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Commercial Director
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25 May 2021

Dear Sir

**Proposed Disposal of Two Areas of Public Space at Rievaulx Road, Whitby
and One Area of Public Space at California Road, Whitby
under the Local Government Act 1972 – section 123.**

Whitby Area Development Trust objects to the proposed disposals on the grounds that SBC has not complied with the requirements of sections 96 and 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in respect of public open space.

- 1) The proposed disposals are not based on "*robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities*" in the Whitby urban area.

The last such published assessment was the SBC Green Space Audit 2014, which identified a significant deficit in the Whitby urban area, compared with the desired local standard. Since 2014 there have been yet further reductions in the green/open space provision in Whitby.

- 2) NPPF requires that open space, sports and recreational land should not be built on unless "*an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements...*"

Any such assessment would necessarily include an evaluation of alternative policy options that could achieve the desired acceleration in provision of quality, affordable homes in the Whitby Travel-to-Work Area (TTWA).

Such options should include policies already adopted by other local authorities, eg: raising the % of affordable homes required on land already designated for housing development; joint re-development of land owned by other public sector bodies; the introduction of local occupancy restrictions on all new housing in the Whitby urban area.

There are clear indications that the Whitby TTWA is a distinct functional housing market area within the borough. Meeting local needs requires location-specific policies to adequately address open space provision and affordable housing needs:

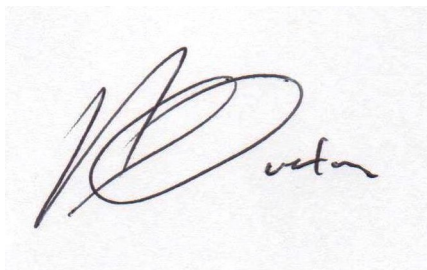
- There are unique constraints on land availability – given the protected area status of the encircling North York Moors National Park, which comprises the remainder of the TTWA outside the Whitby urban area.
- Up-to-date demographic analyses by the Office for National Statistics identify that the Whitby urban area has a declining population and declining employment opportunities.
(Given a similar demographic profile, the SBC Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 identified **no** requirement for additional open market housing in the NYMNP area during 2022-2038.)
- House prices: the demand for second and holiday homes in the Whitby TTWA has a marked effect on average house prices and rentals in the Whitby urban area. They are significantly higher than the average for the whole borough.
(Land Registry price paid data for 2020/21 shows that the average price of flats and terrace houses in the Whitby urban area was around 50% higher than in the Scarborough urban area.)
- Effect of Second and Holiday Homes on Housing Stock:
The Whitby urban area represents around 13% of the total SBC council-tax dwellings. But Whitby represents 22% of all council-tax rated second homes and 42% of all business-rated self-catering holiday accommodation in SBC.
(In 2018, SBC identified that 7% of its 57,514 council-tax rated dwellings were classed as second homes. In addition, there were 2,050 self-catering business-rated properties.)

A “robust and up-to-date assessment” of open space provision in the Whitby Urban Area is a pre-requisite, before any consideration of disposal.

The proposed disposal is said to be necessary to accelerate the provision of affordable housing. Therefore, a “robust and up-to-date assessment” is also required of the location-specific market forces that affect affordable housing provision in Whitby.

Yours sincerely

For and on behalf of Whitby Area Development Trust

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Overton', is written on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Leslie A. Overton
Chairman