



# Old Earth School

*"A happy school where all are motivated and feel safe to thrive."*

27 September 2017

The Chief Planning Officer

Calderdale Council

## **Representations to the Calderdale Initial Draft Local Plan**

### **Proposed Allocation Ref LP0978, North of Lower Edge Rd, Elland**

Dear Sir,

The Governing body and Headteacher at Old Earth School fully endorse and support the Council's proposed allocation of site ref LP0978 on land immediately to the east of the School off Lower Edge Rd and owned by P and J Boyle & Son. Indeed, the Council will be aware from the previous submissions made on the School's and Boyle's behalf in February 2016 that the proposed allocation is fully endorsed by both parties who are working collaboratively on the project. Given this and the extent of the technical reports presented to the Council, which underpin the appropriateness of the site for development, it is clear that the site is deliverable for residential and educational purposes in early term. We would urge the Council to continue to support the allocation in the public interest so that the obvious benefits can be secured.

Perhaps we could describe a brief history and the background to the proposals;

- For several years the landowners and the School have been working closely together to plan for the provision of benefits for both parties and the local community.
- Two years ago the landowners allowed the School to seek planning permission to put a small car park in the field adjacent to the School. This was to alleviate parking pressures by taking staff cars off the main Lower Edge Road. The very special circumstances were agreed by the Council and planning permission was granted
- Subsequently and given the obvious capacity problems for the School, and the need to be able to respond positively to the community's educational needs and demands, an agreement was reached to gift land to the School. This was based on the consideration that the Council and community were supportive of the proposal to expand the School onto the adjacent land to provide extra classrooms with better and safer off street parking etc and for the residential development of the remainder in accordance with an allocation in the emerging Local Plan

In the Summer term and on the 18 July 2017 the School hosted a community meeting for parents, local residents and other interested parties. Supporting the meeting and in attendance were the landowners and their Planning Advisor, Mr Sadler, from Walker Morris LLP; the three local Ward Members Cllrs Gallagher, Allan and Ford; representatives from the Governing body of the School plus some 50 local residents and parents. The School was particularly grateful for the Ward Members support and their commitment to the School's and community's needs.

The meeting outlined possible plans for the land if it was successfully allocated via the Local Plan process for residential development and school/community use.

All attendees had thoughts and opinions, but the clear outcome was that the group supported the plans for this particular parcel of land. The group felt that houses were going to be built somewhere, and this was the parcel that offered the most for the local people of Lower Edge and for the community's needs.

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The School has been grateful to be able to play an important part in the emerging preliminary layout for the proposed allocation ref LP0978 and would endorse the detailed submissions made to the Initial Draft Local Plan by Mr Sadler and his consultancy team on behalf of the landowners, P and J Boyle & Son and the School. The gist of the emerging proposals are as follows;

- Approx 220 new homes, inc 20% affordable housing provision
- New on site public open space provision
- Retention and enhancement of the public footpath through the site
- A dedicated one way system and off street car park for school run time (positively responding to the current highway safety issues is a key component of the proposal)
- Provision of new classrooms and an increase in school places by 15 per year group. This will cater for current needs, the new children from this new development and likely from across the greater Elland area, too. This expansion of existing provision – from 2 to 11 – is clearly excellent value for money for the system as a whole and will directly benefit the local community.
- Increase in out of hours care for School age children.
- Future opportunities will see the School provide further leisure facilities for the local community.

The Governors and the Headteacher feel strongly that the proposed allocation of this site will therefore benefit all. It has very positive Ward Member and local community support and can be delivered in the short to medium term. The School and the landowners will continue to work together to deliver the benefits and consequently would invite the Council to continue to support this allocation and see it as part of the formally adopted Local Plan in due course.

If any matters arise please do not hesitate to contact us directly here at Old Earth School.

Yours faithfully

**Kate Thornton**

Chair of Governors

**Mr Paul Reynolds**

Headteacher