



# NEWSLETTER

February 2022



Housebuilding at Castle Hill. Developments on the West of Harrogate will see a total of 4000 new dwellings built by 2035.

## Our view of the draft West Harrogate Parameters Plan

### What is the Plan? A quote from the document:

'The West Harrogate Parameters Plan Document [WHPP] supports the sustainable and co-ordinated development of the West Harrogate sites.

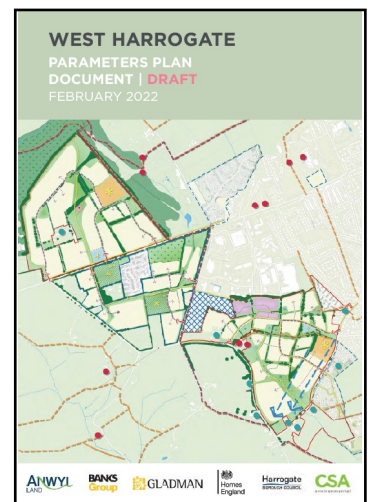
'The Parameters Plan has resulted from joint discussions held between all developers, site promoters and the local planning, highway and education authorities. The Parameters Plan will be a material consideration, taken into account when assessing the planning merits of a development scheme.'

### Our verdict: The plan is fundamentally flawed

... because it fails to recognise the challenges that will be faced concerning traffic congestion both now and going forward, alongside increased carbon emissions and inadequate infrastructure.

Quite simply the WHPP as it stands will not alleviate the problems created by the sheer scale of the proposed urban extension to the west of Harrogate, while those living in the area will suffer the effects created, including inadequate carbon reduction measures.

**Although large-scale development in the west of Harrogate will have an enormous impact on local residents, the Councils are not offering any public consultation on the Parameters Plan document. HAPARA is one of a limited number of 'stakeholders' who have been contacted, but there is no assurance that our views (see page 2) are being reflected in the document. After two years, the rush to finalise the Plan gives little confidence that local views are being considered.**



above: The document cover

## KEY DATES in 2022

7 Jan	First sight of draft WHPP
20 Jan	Stakeholders virtual meeting
28 Jan	Deadline for comments
22 Feb	Sign-off by HBC Cabinet
2 Mar	Approval by full Council ?
?? May	Infrastructure document released

## What the West Harrogate Parameters Plan doesn't do

Traffic/congestion was one of the key drivers for the WHPP being proposed in the first place, the draft WHPP virtually ignores the levels of traffic congestion anticipated to be generated as a result of huge urban extension to the west of Harrogate.

The 'sign-off' of the final version of the WHPP has been planned by HBC to be on 22<sup>nd</sup> February however a separate piece of work namely the Infrastructure Development Schedule (IDS) won't be completed until May 2022. By taking this two tiered approach there is a danger that the whole exercise will be undermined as decisions may be taken without full information being available.

As it stands the draft WHPP is seriously deficient in terms of critical green/low carbon issues.

HBC says that the draft WHPP is a high level masterplan covering, for the most part, only three sites (H45, H49, and H51). However what is actually required is a complete and integrated plan covering all the sites in the Western Arc.

The draft WHPP has been produced on behalf of developers but what about the residents? Alarmingly HBC appear to be saying there is no statutory requirement to consult.

*From the draft document ....*

### West Harrogate Infrastructure Delivery Strategy (WHIDS)

The Harrogate District Local Plan was supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which established the additional infrastructure and service needs, which were required to support the development proposed within the Harrogate Local Plan. The West Harrogate Delivery Strategy builds upon the information within the Harrogate IDP, to provide more detail about the infrastructure requirements for West Harrogate and the cost of that infrastructure. The document will define the infrastructure requirements by providing an Infrastructure Schedule (contained at Appendix A of this document) which is supported by phasing plans and schedules relating to the anticipated rate of delivery in West Harrogate.

*.... but where is Appendix A? Coming in May?*

## Changes requested by the Western Arc Coordination Group

The WHPP should be clear in that the whole of the western side of the town is being considered not just 3 sites (H45/H49/H51) and must take into account the views of residents rather than being far too developer biased.

The figure of 2,000 (H45/H49/H51) new houses quoted by HBC should be changed to read 3,000 since this is what all the sites mentioned in the draft equate to. Taking all of the developments associated with the West of Harrogate into account the figure should read 4,000. Quoting 2,000 distorts the fundamental context of the Draft Plan.

The presentation of the proposed WHPP to the HBC Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> February must be delayed so that it can be amalgamated with the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) to enable a holistic view to be taken. This once in a generation opportunity needs to look at the West of Harrogate as a whole – the principle of 'it will take as long as it takes to get it right' must be applied, if not the opportunity will be lost.

Particular issues the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule will be addressing need to be identified in the WHPP as follows:

- Wider traffic and congestion
- Public transport
- Active travel
- Hard infrastructure
- Secondary school requirements
- High capacity broadband

There should be greater clarity in relation to the challenges that currently exist, the deliverables that will help to overcome them and a clear pathway that ensures existing problems aren't simply exacerbated.

Clear linkage to the Harrogate Carbon Reduction Strategy requires inclusion, in particular regarding:

- Traffic
- Building standards
- Energy
- Overall carbon footprint

In general the WHPP needs to be 'beefed up' to specify:

- Issues being addressed
- What is going to be done to overcome them
- Deliverables
- Timelines