

## **NEWSLETTER - PUBLIC INQUIRY UPDATE 14<sup>th</sup> 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, 17<sup>th</sup> 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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. Sincere thanks to all those who have contributed .

The Public Inquiry starts at 10am on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> 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'*.

## **Transport for the Public Inquiry**

A 'midi-coach', for around 29 passengers, has been arranged by Ward Councillor Alan Lamb to transport people from the Cluster of Nuts car park in Wetherby to the Public Inquiry in Harrogate. Please see details of departure and return timings:

**Tuesday 17/12: Pick Up – 08.30; Return 17:30**

**Wednesday 18/12: Pick Up – 08.00; Return 17:30**

**Thursday 19/12: Pick Up – 08.00; Return 17:30**

**Friday 20/12: Pick Up – 08.00; Return 17:30**

To request a place on the coach please email Councillor Lamb at [alan.lamb@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:alan.lamb@leeds.gov.uk)

There may be opportunity on Day 1 for members of the public to raise any issues they have about the appeal site, although it will be for the Inspector to decide if he will allow them to be considered.

### **The Outline Programme for the Inquiry is as follows.**

Tue 17th Morning - Opening Statements (Inspector, Appellants, HBC, Better Wetherby)

Tue 17th Afternoon - Highways and Transport Matters

Wed 18th Morning - Landscape & Visual Impact

Wed 18th Afternoon - Ecological Impact

Thu 19th (All day) - Planning Matters

Fri 20th Morning - Conditions and Obligations

Fri 20th Afternoon - Closing Remarks (HBC, Better Wetherby, Appellants)

*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.*

**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.**