

# East and South East Leeds Area Action Plan

Leeds Local Development Framework



Development Plan Document

Feedback Report - Summary of Community and Stakeholder Consultation  
September 2007

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the six weeks between June 18<sup>th</sup> and July 30<sup>th</sup> 2007, the people of East and South East Leeds (EASEL) were consulted about the Preferred Options for the future development of the area, as part of the preparation for an EASEL Area Action Plan (AAP) which will set out the vision for future development and regeneration in the area. This report sets out the results of that consultation. It summarises residents' and organisations' views across the whole EASEL area. The report also separates the views of the five neighbourhoods in EASEL: Gipton, Halton Moor/Osmondthorpe, Harehills/Lincoln Green/Burmantofts, Richmond Hill/Cross Green and Seacroft. A more detailed version of this summary can be found on the Council's website, [www.leeds.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/ldf).

### Summary of Responses

In total, 464 people attended the drop-ins, 302 people completed questionnaires and there were 46 letters from residents, agencies, companies and other stakeholders. A petition signed by 208 residents was received from Seacroft and one signed by 59 residents was received from Halton Moor commenting on specific proposals for their neighbourhoods. 583 standardised letters were sent from Gipton residents in response to meetings held by the local MP at the end of the consultation period. 98 people returned a letter distributed by the Leeds Tenants Federation commenting on the housing proposals for the area overall.

Although there were many comments and concerns raised about details or particular local proposals, over the EASEL area as a whole all of the eight themes were supported by a majority of people, both residents and stakeholders.

The main objections raised were about the proposed mixed use area M1 (which includes the Eastdeans) in Seacroft, possible redevelopment of Rathmell Road in Halton Moor, and the scale of demolitions in Gipton. Other issues raised included the need for sufficient affordable and social rented housing, concern about possible demolition, the need to improve greenspace in general, and Wykebeck Valley in particular, and the need to reduce flood risk.

## 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLICITY AND FEEDBACK

There were a number of ways in which people could see the Preferred Options and give their views. These are set out below:

1. Local 'drop-in' sessions were held across the EASEL area on seven different days from midday to 7pm/8pm, where Council staff were present to answer questions and help fill out questionnaires and comments forms.
2. The AAP Preferred Options and supporting documents (including questionnaires) were available for inspection at the Council's Development Enquiry Centre, and at local libraries and One Stop Centres within the EASEL area.
3. The documents were also published on the Council's website, including a downloadable or interactive on-line version of the questionnaire. People could also telephone to obtain a copy of the documents or email [ldf@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@leeds.gov.uk).
4. Finally, additional comments could be submitted by letter and email.

These various ways of giving views were widely publicised through:

- A formal advertisement in the Yorkshire Evening Post.
- An article in 'About Leeds', the Council newspaper sent to all households in Leeds.
- A number of articles in the local press and media, including a Calendar News interview.

- Over 7,000 postcards distributed through all schools in the area.
- 1,003 postcards sent to people on a database.
- 5,602 postcards sent to households potentially affected by the proposals.
- 1,300 postcards available at local libraries and one-stop shops
- 130 information packs sent to community groups, including posters, leaflets, and postcards. 1,300 postcards were sent to community groups overall.
- 1000 postcards sent to Re’new for distribution around the Halton Moor area.
- 1000 postcards distributed by local neighbourhood wardens.
- A letter sent to all agencies legally required to be consulted.
- Posters in public buildings around the EASEL area.
- Planning Aid carrying out work with communities in the Harehills area.
- Information about the events available on the Council’s website.
- Telephone contact made with representatives of the main resident, tenant and community associations in the EASEL area.

This table shows how many people attended the drop-in sessions, and how many completed questionnaires.

Area	Attendance at drop-in	Qu’aires completed at drop-in	Qu’aires sent in or completed elsewhere	Qu’aires sent in after the deadline	Total
<b>Lincoln Green/ Burmantofts/ Harehills</b>	117 (2 x sessions)	60	7	1	<b>68</b>
<b>Cross Green/ Richmond Hill</b>	46	24	18	2	<b>44</b>
<b>Gipton</b>	71	20	10	25	<b>55</b>
<b>Halton Moor/ Osmondthorpe</b>	36	2	14	2	<b>18</b>
<b>Seacroft</b>	194 (2 x sessions)	47	69	1	<b>117</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>302</b>

As well as the questionnaires, the following written responses were received:

- Letters or emails from 23 residents,
- Letters from 10 agencies,
- A letter from Seacroft Ward Councillors,
- Letters from 7 local businesses,
- Letters from 9 other stakeholders,
- A letter signed by 57 residents and a petition signed by 59 residents of Rathmell Road in Halton Moor,
- 583 standardised letters distributed by the local MP, and filled in from residents in Gipton,
- A petition signed by 208 residents from the Eastdeans area of Seacroft
- The Tenants Federation distributed a letter of objection to the AAP Preferred Options. In total, 98 people returned the letter. Those returning the letter were from:
  - Gipton - 54
  - Halton Moor/Osmondthorpe - 4
  - Harehills/Burmantofts - 10
  - Seacroft - 13
  - Elsewhere in Leeds (i.e. not in the AAP area) - 15
  - Outside of Leeds - 2

Questionnaire responses and the comments from letters and other representations have been included in this feedback report; more detail can be found in the full report.

### 3. WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE AREA AS A WHOLE?

The Preferred Options discussed eight general themes covering the whole of the EASEL area. People were asked whether they agreed that:

- **Housing** - land should be used to build up to 7,800 new houses providing a range of different sized properties and a choice of different tenures at affordable prices.
- **Mixed uses** - around 92 hectares, of land should be provided for mixed uses, including housing, workspace and shopping and community facilities.
- **Priority Improvement Areas** - the older back-to-back and terraced properties should be improved through a variety of environmental measures and traffic calming.
- **Retail and local services** - a range of new shops and community facilities should be provided.
- **Education** - some schools in Harehills and Seacroft should be extended and new schools developed where needed.
- **Greenspace and recreation** - existing greenspaces should be protected from development, new ones created and a number improved, including the Wykebeck Valley.
- **Transport and movement** - public transport links across EASEL, and to the Aire Valley, and walking and cycling routes should be improved.
- **Design and sustainability** - all buildings should be well designed and follow a guide which sets out design standards.

All of the themes were supported by a majority of people in the EASEL area. The level of support varied between 85% of respondents agreeing with the design and sustainability theme to 67% agreeing with the mixed-use theme (this lower level reflecting concerns in Seacroft about the development of mixed use area M1 covering Eastdeans/North Parkway).



*Residents study the Preferred Options*

### 4. WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE FIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS?

As well as the general themes covering the whole of the EASEL area, there were a number of local proposals for each of the five neighbourhoods and people were asked to give their views about these. These are summarised for each area below.

#### 4.1 Lincoln Green, Burmantofts, and Harehills Summary

The majority of people supported both the general themes and the local neighbourhood proposals with, for example, over 87% supporting the housing theme and over 95% supporting the Priority Improvement Areas theme.

Proposals for improving shops, protecting greenspace and improving Harehills Lane for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians were also supported.

Specific issues referred to in Lincoln Green, Burmantofts, and Harehills included:

- improving public transport and opportunities for cycling and better parking, which can be difficult in the back to back streets.
- concerns about the impact of selective demolition of housing, with the majority of people questioning the approach and a few feeling that the plans did not go far enough.
- the need to improve the existing social housing and provide enough affordable properties.
- specific concerns focused on the impact on house values and the ability to sell, the need for internal as well as external repairs, the relative degree of priority of different streets and the potential negative impact upon streets not included within the improvement proposals.
- significant support for the proposal to extend Bankside and Harehills primary schools, although with concern about the possible loss of public greenspace.
- the lack of greenspace in the area and the suggestion that there should be more greenspaces and, in particular, safe play areas for children.
- the importance of social issues, including the need for community cohesion (everyone in a neighbourhood feeling they belong) and the need to deal with anti-social behaviour, such as through better policing and CCTV.



*Residents give their views at one of the seven drop-in sessions*

## **4.2 Cross Green and Richmond Hill Summary**

Although numbers were small, the responses to the questionnaire from this neighbourhood showed the strongest level of overall support for both the general themes and local proposals. There was virtually no disagreement with any of the proposals. In relation to the themes this ranged from 74% agreement for the education theme to 100% support for the design and sustainability theme.

In relation to the proposals for the neighbourhood, support ranged from 84% support for improving local schools to 97% support for improving existing greenspaces at East End park, Everleigh Street recreation area and Ellerby Road.

Specific issues referred to in Cross Green and Richmond Hill included:

- the need for new council houses and affordable houses for both sale and rent.
- the need for action now and not in several years time when conditions in the area that need improving will have declined further.
- the need for more and better community facilities.
- concern about the future of York Road shops, All Saints Church, the library and sports centre (for some residents, the proposals were unclear on these facilities).

### 4.3 Gipton Summary

The questionnaires showed strong support for both the general themes and the local proposals. Some concern was expressed, however, about the scale of potential demolitions throughout EASEL and locally the future of the Oakwood Lane area (H16 on the plans). Specific issues referred to in Gipton included:

- concern about the timescale of the AAP, that action is needed now to ‘stop the area going downhill’.
- the need for a proportion of rented properties and the importance of ensuring enough housing is affordable by local people and those on low incomes.
- the importance of the Wykebeck Valley as a unique local resource with a ‘natural feel’ and the need for improvements to be sensitive to its value to local people and wildlife as a greenspace.
- the importance of social issues, including community cohesion and the need for additional or improved social and community facilities including a health centre, a decent community centre, youth facilities, pocket parks and more opportunities for safe children’s play.

In contrast, following public meetings held by the local MP the 31 questionnaires received after the deadline, and the 583 standardised letters received were, on the whole, opposed or strongly opposed to both the general themes and the local neighbourhood proposals for Gipton. In particular, the letters wished for further discussions on the issue of demolitions.

### 4.4 Halton Moor and Osmondthorpe Summary

Overall, nearly all of those completing the questionnaire supported the proposals for both the general themes and the local neighbourhood proposals. This however, represents a relatively small number of people as only 16 people completed the questionnaire. Specific issues referred to in Halton Moor and Osmondthorpe included:

- concern about the long timescale for improvement and a strong view that action in the area is needed now.
- the need to provide more facilities for children and young people.
- a concern that people in the area ‘knew nothing about the plans’ and that there had not been enough consultation.
- the acceptance, however, that Halton Moor was ‘desperately in need of change’ which might include selective demolition of the ‘worst streets’.
- strong opposition from a number of residents of Rathmell Road to the scale of proposed demolition, and especially to demolition of the properties in their own street; it was felt that the street was stable, the properties in good condition and of mixed tenure and there was a strong core community committed to staying there and improving their properties\*.
- a view that the key to improving the area long-term is dealing with the many social problems, including poor parenting, unemployment and low skills levels.

\* A letter, signed by 57 residents, and a petition signed by 59 residents was subsequently sent in by Rathmell Road residents, which objected ‘in the strongest possible terms against any proposals as part of EASEL (option 3) which would involve the demolition of existing housing in this street’.

### 4.5 Seacroft Summary

There was strong support for most of the general themes, with for example 87% agreeing with the greenspace theme and 64% agreeing with the housing one. In relation to the mixed use theme, there were more or less equal numbers supporting it (45%) as disagreeing with it (43%). This relatively high level of disagreement was mainly from

residents living in the M1 proposal (Eastdeans/North Parkway). It reflected opposition to the related local proposals, including the expansion of the Seacroft District Centre. Residents' main area of concern was that this is a stable area with decent housing and a strong community which they do not want to see disrupted. Concern was also expressed about the possible blighting effect of the proposals, with fears about people being unable to sell their properties either at all or at a realistic value.

In respect of the local neighbourhood proposals for Seacroft, there was support for all of them, with the exception of those relating to housing and mixed use as noted above.

Specific issues referred to in Seacroft included:

- concern about a possible reduction in social housing.
- the need for more family housing, sheltered housing for elderly residents, and ensuring that any new housing is 'affordable'.
- improving or 'bricking' properties in Eastdeans (adding a brick skin to prefabricated properties) rather than demolishing them.
- concern about the lack of on-going information available to residents on plans for the area as they develop and change.
- the need for more facilities for children and young people and to protect and improve green spaces particularly the Wykebeck Valley.
- no clear preference on the proposals to extend Grange Farm primary school or develop new schools.

As well as the questionnaires, a petition signed by 208 people and 11 letters were received from Seacroft residents, 10 of which were from residents of Eastdeans/North Parkway objecting to the proposals for mixed use area M1. In general, residents who signed the petition and sent in letters were opposed to any demolition of houses and instead wished to see the housing improved. This view was endorsed by local ward members. Several Seacroft residents also signed a Leeds Tenants Federation letter that objected to the demolition of social housing and suggested that 50% of new housing should be affordable across the EASEL area.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

It takes time to plan the future of an area as large as EASEL and we know that many residents want to see things happen more quickly. The Council will continue to deliver the Area Action Plan which will provide the bigger picture for the area. All of the views and responses in this feedback report will be carefully considered and we will try to resolve objections and concerns. In the meantime work will start on sites within the first phase of the AAP and the EASEL Initiative in Gipton and Seacroft, on sites which have already been cleared and have planning permission.

Next year the draft Area Action Plan will be formally submitted to the Government for consideration and there will be a 6 week statutory consultation allowing further opportunity for comments. This is likely to happen by mid 2008. If there are still objections to the Plan these will be considered by an independent Government Inspector through a Public Examination which will probably take place in Spring 2009. The Council will need to make any changes recommended by the Inspector and the AAP will then be published as the statutory development plan for the area.

## Contact Details

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