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Forward Planning
Ryedale District Council
Old Malton Road
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9th December 2015

Sent by email:

Dear Sir or Madam

**RYEDALE LOCAL PLAN: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES – SITES CONSULTATION,
DECEMBER 2015
REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF ROYAL MAIL GROUP**

We are instructed by Royal Mail Group Ltd (Royal Mail) to comment on the above document, currently on consultation.

Background

Royal Mail is the UK's designated Universal Postal Service Provider, supporting customers, businesses and communities across the country. This means it is the only company to have a statutory duty to collect and deliver letters six days a week (and packets five days a week) at an affordable and geographically uniform price to every address in the UK. Royal Mail's services are regulated by Ofcom. It also operates Parcelforce Worldwide which is a parcels carrier.

Please note that Royal Mail and the Post Office are separate companies. Royal Mail is the company that delivers parcels and letters – the provider of the universal postal service. The Post Office is the nationwide network of branches offering a range of postal, Government and financial services. The Post Office remains in government ownership, whereas Royal Mail is a public listed company.

The United Kingdom letter post business was fully liberalised in January 2006 and Royal Mail operates in a highly competitive market place. Royal Mail is continually seeking to find ways to improve the efficiency of its business, anticipate its customers' needs and respond flexibly to changes in communications technology.

Royal Mail Properties

Royal Mail delivers mail from a network/portfolio of properties around the Ryedale District. The following property, which forms a part of this portfolio, will be impacted upon by a draft allocation:

- Pickering Delivery Office, Thornton Road Industrial Estate, Pickering YO18 7AG (Royal Mail ID: BE2816).

Two potential sites for residential development have been identified on the fields adjacent to the above delivery office (**site references 139 and 150**). Residential development on these sites should be cognisant of and sensitive to Royal Mail's operations.

Representations

Royal Mail wish to object to the **site selection methodology** with regards to sites 139 and 150, particularly sections Q29 (amenity) and Q46 (highways impact and mitigation), in so far as the consideration of the sites for residential development needs to take full account of Royal Mail's operations at this delivery office, and the need to ensure that they are not hindered by a proposed development. The reference within section Q29 to the potential for the Thornton Road Industrial Estate, in which the delivery office sits, to cause harm to the amenity of prospective residents, as demonstrated at a Public Inquiry, is welcomed in the case of both prospective sites. This reference is supported, but it is requested that further consideration is given to the operations which are carried out within the industrial estate, and that mitigation measures are stipulated in order to fully account for and respond to Royal Mail's operations.

It should be noted that at present, the above site is operational and Royal Mail currently have no plans to close or relocate it. The delivery office operates anti-social hours and generates noise through vehicle movements and loading operations which could impact on the amenity of nearby residential occupiers. The delivery office has an open service yard and sits adjacent to the boundary between Thornton Road Industrial Estate and the proposed housing sites.

If new housing is to be permitted at sites '139' and '150' it will be essential that the local authority requires and enforces the incorporation of measures to satisfactorily mitigate the impact of noise within the development without detriment to Royal Mail's operations or business, in order to meet the requirements of adopted Local Plan Strategy policy SP20. This could be in the form of acoustic fencing, landscaping and maintaining an adequate separation distance between the residential development and the industrial estate.

Bearing in mind that there are 6 potential housing sites within the vicinity of the delivery office, the assessment of highways impacts, particularly in relation to Site Selection Methodology reference Q46 (is highway mitigation required as part of the development and what is the impact of the development on the highway network following mitigation?), should take account of Royal Mail's operations. The trips generated from the delivery office, and the unusual times of day at which most of these trips occur, should be included in the assessment of impact upon the capacity of the local highway network and the highways mitigation required.

This approach accords with adopted Government guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) which stipulates that local planning authorities should seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings (paragraph 17), and help achieve economic growth by planning proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century (paragraph 20). The NPPF also advises that local planning authorities should support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting; and that policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances (Paragraph 21).

Next Steps

Further to the above, we request that we are consulted directly on any future development proposals relating to this site. We should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of our letter and keep us informed of future stages of the Local Plan preparation.

Yours faithfully,

William Steel

Consultant

cc Dennis McCafferty Royal Mail Group