

Dear Councillor Harrington

I write to you noting that you are chair of the NE Outer Area Committee to seek assistance broadly because of the "Shared Goals" of the Leeds City Council Town and Parish Council Charter, specifically drawing your attention to paragraphs 1.1 to 1.7. Prior to writing to you I have consulted the Chair of my Parish Council and have informal correspondence with Ward members. It is my view that the City Council, or its officers are failing to act within the spirit of the Charter. In 2006, as a Parish Councillor for Scholes (Barwick in Elmet and Scholes) and PC David Thomson of Boston Spa PC had the privilege of assisting Leeds City Councils Head of Planning Martin Sellens in drafting the Charter prior to its adoption by your full council

The Charter states at Para 1.4

"Leeds City Council acknowledges that, where they exist in Leeds, local councils are the grass-roots level of local government. By working with them, and in particular through its own Area Committees, Leeds City Council aims to act in partnership with local communities, while balancing the needs of the wider community."

At Paragraph 1.7 the Charter speaks of active engagement with all parts of its community providing vision, identity and sense of belonging

The background to my issue is that in December 2018 I represented Scholes Community Forum's 748 members during a section 78 planning appeal against Leeds City Council's decision to refuse planning permission on a policy H3 "Safeguarded site" East of Scholes. Our community was pleased that the appeal was dismissed by the Inspector and permission refused primarily on grounds of Access.

As you will be aware the City Council have submitted a Site Allocations/Remittal plan for examination which will take place in September 2020. The Developer/ Owner of the aforementioned site, through their legal advisors, have challenged the submitted SAP and are seeking the release of all safeguarded sites. Specifically the East of Scholes site stating that the reason for refusal, namely access, has been addressed with officers and can no longer be substantiated. We have no knowledge neither has the Parish Council, and I believe our ward members. Clearly if the claim made by the Client of Walker Morris Solicitors is valid officers of the Planning Department have not respected the duty enshrined in the Charter and it is important that there is transparency on this issue. Factually the developer can reapply for planning permission if there was confidence in reasons for refusal at the previous appeal had been overcome, albeit that it would be a departure from the development plan,

The SAP /Remittal plan does state that reviewing policy H3 is outside the scope of the review furthermore correspondence I have had with The SAP examiner, through the programme officer, indicates that the promotion of Safeguarded sites will not form any part of the Examination process. We rely on that undertaking.

I have endeavoured to provide adequate information that will allow your committee to formalise the matter & seek the answers we require while simultaneously ensuring that the Council and its officers adhere to the good practise partnership undertakings agreed in "the Charter". Perhaps this could be an agenda item at your next meeting but you prefer me to make this request through a virtual representation at your open forum procedure please let me know

Kind Regards

George Hall