

# Appendix 5 – Draft Recommendations for Spennithorne Parish Meeting

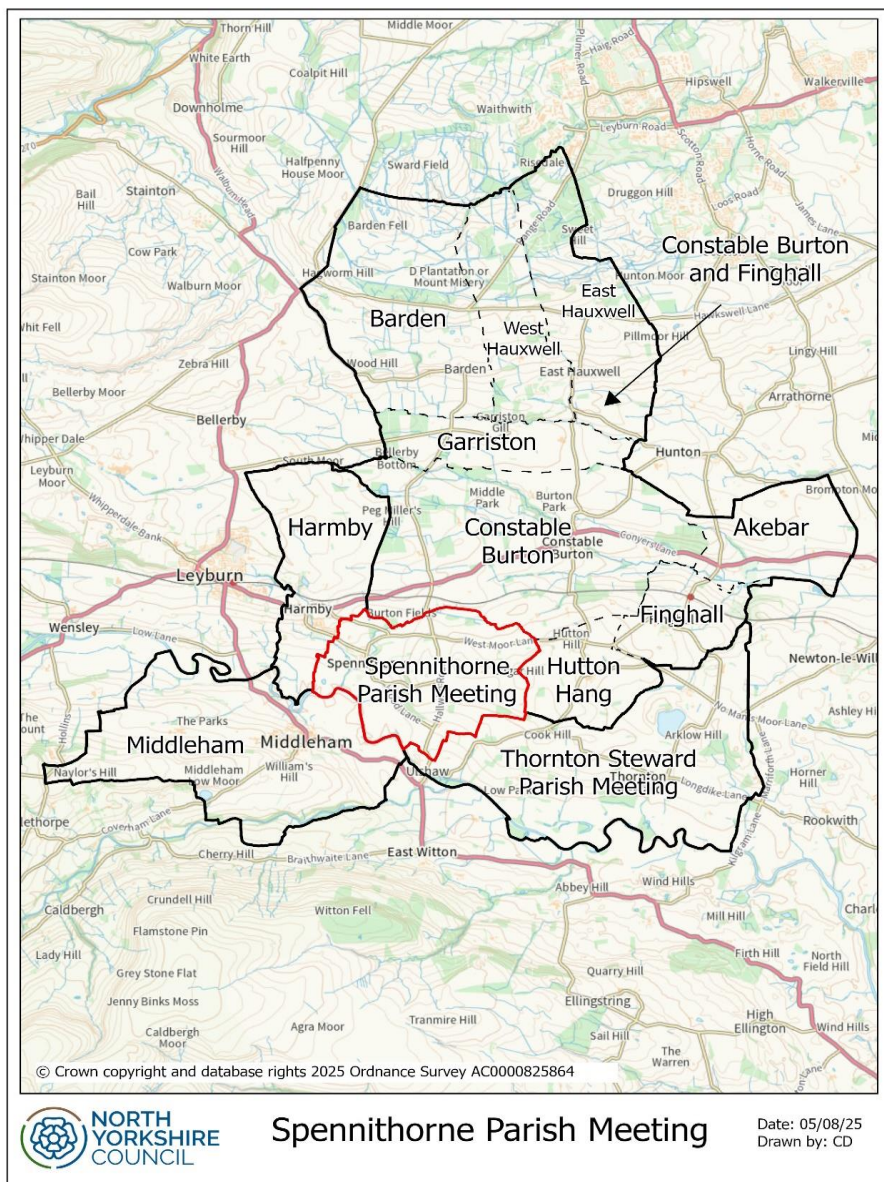
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## 1.0 Current governance arrangements and history of the area

### Current governance arrangements

- 1.1 Spennithorne parish is situated within the Scotton and Lower Wensleydale division and is part of the Richmond and Northallerton parliamentary constituency.
- 1.2 Spennithorne parish currently has 160 electors and 103 properties.
- 1.3 Spennithorne has a number of neighbouring parish areas as shown in the map below including Harmby.



- 1.4 Whilst the area of Spennithorne is parished it does not have a parish council and is referred to as a parish meeting. This means it does not elect Councillors or hold parish council meetings. Parish meetings must assemble annually between 1 March

and 1 June and on at least one other occasion during the year. These meetings are open to the public but only registered electors of the parish can speak and vote.

- 1.5 Parish meetings can raise a precept to raise monies for spending for the benefit of the parish. Spennithorne raised a precept of £2,650 in 2025/26.
- 1.6 Spennithorne Parish Meeting initially requested to merge with a neighbouring parish with Harmby being the preferred option.

### History of the area

- 1.7 In November 2023 Spennithorne agreed at a parish meeting to continue as a parish meeting as initially there was little appetite from Harmby to merge with Spennithorne.
- 1.8 In May 2025 the Chair E-mailed advising that the clerk has resigned.
- 1.9 The parish meeting continued to struggle for volunteers and had no interest in the clerk position.
- 1.10 Harmby Parish Council have now confirmed they are in favour of a merger with Spennithorne.
- 1.11 Harmby currently has 337 electors and 199 properties and there are 5 Councillors on the parish council.
- 1.12 There was no response from the Divisional Representative.

### Five year electorate forecast

- 1.13 The electorate and 5 year electorate forecast for Spennithorne and Harmby is as follows:

Parish	Electorate (2025)	Electorate prediction (2030)*	Predicted electorate increase
Spennithorne	160	168	+8
Harmby	337	348	+11

*\* based on 2024 electorate totals*

## 2.0 Assessment of consultation responses for Spennithorne Parish Meeting

2.1 The following table shows the number of households written to, with the number of consultation responses received, and response rate.

Households sent CGR consultation letter	1132
Consultation responses received	24
Response rate	2.1

2.2 Consultation letters were sent to households in Constable Burton and Finghall, Harmby, Middleham Town and Thornton Steward as following the CGR request made by Spennithorne to merge with a neighbouring parish, these were the areas under review.

2.3 A copy of the consultation survey can be found at Annex 5A. A summary of consultation responses received can be found at Annex 5B.

2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the free text comments received through the consultation process reflect the views of the individual respondents alone. These comments do not represent the views of North Yorkshire Council and should not be construed as being endorsed by the Council.

2.5 The response rate in the table above was calculated by comparing the number of consultation responses with the number of households directly consulted by means of a letter sent to all properties in the areas under review. The total number of responses for the Spennithorne CGR was 24.

2.6 Of the 24 respondents, 7 reported that they lived in Spennithorne and 13 in a neighbouring parish, of which 7 was Harmby. 2 respondents were community organisation representatives and 2 others did not state.

2.7 The majority of respondents chose to merge with a neighbouring parish, as detailed in the table below.

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes, I support this idea	19	79%
No, I do not support this idea	3	13%
I am unsure	2	8%
Total	24	100%

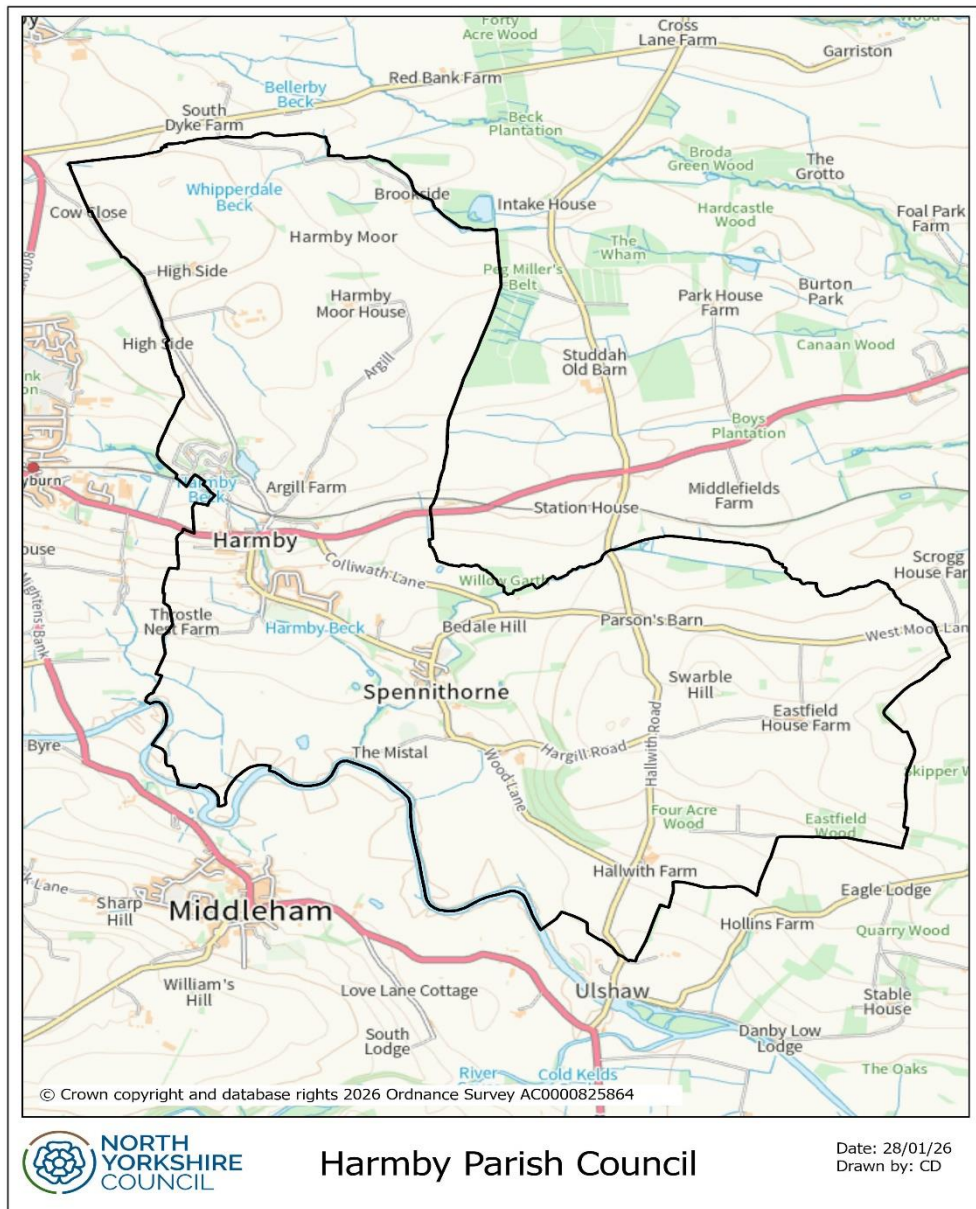
- 2.8 Of the 19 residents supporting a merger 18 supported the suggestion of merging with Harmby, with 1 suggesting a merger with Constable Burton and Finghall.
- 2.9 When asked if the proposed model would meet the needs of its community, a majority of 16 respondents agreed that it would, as detailed in the table below.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes, definitely	13	54%
Yes, somewhat	3	13%
No	3	13%
I am unsure	5	21%
Total	24	100%

- 2.10 All consultation responses received have been analysed and taken into account when forming Stage 2 recommendations.
- 2.11 Annex 5B summarises the feedback received.
- 2.12 The comments generally supported the idea of the merger as the two villages already have long standing joint community ventures, currently work together on a frequent basis and share amenities.
- 2.13 The reason the CGR request was initially made was due to the difficulties in recruiting volunteers to the parish meeting. It was felt that a merger with a strongly led Council would improve matters.

### 3.0 Final assessment and draft recommendations

- 3.1 The majority of the 79% responses (95%) indicated support for Spennithorne to merge with the neighbouring parish of Harmby. It is therefore proposed to merge the parish of Spennithorne with Harmby to form a single parish council.
- 3.2 The parish would be known as the parish of Harmby.
- 3.3 A map of the recommended parish of Harmby is shown below:



- 3.4 A list of recommendations can be viewed below:

**Recommendation 1 – the existing parish of Spennithorne be amalgamated with the parish of Harmby**

**Recommendation 2 – that the new parish boundary is as detailed in the attached map.**

**Recommendation 3 – the new parish shall be known as Harmby**

**Recommendation 4 – there shall be a parish council for the parish of Harmby**

**Recommendation 5 - that the Parish Council be named Harmby Parish Council.**

**Recommendation 6 – that 5 Councillors are elected to Harmby Parish Council.**

**Recommendation 7 – that the above take effect for administration purposes on 1 April 2027 with elections to the new Parish Council to held on 6 May 2027 for a term of 4 years. Changes to the electoral register required for the above take effect on the revised publication ahead of that election (planned for December 2026).**

3.5 The recommendations detailed above will form the basis of the Stage 2 consultation which will commence on 19 March 2026.

Annex 5A – Consultation survey

Annex 5B – Summary of consultation responses