

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT			
To	Action	INFO	Forward
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LDF Publication Draft Consultation
 Forward Planning & Implementation Team
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3rd November 2015

Dear Sir

Response to Site Allocation Consultation

I wish to object to the proposed new site allocation and the proposed use of green belt land around Rawdon. You invited consultation and specifically invited comments under the following headings:

Have the plans been positively prepared? No

The proposals allocate too much housing and are unnecessary. The plan for Leeds over-provides for the amount of housing required according to latest housing need predictions.

There are many empty homes in Leeds and plenty of brown field land still available that could be developed. Much housing has already been built in the area and more green field land is already allocated for housing development e.g. Calverley just after Horsforth roundabout and near the Fire Station in Rawdon.

The housing site allocation proposals do not accord with Leeds' own local plan as several of the proposed development sites are already listed as Leeds Green belt and Strategic Green Infrastructure. The proposals therefore conflict with Leeds' published plan.

Are the plans justified? No

The use of green belt and so much green field land is outside the limits of Leeds City Council's own current local plan and Core Strategy. I see little point in creating a local plan, which was properly consulted on, subject to due democratic process, published and then shortly afterward deviate from it, and I shall reflect on this point when it comes to exercising my own democratic prerogative.

The plan alarms me as it fills-in the green belt and leads to a merger of Rawdon and Horsforth, particularly through the proposed development of sites HG2-41, HG3-2 and HG3-3. The distinct identity and culture of these places will be irreversibly damaged. If you join Rawdon to Horsforth, we will eventually vanish.

Furthermore these particular sites were identified as a "special landscape" and "strategic green infrastructure" in the current Core Strategy and should not be built on.

The Council appears to be demonstrating through these site allocations, that it is not doing enough to protect green belt or to protect the identities and culture of local places. Communities need green spaces for all sorts of reasons, e.g. children playing, recreation, health and well being, and older people keeping active.

Will the plans be effective? No

The proposed site allocations over-provide for the amount of housing required using the latest population estimates for Leeds. The type of housing is also important as what is needed, from experience of my own family and friends, is more affordable housing, 2 bedroom starter homes and socially owned rental properties, and not the 3-4 bedroom houses developers seem to wish to build in this area. The Council should provide appropriate safeguards for the community, and checks to the 'free market' to provide the housing that is really needed by the community by setting strict conditions on the number, size and type of housing to be developed.

In terms of infrastructure, the A65 is already horrendous at peak times and more development along it will only add to the difficulties of local people going about their normal lives travelling to jobs, shops, schools and doctors.

I am deeply concerned too about the environmental damage that would ensue from the further destruction of habitat, hedgerows and diversity. Sites HG3-4, HG3-2 and HG3-3, where I have walked, I have seen rare farmland birds which are already suffering decline.

I am also concerned about the protection of the cultural, and possibly archaeological, heritage of the area, and specifically, the emergence of the 'red stream' from an iron ore seam, that gives Rawdon (Red stream) its name, which is located adjacent to, or even within, site HG3-4.

Is the plan consistent with national policy? No

I believe the use of so much green belt and undeveloped green field land is contrary to National policy and outside the Council's own stated and published policy and strategy.

The proposals do not take sufficient account of the importance of green belt to check urban sprawl, to prevent the merger of neighbouring towns – exactly what is potentially proposed with site HG2-41, to safeguard the countryside, to preserve the setting and special character and to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. All of which are listed in the National Planning Policy Framework and all are repeated in the Council's own Core Strategy. Furthermore several of the sites are specifically listed as Leeds Green belt and Strategic Green Infrastructure in the Core Strategy.

The use of green belt to meet over-extended housing target numbers cannot be justified and would appear to contravene National planning policy framework.

Many thanks for the opportunity to comment. I hope you will take these views into account when considering the site allocations.

Yours Faithfully

Mrs Pamela Laurie