

Annex A

Heslington Neighbourhood Plan Application

HESLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
THE BYRE, FIELD HOUSE FARM,
THORNTON-LE-CLAY,
YORK, YO60 7QA
TEL: 01904 468773
Email: parishclerk@heslington.org.uk

M. Grainger,
Head of Planning and Environmental Services
City of York
West Offices
YORK
YO1 6GA

Date 20/11/2015

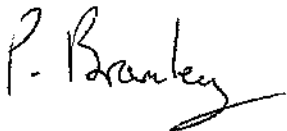
Dear Mr Grainger

Heslington Parish Council.
Application for Designation of Neighbourhood Plan Area

I have pleasure in enclosing a formal application to permit Heslington Parish Council to commence with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish area as marked on the plan attached together with the detailed Conservation area plan.

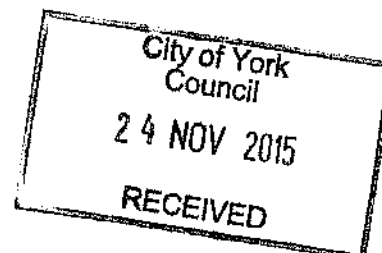
We look forward to working closely with the relevant officers in your department and we hope to receive a favourable response by January 2016.

Yours sincerely,



P Bramley

Chair
Heslington Parish Council



HESLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPLICATION TO CITY OF YORK COUNCIL FOR DESIGNATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

INTRODUCTION

Heslington Parish is situated approximately two miles south of York city centre and currently is in Heslington South and North wards of City of York Council. It comprises the village of Heslington and surrounding farmland interspersed with a number of farmsteads and individual houses. The Parish also includes most of the University of York but the area proposed for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan excludes all of the Heslington East Campus built area and the parts of the Heslington West campus which lie to the north of the Heslington Conservation Area and it also excludes Halifax College. The attached plan shows the extent of the area to be included in the plan.

BACKGROUND

Heslington has a special character and an important and unique role in supporting York's heritage, identity and cultural life. This is clearly recognized in the CYC Conservation Areas report which states that it has "retained a strong sense of its own identity"⁽¹⁾ despite its close proximity to York and being bordered by University of York campuses to the North and East. This identity is defined by the nature of the village which has "a rich heritage of streets, vernacular buildings, trees and open spaces"⁽¹⁾ and includes 26 listed buildings. It is further enhanced by its washed over Green Belt status and the outlying rural countryside to the south, which is of ecological and historical importance in itself, featuring ancient cattle routes, 1,000 year old hedges and an SSSI. It provides an essential element of the green wedge which runs through Walmgate Stray reaching close to the city centre. This is recognised in the current draft Local Plan which states "Green Wedges extend from the open countryside into the heart of the main urban area like spokes of a wheel" and "These corridors are vital in maintaining York's Green Infrastructure network and the character and environmental quality of the city."⁽²⁾

This proximity to the University means that student residents will always be a key part of Heslington and give welcome vitality and diversity to the community.

The predominantly rural nature of the Parish will also mean that Heslington will continue to be an attractive place for people to live; adjacent to jobs, services and education.

The unique qualities of the parish and village contribute greatly to the attractiveness of the university to its staff and students.

⁽¹⁾ CYC conservation areas, area 28, Heslington 2009

⁽²⁾ From Local Plan preferred options (June 2013)

AIMS

The Neighbourhood Plan must support and reinforce the distinctive character and appearance of Heslington Parish and its sense of village community. The Conservation Area, at its core, will be preserved and enhanced for established residents and future generations.

The Plan will strengthen the existing Heslington Village Design Statement [VDS] giving it statutory status and a greater influence over planning decisions.

The Plan will ensure the preservation of the Green Belt and green space within the Parish.

The Plan will guide established residents and local planning decision makers in deciding how best to influence key projects on the future of the village and wider Parish - its built environment, transport and traffic flows and ensure the sustainability of any development. It will enable those who know and care about Heslington to plan for its ongoing development with community-led planning decisions.

The Plan will reinforce the image and identity of the Parish to improve the quality of life for all people who live and work in Heslington, build a stronger community spirit and greater cohesion. Local residents and stakeholders will be consulted and involved in delivery of the objectives outlined in the Plan.

BOUNDARY OF THE HESLINGTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Heslington Parish Council plays an important and active role within the community and its declared objective is to represent effectively all the residents of the Parish except for those University students and staff who live on campus and are adequately represented by the University of York directly.

Consultation carried out to date shows a strong desire from Parish residents for a Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council works alongside City of York Council on many matters and is a statutory consultee on planning applications within its area. It gives support to numerous village groups and organisations and actively keeps Parishioners informed through its regular meetings, website, newsletters and the village notice board.

We believe these objectives are best served by defining the area of the Neighbourhood Plan as identical to the boundary of the current Village Design Statement for Heslington with the exclusion of Halifax College.

All of the Heslington East Campus built area and the parts of the Heslington West campus which lie to the north of the Heslington Conservation Area are excluded.

The reasons are as follows:

- The aims and objectives of the Parish are very different from the educational and commercial aims of the University and the needs of its students.
- The University has its own agreed planning brief and master plan for the campus.
- The Plan would have no significant interest in influencing the buildings and activities within the current university area designated apart from protection of the green buffer zone, traffic and pedestrian flow.
- The majority of public roads and pedestrian crossing areas between the two campuses are included.

- If the University were to be incorporated in the Neighbourhood Plan area, those entitled to vote would include some 5500 students whose needs and aspirations are focused largely around the University with no long term interest in the rest of Heslington Parish. The Parish Council cannot address these needs. They can only be met by the University, which has its own processes in place to communicate and consult with the student body.
- Students make no contribution to the annual Council tax precept, so there are no Parish Council resources to fulfil their needs.
- Students are normally only voting residents for one year, while they are in the halls of residence. Consequently, the cohort that engages in consultation will not be the same group that votes for the final Plan. Their participation will swamp the established residents' views and distort the Neighbourhood Plan, making it almost impossible to achieve its objectives. This difference between the communities has been recognised by CYC recently and reflected in the change of ward boundaries, which now exclude almost the entire built up areas of the university from the Heslington and Fulford Ward.
- Those Students and University Staff living within the designated Plan area itself will give a balanced input into the Plan as they along with other stakeholders will obviously be consulted.
- Inclusion of the University campus in the area to be included in the Heslington Neighbourhood Plan would add an enormous logistical burden and financial cost to its preparation, as well as unnecessary delay to its timely completion. The PC has a small precept based upon its small number of residences with non-student occupants and does not have the resources to deliver a Neighbourhood Plan to include the University West campus and East campus.
- For consistency those parts of the University campus which lie within the Heslington Conservation area and are an intrinsic part of the village will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Heslington Conservation Area Character Appraisal April 2009 says: "The Conservation Area still gives a fairly accurate illustration of a village life, with pedestrian traffic, busy pubs and shops in the south leg of the Main Street and loud playtime breaks at the school. At night time, when the shops and banks are closed, the area reverts to a peaceful village street. The active farm with its open fields provides a physical linkage to the open rural setting of the village".
- The 'green' buffer zones around the built area of the Heslington East campus are important to the setting of the church and the village and need to be included within the plan area. The playing fields between Holmfield Lane and the golf course are important to the setting of the village and must be included. Here, the sites are fully developed and no further significant development is envisaged.
- The Parish Council therefore propose that the boundary of the land to be included in the Heslington Neighbourhood Plan shall be identical to the boundary of the current VDS for Heslington with the exclusion of Halifax College.

HESLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL AS THE RELEVANT BODY

Heslington Parish Council has considerable collective knowledge of its Parish area and is the recognised representative body for the Parish. It is fully prepared to engage and lead the way forward in establishing a Neighbourhood Plan in conjunction with other members of the local community, relevant stakeholders and the City of York.

CONCLUSION

Heslington Parish Council looks forward to receiving formal designation of its Neighbourhood Plan area and to working with the City of York in completing its Neighbourhood Plan.



P Bramley


Chair


Heslington Parish Council

20th November 2015

Council
24 NOV 2015
RECEIVED

Heslington Neighbourhood Plan

Plan area : 

Excluded area : 

17/11/2015

