

Comments by Historic England on the representations to the publication draft of the Kirklees local plan regarding sites H675 and H1792 (land to the east of Old Lane, Birkenshaw)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These sites adjoin the boundary of the Registered Battlefield of Adwalton Moor. The loss of this currently-undeveloped area and its subsequent development would result in major harm to the setting of this designated heritage asset. Since the setting is one of the key elements of the significance of this Battlefield, Historic England considers that the development of this area would fundamentally harm the ability to understand and appreciate the Battlefield. As such, we consider that this would result in substantial harm to the significance of Adwalton Moor. Consequently, such an allocation would be contrary to the requirements of national policy guidance as set out in the NPPF regarding both the conservation of a designated heritage asset of the highest significance and for Local Plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.
- 2.2 As a result, Historic England fully supports the decision by the local planning authority not to allocate this site for development in the Kirklees Local Plan

2 The Battlefields Register

- 2.1 The Register of Historic Battlefields is compiled by Historic England. The sites identified on this Register represent areas where important battles in the history of England are sufficiently well documented to be identified on the ground. Existing information on each of the proposed battles has been synthesised by the National Army Museum and reviewed for Historic England by an independent advisory panel of suitably skilled and individually eminent people. Those cases which were considered to satisfy the criteria for a battlefield were identified and their boundaries defined. Adwalton Moor is one of only 43 Battlefields on the Register nationally and seven in Yorkshire.

3 The Battle of Adwalton Moor

- 3.1 The Battle of Adwalton Moor took place on 30th June, 1643. Recent research work has demonstrated that the battle played a pivotal role in the series of events that led to Parliamentary victory in the Civil War. The defeat of the Parliamentary forces at Adwalton Moor and the resulting loss of control of the north of England for the remainder of the year convinced the leadership of the Parliamentary cause that victory could be achieved only by seeking the military support of the Scottish Presbyterians. This support was forthcoming and a combined English and Scottish parliamentary army defeated the Royalists at Marston Moor, York on the 2nd July, 1644.

- 3.2 The battle of Adwalton Moor was one of movement and ‘encounter’. The surviving areas of the battlefield allow the course of the battle to be followed by the expert and, with suitable carefully sited interpretation, the battle could be made clear to the general public.
- 3.3 The Earl of Newcastle commanding the Royalist army of approximately 10,000 men, proposed to break the power of the Fairfax family in the North of England (concentrated on the cloth towns of West Yorkshire) by marching on Bradford and besieging him there. Lord Fairfax, the commander of the Parliamentary army, aware of Newcastle’s strategy, chose to defend Bradford by marching his force of approximately 4,000 men out of the town to meet the Royalist army before it left its base at Howley Hall. The advance guard of the two armies met on the ridge of land running between Westgate Hill and the summit of Adwalton Moor one-and-a-half miles to the southeast of Bradford, a landscape of enclosures, small lanes and cottages.
- 3.5 The advanced guard of a Seventeenth Century army was known as the “forlorn hope” and it was these elements of the two armies that first met. In this landscape of hedged-lined enclosure fields it was difficult for the two forces to be formed in continuous lines. The Parliamentarian “forlorn hope” took the Royalists by surprise and what followed was an encounter that moved from hedgerow to hedgerow with musketeers and cavalry fighting in isolated groups.
- 3.6 The Parliamentarians pushed the Royalist “forlorn hope” south-east towards the open moorland around Drighlington, but the consequence of this was that it enabled the main body of the Royalist army, including cannon, to form itself on the higher ground on the edge of the settlement. Once the Royalist lines were in place, they were able to counter-attack the Parliamentarian force that had now become vulnerable by continuing their advance across the open moor. The Royalist pikemen and cavalry struck the Parliamentarians and although they were held at the south end of their advance, the northern wing of the Parliamentarian army collapsed under the assault (and increasing cannon fire) and the remainder was forced to flee to Bradford before it was encircled. The Parliamentarians held Bradford for only one night and then fled to Leeds and then eastwards to Hull.

4 The Registered Battlefield today

- 4.1 The topography of the battlefield is a key element which contributes to its significance. The ridges, hollows and ditches are important in both understanding the reason why the battle took place in this particular area and the final outcome of the battle and are well-documented in contemporary accounts.
- 4.2 Whilst the significance of the battlefield has been harmed, to some extent, over the years by development within and around its boundaries (including the mid-19th century railway line and the Drighlington bypass), nevertheless, the area that has

long been known as Adwalton Moorside is still largely intact and is preserved as an area of common ground.

- 4.3 The open nature of much of the registered battlefield and the areas surrounding it are a fundamental element of its significance and allows the course of the battle to be read and appreciated in conjunction with the various historical accounts. Where the battlefield is undeveloped, it is mostly laid to pasture divided by field lines and hedgerows and it is possible to appreciate that the battlefield of 1643 may have appeared, in the simplest sense, similar to what it does today. The description of the 17th century landscape is comparatively well documented in the contemporary accounts of the battle by the Duchess of Newcastle, Sir Henry Slingsby, Sir Thomas Fairfax and Thomas Stockdale. The undeveloped nature of the site and the areas which surround it contribute greatly to its significance and the natural and historic landscape features within the site are afforded substantial significance

5 The impact which the loss of this site would be likely to have upon the Registered Battlefield

- 5.1 The development of the area at Birkenshaw would destroy the last remaining open area to the south-west of the Registered Battlefield. The significance of the battlefield derives not just from the field boundaries and ditches within the battlefield itself, but also from the ability to understand how the surrounding topography and landscape elements influenced the actual location of the conflict. These aspects all contribute to the reason why its setting is such an important component in understanding and appreciating this Battlefield. For a designated heritage asset whose significance depends so much upon its landscape context, the loss of this open area would result in considerable harm to the appreciation of the Battlefield, to the experience of those visiting it, and to the ability to understand the reasons why this important battle in the history of the English Civil Wars took place in this location. The development of Sites H675 and H1792, therefore, would result in substantial harm to this designated heritage asset.

6 National policy guidance

- 6.1 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development, it makes it clear that the economic, social and environmental dimensions to sustainable development should be sought, jointly and simultaneously, through the Planning system. The protection and enhancement of the historic environment is identified as a key element of the environmental dimension. In addition, the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is one of the 12 Core Planning Principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking.

- 6.2 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF makes it clear that, when considering the impact of a proposal upon the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It also makes it clear that "significance" can be harmed by development within its setting.
- 6.3 Registered Battlefields are considered by the Government to be in the category of designated heritage asset of the highest significance to which the greatest weight should be given to their conservation. Substantial harm to a designated heritage asset of this importance should be wholly exceptional.
- 6.4 In addition, 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 allocation of this site for development would not conserve one of the most significant heritage assets in Kirklees and, moreover, would fundamentally harm people's potential to enjoy it in the future.

7 Representations by the Objectors

- 7.1 The Objectors have provided absolutely no evaluation of the contribution which this area makes to the significance of the Registered Battlefield or the impact which the loss of this area and its subsequent development might have upon its setting.
- 7.2 The Objectors make great play of the evaluation that was undertaken in the 2015 *Adwalton Moor Battlefield Heritage Impact Assessment*. It should be noted that this was produced by the adjoining local planning authority, Bradford MDC, solely to evaluate the impact of a proposed Urban Extension at Holme Wood, to the north of the Battlefield, in their emerging Core Strategy. The Heritage Impact Assessment, therefore, was only considering the impact upon the significance of the Registered Battlefield of the specific development sites within their area (which are shown at the end of that document). As a result, all the viewpoints from which the ZTIs were produced look in a northerly or north-easterly direction. There were none produced of the impact which development of this site (to the south-west of the Battlefield) might have upon the significance of this designated heritage asset. Therefore, there is absolutely nothing within that Heritage Impact Assessment that can be used to substantiate the claim that "*any development on the site will not be within the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the battlefield*"
- 7.3 The objectors also refer to the fact that the SHLAA considered that the site could be developed without resulting in any adverse impacts on the Registered Battlefield. The SHLAA made no evaluation, whatsoever, of what contribution this area made to the significance of the Registered Battlefield nor did it assess what impact the loss of this area and its subsequent development might have upon it.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The loss of this currently-open area and its subsequent development would result in the loss of the only remaining undeveloped area to the south-west of the Battlefield. The landscape setting of this particular battlefield is a key element of its significance. The harm to the appreciation of the Battlefield, to the experience of those visiting it, and to the ability to understand the reasons why this important battle in the history of the English Civil Wars took place in this location is such that Historic England considers that this would constitute substantial harm to its significance. Such harm would undermine one of the Government's Core Planning Principles, would not contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and would be wholly contrary to the conservation of the historic environment as set out in the NPPF.
- 8.2 Therefore, Historic England fully supports this site not being identified for development in the Kirklees Local Plan.