

From:
To: [Site Allocations Plan](#)
Cc:
Subject: PDE01582_Comments by Cllr Wadsworth (Guiseley and Rawdon Ward)
Date: 14 November 2015 17:24:47

Below are my comments in relation to the site allocations plan in my ward, with regard to the Aireborough Housing area. Despite my strong opposition to the plan's allocations across the Aireborough corridor, particularly those sites in Rawdon, I have confined myself to proposals within the Guiseley and Rawdon Ward.

It is my view that the Site Allocation in the Aireborough housing area is wholly unsound, in that it fails to meet the criteria of being positively prepared, justified or consistent with national policy.

In terms of the plan's positive preparation, there has been scant attention paid to the needs of the LOCAL area, with a 'one size fits all' approach being used across Leeds. This is not in keeping with positive preparation, since the plan would see Aireborough become simply a dormitory for Leeds City Centre, which surely fails to meet the needs of the area's current or future residents. The fierce opposition to further development which has consistently been shown by local activists, councillors and civic leaders shows that more housebuilding is the last thing Aireborough needs.

The council administration has thus far been unable to provide sufficient justification for the plan. It's population estimates have been shown to be unreliable and does not account for the many large housing projects completed in Aireborough in the recent past. The level of justification needed for any development should be particularly high in Aireborough, since the infrastructure is entirely unable to support further housing and it seems there is little prospect for additional employment sites nearby. The council has not shown sufficient need within the local area and it is ridiculous for Aireborough to meet the housing demands of the city as a whole when our GPs, Dentists and schools are incapable of dealing even with existing demand. School expansion plans have already seen our primary schools have to increase their roll enormously just to keep pace with demand from existing housing. Huge investment in roads, schools and healthcare would be needed for Aireborough to cope with any new influx of people from additional housing and this should be given due weight when deciding if any of Aireborough's site allocations are viable.

The plan's consistency with national policy is also highly questionable, since the destruction of large areas of green belt, with no green belt review in sight is entirely contrary to the intention of national government. In particular, any attempt to develop greenfield sites before the city's brownfield supply is exhausted would be totally inappropriate and reveal the site allocations plan to be fundamentally flawed. Green space is vital for the health of residents (particularly children) and any further erosion of green space in the area would put our small town environment at risk. Aireborough is particularly sensitive to the blurring of settlement boundaries, as our towns wish to retain their own identities. National policy encourages councils to avoid degrading the boundaries between communities and there is no appetite for the area to simply become an urban corridor from Leeds City Centre to the Bradford boundary. The site allocations as currently proposed constitute a direct threat to the varied identity of Aireborough and it seems that we would be subsumed into the greater Leeds metropolis. Planners should

also note that promoting development in Aireborough would place additional stress on what is already at times chaotic road network. Alongside the disruption this would cause to residents, the council should account for the economic cost of any development, since more traffic would inevitably reduce Aireborough's productivity and quality of life in the area, this stands at odds with the wider national agenda.

As I move into a discussion of individual sites within Aireborough. It should be remembered that Aireborough's inability to provide sufficient school places, employment, healthcare or transport links means that development on the scale proposed by the site allocations plan is not only short-sighted, but verges on irresponsible. The fact that Aireborough does not have the capacity to provide the services and transport links for any additional residents should be noted for all of the below sites:

HG2-5 (1180A - 1311A & 2163A) Coach Road.

Here we see the destruction of Aireborough's valuable green belt and the loss of an aesthetically pleasing area with a current use (agriculture). Council planners have considered the construction of a school in the area, which would bring additional traffic and pollution to this sensitive part of Aireborough before any of the site allocations are accounted for. The site's poor vehicular access would complicate construction and the addition of traffic from the planned 112 houses would surely overwhelm the site's main route through Silverdale Avenue. Any plan to compulsorily purchase the private section of Coach Road adjacent to the site would ride roughshod over the desires of existing residents and may not fully alleviate the traffic problems in this estate. This proposal is a prime example of the blurring of boundaries which national policy intends to avoid, since the site's proximity to the Bradford boundary undermines Leeds', Bradford's and Aireborough's distinct identities.

HG2-6 (1113) Land at Silverdale Avenue (Allotments)

Once again, this site places additional stress on Silverdale Avenue, which would exacerbate existing parking and traffic flow issues. If development were to occur here, then the area would be inaccessible to emergency services at peak parking times. Any access to the site would be via Park Road, an already overburdened route within Guiseley and extra traffic could compromise road safety.

HG2-4 (4020) Hollins Hill and Hawkstone Avenue

This is another section of Green Belt land which is under threat in this plan and would see construction on a valuable agricultural area. This site dominates the sightlines of the surrounding area and the visually pollutant effect of development would be immense. This site shows scant regard for community boundaries, inching settlement in Aireborough ever closer to the Bradford conurbation. The Hollins Hill road provides entirely insufficient access to the site. Given that any new homes would likely be occupied by commuters, (as Aireborough's fragile employment base is degraded by additional housing sites) this stretch of road between Guiseley and Bradford would become increasingly congested, an outcome which is utterly unsatisfactory for existing commuters and residents.

HG2-1 (3026) New Birks Farm, Ings Lane

A full ecological survey would have to be done prior to development in this area, which is environmentally very precious within the context of the local area. As with much of Aireborough, access to this site is eventually dependent upon the A65, a road which is often

discussed within the Council as a traffic nightmare. Any additional development along the A65 corridor would have an enormous knock-on impact on existing residents and worsen the road network's chronic congestion. This is possibly the worst example of disregard for community boundaries, since this land is essentially all that prevents the joining of Guiseley and Menston, two fundamentally distinct settlements. This development would profoundly affect views of the Chevin, an area well known for its beauty and this deprivation would be unfair to people who have enjoyed these views for many years.

HG2-2 (3029) Wills Gill

Occupying Aireborough's vital stretch of green belt between Guiseley and Yeadon, the site's development alongside that of land at Shaw Lane would see these towns merge. The green space this area provides is essential for the proper setting of these communities. The major route between Yeadon and Guiseley, Queensway, is unable to take any additional traffic sustainably and any road expansion would be exceedingly difficult.

HG2-3 (1255B) Shaw Lane(land at) Guiseley and Banksfield Mount, Yeadon.

This site encounters much the same issues as HG2-2. I cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that Guiseley and Yeadon do not merge if we want to avoid unsightly and unsustainable urban sprawl. This site is a further example of how Aireborough's crucial green space is under threat in the name of meeting central Leeds' insatiable demand for housing.

HG2-10 (1221)Gill Lane, Yeadon.

This site lies at the heart of Aireborough, being in-between the towns of Guiseley, Rawdon and Yeadon. Construction here would see the urban sprawl across the area join up, fundamentally altering the dynamic in the area and destroying centuries of distinct community identities. The site's proximity to the Nether Yeadon Conservation Area should also be accounted for, as the site as it is currently is crucial for proper context around Nether Yeadon, which is historically valuable and a crucial feature of Aireborough's identity. The 155 homes planned for the site are absurd, since once more the A65 is the arterial route closest to the site. Unless we want the entire Aireborough corridor to grind to a halt, development along this stretch of road is unthinkable.

Having outlined the unsuitability of these sites for development, I hope you will reconsider the site allocations plan.

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Guiseley and Rawdon Ward
Chair, North West Outer Community Committee
Shadow Spokesperson for Environment and Community Safety
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