

Leeds City Council,  
Planning Services,  
Merrion House,  
110, Merrion Centre,  
LEEDS LS2 8DB.  
8<sup>th</sup> August, 2022.

Dear Sirs,

Racecourse Approach, Wetherby – Ref. 17/02594/OT.

I am writing as Chair of Better Wetherby (BW) following our 'catch up' discussion with Officers and others on 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2022, which included Ward and Town Councillors and Wetherby Civic Society. BW were represented by Ingrid McLaughlin and myself.

The meeting was appreciated by BW as we had heard very little following our similar 'catch up' with Taylor Wimpey (TW) on 12<sup>th</sup> May. After that meeting, on 15<sup>th</sup> May I wrote indicating BW had been pleased with some of what had been said but principally covered the BW position regarding Conditions 31 and 32 of the above Outline Consent. These Conditions, to the dismay of BW, have now been discharged but I will return to them later.

I understand that following the TW meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> May BW have been described as having a "high degree of satisfaction" (with the content of the TW presentation at that meeting), that was not the case and it would be more realistic to say the BW position after that meeting was one of 'a higher level of satisfaction', the two are not the same.

The two are not the same as at the meeting BW questioned, amongst others:-

- Why were not all houses built from the first phase compliant with 2025 Future Homes Standards rather than the first phase being compliant with 2021 Building Regulations Standards. The answer was cost.
- Why were there no timber framed houses included in the scheme as this would contribute to reducing emissions in production. The answer was cost but a suggestion the matter would be looked at which appears not to have happened.
- BW and others have commented on emissions through production of feature materials such as chimney pots.
- BW and mainly others were concerned about tree planting in individual gardens and the longevity of these trees on maturity.
- BW raised again the issue of noise and air pollution and gave evidence of effect and solution which, with minor modifications to the Motorway bund, has been largely ignored with all the long term ramifications to health of residents.

Moving forward to the meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> August, BW again raised the issue of timber frame construction, emissions caused by production of materials and features of brickwork. BW joins with the view that the Innovation area could be improved, we have seen for ourselves issues of differing house design on other TW schemes and welcome a move to have more of that on

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this site, equally we welcome the LCC view on the location of tree planting and its potential longer term effect on tree felling, effect of roots on dwellings and so on, points which have been raised by the Civic Society in the past.

Equally BW has been concerned about connectivity through the site and into the Town and we were pleased to note that further improvement is required to cycle ways and footways through the site, we have previously commented on these matters at Design Workshops.

Finally as points of detail, I have to record the dismay of BW in that Conditions 31 and 32 of the Outline consent have been discharged with no apparent challenge by LCC based on information BW has submitted and comments we have made, save for an increase in height of the Motorway bund. With respect, BW would be entitled to ask why LCC have simply accepted the TW Consultants submissions which in our view are flawed. New evidence as to the effects of noise and air pollution is being issued almost weekly, the latest in the last few days being the publication of connectivity with dementia.

Having raised this and faced with the discharge of Conditions BW understands that the phased development of the scheme, due for overall completion in 2035 according to previous information, will in all probability commence on the Racecourse Approach frontage where the site access points occur. In that respect it follows that the later stages will be built alongside the Motorway and will be subject to Building Regulation approvals current at the time. BW understands from enquiry that future Building Regulations will likely include far stricter control over noise and air pollution and as such BW would urge LCC, at the appropriate time, to exercise that control, including such features as the 9.6 m high barrier screens we have suggested previously, with utmost rigour.

In terms of 'where we are now', BW was heartened by some of the issues still to be resolved, especially the innovation aspects. We can all surely agree that the content of media reports paint a black picture for the economy which whilst not totally a Planning issue will affect TW. Thus, why build the first phase/ phases to pre 2025 standards and potentially be stuck with a no sale situation as buyers wait for the higher standard homes to emerge thus getting better value for their higher Mortgages and a better resale prospect.

Equally, why not build a better Motorway pollution protection scheme now, why not improve site connectivity now, why not bring more innovation now and after all that why not market the site as truly exemplar, the word we have all used throughout and which in the times of recession around the corner will be a massive selling point.

Future Planning Applications for the remainder of this Allocated Site (300 homes) are not for the TW discussion but in terms of environmental and pollution impact BW would urge that the points here and through the current discussions form the basis of any Pre Application meetings, it is in all our interests.

Yours faithfully.

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Chair,  
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