

Brinsley

Opun Design Review Panel
workshop

03.10.16

Executive Summary

The Opun Panel judged the issues detailed below to be of particular importance. Where we have suggested additional work, it is envisaged that this will be carried out by an applicant as part of a planning application. It is important to note that the recommendations for additional work made here do not preclude or prevent the allocation of the site. Key points are:

- Providing an identifiable network of robust pedestrian and cycle routes utilising and integrating existing landscape features i.e. hedgerows.
- Positioning new access points in locations which minimise the impact on the existing landscape features and are designed to encourage reduced traffic speeds through the village.
- Provision of a robust and generous green infrastructure specifically a transition zone beyond the buffer zone to Brinsley Brook / green corridor, utilising the existing hedgerows within any development etc.
- Retention and improved access to Brinsley recreation ground.
- Recognition of the disused railway line as a non-designated industrial heritage asset.
- Provision of robust visual and physical connectivity from the Church of St James the Great (including grounds) to the Headstocks and disused railway line.

Introduction

Opun are working with Broxtowe Borough Council in providing design support and advice on a number of sites within the district for potential residential development. The Opun Panel members involved in the workshop for Brinsley provided a mix of built environment disciplines including urban design, planning, landscape architecture, highways, heritage and conservation.

The purpose of the workshop was:

- To identify key issues for resolution and development, and
- To agree a set of design principles for the site in an illustrative form, which,
- Set out an indicative schedule of follow-on work that will need to be undertaken should this site be developed.

Brinsley

The site is located in the village of Brinsley in Broxtowe Borough. It is bounded to the north by Cordy Lane (A608), which connects to the M1 motorway to the north, Brinsley Parish Hall, and to a row of houses located to the south of the route with rear gardens backing onto the site. There is also a row of houses to the north of this route and open landscape beyond. All of the houses and the Parish Hall offices are accessed directly from Cordy Lane. To the north west of the site is the Brinsley recreation ground, a row of houses, and a nursing home on Church Lane. The site is bounded to the east by Brinsley Brook. There is mature planting adjacent to the brook.

Further to the east is a disused mineral railway track which is now utilised as a recreational route. The route is bounded by mature trees and provides views to the open landscape beyond. The site is bounded to the south by Mansfield Road (A608) which is a key route linking to Eastwood (the nearest town) to the south. There is a row of residential properties to the north of this route with rear gardens backing onto the site with direct access off Mansfield Road. The site is bounded to the west by Church Lane. The Brinsley Conservation Area is located to the south west of the site, in and around Hall Lane. The most notable buildings in the local area include Manor Farm and the Church of St James the Great, which is listed Grade II. The village is more built-up to the west and also provides dramatic views to the landscape beyond.

The site itself includes the Brinsley Headstocks Heritage Site and Local Nature Reserve, with access from the south eastern corner of the site next to a small car park. The Reserve is located to the east of the site and includes the Brinsley Headstocks, which are historic remains of the extensive coal mining that took place in Brinsley, and Brinsley Brook. The remainder of the site is predominantly made up of fields which are divided by hedgerows.

In terms of topography, the site slopes down from north west to southeast and includes a substantial mound to the north of the Headstocks. The site also affords long views to the open countryside surrounding the site.

Green and Blue Infrastructure masterplan

The desirable setting of the site adjacent to Brinsley Brook and the attractive landscape features within the site, in particular the areas of woodland, matures trees and the continuous hedgerows to the field and site boundaries, provide the site with a strong green character and identity. The opportunity to fully integrate and engage with the existing landscape features to create a landscape-led development which capitalises and embraces the character from existing green infrastructure and setting is strongly encouraged.

As stated above, Brinsley Brook is a valuable asset and any proposals should enhance and improve the setting of the Brinsley Brook corridor including the provision of a transition zone beyond the existing buffer zone to ensure the provision of a robust and generous green corridor / infrastructure route along the Brook.

The hedgerows are recognised as important landscape, ecological and navigational features which define the historic field pattern of the site and provide a strong visual and physical link to the countryside beyond. The retention and enhancement of the hedges is strongly recommended and for these to be utilised sensitively, and with imagination and consideration within any development.

Action: The identification of a transition zone beyond the buffer zone to Brinsley Brook / green corridor, to ensure the provision of a robust and generous green infrastructure route.

Action: Recognition on the importance and value of the hedgerows and to utilise these features within any development i.e. potential location for SuDS, green corridors / routes for pedestrians and cyclists etc.

Brinsley Recreation Ground

The existing Brinsley recreation ground to the north west of the site affords long views to the open landscape beyond and should be retained. As existing, the recreational ground is isolated and the opportunity should be taken to integrate it more fully within the site, i.e. as a part of a wider network of open spaces connected by green routes.

The importance of this recreation ground and of the Headstocks was recognised and there are opportunities for some sensitive minimum intervention.

Action: Retain and improve access to the existing recreation ground i.e. forming part of a network of open spaces linked by green routes / corridors and providing housing to bound the recreation ground.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Incorporating SuDS into the site especially at this stage of the development project is considered to be prudent. Providing an opportunity to create meaningful and robust swales / SuDS and bringing water attenuation into the development, i.e. undertaking an integrated approach and rationale for the SuDS by utilising the existing landscape features, specifically the hedgerows / field pattern etc. is recommended.

Action: Identification and provision of a SuDS strategy which provides an integrated drainage strategy from source control to surface water drainage. The strategy should include a set of design principles for SuDS i.e. an integrated approach with the SuDS as accessible, attractive features that contribute to place making and strengthen the street hierarchy and the maintenance of these features.

Brinsley Heritage Assets

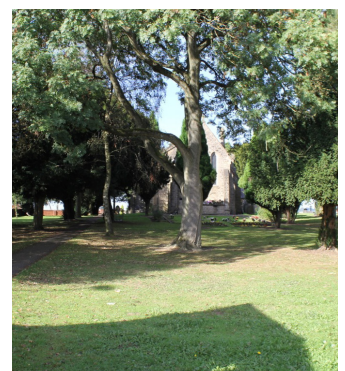
The industrial features within and outside of the site, specifically Brinsley Twin Headstocks and the disused mineral railway track, are non-designated heritage assets which reference Brinsley's industrial past as a coal mining village, and are also cited in DH Lawrence novels 'Sons and Lovers' and 'Odour of Chrysanthemums'. The historic relationship between the Grade II listed Church of St James the Great, the Headstocks, and disused railway line is considered important and should be strengthened, including mitigation measures in relation to the listed Church and its setting.

The themes identified within the DH Lawrence novels are important literary references and should be reinforced within any design, i.e. long views to the open countryside.

Action: Recognition on the importance of the disused railway line as an important non-designated industrial heritage asset.

Action: Provision of robust visual and physical connectivity from the Church of St James the Great (including grounds) to the Headstocks and disused railway line which form part of the wider setting of the listed building.

Action: Identification and reinforcement of literary themes in DH Lawrence novels i.e. provision of a design with a fragmented building line which allows views from the site to the open landscape.



Brinsley Conservation Area

Brinsley Conservation Area to the west of the site in and around Hall Lane is not considered to be affected by the potential development of the site. The site forms part of its wider landscape setting, but in terms of heritage significance there are no key /important views from the Conservation Area to the site, and vice versa.

Action: Define the setting of Brinsley Conservation Area. Any new Conservation Area Appraisal should look to identify the setting of the Conservation Area, and this should be accompanied by a Conservation Area Management Plan.

Access and Connections

At present, connections into the site are pedestrian only, mainly from the car park to the local nature reserve on Mansfield Road but also via an access from Church Lane. The opportunity to provide a network of pedestrian routes (including improvements to existing pedestrian routes) which connect to key local facilities, i.e. bus stops, post office, school, shop, recreation ground, nature reserve etc. is to be explored. This would also help to support the existing village centre. The lack of east-west connections should be noted.

The village is served by two bus routes: Rainbow One with a frequent service from early morning to late evening linking Alfreton and Nottingham City; and Black Cat linking Mansfield and Derby with a slightly less frequent service from early morning to early evening.

No formal national or local cycle routes through or close to Brinsley have been identified. However, cycling should be encouraged as part of any development, for leisure or very local trips.

In terms of vehicular access, this should serve individual and identifiable pockets within the site, rather than a new route through the site encroaching onto Green Belt land. The access points / gateways should be restricted to locations where they would cause the least impact / harm to the existing landscape framework. It may be appropriate to a layout with several small pockets of development being served from a single point of access, although this will depend on the total number of number of houses proposed.

Action: Provision of an identifiable network of robust pedestrian and cycle routes utilising and integrating existing landscape features i.e. hedgerows/ former railway corridor. The network should include a green corridor which connects the pockets of development and with pedestrian/cycle connections to the A608, located as close as possible to existing bus stops to ensure a well-connected development, accessible by foot or cycle.

Action: Provision of an identifiable network of robust pedestrian and cycle routes utilising and integrating existing landscape features i.e. hedgerows/ former railway corridor. The network should include a green corridor which connects the pockets of development and with pedestrian/cycle connections to the A608, located as close as possible to existing bus stops to ensure a well-connected development, accessible by foot or cycle.



Mansfield Road A608

Issues regarding speeding within Brinsley were acknowledged. The layout of the A608 through the village, which has a carriageway width varying between 9 and 7 metres with central hatch marking and edge of carriageway markings, may be encouraging higher speeds; these features may not be appropriate for a 30 mph road within a residential area.

Opportunities should be sought to secure features to alter the nature / character of the A608 through development funding. For example, positioning new access points / gateways at locations which could include features to encourage lower driving speeds on the A608 and the provision of new or improved facilities / features at pedestrian crossing desire lines along the A608.

These could be low-key features to change the appearance of the road to be more consistent with a 30mph road within a residential area. The opportunity should also be taken for the landscape features and boundary treatments to have a positive role in supporting the above.

Action: New access points should be positioned at locations which minimise the impact on the existing landscape features and assist in reducing traffic speeds on the A608.

Action: In addition to road access points, pedestrian connections to the A608 should be provided at locations convenient to the existing bus stops.











Conclusions

Following the workshop and the key issues raised the recommendations are as follows:

1. Identification of a transition zone beyond the buffer zone to Brinsley Brook / green corridor to ensure the provision of a robust and generous green infrastructure route.
2. Recognition of the importance and value of the hedgerows and to utilise these features within any development i.e. potential location for SuDS, green corridors and routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
3. Identification and provision of a SuDS strategy which provides an integrated drainage strategy from source control to surface water drainage.
4. Retain and improve access to the existing recreation ground i.e. forming part of a network of open spaces linked by green routes / corridors.
5. Recognition of the importance of the disused railway line as an important non-designated industrial heritage asset.
6. Provision of robust visual and physical connectivity from the Church of St James the Great (including grounds) to the Headstocks and disused railway line.
7. Identification and reinforcement of literary themes in DH Lawrence novels i.e. long views to the open landscape.
8. Clearly define the setting of Brinsley Conservation Area in a Conservation Area Appraisal and publish a Management Plan.
9. Provision of an identifiable network of robust pedestrian and cycle routes utilising and integrating existing landscape features i.e. hedgerows. The network should include a green corridor which connects the pockets of development to ensure a development which can be accessed by foot.
10. New access points should be positioned in locations which minimise the impact on the existing landscape features and designed to encourage reduced traffic speeds on the A608 through the village.

Issues and proposals diagram

Key:

-  Recreation ground
-  A608 speed reduction measures
-  Brinsley Headstocks
-  Nature reserve
-  Enhanced green infrastructure
-  Visual connections between heritage assets
-  Brinsley brook GI corridor
-  Brinsley Conservation Area

