

From: Dave Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2023 13:07
To: york@iposolutions.online; planning@york.gov.uk
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: The Retreat - proposed boundary amendment

Dear Carole,

I would also like to comment on the proposed amendment to the Green Belt boundary at The Retreat in York. (EX/CYC/124)

Like Andy D'Agorne, I was an elected Councillor representing this area of York -in my case, for the years 2007-2023. I am very familiar with the area surrounding the historic Retreat Hospital and have attended several presentations on possible redevelopment proposals for the site, and toured the grounds, and buildings, of The Retreat on a good many occasions.

I oppose the majority of the proposed amendments to the Green Belt at this location, although I would be content with a small amendment, the detail of which I will come onto...

The majority of the proposed amendment would be unacceptable: frankly, the walled grounds of The Retreat behind the main building and adjoining Walmgate Stray and the allotments should remain Green Belt. All of this provides a contiguous wildlife corridor into the city of York.

The Lamel Hill Battery is an important historic site. This, and the adjoining finger of green providing a footpath up to Heslington Road, must be retained as Green Belt.

The walled grounds of the Retreat with its formal gardens... and which is indicated on the map as sporting facilities, and which also contains the Quaker graveyard where a number of nationally important figures are interred, must also remain as Green Belt. York, and particularly Fishergate Ward, is pitifully short of sporting facilities so the potential of using the area marked on the map as a "pavilion" and "sports facilities" must not be lost.

The one area which I would recommend be removed from the Green Belt in the proposed amendments, is the triangle of land circumscribed by Thief Lane, University Road, and 'Old' Heslington Road (top-right of the map.) I consider that some limited development would be appropriate on this land so long as it did not interfere with lines of sight to The Retreat. Conversion of The Retreat to residential use, which seems to be the most likely means of preserving and maintaining this exceptional nationally important building in the history of Britain's provision of Mental Health Services, will probably require some additional construction in order to make it financially viable in terms of ongoing maintenance fees. I would consider that this triangular-shaped piece of land circumscribed by Thief Lane, University Road, and 'Old' Heslington Road, would be reasonably removed from York's Green Belt to accommodate that development. In my view this would give the best chance of preserving and maintaining The Retreat, its walled grounds with gardens, the historic gun battery site, the potential for sporting facilities with existing pavilion, and, of course, the historic graveyard.

Yours sincerely,

Dave Taylor
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