

Roecliffe and Westwick Parish
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Date: 28th June 2019

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Dear Mr Siswick,

Neighbourhood Planning Regulation 14 Public Consultation – Roecliffe and Westwick Neighbourhood Development Plan

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

NYCC is the upper tier authority for this area, and is responsible for a range of services and infrastructure within Harrogate District and across the county.

Officers from across our service areas have reviewed the consultation documentation and have the following comments.

Strategic Policy & Economic Growth

NYCC has developed a number of Plans and Strategies that are relevant to the preparation of Development Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

The North Yorkshire Council Plan sets out our ambitions for the county up to 2023. This includes a commitment to sustainable growth that enables our citizens to fulfil their ambitions and aspirations.

The County Council has developed a plan to deliver economic growth. The three main Aims seek to achieve:

- Larger business base and increased number of jobs
- Equal access to economic opportunity
- Increase the median average wage

A number of key Enablers have been identified, including:

- Creating high quality places and increased housing provision and green infrastructure

- Delivering a modern integrated transport network
- Enhancing the environment and developing tourism & the green economy
- Delivering a modern communication network

Section 10 of the Neighbourhood Plan concerns the Community Infrastructure Levy. Areas with an adopted neighbourhood plan receive 25% of those contributions in their areas. In times of increasing pressure on the Council's own budgets the use of CIL received by the Parish to help support and deliver key services improvements and projects would be welcomed.

Heritage Services

Archaeology

The plan, together with the community website, provide excellent background information on heritage assets in general, including significant archaeological features such as the Roman fort adjacent to the A1. However I am concerned that these, more archaeological, assets are not picked up in the wording of the policies of the document that focus very much on the built environment. I am sure that this omission is not intentional and with a few changes to the language the policies could be made more robust to provide better protection to the historic environment as a whole. My recommendation would be that Policy A might be changed to 'Preservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment' and add references to archaeological sites to the objectives and policy wording.

Ecology

The plan contains a number of references to local wildlife, habitats and green infrastructure, which is welcome. However, it would be useful if it was clearer about nature conservation designations. On page 43 it is stated that the 'Claypit Ponds' are an "area of Special Scientific Interest", and they are referred to as a SSSI on page 55. In fact, there are no SSSIs in Roecliffe Parish; Bishop Monkton Ings SSSI lies partly within Westwick Parish. Our records show the following Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs):

- Roecliffe Pond
- Roecliffe Meadows
- Cherry Island Wood
- Riverside fields at Brickyard Farm

Harrogate Borough Council could provide definitive advice on SINC boundaries and the reasons for which they are designated. SINCs are not statutorily designated but have been identified as sites of district or county nature conservation value and enjoy a measure of protection from development under Local Plan policies.

Public Health

From a generalised perspective Neighbourhood Plans can be good mechanisms to Create High Quality Safe Places.

Highways and Transportation

Pg 35- "The principal highway problems were identified as": This needs re-writing – suggest instead that it is worded as follows "The main locations that those responding to the surveys expressed concern were..." this will provide clarity.

Pg 38- significant re-write required.

It is suggested that the following text be used:

"Given the scale of the county NYCC has to prioritise the use of its resources towards maintenance of the existing network. Safety schemes are prioritised and are based on a set criteria, most critically the number of collisions involving injury."

There is no existing budget to address the capacity of the highway network, however external funding could be sought by the county council where appropriate. Schemes would be based on robust modelling of the network and how it is used by the travelling public, to ensure resource is targeted at those locations where it is most required. This would generally be in locations where significant disruption is experienced.

Traffic modelling is also requested and audited as a result of any major planning application, to assess the impact of the development on the highway network, models would generally include a coefficient for background growth, and so give a very clear indication of where capacity issues exist on the network.

According to NYCC criteria, the footpath serving the local highways, including Bar Lane, and the village of Roecliffe itself would not qualify for improvement.

As a consequence of the robust prioritisation afforded across the council, there are no plans to upgrade Bar Lane.

Development proposals are, where appropriate aligned to local planning with the Borough Council. Each individual application is robustly viewed by the local highway authority as statutory consultee to the local planning authority, and must satisfy that any detrimental impact arising from the development upon the highway network is ameliorated.

An undertaking to install road signage to address the overnight parking problems was given by NYCC in Spring 2017.

Closing comments

We trust you find these comments helpful. We would like to ensure that the County Council is consulted as the Neighbourhood Plan progresses.

Yours sincerely,



Michelle Saunders

Senior Policy Officer
Strategic Policy and Economic Growth