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DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT			
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7 West End Rise
Horsforth
Leeds LS18 5 JL

11th November 2015

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

Re LSAP & AVLAAP objections

Dear Sirs,

1. I am writing in response to the planning consultation about housing development in the Horsforth area. I object to

HG 2-41 (777 houses)

HG 2-43 (206 houses)

HG 2-12 (130 houses)

HG 3-2, 3-3, 3-4 (246 houses – reserved)

2. The proposals are more than arguably inconsistent with a number of the bases of the National Policy Planning Framework, viz

1) Capping of development in line with the capacity of brownfield sites (see Brandon Lewis' answer to PQ 3 Feb 2015). There may not be much brownfield left around here (most of it is in the process of being covered in housing) but there is an awful lot in Bradford and Wakefield – maybe it's time we talked to others in the area? With Clariant and Kirkstall Forge and Woodside Quarry I think this area has done its bit recently for Leeds housing.

2) NPPF requires exceptional circumstances to override the protection of greenfield. What exactly are these? Not the figures since the projections from the 2011 census are well down on those of 2008, when the process was put in train. Or is the government's guesstimate of 10 million more people in 20 years? This is a controversial matter largely connected with migration policy and it hardly seems good planning for Leeds to be the first to jump in to do its best.

3) Prevention of urban sprawl and merging of communities. These proposals would more or less run together Horsforth and Rawdon (and Rodley). We are well on the way to a deep ribbon development between Leeds and Wharfedale. This happened years ago to the south between Leeds and Bradford and the result is not pretty, to say the least.

4) Protection of the natural and visual environment – I take this up in more detail in 4 below.

3. On a purely practical level the proposals are blind to the problem of the A65. A large number of houses are built/building further west in Bradford's area and the addition of 1,200 more here adjacent to the road will bring it all to a halt. Tinkering with the junction of the A6120 (which took an inordinate time) has made little difference. The road is quite simply saturated and the general lie of the land renders it unimprovable except by unimaginably damaging work. While the addition of two stations on the Leeds-Ilkley/Shipley line is welcome the impact will be limited, simply because most people do not fit the planner's norm of commuting straight in central Leeds.

4. I now return to 2 4) above. I object fundamentally to the impact on the green belt and the natural environment of Horsforth. Some years ago I drove a French colleague on his first visit down from the airport,¹ past the golf course and my house and down into the valley. His comment was "ville en campagne" – a town in the country. The long strip of land south of the A65 is a critical part of the attractiveness of the Horsforth environment, whether viewed from north or south. It is all green belt and almost all of it was identified by **you** not long ago as "Strategic Green Infrastructure". Even comparatively small areas of countryside have enormous importance when looked at from a local point of view. Ironically, there is an example of a "lucky escape" cheek by jowl with the proposed developments – the Leeds/Liverpool Canal. In the 50s and 60s it was in terminal decline and derelict in parts. It was quite common planning orthodoxy in those days that the things should be filled in. The Glasgow Herald of 24 February 1959 reported proposals to fill in the Forth-Clyde canal in north Glasgow on grounds of road development and public safety (!). This was never done because Glasgow could not get a subsidy from London and the whole thing was refurbished and reopened as a leisure asset in 2001 at a cost of £79 millions. A government report in the 1950s concluded that there could never be any demand for housing near waterways. Well, just take a walk from the Royal Armouries to, say, Baildon to see how accurate that prediction was. Nowadays I think it is generally agreed that the Leeds-Liverpool is a great asset to the city, providing a "green lung" out to the west and giving a real sense of the "ville en campagne" the Frenchman spoke of. I know you are not proposing filling the canal but my point is that once you have lost these things they are gone forever and that applies just as much to the environment of south Horsforth.

5. Finally I wish to say that the website on which the consultation process is based (I can find no other permanent method of communication to the public at all) is dreadful – pursuing the individual sites has involved hours of work. A dismal example of public service.

WVH Rogers

¹ If those with delusions of grandeur in charge of LBA have their way the upper end of this will be ruined, too. But this is not part of the current consultation so I say no more.