

GREEN HAMMERTON PARISH COUNCIL.

Regulation 19 Consultation re New Settlement DPD

The documents that have been produced for such a significant project are very disappointing and deeply disturbing. The document appears to be all about aspiration rather than a detailed plan. They appear to be a collection of thoughts, like a brainstorm, that have just been included in the document, without analysis or quantification, just to be able to state that it is in the document. There is a lack of interaction and in-depth consultation with the population of the areas that are ultimately going to be impacted by this colossal settlement.

The New Settlement Vision

Paragraph 2.2 of the DPD sets out the 30-year Vision and Objectives of the New Settlement (which HBC call 'Maltkiln').

The new town will

- be a Garden Village with a distinctive identity
- be an 'exemplar' of sustainability
- not be car dependant
- have a vibrant local centre
- have an employment area, with offices& warehouses
- give priority to walking and cycling

The local Parish Councils are broadly supportive of these.

We also need to note that when the Planning Inspector made his report on the Council's overall planning strategy (the '**Local Plan**') in 2020 he was very particular that the DPD should address 'very carefully the implications for nearby villages'.

We are certainly supportive of this.

However, Green Hammerton Parish Council has little confidence that the DPD is the right document to deliver on this vision, and certainly not with the care demanded by the Planning Inspector.

We think the DPD is not "sound".

Key policies are not justified.

There is little sense that the Vision can actually be delivered.

The whole process appears to be rushed and the planning application and the exhibition held by the developer has muddied the waters – confusing residents as they think that the Developer consultation is the HBC DPD consultation.

The Main Objections

Traffic:

Policy NS36 - 'Traffic Mitigation' - Not Justified or Effective

The DPD presents the Vision of a garden village not dependant on cars. But a third of its infrastructure costs is on roads.

In the original assessment for the area, transport / traffic was a most serious concern, but little has been done to address these concerns, and what has been produced or suggested came out of the consultation group, but no analysis or discussions with the parties involved have been documented. There's no evidence given to justify the infrastructure that has been identified; and in any case the costings look inadequate, and there are big questions about the infrastructure that hasn't been identified - eastwards along the A59 for example, and about the overall traffic modelling, in particular the effects in the existing villages.

It is stated that the new settlement would be developed in stages but to support the development that the vision indicates, the infrastructure must be in place prior to the next stage being constructed. What the document does not state is how many houses can be supported by the current rail network, how much will it cost to improve it and how many houses would that support. There has to be a cost benefit analysis undertaken on this.

The link road is integral to the new settlement and would require constructing before the development starts, there is mention of road improvements when traffic reaches certain levels but yet again it is just loose words that are not quantified.

Equally before every stage the road connections should be improved to support the number of homes that are being developed.

Is the vision really achievable, or what has been suggested practicable?

It mentions subsidising buses, but the developer has already indicated that this would be a start up option only so not sustainable.

The document mentions park and rail how does this fit with the vision.

The employment area is in the centre of the New Settlement, how is freight going to get to there. Is it by road? Should this be to the west linking it with the new link road?

It makes a grand statement of only one parking space per home which would probably be OK in a suburb of a city but not really feasible in rural northern England.

Secondary School:

Policy NS28; 'Education' - Not Justified or Effective; Not Consistent with HBC's Local Plan; Not Consistent with other aims of the DPD

The New Settlement will have no Secondary School until the second half of the century, if at all. Pupils will travel by bus and car to an expanded Boroughbridge High School, is this really feasible with Boroughbridge also expanding with new developments and this creates more traffic movements to the North. The nearest Secondary School (by 2 miles) is Wetherby High. What modelling has been undertaken re West bound Wetherby traffic via what are currently country lanes?

A Settlement of this size cannot be an exemplar of sustainability without this; but it looks to be undeliverable with it.

Sustainable travel. - (Policy NS 30) Not Effective

No evidence is given that the proposed rail improvements will be effective.

In the original assessment for the area, transport / traffic was a most serious concern, but little has been done to address these concerns, and what has been produced or suggested came out of the consultation group, but no analysis or discussions with the parties involved have been documented. Neither North Yorkshire Highways nor Network Rail have been engaged in modelling capacity. There is no effective plan to limit private car use beyond causing traffic chaos to discourage use. Merely limiting car park spaces to one per household will cause excessive street parking and inhibit vehicular access for emergency services, service vehicles and taxis.

The deciding factor to place the settlement in this area was the availability of the rail station and the potential to encourage a pedestrian rail-based environment. There appears to be no discussion on how many houses this rail connection can support, bearing in mind we live in northern rural England. The document states that improvements can be made by increasing the frequency of the trains to two an hour in both direction and by electrification, but is this realistic? The investment in electrification is long way off, and that is not likely to increase the trains. The network is a single rail track with limited passing points. It is already operating at two trains per hour, which is already creating problems with rail crossing when entering Harrogate through Starbeck. There is not the room for expansion.

When the new settlement was voiced, it was for 3000 homes this has now gone up to 4000 with a developer submitting a planning application before the DPD has been finalised. Has analysis been undertaken to say how many homes can be supported by the rail network, as it stands?

The rail aspect also focussed on pedestrians so one can expect freight to the employment centre needs to be moved by road.

There has only been a high-level analysis of the road network, and although the document states there are roads it does not give the full picture as to what type of roads they are.

The majority of roads are country roads. Most of the better roads are to the west of the settlement. The area is surrounded on three sides (North, East, South,) by water, various rivers, there are three crossing points. To the North is Aldwark Bridge, which is a wooden toll bridge, to the south is Historic Cattal Bridge which has a weight limit on it, and is regularly flooded, so the only serviceable bridge is to the east on the A59 which will become a pinch point.

Based on these 3000 homes is not sustainable.

Flood risk (Policy NS11) - Not justified, not effective

There's no proper data-based evidence that the surface water from the proposed settlement has been properly considered. Concern therefore exists about the impact to increased flooding to Cattal, Kirk Hammerton, Skipbridge, A59 and Moor Monkton. And therefore, also a risk to Pool Bridge at Nun Monkton (as happened earlier this year).

There is not a clear constructive plan to handle foul water, no sewerage works etc.

Village Relationships:

Policy NS2 Strategic Green Gap -

To avoid coalescence with Green Hammerton the proposed Green Hammerton Green Gap must be Green Belt and not available for any future development. The residents of the area favoured option 3 as the preferred option to enable a Green Belt to allow the settlement to be centred on the rail station as per HBC deciding factor. This also pulled the settlement as far west as possible enabling a link road to be built to the south and connect to the A168. This pulls the settlement away from being locked in by water and saves the expense of building new bridges.

The green gap policy had been developed in conjunction between Green Hammerton and HBC, with Green Hammerton Parish Council providing information for the justification. It made sense to have the green gap to the edge of the ridge on the south of the A59, with the trees, copse and the roman high point and stretching up the B6265 past Green Hammerton to maintain the conservation status through Green Hammerton.

The NPPF (2021) para 139 states:

“New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions”.

We agree that this new settlement, in close proximity to several ancient villages in a well-defined settlement pattern, in a tranquil rural setting, is indeed an exceptional circumstance.

We advocate that it receives formal Green Belt designation.

Walking and Cycling:

(Policy NS31) - Not Justified; Not effective; Contrary to National Planning Policy

Pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access to the services available in Green Hammerton (e.g., Doctors, school, village hall) across the A59 are not safely provided for. Nor is access to Secondary schooling in Boroughbridge or Wetherby – unless in the latter case S and W access and egress are greatly expanded.

Contrary to NPPF para 122a

applications for development should give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas

The document contradicts itself on footpaths and cycle paths, it states that the area is not very well served by footpaths and cycle lanes and then states that the new settlement will connect with the footpaths and cycle lanes. A number are drawn on maps which don't actually exist and there are not details of how these are going to be created, who owns the land etc

Affordable Housing:

(Policy NS23) - Not Justified; Not Effective; Not Consistent with aims of DPD; Contrary to Local Plan Policy

The DPD sells the new settlement as important for the delivery of affordable homes. But viability issues mean it can't then deliver them.

Affordable housing is being sacrificed to make such a large development and associated infrastructure works affordable for the developer.

This does not meet the vision re affordable housing because of the need for, and cost of, extensive infrastructure work.

Local Plan policy HS2 requires 40% affordable housing on all qualifying greenfield developments

Engagement and stewardship.

If the engagement and stewardship envisioned is akin to that afforded to us in respect of this proposed plan, it is patently not achievable. The absence of realistic consultation and the provision of information in a form readily digestible and understandable by all those likely to be affected is lamentable. We have not had an opportunity to challenge the vague and insipid use of words such as 'consider' and 'may' and 'proposes etc. We view the Vision and objectives as being unachievable aspirations. We have not had the opportunity to be persuaded otherwise.

Delivery and Phasing - Not Effective

GP Practice - there is no commitment to provide any medical centre facilities until the development reaches 1,800 to 2,000 homes, which would mean significant extra demand on the Green Hammerton / Tockwith GP practice.

There are no details of emergency services required for such a population, Police, Fire, Hospital.

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When the new settlement was voiced, it was for 3000 homes this has now gone up to 4000 with a developer submitting a planning application before the DPD has been finalised. Has analysis been undertaken to say how many homes can be supported by the rail network, as it stands? As this could limit the settlement for many years to come, which means more expense on road movements and infrastructure to support it.

Green Hammerton Parish Council.
Per pro. Martin Simpson. Chairman