



Skelmanthorpe

Community Action Group

Kirklees Talkback
Corporate development unit
Kirklees Council
Civic Centre 3
Huddersfield HD1 2RP

19 July 2006

Dear Sirs

On behalf of **Skelmanthorpe Community Action Group**, we would like to give the following feedback from local residents about the LDF proposals.

1. Option E.

We are against option E for a number of reasons:

- The volume of housing will swamp the existing communities changing them from villages into virtually one town. This will have a negative impact on the way of life of all the people who live here.
- Building on the green belt land will wipe out one of the most attractive landscapes in the region. Indeed we think the council should do all it can to protect this landscape for future generations. Once a major incursion is made into the green belt it will be difficult to protect what is left as it is slowly nibbled away.
- There is no local demand for this volume of housing from within the community; it would simply attract more people from outside the area to live here. In particular it will attract more people with well-paid jobs in Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester to move here and commute to work. Creating even more congestion on the roads. At the present time there are already queues on both local roads and the M1 at peak times. How would the M1 cope with substantially more vehicles at peak times?
- Most young people and single parents prefer to live nearer to the major towns, for both work and social reasons. Building more homes for this group would simply be putting them in the wrong place.
- What will happen to all the brown field sites if a decision is made to build in the green belt? Will these areas simply lie idle? Surely its better for the environment to clean them up and use them for housing. Given the opportunity most builders will opt for green field sites every

time.

- Building more industrial units will increase the volume of heavy goods traffic, some of it onto roads that are unsuitable for such vehicles.
- Even if new roads are built to carry traffic to the M1 how will the narrow local roads cope with the huge increase in the volume of traffic using them? We are talking here of increases in excess of 100% on roads that struggle to handle existing volumes at peak times.
- How can so many vehicles find parking spaces in the local villages to make use of local shops and facilities? Parking is already in short supply and there is little potential to develop more. Is the reality of the situation that the shops in the local high street will lose out to larger supermarkets built in the green belt? This will of course destroy the local community.

Option B

Option B calls for 4000 homes to be built in our area using brown field sites and infill. How will this work without the development of new roads to carry the traffic? It is not possible for the extra traffic from 4000 houses to be handled by the existing infrastructure.

How will local services cope with this increase?

How will parking be provided within the local villages?

In many ways this is a worse option than E, because with that option the roads, schools and facilities would be built to service the growth. The greatest risk with the brown field sites and infill is that they will border on or be part of the existing community in areas where it will be difficult to build new roads or provide parking.

Preferred option.

In our opinion the best option is to make use of brown field sites, as this both cleans up the environment and places most houses where they are needed. Focusing most development on Huddersfield places the homes in the area where there is most demand, close to both work and social facilities. This also cuts road traffic to a minimum, as more people will be in a position to use public transport.

The further from Huddersfield the developments are placed, the greater the cost in terms of building up the infrastructure to support the houses and the greater the road congestion.

Finally we would refer you to the 'core strategy document – page 67 – Green Belt – paragraph 5.26. which underpins our view of the current proposals

Green Belt

In the UDP about two-thirds of Kirklees is designated as Green Belt. Whether or not the extent of the Green belt will be changed will depend on how the Council chooses to accommodate development (as discussed in options A-E above). Whatever the extent of the green belt, national policy is clear that only very limited development can be permitted within it. Most forms of development will be inappropriate and can only be permitted where an applicant can demonstrate very special circumstances to justify overturning the presumption against inappropriate development

As a final point , to encourage developers to take up the 'brown field' option, they need an incentive whereby they find them selves no worse off than if they had built on a green field site.

Therefore if they were offered a brown field site at the same price per acre of a green field one. But had within their contract, the assurance that they would be compensated for proven unforeseen problems, e.g. asbestos, cadmium and arsenic deposits, old mining works, in that their proven on costs would be deducted from the green field price, they would be assured that they had a profitable contract.

Yours Sincerely

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(For and on behalf of Skelmanthorpe Community Action Group).

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