:2012. Also indicate any trees on adjoining sites or the highway that may be affected by any aspect of the development.  This survey should also show:  • Treatment of existing trees, protection method (i.e., a Tree Constraints Plan in accordance with BS 5837:2012), surgery, and indicating those specified for retention and/or removal.  • Measures to be taken to ensure that buildings will not be sited too close to existing trees in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 and NHBC Regulations.  2. Soft Landscape/Planting proposals, including treatments for the open space areas shown, should include:  • Topsoil specification and depths;  • An accurate planting schedule and planting plan at 1:200 or 1:100 scale;  • A comprehensive list of species and stock specification;  • Details of planting densities and spacings;  • Individual location of specimen trees and shrubs;  • Areas of grass/wildflowers including seed mix and sowing rates; and,  • Maintenance schedule to ensure the successful establishment of the scheme.  3. Hard landscaping details:  • Principally: proposed levels, surfacing materials, walls, fencing and street furniture.  Planting to soften garden boundaries where it abuts the open space.  It is accepted that substantial numbers of trees and vegetation will need to be removed to facilitate the development and this will impact on the landscape and ecological value of the site. However it may be feasible to retain some trees adjoining the ancient woodland and elsewhere and this should be considered. Given that there is likely to be a significant impact on the landscape and ecology of site the application should include proposals to mitigate and compensate for the impact. This might include off- site enhancements in the adjoining nature conservation sites. It is recommended that your ecologist make contact with Angus Hunter the biodiversity officer on 0114 2736951 or 07855 225172 to discuss this.  **Ecology**  The planning brief requires 15m separation of development from the trunks of trees adjacent to the ancient woodland – it seems unlikely that this will be achieved but a tree survey will help to clarify. The 15m buffer will also apply to the future road link. Natural England’s standing advice on buffer zones to Ancient woodland is as follows.  “For ancient woodlands, you should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres to avoid root damage. Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, you’re likely to need a larger buffer zone. For example, the effect of air pollution from development that results in a significant increase in traffic.”  The advice from our ecologist is that no development of any form should be allowed in the buffer zones including footpaths. Their primary function is to protect the woodland from disturbance and to function as a wildlife corridor. They have advised that footpaths, roads and management such as mowing, will destroy this function and should not be permitted in a AW buffer zone. The buffers should be naturalistic, wild, unplanted and unmanaged as a wildlife corridor unless a management/planting plan has been agreed with the LA ecologist.  It was acknowledged at the meeting that adjustments will be needed to the layout following the tree survey in order to meet the above constraint.  The general area (including the potential development site) comprises scattered scrub, neutral grasslands and pasture (some under Higher Level Stewardship), mature trees and hedgerows. Some of the pastures are notable for orchids and fungi.  Along the northern edge of the site is a corridor of Ancient Woodland along the Ochre Dike (LWS 296).  The site would require a Phase 1 Habitat Survey, to be carried out at an appropriate time of year for the habitats present. This would ideally be May - June. Specifically, the Phase 1 should place emphasis on:  • Scoping for protected species, notably badgers and bats.  • Birds, noting species of woodland, scrub and open grassland  • Identifying any UKBAP/ NERC Section 41 habitats: Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Hedgerows. Any others present.  Any development of this site should be assessed against the following UDP policies: GE11, GE13, GE15, GE17, GE19 and GE26.  GE13 specifically states: ‘Development which would damage areas of Natural History Interest will normally not be permitted. Development affecting Local Nature Sites should, wherever possible, be sited and designed so as to protect and enhance the most important features of natural history interest’.  The application should include proposals for the translocation of the wild orchids on site.  **Affordable Housing /Housing Mix**  11 units are to be provided to meet the affordable housing policy and 7more are to be sold to the Council at market rates, these will all be for shared equity which will be transferred to the council and managed by the council. Post the meeting Dan Green has advised me that in terms of the 11 affordable units, the sq ft coverage works out at 10.96% of the total for all 82 units, so just above the 10% AH contribution rate for this area. However it is not clear if the sq ft figures are for internal floor space (which is used for the AH contribution rate).  For the scheme as a whole (affordable and open market), it would be preferable to see a higher proportion of 2-beds for starter homes and some downsizing options for older households in this development. Otherwise this would need to be considered when the other two sides are marketed, to ensure local need is being met across the sites as a whole.  **Renewable Energy**  Unless it can be shown not to be feasible and viable Core Strategy policy CS65 requires 10% of predicted energy needs to be met form decentralised renewable/low carbon energy. This does not preclude an alternative fabric first approach to offset an equivalent amount of energy.  **Land contamination**  The council’s Environmental Protection Service has advised that they would be likely to recommend the following conditions should be applied to any consent.  *No development shall commence until a mines gas risk assessment has been undertaken and a desktop study report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR11 (Environment Agency 2004).*  *Any intrusive investigation recommended in the Mines Gas Risk Assessment Desktop Study Report shall be carried out and be the subject of a Phase II Intrusive Site Investigation Report which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced. The Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR 11 (Environment Agency 2004).*  *Any remediation works recommended in the Phase II Intrusive Site Investigation Report shall be the subject of a Remediation Strategy Report which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced. The Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR11 (Environment Agency 2004) and Local Planning Authority policies relating to validation of capping measures and validation of gas protection measures.*  *All development and associated remediation shall proceed in accordance with the recommendations of the approved Remediation Strategy. In the event that remediation is unable to proceed in accordance with the approved Remediation Strategy, or unexpected contamination is encountered at any stage of the development process, works should cease and the Local Planning Authority and Environmental Protection Service (tel: 0114 273 4651) should be contacted immediately. Revisions to the Remediation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved revised Remediation Strategy.*  *Upon completion of any measures identified in the approved Remediation Strategy or any approved revised Remediation Strategy, a Validation Report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The development or any part thereof shall not be brought in to use until the Validation Report has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Validation Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR11 (Environment Agency 2004) and Local Planning Authority policies relating to validation of capping measures and validation of gas protection measures.*  You may wish to consider addressing some or all of the pre-commencement conditions (relating to land quality) either in advance of submitting a planning application or submitting the relevant reporting in support of the planning application, with the objective of potentially negating the application of such conditions to any favourable planning consent.  **Air Quality**  An air quality assessment is needed where there are 60+ vehicle movements in any hour within 200m of an area exceeding Air Quality Limitation Values or for housing within 200m of such and area. Limit values are exceeded on Donetsk Way and this is within 200m of the site, therefore an assessment is required.  You should consider making provision for electric chargers in the house designs.  **Open Space**  The Council needs to explain what it is looking for in terms of play and Multi games provision as this has potential implications for the site layout. As set out in the brief it is expected that the play facilities are provided as part of the first application. Emma Wells in the council’s forward and area plan section has agreed to take this forward with parks and recreation and property. I will keep you informed of progress.  It is normally the case that open space and play provision is maintained and managed by the applicant, however Roger Nowell the Suds officer has raised with Parks whether this could be tacked on to the suds management precept.  **Sustainable Urban Drainage and Flood Risk**  A flood risk assessment is required as the site area exceeds I hectare.  A SuDs design statement will be needed for this site.  The development should discharge to the nearby watercourse at greenfield rates.  Offsite detention basins could be accommodated on the public land to the north-east. This will need to be designed to acceptable standards considering the proximity to housing. This could provide treatment for everyday flows as well as storage. It was explained in the meeting that local treatment of surface water within the site is likely to be challenging due to topography. The model established on other sites of a rental charge for each property is likely to be the vehicle for securing the funding for management/adoption of the Suds scheme. This is likely to be secured by a S106 agreement. Assuming SCC is entering into a conditional contract to sell the land to Avant, but Avant are only obliged to purchase if/when satisfactory planning permission for development is granted, then if planning obligations are required to be secured in a section 106 agreement, the developer would first need to enter into a s111 agreement. That is because a landowner has to enter into a 106 agreement to bind the land, but SCC can’t enter into a 106 agreement with itself. The s111 restricts the developer from commencing a development until they own the land and have entered into a section 106 agreement to secure the planning obligations.  In terms of surface water flood risk exceedance flow paths need to be defined.  Post meeting the Roger Nowell (Lead Local Flood Authority) has downloaded the drainage design for this development and has the following comments:  The basin looks to be designed with suitable depths for a public open space adjacent to housing – It is not clear what the side gradients are but these need to be 1in 6 where water is stored. It is suspected there may need to be a balance of storage within the two developments served by these features – this will need to be clearly defined in a strategy. It is recognised onsite storage is likely to be in oversized pipes etc as lined permeable paving may prove difficult to include due to gradients.  The system needs to include treatment - it is preferred a separate first flush basin is provided for this with suitably sized control and spillway for flows exceeding the basin to the main storage basin ensuring reduced entrainment of sediments. Basin to have permanent water (min 300mm areas of 450mm) to provide for sediment accumulation and vegetation for treatment. It is suggested depths of manholes are reviewed to seek a shallower pipe for discharge to the treatment basin which could be located to the west of the main basin. This would allow the main basin invert to be lifted considerably reducing the engineered gabion wall structure.  3m access to be provided to the treatment basin sufficient to allow desilting etc. The main basin to have access to the majority of the sides of the structure.  The main basin outlet is to be opposite the inlet to ensure good residence time of flows and final treatment. Permanent water should be provided within this basin for biodiversity and treatment. The inlet from the second phase of development if possible should be defined to determine how it interacts with the design, i.e. can it discharge to the treatment basin?  **Community Infrastructure Levy**  The CIL charge for the site is £30 per m2.  Please be aware of the additional indexing charge to be applied to the CIL rate. This currently represents an additional 25.98%. This is explained on the website under ‘calculating the amount of CIL you need to pay’: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/sheffield/home/planning-development/local-planning-guidance/community-infrastructure-levy.html  **Application Boundary**  This would need to include the suds scheme and potential off site footpath and cycle link improvements. The question was raised as to whether potential highway works could be covered by a S278 agreement. If these are required I will raise this will the highway officer.  **Community Consultation**  The last public consultation about the site was in 2014 when events were held locally about the Planning and Design brief. There will be substantial local interest in the development proposals and the developer should undertake local consultation prior to submitting the planning application. Gary Dickson, the Area Planner, (tel 0114 2735160 on leave until 1.4.19) can provide a list of local groups, and advice about the format of consultation – whether it takes the form of events and/or on-line, leaflets, potential locations etc. A consultation statement should be submitted with the planning application.  Information about the Planning and Design Brief consultation is available here: http://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=8795 – download ‘Owlthorpe Appendix, item 7’  **Enhanced application Service**  Please find attached a separate document setting out the service we are able to provide. Please advise if you would like to progress this. | |
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| 1. **Policy**   The relevant policies are contained in the planning brief and are not repeated here. | |
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| 1. **Information we consider is necessary to accompany your planning application….**  * 80 dwellings plus requires a transport assessment. * Tree Survey * Ecological survey and mitigation * Phase 1 and 2 land contamination reports * air quality assessment * Coal mining risk assessment * Design and access statement could cover the sustainability policies CS64 and CS65   - Suds statement – including subs basin design  - Flood risk assessment  - Heritage –Archaeology assessment  - Masterplan showing how the context with the adjacent housing sites.  - Affordable Housing Statement  - CIL form  - Detailed levels, plans showing retaining structures and site cross sections  - Street elevations along principle routes and spaces  - Play facilities to be delivered as part of this application  - Statement of Community Involvement | |

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| **Case officer: Howard Baxter** | **Date 25.03.19** |

1. NB The views given will be current at the time of giving advice, but changes in planning circumstances can occur and will need to be taken into account when any subsequent application is submitted. These views are also given without prejudice to any eventual Committee decision on an application. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)