

Sustainability Assessment (Including Green Belt Purpose)

Coach Road Fields, Guiseley



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A submission to Leeds City Council re site HG2-5 (2163, 1180 and 1311)

by the Silverdale Action Group

in conjunction with Aireborough Neighbourhood Forum

November 2015

Overview

Silverdale Action Group was established in February 2015 in response to the proposed development of the Coach Road Fields, site HG2-5 (2163, 1180 and 1131) and the Silverdale / Coach Road allotments (site HG2-6, 1113).

We are a group of like-minded Guiseley residents who are extremely concerned about not only these sites but also the extensive over-development of the Aireborough area, in particular the fact that the vast majority (79%) of ear marked sites in Aireborough are Green Belt. A meeting of 150 concerned residents from the area showed the strength of feeling. Whilst we cannot accurately reflect every individual's particular point of view we are confident that this report reflects the views of the vast majority of those living on the Silverdale estate including Coach Road, Esholt Avenue & surrounding areas.

We share concerns with our partner groups across Aireborough about the impact on the environment, transport (road & rail), local infrastructure (schools, GP's, leisure) of these developments. We feel little heed has been paid to the impact of extensive recent and ongoing developments in Aireborough itself and the neighbouring areas of Wharfedale and just over the border in Bradford.

On the macro scale we have grave concerns about the initial 70,000 target which we feel has little or no evidence base to support it, in fact Office of National Statistics data suggests a figure closer to 45,000 is required. Even Peter Gruen admitted in a recent interview that the figure should be more like 60,000. Accepting the 60,000 target would cut 2/3 of the development on Green Belt and the 45,000 would mean all development is on brownfield, in line with Leeds own Core Strategy.

We also feel that the whole approach to the City wide plan should be a positive force for good with the regeneration of inner City brownfield sites, not the destruction of the thriving parts of the City. There appears to be an unhealthy influence of those with vested interests in developing this plan; developers, land agents, estate agents etc. and little regard for those wanting to create a vibrant modern City.

As this report demonstrates serious errors have been made when compiling the Sustainability Reports for this site and had they been properly assessed in the first place, would have been 'red listed' as not suitable for development.

For more information you can also contact us by email at silverdaleag@gmail.com or on Facebook search for Silverdale Action Group.

The Coach Road Fields

The Coach Road fields are situated on the Western edge of Guiseley along the border with Bradford. Initially relatively level (the 'A' sites) they then fall away sharply from Sodhall Hill down to Esholt Woods. As prime grassland they are predominantly used for the grazing of horses and sheep and they are usually left to grow long in the Summer and harvested in the Autumn for winter fodder. Site 2163 is often used also for exercising and training horses with temporary horse jumping fences erected.

All 3 sites are bordered by ancient dry stone walls and mature native trees. These provide a fantastic habitat for a wide range of rare and threatened species, including bats, owls (small, barn & tawny), red kite, sparrow hawk, goshawk, lapwings, curlews, oystercatchers, woodpeckers, jays, nuthatch, bullfinch, wrens, harvest mice, deer, hedgehogs and foxes. The Eurasian Curlew, Northern Lapwing & Red Kite are regular, migratory visitors & all 3 have recently been cited as 'near-threatened UK bird species' by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and as such it is vital that these sites are preserved. The sites also act as a key component of a green link corridor, for a wide range of animals and birds, linking the Engine Fields Nature Park in Yeadon with the wider countryside. **See Appendix 2 –Environmental Assessment**

Sites 1180 & 1311 are divided by Springs Road, an ancient 'green' lane which connected to Esholt Hall a Cistercian nunnery. Coach Road was the coach road connecting with Springs Road. A footpath also runs along the Southern edge of 1311. Springs Road & the footpath converge near a rail bridge which is the gateway to Springs & Jerrisons Wood, which along with Belmont and Sodhall Hill wood are collectively known locally as Esholt Woods.

Coach Road, which forms the Eastern border of the site is an unadopted road and is unmade from the junction with Silverdale Mount. This leads to the majority of vehicles using Silverdale Avenue as the main access point to the Silverdale estate, leaving Coach Road relatively traffic free. Hence Coach Road has a quiet, rural feel and is much loved by local residents as a cycle route both for recreational users & commuters, by dog walkers, runners, walking groups, horse riders and those who just want to escape for a pleasant walk.

It is also used as an access route to Esholt Woods for those who want to get even further off the beaten track. Many walking groups pass this way during the week; often made up of active retired groups such as U3A, Wharfe Valley Wanderers and Bradford Ramblers.

At weekends particularly the route teems with runners, mountain bikers and families cycling. Dog walkers are seen at all times. The annual 'Guiseley Gallop' 10k race on Easter Sunday runs along the footpath and through the woods to the canal and attracts hundreds of competitors and spectators. For further information on the importance of 'Green Exercise', **please see Appendix 4.**

The 3 sites are all designated by Leeds City Council as Special Landscape Area, a recognition of their natural beauty and their importance to the character of the area.

Site 2163, the Northern most of the 3, falls within the Guiseley, Park Rd / Esholt Avenue conservation area and 1180 and 1311 fall wholly or partly within the 100m 'buffer' zone which is supposed to conserve the status and character of a conservation area. The combined, triple protection from development provided by the green belt status, Special Landscape Area designation and the Conservation Status mean these should be preserved at all costs.

The sites border Bradford on their Western edge and footpaths through the woods connect through to the Leeds – Liverpool canal, Apperley Bridge, Shipley and Esholt. Consultation with Bradford over these sites has not taken place, even though the 'b' part of 1180 is over the border, contrary to normal planning rules.

The South-Eastern border of 1311 is the railway line, which also forms the boundary dividing Guiseley from Yeadon.

Access across the railway bridge at the Southern end of Coach Road provides pedestrian/cycle access to Yeadon and beyond. This forms part of the Yeadon – Guiseley Greenlink/Sustrans cycle route. Coach Road and this route is used by many, many school children each day on their way to Guiseley School (secondary). This route is supported by Leeds City Council and this is clearly due to it's relatively traffic free nature. **See Appendix 3**

Esholt Woods- see also Appendix 5

Spring and Jerrison Woods cover quite a wide area, just to the east of Esholt and to the west of Yeadon. The north-eastern part of the site is adjacent to the district boundary with Leeds. The northern area of the wood is the broadest, and is ancient woodland, part replanted with conifer and part semi-natural woodland. The wood then narrows to a linear stretch, and runs down for about 1.5km, in line with the southern end of the sewage works. There is a railway line bordering the site to the east, and agricultural grassland fields to the north. There is also a beck running through the eastern side of the site.

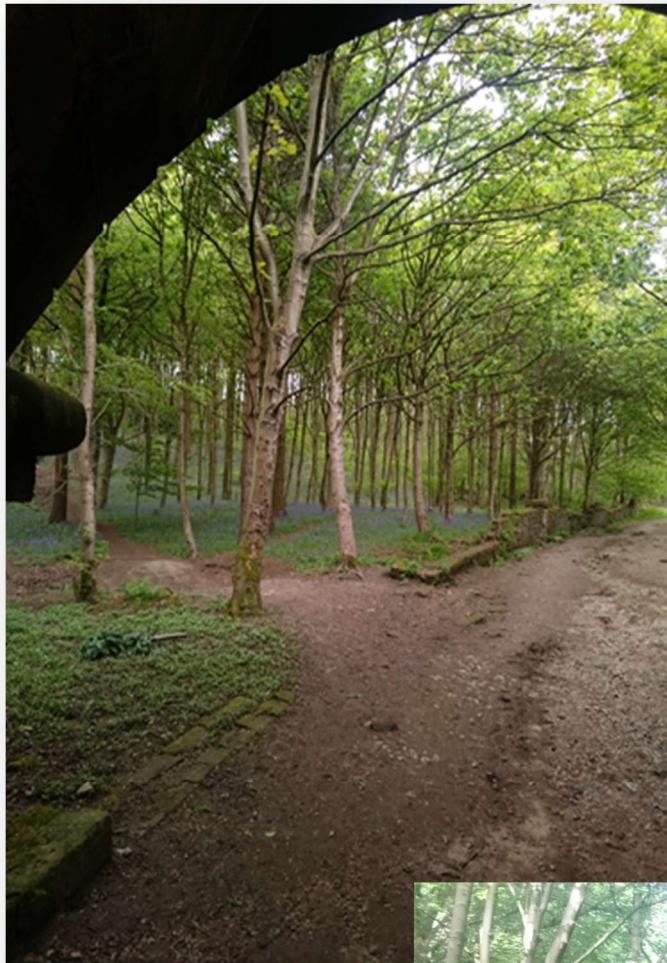
Spring and Jerrison Woods meet the criteria in respect of Wd1 ancient semi natural woodland and Wd5 bluebell cover under the West Yorkshire Local Wildlife Site (LWS) criteria. Although the woods meet the LWS criteria, they haven't yet been to the West Yorkshire LWS Panel/Partnership for ratification yet. However, in planning terms the site(s) are still considered a material consideration.

Many and varied routes weave through the woods, most following the course of the main stream. In Spring the bluebells can be outstanding.

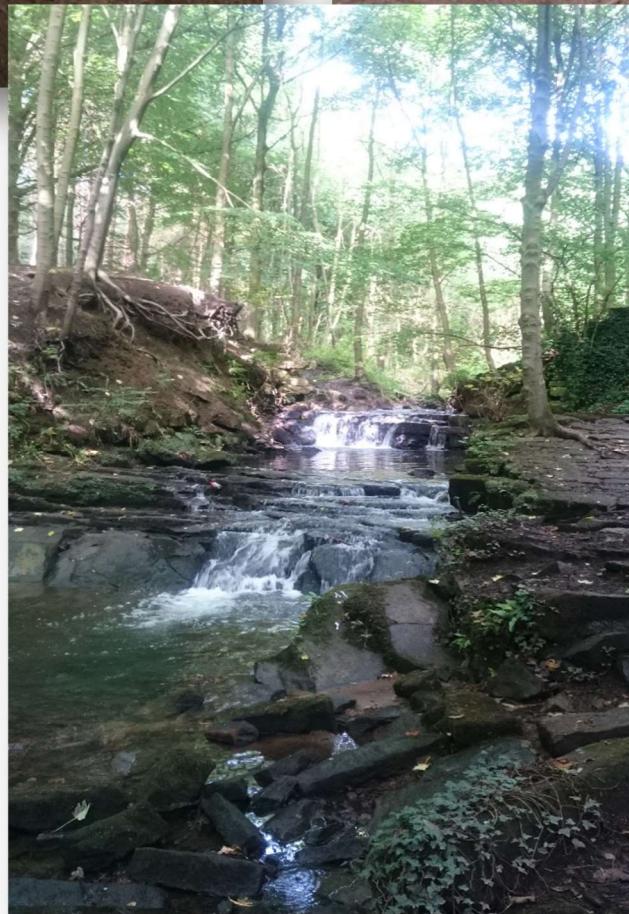


Fabulous Bluebells a short walk down Springs Road





Scenes in Esholt Woods



Site HG2-5 Pictorial Description

View of entrance to Springs Road – Footpath sign. Site 1180 to its right.



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Site 1180 (and below)



**Tree just beyond the
footpath sign**





Site 1180 from Springs Road, Coach Road houses can be seen.



Site 2163



The fields are used for grazing horses and recreational riding from the nearby stables.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER – How the Coach Road Fields fit into the landscape.



Above & Below- View of the fields from SSSI site 2038 of site 1311 - field in centre of photo, site 1180 to its left. Poplar trees centre of picture have now been removed by land owners of sites 1113 (Silverdale/Coach Road allotments HG2-6) in an attempt to give the impression that development of that site is a 'done deal'. In one week all trees on the land were removed.

Landmark trees Whalejaws Hill on RHS. Wharfedale North of Otley in the far distance.





View from Yeadon Banks of site HG2-5, note Baildon in the distance and moors beyond. Same picture below with the conservation/greenbelt land removed.





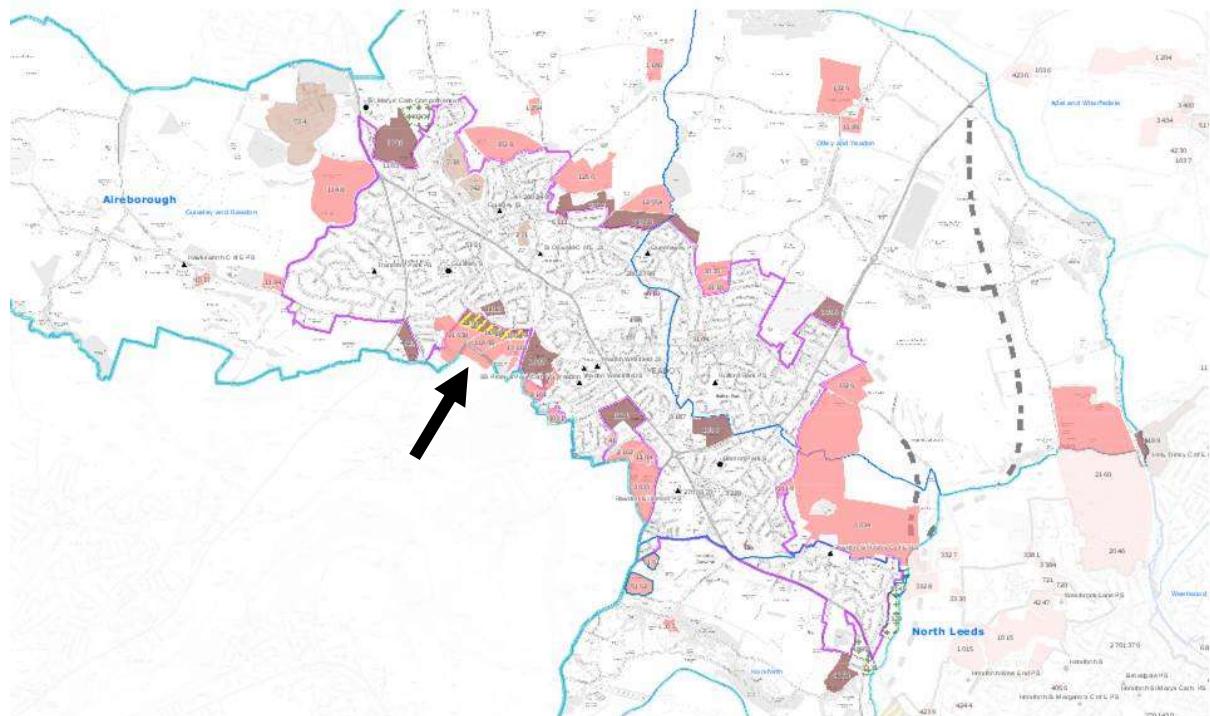
Site 1180 with site 2163 behind the trees (from Yeadon Banks)



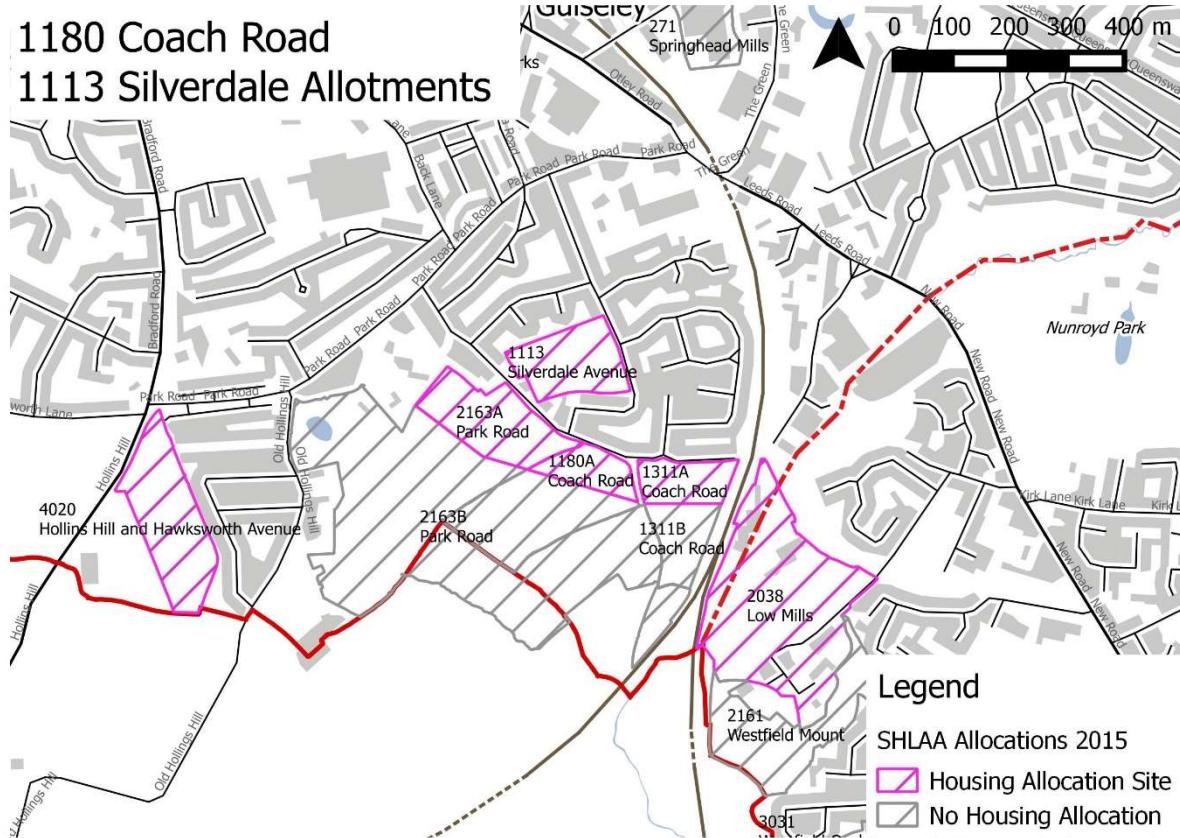
Site 1180 from Queensway

Maps of sites

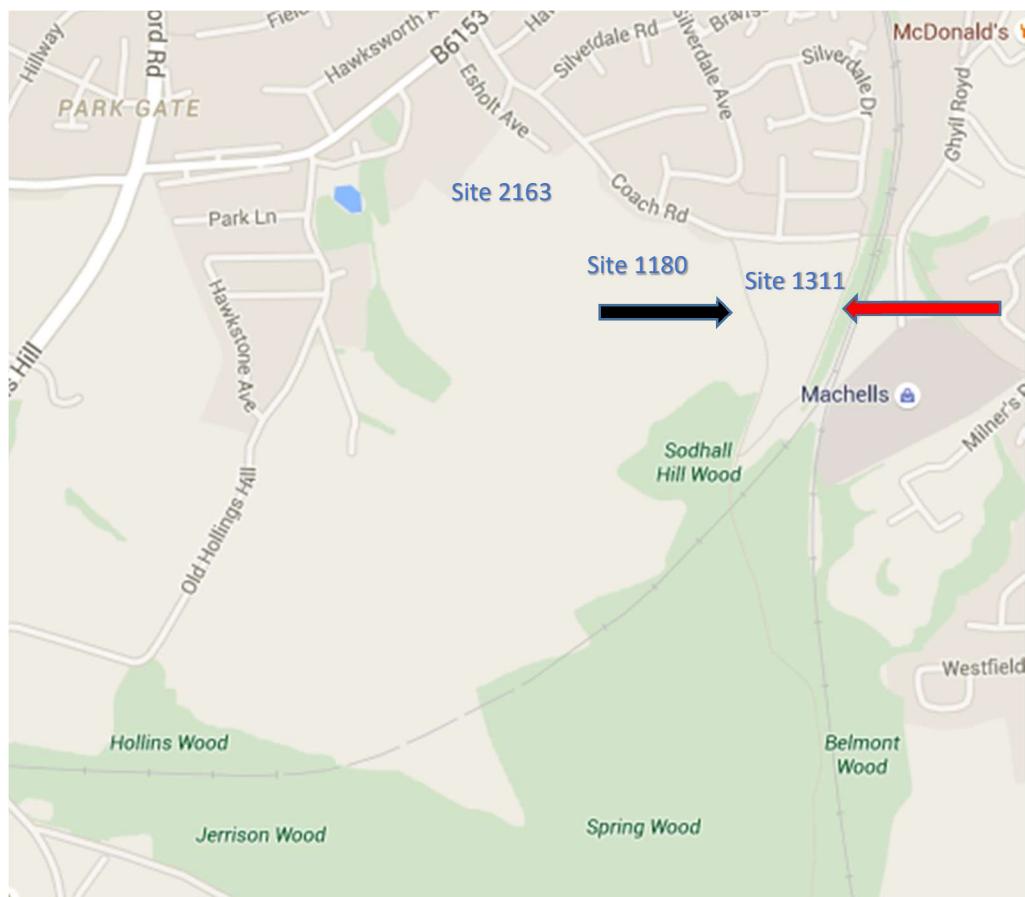
1. **Map of Aireborough**; extensive proposed development around the whole of Aireborough. Coach Road sites indicated by the arrow. Note proximity of the Bradford border.



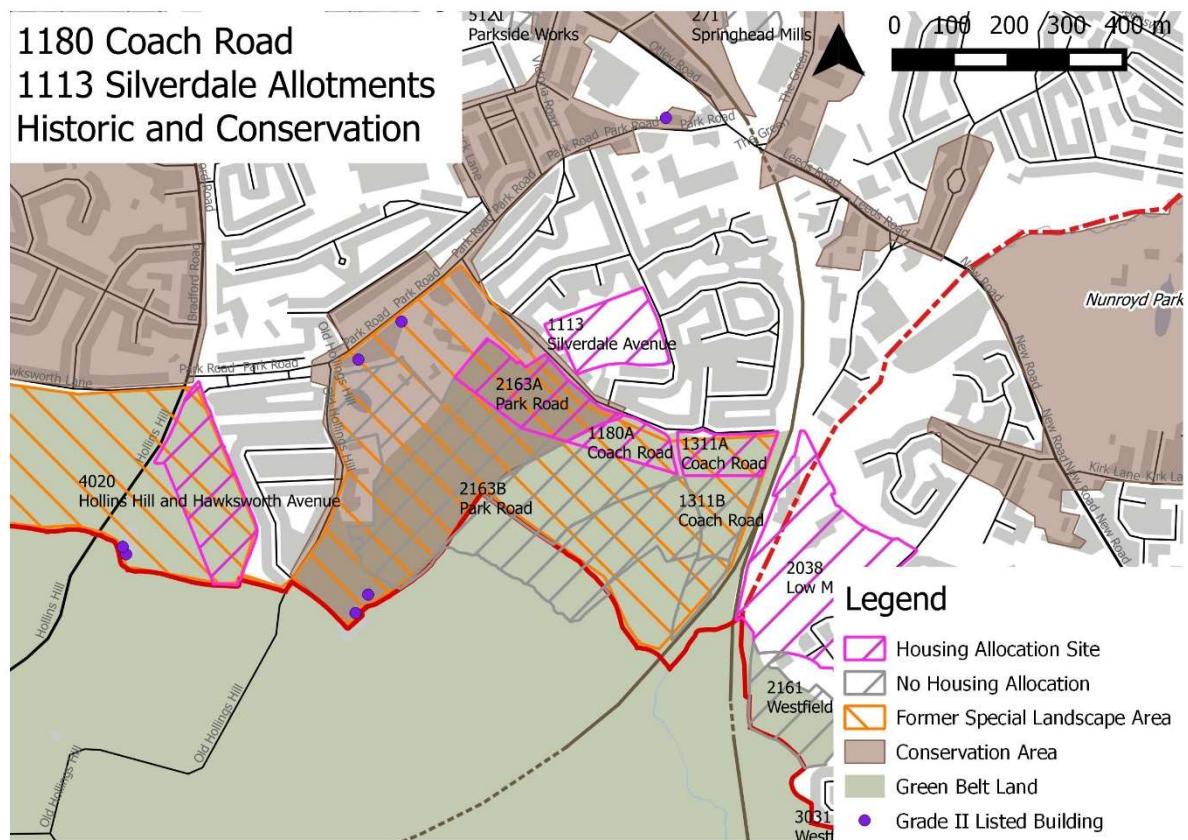
2. **Detail of Coach Road Sites** – note proximity to 4020 (HG2-4), 1113 (HG2-6) and 2038 (now removed from plan).



3. **Detail of Coach Road fields** – note Springs Rd (black arrow), an ancient ‘green lane’ / bridleway which runs between 1180 & 1311 and the footpath (red arrow) along the side of 1311 leading from Coach Road to Sodhall Hill & Spring Woods.



4. Conservation area (& buffer zone) / Special Landscape Area



Sustainability Appraisal of Site 2163a South of Park Road / Sodhall Hill

Sustainability Assessment Site 2163a		LCC Score	LCC Comments	Residents Score	Residents Comments
SA01	Employment	0		0	Current agricultural use / recreational.
SA02	Economic Growth	0		0	
SA03	Accessibility to Education	0		0	Existing schools in area over capacity. Without a new / expanded primary school travel to primary could be out of area therefore -1
SA04	Accessibility to Health	0		0	
SA05	Crime	0		0	
SA06	Proximity to Leisure / Culture	0		0	Existing Aireborough swimming / leisure centre would need expanding if significant development in the area
SA07	Housing	1		1	
SA08	Community Participation	-1		-1	
SA09	Community	0		-2	in conjunction with 1180, 1311, 1113 & 2038
SA10	Greenspace Access	1		1	
SA11	Greenfield or BrownField	-2		-2	Green belt, Conservation Zone & Special Landscape Area.
SA12	Biodiversity	-1		-2	LCC haven't undertaken a proper habitat survey & rating is based on incomplete / minimal data. Numerous mature trees which are home to bats, owls, woodpeckers. Grassland is used by deer, fox, field mice, and in passing by plovers, lapwings, curlews, kestrels, red kites & sparrow hawks. See appendix 2.
SA13	Greenhouse Emissions	0		0	
SA14	Flood risk	1		0	Beck at Western edge of site plus there are believed to be 2, possibly 3 springs.
SA15	Transport Network/Access	1		-1	In conjunction with 1180, 1311 & 1113 this would put >40% more cars along an already highly congested Silverdale Ave. There is minimal use of the unadopted Coach Rd. Including a school on this

SA16	Local needs	0	largely inaccessible site would cause gridlock at pick up / drop off times.
SA17	Waste	0	
SA18 a	Land Contamination	0	
SA18 b	Air Quality	0	
SA18 c	Hazard Zone	0	
SA19	Landscape/Wo odland	-2	Excess standing traffic on Silverdale Ave has potential NO2 / pollution issues
SA20	Distinctiveness	0	Special Landscape / Green Belt / Conservation area with extensive mature trees & ancient stone walls
SA21	Historic Environment	0	These fields are an essential part of the character of the Esholt Avenue / Coach Road conservation area.
SA22 a	Agricultural Land	-2	Is part of a conservation area.
SA22 b	Area of search for wind energy	0	
SA22 c	Water Resources	0	
SA22 d	Mineral Resources	0	
	Sum for Reference	-4	-13

Sustainability Appraisal of Site 1180a Coach Road

		LCC Score	LCC Comments	Residents Score	Residents Comments
SA01	Employment	0		0	
SA02	Economic Growth	0		0	
SA03	Accessibility to Education	1		0	Existing schools in area over capacity. Without a new / expanded primary school travel to primary could be out of area therefore -1
SA04	Accessibility to Health	1		0	
SA05	Crime	0		0	
SA06	Proximity to Leisure / Culture	0		0	
SA07	Housing	1		1	
SA08	Community Participation	-1		-1	
SA09	Community	0		-2	in conjunction with 1311,1113,2038 & 2161
SA10	Greenspace Access	1		1	
SA11	Greenfield or Brown Field	-2		-2	Green belt, special landscape area & within 100m of conservation area
SA12	Biodiversity	0		-2	LCC haven't undertaken a proper habitat survey & rating is based on incomplete / minimal data. Numerous mature trees which are home to bats, owls, woodpeckers. Grassland is used by deer, fox, field mice, and in passing by plovers, lapwings, curlews, kestrels, red kites & sparrow hawks. See appendix 2
SA13	Greenhouse Emissions	-1		-1	
SA14	Flood risk	1		1	
SA15	Transport Network / Access	0		-1	? In conjunction with 2163, 1311 & 1113 this would put >40% more cars along an already highly congested Silverdale Ave. There is minimal use of the undapoted Coach Rd. Including a school on this largely inaccessible site would cause gridlock at pick up / drop of times & an intolerable increase
SA16	Local needs	-1		-1	?
SA17	Waste	0		0	

SA18 a	Land Contamination	0	0	
SA18 b	Air Quality	0	-1	Excess standing traffic on Silverdale Ave has potential NO2 / pollution issues
SA18 c	Hazard Zone	0	0	
SA19	Landscape / Woodland	-2	-2	Special Landscape / Green Belt / within 100m of a Conservation area with extensive mature trees & ancient stone walls
SA20	Distinctiveness	0	-1	These fields are an essential part of the character of the Esholt Avenue / Coach Road conservation area.
SA21	Historic Environment	0	-1	Important part of conservation area
SA22 a	Agricultural Land	-2	-2	
SA22 b	Area of search for wind energy	0	0	
SA22 c	Water Resources	0	0	
SA22 d	Mineral Resources	0	0	
Sum for Reference		-4	-14	

Sustainability Appraisal of Site 1311a Coach Road

		LCC Score	LCC Comments	Residents Score	Residents Comments
SA01	Employment	0		0	
SA02	Economic Growth	0		0	
SA03	Accessibility to Education	1		0	Existing schools in area over capacity. Without a new / expanded primary school travel to primary could be out of area therefore -1
SA04	Accessibility to Health	1		0	
SA05	Crime	0		0	
SA06	Proximity to Leisure / Culture	0		0	
SA07	Housing	1		1	
SA08	Community Participation	-1		-1	
SA09	Community	0		-2	in conjunction with 1180,1113,2038 & 2161
SA10	Greenspace Access	1		1	
SA11	Greenfield or Brown Field	-2		-2	Partially within 100m of conservation area
SA12	Biodiversity	0		-2	LCC haven't undertaken a proper habitat survey & rating is based on incomplete / minimal data. Numerous mature trees which are home to bats, owls, woodpeckers. Grassland is used by deer, fox, field mice, and in passing by plovers, lapwings, curlews, kestrels, red kites & sparrow hawks. See appendix 2.
SA13	Greenhouse Emissions	-1		-1	
SA14	Flood risk	1		0	At least 1 spring on lower part of the field.

SA15	Transport Network / Access	0	-1	In conjunction with 1180, 2163 & 1113 this would put >40% more cars along an already highly congested Silverdale Ave. There is minimal use of the undapoted Coach Rd. Including a school on this largely inaccessible site would cause gridlock at pick up / drop of times.
SA16	Local needs	-1	-1	
SA17	Waste	-1	-1	
SA18a	Land Contamination	0	0	
SA18b	Air Quality	0	-1	Excess standing traffic on Silverdale Ave has potential NO2 / pollution issues
SA18c	Hazard Zone	0	0	
SA19	Landscape / Woodland	-2	-2	Green belt, special landscape area
SA20	Distinctive - ness	0	-1	Green belt site much used by local residents (dog walkers, runners, mountain bikers, horse riders etc) to access the Esholt Woods
SA21	Historic Environment	0	0	
SA22a	Agricultural Land	-2	-2	
SA22b	Area of search for wind energy	0	0	
SA22c	Water Resources	0	0	
SA22d	Mineral Resources	0	0	
	Sum for Reference	-5	-15	

Sustainability Assessment Summary

All 3 sites have been significantly 'under-scored' and would almost certainly have been 'red listed'. Key factors such as Conservation status, Special Landscape Area, Tree Preservation Orders and footpaths were not factored into the initial assessments. They are only 'sustainable' in the sense that developers could make huge profits.

Historic England's Opinion

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) had the following to say on the Leeds Plan in general- they considered the whole plan to be UNSOUND (from letter to LDF Publication Draft Consultation 21 Oct 2015)

General comments

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This means that the plan, as a whole (including the sites it is putting forward as allocations), has to set out a framework which is likely to conserve the historic environment of the Plan area. The Sites Allocations Local Plan proposes a large number of sites for development which could harm elements which contribute to the significance of the City's heritage assets.

There are, for example:-

- 11 sites which involve the loss of open spaces adjacent to Conservation Areas,
- 6 which involve the loss of open spaces within Conservation Area,
- 8 sites which involve the development of open spaces in the vicinity of Listed Buildings,
- 6 more where the development of an open space could impact upon both a Conservation Areas and Listed Building,
- One which seems likely to directly impact upon a Scheduled Monument, and
- A large Urban Extension in the vicinity of a Grade I Historic Park and Garden

The Allocation of a site for development in the Local Plan is, as Paragraph 2.52 of Section 2 of the Plan makes clear, "establishing that the site is suitable for that use" and, therefore, that the principle of development in those particular locations is acceptable. However, in the case- 2 -of this Local Plan, there has been absolutely no evaluation of what impact the loss of these currently-open areas and their subsequent development might have upon those heritage assets.

In the absence of any assessment of the degree of harm which the proposed Allocations might cause to the historic environment or, indeed, what measures the Plan might need to put in place in order to ensure that any harm is minimised, the plan cannot demonstrate that the development of the sites it is putting forward for development is compliant with the Plan's policies for the protection of the historic environment as set out in Core Strategy Policy P11. Moreover, the Plan also fails to demonstrate that:-

- (a) The sites it is putting forward for development will deliver a "positive strategy for the historic environment" as is required by NPPF Paragraph 126.
- (b) The sites that are allocated will be likely to "contribute to protecting or enhancing the historic environment". Therefore, it has not shown that it is likely to deliver sustainable development in terms of the historic environment [NPPF Paragraph 7].
- (c) The sites which it has allocated are likely to "conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance". Therefore it has not shown that it will be likely to deliver the Government's objectives for the historic environment [NPPF Paragraph 17].
- (d) It has complied with the statutory duty under S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 to pay "special attention" to "the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance" of its Conservation Areas.

Moreover, there is no evidence that, in preparing the plan, the local planning authority has had "special regard to the desirability of preserving" any of its Listed Buildings. Whilst it is accepted that S66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 does not apply specifically to Plan making, the

absence of any evaluation must bring into question the deliverability of a number of those particular sites. When the requirements to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses may mean that the quantum of development on that particular site is, either, unachievable or, at worst, that the need to safeguard the setting of the building actually renders the site undevelopable. For the above reasons, therefore, Historic England considers that this plan is unsound.

They had the following to say about the site HG2-5 – specifically: They considered the plans for this site to be UNSOUND.

The northern half of this site lies within the Guiseley Conservation Area and the remainder adjoins its boundary. When the Conservation Area was originally designated, there must have been an acceptance that the open area at the northern end of this Allocation contributed towards the character or appearance of the area. Therefore, one might conclude that the loss of this space would be likely to harm an element which contributes towards the significance of the Conservation Area.

By allocating this site for development, the Council is accepting that the principle of the loss of this currently-open area and its subsequent development is acceptable. However, there has been no evaluation of what contribution this site makes to the character of the Conservation Area or what harm might result to those elements which contribute to the significance of this designated area by its eventual development.

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In addition, the Council has a statutory duty under the provisions of S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 to pay “special attention” to “the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance” of its Conservation Areas. In the absence of any assessment of the degree of harm which this proposed Allocation might cause to the Conservation Area, or, indeed, what measures the Plan might need to put in place in order to ensure that this harm is minimised, the Plan cannot demonstrate that the allocation of this area is compliant with, either, the statutory duty placed upon the Council under the provisions of the 1990 Act, or the requirements of the NPPF.

Before allocating this area, therefore, there needs to be an assessment of the contribution which this currently-undeveloped area makes to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and what effect the loss of this site and its subsequent development might have upon the elements which contributes to its significance.

Executive Summary

The whole area of HG2-5 and the adjoining fields are designated Green Belt and therefore any development is required to be in accordance with adopted Green Belt policy and the special tests regarding development.

The land continues to serve all five purposes of Green Belt land

- The existing Esholt Avenue / Coach Road provides a defensible barrier to restrict urban sprawl.
- The Western side of the sites borders Bradford & they are surrounded by traditional dry stone walls.
- The site is fringed with mature native trees, most of which are subject to tree preservation orders, and are home to a wide range of treasured & threatened species – bats, owls, woodpeckers, wrens, foxes, deer as well as being regular resting sites for lapwings & curlews.
- Springs Road & the footpath through 1311 are in almost constant use for recreational access to Esholt Woods. Coach Road forms part of the Sustrans 'Aireborough Greenway' which provides a traffic free link to Yeadon for local commuters, school children etc. Coach Road itself is unadopted and thus provides a very low traffic route for and is cherished by many, especially those unable to cope with the more rough paths down into the woods.
- It is either wholly in or adjacent to part of the Guiseley Conservation Area, is a designated Area of Special Landscape; it is no 'ordinary' Green Belt.
- Is a major recreational asset in constant use by dog walkers, mountain bikers, horse riders, runners etc.
- Coach Road defines the Western fringe of Guiseley and the surrounding land provides it with a distinct USP. Guiseley is in danger of becoming just another large housing estate if this green asset is lost.
- The local infrastructure is not sufficient to cater for the existing major new residential developments, let alone anymore particularly given the chronic congestion issues on Park Road & the A65 as well as the overcrowding on trains at peak times. **See Appendix 1- Transport**
- Guiseley has already sacrificed green land for development at Netherfield Road and almost all existing Brownfield sites have already been developed leaving us little land for Employment.
- There are other more appropriate, suitable and deliverable sites for residential development within Leeds District which are not designated as Green Belt – many of which are brownfield.
- Significant local support for conservation of the fields from local residents.
- It is in active economic use, predominantly as grazing land.

Conservation Area

HG2-5, site 2163 is within a conservation area a key part of the 'setting' of the Conservation area and any development will be required to meet the statutory test of whether it 'Preserves or Enhances' the character and appearance of the conservation area. Similarly, the surrounding fields (1180 and 1311) contribute to the wider setting of the conservation area and should also meet the statutory test of whether development 'Preserves or Enhances'. These aspects of setting should be protected under guidance on the setting of heritage assets and the planning system should therefore insist upon the protection of such

- Site 1180 borders a conservation area (supposed 100m buffer around conservation areas)
- Site 1311 partially falls within the buffer zone
- Further proof that this area is far more than just 'ordinary' Green Belt; these should be the some of the last fields to be built on in the UK.

Special Landscape Area Designation (all 3 sites)

- As defined by Leeds City council. This is supposed to offer additional protection over & above Green Belt status.

We submit this report to Leeds City Council and request it be reviewed fairly and in good faith. These sites are not appropriate for development; had the Sustainability Reports been done more accurately in the first place these would have been red listed immediately. It is only natural that when asked to review so many sites at once that errors crept in but I implore you to have the humility to recognise the error before this beautiful corner of Aireborough is destroyed forever.



Aerial View of the area taken on Flight to Dublin

HG 2-5 Yellow Coach Road Fields

HG 2-6 Blue Silverdale/Coach Road Allotments – separate report

HG 2-4 Pink Hollins Hill - separate report

White area - Esholt Woods

Appendix 1

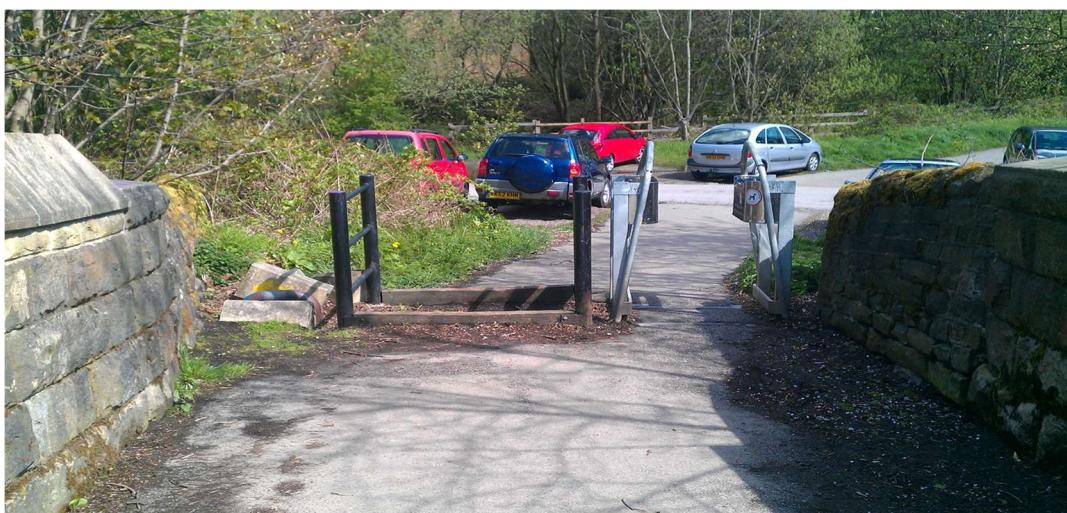
Transport

The current road infrastructure of the Silverdale / Coach Road Estate

At present the only real road access in and out of the estate is via Silverdale Avenue, The only other access points are from the top of Coach Road (onto Park Road) and pedestrian / cycle access over the narrow railway bridge at the bottom of Coach Road. The top of Coach Road is unadopted and very bumpy, so is impractical for vehicular access.

Coach Road is part of the National cycleways (Sustrans) connecting to Yeadon and is used by many cyclists, horse-riders and walkers recreationally and for access to places of employment & schools.

Bottom of Coach Road



Top of Coach Road



Silverdale Avenue



Silverdale Avenue is quite a narrow road, leading out onto Park Road, near the entrance of Morrisons supermarket and the Guiseley gyratory. Vehicles park on both sides of the Road near its' entry to Park Road, because most residents living there have limited or no off-street parking. This is further exacerbated when the bowling green is in use, leading to cars parking as far down as the allotments.

The above picture was taken on the 5th May 2015. It can be seen that the local infrastructure is already overloaded and additional traffic, will exacerbate the problems and dangers.

The dangers and hazards along Silverdale Avenue are:

1. Extra danger to pedestrians (especially school children) crossing the end of Silverdale Ave.
2. Greater difficulty in getting out onto Park Road. Traffic is frequently backed up on Park Road, at times to the top of Hollins Hill. If a driver is waiting to turn right, a small queue of 2 or 3 cars behind clogs Silverdale Avenue causing knock-on congestion down Park Road.
3. Higher likelihood of vehicles colliding with each other or with parked cars as they weave through parked cars on Silverdale Avenue (see picture below).



Traffic Summary

The existing access to the Silverdale estate along Coach Road is already problematic and can cause additional knock-on problems to Park Road and the Guiseley gyratory. An additional 30 – 40% increase in the number of vehicles would inevitably exacerbate this and if a school were to be built this would place an intolerable strain on the local roads.

A one form entry school (1FE) would ultimately have 210 pupils plus approximately 20 staff, whereas a two form entry could have up to 420 plus 40 staff. If we use Tranmere Park as a local example of a 1.5 form entry school in the middle of an estate, almost all staff drive to work and only 1/3 routinely walk to school. This equates to roughly 100 pupil journeys at school pick-ups & drop offs and 30 staff commutes. Whilst not having the resources to do a comprehensive traffic assessment it is reasonable to conservatively assume that this is on a par with a doubling of the existing situation and would lead to virtual gridlock on the estate.

This is in addition to the impact that these and other proposed developments would have on the already chronically congested Park Road and A65. A 20 minute journey into Leeds or Bradford at night turns into a journey in excess of an hour at peak times. Even commuters lucky enough to work in central Leeds within striking distance of the train station struggle to get onto peak time trains. Guiseley residents are known to head ‘up stream’ to park & catch the train in Menston to ensure they get on. This scale of intensive local development could only be considered with massive infrastructure expansion.

Appendix 2

[Case for an Environmental Impact Assessment of Coach Road Fields HG2-5 \(sites 2163, 1180, 1311\) and Coach Road Allotments \(Site 1113\) on the Silverdale Estate.](#)

The Silverdale Estate is immediately adjacent to the three sites of Coach Road Fields HG2-5 (1163, 1180, 1311) and contains the Silverdale Allotments (1113). It is truly an area where “Town meets Country” in every sense. However, in the sustainability assessment of each site undertaken by Leeds City Council (LCC) the Green Belt Factors appear to have been consistently underscored by LCC despite the fact that LCC have not undertaken a Habitats Survey . There is incomplete or minimal data on which to make a judgement.

However, there is ample anecdotal evidence from local residents that the Silverdale Estate and surrounding area is home to a variety of fauna, i.e. bats, owls, woodpeckers, deer, foxes, lapwings, curlews, kestrels, red kite and sparrow hawks. In order to establish the full extent of fauna inhabiting the area a Habitats survey is essential.

In brief the main legislation driving ecological surveys is the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010, which enacts the European Habitats Directive into UK Law. These cover European Species and their resting places, of which the most salient in this case being bats.

[Bats and the Law](#)

In the UK, bats and their roosts are protected by law whether occupied or not. It is illegal to damage, destroy or disturb any bats or roosts without having taken the necessary precautions. A roost is defined as any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection and roost is protected whether bats are present in it or not.

The Former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published guidelines to local authorities stating that the above legislation must be a material consideration in the planning process. More recently other government guidelines expect the local planning authority to require that Habitats Surveys are submitted with the planning application.

Clearly a full Ecological survey must be a pre-requisite before any planning application for part or all of the four sites can be considered by LCC.

[What LCC Should Do](#)

The planning authority has a legal obligation to consider whether bats are likely to be affected by a proposed development. If a survey has not already been undertaken to determine the potential for bats on the site and or the presence of bats, the authority should require that the developers commission an appropriate survey.

The West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) Ecological data services has data recording the presence of bats and bat roosts in the area of the Silverdale estate going back over ten years. Although there are only a low number of records, this is probably due to a lack of observer activity in the area rather than a low number of bats. It does suggest that there is an established population of bats on the estate and in the immediate area. Whilst the WYBG data identifies the Pipistrelle bat (Pipistrellus) as the species encountered in half of the data, other bats species not so far identified may also be present. Probably another Pipistrellus species or possibly long eared bats (plecotus). Of particular interest is the data on the maternity roost of bats noted in

July 2000. Such roosts of female bats gather together in summer and in the case of Pipistrelles and long eared bats are usually (but not exclusively) found in the roof structure of buildings or beneath hanging tiles. This indicates that somewhere in the area of the estate there is at least one property with a bat roost. Overall the WYBG data suggests that bat activity is centred in the housing area, but of course, this is where the observers are and there may be further bat activity in the surrounding area. A proper survey would be needed to establish the facts.

Therefore in addition to an Environmental Impact Survey and subsequent Environmental Statement being requested to accompany any planning application, there should also be a bat survey be a bat survey i.e. "Protected Species Survey and Report" required by LCC.

There is a clear justification for this in the Trigger List (criteria and thresholds) for determining when a "Protected Species Survey and Report" is required with the planning application.

The specific criteria which apply in this case are :-

1. Demolition or Removal of Buildings (Coach Road Allotments?)
2. Development affecting bridge structures (Coach Road?)
3. Felling, removal or lopping of hedgerows/lines of trees/veteran trees (Coach Road Fields?)

If a survey demonstrates that development is likely to affect bat foraging and or commuting habitats then linear features such as tree lines should be retained and compensatory planting should be considered whenever possible. If a survey demonstrates that bats, or a bat roost, is likely to be affected by the proposed development and planning permission is to be granted, a condition should be placed on the decision notice requiring the developers to obtain a European Protected Species Licence before work commences. The licence will specify planning conditions such as timing and measures to be taken to mitigate and lessen impacts. If a developer is suspected of contravening the conditions an objection can be made to the authority granting the licence.

Conclusion

Given the current data available, LCC should insist that any planning application should be accompanied by a habitat survey and a specific bat survey.

Appendix 3. The Coach Road Fields are the fields under and next to the 'Code of safety' on the map.

Guiseley to Yeadon

The busy towns of Guiseley and Yeadon lie within the North West commuter belt of Leeds close to the Aire Valley railway to Ilkley and the Dales. The 1.5km path follows a disused railway line from Parklands View in Yeadon to the old Coach Road leading into Guiseley, passing through wooded cuttings and under bridges including beneath the busy A65.

Safe routes to schools

This traffic-free greenway provides safe access to Yeadon Westfield Junior and Infant Schools and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School. It is hoped to link the routes to the nearby Benton Park and Guiseley schools in the future.



Moorhen chicks at Engine Fields

Attractions

This map shows the railway path and links to Guiseley and Yeadon town centres, nearby schools, Guiseley railway station and links to Esholt Village (the original setting of TVs Emmerdale). There are two children's farms close to the route (marked on the map). More information on these can be found at www.stleonardsfarm.com and www.emsleys-farmshop.co.uk.

The route also passes by Engine Fields, which is an urban nature reserve and home to a wide variety of plants, especially wildflowers with some fantastic wildlife living in the old mill ponds. Water voles and sometimes even kingfishers can be sighted. The Yeadon end of the path is close to Yeadon Tarn which is used for walking, boating and as a viewing area for the busy Leeds-Bradford Airport.

This route is supported by

Leeds CITY COUNCIL



Sustrans and the National Cycle Network

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. The charity is behind many groundbreaking projects including the National Cycle Network, over twelve thousand miles of traffic-free, quiet lanes and on-road walking and cycling routes around the UK. We are the charity making a difference today so everyone can live a better tomorrow.

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www.sustrans.org.uk
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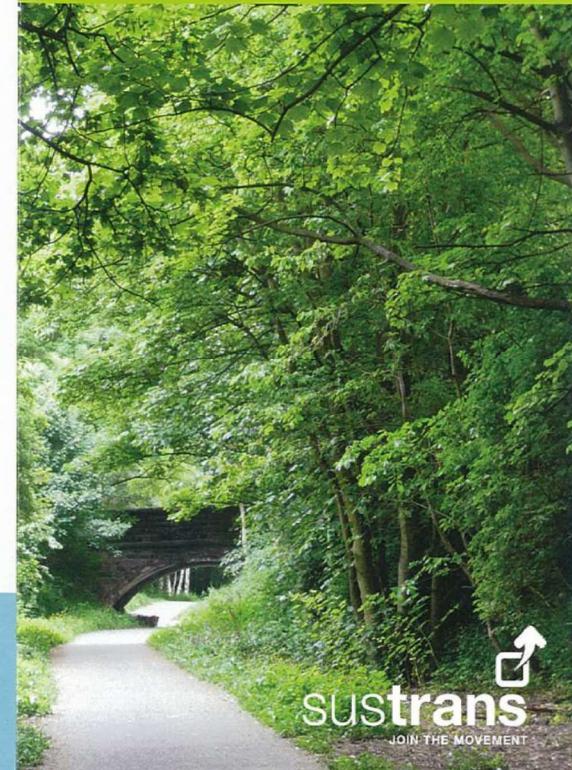
Sustrans
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

ROUTE MAP

5 

The Aireborough Greenway

Guiseley to Yeadon



YORKSHIRE

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APPENDIX 4

According to the former Countryside Recreation Network (now Outdoor Recreation Network) in their Executive summary on 'A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing: The Physical and Mental Benefits of Green Exercise.

"Irrespective of where we come from, it seems that the presence of living things makes us feel good. They help us when we feel stressed, and if there is green vegetation, blue sky and water in the scene, then we like it even more. This idea that the quality of nature affects our mental health is not a new one, but it has not greatly affected the planning of our urban and rural environments, nor the setting of public health priorities.

In the UK, more than 80% of people live in urban areas (Defra, 2004), though the greater growth is now in rural areas. Urban settings by definition have less nature than rural ones. And less green nature means reduced mental well-being, or at least less opportunity to recover from mental stress. As natural green environments have increasingly come under pressure from economic development, so it seems our own wellbeing has suffered as a consequence."

They undertook research to explore the synergy in adopting physical activities whilst being directly exposed to nature, called 'green exercise'.

They said

'We conclude therefore that green exercise has important implications for public and environmental health. A fitter and emotionally more content population would clearly cost the economy less, as well as reducing individual human suffering. Thus increasing support for and access to a wide range of green exercise activities for all sectors of society should produce substantial economic and public health benefits'

They recommended

"We conclude with sectoral policy recommendations, addressing:

Access and recreation providers (including local authorities), who need to address maintenance of paths, sustainable transport, promotion of facilities and provision of information.

Agricultural managers and policy makers, who need to increase countryside access and encourage the farming industry to promote the opportunity to indicate that land management can involve opportunities for public health provision.

Health sector – which needs to consider the contribution that green exercise makes to public wellbeing and saving money for the NHS. The forthcoming Physical Activity Plan should emphasise the value of nature and green space for formal and informal use, and also stress the therapeutic value of the outdoors (both rural and urban) for delivering mental wellbeing.

Planners and developers – who should take account of the vital role that local green space (or nearby nature) plays for all people, and regard outdoor recreational activities as part of economic regeneration strategies in both rural and urban economically depressed areas.

Social services – who should acknowledge that green exercise has clear mental health benefits for those people who engage collectively with existing groups or new groups, and so countryside and local authority agencies should ensure their provision of services at recreation and leisure locations is focused on encouraging families and other groups. Crime/social service agencies should also consider the therapeutic value of green exercise.

Environmental managers – local and national Biodiversity Action Plans should be rewritten to include a component on biodiversity activities that contribute to public health.

Partnerships - green exercise has implications for many sectors, suggesting the need for cross-disciplinary and sectoral strategies and action, and so countryside agencies should market the countryside as a health resource, and the private sector, particularly the food manufacture and retail industry, should be engaged in partnerships for provision of both healthy food and healthy places where the food is raised and grown.'

Esholt Woods, a Bradford Metropolitan Council wood

Near: Yeadon, County: West Yorkshire
Grid ref: SE191404 (?)

