

Otley Neighbourhood Plan

Vision statement

By 2028, Otley will be a more attractive, self-sufficient and sustainable community, building on its status as an independent and traditional market town in an attractive rural setting.

The town will be home to more people and so the emphasis will be on providing the right sort of homes for local people. There will be significant transport and infrastructure improvements (relief road, cycle ways, etc.) and, crucially, greater employment opportunities. Jobs in the creative, cultural and tourism industries will build on Otley's strengths and reflect the town's character. This will help reverse the trend towards becoming a suburb of Leeds.

Otley's bigger population will command greater resources, supporting much improved local facilities and services in the town centre and outlying areas. A better deal for teenagers and young people will be a key feature of this enhanced provision.

The town's retail facilities will be very much improved and build on Otley's history as a distinctive, independent shopping centre rooted in local traders and businesses and a strong market culture.

Unique tourist selling points for Otley will be its character as an attractive town set in outstanding countryside; the music and pubs underpinning the town's cultural economy; its national status as an ever-growing cycling hub (supported by the development of a first-class cycling route network) and the provision of improved footpath routes.

The Chevin and River Wharfe will enjoy enhanced protection as high-quality recreational, wildlife and landscape corridors with the aim of more fully realising their potential as community, tourist and day visitor attractions and amenities.

The town's essential character will remain firmly intact despite all of this growth, development, change and progress. A key element of the town's development will be to preserve and enhance Otley's heritage. Sustainable development over 11 years will create a town which, if anything, will look even more attractive than it does today and be an even better place to live.

Overall Aim

To develop, maintain and improve a vibrant and sustainable Otley by stimulating a thriving economy with a range of employment opportunities and 'affordable' housing that supports an active and inclusive community and to build on Otley's natural assets whilst protecting and enhancing its unique environment and heritage.

Objectives

- To ensure that homes, of the right types, are built to meet the needs of local people;
- To ensure that new employment opportunities are provided in the town;
- To support and regenerate the local economy;

- To ensure the provision of better community and leisure facilities for all;
- To improve transport infrastructure, alleviate congestion and develop safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists;
- To protect Otley's rich built heritage;
- To encourage quality design in buildings and places;
- To protect landscape, wildlife and nature conservation interests.

GREEN ENVIRONMENT

YOU TOLD US:-

- You value the Chevin, countryside, scenery, the rural setting, the Wharfe, green links and walking opportunities
- To address derelict riverside sites
- To protect local wildlife sites, local green spaces and trees
- Flooding is a growing concern

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Protect the Chevin's 'Special Landscape' against unsympathetic development
- Protect the town's local green links and corridors, such as the disused railway and Green Lane/Kell Beck, so they are not severed or harmed, while encouraging improvement and extension.
- Control harmful development within the riverside corridor but promote its recreational use and easy access
- Suggest leisure/community use of the former Bridge End Cattle Market site, together with necessary car parking, but with flooding, landscape and environmental safeguards
- Define a wildlife habitat network within Otley, control development within it, and seek improvements wherever possible
- Identify a list of Local Green Space sites which in effect gives them Green Belt status and protection
- Identify a shortlist of Local Green Space sites that would benefit from improvement
- Support appropriate development which would provide new green space, and encourage these spaces to meet Woodland Trust and other nationally recommended standards
- Lobby for land at Midgeley Farm to be used for water-based nature conservation, flood alleviation and informal recreation uses, after sand and gravel have been extracted and the site restored.
- Provide for replacement trees within the Otley Neighbourhood Area wherever trees will be lost on development sites
- Promote surface-level sustainable urban drainage systems as part of new development to help reduce surface water flooding

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

YOU TOLD US:-

- You value the market place, historical architecture and buildings
- To extend Otley Conservation Area

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Identify potential Conservation Area extensions – at Albion Street, Weston Lane, Westbourne, Birdcage Walk, Otley Riverside and Station Top – as 'Local Heritage Areas', and set out area-specific considerations which any new development should take account of
- Identify a list of 'Potential Non-Statutory Heritage Assets' (locally important buildings or structures), the significance of which will be considered in any development proposal, in order to avoid or minimise conflict with their conservation and to improve them where possible
- Guide design and development in and next to Otley Conservation Area so they reflect and take account of the area's special historic and architectural features
- Identify three residential estates – The Oval, Duncan and Pegholme – which have notable architectural or design characteristics and set out area-specific features which any new development should take account of
- Guide design and development at Throstle Nest, next to Weston Conservation Area, so they reflect and take account of the area's special historic and landscape features

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS

YOU TOLD US:-

- You are unhappy with housing or any other development East of Otley
- Ashfield Works should be developed for housing
- You are unhappy with edge of town centre retail development at Ashfield/Westgate
- You are concerned at the number of derelict/empty sites and buildings around the town

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Can't stop development East of Otley, but do set out key guiding principles to govern aspects of the development such as: overall approach and design; the bypass, footpath and cycle links; employment, education, and improvement of former tip sites
- Set out development requirements for Ashfield Works, covering traffic, ecology, riverside walkway and cycleway, and heritage
- Set out development requirements and aspirations for the Westgate site, covering traffic, pedestrian routes and heritage, and suggest indoor market and museum uses
- Set out development requirements and aspirations for the former Board Buildings on North Parade, covering heritage and suggesting future housing and/or office use with associated car parking

HOUSING

YOU TOLD US:-

- Otley needs limited new housing and that it should come with improved facilities
- Housing development should be on smaller sites, compact and walkable
- Starter homes and homes for the elderly are needed
- There is an 'affordable' and/or 'social' housing need in Otley

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Set out criteria to be met by further housing development, on sites not already identified or allocated
- Support mainly one- and two-bedroom housing rather than larger properties, and also rented accommodation, all to be provided through a range of housing types
- Seek to ensure that all new housing aimed at elderly or disabled people has good access to community facilities (Seek to ensure that the affordable housing required as part of a development is delivered on-site wherever possible, and that any developer payments in lieu of affordable housing on site are used to provide this housing elsewhere within the Otley Neighbourhood Area)

EMPLOYMENT

YOU TOLD US:-

- You are concerned that Otley should not become solely a dormitory or commuter town
- You want existing employment land to be retained
- Successful Otley-based businesses are moving out due to a lack of land for expansion
- You support the provision of new employment land
- Job opportunities in Otley are at best average
- You support tourism-related development and live/work accommodation

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Safeguard a list of 13 employment sites across the town
- Support and set out development requirements for 2 new employment sites off Ilkley Road
- Support employment uses on other suitable sites, as long as they meet guidelines to ensure acceptable development
- Support proposals for live/work accommodation, as long as they meet guidelines to ensure acceptable development, including at Otley Cemetery Chapels
- Support hotel proposals on town centre or edge of centre sites, as long as they meet guidelines to ensure acceptable development

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

YOU TOLD US:-

- You have concerns about the town's schools, civic centre and other facilities
- You support the safeguarding of community buildings and facilities
- Improved sporting and leisure facilities, including swimming pool and leisure/sports centre, are priority concerns
- You want a large multi-purpose venue with cinema facilities
- You support improved health facilities
- There is a need for youth facilities, teenage clubs and activities

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Protect the amount of community facilities in the town and support additions and improvements
- Support the provision of new and/or improved sports and recreation facilities
- Support the development of new and improvements to existing entertainment venues
- Support improvements to health facilities, particularly north of the river and in the town's Bradford Road neighbourhood
- Support the development of a new school, or extensions to existing ones, to increase capacity and/or improve facilities

TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

YOU TOLD US:-

- Improved cycling provision is a key 'want'
- You are dissatisfied with bus service links to key destinations
- You want better coordination and integration of bus and rail services
- Otley bus station is unsafe and has inadequate capacity
- You want Otley's rail links reinstated
- Town centre car parking is a problem

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S POLICIES:-

- Expect new development to improve cycling and walking provision in the town, and protect the route of the proposed Wharfedale Greenway
- Support improvements to Otley Bridge and the White Bridge
- Expect new development to contribute to public transport improvements
- Support improvements to the existing Otley bus station or the provision of a new expanded station
- Resist development which would make it difficult to reinstate an Otley rail link along the line of the former railway
- Safeguard existing levels of town centre public car parking and support additional parking, including a suggested new car park at the former Gas Works Site