

YORK LOCAL PLAN
EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC
Response to Inspector’s Matters, Issues and Questions
Made on Behalf of Barratt and David Wilson Homes

Matter 1 – Legal requirements

Introduction

- 1.1 These responses are made on behalf of Barratt and David Wilson Homes (Yorkshire East), hereafter referred to as our Client. Our Client is the country’s largest housebuilder and has an excellent delivery record nationally and locally in the region.
- 1.2 Our Client has a significant number of land holdings within and around York and has made representations throughout the CYCLP consultation process at all stages. In summary and for clarity the following is a list of our Client’s interests.

Site Address	Site Reference	CYCLP Area	CYCLP 2013 Capacity (BDWH control)	CYCLP 2016 Capacity (BDWH control)
Manor Heath, Copmanthorpe	ST12	1	250	0
Moor Lane, Copmanthorpe	H29	1	65	88
Riverside Gardens, Elvington	SF10	2	0	0
Land to the West of Elvington Lane	ST15	2	4,680	0
Eastfield Lane, Dunnington	H31	3	75	84
Metcalfe Lane, Osbaldwick	ST7	4	750	35
New Lane, Huntington	ST11	4	360	0
North of Monks Cross	ST8	6	35	35
North of Haxby	ST9	6	375	375
North of Clifton Moor	ST14	6	750	500

Question 1.7 - Has the Plan's formulation been based on a sound process of sustainability appraisal and testing of reasonable alternatives, and is the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) [CD009, CD010 & CD011] adequate?

- 1.3 The Council's plan has assessed the policies in the plan and the proposed allocations, with alternative sites also assessed in Appendix H and I of the SA.
- 1.4 Appendix I considers the draft allocations and alternative schemes on those sites. Our Client has interest in Site ST7 (Metcalfe Lane) and ST14 (Land west of Wiggington Road). In both instances Our Client believes that the sites could and should be increased in size, with either larger allocations or areas of safeguarded land.
- 1.5 Appendix I considers a number of alternatives for the site, noting adverse scores of the larger sites, simply based on their size. These amended scores are not based on evidence and simply confirm a view that larger sites would have an impact on placemaking and add more traffic to the roads.
- 1.6 The assessment does however provide no benefits to increasing the level of homes, such as access to homes, provision of more onsite facilities, improved public transport provision from a larger scale development or improved levels of green space.
- 1.7 Given the Council rely on one if not both of these sites as being able to provide homes beyond the plan period, the boundaries and scale should be carefully considered as they are not bound by the level of homes needed in this plan period. On this basis, the SA as drafted does not preclude the larger sites, in the case of Metcalfe Lane shows no major differences in the different schemes and in both cases could justify a larger site, that could enable delivery of homes in the next plan period.
- 1.8 Two of our Client's sites were previously included as housing allocations at New Lane, Huntington and Manor Heath, Copmanthorpe. Both of these sites were removed, following a reduction in the level of homes by the Council. Prior to that the sites have been assessed and considered suitable, with regards to the site assessment and the SA.
- 1.9 The Council's decision to reduce the level of homes resulted in the number of allocations being reduced, however this was not based on any evidence or assessment against the policies, spatial strategy, Green Belt purposes or the SA. At this stage, the impact of removing sites and those sites chosen should have been removed.
- 1.10 Appendix H includes an assessment of sites that were dismissed and their sustainability credentials. It is not possible to make a direct comparison between sites which have been allocated as strategic sites and those which have not due to having different assessment criteria.

- 1.11 For example, the non-allocated sites have a combined assessment for SAO5 and SAO6, whereas the allocated Strategic sites have a separate assessment for each criterion. In addition, no assessment of SAO11 is undertaken.
- 1.12 Furthermore, some of the assessment criteria for the allocated strategic sites have two ratings e.g. SAO2, SAO3, SAO6, SAO7, SAO8, SAO12, SAO14 and SAO15. It is not clear why this has been undertaken and logic would be that it is split between proposed uses as some of the strategic sites are mixed-use i.e. one rating relates to the housing element, one relates to employment. However, this isn't related in the site assessment criteria table 5.4, where for example, SAO2, SAO8, SAO12, SAO14 and SAO15 do not differentiate between different uses.
- 1.13 We would therefore question the validity of the Sustainability Appraisal and its robustness as an evidence base for determining the most suitable and sustainable sites to take forward as proposed housing allocations.
- 1.14 Barratt and David Wilson Homes have promoted a number of sites through every stage of the emerging Local Plan, some of which have not been allocated and it is considered that they have not been considered correctly.
- 1.15 In assessing New Lane Huntington only one of the objectives has the lowest possible rating, SAO9 (use land resources efficiently and safeguard their quality). A site is assessed if it is greenfield and has an agricultural land classification of either 1, 2 or 3. We would question the suitability of this approach as grade 3 land is split into grade 3a and 3b, with only land being 3a and above being classed as best and most versatile land. As such, land which is 3b will in effect be rated unfairly based on the Council's approach, as it cannot be separated out.
- 1.16 Furthermore, the site has been incorrectly assessed in respect of SAO13. The entirety of the site is FZ1 and should therefore have been scored as 0 rather than -.
- 1.17 If the above assessment is converted into a numerical score using a range of scores from -2 to 2 the site performs very well when compared to allocated sites
- 1.18 Using this approach, the site would score +4. However, as noted above we do believe that the assessment of SAO4 is flawed and the site should score positively as it will help improve the local economy through job creation. Taking the above error regarding SAO13 into account, the site should be assessed as +5 as a minimum.

- 1.19 As with New Lane, Huntington, Manor Heath in Copmanthorpe only has one of the objectives scoring the lowest possible rating – SAO9, on the basis that it is a greenfield site with an agricultural land classification of either 1, 2 or 3.
- 1.20 We would dispute the Council’s assessment of the site regarding SAO3 as the settlement of Copmanthorpe has a primary school (Copmanthorpe Primary School), a nursery (Child Care Centre) and higher education facility (Askham Bryan College). We are unable to locate any information as to how the SA assess ‘access to’ education facilities, however, all three of the above mentioned facilities are within 1km of the proposed site. As such, rather than scoring – the site should have been assessed as ++.
- 1.21 In terms of SAO14 and SAO15 these are assessed on the basis of the findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment, which on the face of it is a reasonable approach to take. However, in the case of this site, the negative findings are questionable.
- 1.22 For example, the site receives a rating of – on the following grounds, “although Askham Bryan College is not a “village”, as such, nonetheless, it is a sizeable development in the open countryside to the west of the City and the development of this site would substantially reduce the current gap between Copmanthorpe and the large assortment of buildings to its north-west around the College”.
- 1.23 It is acknowledged within the above response that the development of the site would not lead to the coalescence of two settlements, the fact the gap between Copmanthorpe and Askham Bryan College would reduce is not of relevance and does not impact upon the sustainability of the development. As such, the site should not have received a negative rating on this SA objective.
- 1.24 The above extract from the Heritage Impact Assessment, concludes that Character Element 6.7 would be harmed. Character Element 6.7 is classed as ‘relationship of the historic city of York to the surrounding villages’. Askham Bryan College is not a village and to state otherwise is a significant flaw, particularly as it has led to a negative score. There would be no landscape or heritage harm as a result of the development of this site.
- 1.25 Using our scoring system above this site would have scored +1 based on the Council’s assessment. However, in our view the site should have score +6.
- 1.26 As noted above it is difficult to make a direct comparison between the non-allocation BDWH sites and the proposed strategic allocations, because they have not been assessed in the same way. However, as per our previous representations, the sites at New Lane, Huntington and Manor Heath, Copmanthorpe, score as well as, or more favourably than sites which have been taken forward as proposed allocations.