

Comment

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Event Name	Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)
Comment by	Ms Janet Raper (1175472)
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Question 2	

Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Question 3a

Your Comments

Please give details of why you consider that this part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate.

Please find below my objections to the proposed development of land known as Skerningham located in the north and north east of Darlington.

I object to the Darlington Local Plan which is currently subject to public consultation for further consideration in relation to Skerningham Village, in the north and north east of Darlington .

This is due to the damage and harm the Local Plan will do to the environment, the ecosystem and the bio-diversity of the area where the countryside will be replaced with an urban village. Skerningham Wood will be destroyed and its mature trees will be felled because in the Local Plan it states that the Darlington Golf Club will be located there. At the proposed location there are at least two graves. One of the graves is of David Green who was a respected and well known international ecologist – he was murdered in India and his body was brought back to this country. On the wishes of himself and his family he was buried within the wood as he was instrumental in the development of the wood and the planting of the trees. Myself and members of my family attended the funeral which was very moving in that the coffin had to be carried up the track and there was a large number of other well wishers

there paying their respects. I think to just dig the graves up and move them ... and to where would be very disrespectful not only to the dead but to their members of their family.

The wildlife in that area is phenomenal, there have been sightings of rare species including Red Kites, water voles and many more. To develop on this land as the plan proposes all this wildlife and wild flora will be totally wiped out and lost to that area.

In addition to that due to the large number of trees which act as a natural flood defence shielding the ground from flooding and any excess water on the ground is soaked up by the tree roots. Once these trees have gone there is a strong possibility that there will be localised flooding in the surrounding areas, not to mention the river which runs through this land will become flooded and cause major issues.

The proposed plan if it went ahead for the Skertingham Village will result in the mass loss of bio-diversity and untold damage to the environment which will never recover.

I am sure you are aware of the programme that was aired on Sunday 13th September on BBC1 broadcast by Sir David Attenborough called Extinction which showed the damage we are doing to the climate in which we live. He stated "We are facing a crisis and one that has consequences for us all. It threatens our ability to feed ourselves, to control our climate, it even puts us at greater risk of pandemic diseases such as Covid-19. It's never been more important for us to understand the effects of biodiversity loss, of how it is that we ourselves are responsible for it. Only if we do that, will we have any hope of averting disaster."

On the note of COVID 19 – it has been vital for people to go out and get fresh air and exercise (as advised by the government). This area in particular has been a great foundation for people exercising, not getting over-crowded as some parks and beaches have and people have exercised and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. And not spreading the virus any further.

Question 4

Changes Sought

Please Note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage. There is the opportunity to attach Word or PDF files before submitting your comment.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues identified for examination.

Please set out what change(s) to the Local Plan you consider necessary to make it legally compliant or sound. You will need to say why this change will make the Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording for any policy or text.

Please withdraw the Plan for the north and north east of Darlington, Skertingham Village – just do the right thing you know it is the right thing to do.

Question 6

Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan?

Yes, I request to be notified