

## **Bramham Parish Council response to proposals of the Local Plan Consultation 2025**

Representatives from the Parish Councils of Boston Spa, Thorp Arch, Walton, Clifford and Bramham met on the 7th August to review the new sites submitted for consideration in the Leeds Local Plan.

There is a clear level of concern from all parishes that any resulting development from the sites submitted would have a cumulative knock-on effect on all the villages and their residents. There are already significant issues with traffic and congestion across all five villages. The majority of the streets were not designed in the day of motorised transport and on-street parking is the norm. This has resulted in serious congestion, speeding and road safety issues. The nearest train station is over 8 miles, and the nearest accessible train station via public transport in Garforth is 11 miles away and 43 minutes on the bus, and the one bus service (the number 7) which serves all the parishes runs only once per hour during off-peak periods. Connectivity to the rail network is at best limited and at worst non-existent.

The villages of Walton and Clifford have no schools. Children from these villages attend primary schools in Boston Spa, Thorp Arch or Bramham and so many children must be taken by car. The schools themselves are approaching capacity given the additional housing over the last 10 years and the projected uptick in the birth rate.

The areas of Thorp Arch Bridge and Boston Spa village centre are particularly congested, especially at peak times. Thorp Arch trading estate is home to a number of businesses and large organisations which include the British Library. Wealstun Prison and the Leeds United Training Ground are at the top end of Thorp Arch. All of these bring significant travellers by car from destinations which are much further afield. Thorp Arch itself has just seen the completion of 145 residential properties on the Chartford and Lovell Homes estates which has increased traffic to the area.

Whilst over the North Yorkshire boundary, the village of Newton Kyme (2 miles away) saw 141 new homes built in 2015. This has brought more traffic through the village as residents use Boston Spa as a direct route to the A1. The current North Yorkshire Local Plan also identifies a potential 19 hectares of land in Newton Kyme for future development through its Call for Sites, which will continue to close the gap between Boston Spa, Thorp Arch, Walton and Newton Kyme.

Whilst all of the Wetherby Parishes are in agreement that reasonable and sympathetic development should be expected in the villages over time, the infrastructure and road network simply cannot support any significant increase in housing. The new Swinnow Park development in Wetherby will see an increase of about 1,000 houses, this will invariably lead to increased traffic and calls on the local infrastructure. The above 1000 homes should satisfactorily fulfil the Leeds Housing target and the demand for new housing in the local area. Additional numbers would increase the strain on surgery provision and other social services needed to support an area with a higher than average elderly population.

The specific issues raised by the Bramham proposals are as follows:

#### The Biggin

This development would be in a floodplain, and the access is strictly limited by the narrow road into the Bramham Park estate.

#### Spen Common Lane

This site is alongside the service access road to the A1/M, presenting issues of safety. It is also on farmland, and no other housing is nearby. It is not on the route of the number 7 bus service.

#### Field next to Bramham School

This is the largest proposed development, which effectively would increase the size of the village by one third, adding enormous demands onto the existing infrastructure. Whilst on the bus route it is at the very edge of the village and if built, would remove the Green Belt and link Bramham and Clifford villages directly via the school site.

Entrance to the site would be from the difficult Bramham/Clifford Road which already struggles to cope with the increased access to the village school from outside the village.

The site is a previous landfill site/ quarry, and one which has already contributed to flooding in the Lyndon Road area. It was dismissed on previous application for all these reasons.

Nothing has changed in the interim and arguably pressures have become greater.

#### Field at of Windmill Lane/ Toulston Lane

This field is at the furthest extent of the village and access to the centre and resources including the one shop/ post office would be downhill, thus providing serious problems for those with mobility issues. It has no access to any public transport.

Whilst recognising the need for additional housing to meet the needs of a growing population, none of these sites would do so without causing further problems.

All of these sites would add pressure to existing medical provision issues.

All of these sites would add pressure to the school places issue. Bramham is a good school and attracts from all parts of the Wetherby ward. The resulting traffic has already caused issues and potential danger for children and parents.

The resulting increase in traffic would also increase the risk of a potential fatality as Paradise Way and West Woods Road act as alternative routes in times of increased traffic on the A1/M.

It is imperative that further thought is given to the existing needs of the present community whilst searching for schemes which would support future residents.

Simply building houses is not the answer, we need to build sustainable communities which reflect the range of factors needed to create those strong communities including environmental, health and education. Bramham is the oldest village in the Wetherby Ward built as a response to its geographical position as the junction between arterial Roman Roads. It has a documented history of over 1000 years. To expand its size risks putting pressure on the services and could force it to change to become simply a dormitory village with everyone driving elsewhere to meet their needs. This

model does not work in any terms, social, environmental or economic. I would urge the council to consider the wider picture to the benefit of all, past, present and future.