

**From:**  
**To:** [Site Allocations Plan](#)  
**Subject:** PDE01532\_objection to proposed development on site 3029 (Wills Gill)  
**Date:** 14 November 2015 23:26:22

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LDF Publication Draft Consultation  
Forward Planning & Implementation  
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Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wish to comment on the soundness of the Aireborough Site Allocation Plans as part of the consultation process before the plans are reviewed by a Planning Inspector.

I live on Shaw Lane Gardens, which forms the southern boundary of site number 3029 (HG2-2). The Banksfield/Coppice Wood site (1255B) is adjacent. With the proposed construction of 133 homes on the Wills Gill site and 234 on the Banksfield site, a major urban extension would be created, which would join together the settlements of Guiseley and Yeadon.

A large part of the Wills Gill site is visible from my bedroom window. I walk past the site several times a day to take my children to school. I have taken the children to pick blackberries along Wills Gill lane, walked the dog there, cut

across the fields to walk up to the Otley Chevin, watched the sheep graze and huddle in the shelter in the field off the Queensway, heard cows mooing in the field, and enjoyed watching the seasons change and this very particular habitat evolve throughout the year. I know the site intimately and am convinced that the proposed developed is out of proportion with the existing community, will destroy the character of this part of Guiseley, and fails to cater for the needs of the local community.

I will be commenting on the following themes, to demonstrate that the plan is not sound: loss of greenbelt, local services, schools, conservation, and ecology.

I do not consider the plan with respect to site 3029 (HG2-2) to be sound for the following reasons.

1. **Justified:** for the plan to be 'justified', it must be clearly founded on valid research. However, the information contained in the Sustainability Appraisal and Greenbelt Review is inaccurate in parts.

- The Greenbelt Review considers the site to be well connected to a built up area, with 2 or more boundaries. This is manifestly not the case, as one of the boundaries is Wills Gill lane, an unlit track with just 7 homes.

- The Greenbelt Review considers that development would not lead to a physical connection of 2 or more settlements. If the Wills Gill and Banksfield site were developed, with the creation of 367 houses, Guiseley and Yeadon would merge. The last remaining rural land between Guiseley and Yeadon, offering a characteristic long distance view and retaining the 'village' character of Guiseley, would disappear.

- The Greenbelt Review ignores the 70 mature trees on the site, which are an important part of its biodiversity, as well as creating an iconic view (the row of poplars along Wills Gill lane). Site 1256, which is adjacent to the Wills Gill site, is considered 'very diverse', yet site 3029 contains the same varied mix of species and is also a damp meadow environment. There is no justification for giving it a different classification.

- The Sustainability Review ignores the two agricultural buildings on the site. Sheep and cattle graze the land on site 3029, and these buildings are used for the livestock in winter. Site 3029 is surrounded by greenbelt and the fields all the way up to Otley Chevin Forest Park are in agricultural use. Walkers and horse riders use the network of parks for recreation and appreciate the fact that this land is still farmed.

- The Sustainability Review states that the site is not adjacent to a conservation area or listed buildings, but it is. The western boundary of site 3029 is adjacent to Guiseley's conservation area and the medieval Crofts and Tofts, long strips of land which are rare and of significant value. The

Crofts and Tofts provide a transition between the village and the rural aspect of the greenbelt off the Queensway. If site 3029 were built on, the character of this part of Guiseley, and the long distance views, would be destroyed.

--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]--> **Is the plan 'positively prepared'? Does it meet the community's needs for, inter alia, community facilities, education, shops, sport, leisure and infrastructure?** As a resident of Guiseley, who uses all the local facilities and lives adjacent to site 3029, I am convinced that this development does not take into account existing pressures on local services, let alone future needs.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]--> **Education:** this year, I applied for a place in Year 1 for my daughter. She missed the first week of term in September because none of the local schools had a place. Leeds City Council suggested a school 5 miles away. Both Guiseley Primary School and St Oswald's have expanded this year to **meet existing needs**. There is no contingency to meet the needs of an additional 367 households on the doorstep.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]--> **Traffic:** the A65 is already very congested. At rush hour, traffic is gridlocked. The train into Leeds is packed at peak times. There is insufficient parking at the train station. Side roads are already being used by traffic to avoid the A65. Emissions from buses are already a problem in Aireborough. Each new household would create 6 traffic movements per day. It is entirely unclear how housing development on the Wills Gill site could be catered for without blocking all the local roads. At rush hour it takes ages to access the A65 from the Queensway because traffic is backed up, and it is very difficult to turn from Town Street onto the Queensway. I regularly hear cars hooting at each other after near accidents. If site 3029 were to be developed, this problem would be exacerbated. In addition, the Plan seems to address 'difficult' access for the Banksfield site by creating a road to link the two sites, i.e. a potential rat run!

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]--> **Healthcare:** there is already a great deal of pressure on local services. I am registered with a Guiseley GP which is associated with a surgery in Yeadon. It is almost impossible to get through to them on the surgery number and there is a waiting time of several days to get an appointment.

--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]--> **Is the plan consistent with national policy?** The Office of National Statistics projects a housing need of 45,000 households for the whole of Leeds, not 74,000, but Leeds City Council has refused to modify its assessment.

In summary, the Wills Gill site (3029) contributes to the distinctive appearance of the edge of Guiseley. Housing development on this site would encroach on greenbelt land and contribute to urban sprawl by connecting two settlements. It would also unacceptably increase the pressure on local services such as schools and GPs, which are already struggling to cope with existing needs, as well as increasing traffic in an already congested area.

This land was still classified as 'unsuitable for housing' in 2013. Based on criteria such as avoiding building on greenbelt land except under exceptional circumstances, safeguarding Guiseley's character and heritage, and creating a plan that meets the needs of the local community in consultation with local people, I do not believe the plan is sound.

On a personal note, I find it astonishing that 95% of the sites to be found for housing in Aireborough are on greenbelt land, whereas the original target, shocking in itself, was 52%!

Why not create a nature trail along Will's Gill to highlight its ecological importance and give some information about the historical role of the Crofts and Tofts, instead of turning it into housing for which there is no demonstrable need?

Yours faithfully,

Sophie Llewellyn Smith