



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF
LAND OFF PENDLE DRIVE, CALDERSTONES**

OCTOBER 2011

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Taylor Wimpey Manchester (the Applicant) in support of a detailed planning application for residential development (46 dwellings) of land off Pendle Drive, Calderstones.
- 1.2 Further details of the proposed development can be found in full in the Planning Statement which accompanies the application.
- 1.3 This Statement is intended to provide an overview of the community consultation undertaken, the responses received and the changes the Applicant has made to the proposal as a result.
- 1.4 The Statement of Community Involvement is just one part of the application, and should be read in conjunction with the other supporting documents submitted alongside it. These are set out in full in the Planning Statement.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Planning shapes the places where people work, live and learn, so it is right that people should take an active part in the planning process.

2.2 National and local planning policies highlight the increasing need for more effective community involvement in the planning process. Those policies of relevance are outlined below:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

2.3 This document identifies community involvement as an essential element in delivering sustainable development and creating sustainable and safe communities.

2.4 The document summarises that community involvement in planning should not be a reactive, tick box process but should enable the local community to influence development at a stage when it can make a difference. Effective community involvement requires an approach which:

- Informs communities in good time about emerging policies and proposals;
- Enables communities to suggest ideas and participate in developing proposals and options;
- Consults on formal proposals;
- Ensures that consultation locations are widely accessible; and
- Provides and seeks feedback.

2.5 Community involvement is also identified as an essential element in delivering sustainable development and creating safe and sustainable communities. Planning authorities are required to ensure that communities are able to be involved in development proposals.

Ribble Valley Statement of Community Involvement

2.6 At the local level, Ribble Valley BC's Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in December 2010. The document summarises the consultation approach adopted by the council and provides guidelines for developers.

2.7 For developers who are proposing a significant or potentially controversial proposal, the council encourages them to meet with planning officers prior to submitting an application and to actively engage with the community prior to formal submission.

3. APPROACH TO CONSULTATION

Consultation Strategy

- 3.1 Taylor Wimpey are keen to involve all stakeholders including the local community in the development and design process, and have therefore recently undertaken extensive consultation on its proposals.

Objectives of the Consultation Process

- 3.2 The objectives of the overall consultation programme are as follows:
- To provide the local community and relevant stakeholders with information about the proposals at an early stage.
 - To understand the aspirations and concerns of the local community, and to take their concerns fully into account in the preparation of the planning application.
 - To accord with the guidelines and recommendations of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, PPS1 and PPS12, which sets an expectation on developers to consult on major proposals.

Consultation Methodology

- 3.3 For stakeholders and the local community to be provided with every opportunity to contribute their views on the proposals, the consultation programme has been devised on the basis of seven principles for effective consultation:
- Notify stakeholders that are to be consulted.
 - Inform those being consulted about the proposal.
 - Consult stakeholders to ascertain their views and aspirations for the successful redevelopment of the site.
 - Measure responses and analyse results of consultation rounds.
 - Report back to the local community about the views that were expressed.
 - Respond to the consultation by amending the proposals where sensible.
 - Publish details of the final proposals. A full consultation statement is to be submitted to the Council as part of any planning application submissions.

Our Approach

3.5 The approach to consultation has been set to meet the policy requirements identified in chapter 2. Consultation was carried out with three main groups:

- Officers at Ribble Valley BC through formal pre-application discussions;
- Statutory Consultees; and
- Local Residents, Councillors and the Local Parish Council.

3.6 This Statement is intended to focus on the consultation with local residents, both directly and through local councillors. Consultation was undertaken via three principal means:

- Leaflet and letter drop to neighbouring residents on the Calderstones Park estate;
- A presentation to Whalley Parish Council; and
- One-to-one meetings with local councillors.

3.3 Each aspect of consultation is taken in turn below.

Direct Consultation with Local Residents

3.1 On Friday 15 July, leaflets were posted to 379 addresses in the vicinity of the application site. The list of addresses contacted was agreed with the Council's planning office prior to the leaflets being issued. A copy of the leaflet can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Each consultation leaflet included an illustrative masterplan for the development and a summary of the development proposal. Comments were requested by 29 July 2011 via either:

- Writing, using the feedback form and freepost envelope provided;
- Email, to a dedicated consultation email address, or;
- Telephoning the Applicant's office direct.

- 3.3 The response form was intended to allow respondents to raise whatever issues particularly concerned them. Rather than a tick-box questionnaire asking for comments on specific questions, the form was designed to provide respondents space to talk about the matters that most concerned them.
- 3.4 Every consultation response received that included a postal or email address received a written acknowledgement of their comments. This was not intended to address the specific issues raised, but rather to confirm that their comments had been received.

Consultation with Local Councillors and Whalley Parish Council

- 3.5 Prior to issuing the information leaflet to local residents, a copy was issued to both the Parish Council and the two ward councillors, Councillors Terry Hill and Joyce Holgate.
- 3.6 Once the date for consultation responses had passed, the Parish Council were contacted again with an offer to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the outcome of the consultation exercise. This offer was accepted, and the Applicant attended the Parish Council meeting on 18 August.
- 3.7 Similarly, Councillors Hill and Holgate were also contacted with an offer to meet to discuss the outcome of the consultation exercise, in their capacity as ward councillors. This offer was also accepted, with the Applicant meeting the Councillors on 15 August.

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 4.1 Of the 379 leaflets issued, 47 responses were received (12.4%). 7 of the responses (14.9%) were in favour of the development, with the remainder being either qualified objections (which objected to specific details of the proposal) or unqualified objections (objecting to the general principle of development).
- 4.2 The responses centred around 3 main issues along with a number of more general comments, which are summarised below. Copies of the original responses can be made available to the Council if required.

Highways and Access

- 4.3 26 respondents (55.3%) raised concerns over the impact the extra traffic the development would generate, making it the most commonly raised issue. The capacity of the Mitton Road and Pendle Drive junction was questioned by 11 respondents (23.4%) with two of those requesting some form of traffic calming. The impact on traffic levels in the centre of Whalley was raised by 18 respondents (38.3%), with 4 (8.5%) respondents expressing concern over parking provision in the centre of Whalley. 2 respondents (4.3%) were concerned about the sight lines along Pendle Drive at the access to the proposed new development.

Lack of School Capacity

- 4.4 The pressure the proposed development would put on school places was raised by 27 respondents (57.4%). Although 3 of those (6.4%) felt that a commuted sum payment was an appropriate way of dealing with the issue, 15 respondents (31.9%) felt it was not. This was due to a perception that the financial contribution would not actually be spent on expanding school capacity in Whalley.

The Character of Whalley

- 4.5 17 respondents (36.2%) stated that the development would have an unacceptable impact on the character of Whalley and its social infrastructure. 8 respondents (17.0%) felt that there were too many homes in Whalley already, while pressure on community facilities was raised by 10 respondents (21.3%), with a lack of doctors surgeries being raised most often in that context (4 respondents – 8.5%). 2 responses (4.3%) expressed general concern about the impact on the character of Whalley, while 1 respondent (2.1%) felt that the shops in Whalley already didn't cater for local needs, and that the proposed development would make matters worse.

Other General Comments

Ecological Issues

- 4.6 Ecological concerns were raised by 7 respondents (14.9%). General impacts on wildlife were raised by 5 respondents (10.6%), with 2 (4.3%) making specific reference to deer that presently use the site. 4 respondents (8.5%) expressed concern at the number of trees to be lost, with 1 respondent (2.1%) commenting on a specific tree at the rear of their property.

Public Open Space

- 4.7 Public Open Space (POS) was raised by 5 respondents (10.6%), with 3 respondents (6.4%) asking for the existing POS to be enhanced, 1 respondent (2.1%) asking that the development provided open access to the existing POS to the rear of Pendle Drive, and 2 respondent (4.3%) stating that improvement works would not be appropriate on the existing open spaces.

Employment Land

- 4.8 The historic outline planning permission for an office development was raised by 7 respondents (14.9%), although opinion was divided. While 4 respondents (8.5%) felt that development for employment purposes was more appropriate, 3 respondents (6.4%) stated a preference for residential development instead.

Design and Density

- 4.9 8 respondents (17.0%) expressed concern about the design of the proposed development. Of those, 5 respondents (10.6%) were concerned about the design of the houses themselves, while 3 respondents (6.4%) believed that the proposed development was too dense.

Other Comments

- 4.10 2 respondents (4.3%) were concerned about the impact the proposed development would have on the value of their existing homes, with 1 of those questioning why more houses were needed when they believed the existing development at Calderstones Green wasn't selling.

- 4.11 Concerns regarding the capacity of the existing sewer network were raised by 3 respondents (6.4%), while 2 more (4.3%) questioned whether the impact of the proposed new crematorium had been considered.
- 4.12 4 respondents (8.5%) objected to the principle of development without giving specific reasons, although 1 of those did state that the reasons for their objections would be provided once detailed plans were available.
- 4.13 The issue of footpath links across the POS was raised by 2 respondents (4.3%), with 3 respondents (6.4%) welcoming the proposed provision of affordable housing.
- 4.14 1 respondent felt removing an area of derelict would be beneficial, while 3 respondents (6.4%) expressed an interest in buying one of the properties should they be built.

5. THE RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION COMMENTS

- 5.1 All the comments received as part of the consultation exercise have been considered by the Applicant and their professional team. The development proposal has consequently been amended to reflect those comments as far as practically possible.

Highways and Access

- 5.2 Prior to preparing the initial masterplan for 60 dwellings, a Transport Statement was prepared on behalf of the Applicant by Curtins Consulting. This identified that the proposal was acceptable in highways terms without any enhancements being required to the road network. However, in response to the concerns raised by local residents, it is proposed to reduce the number of homes proposed to just 46, reducing the impact in highways terms even further.
- 5.3 Curtins Consulting have consequently updated their Transport Statement to reflect this change, and this report has been submitted in support of the application. An assessment of the likely number of vehicle movements to be generated by the proposed development has been carried out using information from the TRICS database. This consists of actual traffic counts before and after development at other residential development sites across the country. It is therefore estimated that there will be 34 additional vehicle movements in the morning peak (8am to 9am) and 35 additional vehicle movements in the evening peak (5pm to 6pm). On this basis, the highways impact is not significant enough to warrant further highways improvements either in the vicinity of the site or in the centre of Whalley itself.
- 5.4 The junction between Pendle Drive and Mitton Road was identified as a potential issue by a number of respondents, with a number questioning its safety. According to Lancashire County Council's (LCC) MARIO database of road traffic accidents, there have been 3 accidents within 600m of this junction within the last 5 years. Two involved collisions between motorcars and cyclists, and one between motorcars. All three accidents resulted in minor injuries. This is unfortunately typical for roads of this type and would not warrant highways improvements for reasons of safety. As part of the planning permission for the existing Calderstones Green development, the applicant agreed to provide interactive speed limit signage to Mitton Road, either side of the Pendle Drive junction. It is understood that this signage has successfully reduced vehicle speeds on Mitton Road.
- 5.5 Consideration has been given to incorporating a mini-roundabout at the junction between Mitton Road and Pendle Drive as was requested by a number of

respondents. Unfortunately, there is insufficient land within either the existing highway or the Applicant's land ownerships to accommodate this feature. As it is not required in pure highway terms this option cannot be considered further.

- 5.6 Visibility from the proposed new site access has also been considered by our Highways Consultant. This has been moved slightly from that shown on the layout used as part of the consultation exercise to maximise visibility, with the proposed location being appropriate in highways terms.

Lack of School Capacity

- 5.7 The reduction in the number of homes proposed on the site will result in fewer school places being required by future occupiers of the development. The Applicant has committed to providing the full commuted sum payment requested by LCC in order to provide the additional school places that the development will generate a requirement for. The Applicant is mindful of the difficulties of expanding existing schools, especially at Primary Level, however payment of this commuted sum is the only option open to the Applicant under the planning process.
- 5.8 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 makes clear that LCC has a statutory responsibility to secure sufficient school places for residents of its areas. LCC has also confirmed to the Applicant through pre-application discussions that it will meet its statutory responsibility and raises no objections in principle to the development subject to appropriate contributions being paid in respect of primary school provision.

The Character of Whalley

- 5.9 In December 2008, the Council published a 'Settlement Hierarchy' for the borough. The introduction confirms that the settlement hierarchy has been produced *'to help make informed and rational decisions about the most appropriate and sustainable location of future development, whether it be housing, schools, employment, shops or other facilities within the many settlements of Ribble Valley'*. The Settlement Hierarchy identifies Whalley as a Key Service Centre. The report highlights that Clitheroe has the best provision of services and facilities in the Borough. It goes on to highlight that Longridge and Whalley also stand out from other settlements in terms of provision of access across all the various service and facility categories.
- 5.10 Table 1 of the report assesses settlements in the Borough based on local community needs including transport, convenience, community facilities, health, education and employment. The total maximum score available is 42, which is achieved by

Clitheroe. Longridge and Whalley are just behind on 38 indicating that sustainable development is best met in the three Key Service Centres.

- 5.11 Whalley as a centre is also viable and has vitality. The Council's Employment Land and Retail Study (published October 2008) states: *"Despite its size, Whalley performs the best of the three main towns in terms of vitality and viability. It has no vacant shops, retailer confidence is high, footfall and trade seem to have been constant over the last four years, if not increasing. Shoppers from across all parts of the Borough find the town centre easily accessible (albeit mostly by car) and rate it the best town centre in terms of being able to walk around."* (Executive Summary).
- 5.12 It is clear, therefore, that Whalley is recognised as a vibrant Key Service Centre and represents one of the larger settlements in the borough. Spatially, Whalley represents a highly suitable and sustainable location for future growth and development and it should play its full part, along with other Key Service Centres, in accommodating (and delivering) the borough's housing needs.
- 5.13 Although the Applicant acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents, the new homes the Borough needs must be built somewhere. It is considered that Whalley is an appropriate location and that this is a suitable brownfield site for housing. As a small extension to an existing housing development, this site represents an opportunity to deliver additional houses without encroaching onto Greenfield sites unnecessarily. Notwithstanding that and as previously stated, the Applicant has opted to reduce the number of new homes proposed from the 60 which formed the basis of the original consultation exercise, to the 46 which are the subject of this application. The scheme has been sensitively considered to ensure it will deliver a high quality design which is consistent with its surrounding residential and countryside context.

Other General Comments

Ecological Issues

- 5.14 Most of the concerns raised related to the general 'wildlife value' of the site. TEP were commissioned in June 2011 to carry out an ecological assessment of the application site and its surroundings. The report accompanies the planning application.
- 5.15 The report confirms that there are no internationally or nationally important wildlife sites within the influence of the development proposals. Moreover, no species, habitats or sites covered by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations

2010 have been identified on or immediately adjacent the application site. The report identifies a badger sett located over 200m west of the application site but confirms that the development will not have any direct impact on the sett. The report also confirms that:

- there are no records of the presence of reptiles within the wider area; and
- although there is anecdotal evidence (comments made by a members of the public to Taylor Wimpey) which indicates deer (species unknown) use the woodland habitat in the south of the site, the report confirms that legislation relating to deer species is primarily concerned with regulating the hunting season and is therefore not directly relevant to these development proposals. Deer are mobile animals and generally occupy a large home range. The area of woodland within the site would only form a very small part of their overall range and therefore the wider redevelopment of the site would not detrimentally affect their habitat.

5.16 The reduction in the number of units on the site is partly a consequence of a reduction in the proposed area of development. This has allowed a substantial decrease in the number of trees which are to be removed. Removal will therefore be limited to those trees requiring removal to accommodate the access road and a number of trees within the site. The vast majority of trees within the site are low value specimens which previously formed the landscaping to the carparking areas for the former hospital buildings. For example, a number of the trees are *Leylandii* which have limited value from an ecological perspective. In any event, to mitigate the impact of this tree removal, a significant number of additional trees are to be planted as part of the landscaping proposals which accompany this application.

5.17 An intermittent hedgerow, which acts as wildlife corridor linking the woodland to the BHS, would also be lost to the development. However, this hedgerow is to be replaced with a continuous hedgerow to the east of its current location with a second hedgerow to be planted to the western boundary; this will enable the green-link/wildlife corridor feature to be enhanced.

5.18 The report sets out a series of additional recommendations to improve wildlife linkages and ecological diversity and these will be implemented in full by the Applicant. As well as planting schemes, this also includes the provision of two 'information boards' on site, intended to explain the wildlife of the area. It is therefore considered that wildlife value of the site will be enhanced by the proposed development.

Public Open Space

- 5.19 The changes to the design of the proposed development included providing further links to the two areas of open space adjoining the site. The triangular area to the east of the site is in private ownership and therefore no improvement works will be carried out. To the west of the site, the Council owned open-space is an informal 'wildlife' area. Although pedestrian links will be provided to this area at two locations, ensuring that current informal pedestrian routes are maintained, it is not proposed to carry out any works to formalise this area of open space. We have also incorporated a 'Parish Notices' sign within our landscaping design adjacent to Pendle Drive as it was pointed out to us during the consultation that no such facility was currently available within Calderstones Park.
- 5.20 As part of the adjoining residential development currently under construction by the Applicant (Calderstones Green), an off-site commuted sum was secured by the Borough Council to landscape the existing public open space which adjoined the site and for the provision of a children's play area off Fell View.
- 5.21 For this application, it has been agreed with the Borough Council that the Applicant will pay a commuted sum to be made available to the Friends of Whalley Wood group, to help finance their ongoing programme of work in the vicinity of the site.

Employment Land

- 5.22 The site was originally envisaged for business use and planning permission was granted for such development (as part of the wider redevelopment of Calderstones Hospital) in 1998. However, despite numerous marketing attempts over the 13 years since then, the B1 office space on the site was never progressed and this element of the planning permission subsequently expired.
- 5.23 The site has been identified as a suitable housing site within the Borough Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and this now seems to be a more appropriate use for the site.

Design and Density

- 5.22 The Applicant is proposing to build the same types of dwellings that it is currently constructing at Calderstones Green which is reflective of the wider Calderstones estate. It is therefore considered that the design of the houses proposed is appropriate.

- 5.23 As previously identified, the scheme has been reduced from 60 to 46 dwellings and the Applicant in order to reduce the density of the proposal in response to comments from local residents. The remaining housetypes are all detached types (with the exception of the affordable housing) which respondents seem to feel is more in keeping with the character of the Calderstones Park estate.

Other Comments

- 5.24 It is not expected that the development will have any impact on the re-sale price of existing properties on the Calderstones Park estate. The new dwellings will be sold over a period of around two years and will therefore have a limited impact on overall housing supply at any given point in time. In any event, the effect on existing house prices is not a consideration under the current planning system.
- 5.25 The capacity of the existing sewer network and sewage treatment works has been discussed with United Utilities (UU). They have confirmed that as the proposed development is a brownfield site, potential foul water discharges are taken into account when assessing the capacity of the sewage treatment works. Copies of this correspondence from UU are contained within the Utilities Statement that accompanies this application.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Taylor Wimpey has completed a pre-application consultation exercise with the local community in respect of the proposed residential development of land adjoining Pendle Drive, Whalley.
- 6.2 The consultation has been carried out in accordance with the best practice and statutory guidance set out in the Ribble Valley Statement of Community Involvement which forms part of the Ribble Valley Local Development Framework. The consultation programme has been designed to encourage involvement and participation from local residents and to provide an open and accessible means for the local community to review and comment on the development proposals.
- 6.3 The consultation programme involved dedicated one-to-one meetings with local councillors, a presentation to Whalley Parish Council and a 'leaflet' drop to neighbouring residents. The consultation responses highlight that there is some tentative support for the scheme but the majority of residents raised matters of concern; these have been considered further and have been addressed, where practical, in the planning application submission.
- 6.4 As a result of this consultation exercise, the following changes have been made to the design of the proposed development:
- Reduction in the number of new homes proposed from 60 to 46.
 - Increase in the proportion of the new homes which will be detached.
 - Reduction in the area of the site to be developed.
 - Increase in the number of trees to be retained.
 - Re-positioning of the proposed access to the site.
 - Updating the Ecological Survey report to take into account the potential presence of deer.
 - Confirmation sought from UU that the sewage network and treatment works has sufficient capacity for the development.

APPENDIX 1

CONSULTATION LEAFLET