

Kimberley

Opun Design Review Panel
workshop

10.10.16

St. PAUL'S COURT

Executive Summary

The Opun Panel judged the issues detailed below to be of particular importance. Any additional work suggested should be undertaken as part of the design development of the site in support of forthcoming planning applications. 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:

- Prioritising development on the Brownfield parts of the site (such as the Depot and Kimberley Caravans sites) and the existing housing allocation site.
- Avoiding new built development to the south of the former railway embankment.
- Exploring the potential for small-scale residential development clusters to the south of some of the existing streets (such as Dale Road or Leslie Avenue).
- Protecting and enhancing the existing network of public footpaths connecting to and across the site, including to Eastwood Road and on to Hall Om Wong Open Space, Goodwin Drive and Church Hill.
- Improving the lighting of the tunnel under the A608, to encourage use of a safe pedestrian route to the surrounding villages and farms to the south of the site.
- Ensuring any new development enhances the adjacent Kimberley Conservation Area.
- Protecting and enhancing the existing Green Infrastructure corridors and landscaping areas within the site.
- Protecting the embankment of the former railway line for either pedestrian use, or in the longer term, as a potential new NET tramway linegreen spaces.
- Improvements to the existing public footpaths within and adjacent to the site.

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 Kimberley 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 will,
- Set out an indicative schedule of follow-on work that will need to be undertaken should this site be developed.

Kimberley

The site is located in Kimberley in Broxtowe Borough. The site is bounded to the south by a long continuous boundary to the A610, which is a busy dual carriageway which connects to the M1 motorway, and beyond by open landscape. There is also a tunnel beneath the A610 which connects with public footways. The site is bounded to the northwest by Speedwell Lane and Kimberley Caravan Centre Ltd. There is also a housing allocation site adjacent to the site boundary (2004 Local Plan Site H1(m): South of Eastwood Road, Kimberley – a 1 hectare site for up to 40 units).

The site is bounded to the north by small sections of Eastwood Road and Church Hill / High Street. There is also a scout hut to the north of the site, located close to the junction with Eastwood Road on the access to Kimberley Depot. The Kimberley Conservation Area is located to the north and northeast of the site.

The site is bounded to the north east by residential streets and lanes (which are accessed off High Street), these streets include Laverock Close and Dawver Road. Residential properties on Dale Road, Leslie Avenue and Ruby Paddocks also back on to the site. A public footpath runs along part of the north eastern boundary to the site, heading from Dale Road, linking to Dawver Road, before crossing the site to the south west. The site is bounded to the east by Manor Farm, a Grade II listed building which is located about 25m from the site at this point.

The site itself is predominantly open landscape, with the main exception being Kimberley Depot to the north west of the site. There are a number of landscape features within the site which include the substantial belt of trees / landscape to the A610, hedgerows which run from north to south separating the fields, and the dense tree belt along the former railway embankment which is designated as the Church Hill Meadows Local Wildlife Site.

The embankment forms a part of a 'Greenway', allocated within the 2004 Local Plan. There is a footpath along this embankment which connects Church Hill / High Street with the south of the site. There are steps down from the embankment to the south of the site, allowing easier access by foot. A public footpath also runs along the northern site boundary from Dale Road, linking Dawver Road, before crossing south west across the site and along the southern boundary of the site to Goodwin Drive (to the west of the site). Another right of way also links off this southern footpath to run north across the site adjacent to the boundary of Kimberley Depot before ending at Eastwood Road, to the west of the Kimberley Caravan Centre.

The only vehicular access to the site is from Eastwood Road (to the northwest of the site), which provides access to Kimberley Depot. The topography of the site is varied. The north west of the site, occupied by Kimberley Depot and the land to the west of the depot is relatively level. The site falls from the east and north east to the south and southwest. There are parts of the site where the gradients are relatively steep. In addition, the sides of the railway embankment (which runs north east to south west through the site), are very steep, especially on the south eastern side.



Site Options

The land to the east of the former railway line was considered to be less favourable as development would be tucked behind the back of existing houses and streets, allowing only small pockets to be developed. The land to the west of the former railway line was considered to be more suitable as it would provide an opportunity to create a comprehensive development site incorporating Kimberley Depot, the Kimberley Caravan Centre site and the existing housing allocation site (Site H1(m)). It would allow vehicle and pedestrian access directly from Eastwood Road through the existing depot site access; this is significant as access opportunities to the wider site are limited. It would also provide a built frontage onto Eastwood Road, as well as an opportunity to integrate the potential tram route into the site, and a new location for the existing scout hut.

As stated above, the east of the site would only allow small pockets of housing to be provided from Dale Road, Dawver Road and Rugby Paddocks. Limited development within this part of the site should be considered with houses positioned to directly front or overlook the public footpath, which is at present partially hidden from view.

Action: Prioritise development to the west of the disused railway line and undertake a land assembly exercise which incorporates Kimberley Depot, Kimberley Caravan Centre and the existing housing allocation site. This combined site should also be designed to allow for the potential new route of the Nottingham tram (NET) to serve this area.

Action: To explore the provision of limited residential development to the east of the site from existing streets to provide overlooking / surveillance to the public footpath. This could take the form of self-build or small clusters arranged around low key access routes if feasible.

Action: If required, explore the relocation of the existing scout hut from its current location to the west of the site at Eastwood Road which would assist in creating overlooking and activity to this part of the site. The acquisition of this land would provide the space for the creation a new 'gateway' to the development, with the transition into the new site clearly demarcated.

Green infrastructure

The attractive landscape features in and around the site, in particular the areas of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows, provide a robust green character and identity to the site. The opportunity to fully integrate and engage with the existing landscape features to strengthen the green infrastructure is encouraged.

The opportunity to develop a green route along the disused railway line connecting with the former railway line (physically and visually), to the northeast of the site should be explored. Connecting sections of the disused railway line should be a long-term ambition, which would benefit the development and town in providing an integrated and connected network of green routes.

The potential for the extension of the tram route to the west of the site should be positively integrated as part of the green infrastructure of the site. It would be necessary to provide landscape and acoustic buffering to areas of the site adjacent to the A610, to ensure that the amenity of future residents is not compromised.

The triangular area to the southwest corner of the site which is located adjacent to the A610 is likely to not be suitable for residential development due to acoustic problems and consideration should be given to developing this as an informal open / green space that forms part of a wider network of open spaces.

Action: Provision of an open space strategy for the site which should include developing and strengthening green corridors within and adjacent to the site. This should include the disused railway line and potential tram route. There should be an integrated approach to landscape features and green spaces. For example, the triangular green space adjacent to the A610 could form part of a network of spaces which could be accessed from the public footpath and new development.

Site Access and Connections

There are limited opportunities for vehicular access to the site. Access from the ends of existing streets to the north of the site or from along the frontage of Church Hill would be problematic. Access from Eastwood Road utilising the existing depot site access is preferred and would allow a strong frontage to be provided to Eastwood Road.

With regard to pedestrian routes within and adjacent to the site, the environment and desirability of these routes should be improved. As a part of the development, this should include the provision of lighting (motion sensitive) to the existing underpass, integrating and improving access to footpaths and the improved surveillance of the footpaths, i.e. houses overlooking these routes.

Action: Provision of vehicular access to the site from Eastwood Road utilising the existing access to the Kimberley Depot part of the site.

Action: Undertaking improvements to the existing public footpaths within and adjacent to the site including lighting to the existing underpass.

Conservation Area

The potential development of the site would not impact negatively on the Conservation Area as it is not deemed to form a significant part of the Area's setting. The redevelopment of the western part of the site provides an opportunity to enhance the setting of the Conservation Area through appropriate site layout and associated green infrastructure.

Conclusions

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

1. Prioritise development to the west of the disused railway line and undertake a land assembly exercise which incorporates Kimberley Depot, Kimberley Caravan Centre and the existing housing allocation site.
2. Exploring the potential to relocate the existing scout hut to Eastwood Road, which would assist in creating overlooking and activity to this part of the site and free up space to form a 'gateway' to the rest of the site.
3. Explore the potential for the provision of residential development to the east of the site from existing streets to provide overlooking / surveillance to the public footpath.
4. Provision of an open space strategy for the site including strengthening and developing green corridors within and adjacent to the site and an integrated approach to the landscape features and green spaces.
5. Provision of a vehicle access to the site from Eastwood Road utilising Kimberley Depot site.
6. Improvements to the existing public footpaths within and adjacent to the site. This should include improvements to the lighting of the existing underpass (which is outside of the site boundary), creating footpath linkages to the new development, and ensuring that new buildings overlook existing and new footpaths, for the reasons of crime prevention.



