

BRAMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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From Bramham Parish Council

To Parish Councillors and Neighbourhood Plan Groups:

On the 15th Of October 2015 members of Bramham Neighbourhood Planning Group and the Parish Council attended, as did representatives of other Parishes, a meeting in Wetherby Town Hall, organised by Andrew Birkbeck of LCC for the purpose of discussing LCC's Site Allocation Plan (SAP).

What we heard at that meeting about the University of Leeds' decision to withdraw their land at Headley from the SAP and the decision by LCC to continue with the consultation process in the hope of a reversal of that University decision gave us concern that members of other Parishes in the Outer Leeds Area were not being given the full facts about Headley.

We would like to take this opportunity to redress that imbalance and inform other Councils and members of the public what we see as the situation at Headley and possibly throw light on The University's decision to withdraw their land.

Headley has been described by those who favour it as a virtually perfect piece of real estate, in the right place and crying out for the building of a new town of 5000 plus homes. The reality is somewhat different.

We have consistently rejected Headley for the following reasons – some of which no doubt influenced the University in reaching their conclusion.

We oppose this development because it would:-

- **Involve the loss of a large area of green belt and high quality agricultural land, with significant historic and natural features.**
- **Be totally contrary to Leeds City Council's adopted Core Strategy and a contradiction of the strategy for prioritising the development of brown-field sites.**
- **Cause significant damage to an important area of countryside, with associated loss of habitat and damage to wildlife.**

In addition

- **This historic land contains a number of grade II listed buildings, WWI aircraft hangar and a battlefield site all of which have attracted support from The Battlefields Trust, English Heritage and the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Development would threaten features of archaeological value and interest.**
- **This development would take years to implement, and in the meantime the infrastructure of roads, schools, shops, doctors surgeries would not be in place. This would mean great pressure on roads and services in the surrounding area and villages for many years to come.**
- **The land has high voltage National Grid transmission lines crossing it, which would raise serious concerns about the health and safety of potential occupants.**

Your local MP and Ward Councilors have promoted the Headley development as a means of reducing the likelihood of development in other villages. We dispute this, on the basis that the intended allocation at Headley would not reduce pressures for development of other sites in the short term, as this major site would take so long to proceed. Developers would still pursue appeals to The Secretary of State for additional building in other villages.

Development at Headley would also fail to meet the need for affordable housing within **existing** communities in the Outer North East Leeds area, including Bramham.

In 1999, a Planning Inspector determined that Headley would be a totally unsuitable location for a new town. That conclusion is equally valid today.

We hope that the above helps clarify why we in Bramham see the Headley proposal as a seriously flawed project. Opposition to it has been clearly stated by the NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP AND THE PARISH COUNCIL. All residents who have responded to questionnaires regarding Headley have been opposed to it.

Whilst the University appears to have withdrawn its land, the site remains in LCC's SAP, and it is clear that there is going to be pressure on the University to change its position. We urge you to join us in this opposition by responding to the consultation on the SAP in that vein.

For more information and to download documents mentioned please go to:-

WWW.BRAMHAM.ORG.UK

Facebook – Bramham Neighbourhood Plan Group

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