

DRAFT
Whinmoor Grange
Informal Planning Statement



January 2011
Appendix 2

Whinmoor Grange Informal Masterplan Statement



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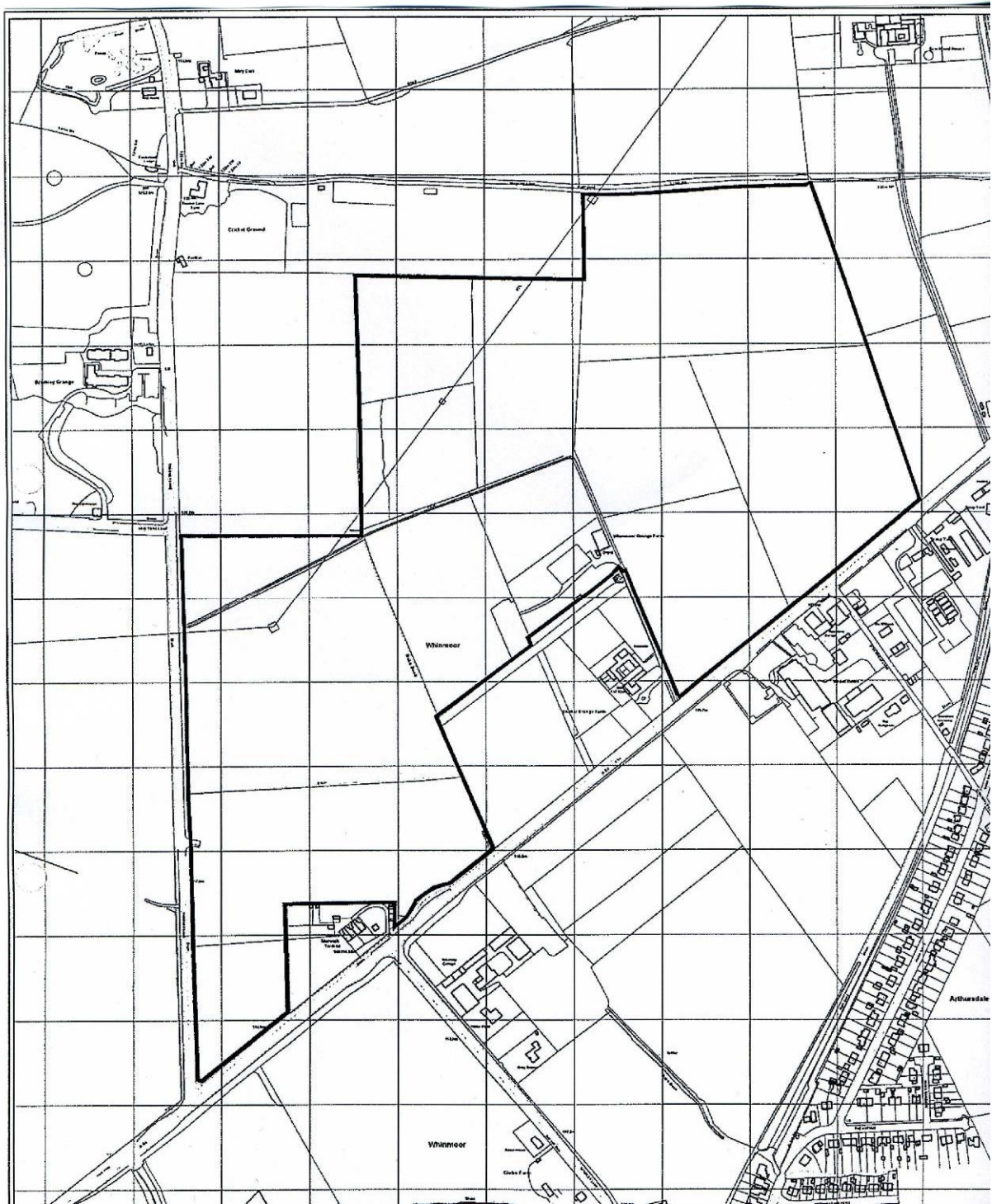
Whinmoor Grange Informal Planning Statement

1.0 Background

1.1 Introduction

Whinmoor Grange is a 104 acre (43 hectares) site to the north east of Leeds. It is bounded by Thorner Lane to the west and York Road to the south and is owned

exclusively by Leeds City Council.



The majority of the site is currently used for rough grazing, however there is a now defunct depot in the centre of the site, which houses a large storage shed, office facilities and car parking. Currently this area of the site is being used for the storage of outdated and unusable equipment and machinery. (aerial photo)



In 2002, planning approval was granted for the construction of the first and second phase of a large scale 46 acre (19 ha) cemetery on the site, which amounted to approximately 16 acres (6.5 ha). However, a review of cemetery provision across the city, following the reconsideration of the provision of large scale cemetery sites has resulted in the requirement for a more strategic assessment of cemetery requirements on a smaller scale and an exploration of the potential alternative future uses of the site which will be encapsulated in the masterplanned options of the site.

1.2 Scope of the Statement

This Statement sets out the development principles for the redevelopment of a large area of agricultural land at Whinmoor Grange Farm. It has been prepared to take account of the wider regeneration of north east Leeds, taking account of alterations in the Leeds UDP Review regarding the East Leeds Extension and provides opportunities to relocate facilities and services in a co-ordinated and planned way. It will provide guidance to officers, Council departments, ward members, stakeholders and the general public, to the formation of development proposals moving forward.

It will set out key principles and options for the redevelopment of the site and its structures and will be used by the Council as a reference document against which submitted proposals and future planning applications will be assessed.

The document will be laid out as follows:-

- Section 1 - Background to the site and this document
- Section 2 – Information regarding the site and the area
- Section 3 – Planning Policy context, pressures and previous approvals
- Section 4 – Development framework for the site and potential uses with associated masterplan options
- Section 5 – Summary and way forward

2.0 Site and Setting

2.1 Site Description

The Whinmoor Grange site is located approximately 6 miles to the north east of Leeds city centre, 1 mile to the south of Thorner and half a mile east of Whinmoor (location plan). The Council's land ownership extends to approximately 104 acres (42 ha) and includes the Whinmoor Grange Farm building, storage area and surrounding agricultural land.



The site is bounded to the south by the A64 York Road, to the west by Thorner Road and to the north by Mirycarr Road. It slopes gently west to east and north to south. It contains three electricity pylons and is transected by the overhead power cable associated with them. In addition, an underground gas main runs north-south through the western portion of the site. Internally there are several defined fields with hedgerows as boundaries, where several different crops have been grown in the past.

2.2 Uses – Existing and Previous

The existing site, on the whole, is currently used for rough grazing, with a small area in the centre of the site providing storage space for the Council's defunct agricultural and maintenance equipment and machinery.

In 2002, access and infrastructure works commenced for the first and second phases of the Whinmoor cemetery along with a large amount of planting. However these were not fully completed as a result of a full cemetery provision review, but the approvals for the works are still in place, allowing the potential for these, or a smaller scale cemetery to come forward at some future point in time.

The storage area of the site was previously the operational depot of the Landscape Construction Team of the Parks and Countryside Service, with an access route along a narrow track off York Road. This operation was relocated in the late 1990's, to Red Hall, the then, head office for the service.

2.3 Access

The A64 York Road is a major highway route into the city centre that passes along the south of Whinmoor Grange. There is a narrow track off the A64 that runs northwards into the depot area of the site, which was used as the site access until the function was relocated. The A64 is a very busy route for traffic travelling between York and Leeds and the reestablishment of this track off the A64 is unlikely to be explored as an option. PHOTO Thorner Road is generally a quiet route past the site and as a result of this, the access for the proposed cemetery site was constructed off this highway. The area has public transport links, with regular bus services along York Road in particular.



2.4 Views

Views into the site are not comprehensive, being restricted by trees and hedgerows which cross and block vistas west-east and north-south. However, within the site, the views are not wholly restricted apart from around the depot area, as the existing hedgerows are relatively well maintained and kept low.

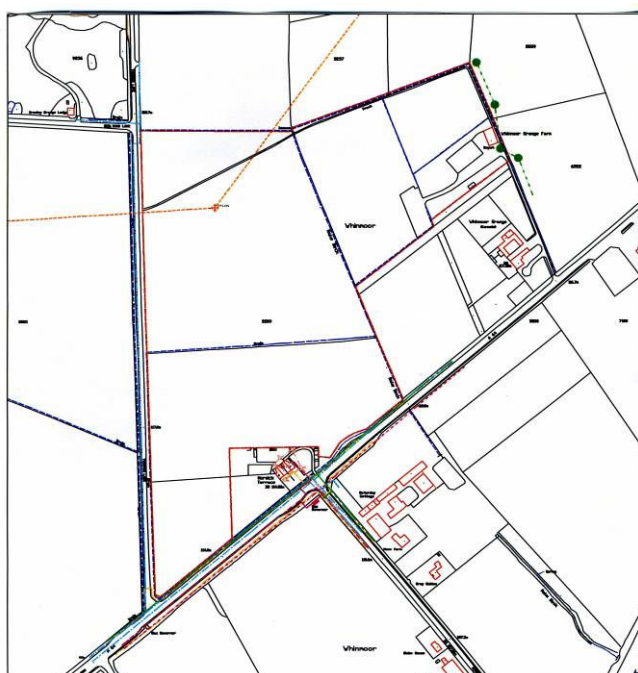


2.5 Site Constraints

There are several constraints that need to be taken into consideration in the development of the future master plan of the site. These include:-

- the Green Belt status of the site;
- existing trees and hedgerows;
- the overhead powercable and associated electricity pylons
- the underground gas main;
- the existing planning permission for phase 1 and 2 of the cemetery development;
- and the poor drainage and high water retention in the south west corner of the site.

The site is also crossed by several services and watercourses which are shown on the plan below

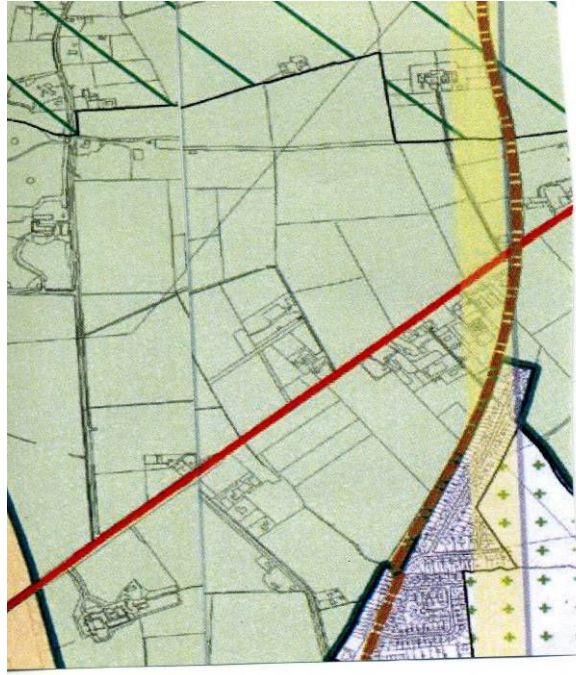


KEY

Site Boundary	
Existing Watercourses	
Existing Foul Sewers	
Electricity High Voltage Overhead 132kv	
Electricity Low Voltage Underground	
Existing Water Mains	
Gas Low Pressure	
Gas High Pressure	
Telecom Overhead	
Telecom Underground	

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Whinmoor Grange Site Allocation



- This site and the surrounding area is designated as Green Belt under policy N32 of the Leeds UDP Review 2006. (plan)

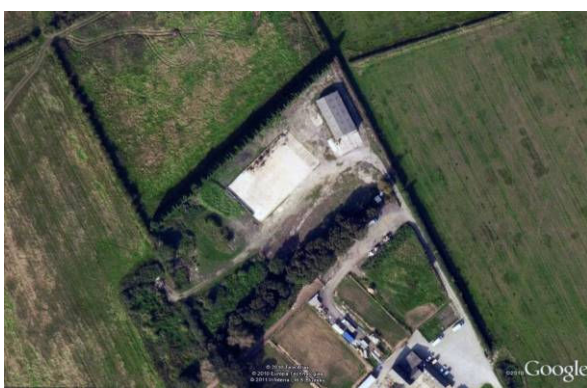
3.2 Planning Policy Context

There is a general presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts. As such, the construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the following purposes:-

- Agriculture and forestry
- Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt
- Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings
- Limited infilling in existing villages
- Limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans

In addition, cemeteries are also an acceptable use in Green Belt areas.

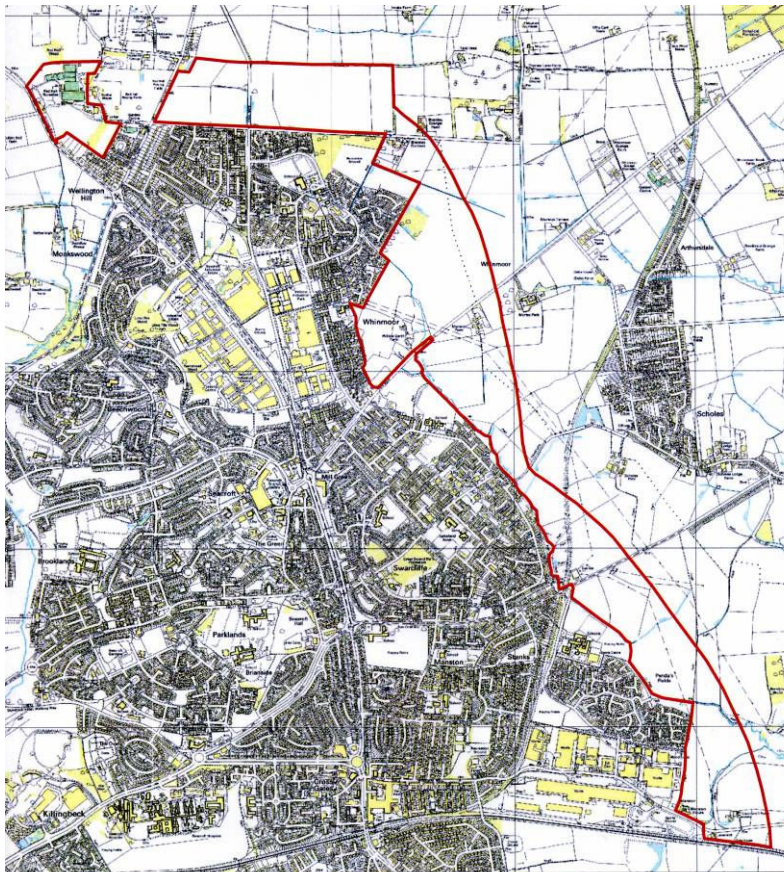
As previously stated, a small portion of the site used to function as the office and depot for the landscape construction team within Parks and Countryside Service.



This area is 0.65ha in size and contains a storage depot/shed and a large concrete hard standing, previously an additional storage shed. In addition there is a large gravel area surrounding the depot that was used for car parking when the facility was active.

3.3 Leeds UDP Review – East Leeds Extension

Land around the eastern edge of Leeds has been defined as the East Leeds Extension under the Leeds UDP Review 2006. The area covers some 215ha of land, extending from the edge of Manston, to the west of the A58 at Wetherby Road and includes Grimes Dyke and Red Hall. PLAN.

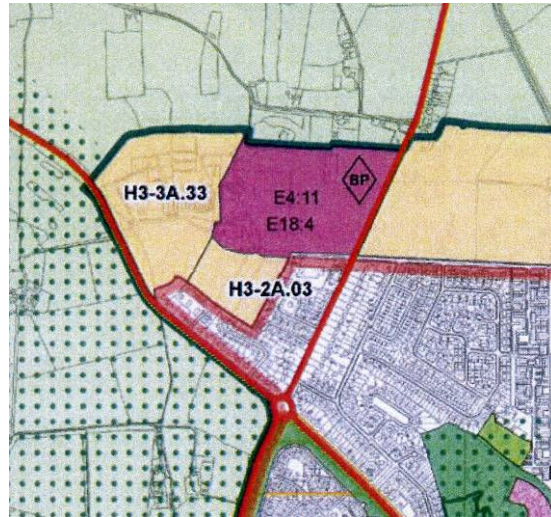


It is intended that development of this area will include housing, employment, greenspace and ancillary uses. The overall extension site is a significant Greenfield area, however its urban edge location will allow residents to benefit from integrated services and facilities available within the city centre and adjacent communities.

Future development of East Leeds Extension will need to be planned in an integrated way, which links to adjacent residential communities and employment areas. . New highway infrastructure will be required at an appropriate level based upon an assessment of the need for a new orbital relief road which would not only serve the development but offer an alternative for the A6120 Ring Road.

The land at Red Hall, included in the East Leeds Extension, is owned by Leeds City Council and includes the operational depot of the Parks and Countryside, now allocated as potential housing land. Land to the south of Red Hall Lane (H3-2A) is allocated for housing under phase 2 of the UDP. Land to the west of Red Hall (H3-

3A) is allocated for development under phase 3. The Council has not yet released phase 2 sites for development. The Red Hall playing field land is allocated as a Key Business Park reserved for B1 office use under policy E4:11 in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan which was adopted on 1st August 2001. This position is likely to be reviewed through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process to reflect changed planning circumstances, which now promote new office development within town centres. If it is established that there is no need for alternative employment land, this area is also likely to be brought forward for housing.



Under Policy H3-3A, this area will be subject to:-

- preparation of a Development Framework which will determine the phasing, mix and location of uses, density of development and location of access points
- assessment of the need for an orbital relief road and if required, funding by the development
- the provision of appropriate highway infrastructure incorporating the facility for public transport to serve the development
- financial support for enhance public transport routes, provision and services
- provision of local, community and education facilities
- provision of an appropriate level of affordable housing
- establishment of an overall landscape structure including substantial planting to site boundaries and main highway and footpath corridors
- retention of existing footpaths and creation of additional links to existing communities, local facilities and the countryside
- submission of a sustainability appraisal
- submission of a satisfactory flood risk assessment incorporating an appropriate drainage strategy

In order to facilitate any proposals coming forward under these policies in relation to Red Hall, the Council will need to assess the service requirements for Parks and Countryside in the future and develop a co-ordinated, pragmatic solution to their relocation. The key element to this is the development and subsequent agreement of

this Planning Statement that will allow all of the elements requiring decant to be assessed and the optimal location for these elements of the Service to be defined.

3.4 Red Hall Decant Requirement

The Red Hall site, currently occupied by the Parks and Countryside service, provides services such as:-

- The horticultural nursery comprising glasshouses and poly tunnels
- Green and brown waste recycling site
- Horticultural machinery workshop
- East area depot
- General offices

These facilities occupy 18.50 hectares/45 acres (2.25 ha/5 acres is Green Belt). It does not include the Rugby Football League site. In addition there are 11 ha of playing fields (E4:11) identified as Key Business Park site which is not included as part of the East Leeds Extension.

In 2006, Phase 1 of the project to relocate staff from Red Hall to Farnley Hall was completed. This project to date has consolidated a range of service functions at Farnley Hall and has initiated the relocation strategy required to release the Red Hall site in the future for potential development.

To fully release land at Red Hall for the formation of the East Leeds Extension and realise the benefits of future developments, all of the remaining functions at Red Hall require decanting as part of a wider relocation strategy. Part of this strategy involves the continuation of the relocation of Parks and Countryside staff to the operational headquarters at Farnley, where appropriate. However, some of the remaining functions at Red Hall will either require a significant land take, such as the horticultural nursery and the recycling unit or need to be located at the eastern side of the city i.e. the east area depot. In addition, this allocation is subject to the provision of offsite highways improvements, the protection of the setting of the listed buildings at Red Hall and the provision of high quality replacement playing fields and changing rooms.

The playing fields are protected under Planning Policy Guidelines 17 (PPG 17) which states:-

‘Where an exchange of land is required/takes place, to compensate for loss of recreational provision at another location, Local Authorities should secure any necessary works and subsequent management agreement by planning conditions or obligations associated with the grant of the planning permission. Exchanges should be equivalent in terms of size, quality, accessibility, usefulness and attractiveness to that being lost’.

As such, the Whinmoor Grange site, with its previous use as the landscape construction depot, its large land area (104 acres) and access infrastructure works completed as part of the development of Whinmoor Cemetery, has been considered for some time as a potential site for the decant of Red Hall. This Informal Planning



Statement will explore the potential future mix of uses the site could be put to, based on its UDP allocation, the activities/land uses requiring relocation from Red Hall along with any previous planning approvals for the site.

3.5 Whinmoor Grange Cemetery

The land at Whinmoor Grange was identified as being suitable as the site for the Replacement Harehills Cemetery as it fitted many of the criteria set at that time for the location of new north east Leeds cemetery. These were;-

- The site was in the Council's ownership
- The use of the site as a cemetery was an appropriate use of land within Green Belt
- Road access was good
- Statutory services were close by the site
- Geological conditions were satisfactory
- Generally, the site was not generally visible within the wider landscape

cemetery (phases 1 & 2 16 acres or 6.5ha) and the requirement for a maximum of 9.5ha for the horticultural nursery and the works depot, plus 15 ha of playing field land to replace the 11 ha decanted from Red Hall Playing Fields, with increased capacity to address other local pitch quality issues, there is enough land to accommodate all of the proposed decant, including a small cemetery.

In 2008, Executive Board approved the 'development of a 5 acre cemetery at Whinmoor in the location identified on the plan submitted with the report (PLAN below) and with the recommendation that its implementation is delivered as part of the larger masterplan for the site.'

Phases 3-5 of the proposed cemetery development are now not proposed to come



forward and will be considered for other land uses linked to the relocation of Red Hall.

3.6 Future Land Uses at Whinmoor - Aspirations

3.6.1 Our aspiration for the Whinmoor masterplan is to:-

- Provide opportunities for increased access to the countryside by enhancing existing desire lines through the site and linking into existing permissive footpaths where appropriate
- Explore opportunities for increased nature conservation and environmental sustainability
- Protect and enhance existing habitats where possible
- Provide opportunities for formal and informal recreation
- Utilise the site to allow for the existing uses at Red Hall to be accommodated on the site, taking account of the Green Belt location
- Explore the options in relation to the construction of the ancillary buildings required for the site operations
- Recommence construction works in relation to the development of a 5 acre cemetery on the site, within the existing planning approval boundary
- Explore potential highway options into and out of the site to service all of the proposed land uses

4.0 Development Opportunities

4.1 Masterplan Layout – Options

The overall vision for Whinmoor Grange is for consideration to be given to a range of land uses that are complementary to Green Belt policy through an agreed masterplan. This will include the previous approval for a 5 acre cemetery. Potential uses falling within this scope are:-

- horticultural glasshouses/nursery
- recreational facilities such as outdoor sports pitches and associated changing rooms
- agriculture – which is the site's existing land use
- natural amenity areas for nature conservation
- footpaths and bridleways, linking in to the existing network
- depot/office facilities and associated car parking
- other land uses permissible in green belt such as allotments, natural land etc

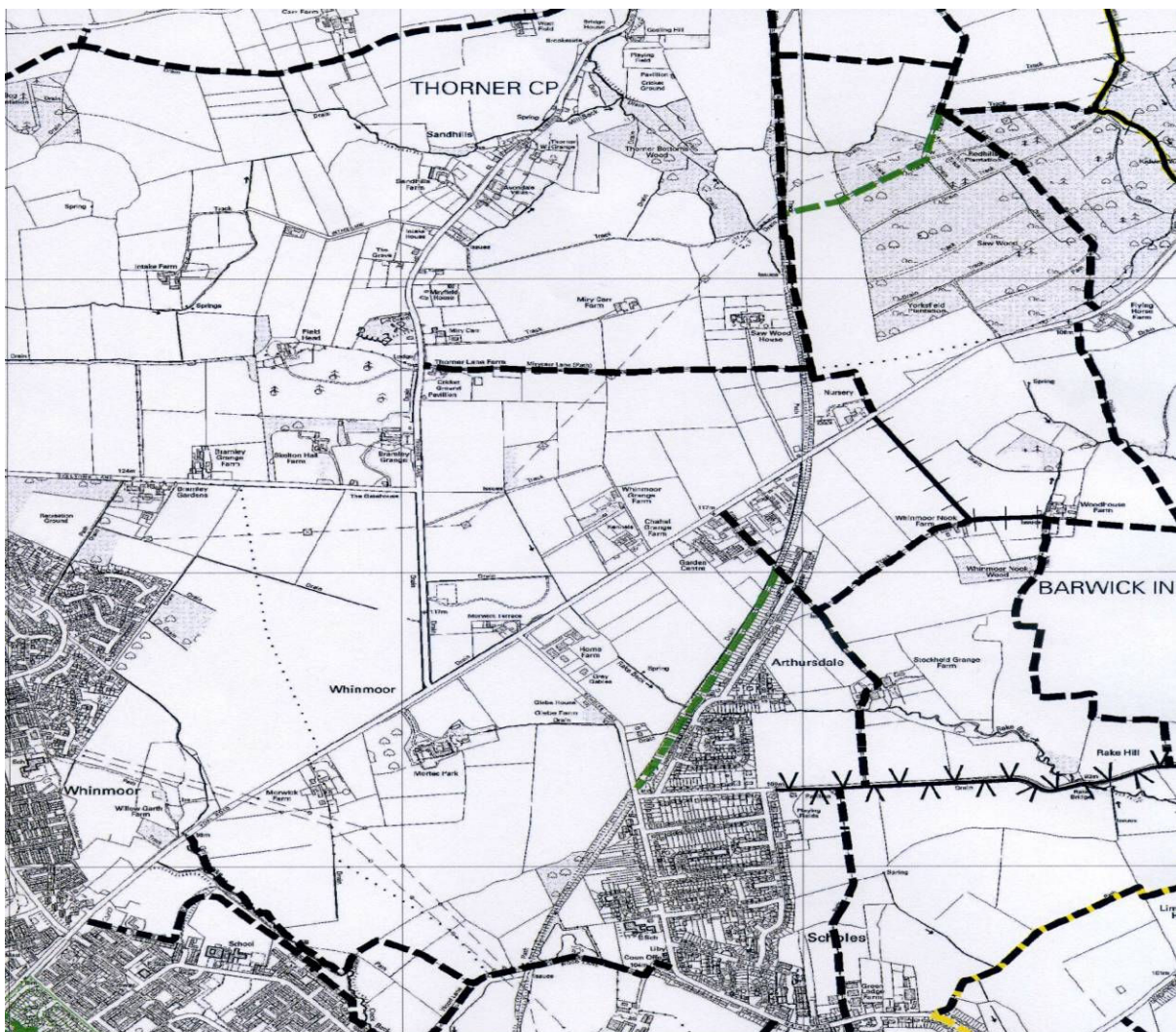
4.2 Pedestrian & Cycling Networks and Links

Whinmoor Grange currently has a definitive footpath running along Mirycarr Lane to the north of the site. There are no other identified paths within the site, either definitive or permissive. To the south of the site and the A64 York Road, there is a bridleway that links Whinmoor Nook Farm and Woodhouse Farm to footpaths southwards and northwards across the A64 and beyond to Saw Wood House and Thorner.

Inside the site however, there is a vehicle 'track' that runs from the sites northern access gate, around internal field boundaries, to the old depot area. This route was used daily when the depot was active but has now become overgrown as a result of the depot being relocated to Red Hall. Consideration could be given to the potential for this route to be utilised as a future access route into and out of the site following any recommencement of operational functions.



As the site develops, particularly when the cemetery works are completed, access for informal recreation (dog walking, cycling) will increase. Opportunities to expand the internal footpath network, from the cemetery into the wider footpath network and



the potential for the creation of new linkages will be explored.

4.3 Transport Access and Parking, Green Travel Plan

In developing a masterplan for the Whinmoor Grange site the following objectives need to be taken into account when considering transportation issues. These are:-

- The existing planning approval for phases 1 & 2 of Whinmoor Cemetery, including the completed highways works and car parking base
- The promotion of sustainable travel modes where possible
- Minimal impact on the strategic highway network around the site, in particular the A64
- Minimise the impact of generated traffic for existing residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site
- Provide appropriate infrastructure to enable the safe access and egress for vehicles arriving and departing the site
- The potential to utilise the northern entry point of the site from Thorner Lane as the new site access for all uses apart from the cemetery, to ensure appropriate consideration and separation is given to mourners and other operational uses

Both physical infrastructure and operational management of the site in the future needs to consider how to accommodate the sites function as a depot for the Parks and Countryside Service during weekdays, the cemetery usage including funerals, the horticultural nursery and both formal and informal recreation. This will be explored in greater detail through the planning process and the development of management plans.

4.4 Building Form & Quality

To ensure that any proposals in relation to the relocation of Red Hall depot are consistent to Green Belt policies, any scheme design for the reuse of the existing building or former building plots should:-

- minimise the impact on the openness of the Green Belt
- ensure that the rural appearance of the land is retained by appropriate building materials and screening
- ensure that the location of the changing facilities is the most usable in relation to the playing fields

4.5 Site Layout

In considering potential site layouts and proposed land uses within the 104 acre site, there are key requirements that need to be taken into account. These are:-

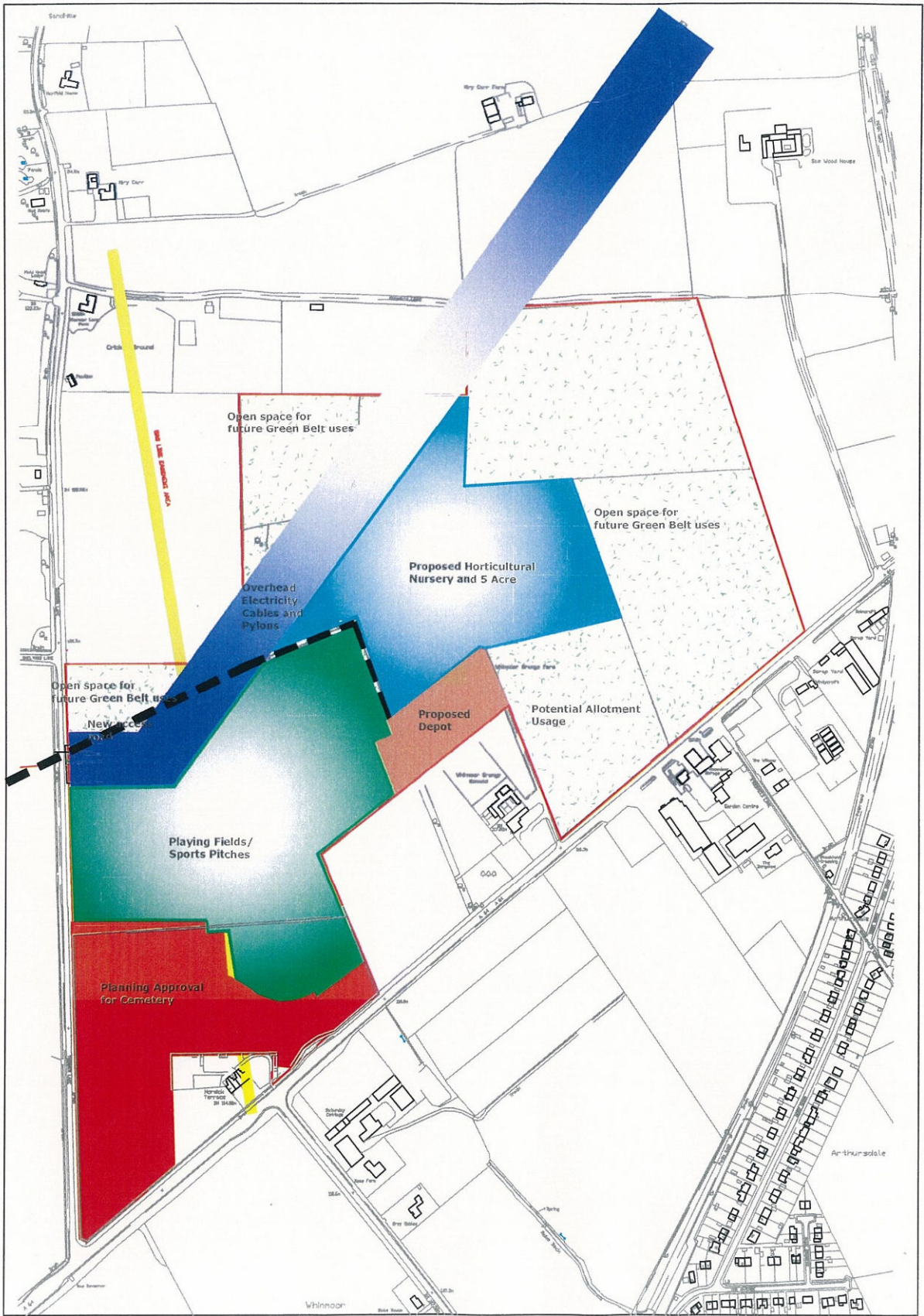
- The need for a separate entry to the site that is detached from the already constructed entry into the proposed 5 acre (2ha) cemetery area from Thorner Lane
- The requirement to provide 3 acres (1.2ha) of land for the relocation of the horticultural nursery

- The requirement to relocate the playing field land from Red Hall to Whinmoor 27 acres (11ha) with its associated changing facilities and the opportunity to explore the use of the site for additional quality playing field provision
- The potential relocation of the recycling unit and 5 acre site
- Future pedestrian, cycling and bridleway linkages through/within the site and beyond to wider existing routes
- The overhead electricity pylons and the requirement to have a 60m wide easement beneath them
- The existing underground gas main that runs north-south through the site with a 12m easement
- The potential to utilise the site for other service uses that are complementary to Green Belt use such as allotments, tree planting and habitat creation
- The potential to explore the expansion of the cemetery in the future to a maximum size of approximately 12 acres
- The requirement to provide office accommodation for Parks and Countryside staff from
 - Forestry
 - Natural environment
 - Nursery
 - Landscape Construction
 - Area officers for the east

After taking these factors into consideration, there are 2 proposed masterplan options for consideration as part of this Draft planning Statement, Option 1 and Option 2, which are shown below.

Option 1

This option shows the net 5 acre cemetery located as per the planning approval, which will provide 19 years of multi faith burial supply. Above this is an area of proposed playing field land to allow for the decant of Red Hall playing fields with space for additional pitches for club growth or other playing pitch relocation. This area is approximately 20 acres in size and could accommodate up to 10 playing pitches. The proposed depot sits over the existing area that used to house the former landscape construction depot and is XXX in size. The proposed horticultural nursery sits to the north of the depot and covers an area of approximately 15 acres. There is also the potential to explore other complementary green belt uses with the remaining land area, such as allotment use, woodland development etc.



This option provides for the net 5 acres in the location as per the planning approval but also retains an area that could be utilised for a future cemetery extension of up to 10 acres. This could provide additional burial time of up to 38 years if required. The playing field land is now accommodated to the east of the site and is over 25 acres in area which could accommodate up to 15 playing pitches. The depot sits in the same location for both options and the position of the nursery varies only slightly from option 1. There is also still remaining land to explore other site uses that are complementary to green belt use.

4.6 Whinmoor Grange Design Principles

As a site that is rural in nature and mainly agricultural in use, the main aims for any designs coming forward will be to:-

- Improve the setting of the site, whilst maintaining its open aspect and rural setting
- Improve pedestrian access through and beyond the site and provide clearly defined routes
- Provide an appropriate setting in the cemetery where funerals/burials can take place and afford grieving families time and space for reflection
- Improve and enhance existing tree, shrub and other landscape elements
- Biodiversity enhancements will be explored, which should seek to provide linked habitat areas across the site
- Maintenance of the site will be hugely important to the success of the whole relocation of the Red Hall depot, cemetery and wider site and will encourage and retain local users
- Any building development must be sensitive to the surrounding land uses and any existing property close by.
- Consideration must be given to the public utilising public transport to access the site

5.0 Planning Procedures – Next Steps

5.1 Consultation strategy

The Council will seek to engage stakeholders including the people of Leeds and appropriate statutory agencies, simultaneously over a period of 6 weeks, utilising a variety of media, including public exhibitions, hard copy and electronic questionnaires and documents, presentations and public meetings prior to the adoption of this document.

The adopted Leeds City Council statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out ways that can be used to make sure that people:-

- I. Are aware of what is happening
- II. Know how and when they can have a say on any issue
- III. Have access to all the available information
- IV. Find out what decisions have been made following consultation and whether they can take any further action should they wish to do

5.2 Planning Pre-application Process – Planning Performance Agreements

- Leeds City Council Planning Services offers an integrated approach to dialogue with stakeholders and will coordinate all planning and related inputs, including advice on Building regulations issues. This will extend through the pre-application period to the formal planning application stage.
- For further information please contact XXXXXXXXXXXXX quoting 'Whinmoor Grange Informal Planning Statement'

http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_Planning/Planning_service_and_performance.aspx