

15 Marshall Drive

Pickering YO18 7JT

22 December 2017

re. Local Plan Site Allocations Document, Response to Consultation

Land East of Whitby Road, Pickering

Site ref. SD3

Planning Application no. 17/01220/MFUL

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to this application.

My property abuts onto the southern boundary of the site. I appreciate the national need for new homes and in principle do not oppose the use of this land for housing. However I would like to object to the current application.

1. Density and size of development

If the number of proposed homes is simply divided by the area, density would appear to be within guidelines. However a sizeable area of the site will not be built on and has been reserved for other use, in particular the proposed drainage basin, the semi-circular green area at the south (in a gully) and the underground storage tank. The housing planned for the remaining areas appears unduly dense, especially in the eastern sector. There appears to be relatively few green areas within the housing zones (verges, front gardens) when compared with other developments over recent decades in Pickering. The nearby Woodlands Park estate (by the same developer) shows the same level of density. As well as a lack of green areas and trees within the Woodlands estate, the density has resulted in substantial numbers of cars parked astride the pavement, or using the Community Park car park (not an option in the proposed development). There are also implications for surface water drainage and general quality of life for residents closely surrounded by housing, especially as the proposed development will be about two and a half times as big as Woodlands Park. Overall, the design would appear more suitable to an inner-city site than one on the edge of a market town.

The size of the development (239 homes) would seem to be at odds with the Local Plan. Section 3, p.18, 3.8 states: "An important element of this Strategy is that it looks to accommodate new development through a pattern of small and medium sized sites spread within and around each of the towns as opposed to relying on the delivery of one or more 'strategic sites' capable of accommodating a significant proportion of Ryedale's development requirements in a limited number of locations." Under the council's definition, a large site consists of 100+ dwellings.

2. Access

The proposed single entrance/exit road leading directly onto the A169 would appear dangerous. Without additional traffic-calming measures, vehicles emerging from the estate, and those waiting in the middle of the road to turn into it, will have to cope with traffic from both directions that frequently exceeds the speed limit. Even more concerning is the prospect of pedestrians, including schoolchildren, having to cross the A169 at or near the same location to access all of the town's schools, shops and services.

3. Archaeology

I am concerned that the recent (Dec. 2017) trial trenching by MAP Archaeology Practice may have been inadequate. The exercise consisted of two field workers and a digger, and appeared, to those of us watching, to be completed very quickly. Unfortunately their report (doc. no. 1794755, 13/12/17) gives no details of the time that was spent on site. Two field workers, with one digger, over a couple of days for a site of over 8 hectares seems insufficiently thorough. They conclude: "The trial trenching revealed no significant archaeological features. Therefore, no archaeological mitigation is required" (p.3) Accepting the first sentence to be true, in the small proportion of the site that they explored, the second does not follow logically, as implied.

My main concern, however, is that the trial trenches did not cover two areas of potential importance.

(i) A sub-circular earthwork and crop mark enclosure. This has been recorded by English Heritage (Eng. Her. Pastscape website, Mon. no. 1370351).

This is visible from Google Maps, and lies NE of trial trench 12. I do not understand why this was not investigated by the field workers while they were so near it. It is due to be built over.

(ii) The hedge, and specifically the ridge on which it stands, which runs north from the southern boundary of the site (from behind 49 Corbie Way) into the centre of the site. This marks the western boundary of the series of historic strip fields running in a N - S alignment to the north-east of the town. (Although the field behind Marshall Drive has lost its inner hedges and has been "squared up" it is shown as a series of strip fields as recently as the 1930 O.S. map.) The ridge on which the hedge stands at its southern end appears to be a man-made feature, possibly a mediaeval boundary bank. Again, the nearest trial trench (trench 10) did not cover this feature, as it was cut approximately 50 - 100 m. to the north of the feature. I am very concerned that the site plan shows a road is to be cut through this bank. I attach photos of the feature, taken from the garden of 43 Corbie Way, looking east.

I emailed these photos to Heritage Services at NYCC, and they agreed in their reply that the feature should be investigated.

Section 7 of the Local Plan, 7.7, p.118 states: "Where it can, the Council will also look to protect wider features of local historic value which are not afforded statutory protection. Negotiating and advising on the siting of new development or adaptations to buildings will be an important way in which this can be achieved and the decisions made over new land allocations will need to ensure that the historic character of settlements and their settings are not undermined. Encouraging an awareness of the value of the District's historic landscapes will also be an important way in which they are protected and this is something that this Strategy seeks to support."

4. Ecology

I note in the Design and Access Statement (doc. 1781642, p.15): " sites (...) where the strip field systems are less intact (...) may be appropriate providing that the existing hedgerows and trees are incorporated into the design of the scheme."

On the site plans, the hedge referred to above is missing. Two large mature trees have also been removed. I would ask that planning permission only be granted on this condition being met. As well as preserving some of the rural nature of the site, this would enhance environmental sustainability and the quality of life of the residents.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S. H. Jennings

PickHedge from West



PickHedge from West

