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From: Bill Hobman
Sent: 19 January 2015 10:30
To: LDF
Subject: PLAN reply
Attachments: PLAN Response Jan 2015.docx

Please find attached my response to several of the Questions raised in the PLAN Consultation.

Each of the Questions answered is on a separate page of the document.

Please advise that the response is accepted.

Thanks.

Regards.

Bill Hobman

Q5. Aims and Objectives

In order for the Objectives to be achieved, and to improve the quality of life and experience associated with living in Selby District it is suggested that the development of certain important infrastructure components is considered.

Examples would include:

1. Removal (to underground) of National Grid power cables.
2. Improve access to the A1(M) corridor to the North of Sherburn connecting to the A63 east of Monk Fryston. This would also serve to better connect Selby to the motorway system and better connect Sherburn Industrial Estate to the major road network.
3. To ensure equitable distribution of new housing across all 3 major settlements judged objectively on an equitable and justifiable allocation basis, and to recognise that Sherburn is some long way behind the other Towns in being able to contribute on an equal basis in the provision of amenity and access to both North/South and East/West road networks. Sherburn's housing growth is partly due to the Industrial Estate, but also as an overspill from Tadcaster.
4. Recognise that new housing development needs geographic focus in order to help provide and use better infrastructure facilities for existing as well as new developments.
5. Recognise that the Selby District is basically a flat area and that randomly allowed above ground infrastructure will very quickly and directly affect the quality of the landscape and will negatively impact and devalue the rural character of the District. Many of these structures are industrial in scale and many domestic implementations are hideous and damage the rural character of the local areas.
6. Recognise that additional guidelines and targets on issues such as those envisaged with renewable energy generation will require further significant cost and bureaucracy to implement and manage and ask whether this is a necessary cost to be borne by Selby District residents.
7. Improved access to an international airport for incoming and outgoing tourism. The access to Leeds International Airport is very unsatisfactory, and also Leeds Airport may never attract the services required to properly support the District's (and adjacent District's) requirements.

Q8. House Building phasing

Re housing numbers, on the evidence of the numbers provided it is clear to see the woeful contribution of Tadcaster, a place which looks increasingly desolate, shoddy, out of date, yet full of brownfield potential. In housing contribution terms it has been allowed to deflect responsibility for meeting the District's housing requirement to other (less well equipped) settlements in the area.

According to the numbers quoted in the PLAN documentation the answer must be some form of compulsory purchase in order for Tadcaster to catch up never mind develop over the PLAN period.

For example, the numbers (for similarly located settlements to the west of the District and so with the advantage (if required) of similar access to the A1(M) and Leeds appear to be as follows:

Tadcaster has a stated requirement of 500 houses (7% of the overall requirement), significantly less than Sherburn. Given the 5 completions over the 3 years to March 2014, on this levels of performance and achievement by Selby DC, what are the chances of 500 being built ? Especially as the 'Outstanding plots with PP' column for Tadcaster is equally minute compared to places like Sherburn for example, and even South Milford has built far more houses in the past 3 years. Both are places with fewer publicly funded facilities than Tadcaster and yet have had to contribute out of proportion, largely to overcome the housing performance of Tadcaster.

There are hamlets which have made a bigger contribution to meeting the Nation's (and the District's) housing requirement.

This, in spite of the proximity of the A64 (whose access to Tadcaster could hardly have been less well designed, to the point that brewery vehicles have a 2 mile journey to access the westbound A64, to the detriment of residents along Leeds Road, when the actual brewery is a very short distance from the road). The A64 is the only dual carriageway road which traverses the District and no advantage is taken of this in the District's housing allocation policy. Indeed, out of the 4360 dwellings required Tadcaster has less than 11%, as opposed to Villages with 30% and inferior road provision.

Q9. Analysis of existing Greenbelt boundaries is a key factor in deciding how much land is available for development use, as is preservation and if possible enhancement of the rural nature if the area. Any incursion into Greenbelt



Q11. Tadcaster Phasing

Given it's position alongside the dual carriageway A64 and half way between York and Leeds and with the best access in the District to the A1(M) corridor, as well as being a centre for local history from Roman times to the Wars of the Roses, Tadcaster should (along with Selby) be a shining light as a focus for tourism and an entry point into the District. It would be helpful if the PLAN could recognise the opportunity and spell out what is expected of Tadcaster in order for it to properly support the District. This would include larger housing allocation, if necessary supported by compulsory purchase of sites. The impression is that the phasing plan is simply a further example of the procrastination which has avoided the real issue and has offloaded the burden onto other less naturally equipped centres, some might say to their detriment. The phasing plan seems to say that if Tadcaster continues to not contribute for another 5 years the problem gets transferred elsewhere, which is probably what will happen. However, Tadcaster's existing facilities include Fire Service, Police HQ, Waste Management, quality schooling, Swimming Pool and as such it is the natural centre for housing development. The public purse has provided Tadcaster these facilities yet at the moment it gets these benefits without properly justifying their presence compared to other settlements in the District and it may be that compulsory purchase of land is the only way to address the problem.

Q25. Infrastructure

Perhaps provision of Gardening Allotment space should be considered, as well as making a case to Leeds City Region re improved access to Leeds Airport, or exploring a more local arrangement at Church Fenton / Elvington.

Q 26 Climate Change

a) It is not at all clear what the renewable target might be and what are the best ways of meeting the requirement. Some of the options (eg wind turbines) are very invasive solutions with any number of negative characteristics (including the fact that they don't solve the renewable shortfall problem, and may even add to the challenge by requiring 'conventional' supply sources to over produce, which presumably and strangely adds to the quantity needing to be supplied by renewable), and therefore the numbers are important – no information is provided in the PLAN documentation to indicate how many of what capacity/height are required, but certainly if SDC is to incorporate a target, then it should be along the lines of x turbines of height a, y turbines of height b and z turbines of height c with a total capacity cap which, when reached would stop any further turbines, no matter how many had been previously allowed. It might also be that height restrictions are imposed in certain areas, but not in others. Other conditions might also apply – a kind of green belt which prohibits turbines. What this cannot be is a free for all approach to planning application for turbines – it makes it expensive for everyone concerned and difficult for members of the public to make lifetime decisions about where to live etc.

Height of structures is a very relevant issue in a low lying area & so use of height (eg with Selby Abbey which has design and architecture about it's presence) is a precious commodity which should not be spent on a random basis.

Then there is the question about whether turbines are helpful in the renewable discussion. This is particularly relevant in Selby where Drax & Eggborough Power Stations are taxed with over-producing in order to cover the complete inadequacy of turbines to deliver the 'on demand' solution which is a fundamental requirement of any largescale electricity provision.

The whole issue of windturbines and how they are funded requires people's normal instincts, intelligence, understanding and common sense to be sidelined – the whole model is a brilliant example of folly and waste in the public sector at a time when budgets for key services are under severe pressure. It is unsustainable on every front, including the imposition of a levy on everyone's electricity bills, and should be discouraged at every turn.

Also, Selby should negotiate a lower renewable quota given that Drax & Eggborough have to overproduce in order to make up for the regular renewable supply shortfalls across the whole Country.

Q26 b) This is like some kind of business/development tax and should be withdrawn immediately – it sends out all the wrong signals to commerce and residential developments alike.

Q26 c) Technical area – not sure what it means – if it's about insulation etc, that's fine, but are there additional cost issues ?

Q26 d) In line with (a) above, the main issue is above ground , though widespread use of fields means we have to import more food. The problem with renewable is that it is not something for nothing (in fact it's very close to nothing for something and in some cases less than nothing for something), and all the consequences need identifying and thinking through. Selby is a very agricultural area and has a prime responsibility to continue to make field space available – nationally not all areas can grow food (but they can generate wind power if we must).

Re hydro – well the River Ouse is tidal (along with the Wharfe, and the Aire), have any calculations been made re their potential contribution ? At least we can predict the tides so we can rely on their contribution.

Q26 e) How about a minimum number of turbines per application with 5 mile separation between sites and housing unless all those affected agree and are paid a subsidy for the detriment, taken from the existing HMG subsidy arrangements, so at no additional cost to Selby ? Everyone who is affected by Turbines pays a price and not just in cash terms, and needs to be compensated just as much as the Wind Turbine operators.

Q26 f) I think this is beyond the scope and responsibility to resource of any District Council. There is nothing in this question which is Selby specific. We have to keep costs down not enter into schemes which add to the administration burden within the District for no financial reward.

Q26 g) The points above apply to renewable energy supply in any timescale. However Selby should only commit to any renewable plan when it absolutely has to. Power generation technology will change in the future on all fronts, conventional as well as renewable & PLAN must be able to accommodate future power developments which offer a better environmental and power supply deal without being constrained by decisions taken unnecessarily early.

Q26 h) This question pre-supposes that there remains room for a sensible, logical debate around the whole subject of climate change and renewable energy, which, if true is to be encouraged, because it would help prioritise the real quality, benefit and contribution of the various options, something which would be very useful to understand as part of any site allocations decision, where any disadvantage to private individuals is fundamentally important. So, the 'later stages' are eagerly anticipated.

Q 56. South Milford.

One point re the description of South Milford in 5.86 of the Consultation Document is that South Milford has no link to York by rail. The rate of development of South Milford over recent years has been proportionately at the high end of excessive and having filled the gap between the old village and the bypass it is to all intents no longer suitable for volume development. South Milford is constrained to the north by Sherburn and it is suggested that many people would want to retain the distance between the two settlements. This could be enhanced by redrawing the boundary between Sherburn and South Milford to reflect the reality of which settlement residents identify with – at the moment the Sherburn boundary starts in the middle of South Milford and 'South Milford' railway station is actually located in Sherburn. Further clarity in this regard would help with local identity and the resolution of housing numbers. For example the developments to the north of the railway line naturally form part of South Milford, but are they counted as such ?