

FULFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Mrs H Blackburn
Planning Officer
City Strategy
City of York Council
9 St Leonard's Place
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Dear Mrs Blackburn,

Re: Application to Extend Time Period for Implementation in Respect of Outline Planning Approval 01/01315/OUT (Granted by Secretary of State on 09/05/07) for Residential Development of Approx 700 Dwellings, the Creation of Public Open Space & Community Facilities Including Local Shops, with Associated Footpaths, Cycleways, Roads, Engineering Works & Landscaping at Germany Beck Site, East of Fordlands Road, York 12/01802/OUTM.

With regard to the above planning application please find below, the objections and observations of Fulford Parish Council.

1. Introduction

1.1: At paragraph 1.3 of the Non Technical Summary, the applicants refer to the document *Greater Flexibility for Planning Permissions* which was published in October 2010. This document relates to changes in secondary legislation that allows the time period for implementation of a planning permission to be extended. It is noted that such applications must be considered within the policy context current at the time of the application, so where there has been a material change in planning circumstances since the original application was approved, the replacement permission can be refused.

1.2: It is acknowledged, that for this type of application the need for design and access statements has been removed but it is also relevant that the original application did not include a design and access statement which is now a legal requirement for outline applications. The lack of such a statement for such a large complex scheme represents a defect in the current application to renew the permission.

1.3: Paragraph 5.6 of the Environmental Statement Non Technical Summary states that "overall it is considered that there have been no significant changes that would warrant a different decision being made in relation to this application than which was made in 2007". However, it is our opinion that the reasons for granting outline approval 01/01315/OUT have been superseded and that there have been extensive and significant material changes in the circumstances of the site since the application was allowed. These changes are of such significance that the principle of development cannot now be considered acceptable. The following matters set out the Parish Council's objections and clearly outline these changes.

2. Planning Obligations / Section 106

2.1: Paragraph 1.11 of the Environmental Statement (ES) states that: “No amendments are sought by the Applicants to the existing S106 which can be linked to the new permission by a simple deed of variation”. Considering that the land ownership has changed and one of the builders (Pilcher Homes) is no longer involved, we trust that the Council will ensure that any linked agreement remains valid.

2.2: Further to this, there is considerable doubt that the provision of a sports hall and the Multi Use Games Area can be delivered through the current arrangements set out in the S106 agreement. In 2006, Fulford School had match funding for the Sports Hall but this is no longer the case. The Council has stated that it would have to borrow approximately £900k in order to deliver a sports hall but in the current economic climate it is questionable whether there is much likelihood that funding will be allocated either now or in the future. Furthermore, there is no cost estimate for the Sports Hall (and MUGA) and delivery cannot be guaranteed, especially with a longer timescale for implementation.

2.3: A similar situation applies to the additional defence work proposed at the A19. There are no cost estimates for this work, the Council has no funding allocated and the developer S106 contribution is considered inadequate to carry out these extensive defences.

3. Planning Policy

3.1: The York Local Plan is no longer relevant, therefore the application’s appropriateness should be considered in terms of the recently published NPPF and other material considerations.

3.2: With regard to regional plans, the applicants point out the government’s intention to revoke the Yorkshire and Humber Plan and therefore limited weight should be afforded to it. Further to this they go on to state that should the RSS be revoked this summer, there will be no statutory plan defining even the general extent of the York Green Belt. However, because of the wealth of documentation with regard to York’s green belt going back to the 1950s and in particular the Sec of State’s Decision Letter, which confirms that the Germany Beck site is green belt, there can be no doubt with regard to the current status of the development site. It will however be vital that City of York Council have mechanisms in place to fully protect the Green Belt in the event that the RSS is revoked.

4. Green Belt and Very Special Circumstances

4.1: As stated by the applicants in the summary table for changes section in the ES Non Technical Summary regarding very special circumstances, “the very special circumstances for approving this application in the Green Belt was based on the housing land supply shortage in York”. It is understood that there is still a shortage of deliverable housing land in York. However, all the inquiry evidence was predicated upon the urgent need to release the Germany Beck site in order to contribute to housing requirements up to 2016. Crucially, this site has made no contribution to Housing supply and has not fulfilled the urgent need that justified its release from the Green Belt.

4.1.1: Furthermore, the purpose of this extension of time application is to extend the time limit to a period of twelve years for the submission of all reserved matters whereas the original outline permission was subject to a five-year time limit. This further casts doubt

over the site's ability to contribute to the current housing shortfall. **Therefore the entire rationale for this very special circumstance of meeting housing requirements in York has been fundamentally undermined and the purpose of granting consent has not been fulfilled.**

4.2: The second very special circumstance at that time was the lack of any sequentially preferable site. Considering that in 2007, the Secretary of State stated that the allocation of the site in the unadopted York's Local Plan was not relevant, it is clear that the allocation of the site for housing at the present time carries no weight whatsoever. It follows that the site must now be sequentially tested against all other potential sites (both green belt and brownfield) that have come forward since the inquiry and that this must be carried out before a decision is taken to renew the permission.

4.2.1: The protection of the green belt is reaffirmed in the NPPF and very special circumstances must be demonstrated in order to justify inappropriate green belt development.

4.2.2: In her decision letter, the Secretary of State, placed substantial weight on any additional harm to the green belt but concluded that the harm at Germany Beck would be "limited" because the site does not form "part of the historic strays and wedges crucial to the character of York and, given the principal purpose of York's green belt is to preserve the setting and the special character of the City, she is of the view that the loss of either site would not harm the setting and special character of the City".... and "she also agrees with the Inspector's view that neither site would fulfil any other Green Belt purpose (IR24.72)".

4.2.3: IR 24.72 refers explicitly to City of York's Green Belt Appraisal 2003, a core document at the Inquiry (CD35) which identifies categories of land that are considered important in preserving the historic character and setting of the City - the primary purpose of York's green belt. However, it is now clear that the Germany Beck site was not appraised at all in 2003 and this is confirmed in the first paragraph of the GBA where it states: "An essential aspect of any review of the Green Belt would clearly be to appraise the existing draft Green Belt **as defined in the unadopted York Green Belt Local Plan (post mods draft 1995)**. In this Draft Plan of 1995, the Germany Beck site was shown as being outside the green belt and since that time, the Council has continued to treat the site as being outside the green belt and even viewed it as being contained within the main urban area. It is highly significant that the site was not appraised in 2003 and it undermines the inquiry evidence and the conclusions drawn from it by the Inspector and the SoS. (Y1: 6.34 and IR24.72).

4.2.4: Following a submission by Fulford Parish Council for York's LDF, the Council reassessed the function performed by the Green Belt in Fulford and made additional green wedge designations to land included within the Germany Beck site and to land adjacent to Stone Bridge. These changes are set out in the LDF Technical Paper 3 Historic Character and Setting, City of York Council January 2011 (sites 2 & 3) In this document, the Officer comments on the delineation of the Walmgate Stray green wedge and states: "The western boundary ... should skirt around the Germany Beck allocation, rather than include part of it". This indicates that the Officer's decision not to include the site in the green wedge was based on its allocation rather than an objective view of its green belt value.

4.3: The Parish Council now calls for a full appraisal of the whole site in the context of the categories of land identified in the Green Belt Appraisal of 2003 and the extension to the Conservation Area in 2008. It is the opinion of the Parish Council that most areas of the development site qualify overwhelmingly for designation (either alone or in combination) as ‘village setting’, ‘green wedge’ or ‘area retaining rural setting’.

4.4: It is a significant new material consideration that the previous allocation is no longer relevant and that changes have been made to green belt character areas. These are factors that must be considered in determining whether the principle of development should now be supported.

For your information, the Parish Council’s LDF Submission is attached with this letter. Chapters 3, 7, 8 and 9 are of particular relevance to Germany Beck.

5. Deliverability and Housing Supply

5.1: In an information sheet produced by the applicants explaining the rationale behind the extension of time application, they state that: “The developers are keen to commence work on site and as such an application for Approval of Reserved Matters was considered the best way forward. However, following the submission of the Reserved Matters the Council requested updates to specific chapters of the Environmental Statement that formed part of the Outline Permission. Given the level of work this entails it is now unlikely that a decision will be made by the Planning Committee prior to the expiry of the Outline Permission. In order to safeguard the planning permission for the site the decision was taken to extend the life of the Outline Permission”. Their rationale explained in the above excerpt is plainly wrong. By submitting all the reserved matters prior to the expiration of 5 years from the date of the permission in line with condition 1 of the outline permission, which they did, the planning permission was safeguarded and didn’t require a further extension of time application to safeguard the permission. **It is the opinion of Fulford Parish Council that this extension of time application is just an attempt by the applicants to delay the site further as they are not in a position to move forward with it. It casts serious doubts over the deliverability and viability of the site.**

5.2: The applicants are seeking a minimum time limit of twelve years for the submission of all reserved matters, but in our opinion, with such a time-scale there would be no real guarantee that the scheme would actually come forward in a comprehensive manner. With a twelve year permission one could question how for instance, necessary works linked to specific phases required by the s106 could be properly delivered with any certainty. Persimmon Homes is a volume house builder and one would expect a scheme of this size (with a further builder on site) to come forward more quickly.

5.3: Bullet point 3 of paragraph 1.15 of the ES states that: “All reserved matters relating to Phase 6 shall be submitted within 12 years of date of planning permission” and “development of each phase shall commence within 2 years of the approval of the reserved matters for that phase”. The implications of the proposed time limits are that if phase 6 is submitted in late 2024 and commences in 2026, the development may not be complete until 2028 or even later if economic conditions are not favourable. The actual start of the development is likely to be delayed for four years following any approval of the application – two years in which to submit the first reserved matters application and a further two years in which to commence development. It will take at least a year to

construct the access road and therefore it is entirely likely that not a single dwelling will be constructed before 2017.

5.4: This timescale undermines the rationale for the consent granted in 2007 when the site was expected to contribute up to 2016. It is also worth noting that the Development Brief published in 2001 states: “Development of the site for housing is crucial for its contribution to the city’s supply of housing over the **next 5-10 years**” and that “Development of this site for housing remains crucial for its overall contribution to housing land supply over **the next 10 years**”. Such a conflict with the aims of the original Development Brief suggests that the application is now outdated and does not merit renewal.

5.5: Paragraph 5.8.5 states that “it is the developer’s intention to proceed with the delivery of this development as soon as possible. This has been demonstrated by the submission of a reserved matters application. The previous delays have been as a result of an application by the Parish Council for Village Green Status on the site and the economic recession”. The first reserved matters application was submitted only 3 months before expiry of the outline permission so it does not demonstrate any commitment, rather a lack of commitment. The economic recession continues with continued difficulties being experienced in the construction and house-building industry. We feel it is important for the Council to consider whether the developer has true intentions of early delivery of this site and whether it is currently viable.

5.6: In today’s circumstances, it is also notable that the approved Masterplan imposes unwanted constraints on the Developers in terms of their ability to build to their preferred layout or density or housing mix (as openly admitted by Persimmon during Community Forum meetings). The design principles, broad layout, densities and housing mix as already approved (and contained within the current application) cannot depart significantly from the approved scheme and this will apply to subsequent applications for reserved matters (linked to a renewed outline permission) as it does to the reserved matters applications currently before the Council.

5.7: As the Council has no details on the delivery and phasing of identified sites that make up York’s 5 year housing land supply as highlighted by the Inspector in his key concerns following the Core Strategy Exploratory Meeting on 23 April 2012, it is difficult to envisage how Germany Beck will contribute to its short-term housing supply.

6. Air Quality

6.1: With regards air quality, it is of critical importance that since the original outline consent, the A19 at Fulford has been declared an Air Quality Management Area and the Council now has a legal duty to improve air quality in this area. As a result, no further emissions in the road corridor can be tolerated on the basis of human health.

6.2: In terms of air quality impacts, the ES states that the largest impacts are predicted at properties adjacent to the A19, which is part of the AQMA. The exacerbation of the existing air quality flowing from the additional traffic loaded onto the A19 is a further, highly significant, new material consideration that has arisen since the original grant of outline planning permission. NPPF paragraph 124 requires the Council to consider if the development is consistent with the Local Air Quality Action Plan before consenting to further development within AQMAs. The impact on human health is a further important material reason why the principle of development cannot now be considered acceptable.

6.3: It is interesting to note that paragraph 6.4.5 of the ES states: "In 2004, a 'Cumulative traffic impact assessment of key developments in the south/east of York was undertaken. The assessment considered the cumulative impacts of three developments: Heslington East, and the residential developments at Derwenthorpe and Germany Beck. The assessment concluded that the traffic generated by each of the three developments will not materially change the flows on the roads. Therefore traffic flows specifically associated with Heslington East and Derwenthorpe developments have not been included in the traffic data". It is considered highly questionable how the traffic generated by the three developments would not materially change the flows on the roads.

6.3.1: More importantly, this study did in fact identify material impacts on Fulford, contrary to the above statements. The Cumulative Traffic Impact Report (Y7 para 63) states: "In the event that all three developments proceeded, I concluded from these tables that:

a) the traffic proposals suggested by the university would have a beneficial effect upon the highway network and would on some links significantly reduce traffic flows as compared with the current situation.

b) there would be a relatively small adverse effect around the Tang Hall/Hull Rd junction and

c) there would be significant adverse effects around the village of Fulford and its immediate connecting roads and junctions".

This last point (c) is not addressed in the chapter and the conclusions reached on air quality impacts are thus undermined.

6.4: The impact of traffic on air quality is dependent not only on vehicle numbers but also on the speed of those vehicles passing through an AQMA, and on the duration of peak hour conditions. CYC Inquiry evidence estimated that the development would result in an increase of peak spreading by 30 minutes (am) and 20 minutes (pm). This important aspect has not been considered in the modelling of air quality impacts in the ES.

7. Flood Risk

7.1: The 2004 Flood Risk Assessment relied upon during the inquiry, is now materially out-of-date and it is surprising that an updated FRA has not been submitted as part of the ES, especially in view of subsequent changes to the proposals. It is also highly relevant that revised flood maps have been published by the EA that indicate an increase to areas of the site now included within flood zone 2 & 3. These are material changes, which should be considered before permission for extension is contemplated and must be addressed in a comprehensive manner through a new site-specific FRA before a decision is taken to renew the permission.

7.1.1: The following matters should be addressed:

New local flood maps published by the EA

The EA River Ouse Flood Models published in 2009

New climate change charts published in the NPPF (Technical Guidance).

The revised (increased) height of the junction and access road,

The omission of a surface water pumping station

The relocation of the foul water pumping station to the southwest meadow

The additional flood defences at the A19

Changes proposed to the hydrology of the SINC in the 2012 ES (Chapter 11 para 2.3.3 point 5)

The changes to hydrology brought about by the University expansion, which directly affects the Germany Beck watercourse.

The major changes that have been made by Yorkshire Water to the foul drainage system on Fulford Ings

The impact on the Fordlands Road Care Home and properties at Fordlands and Cherrywood Crescents

7.2: In addition, many concerns remain as to whether a sufficient gradient can be achieved to drain such a predominantly flat site, or how surface water will be managed to reduce the risk of flash flooding and/or flood-locking when storms coincide with periods of flood. There is also considerable anecdotal evidence that the water table in Fulford has been rising in recent years.

7.3: Paragraph 8.2 of the ES states that: "The amendments relate to:

a) The recent release of the NPPF.....which supersedes PPS25.

b) The omission of a Surface Water pumping station".

However, the chapter does not deal with the advice in the NPPF or the impact of omitting the surface water pumping station; in fact neither is mentioned again within the chapter.

7.4: Technical guidance issued with the NPPF states among other things that in zone 3b (the functional floodplain), only water compatible uses and essential infrastructure such as transport infrastructure should be permitted. It goes on to state that "essential infrastructure in this zone should pass the exception test". It is our opinion that the proposed access road/junction, has never been subject to the exception test.

7.5: Residents of Fulford are justifiably concerned that the development could increase the risk of flooding to their homes. The submitted ES does nothing to allay these fears and we would urge the Council to insist that the applicants deal with all these issues within a comprehensive FRA.

8. Ecology and Nature Conservation

8.1: Green Corridors: Recent work has been carried out to assess green corridors within York. The site of the new junction is now part of a Regional Green Corridor, while the areas to the east of Fordlands Road (including the south west meadow) form a local green corridor that continues east following the course of the Beck. (Technical paper 5. Green Corridors 2011 page 10). This is a further material consideration to be taken into account when considering impacts on ecology and whether permission should be granted.

8.2: Chapter 11 of the ES deals with ecology and protected species

The SINC is re-assessed and the proposals to treat and prevent the invasion of Himalayan Balsam are welcomed. However, paragraph 2.3.3 suggests the removal and subsequent replacement of the topsoil, (point 3) and prevention of seasonal flooding of the habitat (point 5) which was originally proposed in 2001 and subsequently dropped following objections by the Council and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

8.3: The species survey results as described in the ES are inadequate and defective.

8.3.1: Voles:

The water vole survey carried out on May 18th does not comply with best practice guidelines - no information is provided on weather conditions or which lengths of the

beck were surveyed. For example, it is important that all the downstream sections of the beck, including those within the SSSI have been fully investigated.

8.3.2: Harvest mouse.

ES 7.1 acknowledges previous records of harvest mouse and that a nest was found in the southwest meadow in 2005. The 2006 ES Supplement emphasised that the surveys in 2005 were not carried out at the right time of year and that further surveys would be necessary, ideally throughout the breeding season, from May to October. Given this assessment in the 2006 ES, it is unacceptable not to have comprehensively re-surveyed for the Harvest Mouse so that appropriate mitigation and/or conditions could be put in place

8.3.3: Bats:

The lack of a bat survey is a clear and regrettable omission because it is evident that large populations of bats are present within and all around the site, but most particularly in the area of the proposed junction and the length of access road between the A19 and the entrance to the housing site.

8.3.4: There are more than 140 trees or groups of trees identified in the tree survey yet the ES contains only a cursory assessment of 4 individual trees for their potential value as bat habitat. There is no explanation as to why these particular four trees were selected and more importantly, why a full bat survey has not been commissioned.

8.3.5: The critical necessity for a bat survey is now reinforced by the recent discovery of a bat roost at the Fordlands Road Elderly Care Home, which lies directly adjacent to the land which will contain the proposed raised access road. A bat survey has been undertaken (commissioned by CYC in relation to demolition of the building) that identifies the land immediately to the south of the Home as being essential bat foraging habitat that should be retained. The area, to which the survey refers, would be almost entirely lost through construction of the access road in the Germany Beck corridor. Green infrastructure is an essential feature of bat habitat and loss or fragmentation of such habitat can have an adverse impact on bat populations. It provides feeding, foraging and flight corridors for bats and provides shelter from wind and predation. The damage to the habitat would be compounded by other major residual impacts including noise/vibration and air & light pollution impacts in what is currently a natural area which is intrinsically quiet and dark.

8.4: The prejudice and disturbance to protected species and their habitat is clearly an important material consideration for the Council to consider, which gives rise to duties under EIA Regulations and the Habitats Directive under Article 12.

9. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

9.1: Since the original outline approval, the Fulford Village Conservation Area has been extended to include the area within which the access road and junction with the A19 is to be sited. This is a material change and we consider that the detrimental impact of the proposed access road on this important part of the conservation area constitutes a reason for refusal.

9.1.1: The direct impact on the character of the Conservation Area and its setting should have been fully assessed in the ES but in fact the ES seeks to defer any assessment until conditions are discharged, and after permission is granted.

9.1.2: Paragraph 2.1 of chapter 14A confirms that the first section of the access road would be located within the extension to the Conservation Area. It goes on to state that; “A planning condition was attached to the Outline Planning permission requiring the submission of a detailed scheme for the design of the access prior to the commencement of development. The detail of this element of the scheme will not be finalised until such time that an application for reserved matters has been approved. However, the reasons for including this area within the conservation area are noted and will be given full account when the detail of the junction is drawn up”. This statement is factually incorrect in that access was not reserved in the original outline permission and the design and siting of the junction with the A19 and first length of the access road has already been agreed as set out on the Bryan G Hall Drawing 05/401/TR/009A covered by condition 32.

9.1.3: For such an important material change involving a designated asset, it is unacceptable that the impact of the raised junction and flood defences on the extended Conservation Area is not assessed within the ES. It must also be noted that the area lies in a part of the green belt that undoubtedly contributes to the primary purpose of York’s green belt – to preserve the historic character and setting of the City. It also forms part of the Ouse river corridor which is a green corridor of regional importance.

9.1.4: The low-lying marshy area at the entrance to Fulford is of historic and cultural importance to the village, being the site of the foul-ford from which the village derives its name. The Stone Bridge retains its original pointed arch on the east side and is of considerable historic and archaeological interest. Its demolition would represent a major loss of a heritage asset for the City which has never been assessed in any submitted ES or updated ES – indeed, until now its demolition has never been openly acknowledged. The Parish Council considers that the mitigation suggested in paragraph 14.3.91 of the ES (to record the structure prior to demolition) will not compensate for its loss.

9.2: The NPPF states at para 132: ‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification’. It goes on to state that substantial harm to designated battlefield sites should be ‘wholly exceptional’.

9.3: The Battle of Fulford.

English Heritage has recently sent out the consultation forms regarding the proposed inclusion of the site on its Register of Historic Battlefields. The plan included with the consultation documents indicates that the suggested battlefield area encompasses the whole of the development site. It has been suggested that English Heritage will make its decision on registration by August, therefore the Parish Council would urge the Council not to decide this application until the registration issue is resolved.

9.3.1: There is no doubt that the development would cause wholesale destruction of the battlefield site as well as the historical context of its landscape setting. The recording of the archaeological remains does not represent appropriate mitigation in this case because the original landscape and historical land-use of the area will not be preserved. Para 141 of the NPPF states: “...the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in determining whether such loss should be permitted”.

9.4: The cursory judgments in the latest ES that these assets are only of 'low' and 'local' significance can only be regarded as prejudiced and irrational. In particular, the finding of a 'negligible' and 'insignificant' impact on the historic landscape during the construction and operational phases is absurd. There can be no mitigation to lessen the damage that the junction will cause to the historic landscape and the conservation area.

9.4.1: The NPPF identifies one of the core planning principles to be: "conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations" (§17)

This principle cannot be applied unless the significance of a heritage asset is properly evaluated and the true impact on the asset is honestly acknowledged. Fulford Parish Council is of the opinion that recent research with regard to the location of the battle-site and the consideration by English Heritage to include the site on its register, constitute material changes that should lead to a refusal of this application.

10: Environmental Statement

10.1: The Parish Council considers that the document is defective and this letter provides a few examples of omissions, factual errors, inconsistencies and subjective judgments.

10.2: Crucially, it does not deal with those elements of the whole scheme which, although not contained within the red-line plan are nevertheless integral to the main development and which will, cumulatively, produce wider environmental impacts. For example; the new sports hall and MUGA will undoubtedly produce additional environmental effects with regard to drainage, landscape, ecology, lighting and residential amenity. Wider impacts will also be felt at the A19, where the additional flood defences will impact on Landing Lane, the Parish playing field, the SSSI and of course on the extended Conservation Area. The defences also require alterations to driveways of residential properties adjacent to the defence walls; therefore if these matters are not addressed within the ES, the public will not be fully informed and will be unable to comment appropriately on the proposals.

11. Sustainability

11.1: At the heart of the Framework lies the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which comprises economic, social and environmental dimensions. This is a further material change against which the sustainability of the proposals must be newly assessed by the Council.

11.1.1: The Applicants summarise the sustainability credentials in the narrowest way, without addressing the three roles defined in the NPPF.

11.1.2: The site lies in a fairly accessible location, close to schools, limited services and local transport, but it is significant that the site is actually highly inaccessible because the only suitable location for the new access road is within the floodplain and the green belt and now, also within the Conservation area. A single access route for 700 homes emerging onto an already gridlocked A19 with unlawful levels of air pollution does not represent 'sustainable development'.

11.2: "The economic role: - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land is available in the right places and at the right

time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure”.

11.2.1: A development of this scale will bring some economic benefit to the City. However, the worsening economic conditions together with the lack of commitment demonstrated by the Applicant creates uncertainty as to whether the scheme will deliver the expected housing either in the short or medium term. However, the site of the Battle of Fulford (even if unregistered) presents a significant opportunity to build on a valuable asset for Fulford and the City with great economic and cultural potential.

11.3: “The social role - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generation; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being”.

11.3.1: A development of this scale will undoubtedly impact on the existing population, in terms of schools, medical facilities and other services, yet no update is provided with regard to current village facilities, school capacities or population and employment levels. The reader of the ES is invited to refer to an ES dating from 2001, which is highly inappropriate.

11.3.2: The addition of such a large number of additional households into a small community, will affect social well-being particularly considering the large impacts on the village arising from such a prolonged construction process. Moreover, the local community has consistently opposed the imposition of the scheme on their community over several decades. It does after all, deprive local residents of their valued open space around the village which is so well used for recreation and quiet enjoyment of the countryside.

11.3.3: The fact that the new residents will be obliged to enter into agreements to manage and maintain the new green/recreational spaces as well as the new nature park does not bode well for social co-operation and integration. It is also of concern that the applicants now seem to have absolved themselves from any responsibility for the future management of the nature park including the SINC and the new flood basin with its online balancing ponds. Considering the many complex issues of hydrology and ecological management that will be necessary to manage the park successfully, it will place a very onerous obligation on the new residents.

11.3.4: Fordlands Road community:

The residents of Fordlands Road will suffer particular adverse effects - their currently safe route to school will become unsafe and unpleasant due to the main access road cutting across their route into the village. Fordlands Road does not receive the benefit of flood protection (unlike the access road to the new development) and indeed many residents justifiably fear that the new flooding regime will increase the risk of flooding to their community.

11.4: “The environmental role - contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this to improve bio-diversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy”.

11.4.1: The Parish Council considers that the proposals will irrevocably damage the historic environment of the village, as well as its sensitive ecology and green infrastructure. The sustainability codes stipulated for the new dwellings are out-dated and have been entirely superseded whilst the loss of so many hectares of best and most versatile agricultural land is yet another unsustainable aspect that weighs against the proposals. The health-benefits of a new nature park must be also be offset by its lack of accessibility for existing residents – it lies up to a kilometre from the majority of existing homes in the village.

Summary

To summarise, this letter outlines the objections of Fulford Parish Council and highlights the significant material changes in planning circumstances since the original application was approved.

The Parish Council believes that these material changes are of such significance and the defects contained in the ES are so substantial, that the application should be refused.

We trust that these matters will be given full consideration.

Yours sincerely

Jeanne Fletcher
Clerk to Fulford Parish Council

www.fulfordparishcouncil.org.uk