



August 2017

Statement of Community Involvement

Opus North
Massey Fold, Spofforth

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Executive Summary

Opus North has conducted a consultation programme for its plans for Massey Fold, Spofforth. The following document covers that consultation.

Consulting with local people prior to the submission of a planning application is a key part of Opus North's development process and has been fundamental in developing the plans to develop the Spofforth site. The applicants believe that by engaging with local residents, councillors and stakeholders, they can ensure that the plans submitted to Harrogate Borough Council provide a development tailored to the needs of Spofforth and one that is delivered in the right way.

The plans propose transforming the current site into a welcoming space comprising 84 attractive homes in a range of styles and sizes. 40% of these houses would be affordable and thus the development would abide by Harrogate Council's policies. In addition to the houses, there would also be a new public open space for residents to enjoy and a landscaped buffer to the River Crimple.

Opus North's proposals would promote social, economic and environmental values, including a multi-million-pound investment into the local economy and the opportunity for local residents to get onto the property ladder.

Residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide their feedback regarding the proposal at all stages of the pre-application public consultation, via a number of different channels, including a community letter, a Freephone information line and a public exhibition.

Opus North has carefully reviewed all of the feedback received to date. The development proposals have received some local support, with close to 60% of pre-application feedback received supporting the level of affordable housing and agreeing that there is a need for new housing in Spofforth.

In total, Opus North has received 51 responses from local people, all of which was submitted at the public exhibition. The main comments raised by the local community have been addressed within this document and the wider material submitted as part of the planning application.

Opus North is committed to engaging with the local community, and following the submission of the application, will ensure that interested parties and key stakeholders remain informed and updated regarding the proposals. This document provides a chronological account of the pre-application consultation undertaken and a review of the feedback received.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Opus North is submitting an outline planning application for land off Massey Fold, and is proposing to develop a housing scheme which will provide 84 houses, 40% of which will be affordable.
- 1.2 Opus North is committed to pre-application consultation regarding its plans to regenerate land off Massey Fold.
- 1.3 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely highlighting the community consultation undertaken by Opus North in respect of its proposal for Spofforth, and the activity that Opus North proposes to undertake once the application has been submitted.
- 1.4 In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, Opus North appointed Remarkable Group, a specialist communications agency, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed development.
- 1.5 All feedback received is accounted for and represented within this document.

2. Background

2.1 The site

- 2.1.1 The proposed site is located off Massey Fold, Spofforth and is a greenfield site which has been identified by Harrogate Borough Council as being suitable for housing.
- 2.1.2 The consultation programme for this proposed housing development took place in July and August 2017.

2.2 Proposal

- 2.2.1 Opus North is proposing to develop the site into a housing scheme which will comprise 84 houses (34 of which will be affordable) and a new public open space. They will also provide a landscaped buffer to the River Crimple.
- 2.2.2 The site has been identified by Harrogate Borough Council as being suitable for housing in their draft local plan. The proposed development would ensure a multi-million-pound investment into the local economy and offer local residents the chance to get onto the housing ladder.
- 2.2.3 A full Transport Assessment has been carried out and submitted with the planning application. This will demonstrate that there will be sufficient parking to meet the needs of the development.
- 2.2.4 84 houses will be created by the development, and would represent a multi-million-pound investment into the local area. Opus North is aware that Harrogate Borough Council has a target of building 669 houses per year through to 2035 meaning this development would contribute towards achieving that target.

3. Pre-application engagement

3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.1.1 Opus North has complied with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that “*early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties*” (Paragraph 188).
- 3.1.2 The NPPF also highlights that “*good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community*” (Paragraph 188).

3.1.5 Harrogate Borough Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in July 2006. The SCI provides guidance for applicants on how they should consult the local community on development proposals.

3.1.6 The Statement of Community Involvement states that:

3.1.7 *"The purpose of community involvement is to create dialogue with, and seek the views of, the community and stakeholders on the land use development issues affecting their locality. The Council can then take account of those views to make balanced and well informed decisions. If the facilitation of community involvement is effective, more people will benefit from it and the Council's overall service delivery will be improved."*

3.1.8 In accordance with this advice and in view of its commitment to community engagement, Opus North has undertaken an extensive programme of engagement on its proposals, as outlined in the following pages.

3.1.9 The purpose of the public engagement programme was to:

- Inform people about the proposed development
- Provide the local community with the opportunity to comment on the plans
- Ensure that relevant issues had been identified and addressed in the planning application

3.2 Contacting statutory bodies

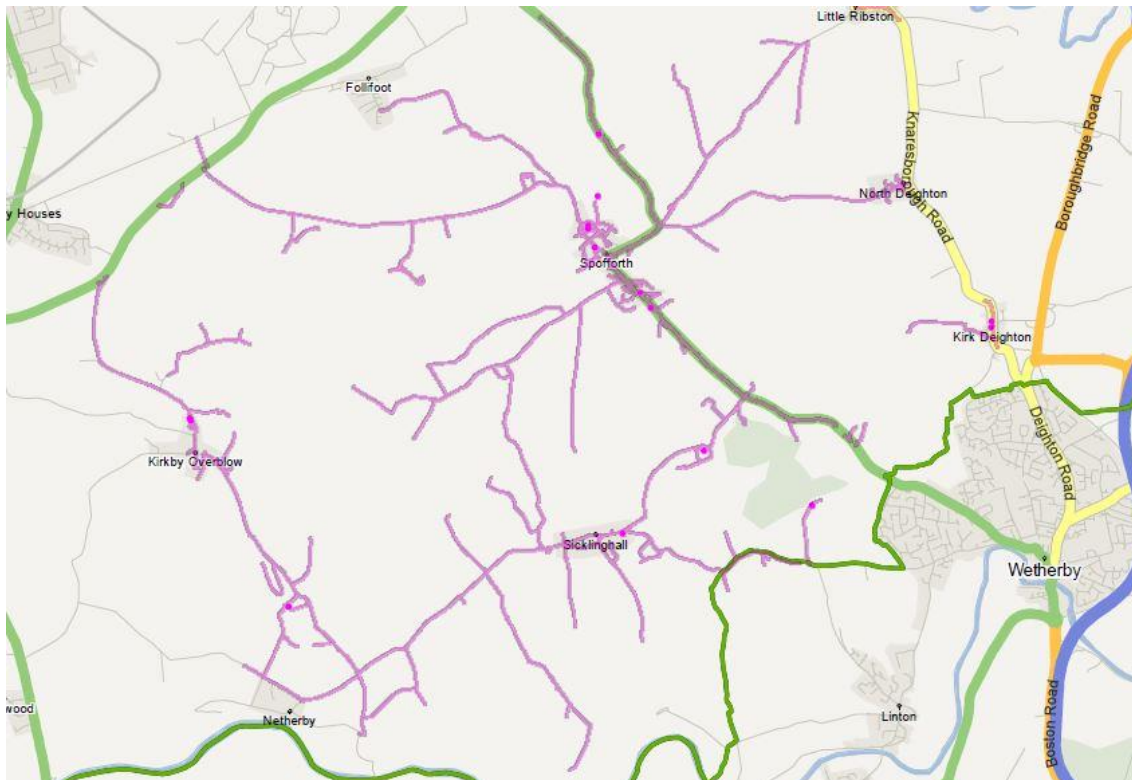
3.2.1 Opus North ensured that all local representatives were invited to the public exhibition and were kept updated throughout the consultation process.

3.3 Public Exhibition

3.3.1 Opus North held a public exhibition to display its proposals to develop the site at Massey Fold on Thursday 10 August 2017 between 3:00pm and 7:00pm at Spofforth Village Hall, less than a mile from the site.

3.3.2 The purpose of the public exhibition was to present the proposals to the wider community and gain additional feedback prior to submitting a full planning application.

3.3.3 An exhibition invitation letter with detailed information about the proposed development was distributed to 1,144 addresses around the site in and around Spofforth, Harrogate in July 2017.



Distribution area for newsletter

3.3.4 The letter contained the following:

- Information about the plans
- An overview of the proposal
- Opus North's vision for the site
- Details about the planned exhibition

A copy of the invitation letter for residents can be found at **Appendix I**.

3.3.5 An invitation was also issued to the following local stakeholders:

- Members of Harrogate Borough Council including relevant Cabinet members, Planning Committee members and ward representatives for the site
- Members of Spofforth with Stockeld Parish Council
- Andrew Jones MP, Member of Parliament for Harrogate and Knaresborough
- Representatives of local third party groups

A copy of the invitation letter for stakeholders can be found at **Appendix II**.

3.3.6 The exhibition letter displayed the details of the Freephone information line (0800 298 7040) to allow people to request further information.

3.3.7 The public exhibition was attended by 91 individuals, including local residents and local representatives.

3.3.8 Details about the proposal ahead of the submission of the planning application were displayed. The display boards included information about:

- The background to the site
- The proposed scheme, including CGIs, the site layout plan, and aerial images
- Information about Opus North, including images from previous Opus North developments

Copies of the exhibition display boards can be found at **Appendix IV**.

3.3.9 The following materials were available:

- Copies of the display boards
- Copies of the invitation newsletter
- Feedback forms
- A visitors' book for registering attendance

3.3.10 The exhibition also provided:

- A ballot box to deposit completed feedback forms
- A3 copies of the consultation area map
- Copies of plans which illustrated details about the proposed development
- A list of those invited to the exhibition
- Direction signs to lead attendees into the venue
- An opportunity to request further information

3.3.11 Feedback forms could be filled in at the venue and placed into the available ballot box. These were then collated and the feedback analysed.

A copy of the feedback form is included at **Appendix III**.

3.3.12 Representatives from Opus North and the project team were available to answer questions throughout the exhibition.

3.4 Freephone information line

3.4.1 During the consultation, access to a Freephone information line was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposal, or to register their comments via the telephone.

3.4.2 The telephone number used (0800 298 7040) was in operation Monday to Friday between the hours of 8.30am and 5.30pm. Outside of these hours, a message facility was available for voicemails to be left. These were responded to at the earliest opportunity to ensure that information was readily available, and queries or concerns were addressed.

3.4.3 Information was given to callers where possible, and if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to the relevant project team member.

3.4.4 Thirteen calls were made to the Freephone information line.

4 Feedback comments

4.1 Feedback summary

4.1.1 The feedback received during consultation programme is summarised in the table below. This includes feedback received at the exhibition.

Total responses	Supportive of 40% affordable housing	Unsure or No view	Objectors
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50	28	14	8
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Q1:

	Total responses	Supportive of new housing in Spofforth	Unsure or No view	Objectors
Q2:	50	30	9	11

4.1.2 A majority of the feedback received has been supportive of more housing in Spofforth, with 56% of respondents expressing support for the level of affordable housing in Opus North’s proposal and 60% of respondents agreeing that there is a need for new homes in the area.

4.1.3 In terms of objections, concerns and additional comments, the most frequently raised reservations related to traffic on Harrogate Road and the dangers associated with building on a flood plain. Respondents were also concerned about the number of houses being built, with several saying that the scheme would be more acceptable with fewer houses.

4.2 Comment breakdown

4.2.1 Below is an overview of some of the general comments, reservations, or concerns received and the frequency with which they appear:

Comments	Frequency
Design of buildings should be in keeping with village style i.e. stone	28
General traffic concerns	19
Impact on local infrastructure	16
The number of houses proposed	15
Traffic on Harrogate Road	15
Building on a flood plain	12
Saxon burial ground	5

5 Response to comments

5.1.1 All comments received, including those received via telephone and exhibition feedback forms have been reviewed by the project team. Where possible, amendments have been made to the proposal. People who attended the exhibition preview, the full exhibition or who called the freephone line were able to discuss issues directly with members of the project team. Many of the issues raised are covered in the application documents (including in the Transport Assessment).

5.2 Support for housing

5.2.1 Opus North is encouraged that a clear majority of people who completed feedback forms, or who communicated their views in other ways, are in favour of more housing being built in Spofforth (60% in favour and with further 18% not expressing an opinion). More affordable housing was also popular and was raised by a number of people at the exhibition who are keen that young people from Spofforth are not forced to leave the village when they leave home.

5.3 Methods of response

5.3.1 During the consultation, Opus North's project team responded directly to a number of specific enquiries and questions relating to the proposal.

5.3.2 The main issues which arose during the pre-application consultation process, as well as Opus North's response to each are detailed below.

5.3.3 The public consultation provided an opportunity for respondents to raise issues that they felt needed to be considered in the most detail before the application was finalised. Among these were the potential impact of the development on the local road network, the scale of development, the risk of flooding and the Saxon burial ground on or near to the site.

5.3.4 Opus North is grateful that many local people and representatives engaged with, and provided feedback for the consultation. The main issues which arose during the pre-application consultation process, and Opus North's responses to each are detailed below.

5.4 Impact on local highway network, access, and road safety

5.4.1 The most frequent comments raised concerns about the impact of a new scheme on traffic at Harrogate Road, and the access junction for Massey Fold.

5.4.2 A full Transport Assessment has been undertaken as part of this application. The assessment also considers whether any mitigation measures are necessary. The Transport Assessment submitted provides more detailed analysis of the highways matters associated with the proposed development, including the site access, which will be considered by the local highway authority. Any proposed amendments to the wider road network will also be done in conjunction with the highway authority.

5.4.3 The scheme Highways Consultant attended the exhibition in Spofforth and was able to respond directly to issues raised on the day.

5.5 Scale of development

5.5.1 The second-most frequent comment suggested that, although housing is needed in Spofforth, the number of homes proposed for the Massey Fold development is too high.

5.5.2 Opus North believe that the number of homes is appropriate for the site. The proposed housing density is well within local authority guidelines. The site is part of an area proposed for residential development in Harrogate Council's draft local plan.

5.6 Risk of flooding

5.6.1 A number of residents raised concerns about flooding on the Massey Fold site. Opus North take these concerns very seriously and have looked at this issue in detail.

5.6.2 Massey Fold is not an area considered to be at risk of flooding by the Environment Agency. It is in flood zone 1. The site is identified as suitable for residential development in Harrogate Council's draft local plan.

5.6.3 The planning application further details drainage works that will be undertaken as part of the development to ensure it fully meets planning policy requirements.

5.7 Saxon burial ground

5.7.1 Several residents noted that there was a Saxon burial ground on or near the Massey Fold site and raised the issue of further remains being uncovered.

5.7.2 Opus North will ensure that all legal processes are correctly followed in the event of any remains of archeological interest being discovered on site during construction.

5.8 Style of houses

5.8.1 The highest number of comments received related to the building style of new homes and a desire that they should be in keeping with the rest of the village.

5.8.2 Opus North have taken these comments on board and can confirm our intention to build homes with a stone that will see the new houses fit in with the traditional designs common elsewhere in Spofforth.

6. Post-application engagement

6.1 Ongoing engagement

6.1.1 The Opus North Freephone information line will remain active throughout the application process.

6.1.2 Given the interest shown by residents and stakeholders in the proposal, Opus North will ensure information flows through existing channels to interested parties.



7. Appendices

Appendix	I	Resident exhibition invitation
Appendix	II	Stakeholder exhibition invitation
Appendix III		Exhibition feedback form
Appendix	IV	Exhibition boards

Appendix I: Resident exhibition invitation



First Floor
33a Brass Street
Tilley
LS29 8AG

Tel: 01943 816 839

<ADDRESS1>
<ADDRESS2>
<ADDRESS3>
<POSTCODE>

02 August 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Land at Massey Fold, Harrogate Road, Spofforth

Opus North is proposing to sensitively develop land at Massey Fold, transforming the current site into a welcoming space comprising of 84 attractive 1-5 bed homes. 34 of these will be affordable homes, available for local people to purchase at a reduced price or to rent. Our outline proposals will also involve new public open space for local residents to enjoy and a landscaped buffer to the River Crimple.

We are proposing road access off Harrogate Road. There will be additional pedestrian access to the village.

Opus North is dedicated to community consultation. We would like to invite you to an exhibition where you can find out more about our outline proposals and give us your feedback. Our project team members will be available to talk you through the plans on **Thursday 10th August**, between 3pm and 7pm at **Spofforth Village Hall, Castle Street, Spofforth HG3 1AP**.

If you are unable to attend the exhibition and would like more information about the proposals, please contact our community information line on **0800 298 7040**. The line is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Duncan
Opus Land North

Appendix II: Stakeholder exhibition invitation



First Floor
35 Bruce Street
Ekley
LS29 8AG

Tel: 01943 816 839

<NAME>
<ADDRESS1>
<ADDRESS2>
<ADDRESS3>
<POSTCODE>

28 July 2017

Dear <NAME>,

Re: Land at Massey Fold, Harrogate Road, Spofforth

Opus North is proposing to sensitively develop land at Massey Fold, transforming the current site into a welcoming space comprising of 84 attractive 1-5 bed homes. 34 of these (40%) will be affordable homes, available for local people to purchase at a reduced price or to rent. Our outline proposals will also involve new public open space for local residents to enjoy and a landscaped buffer to the River Crimple.

We are proposing road access off Harrogate Road. There will be additional pedestrian access to the village.

Opus North is dedicated to community consultation and given your position in the community we would like to invite you to preview the preliminary proposals. Our project team members will be available to talk you through the plans on **Thursday 10th August**, between **2pm and 3pm** at **Spofforth Village Hall, Castle Street, Spofforth, HG3 1AP**. If the preview is of interest to you please contact Chris Midgley on **0800 298 7040**.

We will also be holding an exhibition later in the day to present our plans and gather feedback from the wider community. This is taking place from 3pm-7pm on 10th August. 1087 local addresses have been invited to this event.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate contact Chris on the dedicated project information line if you require further information.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Duncan
Opus Land North

Appendix III: Exhibition feedback form

August 2017

Feedback Form
Proposals for Massey Fold, Spofforth





As part of our proposal to build 84 new homes on Massey Fold in Spofforth, we are keen to hear your views on what we have presented today.

Our proposal is for a residential development of 84 high quality and sensitively-designed new homes, in a range of styles and sizes. 40% of these will be affordable homes.

Please take a moment to fill in this form and place it in the ballot box provided. Your views will be carefully considered before a planning application is submitted to the local authority in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your time.

All feedback will be collected and analysed by Remarkable Engagement on behalf of Opus North in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Feedback will be used to shape proposals where possible, and will be presented as part of a Statement of Community Involvement along with a planning application. Details of respondents will not be released to third parties.

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Please keep me informed of changes to these proposals

Appendix IV: Exhibition boards

Proposals for the Redevelopment of land at Massey Fold, Harrogate Road, Spofforth



Welcome

Welcome to our public exhibition. The aim of today is for you to find more information about Opus North's proposal to sensitively develop land at Massey Fold, Harrogate Road, Spofforth.

We are looking to transform the current site into a welcoming space comprising 84 attractive homes. The site is in an ideal location on the edge of Spofforth, with great access to the village centre and to Harrogate.

Today's exhibition is an opportunity for you to find out more about the proposed development. The display boards present information about the site itself, the benefits it will bring to Spofforth, and the next stages. Members of the project team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the proposal.

This event is intended to help you learn more about the proposal, receive answers to any questions and put forward your views and opinions.

Proposals for the
Redevelopment of land at Massey Fold,
Harrogate Road, Spofforth



Our Proposal

Opus North understands the importance of enhancing the local area, and wants to make sure that the proposed development will benefit the whole community.

The proposal will provide:

- A residential development of around 84 high-quality and sensitively-designed new homes, in a range of styles and sizes
- 40% of these will be affordable homes which will be available to buy or rent. The affordable homes allocation is as required by Harrogate Council's policies, and are designed to cater for first-time buyers, young families, the elderly and those struggling to get on the property ladder
- New public open space for local residents to enjoy
- A landscaped buffer to the River Crimple
- Additional pedestrian access to the village

- A multi-million-pound investment into the local economy
- A knock-on boost to the local economy from new residents spending locally

Our team of architects has designed a high-quality development which will improve the housing choice for the residents of Spofforth and the surrounding area.

The development will help contribute towards Harrogate Borough Council's recognized housing need.

Harrogate Borough Council's draft Local Plan lists Massey Fold as a preferred location for residential development (site SP6). Opus North's proposal covers a significant proportion of the land identified within the Massey Fold site.

**Proposals for the
Redevelopment of land at Massey Fold,
Harrogate Road, Spofforth**



About the site

Opus North is proposing a mixed development of 84 new homes on Massey Fold. 40% of these will be affordable homes available to buy or rent, designed to cater for first-time buyers, young families, the elderly and those struggling to get on the property ladder.

In total, we are proposing

- 4 one bedroom homes
- 20 two bedroom homes
- 30 three bedroom homes
- 15 four bedroom homes
- 7 five bedroom detached homes

34 of these will be affordable homes.

Road access to the site will be via the existing junction off Harrogate Road. Two additional pedestrian links into the village are proposed at the south of the site.

Opus North will construct a landscaped buffer between homes and the River Crimple, paying particular attention to sustainable drainage across the site as a whole.

**Proposals for the
Redevelopment of land at Massey Fold,
Harrogate Road, Spofforth**



Living at Massey Fold

Keeping Spofforth moving

Opus North will be conducting a full Transport Assessment, with models of individual junctions. This will include the mini-roundabout in the centre of Spofforth.

The assessment will look at the effect of the development on the roads and junctions and propose mitigation measures if needed. It is expected that the existing local highway network can comfortably cater for the proposed development.

Landscaping

The aim of the landscape design is to create a rural theme for the development in keeping with the village setting. The landscapes within the scheme include parkland for the public open space with large trees and meadow grasses with wildflowers. In the rear gardens trees will fill the gaps along the riverside edge, and elsewhere are laid out to form a landscape feature that runs west to east across the site. The views from outside the site will be of the hedgerows and trees running amongst the housing to link the existing back land landscapes with the riverside edge.

Ecological approach

The existing site habitats are unmanaged agricultural land. During development of the site hedgerows and trees will be protected where practicable and any losses will be compensated for in the landscape proposals.

The proposed landscape elements including trees, hedgerows, the wildflower meadow, and seasonal ponds with their associated planting, will significantly enhance the site ecology and habitats.

Proposals for the
Redevelopment of land at Massey Fold,
Harrogate Road, Spofforth



Next Steps

The public consultation on the proposals is still underway and a planning application has not yet been submitted.

Thank you to all of those who have taken part in this consultation, if you could provide your comments in the ballot box at the end it would be much appreciated. The feedback received will be outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement, which will be submitted alongside the application to the Harrogate local planning authority.

If you would like to get in touch to discuss any information seen today, or any information regarding the proposal, please call Chris Midgley on **0800 298 7040**.

About Opus North

Opus North, based in Yorkshire, and is one of the region's most active and successful property companies. The company has a long track record of developing property across the north of England.

The company takes pride in what it does and all of its projects link with the philosophy of sustainability and ensuring developments work with their surroundings.