

**From:**  
**To:** [Site Allocations Plan](#)  
**Subject:** PDE00393\_Aireborough SAP  
**Date:** 07 October 2015 15:06:07

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For Attention of Leeds City Council, Forward Planning Department  
Re the Aireborough Site Allocation Plan

Dear Planners,

I attended the 'consultation' day at Guiseley Methodist Church on 23/09/15, at which the very large number of residents present not only reflected the serious concern felt locally regarding these plans, but unfortunately meant effective consultation was impossible in spite of the best efforts of the Officers present. I left after an hour to study the plans via the internet and my views therefore lack the benefits of consultation. Like most of the residents I have spoken to, I am alarmed at the number of homes still proposed for Aireborough and Guiseley in particular. This area is a crossroads for the commuter distribution network serving parts of Bradford MDC as well as Leeds NW and is already under severe pressure. It is also clearly unrealistic and unsound for the Government in London to deny a regional view. The local political boundaries are unnatural, with commuters and trades people crossing them on a daily basis and consequently local roads as well as the A65 becoming impassable during peak periods.

I believe the housing components in the Leeds SAP for Aireborough are **unsound** because:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->All our Brownfield sites have already been built on or allocated and proposals for further building therefore have to be on Greenfield sites. Unfortunately this has encouraged developers to ignore Brownfield sites in other parts of Leeds and to focus on Greenfields in Leeds NW before empty Brownfield sites elsewhere.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The comments linked to the various sites do not adequately reflect problems concerning the movement of people and goods around Aireborough. For example merely stating 'The A65' is not enough and even the Leader of the City Council referred to the A65 as "overcrowded" when justifying a new Airport link road, which if built will in fact do little to ease congestion along the A65 Corridor, as traffic to Leeds from the NW would be largely unaffected.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The local character of Aireborough that Leeds promised to preserve and enhance, is based on an open and complex mix of Greenspace, employment and housing and is rapidly being eroded by out-of-character residential developments.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->A number of the sites are on Greenbelt land and should require very special needs before being released for building. In fact since this comparatively small district has already received over 2000 new homes over recent years, it no longer has an urgent 'community' need for the homes proposed and is still struggling to assimilate recent new residents, e.g. current school problems. I could not see any reasons put forward to justify building on Greenbelt land and the whole exercise seems to be a continuation of the

arbitrary and overly simplistic allocation of housing strictly in proportion to population and set by Leeds City Council (LCC) in 2008 using disputed growth figures – clearly not a ‘special need’.

• The criteria used to assess suitability of the individual sites by the Planners are unhelpful, for example all the sites proposed for Aireborough are said to be ‘suitable for the elderly’, whereas in fact they differ widely in relation to local facilities, transport and topography.

• The Planners have largely ignored the effect of huge numbers of additional vehicles each day on the local road network, as drivers seek to find a way around the congested and traffic control light obstructed A65. Queensway west, Oxford Rd, Park Rd and the Green in Guiseley and Queensway east, High Street, Green Lane, Rufford Avenue and Henshaw Lane in Yeadon are particularly under threat from increased traffic. The Bayton Lane/A658 junction mentioned in the SAP is just one of many such problem intersections.

• Not to build on available Brownfield sites in other parts of Leeds before targeting Aireborough’s Greenfields is discrimination. Brownfield sites should be developed first wherever they are, as the whole of Leeds should be treated equally. Only when the Leeds supply of Brownfield sites is exhausted should Greenfields be considered.

Although my view is that the Aireborough SAP should be suspended, because individual sites have been identified it is also necessary to submit objections to the individual areas HG 2, 1 to 10 and my objections follow and unfortunately make this a much longer letter than I would prefer:

#### Objections to individual sites:

##### 3026/HG2-1 – New Birks Farm

The size of the proposed development is still a worry even with the welcome safeguarding of site HG3-1 (4043). Development of this site will cause serious traffic problems on the A65, safety issues at the Ings Lane/Netherfield Rd and pedestrian and traffic issues at the Netherfield Rd/Oxford Rd junction.

I am surprised that the recommended Ecological Survey has not already been carried out given the ecological importance of this site. If development does occur, the buffer zone protecting the environment along Mire Beck needs to be substantial to provide an effective wildlife corridor through to Highroyds grounds and the Odda. The loss of this land to housing would also be regrettable as HG2-1 makes more sense than Coach Road as a possible future Infant/Junior school site. It is in a school area and close to Highroyds, where the developer reneged on the promised new school. As the pressure on Guiseley Fieldhead School grows, Coach Rd may be required for sports fields should the school need to expand further on its original site.

##### 3029/HG2-2 – Wills Gill

1 The statement regarding suitability for the elderly is wrong. This site, like most of the others proposed, is not an easy location for older people without transport. It involves hills, is well away from medical and retail facilities and is unlikely to be on an Access bus

route.

2 Access to the Site from Queensway is completely unsuitable because:

- (a) Queensway is already a heavily used and already congested main urban route - not mentioned in the impact notes;
- (b) the proposed junction is an accident risk. It is in a dip, on a bend and opposite and close to existing traffic junctions with Queensway;
- (c) the Beck is a possible flood risk, made worse by potential run-off water;
- (d) the adjacent busy 5-way Town Gate Junction and zebra crossing are a problem;
- (e) Site 5111/HG1-7 has been expanded since this report was prepared to include the adjacent Anetic Aid engineering works in addition to the Dairy site and is opposite the proposed access onto Queensway, increasing congestion problems at this point.
- (f) it is very difficult to see how any development at the Western end could possibly “preserve and enhance” the Conservation Area. These fields are a vitally important visual asset.
- (g) An existing footpath is shown linking to Moor Lane via Wills Gill, this is correct and the unmade lane is also the vehicular access to the houses on Wills Gill. However this lane and the Moor Lane/Carlton Lane junction are completely unsuitable for additional vehicle use and as the report on 1255B dismisses Old Shaw Lane as an alternative, there is no suitable vehicular access to this site.

#### 1255B/HG2-3 - Banksfield

This is contiguous with HG2-2 and taken together the minimum of 357 houses proposed for this small area represent an intolerable additional 500 minimum cars using Queensway twice a day. This cannot be allowed to happen.

If development goes ahead on this linear site, then to spread the nuisance load, traffic access should use all three of the possible access roads, plus a pedestrian access via Old Shaw Lane. If in spite of my views, development is permitted on the Eastern portion of HG2-2, an access link should be included; however I do not believe the existing local road network can cope.

There is a serious worry of peak-time gridlock on Queensway if sites HG2 1 & 2 are allowed to proceed, but once again the Local Highway Network comments are inadequate. Oxford Road, The Green and particularly Queensway will all suffer and during the campaign for parking restrictions, we proved that the Queensway area was too distant for most rail commuters to walk. Additional rail users will need additional resources – probably an upper level constructing over the Netherfield Rd car park, but who will pay?

The Bayton Lane A658 junction is not specific to Queensway, it is the main commuter route to the Leeds Ring Road which distributes commuter traffic across north and east Leeds, as well as its use as an A65 alternative to avoid the Horsforth roundabout.

Environmentally, this site cuts across drainage patterns of the southern Chevin Slopes and as well as an ecological assessment and a biodiversity buffer, a broad green corridor along the line of Nun Royd Beck is also required to retain the traditional Yeadon/Guiseley boundary that follows the course of the Beck.

4020/HG2-4 – Hollins Hill/The Hawkstones

**This site is definitely not suitable for inclusion.** Among other reasons, the rise of the land towards the junction means that houses on this site would block the present views that frame an important entrance to Aireborough, enabling the whole district to be seen. This open aspect with views is one of the defining characteristics of Aireborough. It is one of the very few places where one can appreciate the full spread of Aireborough, sited as it is on the slopes of four distinctive and ancient hill sites, The Odda, The Chevin, The Haw and The Billing and it is against Leeds stated aims to destroy character.

To allow vehicle access onto the A6038 so close to the Hawksworth Lane crossroads would create a major danger spot; the 'ghost island' would be invisible to traffic heading north on the A6038 until the last minute and access onto Park Road would compound the existing congestion.

We are after more than 10 years still waiting for the improvements to these crossroads promised by the original developer of the Highroyds site – proving that developers cannot be trusted and that Councils are impotent. I agree with the other comments, except that if this site is considered suitable for older persons, then HG4 is complete nonsense and you may as well say that any house anywhere is suitable.

The official comments alone clearly make this site a no-go and I also note the recommended housing density is the standard 26 per hectare, much greater than that of the Tranmere Park and therefore highly unlikely to enhance the Tranmere Park Conservation Area.

2163A1180A/1311A/HG2-5 – Coach Road

These sites are an important part of the Green belt and lead to what is effectively the Esholt Country Park, and although this is administered by Bradford MDC, it lies directly alongside Aireborough and is very well used by Leeds residents; it also abuts a conservation area that is important ecologically as well as historically.

I approve of the proposal to allocate land to future school uses and the concerns over access, with a still growing school population, schools are a big issue, but development on Coach Road will have a huge impact on Park Road, which is already alarmingly congested. This is not and it is also as wrong for Planners to assume that all Guiseley commuters travel to Leeds as it is to assume that all the Leeds bound traffic along Park Road originates in Aireborough. Train usage shows that approximately one third of commuters from this district travel towards Bradford and the fact that the majority of our new residents come with established families and retain their existing jobs which can be located anywhere across the region, means that their work destinations vary considerably. When questioned, most newcomers say they are here for the schools and that schools take precedence over the minor nuisance of an increase in commuting time.

1113/HG2-6 – Coach Road/Silverdale Avenue

To the best of my knowledge the southern side of this site is still in private ownership as allotments. It has been allotments for very many years and is one of the few remaining allotment sites in Aireborough that permits the keeping of animals, hence the reluctance of some owners to sell. There is also an existing Covenant that limits building to one

house per plot and if the developers, who have offensively allowed the northern side to remain derelict for 40 years would sell to individuals, this would fulfil a real local need for individual character houses, clear up an eyesore and still leave the developers with a profit. The council could not 'manage' the site unless they either bought the land or had an agreement with all the owners. Public allotments would be great but are unlikely to happen unless the Council manages to come up with a statutory solution.

180/HG2 – 7 – Swaine Hill

Agree with the comments.

4019/HG2-8 – Queensway

Genuinely suitable for the elderly and empty for far too long.

3366/HG2-9 – Victoria Avenue

Obviously very close to both the runway and the road tunnel and access difficult. The NE corner of the site needs more than a buffer zone, it is effectively part of a wetland area integrated into the Tarn Field surrounds. An Ecological Assessment is urgent.

1221/HG2-10 – Gill Lane

**This site is definitely not suitable for inclusion.** Visually it is part of a Conservation Area; it avoids enclosing the A65 and its trees and rural aspect both provide a welcome break from strip development and leave space for possible future road improvements to the A65; it is an integral part of the setting of ancient Low Hall which, after Guiseley Rectory, is the oldest surviving property in the area and whose porch is reputed to have come from the now entirely lost medieval Esholt Nunnery.

No development of this land could possibly "enhance the character or appearance of the Nether Yeadon Conservation Area" (eg see Bolling Hall, Bradford). A limited development on the Greenlea Rd edge of the site would be the least damaging and might be possible, but the land contiguous with the greenspace fronting Greenlea Avenue and continuing to Gill Lane should have its protection.

Finally

1. **In the documents I read I saw no acceptance of the overdevelopment of Guiseley in particular,** caused by the 2000 plus new homes recently built in the area and in particular its effect on the infrastructure and character of the town. Other than a brief standard box ticking reference to the A65, well documented problems with local roads and with the infrastructure such as education are omitted from the comments.

2. **The A65 Corridor.** Even the Transport Authority admits the A65 is already over-full at peak times, subject to lengthy delays and with little scope for major improvement. The standing traffic produced has serious health, economic and environmental consequences and many of the delays are compounded by so-called improvements – eg Guiseley Gyratory,

access to the Retail Parks and the excessive number of traffic control lights. The A65 trunk route is effectively a human drain and as it passes through Aireborough on its way to Leeds, it is full. It funnels commuters to and from their work from both within and out of the Leeds City Area and is affected by developments within and outside of LCC control. Personally I doubt that the work currently being carried out on the Horsforth Roundabout or the proposed new Airport link Rd will improve the situation appreciably.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->**Comments from Leeds Highways Department regarding local roads**, particularly Queensway, Oxford Road, The Green and Park Road in Guiseley and Queensway, Henshaw Lane, Town Street, Green Lane and the Harrogate Rd in Yeadon are conspicuous by their absence. Google Earth only shows the presence of a road, it does not show the effects of its traffic use and the only highlighted concern I could see is for the Bayton Lane (Yeadon Fountain) crossroads, however many other roads and junctions suffer similarly at peak periods and school times. If these minor roads are blocked, then the A65 will grind to a halt.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->**There seems to be an underlying assumption in the SAP** that the only commuter destination is Leeds, but although Leeds is undoubtedly the main destination, it is far from being the only destination in this very mobile age. Our new residents arrive from all parts, both within and without of the City of Leeds and their current employment can be anywhere within a 50 mile radius, with Harrogate as well as Bradford an important destination and commuters even travelling to Lancashire. The usual reason given for moving is for the schools and having to travel to work is accepted as a necessary evil.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->**Positive comments** – I am delighted 4043 has been removed as in addition to environmental problems, building here would have extended urban sprawl into a part of the district that could in the future be incorporated into a National Park. I am also relieved to see recognition at last that land needs to be reserved for possible future educational uses. Reserving the land rightly preserves it until the future educational needs are known, but it does not block future alternative uses if the land is not required for education, as would a housing estate.

**In conclusion** and in common with the majority of residents, I believe all sites proposed for large developments **should be dropped** from the Aireborough SAP, though small developments will always be needed to stop the area from stagnating. There are no large Brownfield sites left; we have already received our fair quota of new-builds and to proceed onto Greenbelt without very good reasons is clearly against Government Policy.

Yours sincerely,

Alec Denton.

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07.10.15