

# PDH 01592

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK			
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## **Local Development Framework Publication Draft Consultation**

I've been urged, through a number of emails sent to me by Leeds City Council, through local publicity campaigns headed by the Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum, through my constituency MP and others, to have my say on, take part in, the public consultation exercise on the *Local Development Framework Publication Draft Consultation*.

At its heart, the Core Strategy of the Framework has the ambition to build 66,000 new homes in Leeds by the year 2028, with up to 5,000 of those homes allocated to my community, around my town of Garforth. Those numbers arise out of a single independent consultancy study commissioned by Leeds City Council - the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

I've attempted to engage with and understand all of the aspects of the Local Development Framework in order to assist me in making a meaningful contribution to the consultation exercise. I've listened to and read the opinions of ordinary people and 'activists' along the way. In doing so I've concluded that there is no possible way for me to 'bottom out' my understanding of the 'grand plan' - because I don't have a degree in the workings of local government, the politics of local government and or the interactions between local and national government.

Furthermore I've found myself drowning in an alphabet soup of acronyms and plot numbers, and become bewildered by the verbal diarrhoea and jargon of the quasi legal public documents set before me - all of which it seems to me are written by people who write for themselves using a political language and vagueness of style that citizens like me are unable, reasonably, to relate to.

In addition, I've lost count of the endless number of support documents that are supposed to help and inform, each of them with their own flow chart diagrams that only mean things to the consultant breed of people who put them together in the first place.

I've come to realise that there's rivalry and party politics mixed together when it comes to the setting of boundaries and the numbers of houses to be built and the green spaces to be provided within each area. The role of, or the absence of, Parish

and Town Councils particularly in respect of the disbursement of funds raised from house developers by something called the Civil Infrastructure Levy raises its own mistrust and envies.

I've come to understand that it's a very 'raw beast' we're all dealing with when it comes to homes, housing developers and housing developments - all based on a single LCC commissioned SHMA forecast that speculates on population increase more than a decade ahead. It's not so much a housing crisis as a people crisis.

And I've come to realise there are a lot of opinions 'out there' that are biased, prejudiced and skewed by false information, lack of knowledge, guesswork and seemingly vested interest.

So, my submission, my contribution to this consultation, is a quite simple and serious message.

- Before any future housing plans and development, on the scale proposed for the Garforth area, are contemplated then the neglected infrastructure needs of the town as it exists today must first be addressed and managed. A house building moratorium in other words until the infrastructure deficit laid down over decades has been subject to remedy.
- The geographical nature of the town, with a simple one road high street already serving an overlarge population with housing estates crammed into a triangular wedge formed by the main roads of A 63 and A 642 is not viable for further development without infrastructure upgrade. It cannot take any more population increase.
- I don't have the benefit of full blooded surveys to illustrate the point in any scientific way, but empirical observations and discussion with resident groups will identify problems with:
  - traffic, full to capacity main and estate roads, accident black spots, and grid lock from any road work restrictions or road traffic incidents
  - public transport with outdated rolling stock in this Northern Powerhouse,
  - adequate parking places anywhere in the town, but particularly for park and rail ride travellers,
  - education with insufficient schools and school places for the total catchment area,
  - medical health and welfare provision with threats of clinic closure,
  - flooding problems from old worn out sewers and inadequacies in land drainage,
  - lack of immediate free green space for the town's population size
- It is incumbent upon the local authority to put right the infrastructure wrongs brought about by overpopulating this area of Leeds over the years of this particular resident. To do anything less would be an abrogation of civic and public servant responsibility.