

**ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
9 JANUARY 2025**

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**SKERNINGHAM MASTERPLAN**

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**Purpose of Report**

We have requested a call-in of Cabinet's decision in relation to the Skerningham Masterplan (Minute C76) The reasons we have requested the call-in is to determine details omitted from the Cabinet report :-

- Page 24 of the Masterplan quotes The Council's assumed pupil yields are 20 primary aged children and 12 secondary school aged children per 100 dwellings. However, Department of Education has this figure higher at 25 primary and 13 secondary pupils per 100 dwellings. They also go on to say that larger homes (such as the ones in Skerningham Garden Village) and newer houses will typically have more school aged children than this. [Fact Sheet 5. New homes and school Places GOV\\_UK](#).  
The Local Plan also references school yields. However, these yields are different to the yields in the Masterplan which are lower. This suggests that the Skerningham Masterplan is not consistent with the Local Plan Policy.  
We feel this is evidence that the decision was not taken with the principle of due consultation. Scrutiny would like to look at the data in respect of these assumptions and the discrepancy between the Council's numbers, the Department of Education's numbers and the Local Plan.
- According to a submission on 30 August 2024 to Planning Application 24/00772/FULE from Paul Richardson on behalf of the Education Department [Consultee Comments for Planning Application 24/00772/FULE](#), it is stated that there is no spare capacity at Education Village for secondary pupils. This means that pupils will need to go to Longfield School creating a longer journey for residents living east of the East Coast Mainline.

Scrutiny would like to review recent traffic modelling in respect of additional car journeys in relation to this and the road capacity to ensure the infrastructure phasing is acceptable. In reviewing the Traffic Modelling info in relation to the Springfield Park Link Road which is very old, it's useful from the point that it has traffic modelling in relation to Skerningham Garden Village [Skerningham Garden Village Local Plan](#) (page 9). Without the Local Distributor Road in place and assuming 600 houses have been built at the top of Barmpton Lane, it quotes a 47.6% increase in traffic down Whinbush Way.

The Systra traffic modelling done in January 2021 referenced in the Local Plan assumes that part of the Skerningham Link Road (Local Distributor Road) will be built

from Barmpton Lane to Bishopton Lane in 2025. It also assumes that the Local Distributor Road would be completed in 2030 which was stated by Andy Casey in the Local Plan hearings. I believe that this modelling, now 5 years out of date, assuming infrastructure in place 5 years early is now of very limited value. There's no clarity on whether this traffic modelling was based on the assumption that Skerningham Garden Village would be a 20 minute neighbourhood and whether they had factored in school trips. The Local Distributor Road is not scheduled to be completed until 2036 by which time there will be 1,450 houses built with no additional schools.

We feel that this is evidence that the decision was not taken with the principle of due consultation. Scrutiny would like to review recent traffic modelling which would include:

- a. Traffic at peak time around school time assuming pupils are using the existing schools. Assumptions on per number of pupils per 100 houses should also show numbers based on the Department of Education.
  - b. Traffic modelling for general non school traffic
  - c. Traffic modelling should also factor in the additional traffic coming from the Burtree Garden Village
  - d. Traffic modelling should look at how Whinbush Way/ Salters Lane North / Longfield Road / North Road are impacted
- The Systra Report entitled Skerningham Railway Crossing - Feasibility Study looks at the various routes for the Local Distributor Road to cross the railway. It considered 4 options, all of which avoided the woods. Point 5.1.5 states 'An area of dense woodland is located to the east of the ECML. For each option, a roundabout has been shown to the east of the ECML to ensure that the proposed link road can divert past and not impact upon the woodland'. However, the Masterplan shows the road going straight through the Skerningham plantation. In the Local Plan, policy H10, item i, vi), it states that wherever possible the Skerningham Garden Village development should retain and enhance hedgerow and trees that contribute to landscape character.

We feel that this is evidence that the decision was not taken with the principle of explaining what options were considered and giving reasons for the decision. Scrutiny would like to review any relevant documents that consider these routes and see why the decision was taken to choose an option that goes through Skerningham Woods.

We would like to discuss these issues with the relevant Portfolio Holder, relevant Director and Head of Service

**Councillors Henderson, Marshall, Durham and Scott**