



THORP ARCH TRADING ESTATE ACTION GROUP  
**OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 13/03061**  
2,000 HOUSES ON THORP ARCH TRADING ESTATE

**Volume 13 – DISTORTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS  
AND LACK OF LOCAL INVOLVEMENT**

Contact: Peter Locke, Chairman  
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Added congestion



Loss of prime agricultural land



Overwhelming local opposition



Site asbestos contamination



Gridlock on Bridge Rd again



Poor accessibility



Does this look brownfield to you?



Unsuitable re-routing of local traffic



Loss of flora and fauna

**Outline application 13/03061 for 2000 houses on Thorp Arch Trading Estate.**

**This is an official objection to the above application, on the grounds that the planning process is not been properly or fairly administered, and that the City Plans Panel are being misled.**

On Thursday 26 September, the City Plans Panel had a site visit and then a Plans Panel meeting to consider the above site. At these events the extent of the process distortion became fully apparent.

- The site visit was organised to view only two favourable aspects of the scheme - a building for the proposed primary school, and the brownfield 'Westminster Yard', which would be redeveloped. The panel members were not taken to see the huge acreage of virgin never-developed land of high ecological value. They were not taken to the highly contaminated area containing explosive-demolished buildings. The extremely poor accessibility (failing Core Strategy requirements on virtually all criteria by a factor of two or more) was not mentioned.
- The Plans Panel meeting was addressed at some length by both Councillor Procter, and Area Planning officer David Newbury. These two gentlemen have been involved in the, effectively secret, 'consultative forum' where the scheme has been developed. It was Councillor Procter who initially proposed a Walton By-pass, now known as a 'relief' road. Is it appropriate for these two gentlemen, so intimately associated with the developing proposals, to also be influencing the Panel?
- Councillor Procter was only on the Panel because he was replacing the official Panel member, his wife. Why is this permitted when he has such an obvious pre-disposition? Apparently he does this regularly, and has been at both the pre-plans meetings on TATE.
- Both Councillor Procter and David Newbury are aware that the pre-plans discussions of 14 March 2013 minuted that the 'relief' western route had "total support in the community". They are also aware that it is the opposite of the truth. Councillor Procter himself was at the public meeting where, of the 135 local residents present, only 7 had been aware of the proposals for 1700+ houses and a 'relief' road before April 2013. This information is clearly vital under the provisions for 'localism', where community consultation is an essential part of the planning process. Why were the Plans Panel not informed?
- No mention was made at the meeting of the extent of community anger at the secrecy of the 'consultative forum' process, reflected in many of the objections. TAG were only able to obtain a copy of the minutes of the 'consultative forum' meetings by using a freedom of information request.

- Nor was the total opposition in Thorp Arch to the 'relief' road mentioned. It forces thousands of vehicle movements per day through Thorp Arch conservation village. (Walton, about one third of the size, does see traffic moved, from skirting the edge of the village, to a greater distance away). The 'relief' road does very little positive. It has huge negatives. It requires 40 acres of prime agricultural land, and it joins two points already joined by perfectly good roads. And the developers hope to get Leeds to provide funding for it! It only exists as a 'carrot' to get support from Walton village. It provides the opposite of 'relief'.
- The many policy areas of the UDP, NPPF and Leeds Core Strategy that are breached by this scheme were overlooked.
- The planners' position seems to be that the site has already been discussed at two pre-plans meetings, **and in principle has been accepted as suitable**, subject to being sustainable. This has been done **before the vast majority of the local communities were even aware of the existence of the scheme**. Where have the localism requirements gone?
- TAG requested to speak at the Panel meeting, but permission was not given. We were not in a position to speak at the previous pre-plans Panel meetings. TAG had not been formed then, because NO ONE KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SCHEME at that time. The first we heard was at our annual Parish Meeting in April 2013. The voices of the community are being excluded from the process.
- The local Neighbour Planning Steering group were instructed NOT to consider the TATE development, but also told that if it went ahead they would not have to come forward with any housing sites.

This is not an acceptable approach to planning matters to be taken by such an important city as Leeds.