

Ref application P/15/00080/FU Leeds Road, Bramhope

Bramhope & Carlton Parish Council wishes to object to this application:

1. Brown Field Sites First Policy

Leeds City Council promotes a policy of 'brown field sites first' (i.e. prioritises the use of previously developed land) as well as the protection of green belt land. The application site is clearly not brown field (nor is it green belt land). However the site in question has remained undeveloped throughout history. It provides both an amenity and a thoroughfare for the local community which once gone cannot be replaced.

2. Impact on Bramhope Conservation Area.

Development should only be permitted within a conservation area (CA) if it enhances the CA and makes a positive contribution towards it. This proposal if permitted would have the opposite effect of this requirement.

Character Area 5 of the Bramhope Conservation Area Appraisal (BCAA) states that *'the majority of the houses are individually plot built and have a very positive impact on Bramhope.... Characterised by large front and back gardens with wide space between plots.... Ornate stone detailing is present on many of the properties.... Mature trees should be retained where present. These houses are characterised as being 'positive buildings' within the CA. They possess variety in terms of individual design, appearance and elevational treatment including ridge and eaves heights and roofing materials. There is variety in the form and detailing of adjacent properties within the CA including elements such as windows and bay windows, entrance porches and canopies and variety in stone detailing'*.

The applicant has amended the design of the original dwellings from the extremely plain, drab, mundane & repetitive earlier proposals to the current design which unfortunately remains unworthy of its conservation area status. The proposed dwellings are more reflective of the houses within the BCAA identified as NOT being positive buildings within the CA.

The applicants design appraisal states that the proposed development will 'conserve the architectural and historic significance of the Bramhope CA'. Clearly if permitted this would not be the case.

The Design and Access Statement states in item 10 Conclusion that:-

'This (development) is a positive improvement to the appearance of this highly desirable conservation area transforming the site of overgrown scrubland into residential properties which reflect and reinforce local character and quality.'

This is incorrect as the application site was included in the Conservation Area specifically for its contribution to the area as attractive open green amenity space within the village. To build 4 houses on the land would negate its desired function completely.

The Design and Access Statement also states that:-

'The properties have been designed with great consideration to layout & appearance with sensitivity to neighbouring properties & the conservation being paramount to the design process.'

This statement is inaccurate. The only significant change to the design of the dwellings from the previously rejected application is in elevational treatment where the designer has simply changed the style of the 'wallpaper' applied to the previous elevations. The elevational treatment, as with the original proposals, lacks integrity. The elevations are a crude pastiche of properties from the locality. There is no coherent design approach other than to copy existing elevations of nearby houses. The opportunity to enhance the conservation area with a development of quality & character (which is a basic premise of conservation area status) has been lost to a 'more of the same' approach - which in fact achieves much, much less.

3. Loss of habitat

The application site forms part of a larger green corridor which abuts the A660 Leeds Road. It provides landscaped amenity land which the applicant describes as having 'no ecological use'. Clearly this can't be correct - there is both flora and fauna on the site. The site contains a drainage ditch trees and shrubs - it is home to birds, insects, frogs and toads. It may not have a high ecological value but cannot be described as having 'no ecological use'.

4. Current condition of Site

The applicant describes the site as being 'enclosed by OSB boarding' and that 'this boarding is unsympathetic to the character of Bramhope and is an incongruous feature'. This boarding was erected by the land owner (who might be quite happy for it to be unsightly if it assists the current planning application). The boundary and right of way could have easily been surrounded by sympathetic open fencing.

5. Concerns over correct demarcation of site boundaries

It has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council by residents of Wynmore Drive, whose properties back onto the drainage ditch, that they dispute the accuracy/legality of the red line shown on the site plan and block plan within the application (refs 12-005/A(10)-100 and 101). They claim to own up to the centre of the ditch or in some cases to the 'far side'. Each property has a gate giving access to the land and in some cases a bridge over the ditch. Whilst this does not prove ownership it would suggest that there may be a case and that the applicant should be requested to prove title to all of the land within the red line

because if he does not own all of the land and he has not served notice on the owners then we believe that the application is invalid.

6. Loss of trees

We note that the applicant has corrected the inaccuracies of the original site plan with regard to trees but would point out further inaccuracies in that the revised plan has a note 'open ditch retained as existing' but note that the open ditch has disappeared from the plan at the NW end of the site where if it remains it will encroach on the access road at the rear of plot 1. The open ditch should be accommodated for its full length.

7. Traffic and Highway Issues.

The A660 Leeds Road is a very busy and potentially dangerous highway. The proposed new vehicular access to the proposed gated community will exacerbate the situation which exists. Tredgold Avenue and Wynmore Avenue join with the Leeds Road at right angles and Creskeld Lane joins obliquely close to the site of the proposed new access. At peak periods this is very dangerous combination of junctions. Because of the proposed new access, the fact that it would be gated and that the speed limit here is not 30 mph but 40 mph we believe the proposal is unacceptable.

The 3.2m rear aisle width is not sufficient for two way movements especially with any parked vehicles on the aisle, The Manual for Streets states a requirement for 4.1m two way access. In addition the 3.2m rear aisle width could result in parked vehicles (visitors) blocking through access along this rear access road or could result in parking on Leeds Road itself which would also impede visibility from 2.4m setback at the site access to the east for the 40mph road.

There are also concerns that the location of the access does not comply with recommended stagger junction distances seeming to be only some 50m on same side and 20m on the opposite side.

New housing developments currently being constructed in Adel at the Boddington Hall site and the site of the former DWP offices will only add to congestion on the A660.

We also endorse the objections/comments made by LCC Highways in their latest consultation.

8. Diversion of public footway.

We note that the applicant still refers to the public footpath which runs through the site as a 'claimed public footpath'. The status of this footpath has now been confirmed formally as a public right of way. The current footpath which runs near the centre of the application site is used by local residents as a safe & attractive alternative route to the existing footway adjacent to the very busy/dangerous Leeds Road. The applicant proposes to block this up &

divert pedestrians to the Leeds Road. This is not an acceptable alternative. Also the applicant proposes to alter the direction of the footpath on land not within his ownership instead of land within his control (which should be the case).

9. Proposed section 106 works.

We understand that the applicant is proposing to carry out 'improvements' to the land adjoining the application site to help mitigate the proposed development & loss of footway across the application site. The Parish Council, as owners of the adjoining land, has looked at these proposals & find them to be inappropriate, both in principle & in detail. The attractiveness of this thoroughfare is in its low key rural appearance. The Parish Council has already taken measure to preserve & enhance the footpath and adjoining land in a sensitive & appropriate manner. The applicants proposals will in its view detract from & be a negative development of the land.

10. Current SHLAA allocations.

Leeds City council has included the large site opposite the application site on Leeds Road in the current allocations process.

If this allocation is granted it will :

- a) increase the size of the village by almost 20% and also provide the village with its future housing needs for decades to come
- b) result in loss of green belt & open space which if added to the loss of open green space (which is the subject of this application) is unacceptable.

We believe that the application site is unsuitable for development in principle but nevertheless would suggest that the application should not be determined until the SHLAA process is complete.