



Groves Town

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Job Title	Ryedale Local Plan
Client	Mr M Campion
Document Title	Examination Statement
Version/Date	V2 23/08/2018
GTP ref	Gtp 17-12-001B
Site	Land off Welham Road Norton

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Groves Town Planning is appointed to represent Mr & Mrs M Campion in making representation to the Ryedale Local Plan Sites Document which was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 29 March 2018.
- 1.2 Representations were made by GTP on behalf of Mr Campion at the point of publication of the draft submission version of the plan. A statement dated 22 December 2017 was submitted to the Council to this end. Mrs F Campion also submitted representations independently which covered the same issues
- https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/images/PDFs/Representations/1081_Groves_Town_Planning_obo_M_Campion.pdf
- https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/images/PDFs/Representations/1020_F_Campion.pdf
- My client's have subsequently received the support of a number of other residents of Whitewall and Welham Road and my instruction now includes representation on behalf of those parties also.
- 1.3 Representations were made in respect of the wider area of land north of Whitewall and east of Welham Road including the whole or part of parcels identified as sites 103, 187, 191, 302, 319, 476, 646, 647 and 648 in local plan documentation.
- 1.4 The initial representation also flagged the potential benefit of considering land to the west of Welham Road as an addition part of the proposed VIUA. Sites 510 and 526.
- 1.5 The representations were focused on support for the Council in the process of proposing designation of land north of Whitewall as VIUA. Generally consensus

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was provided for the criteria used to justified designation and support for the purposes of designation.

1.6 Inevitably, and given the known pressures to release all or part of this area for development, the designation as VIUA was also seen as a layer of protection of the land from development. There are representations to the plan which would seek development of land within this area.

https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/images/PDFs/Representations/1093_Evolution_Town_Planning_obo_North_Cote_Farms_Watts_Family_Proposals_Map_SD16.pdf

https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/images/PDFs/Representations/1093_Evolution_Town_Planning_obo_North_Cote_Farms_Watts_Family_SD2.pdf

https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/images/PDFs/Representations/1093_Evolution_Town_Planning_obo_North_Cote_Farms_Watts_Family_SD16.pdf

2 Local Plan Sites Document

Visually Important Undeveloped Areas

2.1 The Local Plan Sites document places the area of land east of Welham Road and north of Whitewall within a designation as Visually Important Undeveloped Area. SD16 of the Ryedale Local Plan Sites Document applies. My clients are wholly supportive of this position and consider that the Council's reasons for inclusion of the land as VIUA is fully justified and compliant with the objectives and criteria for designation

2.2 It has been contended in representation that objectives of designation would apply equally to areas to the west of Welham Road. The Council has responded

indicating that they do not consider that the specific criteria for designation as a VIUA are met but it is considered possible to contest this position. The land to the west of Welham provides a distinctive open setting to the south western edge of settlement. The loss of this area to any form of development would be to the detriment of the rural setting of Norton. In the same way that it is accepted that land north of Whitewall contributes to the setting of heritage assets so to do the open fields and golf course on the western side of Welham. The loss of these areas to development and the consolidation of the ribbon of development along Welham Road would dramatically change the character of a key route into the heart of the settlement. Designation would support and contribute to the accepted value of the VIUA east of Welham Road

2.3 At paragraph 2.10 and 11 below – the objectives for designation of VIUA as set out by the Council are noted. It can be seen that these objectives apply just as well to the land west of Welham Road as they do to the accepted VIUA east of Welham Road

- The area is prominent when viewed from the highway, the golf club and a PROW which crosses the area from Welham Road to the golf club.
- The undeveloped area contributes to the setting of buildings at Whitewall.
- Observation of any map or satellite photograph of Norton readily demonstrates how development of land west of Welham Road would represent an anomalous “blob”, unrelated to any historic settlement pattern. Whilst in some larger towns scale might enable such development to be lost, here it would undermine the intrinsic character of Norton.

- Whilst much of the area consists of open, agricultural fields, these are interspersed with mature hedgerows and trees. The agrarian landscape provides for an appropriate transition between the settlement and the protected landscape beyond.

2.4 In responding to representation the Council emphasises the fact the VIUA designation is not about landscape value *per se* but rather about the setting of settlements within a wider rural context. There is logic in this argument and clarity in the Council's reasons for the designation made. It is considered that this should be seen to reinforce the importance of the land north of Whitewall as part of the transition between the settlement and the Area of High Landscape Value to the south.

2.5 Objection to the designation of VIUA by others is partly based on a view that land has a relatively low landscape value. The Council responds by noting that this is not at issue because it is not landscape value but visual importance and setting which support designation. The contentions of the objector are undermined by this approach.

2.6 The Council notes further that the importance of this area as setting to heritage assets – the listed buildings on Whitewall. This is seen to reinforce the VIUA designation. It would be useful if it is possible to show that there are historic linkages between the listed buildings and land to the north.

2.7 My clients wholly support this approach and the conclusions reached by the Council on having regard to land north of Whitewall.

2.8 It is contended however that there would be value in adopting the same approach to land to the west Welham Road.

2.9 The VIUA background paper of October 2017 notes the purpose of designation and related long term aims. It is noted that Visually Important Undeveloped Areas are areas of undeveloped or open land which contribute to the form, character or setting of a settlement. They can be areas of land that are within a settlement or on the edge of a settlement.

2.10 The longstanding aims of designation are:

- To protect the character and amenity of settlements
- Protect the setting of listed buildings
- To prevent town and village cramming
- To retain green areas open spaces and trees

2.11 Designation of a VIUA should be based on one or more of the following reasons

- Creation of attractive setting for buildings
- Protects historic layout and settlement pattern

2.11 Against this context, six criteria/prompts have been used to identify VIUA's. The

- Contribution the space makes to the setting of the settlement viewed either from publicly accessible view points within the settlement or from approach roads or paths
- Contribution the space makes to the setting of a building or groups of buildings either listed or of historical or architectural interest
- Contribution the space makes to the overall form and character of the settlement

- Extent to which the space provides a vista/viewpoint into the surrounding countryside
- Extent to which trees, boundary hedges or walls contribute to the character of the space
- The archaeological or historic interest of the space.

2.12 The VIUA background paper justifies inclusion of the land between Welham Road and Langton Road when assessed against these reasons for designation and selection criteria - Contribution the space makes to the setting of the settlement viewed either from publicly accessible view points within the settlement or from approach roads or paths.

2.13 It is reiterated that this approach can apply equally to land west of Welham Road. The land is highly prominent as the settlement is entered from the south along Whitewall Corner Hill. The general openness of the setting at Whitewall Corner is provided not only by the land north of Whitewall but perhaps more so with views across the open fields to the west of Welham Road. Of equal importance is the impact of views from this area of land away from the settlement. Such views are afforded from parts of the Malton and Norton Golf Club and a public right of way (25.70/16/1) which crosses from Welham Road to the golf course.

2.14 The historic pattern of development has of course been heavily influenced by the ribbon of development which extends southwards along Welham Road. It is considered however to reinforce the justification for extension of the VIUA to include land to both east and west of that ribbon. The visual importance of this undeveloped area is highlighted through consideration of the pattern of

settlement which would result if development pressures resulted in any significant development between Welham Road and the golf course. This would result in an ugly urban extension to the settlement, contrasting with the organic, historic growth and resultant settlement form. The extent to which the designation of VIUA would provide additional control, even if over the detailed form and pattern of development would justify designation. (Page 10 GTP Statement of Representation 22.12.17)

3 Objection to designation and suggested allocation for housing

3.1 The submission documents note representations from Messrs Watts – North Coles Farm who have objected to the designation and continue to seek allocation for housing of parcels 647 and 648. They suggest that the 7.34 hectares of land is well located relative to the existing built up area. As it is not productive agricultural land, a site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area for Conservation or a scheduled monument there is no reason for its protection or to prevent allocation for housing development.

3.2 The Council provide a comprehensive rebuttal of this objection being quite critical of the representation because of its failure to demonstrate any reason as to how objection renders the Plan to be unsound. The Council say that the Plan's evidence base explains why the sites would not provide for sustainable development when compared to identified allocations. In particular they point to policy SD2 and the proposed allocation of land at Norton Lodge which makes significant provision against housing supply requirements but which is also of a scale which enables and supports the provision of highway and other infrastructure benefits. A collection

of smaller sites would make the delivery of required infrastructure more challenging to achieve.

3.3 The Watt's seek to suggest that as a ready to develop site justification exists for allocation for housing. The Council are confident that their housing figures deliver a level of supply necessary to meet national policy requirements, in part because of the SD2 Norton site noted above. The scale of development proposed on that site brings with it the ability for developers to bring forward highways and other infrastructure provision.

Highways Impact

3.4 It has previously been noted that the impact of development on the wider network is a matter of concern, with congestion already an issue. It would appear that the Council consider that the level of development proposed within the plan can be accommodated in terms of the local highway network

3.5 A 2016 appraisal of the network by external consultants has been updated for 2018. It would seem that it concludes that improvements which can be delivered through the SD2 are sufficient to meet additional pressures on the network resulting from development. As noted above, this is another reason why it is better to allow the development on one larger site rather a number of smaller schemes. This reinforces the value of VIUA which would contribute to the management of development and prevent small, *ad hoc* parcels coming forward for development,

cumulatively contributing to traffic problems around major junctions and railway crossings

3.6 The plan led approach of matching development allocations with infrastructure requirements is properly secured through the current proposals of the Council. As noted above a collection of smaller sites, in a multiplicity of ownerships and with uncertainties over phasing and delivery would not support such an approach.

4 Conclusions

4.2 There would appear to be a clear understanding on the part of the Council as to the validity of representations previously made. Submission papers indicate support for the policies meet the client's objectives, particularly in respect of VIUA designation for the east of Welham Road

4.3 It has been suggested that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the Welham Lane land could be carried out, but in the light of comments from the Council this has not been considered necessary, because of the limited weight given to the function of the VIUA in pure landscape terms. It is clear that the wider visual benefit and the contribution the site makes to the setting of the ASLV to the south and the listed buildings at Whitewall are fully supported by the Council.

4.4 A clear case is made for the inclusion of land to the West of Welham Road to also be included in the VIUA.

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John Groves

20 August 2018

