

From: .
To: [Site Allocations Plan](#)
Subject: PDE02093_Site allocation objections for HG2-41, HG2-12, HG3-2, HG3-3, HG3-4, HG1-96
Date: 11 November 2015 15:21:19

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to object to Leeds City Council's Site Allocation Plan and intention to build over 2,300 houses in the Rawdon and Horsforth area of Leeds up to and beyond 2028, many of which are proposed on greenbelt land.

My family recently moved to Rawdon. We were drawn here by the lovely village feel, good schools and green spaces and I was distressed to find out through the work of local campaign groups such as the Rawdon Greenbelt Action Group about the proposals of the council. Without the work of this group we would have had no idea about the core strategy and site allocation plan. We have had no information from the city council themselves.

It saddens me greatly to think that potentially when my little boy (nearly 2) is old enough to explore the area by himself, many of the greenspaces that we currently enjoy as a family and with our dog simply won't exist. In particular HG3-4, HG3-3 and parts of the Cragg Wood Conservation Area. Since moving to this area only a few months ago we have explored the beautiful conservation area and regularly walk around the site of HG3-4 where just this summer my little boy delightedly experienced his first tractor up-close-and-personal with the local farmer waving at him from the cab as he baled the hay on this site. This site is extremely well used and loved by local people and alongside The Billings, is one of the few remaining publicly accessible green spaces within easy walking distance of the housing estates in Rawdon. Leeds city council might hit housing targets if this site is destroyed but I anticipate that taking away such a valued, well-used, open green space from local people would in the long term have a negative impact from a health and wellbeing point of view – it is well documented that recreational green space provides a vital contribution to mental and physical health and wellbeing.

I would like to oppose the proposals for the following sites. Where I refer to **ALL** sites, I am including the following: HG2-41, HG2-12, HG3-2, HG3-3, HG3-4, HG1-96.

Development is NOT positively prepared

(ALL) There has not been an adequate review of the Greenbelt as required by the Core Strategy set out by the previous inspector. Therefore the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan are unsound.

Development is NOT justified

(ALL) Special Landscape lost - the distinctive open valley views and the rural character of Rawdon, with its very distinctive village feel, will be lost forever. There is no going back once development like this takes place, the landscape is changed forever.

(HG3-3) (HG2-12) Conservation area lost - the views around Cragg Wood Conservation Area will be ruined by this development site and countryside views from the Leeds-Liverpool canal over once open fields will be further marred by the extension of the Clariant development site into HG1-96.

(ALL) To my knowledge no greenbelt review has been undertaken by the council as required by the previous inspectors Core Strategy.

(ALL) Important greenbelt land will be lost forever, and destroying these important spaces completely undermines any previous decisions about why keeping certain areas of land free from development was important. The loss of significant areas of greenbelt land will blur the boundaries of Leeds and Bradford and create general urban sprawl of the area along with other proposed development.

(HG2-12) (HG3-2) (HG3-3) Recreation – my family and I are keen walkers and cyclists and love getting out in spaces that are close to home and easy to reach with a young child when our recreation time is limited (as we work full time and find ourselves spending a lot of time commuting because the local roads are already so busy! – please see my further points!). The Leeds Country Way runs through the proposed plan and it would be a devastating blow to local users if this was lost.

(ALL) Local schools are already heavily over-subscribed and although there is a primary and secondary school proposed on HG2-41 site, the surrounding road infrastructure, especially the A65 (the main commuter route from Rawdon and Horsforth into Leeds), simply cannot cope with the additional traffic that a school and the housing will bring. From personal experience as a commuter that uses the A65 on a daily basis at rush hour it is clear that this road is operating at full capacity. On a daily basis I sit in traffic from the junction of Layton Lane right up to the Horsforth roundabout (recently re-configured and now traffic light operated – which has unfortunately made little difference), it is simply inconceivable that another 1000+ cars could be using the road at the same time (assuming that many families have two cars, the development at HG2-41 could bring 1554 extra cars onto local roads) not only would this cause gridlock but as

it's the main route in and out of Leeds from this area, it is also used by a lot of cyclists, including my husband, and so would create a dangerous situation.

Wildlife habitats will be lost!

(HG2-12, HG3-3 and HG3-4) Are priority habitats as designated by the UK Biodiversity Action Plan . Hosting wild deer, bats, fieldfare, lapwing, curlew, sparrow hawk, tawny owl whose habitats will be lost affecting local biodiversity and impacting in loss of their populations.

ALL the sites have protected mature trees and woodlands within their boundaries and (HG3-3) has an area of ancient woodland with native bluebell wood which are protected by law.

(ALL) Significant amounts of Grade 3 farmland will be lost with these developments and Rawdon's rich farming heritage wiped out with no evidence of the important role it has played in shaping the landscape and village. There are numerous local people employed by farming in this area who would lose their jobs and livelihood. On one of the proposed sites there is a smallholding belonging to a local family and a bee-keepers apiary (HG3-3).

(ALL) Potential alternatives have been overlooked:

- Have Leeds city council collaborated with Bradford council to discuss these possibilities and identify more sustainable and less destructive sites?
- Much more suitable Brownfield sites ARE available elsewhere across Leeds and the Core Strategy states that these must be developed over greenbelt land, an example where this has successfully taken place has been the Sandos site in Horsforth where a disused industrial site has been used for housing and therefore local greenbelt land has not been destroyed.

(HG2-12, HG1-96, HG2-41) These developments will adversely affect 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 at HG2-12, in open and undeveloped fields, would obscure the view and stop the countryside from being 'open'. Therefore appropriate design (one of the councils arguments) could not by itself mitigate against the considerable harm that this development would cause to the conservation area.

Development NOT effective

(HG2-12) The phasing for the proposed developments is undeliverable - Highways access to HG2-12 is contingent on development of 'safeguarded' sites

HG3-2 and HG3-3. But HG2-12 is allocated for delivery earlier than these phase 3 sites. It has been incorrectly categorised as 'allocated' and CANNOT be delivered.

Highways access

(HG2-12) There is only one access point into this site via Southlands Avenue as the other roads are private. This particular road is inadequate for 130 houses and Knott Lane is not at all suitable for additional development, the bottom half of this Knott Lane is a single track and is not surfaced properly, widening this road would involve significant loss of hedgerow habitats. Frequent Crematorium traffic also uses Knott Lane, affecting all three sites close by.

(HG2-12, HG3-2 and HG3-3) Requires realignment of Knott Lane with access issues onto ALREADY heavily congested A65 would remain and further deteriorate with increased traffic from significant housing developments. Access onto the A65 is already particularly difficult from certain junctions including Carr Lane and increased traffic would make this even worse.

Developments NOT consistent with National Planning Policy

(ALL) No alternatives to these sites have been explored as part of the councils comprehensive Green belt review, so Leeds City Council cannot justify that 'exceptional circumstances' exist which outweigh the harm and loss of greenbelt in this area. Growth cannot be used as an exceptional circumstance especially when the people living in this area, who will be worse effected, have not been presented with any evidence of the investigation of alternative sites for development.

Location and importance to conservation area

(HG2-12) sits adjacent to the Cragg Wood Conservation Area and within its immediate setting. This site is the gateway to the Cragg Wood conservation area, and would change the character of this special area for users. It is therefore fundamental to the setting of the conservation area. It is also visible all along New York Lane to the north and from the other side of the valley in Calverley and the suburbs of Bradford.

(HG3-3) is within the Cragg Wood Conservation Area. It is a one hectare field which forms the gateway to the Cragg Wood conservation area. It is adjacent to Rawdon crematorium to its south (built on the site of the 19th century Knottfield House) and associated formal memorial gardens which are also part of the conservation area. It contains an ancient beck (Ghyll Beck) which is the historic

boundary of Rawdon and Horsforth and runs down through the crematorium gardens into site HG2-41. It seems inconceivable that the council can't find an alternative area to develop 35 houses! There are surely brownfield sites where this number of house could easily be delivered. An example where this has successfully taken place is on Springfield Iron Works, Bagley Lane, Farsley where a small number of houses are being built on a brownfield plot with very limited impact upon local residents or the local infrastructure. This sensitive development is what we want to see more of.

Development NOT legally compliant

(HG2-12) There was no consultation for this site before it was allocated to housing in the council's Site Allocation Plan. I have been a local resident of Horsforth, Rodley and Rawdon respectively for the past 8 years and I was not aware of the public consultation held in 2013.

Thank you for taking the time to read my objections.

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