

From:
To: [Site Allocations Plan](#)
Cc:
Subject: PDE00485_Objection to the Development of HG2-12
Date: 09 November 2015 20:09:24

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Site Allocation Plan

I wish to strongly object to the proposed development of :-

SITE HG2-12(4254) WOODLANDS DRIVE, RAWDON, WHICH IS CURRENTLY ALLOCATED FOR 130 HOUSES.

My objections also relate to the sites listed below as they lie along the border of Rawdon and Horsforth and many of my reasons for objecting are the same.

HG3-2(4095) - KNOTT LANE EAST – PAS 61 HOUSES
HG3-3(3331) – KNOTT LANE WEST – PAS 35 HOUSES
HG3-4(3329) – LAYTON LANE EAST – PAS 95 HOUSES

HG2-12 is Grade 3 farmland and has been successfully farmed for both livestock and arable. It is a haven for wildlife and is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat hosting roe deer, bats, fieldfare, lapwing, curlew, sparrowhawk and tawny owls. It is within LCC's own designated Special Landscape Area and Strategic Green Infrastructure Area and therefore any development of this goes against the Leeds Core Strategy.

It is unsuitable for use for house building as it has mineshafts in the field, a main gas pipe running through it and significant surface flood water routes running through the fields.

The proposal to include these Green Belt sites in the Leeds Site Allocations Plan is NOT consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework

The fundamental aim of GreenBelt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and preventing towns merging into one another. The proposal to build on Site HG2-12 as well as the other Rawdon sites HG3-2, HG3-3, HG3-4 and the huge HG2-41, would result in Rawdon and Horsforth merging together and totally losing their independent identity.

and creating a mass of urban sprawl contrary to national policy.

The proposal to use Green Belt before brownfield is not justified. NPFF states that brownfield sites are to be prioritised over the development of green field and certainly green belt. There are brownfield sites within Leeds which are not being used. Why?

By not considering alternatives the council has not proved that “exceptional circumstances “exist to outweigh the harm that development would cause to the greenbelt sites here.

The Site Allocations Plan is unsound

Heritage England have produced a report on the soundness of sites in the SAP . They conclude that Site HG2- 12 is **UNSOUND**. They state, *“By allocating this site for development, the council is accepting that the principle of the loss of this currently open area and its subsequent development is acceptable. However, there has been no evaluation of what contribution this site makes to the character of the Conservation Area or what harm might result to those elements which contribute to the significance of this designated area by its subsequent development.”*

The Site Allocations Plan for the HG2-12 and the other Rawdon sites are not based on a comprehensive Greenbelt review as required by a previous Inspector when he passed Core Strategy as sound. HG2-12 was not included in the June-July Public Consultation and therefore not in LCC’s Issues and Options document. There was no consultation on site HG2-12 before it was first introduced in to the Site Allocations Plan published in January 2015.

LCC’s assessment of HG2-12 does not support any development

I am unable to understand why HG2-12 has been allocated for 130 houses. The Greenbelt Assessment that was carried out by LCC states the following for Site HG2-12(SHLAA 4254).

It has *“ high potential to lead to unrestricted sprawl”* and that the *“site performs an important role in safeguarding from encroachment”*.

“Site to be PAS along with 4095 and 3331” January SAP 2015 but since removed

“Knott Lane barely suitable for additional development”

“New York Lane unsuitable to provide vehicular access”

The assessment concludes that this site is *“less sequentially preferable to other sites”*

LCC's Sustainability Assessment scores it -7, the worst of all nearby sites.

Therefore using LCC 's own assessment this site unsuitable for development. Why has it been allocated for 130 houses?

The numbers don't add up

In the Core Strategy Proposals LCC state that within Leeds there is a housing requirement of 70,000 new dwellings by 2028, (a figure based on estimates carried out in 2008), yet in the same document they say,

"In 2010 there was an estimated 755,136 people, with a forecast for this to reach 860,618 by 2028....this equates to approximately 44,408 new households."

This shows there is a basic flaw in the housing numbers that Leeds are using and if they used the figures in their own core strategy document there would be no need for any development of greenbelt land and HG2-12 would be safe as would the other sites in Rawdon as they are all on greenbelt land.

Access to HG2-12 is flawed in the Site Allocations Plan

The decision to add HG2-12 to the SAP has clearly not been thought through, the field is an island surrounded on two sides by private roads (Woodlands Drive to the South and East and New Your Lane to the North), and by the Leeds Country Way footpath to the West. Access to this site has been linked to combining with Woodlands Drive but this is a private road in a conservation area so that is not possible, or by combining with HG3-2 but this is a PAS site so again not feasible. The only other option is via Southlands Avenue which has not been mentioned anywhere. This is a narrow tree lined avenue where generations of children, my own included, have been able to play safely. To make this an access road to a large estate of 130 houses when currently it only serves 20 homes would substantially alter the character of our street. If I'd wanted to live in a busy crowded development I would have bought a house on one. The beauty of Southlands Avenue is that it is an old fashioned tree lined avenue set in a tranquil area of Rawdon. There is a wonderful sense of community on the Avenue (typified by the way we formed RGAG), which has seen a number of street parties to celebrate national events or to say goodbye to neighbours who have moved or emigrated. This would be lost to us forever if it became a major access road to a large housing estate.

Whatever access road was chosen would have to feed onto Knott Lane. This is a narrow minor road, it provides the only exit route for residents living on Southlands Avenue and also for residents on Woodlands Drive and New York Lane wanting access to the A65. It also provides the exit route for all Crematorium traffic. Cremations take place Monday to Friday every forty minutes often resulting in queues of twenty or more cars trying to feed out onto the A65. Congestion made worse by people parking all day on Knott Lane while they take the bus into Leeds for work.

The road is unable to support any more traffic making its use by the 200+ cars that would be the result of building the proposed 130 houses unsustainable.

The Site Allocations Plan does not consider the consequences on infrastructure

The infrastructure in Rawdon is already struggling to support the population living here, schools are oversubscribed, doctors and dentists are full and the A65 is heavily congested at all times of the day not just peak times, despite the council not accepting this fact, the effect of a further 200+ cars joining the A65 at Knott Lane is unimaginable. There has been no provision in the plans to address these issues and unless developers have to provide for these before starting any house building it is naive to think they will address these after they have completed their estates.

When my husband and I first saw that HG2-12 it had been added we contacted some of our neighbours to alert them to the threat to “our field”, as we think of it. We arranged a meeting for concerned residents on Southlands Avenue, New York Lane and Knott Lane and Rawdon Greenbelt Action Group was formed. Residents in the area feel very strongly about maintaining the rural character of Rawdon and membership quickly grew to around 70 members. On April 12th a march took place around the threatened sites in Rawdon and on the Horsforth border. Despite the torrential rain 400 men, women and children, our local MP and councillors took part to show the depth of feeling we have against the proposed mass urbanisation and loss of greenbelt of the area we live in and love. The event was reported in both the local papers and television. Once the greenbelt is gone it is gone forever and we are determined to do everything in our power

to save it for future generations.

I sincerely hope that my heartfelt pleas and views are listened to by Leeds City Council and the Government Inspector.

My Personal Details are :-

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Regards

Carol Fincham