

PDH00191

29 West End Lane
Horsforth
Leeds
LS18 5JP

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT			
To	Action	Into	File
29 OCT 2015			
File Number			

October 27th 2015

LDF Publication Draft Consultation
Forward Planning and Consultation
Leonardo Building
2 Rossington Street
Leeds
LS2 8HD

Objection to Proposals to Build on Green Belt Sites Around Horsforth

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to lodge my strong objection to the current proposals to build houses on green belt sites around Horsforth. In making this objection I am responding to the Leeds Site Allocation Plans. I am particularly concerned about the following sites: -

- HG2-41 Fields south of the A65 between Horsforth roundabout and the crematorium; popularly known in the area as the strawberry fields.
- HG2-42 Fields to the south east of the junction of the Ring Road with the A65; at Broadway and Calverley Lane Horsforth.
- HG2-43 Fields to the east of the Ring Road approaching the roundabout with the A65; at Horsforth College Campus.
- HG2-12 Fields to the south of the A65 and east of the crematorium; at Woodlands Drive, Rawdon.
- HG3-2 HG3-3 and HG3-4 Fields to the north and south of the A65 in Rawdon.

All these sites are designated Green Belt sites and should be preserved as such. I wish to remind the Planning Authority of the core purposes of designating Green Belt land. The Government states clearly (in its National Planning Policy Framework) that Green Belt land serves the following five purposes: -

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

The NPPF goes on to make three further very important points: -

- The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of the Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence;
- Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES; and
- As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

At a personal level, I wish to make the following personal points about the proposed developments on these sites: -

1. There are NO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES that make it essential to build on these Green Belt sites. Several areas around Horsforth have already been used for development (including the Clariant site and Kirkstall Forge) and these are beginning to make an impact on the infrastructure in the area. The roads (particularly the A65 and the ring road in the area) are extremely busy and further development in and around Horsforth will serve only to exacerbate this situation.
2. It is impossible for Leeds City Council to state that they have exhausted all the "brown field" sites for development around the city and therefore have to make inroads into Green Belt land. There are significant development opportunities visible in many areas of Leeds (particularly the south) where brown field sites are available. Why is Leeds City Council ignoring these opportunities and concentrating on Green Belt sites?
3. By building on these sites, Leeds City Council would be contributing directly to the unrestricted urban sprawl of large built up areas. At the moment, there are pleasant and essential areas of green fields separating communities around Horsforth. I am worried that these further developments would directly increase the urban sprawl surrounding this community.
4. The neighbouring areas of Horsforth, Rawdon and Rodley would merge into one another if these developments go ahead. These Green Belt areas around Horsforth, contribute to the distinction between these communities; eradicate them and you will make these communities far less distinct.
5. There would be significant encroachment into the countryside would be made around Horsforth if these developments went ahead. The countryside around Horsforth plays a vital part in my life. I enjoy walking along ancient paths around Horsforth and into the neighbouring communities. The experience of walking in these areas of green space contribute significantly to my health and well being. Walking along "alley ways" and "ginnels" created between houses if these developments go ahead would not have such

beneficial effects on my health and well being - indeed it is likely to have a negative effect. Leeds City Council makes a great deal of their Leeds Country Way walk. The Leeds Country Way passes through these areas proposed for development. Could you call it the Leeds **Country** Way if it meandered between houses and across housing estate roads?

6. Horsforth has special and historic characteristics which deserve to be preserved. These developments would contribute significantly to the destruction of these characteristics. When I came to Horsforth, I was informed that the boundaries of Horsforth were made and established by streams, in open countryside. Those boundaries should be preserved - in deed reinforced - so that this area - and other areas within Leeds - maintains its special and historic characteristics. Otherwise we shall be forced to live in a characterless and sprawling urban "jungle".
7. Leeds City Council should be made to think again about these developments and concentrate on achieving the "recycling of derelict and other urban land". I am impressed by the way Leeds has used the brown land at Kirkstall and Clariant. I am also supportive of its intention to develop on the derelict site to the south of the Clariant development. These developments have actually improved the environment for me and others around Horsforth. These developments are perfect examples of what Leeds City Council should be doing. They should not be encroaching on Green Belt land until **all other possibilities** have been exhausted.

Finally, I have enjoyed walking in and around Horsforth; enjoying the green fields and countryside within easy access of my home. That has brought enormous benefits to me. It is very important that future generations of those living in Horsforth are able to enjoy the same experiences and benefit from those experiences. If these proposed developments go ahead, then it will make that experience for future generations impossible.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Smith