

From:
To: [Site Allocations Plan](#)
Cc: [Stuart Andrew.MP](#)
Subject: PDE02144_LCC SAP (sites: HG2-12, HG2-41, HG3-2, HG3-3, HG3-4)
Date: 10 November 2015 22:39:19

4 New York Cottages,
Rawdon,
Leeds,
LS19 6JH

7th November, 2015

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to you to protest in the strongest possible manner about proposals to build houses on Green belt land in Rawdon and Horsforth with particular reference to sites:

HG2-12 Woodlands Drive
HG2-41 Rawdon Crematorium - Horsforth Roundabout
HG3-2 Knott Lane West
HG3-3 Knott Lane East
HG3-4 Layton Lane

There are so many reasons why developing on green belt land is wrong it's hard to know where to start, but surely we should start with why we have 'green belt' land. The NPPF says that the purpose of green belt is:

To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

It says that only in 'exceptional circumstances' should green belt land be built on. Growth, according to the council, is that exceptional circumstance. Government ministers disagree and so do I. The harm to Green belt land building houses would cause, far outweighs the need here. Once lost, our green and pleasant land in Rawdon and Horsforth would be lost forever.

In terms of growth, the council need to take a fresh look at up to date statistics re housing requirement in Leeds. According to ONS projections, Leeds would only need 45 000 new homes NOT the current target of 70 000 - reducing the target by 15 000 alone would remove the need to build on green belt land. Brownfield sites ARE available elsewhere across Leeds and the LCC Core Strategy says that these must be developed before green belt land. They seem to have been overlooked.

Building on green belt land in Rawdon and Horsforth would totally defy its objectives and is therefore not justified:

Building on the sites listed above would merge Horsforth and Rawdon and blur the boundary between Leeds and Bradford (have Leeds City Council co-ordinated with Bradford Council to see how boundaries can be maintained?). Unplanned urban sprawl would mean that Rawdon would lose its village feel, one of the things that attracts people to live in Rawdon in the first place.

HG3-3 is within the Cragg Wood Conservation Area and HG2-12 is in its immediate setting. The council has documents that discuss why and how they should be conserved. The Rawdon Cragg Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan describes the 'openness' that is characteristic of this area. Building on HG2-12 and HG2-41 would destroy this feeling of openness - views over the Crag Wood Conservation Area from the A65 end and from across the Bradford side of the valley would be detrimentally affected. The Leeds Country Way runs through HG2-12 and alongside HG3-2 and HG3-3. Myself and my partner run on this at least 3 times a week and my family walk / cycle round these sites. There are always plenty of people doing the same - locals and people from further afield - coming to collect all the lovely conkers on Woodlands Drive or on a ramble, cycle ride or on horseback. At the bottom of HG2-12 there is a little dingley dell, with a knot of beautiful trees (I have remarked to my children that at the roots of one look like The Borrowers could live there) and a stream. It's a little corner of paradise and it would be a travesty to lose it.

All sites are classified Grade 3 Agricultural land. They are tidy, well-maintained fields, and lend Rawdon and Horsforth their character. We all enjoy watching farming practices take place on our doorstep and are even able to participate by picking our own asparagus in the Spring and strawberries in the Summer. We are lucky enough to get eggs from the family's smallholding on HG3-3 which they have farmed for generations. The farms also provide jobs for local people.

Sites HG2-12, HG-3 and HG-4 are UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats. To be seen here - and we have seen them not only when out and about but also out of our windows that overlook the Cragg Wood Conservation Area - are wild deer and bats as well as Birds of Conservation Concern at red or amber level: the fieldfare, lapwing, curlew, sparrow hawk, tawny owls, red kites, swallows, tree and house sparrows and starlings. HG3-2 is adjacent to a UK BAP Priority Habitat Pond with palmate newts and these have also been sighted in HG2-12. All sites contain mature trees and woodland - losing these would dramatically change the visual impact of the area. There is also Ancient Ghyll Beck which runs next to HG3-4 and through HG3-3 and HG2-4. We often walk by this as do others - there is a geocache to be found on one of the bridges! A native bluebell wood is to be found at HG3-3. We must protect our wildlife habitats.

I work on the Aireborough corridor as a teacher and my children go to school in Rawdon. The schools are bursting at

the seams. Has the impact on other local services e.g. Doctors surgeries, fire service etc, been considered too?

Certainly, the impact on our roads has not been thought out. The A65, which we can see from our windows, is rammed. All the sites I have mentioned would have an impact on traffic on the A65 and other roads too. I know its early days, but the work done to Horsforth roundabout seems to have exacerbated the congestion on the A65 and is forcing people onto rat runs. The traffic at 6pm yesterday on the A65 queuing eastbound, reached Over Lane in Rawdon. Normally, at this time, the queues would be people coming out of Leeds not going in. I witnessed this while out and about earlier in the week too. The ridiculous numbers of housing proposed, with 2 cars per family, would tremendously increase traffic and cause even more danger to road users and pedestrians. When walking my daughter to school this week, we attempted to cross Town Street in Rawdon and the levels of traffic on a road narrowed by parked cars on one side was extreme! Frustrated drivers, in a rush, means careless drivers and Town Street was full of children on their way to school - it's an accident waiting to happen. Of course, another consequence of traffic queues is slowing down access for emergency vehicles. I hope my family don't need to call on them at rush hour! In short, the A65 and Horsforth roundabout can't handle the traffic we already have - how on earth does the council expect it to cope with more?

Some of the sites have serious issues concerned with access to them, making any development not effective. HG2-12, HG3-2 and HG3-3 would all be served by Knott Lane. The road is not suitable for the amount of traffic new houses would create and the junction onto the A65 - which they would all have to use to go anywhere (see paragraph above) - is already difficult and dangerous, particularly when there is the added traffic from the crematorium. Any realignment of the junction would cut into sites HG3-2 and HG3-3 which are currently (until it suits the council to change that) safeguarded, which begs the question, why is HG2-12 not safeguarded too? After all, it ranked a -7 in the sustainability appraisal, the lowest of the sites nearby. Access to site HG2-12 could only be down the quiet, tree-lined Southlands Avenue, which is wholly unsuitable for the machinery required to build houses and not designed for more than the cars it already serves.

There are concerns over the legal compliancy of site HG2-12. There was no consultation on the site prior to it being allocated to housing in the Site Allocations Plan - it was not included in the Issues and Options consultation in June; this is not compliant with the council's Statement of Community Involvement.

The development was not positively prepared. The Site Allocations Plan for these sites are not based on a comprehensive Green belt review, as required, but are selective, making their proposals unsound.

Airedale International has said that it doesn't want any neighbours; given the factory set on fire, caused by explosions a couple of years since, you can see why. Building on HG2-12, HG3-2 and HG3-3 would mean neighbours. If at the time of the fire, there had been residents in HG2-12, they would have been evacuated (as we were) and their homes would've been filled with smoke as that's where the smoke went, creating an early Autumn for the trees all the way down the Leeds Country Way bordering the field as the leaves were singed.

I don't know anybody in Horsforth or Rawdon who supports the building proposals. In a democracy, our thoughts should count. There is a real strength of feeling in the community that this **MUST NOT** go ahead and people have invested enormous amounts of their time and lives trying to prevent this. I have hardly seen my partner in the last couple of weeks as he has been toiling over the Rawdon Greenbelt Action Group website, and his contribution is small in comparison to those who set up the group, attend meetings, gather information, produce leaflets, organise marches and keep us all informed. They are all amazing!

When I first came to Leeds as an 18 year old looking at universities, I was struck by how green it was on the A65, my route in from Lancashire. Manchester seemed very built up and grey in comparison. I loved that, and still do about Leeds; and yes, it did affect my positive decision to come to a Leeds university and then settle with my family on the A65 corridor. Fly out of Leeds/Bradford Airport and you see how green and pleasant we are. People live here because they love the country feel we have while being so close to the city and all it has to offer. If we build all over our green spaces, we might as well just become part of the built up city; we would lose our historic identity. We **MUST** protect our green belt - it is something we should celebrate about Leeds, not destroy on the back of flawed statistics and a 'can't bothered to look at' (possibly more challenging) alternatives. If we lose our green belt, it will be an utter disgrace!

Yours faithfully,

Louisa Saunders