

Leeds City Council Response to Otley Neighbourhood Plan Informal Site Consultation

Please note that the comments provided below are given on an initial basis and the council reserves the right to submit differing opinion/comment as part of the formal consultation process.

	Site	Comments
1.	Riverside Changing Rooms	The council has no record of the building, and can confirm we do not maintain. The changing rooms are reportedly used by Prince Henry's School.
2.	Wesbourne Close Woodland	This site is not in council ownership.
3.	Old Railway Line (East)	No comment at this point.
4.	Garnetts Field	The sports ground is N1 greenspace and therefore development would be within the limitations of planning legislation. The council has no current plans to change the use of the site.
5.	Knotford Nook	This site is not in council ownership
6.	Cambridge Drive POS	This is a former tip site which may have contamination issues. Proposed housing allocation wraps around the site so could be used to enable efficiencies in development of that area, i.e. part used for housing development with POS reprovided within the developable area as a whole.
7.	Farnley Lane	N1 greenspace. The council has no current plans.
8.	Pegholme Drive	Proposed under the SAP to be POS. Access to the site an issue in terms of development. The council currently has no plans other than the proposed SAP allocation.
9.	Stephencroft Park, Danefield Terrance	POS, no plans in regard to the site.
10.	Union Court, Union Street	Proposed for POS designation under the SAP. Amenity space largely associated with the sheltered housing of Union Court.
11.	Wellcroft, Crow Lane	POS with designated play area. No plans/comment.
12.	Former Thomas Chippendale School Pitches	UDP N6 protected play pitches. No plans/comment.
13.	All Saints Primary School Playing Fields	Playing fields will have N6 protected designation. The council only has part ownership of the site. The school (diocese) own the substantial part.
14.	Ashfield Primary School Playing Fields	UDP N6 protected play pitches. No plans/comment.
15.	St Joseph's Primary School Fields	UDP N6 protected play pitches. No plans/comment.
16.	Birdcage Walk Allotments East	Designated allotment greenspace. No plans/comment.
17.	Birdcage Walk Allotments West	Designated allotment greenspace. No plans/comment.
18.	Otley Cemetery	Council owned burial site. No plans/comment.
19.	Westbourne Close Woodland	POS, no plans in regard to the site.
20.	Memorial Garden, Bondgate	Memorial monument/area. Need to look further into ownership, appears not to be in council ownership on our systems. Looks to be associated with the adjacent church.
21.	Otley Sand & Gravel Pits	Not identified as council owned, needs further landownership investigation.
22.	Land at Station Top	The council is looking at options to use this area of land for small industrial units and therefore would not wish to limit options or sterilise the site by way of designating for permanent car parking provision.

23.	Otley Lido	As stated the former Lido area is under an exclusivity period whilst proposals for its future are worked up. In principle the council is supportive of a third party developing the site for community and leisure use o, on the basis that a viable proposition is achievable.
24.	Manor Garth	Council owned site, no specific comment at this stage.
25.	Tittybottle Park	Council owned site, no specific comment at this stage.
26.	Wharfemeadow's Park	Council owned Public Open Space with operational park facilities. No specific comment at this stage.
27.	Grove Hill Cricket Ground	Designated Public Open Space. No specific comment at this stage.
28.	Newall Carr Road	The council's ownership excludes the property marked 'Hall' and the area marked around the Hall, up to the boundary between 3 and 5 The Crescent. Public Open Space, no specific comment at the moment.
29.	Grove Hill Park	Public Open Space with multi-operational facilities. No specific comment at this stage.
30.	Weston Drive Sports Field	Public Open Space with tenant owned building on site. No specific comment at this stage.
31.	Westgate Primary School	Operational school, with current school place demand no envisaged change to this. Should the school become an academy school in the future ownership will pass from the council to the academy organisation. Other than this no other comment at present.
32.	Ashfield Works	Current decision pending on a planning application for mixed use redevelopment. All positive buildings on site have been identified and appropriate protection given.
33.	Courthouse	The building is subject to a long leasehold interest, whilst the tenancy remains viable the council, at the present time, have no plans for change. The council, at the present time, cannot commit to support the expansion of the Courthouse onto the adjacent North Parade Depot site. A business case has for the proposed expansion has to date not been received. The depot is still an operational site with no fixed solutions for the current use/tenants.
34.	Otley Cemetery Chapels	Options for the chapels to be assessed, living accommodation may not be the most appropriate use given the cemetery setting, but in principle the option for a work/business premises seems appropriate. This is not to close the door on other appropriate and viable options which may come forward.
35.	Side Copse	The site highlighted is not in council ownership. The area to the south and west of the 'works' buildings having been disposed of under 2 transactions in the early 1990s.
36.	Civic Centre	Proposals for future use of the centre have been received by the council and are currently being assessed. The building has already stood empty for a prolonged period of time and the council would not wish the progress made in receiving proposals to be undermined by further constraints to the buildings future use. The route for bringing the building back into use should be viability lead.
37.	Ashfield Primary School	Operational school, with current school place demand no envisaged change to this. Should the school become an academy school in the future ownership will pass from the council to the academy organisation. Other than this no other comment at present.
38.	Bethall Hall	The building is leased out, viability of its current use therefore rests with the current tenant. Further than this no current comment.
39.	Cross Green Community Centre	Well used viable council run community centre. The centre was subject of a city wide community centre review in 2015, as a result the centre was highlighted as being well used and identified for retention as such.

40.	Library & Tourist Information	The library building is currently subject to a widening of council front facing services and therefore no plans for change of use/withdrawal of provision.
41.	2 nd Otley Scout Hut	No specific comment at present, other than the site has restrictive covenants on it.
42.	Otley Children's Centre	Operational children's centre which will be subject to Early Years funding restrictions. Within the wider Ashfield Primary School site. No specific comments at present.
43.	Spring Gardens	Operational residential home. Any future consideration will be viability lead in terms of local supply and demand for older people's housing. Other than this no specific comments at present.
44.	Weston Lane Youth Centre	The centre was part of the 2015 city wide community centre review through which it was identified as an unviable centre based on the lack of current usage. Current discussions taking place for alternative community benefit use, but should this not lead to a confirmed use then, in consultation with ward Members, the site's future will have to be questioned.
45.	Weston Lane Junior Football Club	As per response at no.30. The club house is tenant owned, therefore viability of the building rests with the third party.
46.	Otley Cricket Club	The building is leased out and intrinsically linked to the adjoining cricket ground/Public Open Space. No further comment at the point.
47.	Wharfemeadows Bowling Club	The building is leased out and intrinsically linked to the adjoining bowling green and wider Wharfemeadows provision. No further comment at the point.
48.	Grove Hill Tennis Club	The building is leased out and intrinsically linked to the adjoining tennis courts and wider Grove Hill Park provision. No further comment at the point.

General Comments:

Whilst the aspiration to protect community assets in principle is recognised, there should be acknowledgement that demand for such can change over time and where the use of buildings reduces to such an extent that operational viability is called into question then there should be a pragmatic approach to what happens to that building in the future, to the avoidance of buildings being void for extended periods of time.

Where assets are currently void, and have been for some time, then it is the council's view that the proposed safeguarding blank approach may act to undermine attempts to bring buildings back into viable use. There needs to be recognition that in some instances waiting for a viable community use may take some time, during which the fabric of buildings may deteriorate despite the council undertaking wind and weather tight maintenance. Not only potentially leading to increased costs to bring back into use but also from an aesthetic point of view having empty buildings is not desirable for local residents or the local economy.

With regards to school play pitches, in addition to Sports England/N6 protection pitches are also covered under the Academies Act legislation prohibiting development of school sites for a period of 8 years following cease of use for education purposes. Only with express consent of the Secretary of State for Education can this period be waived.

Should any of the schools in Otley opt to become, or join an existing academy the council is bound to transfer ownership of the site onto that academy, including play pitches. In this eventuality the council's control over the future of the site(s) is relinquished.

In regard to 'alternative equivalent or superior provision' where loss of a site, e.g. community facilities, is proposed, or occurs, the council would like to see 'sufficient level of continuing.....need is identified' more clearly defined. 'Sufficient' could be applied quite subjectively and sufficiency to make a particular provision (site or building) a viable proposition could vary considerably.