

11th December 2015



Forward Planning
Ryedale District Council
Old Malton Road
Malton
YO17 7HH

THE RYEDALE PLAN, LOCAL PLAN SITES DOCUMENT SITES CONSULTATION
Reference: Site 649 (88) – Land at Norton Lodge (east of Beverley Road)
Proposed erection of circa 578 houses adjacent to the land at Norton Lodge.

Dear Sir / Madam

You have recently launched consultation on the Ryedale Plan Local Plan Sites Document, and as the Chair of the Welham Park Residents Association (WPRA), I write to represent the views and concerns of residents of Welham Park (Farm View and Dairy Way), Norton on Derwent, in relation to **Site 649 (88) – Land at Norton Lodge.**

We feel very strongly that development of the farm land at Norton Lodge will have a detrimental effect on the people, economy and character of Norton, with a knock-on effect into Malton.

We understand that development of this site is dependent on a link road being constructed between Beverley Road and Scarborough Road via Hugden Way to mitigate the transport impact of the proposal. However, even with the construction of such a link road, there will be a large increase in traffic on Beverley Road, Norton. Residents of Norton Lodge going into Norton, Malton or to the station, will not go the long way round via Scarborough Road, but down Beverley Road before funnelled through the bottleneck of Mill Street.

Beverley Road between Dairy Way and Mill Street is a fairly narrow traffic-calmed road, and runs through a well-populated residential area. Traffic can be very heavy, and the traffic calming measures mean that there is slow, and sometimes standing, traffic which will be made considerably worse by this large increase of local population trying to join it. The roads in, and through, Norton are in a very poor state of repair, and a programme of comprehensive repairs would be needed to bring them up to standard for this increase in population and subsequent increase in traffic.

During the building of the new development, there would be an increase in heavy goods vehicles and plant along Beverley Road, with the associated noise, vibration and air pollution. Heavy goods vehicles on this road are already a big problem, and residents will struggle to deal with an increase.

We understand from the Ryedale Plan Local Plan Sites Document that within both Malton and Norton there is a requirement to build 1800 new houses between the years 2012 and 2027. 1082 new houses have already been built, so building 578 houses on one site in Norton would mean that almost your full requirement would be met in one fell swoop, meaning that you would not be required to utilise the majority of the other optional sites.

Norton is a small, historic town coming from farming roots, recorded in the Domesday Book, and closely linked to the racing fraternity. An additional 578 new houses will be a substantial increase in the size of the town, changing its character forever. We do not believe this is fair on the people of Norton, not least because it will put pressure on the already stretched resources of the area, but because a town the size of Norton cannot absorb such a large amount of new people into its community, and Norton Lodge would become a town within a town with the inevitable conflicts between old and new. Building several smaller pockets of new houses across both Norton and Malton between now and 2027 puts less strain on individual areas, and allows those new residents to become integrated within existing communities.

In the 2001 Census, the population of Norton was recorded as 6,943, and in the 2011 Census it was 7,387, an increase of 444 people in 10 years (approximately 6% increase). With the recent development of Welham Park, around another 300 people now live in Norton, so another 578 houses would mean a further population increase of between 1500 and 2000 people, a potential increase by the next census of over 25%, which is far too much in such a short space of time.

With only one main shopping street and little parking, the Town will struggle to provide for the needs of this large increase in population. Whilst facilities in Malton could assist, the congested and dangerous road intersections at the railway crossing and bridge into Malton already struggles now, with standing traffic often blocking the railway line. Regular extra traffic will only make that intersection worse, and is a fatal accident waiting to happen.

Malton is a delightful Market Town, with a growing reputation as the 'Food Capital' of Yorkshire. One of the main attractions is being able to park and shop locally, but with this large increase in population, that will become increasingly difficult. We do not want to lose that 'old world charm'; free parking in the town square, the Palace Cinema with its personal service, the local greengrocers and butchers, the Saturday Market, entertainment at the Milton Rooms, friendly pubs and restaurants etc. etc. are all on a small scale that will be swamped and replaced by brash new bigger facilities to provide for a large increase in population, losing the soul of the Town.

Doctors, dentists and hospitals are already struggling to cope, and this sudden large population increase could stretch them to breaking point, putting the health of all residents at risk.

Local residents are also concerned about the ability of electricity and water supplies, drains and sewage systems to adequately and safely provide for this greatly increased pressure on them, and are concerned that drains etc will need to be replaced leading to the inevitable disruption as roads are dug up. However, they are more concerned if supplies are not updated to cope with demand, as overloaded drains and sewers could lead to flooding and blockages, with all the associated health risks.

The residents of Welham Park appreciate the attraction to the Council of the developers promise to build a much needed new school on the site, however, with the increase in population due to the new houses, this school would soon become full, needing another school elsewhere, so there would be no net gain. In addition there would be an increase in traffic, due to parents driving their children to school, on an already problematic Beverley Road.

Site 649 is currently farmland, the first piece of countryside for the people of Norton to access. It has several public footpaths across it, including Centenary Way, and is used daily by dog walkers and other residents, so the loss of this greenbelt and recreational amenity will be keenly felt by all existing residents. Residents are also concerned about disturbance of archaeological remains, with Roman roads to the Derventio Fort known to be in this area.

The view across the field to the distant hills is a delight for local residents, a daily boost to mental wellbeing; rows of new houses will take away this beautiful view forever. We understand that there may be some multi-story buildings included which would be totally inappropriate for this semi-rural location and would be an increase in 'urban sprawl', ruining the atmosphere of historic Norton.

The Plan says that the development would be built in stages, which would mean years of noise, disruption and mess for existing residents, with no respite for many years as another phase starts as soon as one ends. Having deliberately moved to a house on the edge of countryside for peace and quiet, this is something all our residents, in particular our more elderly ones, are very distressed about.

As residents of a new build development we cannot, and are not, opposed to the building of new homes in and around Norton and Malton – we just feel this development is much too big and is inappropriate in this location. Welham Park is 89 houses, and that is a big enough new development in one place within an established town. As a Resident's Association we are working hard to turn a collection of new householders into a mutually-supportive community, and we are making progress, but that would be impossible in an estate this vast, which can leave people lonely and isolated not knowing their neighbours. Smaller developments encourage social interaction and are more easily absorbed into an existing community.

If this proposal progresses to drawn plans, we would like to see them at the earliest opportunity in order to consult further with our residents, please. If any application for planning permission is to be decided by Councillors, please take this as notice that representatives from the WPRRA would like to speak at any meeting of the committee at which this application is expected to be decided, and would ask that you let us know as soon as possible the date of any such meeting.

Yours Faithfully,

Jean Illingworth CMIOSH
Chair of the Welham Park Residents Association