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Help us protect Askham Bog Nature Reserve

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We need your support! As a member, you can add your voice to those of over 40,000 people and make sure that those in power listen to the needs of our wildlife. Your support will help protect and care for the wildlife of Askham Bog. Please join us today.

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What happened?

Earlier this year, York City Council had been seeking views on the 'Further Sites Consultation' of its Local Plan by July 16th 2014.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust was extremely concerned about two of the sites, both of which are large housing developments; Site ST10 which is immediately adjacent to our nature reserve, Askham Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest, and Site ST15 at Whinthorpe which is adjacent to Heslington Tillmire Site of Special Scientific Interest. The wildlife interest of these two vitally important York sites will be irreversibly damaged by these development proposals if they go ahead.

We objected to the allocation of these sites in the first Local Plan consultation but they remained in the plan. We asked local people and members to write to the Council to object. **You can read our response to the consultation [here](#).**

We were delighted to hear about a temporary relieve for Askham Bog...

The Council heeded our collective concern and proposed to designate the ST10 as safeguarded land - but safeguarded only for future development.

...But Askham Bog was threatened again!

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust raised concerns with City of York Councillors following the collapse of the York Local Plan.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust called on City of York Councillors to commit to the protection of vulnerable and important places for wildlife in York.

City of York Council have since decided to allocate land to the north of Askham Bog Nature Reserve as green belt. [Wonderful news for the reserve read more here.](#)

You can help us by joining Yorkshire Wildlife Trust as a member and adding your voice to ours.



Join now

Background Information

Site ST10 Moor Lane, near Askham Bog SSSI

As YWT's first ever nature reserve, Askham Bog has special significance. In fact in 1946 the Trust was created with the purpose of looking after the site which was bought to save it from development.

A brief summary of the issues relating to the proposals is as follows:

- Askham Bog supports an exceptionally high biodiversity with healthy populations of numerous nationally rare species, and the only regional populations of many others. Particular rarities include gingerbread sedge *Carex elongata* (largest population in England), numerous water beetles and the fen square-spot moth *Diarsia florida*. Askham Bog has been recognised as an exceptional habitat for two centuries.
- It is highly valued both by the population of York and by a national and international community of naturalists and ecologists. Just two miles from the city centre it offers a peaceful place to walk and enjoy nature.
- The importance of the site is entirely dependent on the integrity of the local water table and it is exceptionally sensitive to any disturbance of that. We are concerned that these housing proposals will irreversibly damage the hydrology of Askham Bog and its special interest will be lost. There has been no information presented to indicate that this will not be the case.
- We are also concerned about the huge increase in recreational access on to the reserve. There is highly likely to be unmanaged access from a range of locations, particularly from dog walkers and young people. Whilst we welcome large numbers of people on to many of our sites, Askham Bog is too small and fragile to cope with this high volume of unregulated access.
- We therefore consider that the site should not be allocated for development and that doing so would result in

significant loss of the important wildlife features of the site. This allocation is therefore contrary to the Council's own policies regarding the protection of biodiversity and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Site ST15 Whinthorpe: near Heslington Tillmire SSSI

Our main concerns in relation to this site are:

- The allocation site ST15 lies adjacent to the Heslington Tillmire SSSI which is designated for tall fen plant assemblages, marshy grassland, and the breeding birds associated with these scarce habitats.
- Wetland ground nesting birds are very sensitive to disturbance and the increased numbers of people, dogs and cats from such a large development adjacent to the site would make it very unlikely that birds would successfully breed at the Heslington Tillmire once a development was in place.
- A large development taking up part of the catchment for the SSSI will have far reaching impacts on the hydrology of the SSSI and hence the designated features of tall fen plant assemblages and the wet grassland.
- We therefore consider that the site should not be allocated for development and that doing so would result in significant loss of the important wildlife features of the site. This allocation is therefore contrary to the Council's own policies regarding protecting biodiversity and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Reference

Site name: Land at Moor Lane Woodthorpe

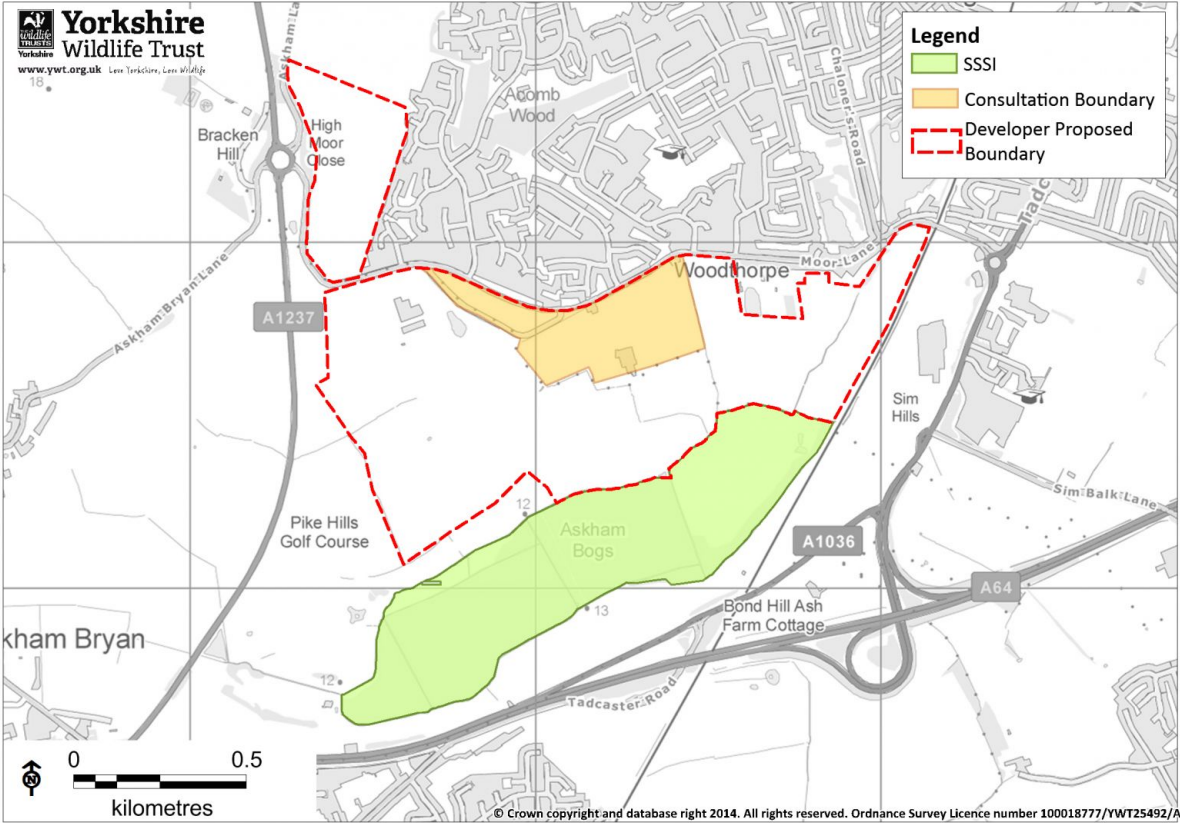
Site reference: ST10

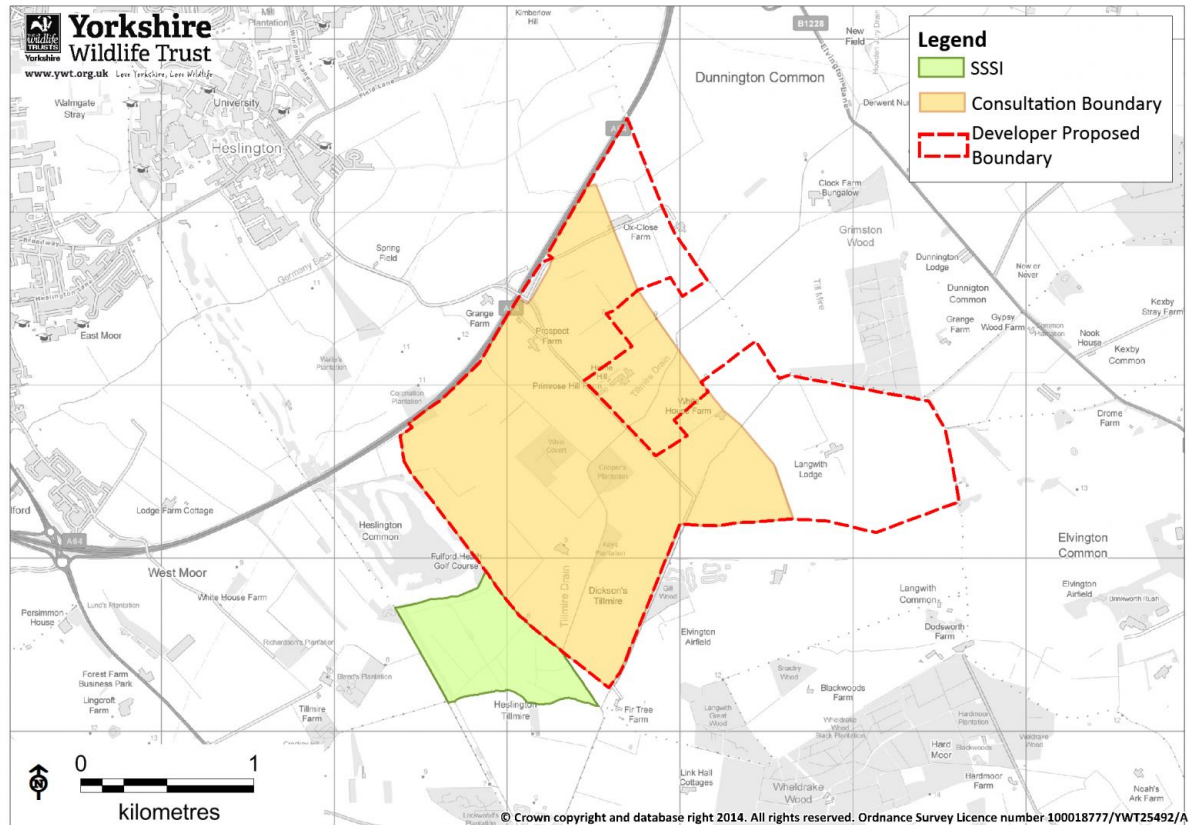
Page number: Page 20 of Appendix 5 Changes to Strategic Sites

Site Name:Whinthorpe

Site Reference: ST15

Page number: Page 32 of the main consultation document





Downloads

Filename	File size
Map of York developments.jpg	1.35 MB
Save Askham Bog campaign poster.pdf	2.47 MB
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's consultation response.pdf	483.46 KB

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