


## John Howard

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5 December 2017

Dear Ms Thompson

### **Visually Important Undeveloped Area between Welham and Langton Road**

In response to your letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017 I am writing a rebuttal to Gladman Developments Ltd interpretation of the document GLVIA-3 with respect to the designation of the land between Welham and Langton Road as a Visually Important Undeveloped Area.

The NPPF in paragraph 76 states "*Local Communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.*"

To take up the bullet points raised in Gladman Developments Ltd submission:

#### **Landscape quality**

The land lies at the bottom of a limestone escarpment. The corner at Bazeley's Lane is the site of multiple springs which drain down through Mill Beck to the River Derwent. The Beck is wooded on either bank and, until the recent installation of pumps, a source of flooding in Norton town centre during periods of heavy rain. The land lies on the southern edge of the town and is a mixture of woodland, arable farming and pasture for racehorses. The latter for over two hundred years.

#### **Scenic quality**

Bazeley's Lane and the footpaths in Scott's Hill provide outstanding views over the VIUA with Malton and the Vale of Pickering in the middle distance and the North Yorkshire Moors in the far distance. Looking southwards from the VIUA there are views of the escarpment which constitutes the northern edge of the Yorkshire Wolds. The scenic value of this has been noted for many years as a condition on the local quarry not to continue mining over the hill crest.

#### **Rarity**

Mill Beck is the only stream in the locality. The upper reaches have, so far, been free from development and provide a natural habitat close to the edge of town.

#### **Representativeness**

The area provides a good example of the springs which surface from the escarpment forming the northern edge of the Yorkshire Wolds.

**Conservation interests**

The VIUA features Mill Beck, a woodland area providing habitat for wildlife.

**Perceptual aspects**

Mill Beck and the surrounding fields provide a natural buffer between Norton's expanding residential boundary and the training of highly-strung racehorses at the end of Bazeley's Lane. Further development in the area will increase the traffic using Bazeley's Lane to the point where it will need to be widened for the passage of traffic in both directions. No longer a country walk for the neighbourhood.

**Consensus**

The VIUA is widely supported by the local community. Bazeley's Lane is in constant use by local dog walkers and forms part of Route 166, the Wold's Cycle Way. It is noted the only two objections to the VIUA came from an interested developer and the land-owners.

**Cultural Associations:**

On the southern edge of the area lies Whitewall House and its attached cottages. It is a grade II listed building<sup>1</sup> built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with earlier origins. The Whitewall Stables have had connections with racing in Norton since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The house was the residence of John Scott a notable 19<sup>th</sup> century trainer. Horse training continues there to this day and the fields in the VIUA provide grazing for horses and an uninterrupted view of the house, stables and adjoining cottages.

Scott's Hill is the site of numerous filled-in trenches, relics of WW2 when the VIUA was considered a suitable site for a defensive position.

Finally, Gladman's last paragraph states; "... *there is nothing to suggest that the trees, boundary hedges or walls are out of the ordinary in the area and that any potential development of the area could not positively contribute to and enhance the character of the space*".

It is ludicrous to suggest the high-density, affordable housing developments we have seen recently constructed in the Malton and Norton area could possibly enhance this space.

Yours faithfully

John Howard  
sent by e-mail 5 December 2017

cc Councilor Luke Ives

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<sup>1</sup> Historic England List Entry Number 1149544