
Report of the Chief Planning Officer

SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

Date: 3rd July 2014

Subject: POSITION STATEMENT – Application 14/01474/RM – Reserved matters application for 90 houses at Land at Royds Lane, Rothwell, LS26 0BH.

APPLICANT

Taylor Wimpey

DATE VALID

4th April 2014

TARGET DATE

4th July 2014

Electoral Wards Affected: Rothwell

☐ Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

☐

Community Cohesion

☐

Narrowing the Gap

☐

RECOMMENDATION:

For Members to note the content of the report and to provide feedback on the questions in section 11.0.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 At their meeting on 9th May 2013, City Plans Panel Members resolved to grant outline permission for residential development on this Protected Area of Search (PAS) site on Royds Lane in Rothwell. This resolution was subject to a further report on matters relating to the detail of the Section 106 Agreement, which was presented to and agreed by City Plans Panel at their next meeting on 6th June 2013. Outline permission was subsequently granted on 22nd October 2013. The decision included a condition restricting the total number of units on the site to 90.
- 1.2 Following initial pre-application discussion with officers and local residents, a reserved matters application for 90 units on the site was received in April 2014. The purpose of this report is to update Plans Panel Members on the reserved matters scheme as submitted and on the response received from consultees and members of the public to date, and to seek Members' views and comments before a recommendation is made on the application later in the year.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The application seeks detailed approval for the layout, access, scale, appearance, and landscaping of the development, all of which were reserved at outline stage.
- 2.2 The application proposes 90 dwellings, the maximum number permitted by the outline permission. In accordance with the requirements of the section 106 agreement which forms part of the outline permission, 15% of the proposed dwellings (14 houses) are proposed as affordable homes, and areas of public open space are proposed on-site.
- 2.3 The affordable housing is proposed to comprise two 2-bedroom properties and twelve 3-bedroom properties, which the housing team have confirmed are acceptable in terms of housing requirements in the area. These properties are laid out in three blocks of terraces and a pair of semi-detached houses in the central part of the site, to the south of the cricket ground and adjacent to one of the areas of public open space. Some have parking within their curtilages, either to the front of the house or on a drive to the side, while others have spaces allocated within communal parking courts opposite the houses themselves.
- 2.4 Most of the remaining units are proposed as 4-bedroom detached or semi-detached houses, with a small number of larger 5 bedroom detached properties. The designs proposed are a selection of the developer's standard house types, constructed in brick with tiled roofs. Most of the properties are proposed to be 2 storey in design, although around 30% would be 2½ storey, incorporating rooms in the roofspace served by dormers and rooflights. Around half of the properties would have an integral garage with hardstanding to the front, others have detached garages to the rear with drives separating them from neighbouring properties.
- 2.5 Two access points are proposed into the site from Royds Lane: one in the central part of the site frontage serving the majority of the site, and a smaller private drive serving the five properties on the northern part of the site frontage. The northern part of the L-shaped site would be served a continuous road 'loop' with cul-de-sacs leading off it, whilst the southern part of the site would be served by spurs off this 'loop' leading into cul-de-sacs and private drives. Pedestrian footpath connections are proposed from the eastern part of the site onto the golf course to the east, where a public right of way runs close to the site boundary, providing connections to amenities and public open space in Rothwell to the north.
- 2.6 In accordance with Leeds' policy on the provision of public open space as part of new developments, there is a requirement for 3600m² of public open space to be provided on-site as part of the development (based on 90 units), in addition to the provision of a commuted sum for enhancements to off-site greenspace provision, secured as part of the Section 106 for the outline permission. The current proposal is to divide the public open space provision into three blocks: one in the central part of the site, one in the north western corner, and a strip of land adjacent to the eastern boundary.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The site is an area of former farmland on the outskirts of Rothwell, designated as a Protected Area of Search (PAS) in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan. The site is L-shaped, wrapping around the southern and eastern sides of cricket and football pitches at Rothwell Athletics and Squash Club and extending southwards along

Royds Lane, and eastwards towards the golf course beyond. The land slopes downhill from Royds Lane towards the golf course to the east, and also from south to north. The site frontage along Royds Lane is open, with fencing around the boundaries with the athletics club in the north western part of the site, boundary fences to the rear gardens of houses of properties on Arran Way and Rona Croft to the north, and trees and low fences along the boundaries with the golf course to the east. There is a larger area of woodland to the south of the site.

- 3.2 The site is on the southern edge of Rothwell, and is surrounded by mid-to-late 20th century dormer bungalow-type housing on the opposite side of Royds Lane to the west, relatively recently-built brick housing on Arran Way to the north, the Athletics Club to the north west, and the golf course to the south and east.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 Outline planning permission for residential development on the site was granted in October 2013 (application 12/03400/OT). The decision included a condition restricting the maximum number of units on the site to 90, and is subject to a Section 106 Agreement which includes obligations relating to the provision of public open space and affordable housing on-site, a travel plan, local employment and contributions towards off-site greenspace, education provision and public transport, in accordance with the requirements of relevant supplementary planning guidance and documents.
- 4.2 A previous outline application for residential development on the site was refused in May 2008 on the grounds of prematurity and that insufficient information had been submitted with the application at that time to demonstrate that the development could be accommodated on the local highway network. A subsequent appeal was dismissed. Additional details in this respect were submitted with the 2012/2013 application which was subsequently approved.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 A pre-application meeting was held between the developer and their representatives, and planning, highways and design officers in February 2014. The following issues relating to the proposed development were discussed:
- Layout of housing to front onto Royds Lane and primary access routes within the site was welcomed, with rear gardens backing onto each other to avoid inactive frontages, and properties overlooking cricket pitch (subject to an acceptable road layout).
 - Advice from outline application reiterated that public open space (POS) should be in a single block, centrally located and well overlooked by surrounding properties. Area of 3400m² based on 90 houses. Noted need to site drainage tank in north eastern corner of site meant this area could not be developed and may need to form some part of POS, but suggested this needed to extend into central part of the site, or to remain an ancillary area of POS, with the principal area more centrally located and better overlooked.
 - Although no objection in principle to incorporating some 2½ storey units within the site, these should not be included on the site frontage, as they are not characteristic of the scale and pattern of surrounding development or the semi-rural character of the area, and should be located within the site rather than on the frontage at the site's highest point.
 - Garden sizes of several properties within the scheme were substandard and fell well below *Neighbourhoods for Living* recommended depths and areas.

- Concerns raised regarding prevalence of closely-spaced properties with integral garages and drives to the front, leading to large expanses of hardstanding and parking in prominent locations on site frontages. Suggestion to include more drives to side, to reduce levels of hardstanding to front, provide better separation between properties, and allow for the provision of landscaping/planting in front gardens.
- Highways comments regarding detailed layout, design requirements for adopted roads, areas of concern regarding tight bends, access and turning for refuse vehicles, numbers of parking spaces and other points of detail.
- Need for additional planting along eastern boundary to provide a landscape 'buffer' between the site and the open land to the east.
- Neighbours' concerns about a pedestrian access route proposed from the POS in the north eastern part of the site onto Arran Way, and security implications of this. Agreement that this would be deleted from the proposals, and an alternative pedestrian access link directly onto the golf course in the north eastern part of the site proposed instead.

5.2 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been provided as part of the application, providing details of consultation which took place within the local community prior to the submission of the application, including:

- Letters to local residents and Ward Members advising them of the intention to submit an application and inviting them to a public exhibition in Rothwell Methodist Church Hall.
- Meeting with Rothwell Neighbourhood Forum and Ward Members.

5.3 Following feedback from consultees and the Council's internal Design Advisory Group following receipt of the application, a further meeting was held with the developer, involving planning and highways officers and the Council's civic architect, to discuss the scheme as submitted. The following concerns were discussed:

- POS still proposed in separate blocks on the periphery of the development and not well overlooked. Noted again that the need to locate underground surface water storage tank in the north eastern part of the site meant that this area could not be developed, and that it may be possible to consider this area as part of the POS provision on-site. However, officers advised that this constraint was not the only factor to consider, and that the POS should first and foremost be more centrally located and better integrated and overlooked, which the proposals as submitted were not considered to achieve. An alternative suggestion was tabled which reflected the Design Advisory Group discussion, and which allowed for some provision for a secondary area of POS in the north eastern corner of the site, but with a larger centrally-located area adjacent to the main site entrance/access road, surrounded by housing. Issues and possibilities relating to this were discussed.
- Need for an undeveloped landscaped 'buffer' between the development and the golf course to provide biodiversity enhancements required as part of the outline permission, and to meet the requirements of UDP policy N24.
- Scheme still proposes 2½ storey properties on the Royds lane frontage, raised as a concern at pre-application stage by officers and residents.
- A number of gardens still substandard in depth and area.
- Concerns raised by highways officers and local residents regarding the provision of a second access point from Royds Lane, and that this could result in an increase in on-street parking on Royds lane by visitors and delivery drivers unable to park within the site itself.

- Highways concerns regarding various aspects of the layout – lack of turning facilities for refuse vehicles in parts of the site, concern that large vehicles may not be able to navigate sharp bends within the development, particularly if vehicles were parked around these areas.
- Other details relating to layout, number of parking spaces etc.
- Possibility of making changes to the original Section 106 agreement to provide funding of speed and/or parking restrictions on Royds Lane, possibly as an alternative to providing public transport contribution.

5.4 Following the meeting, a revised plan has submitted by the developer for further discussion. This seeks to address some of the concerns raised by highways, and also proposes a centrally-located area of POS as a substitute for the narrow strip originally indicated alongside the site's eastern boundary, although the larger area of POS in the north eastern corner of the site remains. As the revised plan has only recently been received, it has not yet been fully considered by highways and the design team, and the responses noted below relate primarily to the originally submitted plan. Any updates received following further feedback from design and highways will be provided verbally to Members at the Plans Panel meeting.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

Ward Members

6.1 Ward Members were notified of the application when it was submitted. Councillors Bruce and Nagle asked for a briefing on the application and have made the following comments:

- Affordable housing should include some bungalows and should be 'peppercotted' around the site in at least 3 different locations, rather than being grouped together.
- Affordable housing should have 2 spaces per property, not 1 as some have at present.
- Large expanse of parking to the front of affordable housing not acceptable in visual terms.
- Lack of turning area on access drive adjacent to terraced housing.
- Public open space is undersized and needs to be larger.

Rothwell Neighbourhood Interim Forum

6.2 The following comments have been received from Rothwell Neighbourhood Interim Forum:

- Public open space does not contribute to the site's rural character, and is not balanced relative to the distribution of houses within the site. The area in the north eastern part of the site is not easily accessible or well-overlooked, and raises security concerns meaning that parents would not feel they could safely allow children to play there.
- Note that the surface water storage tank is proposed in the north eastern part of the site, but do not consider that the amenity and wellbeing of future residents should be compromised because of drainage requirements.
- The development needs a central village green feature, reflecting the character of the area, rather than a 'boulevard' as proposed. A centrally-located area surrounded by housing would be more integrated and better overlooked. This would also be of greater benefit to the affordable houses in the centre of the site, some of which have little amenity space and front onto roads and parking areas.

- Affordable housing should be better integrated and have better amenity space provision.
- The developer was requested at pre-application stage not to include 2½ storey houses on the site frontage, however these are still proposed. They are too high and not considered to blend aesthetically with the style and character of existing properties.
- Creation of a second access onto Royds Lane. Outline plans only showed one access – concerns regarding highway safety and additional on-street parking taking place on Royds Lane by visitors and refuse and delivery vehicles unable to park or turn within this private drive area.
- Additional traffic and pedestrians on Royds Lane. Existing parking and speeding problems at certain times. Other developments approved nearby already expected to worsen this situation. Lower speed limits and road improvements are suggested.
- Existing drainage systems may not have adequate capacity to cope with additional development.
- Education contributions secured under outline permission will not be sufficient to cover the costs of additional school places required.
- Existing problems with parking in Rothwell town centre, exacerbated by sale of existing car parks.
- Disagree that there are good public transport links to the site.
- Inadequate provision for bin storage and collection.
- Lack of local consultation or engagement by the developer prior to submitting the application and little opportunity for dialogue with the Forum.
- Problems accessing some of the information on the Council website.

6.3 The case officer attended a meeting of Rothwell Forum on 19th May. The discussion focused mainly on the concerns raised by the Forum in their comments to the local planning authority which are summarised above, particularly:

- Lack of consultation by the developers
- Drainage concerns
- Creation of a second access onto Royds Lane – additional on-street parking.
- Possibility of changing S106 requirements to allow public transport contribution to be spent on speed/parking restrictions on Royds Lane.
- Could a condition be imposed requiring construction vehicles to arrive at/leave the site outside of school drop-off/collection times?
- 2½ storey houses on the site frontage – incongruous and out of character.

Other public response

6.4 The application has been advertised as a major application and as affecting the character of a conservation area by site notices, posted 17th April 2014, and by press notice, published 8th May 2014.

6.5 To date, 10 letters of objection to the development have been received from local residents. The following concerns are raised:

- Inclusion of 2½ storey houses on the Royds Lane frontage does not complement or blend in with appearance and construction of existing properties, and would be too dominant on what is effectively a country lane.
- POS location has been proposed by the developer solely to use an isolated and 'inconvenient' space which cannot be developed, rather than addressing the demands for this space and siting it in the most appropriate location

where it can be accessed by all residents and is visible from as many houses as possible to provide security for children playing there.

- Additional information on materials is required – details on submitted plans are only minimal.
- Further detail of landscaping proposals required, particularly along Royds Lane.
- Affordable housing is contained in one area of the site rather than being integrated into the development.
- Overlooking of properties on Rona Croft to the north – properties in this part of the site should be no more than 2 storeys high, and landscaping should be provided along the boundary.
- Additional traffic on Royds Lane – existing problems with its width, lack of visibility and on-street parking around schools.
- Second access onto Royds Lane – insufficient space for parking and turning within this part of the site will lead to parking on Royds Lane.
- Visibility from access points onto Royds Lane and whether this can be achieved and maintained once the development is complete.
- Inadequate refuse storage provision.
- Increased likelihood of vehicles ‘rat-running’ on surrounding roads.
- Safety implications of large vehicles using Royds Lane during construction. Can deliveries etc be timed to avoid school drop-off/collection times?
- Can school buses be rerouted off Royds Lane?
- Possibility of speed/parking/weight restrictions on Royds Lane.
- Developers previously agreed to delete pedestrian access onto Arran Way following concerns raised by residents about security and antisocial behaviour in this area. However, this access is still referred to in one of the submitted documents, and plans show removal of trees in this area. Confirmation is sought that this access will not be reintroduced.
- Inaccuracies in submitted documents relating to local amenities and public transport connections.
- Whether drainage system on Arran Way is sufficient to cope with new development, who is responsible for ensuring that this is correctly taken into account?
- A balancing pond for drainage on the site has previously been objected to. This should not be reintroduced.
- Loss of open countryside land.
- Large birds seen around the site, concern that development could impact on them.
- Insufficiency of school places in the area.
- Capacity of local GP surgeries.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

Statutory

7.1 None.

Non-statutory

Highways

7.2 In response to the plans as originally submitted, highways raised the following concerns:

- Introduction of a second access point onto Royds Lane – not part of outline plans. Further details required regarding width and visibility. Concerns that this access would introduce a demand for visitor parking, which would be undesirable on Royds Lane. Provision for visitor parking and turning should be made within the site, and a TRO may be necessary along the site frontage to compel visitors to park within the site.
- Various requirements in relation to design of internal roads, in accordance with requirement for these to be adopted.
- A number of tight bends remain within the layout – unclear whether these could accommodate manoeuvres by refuse vehicles, particularly if potential for vehicles to park on these bends is taken into account. Also concerns about forward visibility and maintenance. Details of vehicle tracking for these bends have previously been requested.
- Concerns regarding dimensions of parking bays in communal parking areas around terraced houses, and lack of visitor parking in these areas.
- Specifications for drives and garage dimensions.

7.3 In response to the revised plans and additional information received following a subsequent meeting with the applicants, highways have advised that these plans still do not address the concerns raised, and have reiterated many of these, including:

- It is now proposed to serve a further property from the second access proposed onto Royds Lane, and the revised plan still does not show and visitor parking in this part of the site. Concerns about potential for overspill parking on Royds Lane therefore remain.
- Lack of visitor parking provision within various private drive areas in the site.
- Internal layout has not significantly changed and still includes a number of sharp bends. Additional details submitted do not demonstrate that a large refuse vehicle could satisfactorily navigate these corners, particularly if vehicles were to be parked on-street around these locations.
- Still no turning head to the drive adjacent to the affordable housing, and no visitor parking within this area, despite the whole of the frontage being taken up with parking.
- Concerns about dimensions of some parking areas and drives.

Affordable Housing

7.4 Local housing demand data supports the development of smaller family accommodation (2 and 3 bedroom as proposed). The proposed mix of affordable housing units on the site is therefore supported. Usually it would be requested that the units be 'pepperpotted' around the development, however as the other units on the development are all 4 or 5 bedroom houses, the proposed affordable terraced and semi-detached units are considered acceptable in a group as proposed.

Yorkshire Water

7.5 No objections to the additional information in the supplementary drainage strategy submitted in support of the reserved matters application.

Flood Risk Management

7.6 No objections, subject to condition requiring details of surface water drainage scheme (required as a condition of the outline permission). The drainage scheme should be designed in accordance with the principles outlined in the supplementary drainage statement submitted with the reserved matters application.

City Services

- 7.7 The refuse collection arrangements for the development appear acceptable.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

- 7.8 Recommend improving pedestrian access links between the site and bus stops, and providing new residents with Travel Cards.

West Yorkshire Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO)

- 7.9 Security concerns are raised in relation to the proposed footpath links from the site onto the adjacent golf course, the proposed design of some plots which have rear access points. Recommendations and suggestions are made in relation to door and window design, security lighting, boundary treatments and alarm systems. The comments have been referred onto the developer for information.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

- 8.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 8.2 The development plan for Leeds is made up of the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) and the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted January 2013.

- 8.3 The site is designated as a Protected Area of Search (PAS) in the UDP, however the principle of developing this PAS site was considered and has been established with the grant of outline permission in October 2013. The current application seeks approval of reserved matters pursuant to this outline permission, and therefore policies and issues relating to the principle of the development, including those relating to PAS land, are not reconsidered here. The following UDP policies are relevant to the consideration of this application for reserved matters approval:

GP5 – General planning considerations, including amenity.

GP7 – Use of planning obligations.

GP11 – Sustainable development.

N2/N4 – Greenspace provision/contributions.

N10 – Protection of existing public rights of way.

N12/N13 – Urban design principles.

N23/N25 – Landscape design and boundary treatment.

N24 – Development proposals abutting the Green Belt.

N29 – Archaeology.

BD5 – New development and amenity.

T2 – Highway safety

T5 – Consideration of pedestrian and cyclists needs.

T7/T7A – Cycle routes and parking.

T24 – Parking guidelines.

H11/H12/H13 – Affordable housing.

LD1 – Landscape schemes.

- 8.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents:

Neighbourhoods for Living – A Guide for Residential Design in Leeds

Street Design Guide

SPG4 – Greenspace

SPG11- Education contributions
SPD- Street Design Guide
SPG25 – Greenspace and Residential Developments

8.4 The following DPD policies are also relevant:

WATER1 – Water efficiency, including incorporation of sustainable drainage
WATER6 – Flood Risk Assessments
WATER7 – Surface water run-off

Draft Core Strategy

8.5 The Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 26th April 2013 the Council submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination and examination has now taken place. Some modifications have been suggested and further hearings are scheduled in relation to specific aspects of the draft Core Strategy. In view of its current status, some weight can now be attached to the document and its contents.

8.6 The following draft core strategy policies are relevant to the consideration of the application:

P10 – High quality design.
P12 – Good landscaping.
H5 – Affordable housing
T2 – Accessibility.
G8 – Biodiversity improvements.

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

8.7 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are relevant to the consideration of the application:

SPG3 – Affordable Housing (including Appendix A: Interim Affordable Housing Policy 2011).
SPG4 – Greenspace Relating to New Housing Development
SPG13 – Neighbourhoods for Living: A Guide for Residential Design in Leeds
SPD – Street Design Guide
Affordable Housing – Interim Policy

National Planning Policy

8.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaces previous Planning Policy Guidance/Statements in setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. One of the key principles at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.

8.9 The introduction of the NPPF has not changed the legal requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

9.1 The principle of residential development on the site has been established with the grant of outline permission in 2013. This application seeks the approval of the outstanding reserved matters, namely access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping. The following issues are relevant to the consideration of the application:

1. Layout
2. Affordable housing
3. Greenspace proposals
4. Housing design
5. Landscaping
6. Residential amenity
7. Highway safety
8. Nature conservation
9. Drainage and flood risk
10. Other issues and representations.

10.0 APPRAISAL

Layout

10.1 A number of the general principles of the scheme's layout as submitted are supported, including:

- A continuous access 'loop' around the majority of the site with spurs off, thus providing alternative routes out of the site in case of obstructions on one part of the access, and minimising cul-de-sacs, which can be confusing in terms of legibility and navigating around the site.
- Houses laid out along road frontages, with back gardens backing onto one another, avoiding inactive frontages wherever possible.
- Connectivity to public footpaths on the golf course, leading to local amenities and public open space within Rothwell to the north.

10.2 However, as submitted, a number of aspects of the layout raised concerns in design and highway safety terms. These include the layout and distribution of the public open space and affordable housing units, some aspects of the design and distribution of housing across the site, elements of the site's internal road network and the proposal to introduce a second access onto Royds Lane. These concerns were discussed with the developer and a revised site plan has now been submitted for comment. The concerns raised and the responses received in relation to this revised plan are discussed in more detail below, and Members' feedback on these aspects of the development and the questions raised in each section would be welcomed.

Greenspace

10.3 UDP policy N2 requires the provision of on-site greenspace at a rate of 0.2Ha per 50 dwellings, and this is re-iterated in SPG4, which advises that this rate should be applied pro-rata to all schemes. On this basis 0.36Ha (3600m²) of public open space (POS) is required as part of the current scheme for 90 dwellings.

10.4 SPG4 advises that greenspace should be designed taking into account the needs of all users, and the range of functions it is intended to fulfil, which may include formal and informal play, visual and residential amenity, nature conservation and green corridor functions. It also advises that 'as a general rule the greenspace should be in one block to ensure its function is performed and to facilitate maintenance, centrally

located, and overlooked by dwellings (to assist in self-policing)' and that 'greenspace must not simply be relegated to 'left over' areas of land or areas which are 'undevelopable' due to gradients, drainage problems etc.'

10.5 During discussions with the developer at pre-application stage and following the submission of the application, concerns have been raised regarding the layout and position of the proposed on-site greenspace, which is currently proposed in multiple blocks, with the largest area positioned in the north eastern corner of the site, remote from the majority of houses within the development and overlooked by only 2 or 3 properties. The developer has advised that the reasons for including this in the proposed area of on-site POS relate to the need to provide an underground drainage storage tank in this area, which is the lowest part of the site, meaning that this area can therefore not be developed. However as the SPG advises, on-site greenspace should first and foremost be an integral and positive part of a housing development, and not simply relegated to areas which are 'left over' or 'undevelopable'.

10.6 Noting the constraints relating to the development of the north eastern part of the site, officers have advised that it may be possible to consider including this area as part of a wider POS strategy for the site. However, whilst the footpath link proposed across this area does give it some connectivity to the development, officers have stressed that its ability to fulfil its function as a central and integral feature of the development is compromised by its peripheral position and security concerns arising from this and from the lack of surveillance of this area, which may impact on its usability by future residents. As such, officers have advised that if this area was to be considered as part of the on-site POS provision, it would only be as a secondary or ancillary area, and that the principal area of greenspace for the development should be centrally located and well overlooked, in accordance with the guidance in the SPG. Clarification has also been sought as to whether, as the lowest area of the site, this area can be satisfactorily drained, as the flooding or waterlogging of this area would significantly impact on its usability as an area of POS.

10.6 As originally submitted, the plans showed two areas of greenspace within the site: the area in the north eastern corner and a second area provided in a triangular strip alongside the eastern boundary between the site and the golf course. Following further discussions, a revised plan has been submitted showing part of this second area of greenspace relocated into the central part of the site, to the north of the main access road, surrounded by housing on all sides. Based on this revised plan and calculations provided by the developer, the current proposals for greenspace provision as part of the development are as follows:

a) Land in north eastern corner of site	1908m ²
b) Central area	1176m ²
c) Strip of land 5-7m wide along eastern boundary	470m ²
TOTAL	3554m ²

10.7 As currently proposed, the largest area of POS proposed remains the block in the north eastern corner of the site, there are queries about the areas cited on the plan (which appear to include some off-site land at present), and the total area of greenspace proposed remains below the 3600m² requirement and includes a narrow strip of land alongside the eastern boundary. This third area appears to be intended primarily as part of the landscaped buffer between the development and the Green Belt land to the west, and would therefore need to include substantial tree planting which would impact considerably on its usability as an area of public

greenspace. It is therefore unlikely that this third area could be considered as an acceptable inclusion for the purposes of calculating on-site greenspace provision.

10.8 In the light of the above, although the recent revisions to the scheme are considered to represent a considerable improvement in this respect, and whilst some subdivision of the greenspace may be acceptable, there are still concerns about the balance of greenspace as currently proposed, and that the total area of POS provided on the site still remains below current policy requirements. Further revisions in this respect are therefore likely to be required, and Members' comments on this aspect of the proposals would be welcomed at this stage.

10.9 **Is the subdivision of the proposed on-site greenspace considered acceptable by Members, in the light of the constraints relating to the development of certain parts of the site as discussed above?**

10.10 **If the subdivision of the greenspace should be considered to be acceptable, in the light of the particular constraints of the site, is the balance of this between the different areas considered acceptable?**

10.11 **Do Members have any further comments or suggestions regarding the proposed on-site greenspace provision?**

10.12 The plans submitted with the outline application indicated the provision of a public footpath link from the north eastern part of the site, connecting into Arran Way to the north. However, during pre-application discussions with the developer, concerns were raised by residents of Arran Way and by Ward Members that this could lead to crime and antisocial behaviour, and in response to these concerns, the proposed link was not carried forward as part of the detailed reserved matters scheme. An alternative route is proposed, linking into the public footpath across the adjacent golf course, although as this is less direct, and its narrow width and lack of surfacing and lighting may compromise its usability in some respects, this would not serve as a direct replacement for the previously proposed route. It is understood that the greater connectivity provided by the originally proposed route was a factor in calculating the commuted sum for off-site greenspace at outline stage, and that the deletion of the route from the detailed scheme is likely to have some implications in terms of the connectivity of the development to the nearby greenspace. However, the plan showing this route at outline stage was only an indicative drawing, and no conditions were imposed on the outline permission requiring such a route to be provided. In the light of this, and as this link was specifically deleted from the scheme at the request of local residents and Ward Members during pre-application discussions, on balance it is not considered reasonable to insist on its re-introduction into the scheme or that an additional contribution towards greenspace could be justified in this instance, and therefore no further information has been requested in this respect.

Affordable Housing

10.13 Leeds' Interim Affordable Housing policy requires 15% affordable units on a 50:50 social rented/submarket split basis. In accordance with this, 14 of the 90 units in the detailed scheme are proposed as affordable units (two 2-bedroom and twelve 3-bedroom). These are proposed as a group of terraced and semi-detached units in the central area of the site, with parking provided either communally in small parking courtyards opposite the houses, or on drives to the side.

10.14 Councillors Bruce and Nagle have requested the inclusion of some bungalows within the mix of affordable housing, however housing officers have confirmed that

that the size and number of affordable units proposed are acceptable based on local housing demand data, which supports the provision of smaller family units, and have not specifically indicated a requirement for bungalows as part of the mix, therefore no revisions have been sought in this respect.

- 10.15 Whilst 'pepper-potting' of the units throughout the site would usually be required, as requested by Councillor Bruce and Councillor Nagle, the remainder of the units on the site are proposed to be larger 4 and 5 bedroom detached and semi-detached houses, and in the light of this, housing officers have confirmed that the proposal to provide the affordable units together as a group of terraced and semi-detached properties in the centre of the site is considered acceptable in this instance.
- 10.16 Although a revised layout plan has been received, concerns still remain regarding some aspects of the affordable housing layout, and in particular the group of terraced and semi-detached properties immediately to the south of the cricket and football pitches. These concerns are discussed in more detail below, but include the prominence and layout of the parking and lack of landscaping within these areas, and deficiencies in the road layout, including the lack of turning facility within this cul-de-sac. This aspect of the layout is therefore not considered acceptable at present, and is likely to require further revision.
- 10.17 Although concerns remain about some detailed aspects of the affordable housing layout, and a greater degree of 'pepperpotting' of these units would generally be required, there are considered to be some positive benefits to the siting of the affordable units in this area which arise from the changes proposed as part of the recently revised plan. This plan proposes to relocate one of the areas of greenspace to a more central part of the site, immediately adjacent to two of the groups of affordable terraced properties, and with others to the north west having an oblique view over this space. This revised layout provides a mix of properties around this central area of greenspace, with affordable housing to the north and west, and market housing to the south and east, and it may be preferable to retain this mix around this area. However, as noted above, there are a number of concerns still outstanding in relation to the area of affordable housing to the north west of this greenspace area, which it may be possible to address by revisions to the layout of this part of the site and the possible relocation of some of the affordable units. Members' views on this would be welcomed.
- 10.18 Is the proposal to provide the affordable units as a group considered acceptable, or should these be more 'pepperpotted' throughout the development as suggested by Ward Members?**
- 10.19 If greater separation of the affordable units would be desirable, do Members have any suggestions as to how this may be achieved whilst maintaining the benefits of having the majority of the affordable units close to the central area of public open space?**
- Housing design
- 10.20 The houses proposed are a selection of the developer's standard house types, constructed in brick with tiled roofs. Most would be 2 storey in height, although around 30% of the units are proposed to be of a 2½ storey design, with higher, steeper roofs incorporating additional living accommodation.
- 10.21 The site is located on the outskirts of Rothwell, with late 20th century dormer bungalows to the west and a late 1990s housing development to the north. In this

context, the proposed use of standard house type designs is generally considered acceptable. However, some concern has been raised regarding the proposal to provide 2½ storey houses on the site frontage, the highest part of the site and one which faces directly onto dormer bungalows opposite. Whilst the raised land levels to the west and the separation between these existing houses and the proposed development mean there is unlikely to be any significant impact in terms of overlooking or overdominance, concerns have been raised that the high, steep roofs of the 2½ storey properties proposed on the frontage are not in keeping with the relatively low-profile, shallow roofs of the dormer bungalows opposite, and would appear prominent and incongruous on this semi-rural stretch of road leading into open countryside, where the scale and presence of properties within the streetscene is generally decreasing. Members' views on this aspect of the proposals would be welcomed.

10.22 Do Members feel that the proposal to incorporate 2½ storey properties on the site frontage is appropriate, or is it considered that any such properties should be situated in less prominent locations within the site?

10.23 A further concern which remains relates to the relationships between properties in terms of their spacing and setting, and achieving a balance between providing appropriate levels of parking, whilst minimising its prominence and visual impact and ensuring that appropriate provision is made for landscaping within the site.

10.24 *Neighbourhoods for Living* advises that when designing parking layouts, 'the convenience of residents needs to be balanced with the need to avoid car-dominated frontages,' and recommends that residential layouts should avoid car parking dominating streetscenes and ensure that parked cars are unobtrusive. In particular it recommends the use of levels and landscaping to break up and soften the visual impact of parking areas, avoiding large groups of parked cars that can be seen from a distance and providing sufficient space for planting around these areas.

10.25 Whilst some revisions have been made to relocate some garaging and access drives to the sides of properties and reduce parking on site frontages, a number of concerns in this respect still remain in certain areas. This includes the area around some of the terraced housing, which is densely developed and where parking is provided communally and prominently in parking courts to the front of the houses, immediately adjacent to the access drive and with little space between groups of spaces in which to provide any planting. Councillors Bruce and Nagle have raised particular concerns in relation to this aspect of the development as currently proposed.

10.26 In other parts of the site there are still numerous groups of closely-spaced detached houses with integral double garages and two parking spaces to the front, sited around wide vehicular courtyards or access drives, resulting in large expanses of hardstanding with little separation between buildings or their parking areas and little scope for landscaping in these prominent areas to the front of the houses. Further advice from design officers in relation to the revised layout is awaited, but at this stage Members' views about this aspect of the layout would be welcomed.

10.27 Does the revised layout strike an acceptable balance in terms of positioning car parking in less prominent locations and maximising soft landscaping along site frontages?

Landscaping

- 10.28 The site abuts the Green Belt to the east and south, and in addition to on-site landscaping as part of the development, the developer has been advised that planting may be required within the site to provide a soft landscaped transition between the built development and this open land, particularly in areas where off-site planting along these boundaries is lacking, in accordance with UDP policy N24.
- 10.29 The land immediately to the south of the site is an area of woodland within the golf course, and although in general policy N24 requires planting to be carried out on-site rather than relying on off-site planting, this area is relatively well established and provides a wide 'buffer' between the site and the open land beyond, which is unlikely to be removed, and no further on-site planting has been requested in this part of the site. However planting within the golf course land to the east is more intermittent, and the developer was advised at pre-application stage that as well as ensuring an appropriate degree of separation between buildings and this boundary, additional planting was likely to be required in this part of the site.
- 10.30 The submitted plans indicate some additional planting in an area of open space alongside the eastern boundary, although the landscape officer has requested further details of what is proposed in this respect. Landscape have reiterated that the development should not rely on off-site landscaping to provide the landscaped 'buffer' in accordance with policy N24 unless the developer has control over the future retention of this planting, which is not understood to be the case. Concerns have also been raised that the land along the southern and parts of the eastern boundaries of the site is within residential gardens, and that any additional planting in these areas may be vulnerable to removal by future residents, with the subsequent loss of visual benefit that this would bring. Further discussions with the developers in this respect are likely.
- 10.31 Further details are also likely to be required in relation to the detailed planting proposals for the areas of public open space, and protection of existing planting around the site boundaries, much of which is proposed to be retained.
- 10.32 Are the current proposals for a landscaped 'buffer' along the eastern boundary of the site, between the development and the open Green Belt land to the east, sufficient, or is additional planting required in this area?**

Highways

- 10.33 Rothwell Interim Neighbourhood Forum and a number of local residents have raised concerns regarding the proposal to introduce a second new access onto Royds Lane, and in particular the potential for this to increase parking on Royds Lane by visitors and delivery vehicles unable to park or turn within the site itself. These concerns have been echoed by highways, who have suggested revisions to the layout to provide additional visitor parking and turning facilities within this part of the site, together with the possibility of a requirement for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to provide parking restrictions on this stretch of Royds Lane if necessary. Further discussions are likely to be required in this respect.
- 10.34 Highways officers raised a number of other concerns regarding the layout as originally submitted, including the visibility and navigability of a number of sharp bends within the site, road widths, footways and the dimensions of drives, garages and parking spaces.
- 10.35 Following a recent meeting with the developer and their consultants, a revised plan and some additional information have been received. However, highways have

advised that this does not address the concerns raised, and have reiterated many of these, including:

- It is now proposed to serve a further property from the second access proposed onto Royds Lane, and the revised plan still does not show and visitor parking in this part of the site. Concerns about potential for overspill parking on Royds Lane therefore remain.
- Lack of visitor parking provision within various private drive areas in the site.
- Internal layout has not significantly changed and still includes a number of sharp bends. Additional details submitted do not demonstrate that a large refuse vehicle could satisfactorily navigate these corners, particularly if vehicles were to be parked on-street around these locations.
- Still no turning head to the drive adjacent to the affordable housing, and no visitor parking within this area, despite the whole of the frontage being taken up with parking.
- Concerns about dimensions of some parking areas and drives.

10.36 As there are still a number of general and specific concerns regarding the access arrangements and internal layout of the development from a highway safety perspective, the proposals are not currently considered acceptable in this respect. The highways officer's comments on the revised scheme have been forwarded to the developer.

10.37 A meeting has recently been held between Rothwell Interim Neighbourhood Forum and planning and highways officers to discuss wider issues relating to the local highway network in Rothwell, including existing problems with vehicle speeds and parking on Royds Lane. It was confirmed that matters relating to the capacity of the local highway network had been considered as part of the outline planning application, and that with the exception of some works to widen footways to the front of the site, no further highway works or restrictions had been requested at that stage. However, in the light of local residents' concerns about the potential worsening of existing problems on Royds Lane, and particularly the potential for additional parking around the second site entrance now proposed, officers agreed to consider the possibility of providing some speed or parking restrictions on Royds Lane, potentially through reallocating funds agreed at the outline stage for public transport improvements (an agreed contribution of £110,339), for which no scheme has yet been identified. As assessments of what restrictions may be necessary and/or achievable remain at a very early stage, and any proposal to use monies from the development towards this would require a change to the section 106 with the agreement of the developer, there are no firm proposals at this stage, and this remains only a theoretical possibility. However, further advice has been sought from Legal Services, and the possibility has been raised with the developer, who has advised that provided this related to the diversion of funds already committed as part of the outline s106, rather than to the provision of further monies, they would be unlikely to raise any objection to such a proposal, if a deliverable scheme could be found.

10.38 If an appropriate scheme can be found, and subject to the developer's agreement and an appropriate mechanism for the variation of the original section 106 agreement, would Members be agreeable to the principle of using some or all of the committed public transport contribution towards parking or speed restrictions on the local highway network instead?

Residential amenity

- 10.39 Although concerns raised previously regarding deficiencies in private amenity space have been addressed in a number of respects, there remain a number of houses, particularly in the blocks of terraces to the south of the cricket ground, where rear garden depths and areas fall below those recommended in *Neighbourhoods for Living*. Although this relates only to a relatively small number of properties, these are some of the smaller and more densely-developed properties within the site, and it is recommended that further attempts should be made to improve the levels of amenity space for these properties.
- 10.40 Concerns have been raised by residents of properties on Rona Croft to the north site that the new houses which are proposed to back onto their rear gardens, some of which would be 2½ storey in height, would detract from their privacy and amenity. The closest of the proposed houses would be around 11m from the northern boundary, with a further 14-18m to the neighbouring houses themselves. There does not appear to be a significant difference in land levels between this part of the site and the neighbouring properties, and as the separation distances exceed the recommended 10.5m to the rear boundary suggested in *Neighbourhoods for Living*, it is not considered that refusal of the application on these grounds could be justified. The existing planting along this boundary is proposed to be retained, and conditions could be attached to ensure that this is retained as a screen between the development and these neighbouring properties.

Nature conservation

- 10.41 A condition on the outline permission requires the provision and implementation of a biodiversity protection and enhancement plan as part of the development, to include the protection, enhancement and ongoing management of hedgerows, water features and adjacent vegetation, semi-improved grassland areas, and provision for bats and bird boxes.
- 10.42 The main ecological features of the site are the beck that runs along the eastern boundary and the woodland to the south. Concerns have been raised that the landscaped 'buffer' along the eastern and southern boundaries which was indicated at outline stage has not been carried forward in its entirety as part of the reserved matters application, and that the inclusion of land along these boundaries within residential gardens presents a risk to its ecological value as a result of formal gardening, removal of vegetation by future occupiers, encroachment and dumping onto this land. To address this, it has been suggested that the layout should be revised to reintroduce a buffer (not including garden space) along the southern and eastern boundaries, however, it is noted that to do so would have implications in terms of the numbers of units which could be accommodated, and may require the provision of additional open space, which is not likely to be considered acceptable in counting towards the POS requirements for the site. Further discussions in this respect are likely.

Drainage

- 10.43 A number of residents have raised concerns regarding the capacity of existing drainage systems. As such matters relate to the principle of the development, these issues were considered as part of the outline application, when both Yorkshire Water and the Council's Flood Risk Management section were consulted and raised no objections to the development in principle, subject to the approval of the specific details of the site drainage scheme. Additional details in this respect have been submitted as part of the current application, and both consultees have been re-notified, and have again raised no objections, subject to the same conditions. In the light of this, and as the conditions on the outline permission remain relevant and

would still need to be complied with, no further details are required at this stage and the development is considered acceptable in this respect.

Other issues

- 10.44 Concerns have been raised in relation to the capacity of local schools. Education provision is a matter relating to the principle of the development, which was considered at outline stage, and appropriate contributions secured as part of the original section 106 agreement. Such matters are not issues to be reconsidered as part of the current application, which relates solely to the approval of reserved matters.
- 10.45 Concerns raised by local residents that insufficient public consultation was carried out prior to the submission of the application have been referred to the applicants, who have advised that they would be willing to carry out further consultation in relation to the revised plans which have recently been submitted. No further details of any such consultation have been received to date.

11.0 CONCLUSION

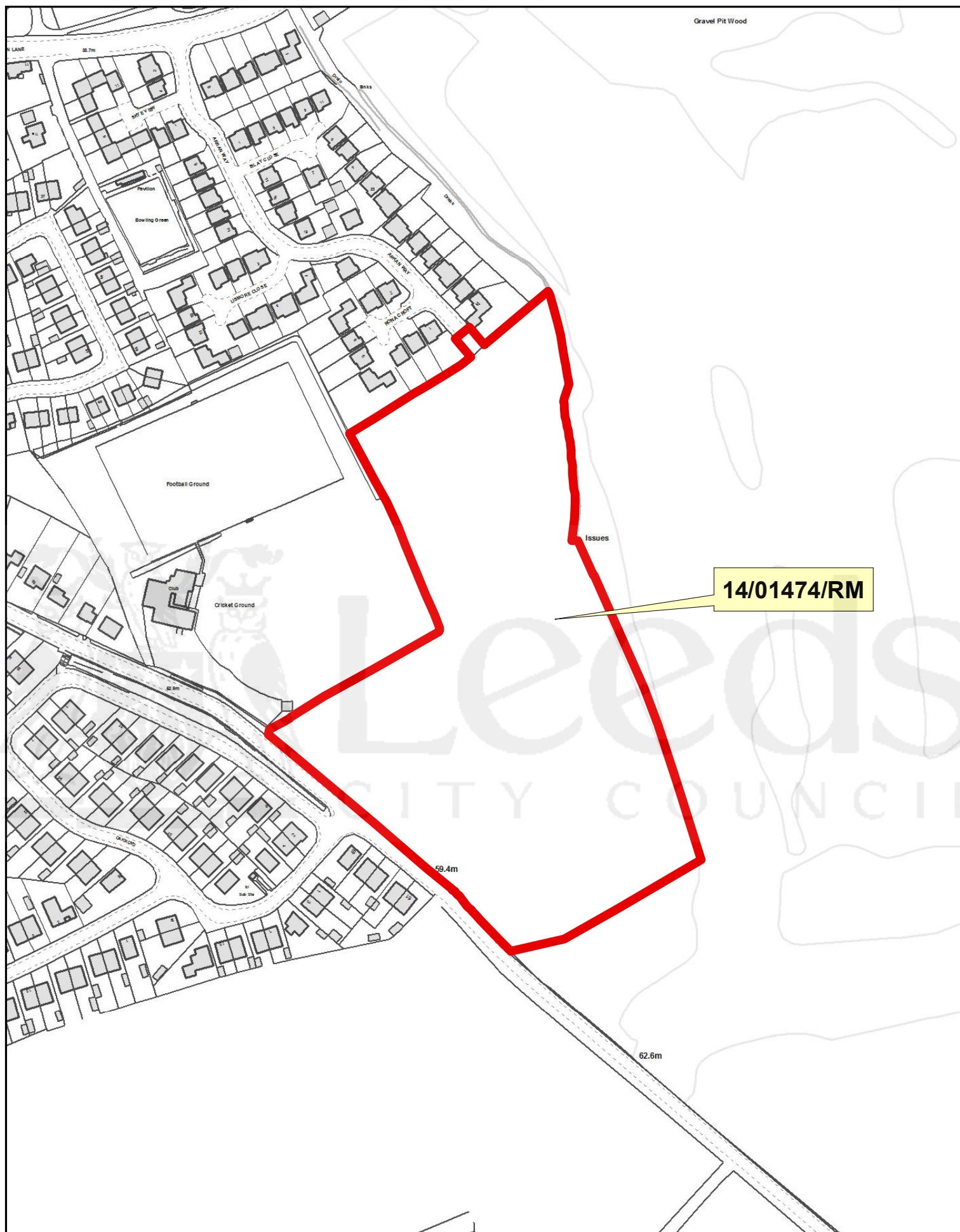
- 11.1 Although acceptable in some respects, there are a number of areas of concern in relation to the submitted details, and further discussion is likely to be required in a number of respects. At this stage therefore, Member's views on the application and responses to the questions below would be welcomed:
- 1. Is the subdivision of the proposed on-site greenspace considered acceptable by Members, in the light of the constraints relating to the development of certain parts of the site as discussed above?**
 - 2. If the subdivision of the greenspace is considered to be acceptable, in the light of the particular constraints of the site, is the balance of this between the different areas considered acceptable?**
 - 3. Do Members have any further comments or suggestions regarding the proposed on-site greenspace provision?**
 - 4. Is the proposal to provide the affordable units as a group considered acceptable, or should these be more 'pepperpotted' throughout the development as suggested by Ward Members?**
 - 5. If greater separation of the affordable units would be desirable, do Members have any suggestions as to how this may be achieved whilst maintaining the benefits of having the majority of the affordable units close to the central area of public open space?**
 - 6. Do Members feel that the proposal to incorporate 2½ storey properties on the site frontage is appropriate, or is it considered that any such properties should be situated in less prominent locations within the site?**
 - 7. Does the revised layout strike an acceptable balance in terms of positioning car parking in less prominent locations and maximising soft landscaping along site frontages?**
 - 8. Are the current proposals for a landscaped 'buffer' along the eastern boundary of the site, between the development and the open Green Belt**

land to the east, sufficient, or is additional planting required in this area?

9. If an appropriate scheme can be found, and subject to the developer's agreement and an appropriate mechanism for the variation of the original section 106 agreement, would Members be agreeable to the principle of using some or all of the committed public transport contribution towards parking or speed restrictions on the local highway network instead?
10. Are there any further issues which Members feel need to be considered?

Background Papers:

Application file 14/01474/RM and history file 12/3400/OT



SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

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