

If you thought 3,500 houses was bad, now over 9,000 houses are being proposed – a village more than twice the size of Garstang

Homes England have agreed to grant Lancashire County Council (LCC) £140M towards a new road from M6 Junction 33 to Hazelrigg Lane, a roundabout, a road bridge under the West Coast Main Line and new roads leading into the area proposed for Bailrigg Garden Village. The grant is a contribution towards a total infrastructure cost of £261M that would include £47M for health and education infrastructure in South Lancaster. The infrastructure package is linked to the provision of 9,185 housing units. Of the balance of the £261M, the City Council would contribute £4.6M and LCC the same amount and £14M would come from other grants. The remaining £98M would come from a 'roof tax' on the 9,185 homes.

This proposal, known as 'The South Lancaster Growth Catalyst', is between Homes England and LCC and neither is in a position to 'require' that 9,185 homes are built or when or where they are built. These are matters for Lancaster City Council which is the Planning Authority and has yet to prepare a South Lancaster Action Plan in which it will set out its plan for the South Lancaster area. However, by the 31st August, Lancaster City Council will have had to sign a Partnership Agreement with LCC which makes legally binding its obligation to require the roof tax on any development it approves in South Lancaster, collect it and pass it over to LCC.

TAKE THE MONEY IN HASTE NOW – REGRET THE DECISION FOR EVER!

In addition, there are many questions still unanswered:

- Does Lancaster need 9,185 homes? What evidence is there of jobs to attract them? The University is not developing as it had planned...
- Does it need them to be built in this part of the District?
- How can any homes be 'affordable', let alone at social rents, if there is a £10K roof tax?
- Who meets the extra costs if there are 'overruns' on the amounts budgeted?
- How will the Pointer Roundabout, the A6 and the A588 with their existing inability to meet demand and be able to cope with the extra traffic the proposed development will create?
- Can the City Council as planning authority to refuse to allow more than the 3500 houses in its Local Plan - which would leave LCC seriously out of pocket?
- The idea of a 'garden village' disappears in something like a new town of 30,000 people grafted onto South Lancaster. Even if the ancient woodland and tops of the drumlins are protected, the urban sprawl will spread past Galgate.
- How will this development affect other strategic sites in North Lancaster and East Lancaster and the plans for Canal Quarter?
- What happens to the infrastructure debt if Lancaster District becomes part of a new Unitary Authority - The Bay - beyond Lancashire County Council?

If you are not happy with what you have read here, please write to:- to Democratic Services (democracy@lancaster.gov.uk) and ask for your email to be passed on to all members of Lancaster City Council. **Don't delay! To have an effect, we need to have as many objections as possible delivered by the 28th July at the very latest.**

Nick Webster Chairman