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DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT			
To	Action	Info	File
11 NOV 2015			
File Number			

10 Rawdon Road
Horsforth
LEEDS
LS18 5DZ

LDF Publication Draft Consultation
Forward Planning & Implementation
Leonardo Building
2 Rossington Street
LEEDS
LS2 8HD

Re: Leeds Site Allocation Plans – Formal Objection

Dear Sir/Madam

Having studied all available documentation I wish to make you aware of my strong objections with regard to the proposed development of the following Green Belt and Green Field sites:-

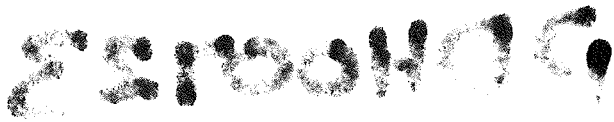
HG2-41 (4240) – Fields South of A65 from Horsforth Roundabout to the Crematorium
HG2-42 (1016) – Fields at Broadway and Calverley Lane, Horsforth
HG2-43 (5009) – Fields at Horsforth College Campus
HG2-12 (4254) – Fields at Woodlands Drive

I am a local resident living very close to the above mentioned sites and I am seriously concerned that the proposed developments will have a profound negative impact on my wellbeing and standard of living. One of the principal reasons why I bought my house was that it overlooks Green Belt land.

My specific objections are as follows:-

1 – The proposals are inconsistent with National Policy Planning Framework:-

- a) NPPF states that the target level of housing development within the plans should be capped in line with the capacity of Brown Field sites to accommodate it, in order to protect Green Belt. The current plans significantly exceed this capacity, resulting in the permanent and unnecessary destruction of Green Belt, which must be protected. i.e. *INADEQUATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINT*.
- b) NPPF states that Green Belt is to be protected and requires “exceptional” circumstances to be built on. There appears to be nothing exceptional about the council’s plans to build on Green Belt land to meet their current housing target. The council’s adoption of the self imposed Core Housing Strategy cannot be considered to be exceptional circumstances, but is merely part of their scheduled housing policy plan. i.e. *NON-EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE*
- c) NPPF states that Brown Field sites must be prioritised over the development of Green Field and Green Belt, but these plans offer up Green Belt in advance. Some sites, such as HG-42 are scheduled for Phase 1, in advance of many Brown Field sites which are allocated for housing. The Green Belt allocated for housing has been selected prior to all available Brown Field land available across the region, which must be included first in the site allocation plan. i.e. *PRIORITISATION OF GREEN BELT OVER BROWN FIELD*
- d) NPPF states that the merging of communities should be prevented. However, development of the above Green Belt sites will lose the individual identities currently seen between the areas in which they are located. These sites currently act as the dividing space between the communities of Horsforth, Rawdon and Rodley. The



urban sprawl resulting from over 1000 new houses will result in a loss of individual identity. i.e. – *LOSS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITY*

- e) NPPF states that infrastructure must come first, but I can see no evidence of any of this in advance of the proposed housing developments. For example, there are no plans to develop new healthcare on the back of what will be a substantial population increase. Similarly, there are only very nominal plans to set aside some of the land for education, but there is no schedule of timed completion and no consideration as to who would fund the building of a school on this land. As happens so often in these situations, the probability is that this would not be progressed due to “economic viability” resulting in the land being released to the developer so that they can build yet more houses (and make more profit). i.e. *LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE*

2 – The proposals are inconsistent with Leeds Development Plan Policies

- a) I do not believe that the need for large scale affordable housing or single owner properties will be fulfilled by developing Green Belt land in semi-rural areas. This should be built on existing Brown Field land in areas which need urban regeneration and investment, the likes of which have been seen in major cities throughout the UK. The sites listed above are in areas which command substantial property values starting in the region of £325,000 (Horsforth Vale) and this can't possibly be part of a plan which prioritises affordable housing. The small percentage set aside for affordable housing in these areas comes nowhere near the target of 35% and goes no way to alleviating the shortage of affordable housing. i.e. *LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING*
- b) I believe that the housing target which appears to be driving a desire to develop Green Belt land is flawed. It seems to be based on a figure of 66,000 properties whereas a revised figure of 46,000 homes is suggested by the Office of National Statistics 2014 figures. i.e. *LEEDS DENIAL OF TRUE HOUSING ASSESSMENT NEED*
- c) In order to prevent the unnecessary permanent destruction of Green Belt, Leeds current plan to re-assess the housing target needs to be put in place before the site allocation plans are progressed and not afterwards as is currently planned. I.e. *LEEDS IS DELAYING THE NEED TO RE-ASSESS THE HOUSING TARGET*
- d) Leeds core strategy identifies a significant need for single owner occupancy housing and this will not be met by developing the above sites. There is little doubt that would be developers will opt to build 3 and 4 bedroom properties which sell for the highest profits – again see Horsforth Vale. i.e. *UNSUITABILITY FOR SINGLE OCCUPANCY*

3 – The proposals will have a negative impact on Highway Safety and Traffic

- a) Three of the above sites are located on a section of the Ring Road and the A65. The 4th, HG2-12, is only a short distance away on the A65. These sections of road are one of the most congested and dangerous in Leeds. The addition of over 1,000 more houses which will all have to use these sections of road can only lead to more congestion and accidents. i.e. *SAFETY IS COMPROMISED*
- b) The adjoining section of Ring Road, A6120, leading from the sections of road mentioned is single carriageway due to the constraints of three bridges over the railway, canal and River Aire. This does not provide the infrastructure to cope with the extra housing. i.e. *INABILITY TO COPE WITH FURTHER TRAFFIC INCREASES*

4 – The proposals ignore Conservation of the Natural Environment

- a) These 4 sites are host to crested newts, various species of bats, owls, hawks, wild deer, badgers and other wildlife which will not survive the proposed development. Whilst some token provision has been made for selected species, most are not even noted or recognised in the environmental impact assessments which have been conducted. i.e. *DESTRUCTION OF HABITATS*
- b) These 4 sites provide a continuous chain of Green Belt along the River Aire Valley and this allows for wildlife to migrate and reside across the region. The destruction of these Green Belt sites will lead to the isolation of wildlife leading to their eventual demise from the area. i.e. *ISOLATION OF WILDLIFE*
- c) Site HG2-41 is immediately opposite my house. It is used as agricultural land and also as Pick Your Own fruit fields. During the fruit picking season the fields are busy

with people from the local community taking the opportunity to connect with the natural environment. Hundreds of families, mostly with small children, can be seen picking raspberries and strawberries in the fresh air. Also, leading through this site is Bar Lane, a public bridleway which I and many others use regularly as a means of quickly getting into the countryside. In a matter of moments, the busy A65 is forgotten and you are in open countryside with the marvellous feeling that provides. Whilst the plans make provision for retention of this thoroughfare, the walk through a housing estate would be nothing like the feeling of being in open agricultural land so close to the urban area. i.e. *REMOVAL OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNTRYSIDE*

5 – Negative Effect on the Landscape

- a) The fields comprising site HG2-41 are an integral part of the landscape of Horsforth and Rawdon. The current view from the A65 provides a wide vista of the natural landscape stretching through the Aire Valley right up towards the distant hills of Shipley Glen. If developed, this connection which we local people have will be lost forever. Also, many people who regularly travel the A65 really appreciate the open green space which, for those travelling into Leeds, is the last bit of Green Belt before they enter the city sprawl. Similarly, in the opposite direction, it is the first bit of green space to be seen when emerging from the city centre 5 miles away. i.e. *DESTRUCTION OF NATURAL VIEWS*

6 – Lack of Co-operation with Neighbouring Councils

- b) Satellite towns which neighbour Leeds and accommodate a large percentage of the working population of Leeds contain substantial areas of derelict Brown Field sites which are undeveloped. These areas in Bradford, Halifax and Wakefield should first accommodate the excess housing needs before Green Belt is forfeited in Leeds. i.e. *NO COHERENT REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION OR CO-OPERATION*

7 – Unsuitability of Consultation Process

- a) The council's consultation feedback website does not allow for the objections to Green Belt development across the whole of Leeds. The method is divisive in that it forces users to focus only on sites on an individual field by field basis, thus making comment on overall policy an impossible task. i.e. *WEB SITE OBSTRUCTIVENESS*
- b) Nowhere in the council's published documentation is there a clear list of all the Green Belt sites which are nominated for development. They are hidden amongst a wide array of all the other sites making them inaccessible to the public. i.e. *LIMITING ACCESS TO INFORMATION*
- c) There have been no letters sent to households across Leeds to advise of the council's exhibition in the Grand Hall of the Civic Centre. Similarly there has been no TV campaign, no radio campaign, no social media or other method of communication. Therefore, the vast majority of the populace of Leeds have not been given the opportunity to comment on these important issues which affect them. I believe that less than 25 people attended the exhibition due to lack of information. i.e. *LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS*

As you will see from my comprehensive observations, I have major concerns about the proposals and I sincerely hope that you will act on my behalf and reject the progression of these Green Belt sites within the development proposals. Please keep me informed of opportunities to further present my objections to the planning panel, the public examinations, the submission of plans and potential outcome of the review.

Yours sincerely

Mr M V Darlow
8th November 2015

