

Annex 2 - Lowfield Green Development – report on Public consultation, information and engagement; 10th October 2016 to 28th October 2016

1. Promotion of consultation and engagement events

The opportunity to view and scrutinise the proposals for the redevelopment of the former Lowfield school site were promoted in a variety of ways:

- A City of York Council press release sent to local media outlets including the York Press and Minister FM.
- Coverage on Minster FM to promote the consultation.
- A press release was also posted on the council's website, with accompanying social media. Information regarding the proposals including the spatial design was also available on the Council website.
- Two staffed engagement events at Gateway Community centre (Wednesday 12th and Tuesday 18nd October, 4.30pm-7pm) were held to discuss the proposals.
- Invitations to attend the drop-in sessions and provide feedback were delivered to approximately 450 houses in the immediate area around the Lowfield site.
- City of York Council twitter feed, promoting engagement events.
- Posters in local shops on Front Street and Morrisons.
- Posters and leaflets distributed to York High School, Hob Moors Primary school and Hob Moor Children's centre.
- Posters and leaflets distributed to Priory Group Medical centre, Energize leisure centre, Gateway Community church and Our Lady's RC church.
- Display and comment box was installed at Explore Library Acomb for the duration of the consultation period.
- Email invitations to those on the York self-build register.

- People were invited to email comments and questions to lowfield.development@york.gov.uk.

2. Lowfield Engagement events

Two drop-in engagement sessions were held at Gateway Community centre which is within a 5 minute walk of the Lowfield site. Invitations to attend the events were delivered to residents in the Lowfield area one week before the first event was held.

The events were held on separate days of the week and were manned by staff, who all filled in feedback forms while discussing the proposals with attendees. Attendees' postcodes were generally recorded, demonstrating that the majority were from the immediately neighbouring streets.

Comments were transcribed and then sorted into categories according to their content. Key issues/discussion topics were also identified from the comments given. The first event held on the 12th October was attended by over 50 people with over half of the responses being positive. The second event on the 18th of October was attended by approximately 35 people.

3. Display at Acomb Explore Library

The public engagement events at Gateway Community centre were complemented by a display at Acomb Explore Library. This display included copies of the spatial plan for the site, information pertaining to the site and leaflets.

The display also encouraged feedback from the public through comment cards which were collected over the course of the consultation period in a collection box. The feedback cards asked people to comment on what type of facilities/provision they would like to see at the Lowfield site as well as the type of housing.

4. Online and email

The City of York Council website carried the article below for the duration of the consultation and engagement period:

“Lowfield Green Development

We seek the views of all local residents and interested parties on proposals for redeveloping the former Lowfield School site in Acomb.

The redevelopment at Lowfield Green seeks to deliver:

- an older persons' care home

- a health and policing community hub
- residential housing for all ages including starter family homes, bungalows and flats for the over 55's and self build plots
- open space including a village green, play area and allotments.

Send your comments by email to: lowfield.development@york.gov.uk, or attend one of our drop-in sessions at Gateway Community Centre, Front Street, Acomb:

Wednesday 12 October between 4.30pm and 7.00pm
Tuesday 18 October between 4.30pm and 7.00pm

There will be a display of the proposals at [Acomb Explore](#) from 12 October and the [masterplan drawing](#) is also available online.

Comments received during this consultation will be used to shape the final proposals for Lowfield.

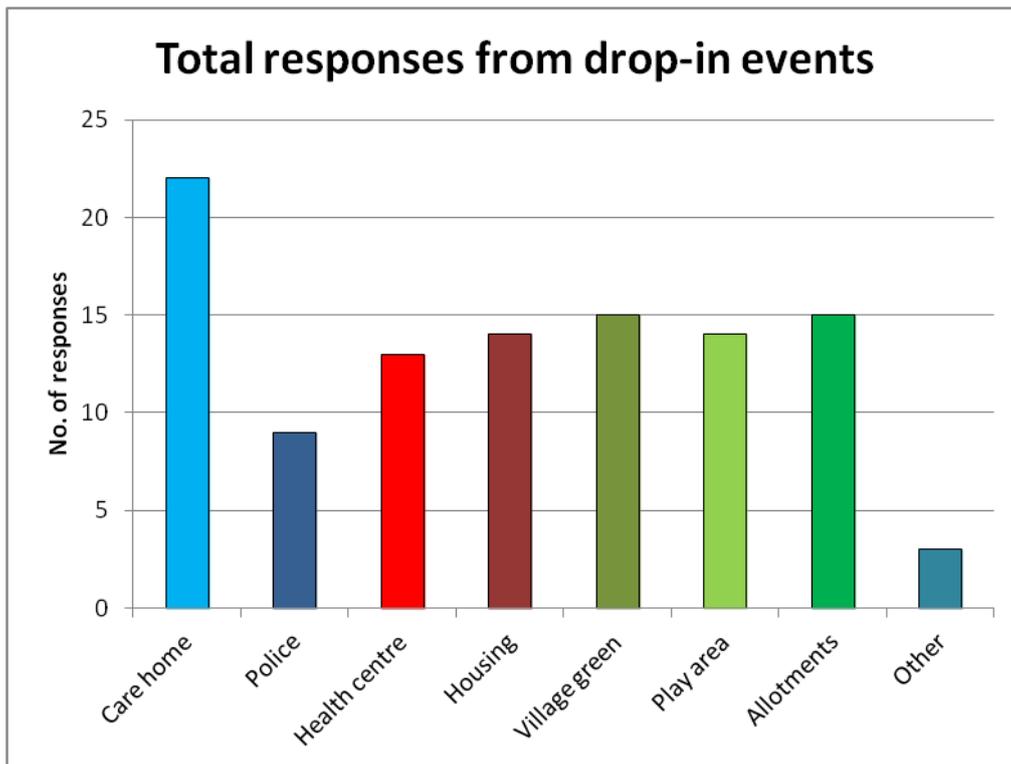
Consultation closes 28th October 2016”

5. Comments and feedbacks from consultation

Drop in session feedback

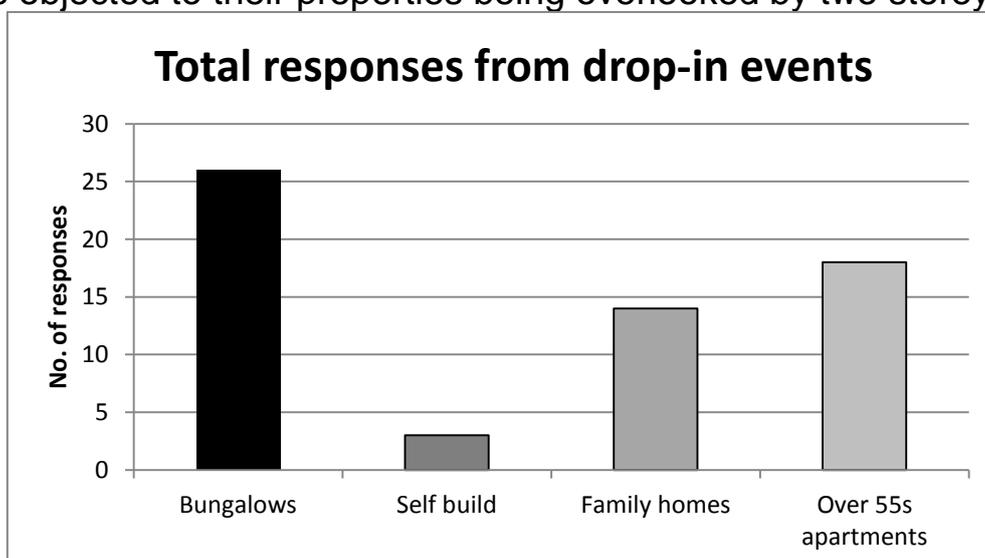
The first drop-in session for the Lowfield Green development was attended by over 50 people. The second drop-in session held on the 18th October was attended by approximately 35 people. Many who attended came as couples. Those who attended either event were asked to comment on and provide feedback on the Councils' proposed spatial plans for the site.

Specific questions were initially asked in order to gain feedback on the type of facilities people would like to see at the site and also the type of housing. In terms of facilities people would most like to see at the Lowfield Green development, the responses are summarised in the chart below. The most popular was the provision of the care home at the site, as many people recognised the need to modernise the care home landscape of York. Those in attendance were also broadly in favour of seeing the village green, play area, allotments, housing and a health centre being developed on the site. Some residents were quite insistent and pleased with the development of housing on the site, while others did not wish their property to be overlooked by new housing.



The provision of a police service on site was less popular as residents did not see the requirement for such a service at Lowfield. There was concern about noise from sirens and flashing blue lights disrupting the neighbours while a vehicle storage facility did not bring any value to the area. Other suggestion made included an assisted living facility for disabled people, a maypole and a nature reserve.

The responses for what form of housing residents would like to see on site is summarised in the chart below. The over 60s bungalows were the most popular. Residents were generally supportive of the 2/3 bedroom houses and over 55s apartments recognising the need for such provisions although some residents objected to their properties being overlooked by two storey homes.



Where support was indicated for self-build plots it was strong support. There were however, a number of concerns people had regarding the self-build plots. These included the possibility that any self-built home would not complement the surrounding housing and the lack of a timeframe that could be implemented for “self-builders”.

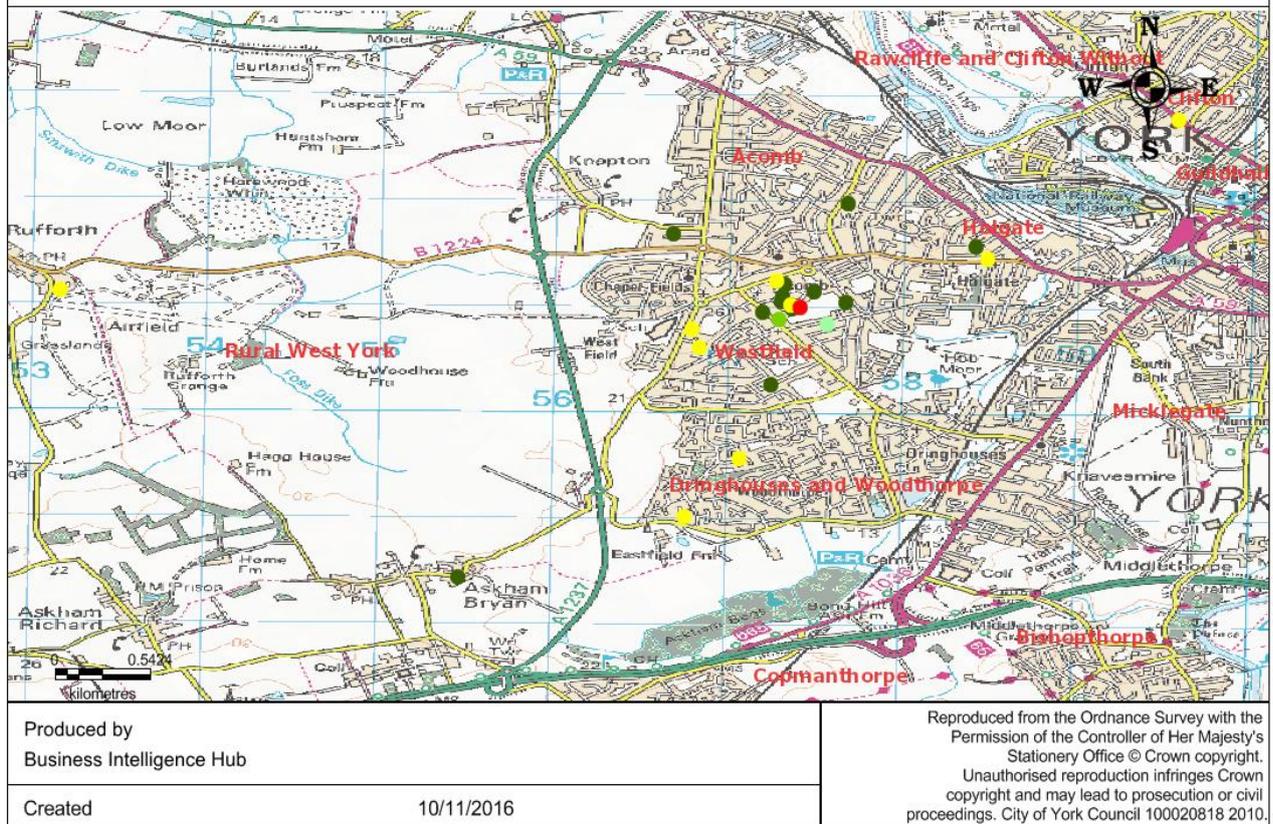
In all 52 conversations were recorded, the majority of which were in couples or groups. The major conversation topics as extracted from volunteer’s notes are shown below. Other than the topics which have already been discussed in this report, issues were raised regarding traffic, the existing sports facilities on site and wildlife.



The responses that were recorded at the drop in events were either graded supportive (green), neutral (yellow) or opposed (red) to the proposed site plans at Lowfield. These responses were then collated and mapped based on the given postcode. The results are shown below. The majority of postcode areas were supportive of the proposed plans or felt positively about the development but had some concerns.

The only postcode that was opposed to the development related to Dijon Avenue, 3 positive responses, 3 neutral responses and 6 negative responses were received from this postcode. The main concerns were increases in traffic and being overlooked by the new build 2/3 bedroom houses. Committee members from the Cornlands and Lowfield Residents association were however supportive of the spatial plans for Lowfield Green.

Responses from Lowfield Postcode Areas



Key: strongly supportive (dark green) supportive (light green), neutral (yellow) or opposed (red)

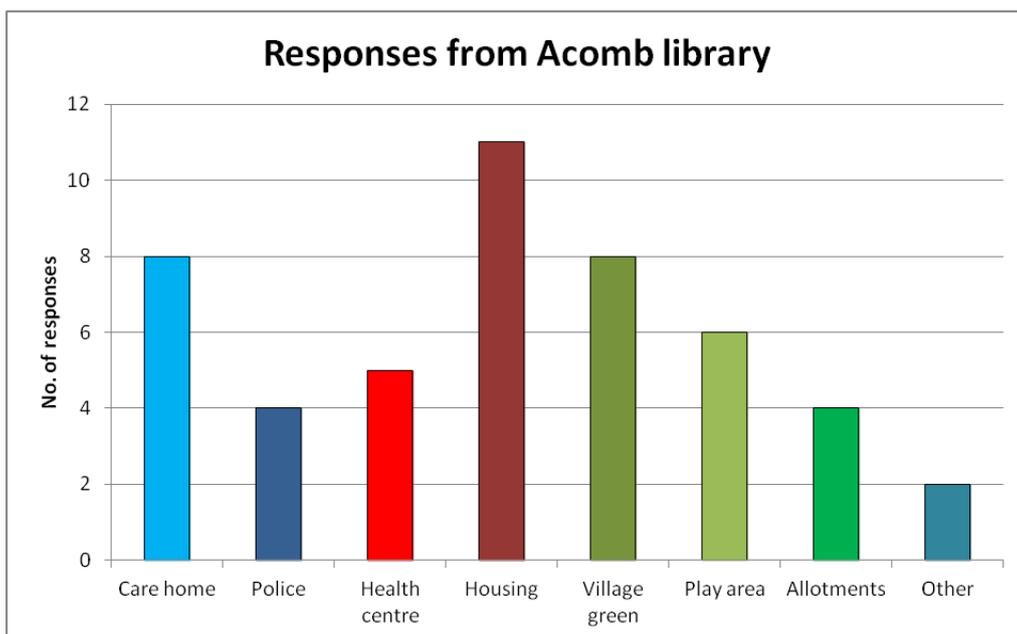
Feedback from the Explore Library Acomb display

The spatial plans for Lowfield Green accompanied with information regarding the development and instructions on how to provide feedback were displayed at the Acomb Explore Library between 10th October and 31st October. The display is shown below. A total of 15 comment cards were filled in and analysed by the council.

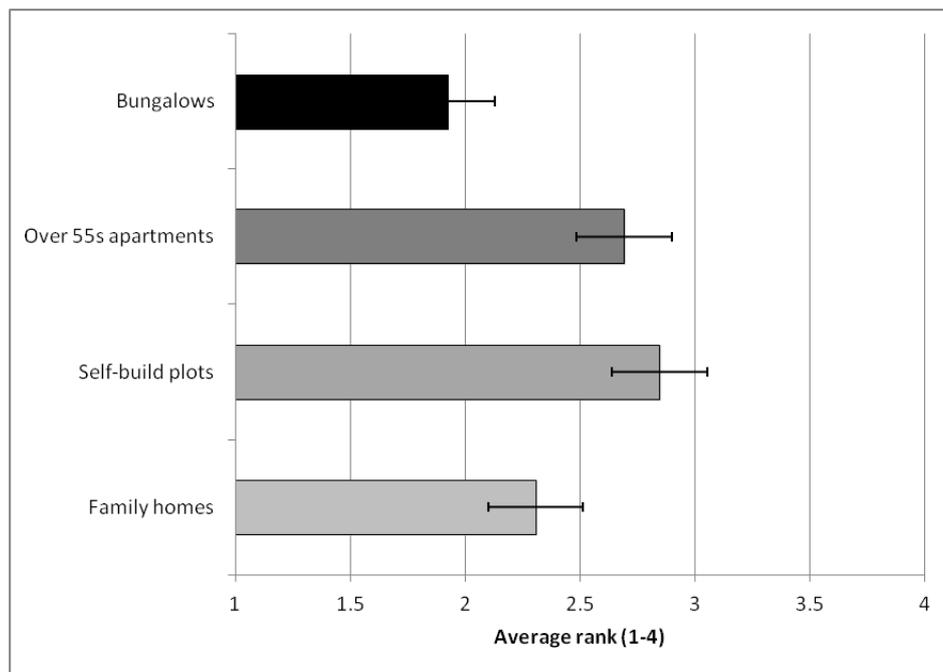


Visitors to the library were first asked to indicate which facilities they would be interested in having at the Lowfield Green development. The graph below shows the total responses. The most popular provision for the site was housing with comments stating that “housing is the most pressing need in York” and that “York does not provide enough bungalows for older singles or couples to allow people to downsize at a reasonable price.”

The construction of a care home at the site was also popular, along with the village green and play area. Those who responded “other” suggested the site be developed as a nature reserve or a dog walking area. A number of comments expressed concern over whether adequate parking was being provided on site for the residents.



People were also asked to rank in order what type of housing provision they would like to see at the Lowfield Green development, with 1 being most preferred and 4 being the least preferred. This scoring system means the lower the score the more popular the type of housing. The results are shown below are the average rank position for each housing type. As was the case for the responses from the drop in sessions, bungalows were the most sought after housing provision for the site. This was followed by the family 2/3 bedroom homes, over 55s apartments and finally the self-build plots.



Online and email

At the time of writing the lowfield.development@york.gov.uk had 25 emails, some of which were from residents who had attended one of the drop-in sessions. Caution was taken not to count responses from those who emailed and attended the drop-in sessions twice. Each email received was replied to in a timely manner.

Approximately a quarter of emails received expressed no feeling of support or opposition to the proposals, instead they asked questions or made suggestions for alterations to the proposed plans. The same number of residents emailing objected to the use of the site for housing as they did not wish their house to be overlooked. The majority of emails expressed support for the Councils' proposed plans for the Lowfield Green development.

Emails that expressed support for the development plans also stated that there was a strong desire for social housing and included an email stating they would like to apply for the 2/3 bedroom houses immediately. Others raised concerns about being overlooked by the 2/3 bedroom houses and the

traffic that would be generated by the redevelopment of the site. A number of emails (8) expressed strong support for the provision of self-build plots on the site. Positive feedback from community housing group YorSpace was also received by email and an article by that organisation was published in the York Press.

The spatial plans were also publicised on social media. The Twitter post had two likes and one retweet from the Westfield Ward Twitter account. At the time of writing one resident had commented, wishing to clarify the nature of the age related housing. The spatial plans and a link to the York Press article were also posted on Facebook. The plans received a single “like” and the image was also shared once.

The low number of comments to the social media posts is likely to be because the posts directed viewers to the consultation page. However the engagement rates for the posts regarding Lowfield on Facebook and Twitter were higher than the Councils’ average for the same period as shown below.

Twitter

Date	Engagements (individual actions)	Engagement rate (%)
20/10/16	9	0.8
19/10/16	15	1.0
18/10/16	24	1.6
17/10/16	46	2.5
12/10/16	14	1.0
11/10/16	25	2.1
10/10/16	44	2.7
Average	25	2
CYC average for same period		0.6

Facebook

Date	Engagements (individual actions)	Engagement rate (%)
20/10/16	6	0.26
18/10/16	9	0.27
17/10/16	61	0.82
12/10/16	35	0.63
11/10/16	13	0.62
Average	24.8	0.52
CYC average for same period	12	-

Other

The spatial proposals for the Lowfield Green development were also

reviewed at a meeting of the York Older People’s Assembly. A letter was received from the charity in which they stated that:

“The proposals received strong support. We particularly liked the mix of family housing, bungalows, flats for older people and the residential home. A sense of “space” is also achieved with the inclusion of a “village green”. We also felt that the site was enhanced by the proposed Health and Police provision.”

6. Issues raised during consultation

During the consultation period a number of concerns were raised, which will be considered in our future planning. It should be noted that these concerns were not raised by every individual and in many cases other residents were also happy with the aspects discussed below. For example one of the key talking points was the level of public open space, a number of residents would prefer to see more open space at the site however equal numbers of residents stated felt that the site wasn’t overdeveloped and in some cases they would like to see more housing.

Concern	Feedback	Potential action
Traffic through site	The issue of traffic was raised a number of times, in the form of volume of traffic and parking spill over from the site.	Change proposals to not include a loop road within the development. Prevent connection between Tudor Road and Dijon Avenue could reduce use of site as a “shortcut” and traffic volume.
Public open space	There was not a consensus on the need for levels of public open space above those proposed. The majority that did express concern stated that their homes would be overlooked by other houses and as such would prefer green space.	The layout of new homes on the north west boundary of the Site will be reviewed in order to facilitate integration with existing homes. The option to increase the level of public open space at the expense of land for housing, other activities and to the detriment of the capital receipt was considered and rejected. The approximately two acres proposed is in excess of planning guidelines and is located so as to benefit the greatest number of residents.

Concern	Feedback	Potential action
Integration of housing	A number of residents would have liked to have seen more integration of the mix of housing.	Develop spatial plan showing integration of housing. Difficult to coordinate if a number of developers/contractors involved.
Self-build plots	Residents were unsure about the demand or need for self-build plots. There were concerns that “grand design” style homes could be built on the plots. There were also concerns about timeframes.	The Council will provide more information for their vision of self-build homes.