

## Press Release 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019

### Racecourse Approach Planning Application

On Thursday, 29 August, after a hearing lasting 3 hours, and in spite of the developer not meeting specified requirements from an earlier hearing, Leeds City Council Plans Panel approved an outline planning application by developers, Taylor Wimpey, to build 800 new houses on land adjacent to Racecourse Approach, which forms the first part of a 1,100 houses development.

Wetherby Ward Councillor Alan Lamb, together with local residents, Peter Catton and Ingrid McLaughlin, speaking on behalf of Better Wetherby, argued that the application was flawed in several areas. Problems highlighted included lack of access to the site from York Road, lack of public transport, concerns about road safety and pressures upon already overstretched local services including health and schools.

Of serious concern was the likely impact of increased traffic from the development adding to already major problems of congestion and lack of parking spaces in the Town, with the associated harmful impact of air pollution caused by emissions from these additional vehicles on the health and well-being of local people. Climate change challenges and efforts to reduce carbon in new housing developments were also raised.

However, despite concerns, a majority of the Panel voted to support a motion by Labour Councillor Peter Gruen that the matter be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer with a directing proviso that no work could commence until outstanding major issues, especially relating to access had been resolved.

Councillor Alan Lamb said “The Panel gave us a fair hearing but, unfortunately, voting was on party political lines, with the majority Labour members all voting to accept the planning application. Fortunately, they accepted our arguments on the requirement that vehicular access was needed from York Road before development could take place and that a consultative forum would be set up to allow local interests to ensure that the development would meet Wetherby’s requirements.”

After the meeting, Peter Catton of Better Wetherby said “We won the battle today, but sadly we have lost the war. Our attractive and historic market town will be the poorer for this decision.”

**For further information, please contact Peter Catton of Better Wetherby, telephone**

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