

19<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Dear Councillor,

**OXSPRING FIELDS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER THE NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS OF OXSPRING & THE PENISTONE AREA**

We write on behalf of Yorkshire Land Ltd (YLL) to seek to provide you with details of their proposed development at Oxspring Fields, Oxspring, and to inform you of the number of benefits that it can provide to Oxspring Village and the wider Penistone area.

The intention of this letter is to provide you with information in an open and transparent manner. The information enclosed has been submitted to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in response to their consultation on the Draft Local Plan and also to the Oxspring Neighbourhood Plan Group in response to their consultation on the draft Oxspring Neighbourhood Plan. Accordingly all of the information provided is available in the public domain.

Yorkshire Land Ltd has a number of land interests within the area and are keen to work with local stakeholders to proactively consider the release of their land to enable the delivery of the significant number of benefits that their Oxspring Fields development proposals can provide for the local area.

**Oxspring Fields Development Proposals**

The benefits that the Oxspring Fields development proposals will deliver to the local area are summarised in the bullet points below. Full details of these benefits area are set out within the enclosed Sustainability & Accessibility Study:-

- Delivery of approximately 150 new homes providing a major contribution to delivering open market housing which includes the delivery of 36 affordable homes, at no cost to the public purse, to help re-balance the Borough's Housing Supply, which includes Oxspring and Penistone;
- Investment of Capital Expenditure of £18m creating 46 direct construction jobs & 65 indirect construction jobs of which a number will be retained in the local area;
- New Homes Bonus of £1,249,248 of which a proportion will be spent in the local area and £208,208 additional Council Tax receipts per annum to help retain local services;
- New first occupation Retail & Leisure Expenditure of £715,000 & ongoing expenditure of £2,621,438 each year by new residents spent in local shops and facilities;
- Provision of £500k funding and the land required to deliver a new Strategic Public Transport Interchange on land adjoining Penistone railway station, which will also include a 100 space car park, a pedestrian bridge crossing, a tourist information centre, café and toilets. This would be delivered in conjunction with draft housing Site allocation H81 (Land South of Halifax Road, Penistone);
- Delivery of significant community and recreation benefits for Oxspring including funding towards a Community Centre/Sports Pavilion (£500k) providing such facilities as; changing rooms; toilets; meeting and function rooms; and health facilities such as a Dr's surgery;

- Provision of a new country park with the potential to provide footpaths, trim trails, picnic areas, general kick about areas and play space alongside enhancements to the area's tourism offer of the Trans Pennine Trail through improving accessibility (including dedicated disabled access) and providing facilities such as a cycle hire shop, a café and other appropriate facilities. Further details of this facility will be provided in the coming weeks; and,
- Creation of riverside walks through the Oxspring Rocher valley, providing the potential for the formation of footpaths, picnic areas and a local fishing club. All of these are long held aspirations of Oxspring Parish Council

Many of the above benefits have been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Group as needs and aspirations of the Village. Evidence of which is presented in the consultation draft Neighbourhood Plan; the group's meeting minutes; and specifically in the videos of the groups meeting with a senior Planning Policy officer of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council which can be found at the following link:- <http://www.oxspringplan.org.uk/about/videos/>

As you may be aware, consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan recently took place, closing on Sunday 15 February 2015. As set out above we have provided a response to the document, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter. Our overall position at this point is that we support a number of the objectives identified within the draft plan as these align with our own (as identified above) and will provide considerable benefits to Oxspring, however, there is simply no means of facilitating them without the delivery of new homes as part of the Oxspring Fields development proposals. YLL's proposals will deliver both the funding and land required.

In order to meet the National Planning Policy Framework's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing land through the delivery of sustainable developments, YLL believe that developments such as the Oxspring Fields proposals, which can provide an unprecedented number of economic, social and environmental benefits, should be supported.

Though the development can be delivered over a 5 year period, when averaged out over the entire 19 year plan period the contribution of approximately 150 new homes would equate to just 8 homes per annum of which 2.5 homes per annum would be affordable properties. The overall impact of the proposals will therefore be minimal, whilst enabling the delivery of a wide mix of housing for those on low incomes, first time buyers through to families and those wishing to up/down size, to meet the Council's identified housing needs.

Due to a number of development constraints associated with the majority of the draft housing allocations in the Penistone area, should these constraints be overcome, the potential for each of these sites to deliver additional community benefits is severely limited in comparison to the Oxspring Fields Proposal.

YLL appreciate that housing schemes can be contentious. Consequently, they hope you will agree that in order for local communities to support new developments, housing schemes that can provide the number of benefits that the Oxspring Fields proposals can deliver should be given priority over those that cannot.

The provision of the Strategic Public Transport Interchange in Penistone will generate major economic benefits to the area. It will deliver enhanced facilities for communities, local businesses and promote tourism in the Rural West area of the Borough. The facility will deliver a great sustainable benefit to Penistone and its environs, which include Oxspring, leading to a much improved Public Transport service, reducing congestion on the local road network and ultimately addressing significant barriers to the future growth of the area.

The issue of congestion within the central area of Penistone is becoming an increasing concern to local residents, the Town Council and local Ward Members. Enclosed with this letter is the front page article from the Barnsley Chronical (Penistone Edition) dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The development of the proposed draft housing allocations to the south of Penistone, especially those located in and around Cubley, will only serve to exacerbate the existing highways issues of the town and this could lead to a large increase in traffic utilising country lanes, in and around both Penistone and the surrounding Parishes, in an attempt to bypass the congestion.

In contrast, access into the proposed Oxspring Fields site will be directly from the B6462 'Sheffield Road' with one or two points of access being easily achievable. To the south east the B6462 leads to the A629 Halifax Road at a priority junction. From here work-related trips to and from places such as Barnsley, Sheffield, Leeds and Huddersfield can access the wider highway network without the need to utilise narrow country lanes or travel directly through the congested Town centre of Penistone.

The provision of the Strategic Public Transport Interchange in Penistone would also be supported by Sheffield Council. In their response to the draft Local Plan (dated 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014) they identify that the *"City Council is supporting improvements to the highway network and public transport services within the Upper Don Valley. This includes examining the potential for reopening passenger rail services on the existing rail line between Stocksbridge and Sheffield. It would therefore be desirable to improve bus services between Penistone and Stocksbridge."*

It is most likely that that any new bus services between Penistone and Stocksbridge would travel through Oxspring, thereby further adding to the viability and sustainability of the settlement and our proposed Oxspring Fields site. It also adds to the need to deliver the proposed Penistone Strategic Transport Interchange on land at Lairds Way, which would prevent any new bus services further congesting the centre of Penistone whilst making up waiting time at the current unsatisfactory Bus layover.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, we highlight the fact that there is a rare and unprecedented opportunity here for both Oxspring and Penistone. Land, owned privately by YLL, is being offered to provide unrivalled community benefits that will facilitate the sustainable development of the area and to enable the delivery of the desires and recognised needs of both Oxspring and Penistone.

Importantly, these benefits are not deliverable without the Oxspring Fields development. Which is why YLL is committed to working in partnership with yourself, Penistone Town Council, Oxspring Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan Group and local residents to seek to successfully facilitate the delivery of the Village's identified needs and aspirations.

We kindly request that you review this letter and its enclosures. In your role as a local representative we would like to meet with you in a regulated manner to discuss our proposals further. In this regard can you please provide us with dates of your availability. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



**PAUL BUTLER**  
Director