

Draft Chopwell Heartlands Planning Brief



Appendix A
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Site Vision

“The Heartlands will reinvigorate housing choice in Chopwell, to encourage the retention of existing residents as well as attracting new ones to the village.”

Introduction

This Planning Brief has been prepared for the Heartlands site located within the heart of Chopwell village. The provision of housing on the Heartlands site is key to the successful regeneration of Chopwell. The site was previously allocated for residential development in the 1998 Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and also as part of the Draft Replacement Unitary Development plan (2006). However, this land allocation was removed by the Inspector following the Public Inquiry into the Draft Replacement UDP; consequently the site is not allocated in the UDP adopted in 2007.

Site Objectives

The objectives of this brief are to:

- Support the regeneration of Chopwell Village.
- To summarise various policy initiatives which will affect the site and will justify the requirements that will be placed on any developer.
- Set out Gateshead Councils policies with regard to the redevelopment of the Chopwell Heartlands site for housing.
- To inform developers and other interested parties of the opportunities and constraints presented by the Heartlands and the type of development expected and encouraged by local planning policy.
- Outline the opportunities and limitations of redeveloping this site and guidance on how they can be dealt with.
- Encourage sustainable building methods and practices in securing the highest standard of development of this site as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This brief ought to be considered in conjunction with the appropriate policies and appendices of the UDP 2007, Interim Policy Advice (IPA) and the emerging Local Development Framework.



Site Location and Description

Chopwell Village is located in the west of Gateshead, approximately 12 miles from the town centre. The village falls within the administrative wards of Chopwell and Rowlands Gill and is home to a population of 3,687 living in 870 households (2001 Census).

The Heartlands site lies in the centre of the village, is predominantly greenfield land, mostly occupied by rough grassland with several areas of naturalised scrubland and trees. Also included on the site are the former Council bungalows at Pennine View and Broomfield Crescent, allotments and garages. The site slopes down from north to south, has extensive views across the Derwent Valley and is particularly prominent in the general landscape.

The site is bounded on its northern, southern and western sides by established, generally high density terraced housing. Chopwell Primary School lies to the north west, with a doctor's surgery to the north east. There are allotments to the north eastern and western sides and Chopwell Park abutts the eastern side. Beyond Chopwell Park is Chopwell Woods, a large commercial woodland that is also of Nature Conservation Importance.

Chopwell was traditionally a mining village, but the pit closed in 1966, leaving behind a legacy of diminished local employment opportunities for its residents.



The population has been declining in recent years, partly due to a reduction in the number of households, but also as a result of some out-migration, particularly by young people which has put pressure on the local primary school. There has, however, been little significant change in the housing stock – a mix of older Victorian terraces and more recent Council housing, now managed by the Gateshead Housing Company.

The run-down appearance of Derwent Street, the focus of the village's shopping and service provision, particularly at its north end, and the poor quality of some of its terraced houses creates the impression of a neighbourhood in need of early regeneration.

Chopwell has a reasonably strong and well-organised community, proud of its heritage, but finding it increasingly difficult to cope with its changing economic and social circumstances. Despite being surrounded by some of the best countryside Gateshead has to offer and considered to be one of the best resourced villages in the Borough, Chopwell remains relatively isolated in the Borough.

Development Plan Context:

Listed below are relevant planning documents and strategies relating to this site;

National Government

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) provide central government planning guidance. Of particular relevance are PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development); PPS3 (Housing) and PPG17 (planning for open space, sport and recreation) Reference should also be made to circulars and other guidance which provide good practice guides.

The North East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (2008) sets out a broad development plan for the region up until 2021. The RSS describes its vision of the North East as a:

“Region where present and future generations have a high quality of life, it will be a vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment, and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the potential to realise their full potential”

The Gateshead UDP 2007 is the current development plan for the borough. The overall vision of the UDP is to ‘promote development where it is needed and in the most sustainable manner possible.’

As the UDP provides the policy framework for suitable development, any application submitted must have regard to this. It is also imperative that there should be consistency with national, regional and local policies and plans.

Housing

Given the size of the Heartlands site and rural nature of the village, the development site will need to be phased, it would be desirable to start development in the south western corner to maximise residential frontage and regeneration benefits onto Mill Road.

The phasing of this development will need to be subject to approval from Development Control at the planning application stage and conform with the UDP and emerging Local Development Framework.

Housing should be developed at a density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare in accordance with UDP policy H12.

Given the character of the surrounding area which is predominantly Victorian terraced housing and the size of the heartlands site, UDP policy H5 is applicable to this development site. The policy states that all new housing developments on sites of 1.0 hectare or more are required to offer a range of housing choices in terms of housing sizes and types, taking account of the housing requirements of different groups such as older people, families with children and ethnic minorities except in the case of the provider delivering housing for groups with special needs.

It is envisaged that given the size of the Heartlands site that a mixture of private housing, affordable housing and self build housing will be built on it. It would also be desirable to see the provision of live/work units within the site to encourage the development of small scale businesses in the village.

The development of self build housing will need to be controlled using guidance and legal agreements to ensure that the development compliments the design, scale and density of the remainder of the Heartlands site and also the rest of the village.



Lifetime, Wheelchair and supported living homes

In order to deliver a mixed, inclusive and sustainable community on the Heartlands site a minimum of 10% of dwellings constructed, where practicable, will be required to be constructed to 'lifetime standards' (UDP policy H9). The Lifetime Homes Standard was developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF). The standard is the incorporation of 16 design features that together creates a flexible blue print for accessible and adaptable housing in any setting.

On parts of the site that are suitable for people with disabilities there is a requirement for a minimum of 2% of the total number of dwellings to be built, or be capable of adaption without structural alteration, to Wheelchair Housing Standards (UDP policy H10). This standard is required to be applied to both affordable and market housing schemes.

Design Principles

Any development on this site should follow the guidance of UDP planning policy regarding urban design.

Policy ENV1 emphasises the importance of conserving and protecting the best aspects of an area and removing its worst aspects. Any development on this site should aim to achieve this balance.

Policy ENV2 states that, 'Sympathetically designed and appropriately located new development will be permitted', whilst emphasising the importance of maintaining or improving the local character and distinctive elements of towns and villages.

Policy ENV3 states that, 'The design, density and scale of new development should make a positive contribution to the established character and identity of its locality.' Emphasis is placed on the need to give recognition to established design principles regarding: scale, massing, height, materials, density, legibility, views and vistas.

Layout

Dwellings should provide a frontage onto streets within the site to create a welcoming environment, whilst also allowing natural surveillance of the neighbourhood. Where possible there should be overlooking onto the open space to ensure natural surveillance, creating a sense of safety.

To encourage activity on the street the creation of a Home Zone may be appropriate.



Any new development should sensitively approach those buildings sited on or just outside the boundary for this site, ensuring that such things as height and orientation do not negatively impact upon the quality of their environment. Rear gardens of any new dwellings should back onto the rear gardens of those existing dwellings lying to the south of the site – ensuring the best use of space and encouraging a frontage onto streets created within the site. The scale of the site should allow for a layout that allows a natural flow of streets, avoiding dead ends.

The layout should be such as to allow a natural pedestrian route through the site, both north to south and east to west. There is a clear opportunity to exploit the views from this site, looking south. The orientation of dwellings should be such as to make the most of the southern aspect of the site to allow for natural solar gain and where possible afford a reasonable view of the surrounding countryside.

The siting of car parking should be carefully considered to ensure that the presence of cars does not dominate the visual impact of the development.

Scale, Height, Density and Massing

The majority of dwellings in this area are terraced and semi-detached properties. Development on this site should acknowledge the existing built environment and make a positive contribution to this character. Existing dwellings are typically 2 to 2.5 storeys high in Chopwell. Developers should recognise this contextual detail, aiming to restrict the height of buildings to 3 storeys. Any dwellings in excess of this should be justified in design terms.

There is room within this development for variation in dwelling types, particularly when considering how best to address the range of developments that border the site i.e. school, public footpath, residential units and public open space.

Materials

- Materials should reflect, where appropriate, the palette of those used in this area.

Legibility

- The layout of the site, dwelling type and quality of environment can all contribute to the legibility of any development. Any housing development on a site of this scale should ensure that it is easy to navigate for visitors and residents alike, whether that be through a clear street hierarchy or subtle changes in materials.



Movement and Permeability

Development proposals should create safe and clear pedestrian access to and around the site. It is important that any new routes link well with the existing pedestrian routes leading to and circulating the site. These routes should be enhanced to provide high-quality, safe and attractive routes, achieving a good level of permeability through the whole site, and to the most direct public transport links. There are existing public rights of way that link the southern side of the Heartlands site to the north, east and west primarily to serve the primary school and the shops on Derwent Street. The provision of these rights of way will need to be incorporated and improved where necessary.

It is envisaged that there will be two highway accesses for the entire Heartlands site. One will be one from the north utilising the existing access constructed for the Nomad housing on South Road. The other will be a new access from the south west corner linking the Heartlands site to Mill Road. It would be desirable to incorporate Chopwell Mill Farm into the access arrangements in order to provide a clearer, safer route into the site. However, access will still be possible without this land. The main access road should be designed to facilitate bus movements should this ever become an option in the future. A new access from the south-west corner of the site would also comprise either a modification of the existing junction or a new junction to an appropriate design, as determined by the transport assessment.

Any new roads must be designed in accordance with the Council's "Designers' Guide for Highways and Sewers" (2nd Edition) which serves as a design guide for access roads and estate layouts, including traffic calming measures and construction. The Council is currently preparing a new guide including advice on homezones, this is currently in draft form, Colin Patterson of Transport and Highways should be contacted on 0191 433 3101 to discuss this further. Any new roads created as part of this development should also be adopted as public highway.

Car parking provision should be made in accordance with the Council's Interim Policy Advice (IPA) 11 - Levels of Car Parking In New Developments, which for C3 (dwelling houses), car parking must not exceed 1.5 spaces per dwelling house, plus 1 space per 3 dwellings for visitors, and for flats/apartments 1 space per dwelling is required. Parking for disabled people and motorcyclists must also be provided as detailed in IPA 11.

Guidance on car and cycle parking is contained in the adopted UDP Appendix 9 'Car and Cycle Parking Guidelines'. The minimum cycle parking standards have now been adopted into the "Cycling Strategy for Gateshead" (March 2003), a copy of which can be made available.

Gateshead is committed to encouraging cycling as a mode of transport by providing a safe and convenient cycling network, secure cycle storage and parking, by providing facilities which will serve to encourage cycle use.

A Travel Plan and Transport Assessment must be submitted with any application for the development of this site in accordance with PPG13. The scope of this assessment will be dependent upon the scale of the final proposals. Please go to <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportassessments/guidanceonta> for more guidance on Transport Assessments and <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/work/makingptpworkessentialforTravelPlans>.



Public Space

There is no requirement for public open space arising from new development on this site. However, due to the rural nature of the village and infrastructure problems on the south eastern corner of the site, this area could be developed as additional open space for the benefit of the entire village and could be provided as an extension to Chopwell Park.

There is a deficiency in play provision for all three age groups according to the space standards set out in the UDP. It would be appropriate for toddler provision to be made on site, and junior and teenage contributions to be made to Chopwell Park, and proposed new open space within the Heartlands site.

New play areas should be designed and maintained for the needs of the age group. Further advice on the design and layout of these can be found in UDP policies H15 and CFR28 and CFR30, and Interim Policy Advice Note 2: Children's Play Area Standards (published as Supplementary Planning Guidance note 4). Potential developers are strongly advised to contact the Council's Fixed Play Officer, Kevin Robson at an early stage.



Public Art

Developers are strongly encouraged to consider opportunities for new public art. Public art promotes legibility and can be used as a landmark to attract people to certain areas, provide a focal point at gateways and define routes and connect locations (see UDP policy ENV 6).

Flood Risk

Gateshead's current Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) identifies that Chopwell is located within a low risk area for fluvial and tidal flooding on the Environment Agency's flood zones map (flood zone 1). However, localised flooding has been observed at several locations in the village; notably Marx, Lennin and Woodside Terraces during the November 2000 floods.

Gateshead Council has commissioned further work on its Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which is expected to be completed by early 2009. This will include further information regarding areas with potential for flooding from other sources including overland flow routes and areas prone to surface water flooding caused by intensive rainfall and local watercourses. It will also provide further detail regarding impacts of climate change and areas defined as functional floodplain. Further additional work may also be undertaken to meet the recommendations of the Pitt Review following on from the lessons learnt from the Summer 2007 flooding.

Any planning application will need to have regard to Policy ENV57 of the UDP and Gateshead's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and national planning policy PPS25 and PPS25 Development and Flood Risk Practice Guide. Any planning applications for development proposals of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) will need to be accompanied by a flood risk assessment (FRA) and the Environment Agency will need to be consulted (PPS25 paragraphs 26 and E9). This includes development of sites in Flood Zone 1, which could have implications for downstream flooding due to increased run-off as well as the effects of surface water run-off within the site itself. The flood risk assessment will need to meet the requirements of Annex E3 and the Environment Agency guidance note 1 (<http://www.pipernetworking.com/floodrisk/fra1.html>). The FRA will need to assess the risk and mitigation of all sources of flooding, including surface water and sewers, and demonstrate how flood risk will be managed for the lifetime of the development taking into account climate change. A flood risk assessment will also be required if any development is located within an area known to be subject to drainage problems.

Surface water management issues should be covered within the FRA. Surface water management is a material planning consideration and a key design component that will need to be considered at the earliest stage in the planning and design process, in consultation with the Council, Northumbrian Water and Environment Agency. Run-off from previously developed sites should be compared with existing rates, not greenfield rates for the site before it was developed. However, developers are strongly encouraged to reduce the run-off rates from previously developed sites as much as is reasonably practicable. Sustainable Drainage Systems will be encouraged where practicable reflecting PPS25 and Policy ENV57 of the UDP to improve environmental quality and as well as control surface water run-off. Further guidance can be found within the PPS25 Practice Guide.

In accordance with PPS25 paragraph 17, a sequential approach to development for all sources of flooding is required i.e. new development should be directed to sites at the lowest probability of flooding from all sources. PPS25 sets out how the sequential test for individual planning applications should be applied.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is of international and national importance, and as such is heavily reflected in council policy.

It is important that Planning Policy Statement 1 supplement 'planning and climate change', and supporting practice guide are adhered to.

Based upon the Supplement to PPS1 (paragraph 35) the Council will:

- expect applicants to use landform, layout, building orientation, massing, density, mix and landscaping to minimise energy consumption including maximising cooling and avoiding solar gain in the summer and maximise natural ventilation taking account of the likely local noise environment and ambient air quality;
- expect substantial new development to gain a significant proportion of its energy supply on site from renewable sources and

/ or be connected to a decentralised, renewable or low carbon, energy supply where available;

- require the provision of public and private open space as appropriate so that the development offers accessible choice of shade and shelter;
- ensure that new development does not create adverse local environmental conditions for people or undermine biodiversity;
- secure sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), pay attention to the potential contribution to be gained to water harvesting from impermeable surfaces and encourage layouts that accommodate waste water recycling; require provision for sustainable waste management; and ensure full consideration is given to creating and securing opportunities for sustainable transport in line with PPG13 including: through the preparation and submission of travel plans; providing for safe walking and cycling, including appropriate secure cycle parking and changing facilities; and an appropriate approach to the provision and management of car parking.

It is now mandatory for all new homes to be assessed against the Code for Sustainable Homes, and by 2010 all developments will be required to meet level 3 energy and carbon standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes under Part L of the Building Regulations 2006. Given the long term timescales associated with developing such a large site, houses developed will need to be in accordance with level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes from 2013 onwards.

Prospective developers should refer to the guidance in 'Building-in Sustainability' – A guide to sustainable development and construction in the North East' produced by Sustaine (see <http://www.durham.gov.uk/> click 'environment' and then 'sustainable development').

Security

UDP policy ENV30 requires that all new developments should assist in reducing opportunities for crime by creating appropriate design and layouts while maintaining a high standard of appearance, amenity and accessibility. Developers will therefore be expected to build security measures into any scheme and to produce a layout that provides distinctive, attractive and well-designed defensible space, with good natural surveillance.

Any proposal must demonstrate at the planning application stage that it has been designed to prevent crime and must show what security measures are to be incorporated as ongoing provision. Further reference can be found in IPA 1: Crime Prevention in New Developments.

Prior to seeking planning permission applicants are encouraged to discuss layouts with Northumbria Police's Architectural Liaison Officer.

Ground Contamination and Utilities

Site investigations will be undertaken in the future by Gateshead Council to clarify ground conditions on this site, given that most parts of the Borough have a long history of underground and surface working of coal and other minerals.

There are existing Northumbrian Water public sewers running throughout the site which will need to be incorporated into any proposal. There are capacity issues with the Blackhall Mill Sewage Pumping Station, and the treatment capacity at Consett Sewage Treatment Works (STW) to which the foul flows discharge. Northumbrian Water has an improvement scheme programmed for the sewage treatment works and pumping station for 2010/11 to increase capacity.

General Requirements

Noise

Housing is considered to be noise-sensitive development. Any development proposal should therefore comply with noise exposure categories as set out in UDP policy ENV60 and PPG24: Noise.

Refuse Collection

Adequate facilities must be provided within the built form of each unit for the storage of wheeled refuse bins and recyclable material for kerbside collection.

Cable

An underground broadband cable television service is gradually being provided throughout the Borough. Whilst it is not a requirement of obtaining planning permission, developers are urged to contact the relevant cable operator. This will enable consideration to be given to the installation of underground cable and the provision of apparatus placement during the development's construction. It is desirable that provision be incorporated at the outset to avoid unnecessary disturbance and costs at a later date.

Pre- application Advice

Developers of the Heartlands site can make use of Gateshead Council's 'Development Team Approach'. This approach brings together every service provided by the council that contributes to the development process – planning, building control, environmental health, economic development, landscape design, highways and structural engineering, legal services and property. The Development Team will guide developers and their consultants through the whole development process including seeking planning permission, obtaining the building regulation approvals and environmental health consents.

Planning Application Requirements

On the 1 April 2008 the Government introduced new national arrangements for the making of planning applications. These relate firstly to the use of standard planning application forms (known as 1APP), and secondly to new information requirements for the validation of planning applications.

A document named The Validation of Planning Applications in Tyne and Wear has been prepared by all of the Councils in Tyne and Wear to provide anyone submitting a planning application with the requirements for planning application submissions. Using this document, this site will require the following to be submitted as part of a planning application:

- Flood Risk Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Daylight/Sunlight Assessment
- Landscaping Details

- Design and Access Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Biodiversity survey
- Environmental Statement
- Foul Sewage and Utilities Assessment
- Heritage Statement
- Land Contamination Assessment
- Noise Assessment
- Open Space Assessment
- Land Transfer Details
- Planning Statement
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Tree Survey
- Transport Assessment

Section 106 Obligations

The following obligations are likely to be sought but the exact requirements will be dependent on individual submissions:

- Highways improvements
- Play areas contribution
- Public Art
- Affordable housing in perpetuity

Essential Criteria

- Provide a mix of housing types
- Affordable housing
- Provision of toddler, junior and teenage play facilities
- Meet Lifetime Homes and wheelchair standards
- Provide well designed housing, that is sympathetically designed and in keeping with the rest of the village
- Provide any necessary supplementary documentation
- Meet Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 (post 2013)
- Provide footpaths to retain the existing links to the rest of the village

Desirable Criteria

- The creation of self build and live/work homes
- The comprehensive development of the site
- The development of the Chopwell Mill Farm site