

HUNNINGLEY LANE BARNLSLEY



Landscape statement, May 2014 - Yorkshire Land Ltd



Introduction

Smeeden Foreman Ltd has been commissioned to produce a landscape statement for Yorkshire Land Ltd, which sets out to analyse the landscape within a site adjacent to the B6100 Hunningley Lane, at the south western edge of Barnsley. The land is approximately 12.55 ha in size.

Landscape architects have carried out a desk study and initial landscape assessment on 13.04.2014 to ascertain conditions on site.

In addition, an assessment of the site's Green Belt status and relevant planning and landscape character was also undertaken.

Proposals



Hunningley Lane, Worsbrough

Illustrative Layout

Gross: 29.5 acres

Nett: 20.4 acres

329 Dwellings

Planning context

National planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 replacing Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Sustainable development is a target in which the environment can play a key role.

'Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.' Para 7 p2 [6].

The overarching emphasis on sustainable development sets out principles which Local Planning Authorities must reflect in local policy. The following paragraphs from the NPPF are most relevant to landscape and the proposed housing location'.

'Paragraph 58 - Requiring Good Design

The NPPF places an emphasis on good design as a key factor to providing sustainable development. It sets out a list of design objectives.

'Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;

optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;

respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;

create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and

are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping'.

'Paragraph 80 - Green Belt

Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'.*

Fig1a: extract from Barnsley council's online map showing current extent of Green Belt in the Barnsley area. (available online: <https://stratus.pbondemand.eu/connect/barnsley/?mapcfg=udp>)

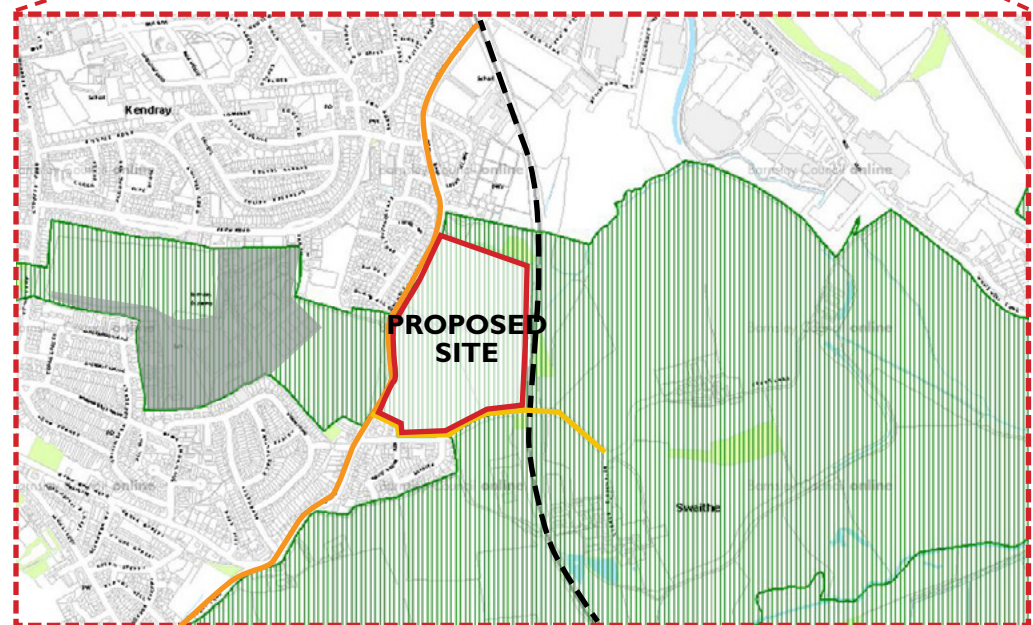
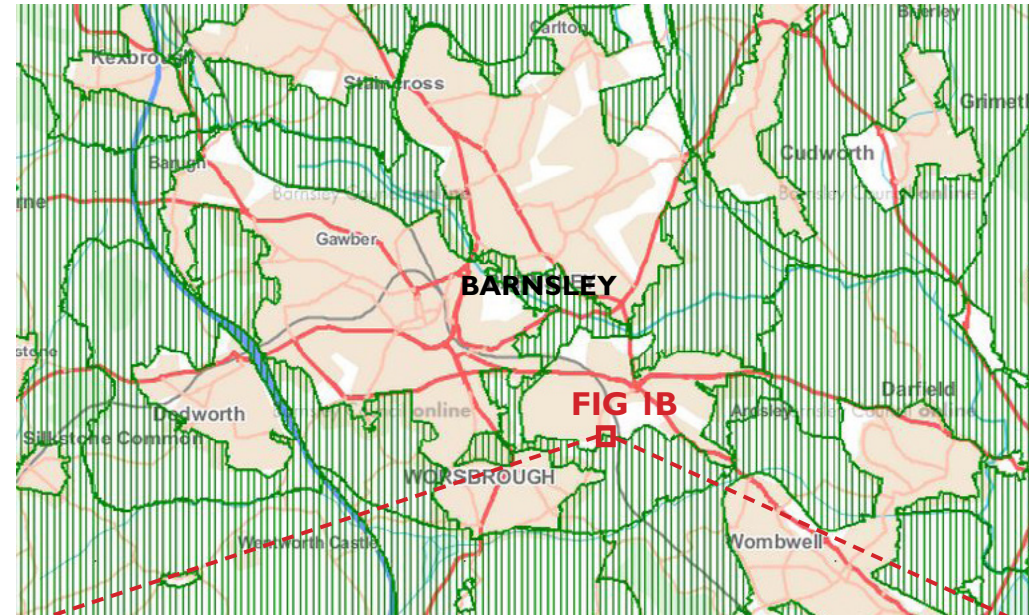


Fig1b: extract from Barnsley council's online map showing current extent of Green Belt in the Hunningley Lane area. (available online: <https://stratus.pbondemand.eu/connect/barnsley/?mapcfg=udp>)

Local Green Belt context

Core strategy was adopted by the Council in September 2011, however 9 months later a Council report to Cabinet dated the 4th July 2012 stated:

“Since the adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDF) core strategy, a member led Economy Working Group supported by senior officers has been discussing key priorities for the Borough and these priorities have now been agreed by Cabinet within the Economic Strategy (2012-2033).”

“The Core Strategy was developed between 2008 and 2010 in a very different Economic Climate to now. In terms of land use framework, the Development Sites and Places Development Plan Document (DPD) will play a major role in creating the conditions for Economic growth within the Borough and will underpin delivery of the Councils Economic Strategy.”

The Council published the Consultation Draft DPD in July 2012.

The Council affirmed, in the Consultation Draft DPD, that at this stage of the process, it had not allocated any Green Belt land for Housing Purposes; however The Council invited Landowners to:

“Let us know if you have a Green Belt Site that may be suitable for low Density Housing. We will consider sites put forward.”

“The Green Belt sites that will be considered most favourably for low density housing are likely to have the following characteristics:

- *Their Development would enable the borough to achieve the ambitions of the Economic Strategy in respect of delivering a broader housing mix*
- *Their Development would not harm the functions of the Green Belt particularly in respect of checking unrestricted sprawl and preventing settlements merging into each other*
- *Development of the site would result in a defensible Green Belt boundary*
- *The site has a good relationship with a settlement, has access to facilities and is sustainable, edge of settlement is likely to be preferred*
- *The Development represents infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within the Green Belt than the existing Development*
- *Will contribute to the viability of the settlement.*

The Consultation Draft DPD affirmed

“Landowners will have to demonstrate that the site put forward is viable for Low Density Housing. Where a proposal for High Quality, High Value well designed, individual or Low Density dwellings is proposed in Green Belt, the need for that type of property may be considered as a very special circumstance...”

Furthermore the DPD sets out:

“The proposal in the housing section to consider Green Belt sites for Low Density Housing will be in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The justification for considering this departure from National Planning Policy is to enable implementation of our Economic Strategy...”

“In Respect of achieving the ambitions in the Economic Strategy, the need for Low Density, High Value Housing in Green Belt may be considered as a very Special Circumstance.”

Adopted Barnsley Unitary Development Plan Green Belt Policy

Greenbelt Policy BA9 set out in the Adopted Barnsley Unitary Development Plan States:

“The Primary Purpose of Green Belt in this Barnsley Community Area is to prevent the built up areas merging with the surrounding settlements of Royston, Cudworth, Darfield, Wombwell, Worsborough, Dodworth and Higham, maintaining the separate identity and character of these settlements in relation to surrounding countryside and having particular regard to the landscape features of that countryside. The Green Belt is intended to contain further pressures for encroachment on the countryside.”



Photographed at Whitecross Lane looking towards Hunningley Lane sports centre and residential area. Centre left (above) and bottom left of the site (below), you can see the area of scrap machinery and farm waste.

Landscape character

The proposed site is located within the Barnsley urban area between the B6100 Hunningley Lane and the Leeds to Sheffield railway line. The site comprises of arable farmland that runs up to a varied, untidy and fragmented urban edge. There is no clear distinction between the current urban edge and the farmland beyond. Urban development spills over the road in places to give an untidy, convoluted edge.

The proposed site is bounded to the north by a strip of mature woodland and a stream which forms the garden of an existing detached bungalow with outbuildings. Beyond this bungalow, there is a cemetery and a further area of existing urban development. To the east, the Leeds to Sheffield railway line is flanked by mature woodland to either side and forms a strong, logical and defensible boundary. To the west, the site is bounded by Hunningley Lane (B6100 Stairfoot to Worsborough Bridge road). To the south, bounded by Whitecross Lane, the arable farmland runs up to a varied, untidy and fragmented urban edge. Within the southern edge of the site, along Whitecross Lane, there is farm waste and scrap machinery littering the field.

Other development within the urban fringe surrounding the site (between Hunningley Lane and the railway line) includes a primary school to the north, and a farmstead and site of a now demolished school to the south.

Adjacent garden boundaries predominately consist of urban fences and hedges. A wedge of urban green space leading from the southeastern edge of central Barnsley (west of the site) visually connects to open farmland, east of the railway line.

Based on our initial assessment we would judge the landscape in this area to be of a relatively moderate sensitivity and in a relatively poor condition.

Effect of the proposed development on landscape character and Green Belt

Based on our initial assessment, and the proposals which retain a link between the urban green wedge (west) and open land east of the railway line, we believe permission for this development in this area of the Green Belt would not significantly impact upon local landscape character.

Furthermore, we believe the Green Belt would benefit from redefining the existing fragmented and untidy urban edge. Strong boundaries defined by the railway, mature vegetation and areas of existing urban development would result in a strong, defensible and enduring edge to the Green Belt.

Local landscape character would also benefit from the removal of the areas of agricultural dereliction that development of this site would bring.



Assessment



Landform and mitigation

The site is set within sloping land which runs up to a fragmented urban edge, it is therefore well screened by these buildings from long distance views to the west and separated from these properties by a green strip and the B6100.

There is significant existing mature vegetation to the east and north which would visually contain the development in views from these areas.

A proposed green corridor and public open space through the heart of the development would retain a strong open connection between the urban green space to the west and open countryside to the east.

Landscape character and Green Belt

This site has a potential to address a number of landscape character and Green Belt issues currently affecting the local area:

- Unification of the fragmented urban edge
- Creation of a strong, enduring and defensible boundary for the Green Belt
- Reuse of areas of agricultural dereliction

- A retained link between the urban green space to the east and open countryside to the west, improving recreation potential for the area
- Improvement of local urban character and visual amenity through introduction of public open spaces, and new native tree, shrub, and hedgerow planting.

It is therefore concluded that removal of this site from the Green Belt and its development would not impair the 5 key purposes of the Green Belt in the wider area. Sensitive development proposals for this site could result in an overall gain in terms of landscape character and urban visual amenity due to the retained views and connections, removal of agricultural dereliction, additional trees and shrubs and public open spaces. The landscape and Green Belt would also benefit from a well defined and more defensible urban edge. This would be defined by utilising the railway cutting on the eastern edge of existing urban development to form a new greenbelt boundary.

Green Belt 5 PURPOSES CHECKLIST	HUNNINGLEY LANE SITE
1) Checks the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas?	YES - decreases potential for sprawl by being contained within well defined, strong boundaries, (in particular the railway to the east)
2) Prevents neighbouring towns merging into one another?	YES - does not encroach on any neighbouring settlements and helps to unify and consolidate development to create a clear and strong urban edge
3) Assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment?	YES - due to strong physical boundaries, this site is a natural end to development in this area. Significant provision for mitigation proposals will help to integrate the development within the landscape. In addition, due to the open green corridor at the heart of the development, a strong connections is retained with the urban green space to the east and open countryside to the west. This site is discrete within an area of medium landscape sensitivity, and the low lying and sloping nature of the existing landform
4) Preserves the setting and special character of historic towns?	YES - will enhance the setting of the area by creating a more unified and defensible urban edge with increased visual amenity of public open space and additional planting of trees, hedgerows and shrubs.
5) Assists in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land?	YES - will help to unify a varied, untidy and fragmented urban edge by creating clear and unified boundaries. Furthermore development on this site will help to remedy the problem of the area being cluttered with scrap machinery and farm waste.

