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Mrs. R. Balmer,
Forward Planning,
Ryedale District Council,
Old Malton Road,
Malton,
YO17 7HH.

Dear Mrs Balmer,

Re: Sites Consultation – Local Plan Sites Document

Thank you for your letter dated 30th October inviting observations on the proposed development sites contained in the consultation document for the Local Plan. I would like to make the following comments on the sites relative to Flaxton village.

Development of these sites, other than Site 20, would have a major impact on the existing character and setting of the village which is almost entirely designated as a Conservation Area. The rural nature of the village with its greens and historic lineal form would be largely destroyed by the major urban impact which development of these sites would bring.

There is no apparent demand locally for any significant development of new housing in the village. These sites, moreover, do not accord with the Council's strategy for the Service villages which is based on there already being adequate sites available for outstanding housing demand.

Clearly it will be accepted that any development of the Flaxton sites would solely provide housing for commuters to York and elsewhere. In this regard it should be taken into consideration that there are very limited service facilities available in the area. There are no primary or secondary schools within three miles of Flaxton and none that are easily accessible by public transport. There is only very limited public transport available generally and there is no railway station nearer than York nine miles away. There are no shops or doctors' surgeries in the village.

I would also wish to make the following observations in respect of Site 397 specifically:

Given the nature and layout of Flaxton village any major development of this size and in this location would clearly have an overwhelming effect on the village's general character

and setting. It would also introduce a significant and obtrusive lineal extension of the village along its approach from the York direction.

The site includes an irregular shaped area to the north east of the field boundary along its north eastern side. Development on this particular area would seriously encroach on properties situated within the Conservation Area. It would clearly have an intrusive effect both on their individual privacy and a detrimental effect on their village setting, including that of the village church.

This site is situated in the lowest area of the village and much of the village drainage gravitates through this area. This drainage also includes a rapid run-off from the fields to the north of the village when there is heavy or prolonged rain. Because of the contour of the land the drainage arrangements through the proposed site area are necessarily shallow-running and in severe storm conditions the system already struggles to cope. The extensive covering over of the site with the hardstanding involved in a housing development would significantly exacerbate the problems as well as seriously reduce the area of natural ground able to provide surface water percolation. Even development on a modest scale would require a major redesign of the drainage system through a large part of the village and this would almost certainly be difficult to achieve.

Because of the land levels at this location there would, in addition to the surface water situation, be serious difficulties with the disposal of waste water to the main sewer. It is doubtful in any event if the sewerage system for the village would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional waste from a site of this size.

Access to this site would be across common land forming part of the village green. Any disturbance to the green is strictly governed by longstanding rights and legislation and it is extremely unlikely that any formal road construction would be permitted across this area.

I hope these observations will be helpful and will taken into account when the Local Plan is considered in its final form.

Yours sincerely,