



The countryside charity  
North Yorkshire

PO Box 189  
York  
YO7 9BL  
[www.cprenorthyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.cprenorthyorkshire.co.uk)  
Tel: 07983 088120  
Email: [info@cprenorthyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:info@cprenorthyorkshire.co.uk)

Branch President  
The Lord Crathorne KCVO  
Branch Chair  
Mr S White

**Authority:** Hambleton District Council

**Type of consultation:** Planning Application

**Full details of application/consultation:** 20/01424/OUT - Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved (considering access) for residential development and demolition of existing agricultural shed

**At land at:** adjacent to 1 Alne Road, Easingwold, North Yorkshire

**Type of response:** Objection

**Date of Submission:** 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020

All responses or queries relating to this submission should be directed to the Secretary for the Trustees at the contact details shown above on this frontispiece.

*Please note, CPRE has undergone a national rebrand and whilst the charity, ethos and motivation remains the same – CPRE will now be known as 'CPRE – The Countryside Charity'*

All CPRE North Yorkshire comments are prepared by the charity using professional planners whose research and recommendations form the basis of this response in line with national CPRE policies.

External planning consultant used in this response:



KVA Planning Consultancy  
Katie Atkinson, BA (Hons), PgDip TP, MA  
MRTPI  
[www.kvaplaning.co.uk](http://www.kvaplaning.co.uk)

## Comment

CPRE North Yorkshire ('CPRENY') welcomes the opportunity to comment on this major outline application for a new outline planning permission with some matters reserved (considering access) for residential development adjacent to Alne Road, Easingwold.

CPRENY object to the proposals which are considered contrary to the Development Plan in that:

1. The site is unallocated within the Development Plan (adopted and emerging) and is located within the open countryside; and
2. The impact on the local highway network as a result of the proposals.

## Planning Analysis

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The planning system should contribute to achieving sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (2019) aims to deliver sustainable development through the implementation of its policies. Paragraph 11 states that for decision making this means:

- c) *'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date<sup>7</sup>, granting permission unless:*
  - I. *The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
  - II. *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.'*

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF clarifies that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework. Weight should be given to them according to their consistency with the NPPF. (The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that should be attributed).

The Development Plan relevant to this application consists of three documents:

- Core Strategy DPD (April 2007);
- Development Policies DPD (February 2008); and,
- Allocations DPD (December 2010).

Hambleton District Council ('HDC') have recently submitted their emerging Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Inspectors have been appointed although at the time of writing, hearings are not yet scheduled. Due to the late stage of plan preparation, weight can be attributed to the emerging policies in accordance with paragraph 48 of the revised NPPF.

*Objection 1 -The site is unallocated within the Development Plan (adopted and emerging) and is located within the open countryside*

The 3.Ha site is located so the , adjacent to Alne Road and is bounded by the gardens of properties on both Alne Road and Raskelf Road to the immediate north of the site and Drovers Court to the south and by agricultural land to the south and southwest. The site itself is currently agricultural pastureland although is categorised as Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land classification. Part of the site also includes a wooded area allocated in the submitted Local Plan as Local Green Space ('LGS') (site ref: ALT/E/041/058a/G) accessed from Drovers Court and proposed for its local recreational value, richness of wildlife and tranquillity, thus in conformity with the LGS tests in the NPPF.

The application site is without question undeveloped land in a greenfield location. Neither the adopted Hambleton Development Plan documents (listed above) or the emerging Local Plan allocate the site for development. It is outside of the development boundary for Easingwold and in planning terms within the 'open countryside'.

The site was put forward by the applicant as two potential allocations (one site has to be accessed via the other) and assessed by the Council for housing land. In 2016, the Council considered the sites to be 'preferred sites' as they scored well in terms of sustainability in the emerging Local Plans Sustainability Assessment. Following a second 'alternative sites consultation' in 2017, the Council put forward 17 sites to the site selection stage in and surrounding Easingwold for consideration for both housing and/or employment land. The Council ultimately chose not to include the sites within the emerging Local Plan for housing development, despite having scored well, because it considered another site in Easingwold was more suitable for housing development over all the others as set out in the Council's evidence base to the emerging Local Plan in their *Site Selection Methodology and Results Report*, (July 2019). The Council sought to allocate one site for residential development of circa 125 homes and one site for employment land in line with the up to date housing and economic needs assessment.

The submitted Local Plan sets out that the Council are in a fortunate position and can demonstrate a significant supply of available housing land, therefore, whilst sites may score well in terms of sustainability, the need for development of all suitable and available sites is not required. The Council must therefore undertake a scoring system to set out their preferred site and that is what they have done in Easingwold via the submitted Local Plan. As such, there is no demonstrable need for a large residential development at this location, despite its sustainability scores. It is considered that Local Planning Authorities should not be permitting all development just because it is deemed sustainable. That would not be in conformity with paragraph 11c of the NPPF which states that proposals should be considered against policies in an up to date Local Plan

To permit this site for development would be considered premature by CPRENY in line with paragraph 49 of the NPPF due to the scale of proposed development and the advanced stage of the development plan for the area.

Policy CP4 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out that Development in the open countryside '*will only be supported when an exceptional case can be made for the proposals in terms of Policies CP1 and CP2.*' CPRENY do not consider any exceptional case has been presented for a major residential development at this open countryside location which would warrant undermining the delivery of the Local Plan.

Similarly, Emerging Local Plan Policy S5 sets out how the Council will seek to '*protect and enhance the intrinsic beauty, character and distinctiveness of the countryside as an asset*'. It goes on to set out that development in the countryside would only be supported if it is '*specifically supported by other policies in the development*

*plan or national policy and would not harm the character, appearance and environmental qualities of the area in which it is located and protects the best and most versatile agricultural land'* (setting criteria as to how this is to be achieved). The supporting text to this policy also states that *'development in the countryside will be resisted unless it is expressly allowed by other policies of this local plan or any other part of the adopted development plan.'*

The site is Grade 2 agricultural land and criteria B (Policy S5) protects it from development that is not associated with agriculture or forestry. CPRE both nationally and locally campaign for the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land from inappropriate development. Given the low housing requirement across the district and the Council's choice of location for development in Easingwold, to replace Grade 2 land for further housing development when there is not a 'need' would be considered inappropriate development.

The site should be considered as a windfall housing development. However, in accordance with emerging Policy EG5 the site is not within the built form of a defined settlement. Neither can it be considered a 'minor scale' housing development adjacent to the built form of a service village, therefore fails to meet the requirements of this policy.

The HDC Settlement Character Study (2016) produced as part of the Local Plan evidence base, identifies that *'due to the relatively flat lying ground, there are no significant long-range views of Easingwold from the surrounding countryside, however, some glimpses of the higher ground are visible from the south west.'* The Easingwold Conservation Area Appraisal (2010) agrees with the Settlement Character Study and explains that the site would not impact on the Conservation Area or Listed Buildings itself and CPRENY concur.

However, CPRENY are aware that Alne Road itself is utilised by its members and residents to gain easy pedestrian access to the countryside via the footpath on the opposite side of the road to the proposed vehicular access to the site. Alne Road becomes a typical rural lane beyond the built development and due to its flat nature allows residents to access the countryside safely and easily, especially for those less mobile.

Access to the countryside provides enormous health and well being both physically and mentally and should not be overlooked.

Cumulatively, when considering the policy context for the site, CPRENY, consider the site wholly unsuitable for the proposed usage.

The policies within the development plan (both adopted and emerging) do not allow for residential development in this location, therefore, should be refused. Furthermore, the Council discounted this site from allocation within the emerging Local Plan, selecting a different growth area for to meet all of Easingwold's housing needs.

### *Objection 2 - The impact on the local highway network as a result of the proposals*

The application proposes vehicular access via a new priority-controlled junction on Alne Road – circa 60m to the north east of an existed gated access to the site.

CPRENY have considered the Transport Assessment submitted in support of the planning application and find it confusing in places. Prior to determination, the Local Planning Authority should require the applicant to clarify its position in relation to modelling of committed development to determine capacity on the local road network.

In consultation with local residents and members, CPRENY also question the likelihood of 45% of vehicular movements from the site heading west along Alne Road in the direction of Alne. It is considered much more likely that the majority of movements will head east into Easingwold – either into the town centre or turning north or south to link to the A19.

CPRENY are also disappointed that the applicant has not given thought to pedestrian and cycle links in line with national and local planning policy requirements, especially when considering the national need to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change and retain the increased usage of non-vehicular movements experienced during the recent COVID-19 lockdown period. However, it is acknowledged that this is an outline application with matters reserved.

The emerging Local Plan considers these issues at Policy CI2 and is in general conformity with section 9 of the NPPF which requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals including promoting opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport use and providing safe and suitable access to sites for all users.

Given the uncertainties surrounding the proposals and submitted Transport Assessment, CPRENY can not rule out a detrimental impact to the local road network and as such believe the proposals should be refused.

### **Conclusion**

CPRENY recognise the fact that this is an outline development and as such have not considered the illustrative design of the proposals but have focussed on the principle of development at this location.

HDC have recently submitted their Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination. Their evidence base suggests that they are in a fortunate position in relation to available housing land supply and as such had numerous sites to chose from which were considered sustainable. The Council have undertaken a site selection process and favoured a single site in Easingwold to deliver the area's housing needs. As such this site is not needed and therefore should not developed.

Furthermore, CPRENY consider that awarding a planning permission would be premature due to the late stage in process of the emerging Local Plan. Approving a site for 80 dwellings at this stage, would seriously undermine the planning policy process when only 125 homes are required in the area and site which can deliver this has been identified and allocated accordingly.

As such, CPRENY believe that the application proposals are contrary to several adopted Development Plan policies, emerging Local Plan policies and national guidance set out in the NPPF.

Should any further information be submitted in support of the proposals, CPRENY reserve the right to comment further.