

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: HOUSING PROVISION IN LEP  
Date: 12 November 2015 14:18:30

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my opposition to Leeds City Council's housing plans in general and about sites HG2-12, HG3-2, HG3-3 and HG2-41 in particular.

From the outset I would like to point out that I am no 'NIMBY' - 2 very large houses were built directly behind my back garden in Cragg Terrace off Woodlands Drive (LS196LE) 2 years ago where no housing had been before and I did not object as we were consulted by the developers, they were on brownfield land and developed sympathetically with the woodland surroundings.

Firstly, I do not accept the council's target figure of 70 thousand new houses being needed to fulfil its core strategy. The government's own ONS estimate is that the city needs 45000 new homes, and the discrepancy between the two figures would be enough to remove the threat to our irreplaceable green belt. Councils have rejected these figures without providing evidence as to why, merely citing predicted economic growth. I think their plans are unjustified.

Secondly, I do not feel I have been consulted by LCC about the plans in general and the aforementioned sites in particular. Years ago we received a leaflet asking our opinions on various possible sites, but it was not made clear there was a housing 'plan' or target or deadline and there was no mention of HG2-12 or HG2-41 at that time. The only information I have received about the council's recent plans has come through local campaign groups and local press.

When I heard of LCC's plans for so many houses along the A65 from Horsforth to Rawdon and beyond, I could not believe that they were serious. It is as if the people who came up with the plan have never actually been here. EVERYBODY who uses that road will testify that it is already hugely congested and adding thousands more cars onto it would be totally unsustainable, not to mention disastrous for the air quality. Leeds is already consistently in breach of EU air pollution targets set for 2010.

There is already huge pressure on school places in the area and this would only add to the problem.

I personally rang round all the dentists and doctors in the area in April 2015 to see if they had been consulted about the impact on healthcare provision if all this housing goes ahead and not one of them had any contact from LCC at that time. Neither had it been discussed at the local clinical commissioning group meetings. So it appears there has been no healthcare planning either.

Aside from the overcrowding, I am devastated to think that our beautiful open landscape in Horsforth and Rawdon will be lost forever if these plans go ahead. The green spaces will be filled in and we will be left with characterless urban sprawl as in Manchester. The open valley views from Horsforth to Calverley and back (sites HG2-41 and HG2-12) will be raised and Horsforth and Rawdon will effectively merge. That is the whole point of green belt surely? to protect and retain each area's distinct characteristics? I understand there has been no comprehensive green belt review as required under the Core Strategy, even though an inspector recommended one take place.

I am particularly shocked at plans for 130 houses on HG2-12, which would amount to little more than vandalism. Firstly it was a very late addition and not in the original 'houses and Options' document. The field directly adjoins the Cragg Wood conservation area, which is an oasis of unspoiled countryside and woodland enjoyed by locals for walking, running, horse riding, cycling etc. It's hard to believe you are in a city when you are there, but the open views would be completely destroyed by building in that field. I have seen one drop in the field many times too. Knot Lane (the access road to the A65) is already very congested at times, particularly when there is a funeral at the crematorium. Adding another 130 houses (20 cars?) would make it unusable and also dangerous. I understand the council have given HG 12-2 an appraisal score of -7, which is the worst of all nearby sites (HG3-2 and HG3-3), yet HG2-12 is allocated while those 2, which adjoin the A65 are safeguarded, for now. I also understand that the survey on HG2-12 is filled with errors, including stating that it is surrounded by development on three sides, which it most definitely is not. It has development on one side only (Southlands Drive) and to open the other 3. Building housing on it would destroy the unique view of Cragg Wood conservation area from so many points in the area. I enclose some photos of the field and the area.

This shows the field from the access road to Woodlands Drive.



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The picture above is taken from Woodlands Drive in the conservation area. If the development goes ahead, the top right hand corner will be filled with houses and the view destroyed.

Finally my concern is that the proposed housing in this area will be of the unaffordable 'executive' type housing, rather than social housing, which is what is needed in the city. I understand why developers want to get their hands on lucrative green belt land, ( the cheapest house at the nearby Horsforth Vale development is £315000), but I do not understand why the council seems so willing to destroy our environment and our children's inheritance forever. They are working from incorrect figures, they have not consulted and there is no infrastructure plan.

Yours sincerely

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Sent from my iPad