



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL WEST

Date: 13th September 2012

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION PRESENTATION – HOUSING SITE AT RUMPLECROFT, OTLEY (PREAPP/12/00192)

APPLICANT

Taylor Wimpey

DATE VALID

TARGET DATE

Electoral Wards Affected:

Otley and Rawdon

No

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO CONSIDER THE ISSUES RAISED IN THIS REPORT AND THE DEVELOPER'S PRESENTATION AND COMMENT ON THE VARIOUS ISSUES AND OPTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH BRINGING THIS SITE FORWARD FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Pre-application discussions are underway as a precursor to a planning application being lodged for housing development on this site, which is a Phase 3 allocated housing site in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006. Initial appraisals have established that the site, which is a steeply sloping Greenfield site, presents a number of challenges to successful development. This matter is therefore brought to the Plans Panel to establish Member's views on how the site might be developed.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

2.1 The applicant will present a number of alternative layouts showing housing development of this site.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The site comprises a 4.9 HA area of land on the northern edge of the built up area of Otley. The site is currently Greenfield and used for grazing. It is also steeply sloping up from south to north. The site is bounded to the east by the rear gardens of houses on St David's Road, to the south by the rear gardens of Meagill Rise, and to the west and north by open farmland. There are a number of trees along the southern boundary.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 29/92/98/OT – Outline application for residential development. Refused on grounds that

The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal to develop this greenfield site for residential purposes is unacceptable in that it would prejudice the ongoing re-use of previously developed land in Leeds and the consequent benefits for regeneration. Previously developed land is available which would make development of this greenfield land unnecessary and the potential to provide affordable housing is not so significant as to outweigh the presumption against greenfield development. As such the proposal would be contrary to the advice given in PPG3 - Housing.

5.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires this application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy For Yorkshire and The Humber (published in May 2008), and the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review (July 2006), policies as saved by direction of the Secretary of State, dated September 2007.

Unitary Development Plan Review

- 5.3 The most relevant policies in the adopted Leeds UDPR are listed below:

- *Under Policy H3-3A.21, 4.9 ha of land is allocated for housing at Rumplecroft, Otley, subject to:
NO ACCESS FROM ST DAVID'S ROAD;
SATISFACTORY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ON SURROUNDING
NARROW ROADS, INCLUDING PROVISION OF OFF-STREET
PARKING.*

The site abuts the Green Belt and the requirements of Policy N24 will apply. Development should address the traffic issues in the adjacent residential streets and is dependent upon the provision of satisfactory access.

- SA1 Securing the highest environmental quality.
- SP3: New development should be concentrated within or adjoining the main urban areas and should be well served by public transport.

- GP5: General planning considerations.
- GP7: Guides the use of planning obligations.
- GP9: Promotes community involvement during the pre-application stages.
- BD5: Consideration to be given to amenity in design of new buildings.
- H1: Provision for completion of the annual average housing requirement identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- H3: Delivery of housing land release.
- H11, H12 and H13 Affordable Housing.
- LD1: Criteria for landscape design.
- N2 and N4: Provision of green space in relation to new residential developments.
- N12: Development proposals to respect fundamental priorities for urban design.
- N13: Building design to be of high quality and have regard to the character and appearance of their surroundings.
- N23: Incidental open space around new built development.
- N24: where development proposals about the green belt, green corridors or other open land, their assimilation into the landscape must be achieved as part of the scheme. Transition planting may be outside but adjoining the site provided that the applicant has control over the land and the LPA is satisfied that the planting will be retained in the longer term.
- T2: Seeks to ensure that developments will not create or materially add to problems of safety, environment or efficiency on the highway network.
- T15: Improving vehicle accessibility.
- T24: Requires parking provision to reflect detailed guidelines.

Regional Spatial Strategy

- 5.4 It is not considered that this site raises any issues of regional significance or that the RSS has any policies of direct relevance to this application.

Emerging Core Strategy:

- 5.5 The Publication Draft of the Core Strategy was issued for public consultation on 28th February 2012 with the consultation period closing on 12th April 2012. Following consideration of any representations received, the Council intends to submit the draft Core Strategy for examination. 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. As the Core Strategy is in its pre submission stages only limited weight can be afforded to any relevant policies at this point in time.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- 5.6 The following guidance is considered relevant:
- SPG3: Affordable Housing;
 - SPG4: Greenspace Relating to New Housing Development;
 - SPG11:Section 106 Contributions for School Provision;
 - SPG13: Neighbourhoods for Living;
 - SPD Public transport improvements and developer contributions;
 - Street Design Guide SPD, and
 - Travel Plans SPD (Draft).

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

5.7 The National Planning Policy Framework was issued at the end of March 2012 and is now a material planning consideration. The NPPF sets out up to date national policy guidance which is focused on helping achieve sustainable development. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The basis for decision making remains that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.0 MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of housing development
- Means of access
- Design and layout

7.0 APPRAISAL

PRINCIPLE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The site is an allocated Greenfield housing site (Phase 3) of 4.9HA with an expectation within the UDPR that it would be developed between 2012-16 and deliver circa 135 dwellings. Members will be aware that the Council attempted unsuccessfully to defend at appeal a number of refusals of applications for housing on Phase 2 and Phase 3 Greenfield UDPR sites (although this was not one of those appeal sites). On each occasion, the Inspector considered that the 5-year supply of available housing land in the Leeds area fell demonstrably short and that the release of the site would not have any marked effect on regeneration prospects. Substantial costs were awarded against the Council in respect of these appeals and the Council's Executive Board subsequently resolved that it would not seek to resist development of Phase 2 and 3 Greenfield sites as a matter of principle. Officers are therefore of the view that the development of this site for housing is acceptable in principle although there are significant matters of detail to resolve. The Panel is asked to note that this site is required to deliver 35% affordable housing under the Interim Affordable Housing Policy.

The Panel is asked to confirm that the principle of developing this site for housing is acceptable.

MEANS OF ACCESS

7.2 Following consideration of a number of layouts and access road configurations it appears that it is not possible to achieve a loop arrangement from a single point of access from Meagill Rise due to gradient constraints. In view of this it would not be appropriate to develop the site from a single point of access as the length of cul-de-sac created would exceed the recommended maximum of 200m by a significant distance. Exploratory layout drawings have placed the plot furthest from Meagill Rise at well over 500m from the junction. Existing houses and third party ownership prevent any opportunity for a second point of access from any other frontage aside from St David's Road.

7.3 The UDP Inspector's comments say that "at least two accesses will be required to the site probably from Meagill Rise and Weston Ridge as St David's Rise [sic]

would be too narrow....In both cases third party land may be required to provide connections and visibility splays." The reference to Weston Ridge by the Inspector is puzzling as there doesn't appear to be anywhere to create an access, even using third party land. The Inspector also refers to "a turning head at the end of Rumpolecroft" being needed. The latter is a steeply sloping track, and would not seem suitable as a means of access to the site.

- 7.4 Despite the Inspector's comments about St David's Road being 'too narrow' it is considered necessary to consider it as a secondary access to the site as it may present the only feasible way of developing the site. In addition to potentially solving the access problem to the housing site a link though would provide an alternative access for existing users of St David's Road, which itself is an excessively long cul-de-sac under current standards.
- 7.5 If a second access via St David's Road is to be pursued despite the wording of the UDPR policy the highway safety implications will need to be fully revisited. The St David's Road estate currently serves just under 300 houses from a single point of access on a loop arrangement, the Street Design Guide recommends that two points of access are preferred for estates serving between 200 and 300 properties and that two points of access must be provided for estates serving more than 300 properties. If a route through the site linking Meagill Rise with St David's Road is pursued consideration will need to be given to the amount of traffic likely to access the site through St David's Road, the suitability of the junction leading from the short cul-de-sac and the route traffic would take to navigate through the estate.
- 7.6 **Notwithstanding the UDP policy stating no access from St David's Road, the Panel is requested to consider whether this approach should nonetheless be seriously considered as seemingly the only viable way to access the site under current highway safety requirements.**

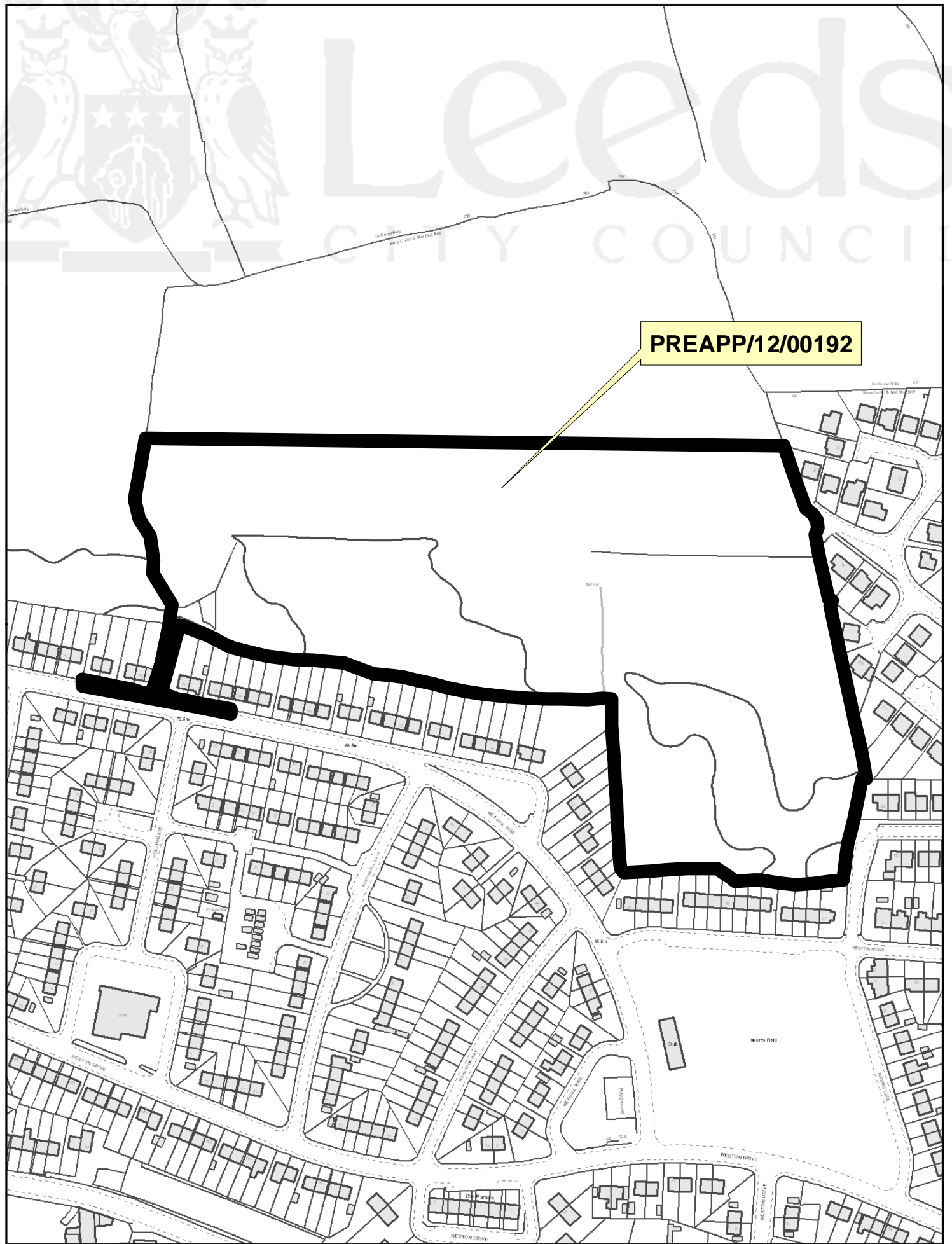
DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 7.7 The steepness of the site presents other design difficulties in addition to access. The proposals presented by the developer to date indicate in part the creation of more level areas through the use of retaining walls and terracing. The developer is seeking to develop conventional two storey houses only - the proposals do not indicate any use, for example, of split-level designs which exploit the level changes. The developer has thus far indicated an unwillingness to consider the use of more innovative design approaches on grounds of cost and incompatibility with its range of standard house types.
- 7.8 Officers consider that seeking to impose standard house types on a site of this nature is unlikely to be the best design approach and would wish to see a more creative design approach.

Members views on the design of the development are sought

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Members are asked to consider the issues in this report and the developer's presentation and to comment generally on the future development of this site and specifically on the matters set out in bold in this report.



PREAPP/12/00192

WEST PLANS PANEL

