

Hetton Town Council - 15 February 2021

Item 15:

Draft response to SCC consultation - Draft Allocations & Designations Plan

Submission of: Cllr K Rowham, Chairman, Planning & Development Committee

Housing Allocations

Hetton Town Council has previously objected to the application for planning permission at Cragdale Gardens, Low Moorsley (H8.56). The proposed site at Ennerdale Street, Low Moorsley (H8.50) adjoins this site. Whilst neither site is within land allocated as open space under the CSDP, these are greenfield sites on the edge of the City which we regard would be unacceptable intrusions into the countryside. The Town Council considers these sites should be protected and enhanced for the benefit of the community.

Hetton Town Council objects to the identification of these and other greenfield/greenspace sites in its area for development when there are so many empty properties and the build of hundreds of homes at approved development sites is delayed because of lack of demand.

There clearly does not appear to be a need for additional homes in the area. Latest figures from the Office of National Statistics project the 3 northern regions to grow at a slower rate than all other regions in the country in the next 10 years. Indeed, where is any evidence that so many new homes are required?

The Town Council is disappointed at the size and number of sites in the Hetton Town Council Area designated as 'not yet deliverable' for housing (SHLAA 2020 - workshops for which Hetton Town Council appears not to have been invited). The Town Council considers that a large number of them are rural exceptions and should be protected from future housing development by excluding them from allowing planning applications to be submitted and determined by the Local Planning Authority on a case-by- case basis.

We are also concerned about a neighbouring site at Chilton Moor (H8.46) and the nearby site at Fencehouses (H8.52). These sites are almost opposite each other along Black Boy Road and extend housing towards the boundary with County Durham. We represent that these sites, which will accommodate circa 173 houses, are also unnecessary intrusions into the Countryside. Although the former Leamside Line does provide a boundary to the west, this would create a hard line on the boundary of the City with County Durham and, in the case of H8.46, would introduce housing south of Redburn Row.

Draft response to SCC consultation cont ...

Natural Environment

In every proposed development site in the Draft Allocations and Designations Plan it is stated that 'the proposals would not have a *significant* adverse impact upon the value and integrity of the wildlife network'. This is a clear admission that there *is* an impact throughout the Town Council area and neighbouring areas and that a cumulative adverse effect is taking place against our wildlife network.

Water, Waste and Energy

This section of the Draft plan considers wind energy alone and has no reference at all to waste, solar or water power. There is a large number of solar applications in neighbouring authorities and our City's River Wear is tidal.

We believe other sources of power should be investigated and proposals put forward before consideration is given to any additional wind turbines or increasing the size of existing ones on the Hetton Skyline.

Additional wind energy in and around the Hetton Town Council area was an issue in 2011 when local residents became aware of a publically undisclosed plan by Sunderland City Council and Hetton Town Council for the erection of an additional 2 of the largest wind turbines in the country to be sited in Hetton Lyons Country Park. An intital Option Agreement with PfR had already been signed. This draft plan fails to demonstrate that the potential planning impacts identified by the affected community within the Hetton Town Council community at that time have been fully addressed.

In addition, it appears that the 2008 ARUP Report prepared at enormous cost by and for a consortium of North East Local Authorities, including Sunderland City Council, which stated that the East Durham Limestone wind resource area was largely full with wind turbines and opportunities for development appeared very limited, has not been taken into consideration.

Planning applications for existing turbines, including those on the Hetton Skyline are usually for a temporary period: 25 years. The Town Council does not accept that the existing turbines are 'now well-established features on the landscape' and would like confirmation that existing sites could not be 'repowered' or increased in size without new consultation on the impact on the landscape, amenity and new homes currently under construction. In addition, the plan refers to micro, small, medium and large sized turbines without defining what each category means. The Town Council would like each size defined so that the public is fully aware.