

DEVELOPER SUBMITS FORMAL COMPLAINT ABOUT HARROGATE'S CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING

The development company planning to create a major new settlement on Flaxby's disused golf course has submitted a formal complaint about Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett, Harrogate Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Planning.

Flaxby Park Ltd's lawyers, from specialist planning law firm Town Legal LLP, have now written to Harrogate Borough Council after Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett made several factually misleading statements regarding the basis for policies within the submitted Draft Local Plan. The plan recommends that a new settlement should be created in an undefined area around Hammerton.

Writing on Twitter on 4th September, Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett said, 'we know that two companies control the land in the area we're looking at,' despite the sites being owned by more than 15 separate landowners and the majority of these are not under the control of the developers.

In addition, the recorded minutes from Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents' Association's annual general meeting this month, show that when Flaxby Park was being discussed, she said, 'such a new settlements (sic) would probably take 5 years plus before being ready for specific planning activity.'

However, Flaxby Park Ltd has held meetings on several occasions with council officers and housebuilders stating their ability to start on site immediately. This is also clearly evidenced in the developer's submissions to the Council. On the other hand, the Council's own Local Plan housing trajectory does not identify the first housing completions from the Green Hammerton / Cattal broad location until 2024/25.

Chris Musgrave from Flaxby Park Ltd, said: "It's crucial to the integrity of the plan-making process that Council members do not make statements that are blatantly false. This is not the first time Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett has misled the public. If she is

saying these things publicly, one can only imagine what she is saying privately.

“Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett’s inaccurate public comments are harmful to Flaxby Park. We own the land, we are ready to start work immediately, we have a thorough and robust case and have followed the Local Plan and all planning procedures to the letter. It is extremely concerning how someone in Councillor Rebecca Reeve-Burnett’s position can mislead local people in this way.

“There are clear flaws and major concerns within the Local Plan, but it has been rushed through anyway, despite the first Local Plan being thrown out by the Inspector. At the very least Harrogate’s residents deserve integrity, objectivity, openness and accountability from Harrogate Borough Council, but they are certainly not getting this at the moment.”

A planning application has already been submitted for Flaxby Park which will see the disused golf course transformed into a new sustainable village community, with 2,750 high quality homes along with a retirement village, two primary schools, a GP surgery, sports facilities, a hotel and a new village centre. Almost 50% of the site will consist of green open space and Goldsborough Railway Station will be reopened as a new park and ride station offering direct rail services to Harrogate, Leeds and York.

Flaxby Park was acquired in 2016 by Flaxby Park Ltd, which is owned by internationally renowned businesswoman and philanthropist Ann Gloag OBE and regeneration experts Chris Musgrave and Trevor Cartner.