

Heslington Parish Council

Response to the City of York Local Plan: Pre-Publication Draft (Regulation 18 Consultation September 17)

Heslington Parish Council (HPC) commented on the City of York Local Plan Preferred options on 29th July 2013.

HPC made further comments on the York Local Plan: Further Sites proposal on 16th July 2014

HPC made further comments on York Local Plan: Preferred Sites 16th September 2016

HPC make further comments on the 4 sites which directly affect Heslington Parish:

1. Proposal ST 15 Land to the West of Elvington Lane

Objection

HPC welcome the reduction in the size of the largest proposed site in the Plan and are pleased that CYC Executive members have resisted the predictable pressure from developers to vary site allocation boundaries and take further Green Belt.

This position must continue.

HPC also welcome the fact that this proposal is partly on brown field though there is still more that could be used and reduce the taking of Green Belt.

However due to its very large size, 159 ha, and its associated infrastructure, HPC consider that for development of this scale, some 3339 houses, will have a major urbanising impact on the rural open countryside and it is essential part of the Green Belt function around the city.

It will have a severe adverse impact on the area: the main transport would be private car and public transport and the main access roads in the area are already highly congested.

The Tilmire SSSI site is less than a mile away and the ecological impacts from: forms of pollution, increased footfall activity, pet predation, would be severe.

HPC are very concerned as details of road connections, etc at a proposed new junction to A64/ University remain unclear and will need to “commandeer” further productive land.

If this allocation were to be approved then its use and access must be conditioned so that

Common Lane, Long Lane and Langwith Stray must not handle any vehicular or pedestrian traffic from the site allowing the continuation for local residents/farmers of “free” existing access.

Ox Close Lane must be similarly protected for local residents.

Any access road to A64 is located to the east, away from the Tilmire SSSI, and should incorporated cycling and pedestrian facilities.

2. Proposal OS 10 New Openspace

Objection

HPC are concerned that because of ST 15's close proximity to the Tilmire SSSI a significant requirement for ecological mitigation takes a further 139.25ha of productive Green Belt.

This farmed area presently surrounds the Tilmire SSSI, giving it the protection with no public access to the area. Any change to that position will have a detrimental effect on the Tilmire as well as to a further three farming, family businesses.

If this allocation were to be approved then its use and access must be conditioned so that

Openspace must be retained as farmed agriculture land.

No direct public access from ST15

No infrastructure

3. Proposal ST 27 University of York expansion site

Objection

HPC are pleased that CYC Executive Members have resisted the predictable pressure from UoY to take further Green Belt and encroach west towards the village from ST27.

This proposal covers 65ha of good agricultural land currently classified as Green Belt and which forms a vital part of the attractive setting of the city of York and of Heslington village. Heslington still preserves its unique village character despite great pressures from the surrounding expansion of the university. A great deal of care was taken to preserve the character of Heslington and its setting in Green Belt by the creation of a buffer zone between the village and the campus and the creation of a barrier between the campus and the access to the village via Low Lane. This was achieved by careful landscaping of the lakes. Its current use as agricultural land complements the undoubted high environmental status of the university lake and the ground-nesting habitat alongside the lake. This will be lost if the land is developed. The Inspector in his report from the Public Inquiry for the current University expansion particularly comments that the lake and wetland area will provide a positive limit to built development to the south of the Heslington East site.

If this allocation were to be approved then its use and access must be conditioned so that:

There should be no direct vehicular or pedestrian access from the site, when developed, into the village other than via Field Lane.

If access from a new road from ST15 connects with ST27 Campus East then no “rat run” opportunity should be available that allows traffic through to Heslington village.

The Local Plan should stipulate that the land can only be developed for the university’s own academic purposes, and not be designated as general development land.

All existing public routes and Rights of Way should be retained in any completed development

4. Proposal H56 Land adjacent to Hull Road

Qualified Support

The comments made by HPC in support of this proposal still apply.

If this allocation were to be approved then its use and access must be conditioned so that:

The site provides good family accommodation and affordable housing for people of all ages.

The continued preservation of the mature trees around the site.

5. General

HPC would like to see the cumulative traffic flow impacts from these local developments - ST15, ST27, H56 and the ST4 analysed by CYC/Developers to evidence that there will be no adverse traffic congestion for Hull Road, Field Lane, University Road and Heslington Lane.

Heslington Parish Council 13th November 2017