

From:
To: [Site Allocations Plan](#)
Cc: [Stuart Andrew.MP](#)
Subject: PDE01624_Objection to Leeds site allocation plans HG2-12, HG2-41, HG3-2, HG3-3, HG3-4
Date: 14 November 2015 14:27:23

To whom it may concern.

My name is Chris Ingham and I live at 39 Layton Lane, Rawdon, Leeds, LS196RQ and I would like to strongly object to the future building of houses on the proposed sites:

- HG2-12
- HG2-41
- HG3-2
- HG3-3
- HG4-4

All of the above proposed development sites will have a significant negative impact to my family's life and the surrounding environment:

My family's health and wellbeing:

The current road infrastructure cannot cope with the volume of traffic today and as such at rush hour times we see huge volumes of standing traffic. The Association of British Drivers (ABD) say that congestion is the biggest waster of fuel and biggest cause of pollution. Slow moving, stop/start traffic is the least fuel efficient. The air within the River Aire valley does not move that effectively today and smog is often formed along the River Aire valley. Additional pollution will only add to this problem and add further risk to my family's long term health.

I also do not believe that the proposed airport link road will ease this congestion. The airport operates their flights regularly from early morning until late at night, and as such the traffic to/from the airport runs consistently throughout the day. This suggests the current rush hour traffic congestion is a result of commuters utilising their cars to get to/from their places of work rather than travelling to/from the airport. Additional local housing will only make this issue worse and will not be eased by a new road to the airport.

We chose to live in Rawdon as it is currently a perfect location to raise a family. It has access to fantastic current local amenities but also is surrounded by green space which provides safe natural places for my children to play and wonderful examples of nature for my children to learn from. Both of these benefits would be impacted by the proposed development and once the green spaces have been replaced by development it is highly likely that they will never return.

Impact to local wildlife:

HG2-12, HG3-3 and HG3-4 are UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, hosting wild deer, bats, fieldfare, lapwing, curlew, sparrow hawk, tawny owl. Ancient Ghyll Beck runs next to HG3-4 Layton Lane fields and through HG3-3 and HG2-41. All sites contain protected mature trees and woodland. HG3-3 has a native bluebell wood. HG3-2 is adjacent to UK BAP Priority Habitat pond with palmate newts, also found in HG2-12. Development on these sites will only negatively impact these nature features.

Legality of the proposed development:

The council assessments that have been undertaken in reviewing the suitability of areas for development, appear to have been completed inaccurately which generates a level of mistrust and questions the value I am receiving from entrusting the local authorities with my hard earned taxes. Prior to any further decisioning by the council i would like a personal explanation on the below errors of judgement:

HG2-12

Clearly, the Council's proposed high-density, isolated housing allocation of 130 houses would destroy the open landscape and long-distance views which are a key part of the character of the Cragg Wood conservation area, contrary to the appraisal and management plan which protects this setting. This development would therefore be inappropriate and unjustified.

The Council has made a series of errors and failures of judgment with regard to the conservation area in its sustainability assessment, as given in the greenbelt assessment section of its site assessment (section 4):

4. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns:

- Site within/adjacent to conservation area/listed building/historical features?
Yes
- Can development preserve this character? **Yes**
- Character conclusion: **Marginal effect on the setting and special character, could be mitigated against through appropriate detailed design**
- Overall conclusion from assessment against all 4 purposes of green belt and essential characteristics of openness and permanence. **Greenbelt site. Adjacent to residential development and industry to the north. Surrounded on three sides by development. Less sequentially preferable to other sites. Within conservation / special landscape area but site is not in prominent location or particularly visible within immediate area.**

1) The Council says that HG2-12 is 'surrounded on three sides by development' - it is not. There is no development to west or south and only partial (carefully screened low-density houses (Southlands Avenue and New York Lane) to the east . (To the north is the low-level one-storey Airedale factory).

2) The Council says that 'HG2-12 is not in prominent location or particularly visible within immediate area.' It asserts that development would cause only a 'marginal effect on the setting and special character'.

This is manifestly wrong – the site is the gateway to the Cragg Wood conservation area, in a highly prominent and elevated position on the south-facing slope of the Aire Valley. It is the first in a line of open agricultural fields creating a stretch of open, unspoilt countryside from Knott Lane to Cragg Wood. It creates a parkland style setting around the conservation area and uninterrupted views from Woodlands Drive (an original carriage drive and main route through the area) and all the fields / woodland / crematorium to its south, west and east which are all within the conservation area or its immediate setting. It is also plainly visible from New York Lane to the north and from the south side of the valley at Calverley and the north-eastern suburbs of Bradford. The

development of a housing estate of some 130 houses would totally ruin the special character and setting of the conservation area, since it would take away this characteristic of 'openness' in the setting which is so important to the conservation area. The development would also harm the setting of the Grade II listed building Woodleigh Hall, which is a building of particular architectural merit in very close proximity to HG2-12.

3) The Council's conclusion that development could preserve the character of the conservation area and that adverse effects could 'be mitigated against through appropriate detailed design' is not true and misleading. Given the strategic location of the site and its importance to the open setting and views which are intrinsic to the Cragg Wood Conservation Area, there is no development in this location that could preserve or enhance this overriding characteristic of 'openness'; the two are mutually exclusive. The development of a housing estate of 130 houses in this position, in open and undeveloped fields, would obscure the view and stop the countryside from being 'open'. Therefore appropriate design could not by itself mitigate against the considerable harm that this development would cause to the conservation area.

4) Purely in design terms, the conclusions are wrong. The proposal clearly does not meet the criteria for 'appropriate detailed design'.

'New buildings need to respond to their setting in terms of... architectural design – e.g. scale, form, quality of materials and building methods. (Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan pg 14)

Successful new development in historic areas will: Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land; Sit happily in the pattern of existing development; Respect important views; Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings; Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting. (Cabe and English Heritage, 2001, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas', as quoted in Rawdon Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan pg 14)

The proposed development of 130 houses in 4.75 hectares is clearly totally inappropriate in form, scale and density to the historically low scale, low-density housing of the Cragg Wood conservation area and its setting where: 'the settlement form is dominated by large detached properties set in spacious grounds [of 2 - 5 acres]. Properties are set well back from the road and mainly hidden from view.' (Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan p.9).

It also fails to respect the landscaped setting of the Grade II listed building Woodleigh Hall. As set out above, because of the impact on the open setting, the proposed development would not 'relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land', 'respect important views', 'respect the scale of neighbouring buildings' nor 'sit happily in the pattern of existing development'. Instead it would form an 'isolated' housing estate, as the greenbelt assessment states (see Greenbelt assessment section 2).

HG2-41

Clearly, the Council's proposed development of 777 houses and a primary and secondary school on site HG2-41 would destroy the open landscape and long-distance views which are a key part of the character of the Rawdon Cragg Wood conservation area, contrary to the appraisal and management plan which protects this setting. This development would therefore be inappropriate and unjustified.

The Council has also made errors and failures in its judgment with regard to the conservation area in its sustainability assessment, as given in the greenbelt assessment section of its site assessment (section 4):

4. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- Site within/adjacent to conservation area/listed building/historical features?
Yes
- Can development preserve this character? **Yes**
- Character conclusion: **Marginal effect on the setting and special character, could be mitigated against through appropriate detailed design**
- Overall conclusion from assessment against all 4 purposes of green belt and essential characteristics of openness and permanence. **A large greenbelt site. However, the site is well-contained by the Clariant site, roads and natural boundaries.**

1) The Council asserts that development would cause only a 'marginal effect on the setting and special character'.

This is blatantly wrong – the site provides a vital role in establishing the open countryside setting of the conservation area. A very large site, it occupies a prominent and elevated position on the south-facing slope of the Aire Valley. It creates a large stretch of open, unspoilt countryside from the ring-road to the south-side of the conservation area, Knott Lane and the crematorium. It offers views from and towards the conservation area. Clearly a development of a high-density housing estate of some 777 houses plus a school would totally ruin the special character and setting of the conservation area, since it would take away the crucial characteristic of 'openness' in the setting which is so important to the conservation area. The development would also harm the setting of the Grade II listed building Woodleigh Hall to its north.

2) The Council's conclusion that development could preserve the character of the conservation area and that adverse effects could 'be mitigated against through appropriate detailed design' is not true and misleading. Given the strategic location of the site and its importance to the open setting and views which are intrinsic to the Cragg Wood Conservation Area, there is no development in this location that could preserve or enhance this overriding characteristic of 'openness'; the two are mutually exclusive. The development of a housing estate of 777 houses plus a school in this position, in open and undeveloped fields, would obscure the views from and towards the conservation area and stop the countryside from being 'open'. Therefore appropriate design could not by itself mitigate against the considerable harm that this development would cause to the conservation area.

3) Purely in design terms, the conclusions are wrong. The proposal clearly does not meet the criteria for 'appropriate detailed design'. 'New buildings need to respond to their setting in terms of... architectural design – e.g. scale, form, quality of materials and building methods. (Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan pg 14)

Successful new development in historic areas will: Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land; Sit happily in the pattern of existing development; Respect important views; Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings; Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings; Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting. (Cabe and English Heritage,

2001, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas', as quoted in Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan pg 14)

The proposed development of 777 houses and a school in 36 hectares is clearly totally inappropriate in form, scale and density to the historically low scale, low-density housing of the Cragg Wood conservation area and its setting where 'the settlement form is dominated by large detached properties set in spacious grounds [of 2 - 5 acres]. Properties are set well back from the road and mainly hidden from view.' (Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan p.9). Any reference to the Clariant site is misleading since this was a brownfield development.

The proposed site allocation also fails to respect the landscaped setting of the Grade II listed building Woodleigh Hall and other landmark buildings. As set out above, because of the impact on the open setting, the proposed development would not 'relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land', 'respect important views', 'respect the scale of neighbouring buildings' nor 'sit happily in the pattern of existing development'.

HG3-3

The Council's proposal to include site HG3-3 in its 'protected area of search' for development of approximately 30 houses in phase 3 would remove the open character of the conservation area on this site, contrary to the Rawdon Cragg Wood Appraisal and Management Plan which protects this site. This development, albeit in a later phase, would therefore be inappropriate and unjustified.

The Council has made a straightforward error with regard to the impact on the conservation area in its sustainability assessment, as given in the greenbelt assessment section of its site assessment (section 4):

4. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Site within/adjacent to conservation area/listed building/historical features? **No**

This is factually incorrect: the site is within a conservation area. This error suggests that LCC has not had regard to the Rawdon Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan when it carried out its site assessments.

Summary

It is easy to take a selfish 'not in my back yard' stance to this proposed development but in this instance I cannot express my views strongly enough that the proposals look to dramatically change the beautiful green spaces that our local area has to offer, for ever. Gone will be the fabulous local walks, the abundance of local wildlife and the spectacular farming, crops and natural plants. Why can we not look to redevelop existing brown field sites rather than ruin for ever our spectacular green areas?

Yours sincerely

Chris Ingham