

PRESS RELEASE 7th December 2019

Stockeld Park / Spofforth Hill Planning Application.

The latest stage in a protracted planning application by Stockeld Park and Hallam Land Management to build 210 new houses on the North Yorkshire side of the boundary with Wetherby will be a Public Inquiry starting on Tuesday, 17th December 2019 in Harrogate.

This contentious application has attracted several hundred objections and been the subject of four separate hearings by the Harrogate Planning Committee over a period of almost two years. At the most recent hearing on 17th September 2019, the Planning Committee voted unanimously to reject the application. But the developers, Stockeld Park/Hallam, launched an appeal that will now be the focus of the Public Inquiry.

Better Wetherby representatives will be participating fully in the Inquiry, acting in support of Harrogate Borough Council, to fight the appeal. In preparation, substantial work has been carried out, including the commissioning of independent expert evidence by Better Wetherby, funded by donations from concerned members of the public. The Public Inquiry starts at 10am on Tuesday, 17th December and is scheduled to last for 4 days. It will be held at the Civic Centre, St. Luke's Mount, Harrogate, HG1 2AE. A final decision by the Inspector is not expected until February 2020.

Paul Crossan, who is leading representations for Better Wetherby at the Inquiry said *'Better Wetherby is challenging this appeal because if it is successful and the development is allowed to go ahead, then it can only be bad news for the people of Wetherby and those living in nearby villages. We know they have real concerns about the harmful impact this development will have on the landscape, character and our local environment. It will also contribute to a worsening of the Town's existing highways, congestion and air pollution problems and result in further demands on already overburdened schools, GP surgeries and other local services'*.

Mr. Crossan added, *'There is absolutely no justification for this development. Both Harrogate Borough Council and Leeds City Council have more than adequate housing provision in their plans for several years ahead. These houses are just not needed by Harrogate, Leeds or Wetherby'*.

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*The **Better Wetherby Partnership** is a consortium of local people from a variety of organisations who contribute to initiatives designed to help make Wetherby and the surrounding villages better for the community of both present and future generations. A current focus is our concern about the negative impact on the Town and local area resulting from large-scale house building.*

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Working to ensure that the physical character of Wetherby and District is protected and developed for the benefit of the community of both current and future generations.