

BRADFORD LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY

COUNCILLOR RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE THORNTON & ALLERTON WARD

Councillor [REDACTED] Sykes (Thornton & Allerton Ward)

A number of meetings have been held with the local residents of the Thornton & Allerton Ward which also incorporates the Sandy Lane Village and the consistent responses and concerns about the Local Development Framework are detailed as follows:

It is acknowledged that the population of the District may rise and Housing Development may be required, although definitive evidence of the numbers involved is sadly lacking.

It is acknowledged that in the event that this occurs, then the Council needs to plan for this requirement.

Local residents do not oppose development in principle and do appreciate the difficulty that the Council will have in maintaining a 5 year supply of land for Development but the major concern is the use of the Green Belt or existing Green Fields to achieve their objectives and the lack of an appropriate road infrastructure to support many such developments.

In addition, it is true that Section 106 agreements between the Council and possible Developers can be agreed to address Educational needs, but with local schools already full, it is likely that the cost of this additional educational provision will be high and perhaps prohibitive for the Developers.

Local Dentists and Doctors lists are already full and this issue will require serious consideration.

There are significant issues in relation to the sustainability of the Drainage systems in many of the proposed locations and together with Environmental, Heritage, Listed Buildings, Wild Life protection, and Archaeology, their suitability is questionable in terms of any proposed development for any significant numbers of houses.

A key question that currently remains unanswered is that of sustainability.

What is the definition of sustainable development? Does it infer adequate local facilities, a road infrastructure that can cope with intensified traffic, availability of school places (Primary & Secondary), and sufficiency of doctors/dentist surgeries?

The real issue here is that the Local Development Plan being prepared by the Council seeks to identify land to be developed over the next 15 years and will include many of the green fields on the edge of the Thornton & Allerton Ward, including Sandy Lane and a concern is that the direction being taken exposes the City and the District to the continuing deterioration of the many undeveloped brown field sites as the Developers

wait patiently for the more attractive and profitable green field sites to become available.

Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities are expected to identify at least five years of housing land supply. Taking current permissions, existing housing schemes, significant numbers of “empty houses”, and already identified brown field sites the City has significantly in excess of that five year supply requirement.

Not only is there no need to identify green field sites, let alone release further land from the Green Belt, but such a strategy will result in regeneration areas within the main urban areas being neglected while developers queue up for the more profitable green field sites. A couple of sites falling into this category being the derelict Seabrooks Crisp factory in Allerton and the previous Soho Works site further towards the City but still just about in Allerton, which already has planning permission.

The proposals for this part of the District will result in the demise of the local villages since they are currently separated by green fields and the plans will simply join them all to become what is known as “Urban Sprawl”. The village identities of Thornton, Allerton, Sandy Lane, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Harden, Harecroft, Ryecroft, and indeed Denholme will be lost and future generations will no longer have that rich legacy of village life to enjoy.

In summary the following issues need to be considered and certain questions answered:

1. The brown field sites need to be utilised before any intrusion on the green fields or green belt.
2. Empty houses across the district need to be identified and brought back into use.
3. Existing planning permissions need to be brought forward for completion.
4. Traffic Infrastructure needs will require substantial and detailed investigation.
5. The need for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems needs to be properly investigated and evaluated.
6. School places are already insufficient for current needs.
7. All the Doctors/Dentists in this area have long waiting lists.
8. This consultation process has been seriously flawed by the sheer complexity of the documents which purport to support the process. The General Public are really unable to fully understand the reality of what is going here, but when decisions are finally made and 10 years from now when they raise objections they will be told in no uncertain manner that the principles of development were agreed in 2012/13 and that had been the time to raise any objections.
9. Village identities must be retained.
10. Why does this Local Development need to identify land for the next 15 years?
11. What pressure can be exerted on developers to bring forward their housing programmes in line with current permissions?
12. How many empty houses have been identified?
13. If it is recognised that in the words used in the Council documents “the topography of the land in the settlement (Thornton) and narrow roads to the

north side of the villages may constrain development to the long term period of the trajectory”, then why are those sites even being considered?

14. The population expansion predictions need to be independently validated.
15. NO green fields or use of Green Belt land should be allocated at this stage in the plan.
16. Further meaningful consultation should take place up to the point at which land allocations are proposed.

Residents are objecting to any proposed development on the following sites:

TH/001	Greenfield Site
TH/002	Greenfield Site
TH/003	Greenfield Site
TH/004	Greenfield Site
TH/005	Greenfield Site
TH/006	Greenfield Site
TH/007	Greenfield Site
TH/008	Greenfield Site
TH/009	Greenfield Site
TH/010	Mixture
TH/011	Greenfield Site
TH/013	Greenfield Site
TH/014	Greenfield Site
NW/015	Greenfield Site
NW/016	Greenfield Site
NW/017	Greenfield Site
NW/018	Greenfield Site
NW/019	Greenfield Site
NW/020	Greenfield Site
NW/021	Greenfield Site
NW/022	Greenfield Site
NW/023	Greenfield Site
NW/024	Greenfield Site
NW/025	Greenfield Site
NW/026	Greenfield Site
NW/027	Greenfield Site – now with Village Green Status
NW/034	Mixture
NW/039	Greenfield Site

It is very clear that Developers interest in developing brown field sites is limited by their ability to maximise profit Margins in these locations, much preferring to build on the green belt or available green fields so specific policies are required to support the regeneration of currently unviable brown field sites. The release of Greenfield sites and any intrusion into the Green Belt must be linked to the delivery of regeneration within the inner city.

It is very clear that proposals for Green Belt releases are unclear and fail to set out the “exceptional circumstances” needed to justify a release.

Policies in HO3 do not set out the basis for any local review of the Green Belt especially in areas of environmental or historical sensitivity and specific policies are needed to meet NPPF policy on Green Belt reviews.

These issues are particularly relevant to the Thornton & Allerton Ward which I represent since the Ward boundaries are all a combination of Green Fields, Pennine moorland, and the Green Belt, all acting as a “Green” buffer zone with the villages of Wilsden, Cullingworth, and Denholme.