

ARMTHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Comments from local residents about the Provisional (Pre-Regulation) Draft Plan and the Armthorpe PC's response.

1. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations set out how “qualifying bodies” undertaking the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan engage with communities and organisations likely to be affected by the Plan’s policies and proposals. The regulations also require qualifying bodies to record how such engagement took place and the outcome of any such engagement.
2. Armthorpe PC since embarking on the process in March 2012 of preparing the Armthorpe Neighbourhood Plan has therefore, undertaken a number of such exercises. (Please see page 32 of the ANP Provisional (Pre-Regulation) Draft for a list of such activities.
3. The most recent consultation exercise involves the publication of the Armthorpe NP Provisional (Pre-Regulation) Draft in August 2013.
4. In addition to consultation replies from developers / land owners / agents / statutory consultees, email replies were submitted by six local residents and a further seventy-three written replies from local residents.
5. The following analysis is, therefore, a summary of the views of seventy-nine local residents, together with a response from the Armthorpe Parish Council. Of the 79 replies, 65 objected to the proposals set out in the Armthorpe NP (Pre-Regulation) Draft for a variety of reasons, as set out below. The remainder were split between the 10 who had concerns about the Armthorpe NP’s policies and proposals and the 4 who expressed support for them.
6. The overwhelming majority of those objecting lived adjacent to Sites 1 and 2, the two large residential sites proposed alongside Mercel Avenue and Fernbank Drive.

Reasons for Objection:

7. The reasons for objection covered a range of issues as the following indicate:
 - Armthorpe does not need any more houses.
 - Development will change the character of Armthorpe.
 - Loss of countryside and arable farm land.
 - Loss of wildlife – birds and mammals.
 - Reduction of gap between Armthorpe and Edenthorpe – coalescence
 - Loss of view across open countryside.
 - “We moved to Armthorpe because it was a village surrounded by countryside”

- Reduction in value of our property.
- Facilities in the village (e.g. schools / doctor's surgery / dentist) are already overcrowded and will be more so with 780 or more new houses.
- Impact on existing roads will just get worse.
- Peak period congestion is already a serious problem.
- Existing surface water problems will simply get worse.
- Allocating Sites 1 and 2 conflicts with previous decision in the 1980s to refuse planning permission for residential development, partly because of sand underground.
- We opposed development in the past – and won.
- New developments will lead to more noise, nuisance and complaints.
- Noise, dust and other nuisance will be generated during construction period.

Rather than respond to each issue separately, the Parish Council has grouped the objections into scale of development; traffic impacts; countryside and ecological impacts; and impacts on social and community facilities.

Parish Council's response –

8. Scale of development: The Armthorpe NP must comply with the Doncaster Local Development Framework . The Local Development Framework is a statutory plan for the whole of the Doncaster Borough. The Local Development Framework Policy context for Armthorpe is set out in the adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy and summarised in the Armthorpe NP (Pre-Regulation) Draft. The Local Development Framework Core Strategy identified Armthorpe as a 'Principal Town', with an overall housing requirement of between 646 and 923 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2028 and with an assumed mid-point of 780 dwellings. This is a legal requirement and the task of the Neighbourhood Plan, therefore, was to find suitable sites for that number of houses in Armthorpe Parish in accordance with the Doncaster Local Development Framework Core Strategy, now officially adopted as the DMBC planning policy up to 2028.

9. Impact on traffic: Many of the replies referred to the existing traffic congestion, particularly at peak periods, and the likelihood that an additional 780 dwellings would be bound to make it worse. The Parish Council accepts there is a traffic problem and that additional residential development is likely to increase traffic flows, unless appropriate measures are taken to improve public transport and other sustainable methods of movement, such as cycling and /or walking. Such matters would be addressed through a Transport Impact Assessment as part of the Site Feasibility Assessment and /or the planning application process for the additional housing.

10. Impact on countryside and ecology: The diagrammatic layouts for Sites 1 and 2 show an awareness of the need for green spaces within and adjacent to the two

schemes. However, the Parish Council accepts there is no doubt that development on the scale proposed will result in a loss of countryside. As presently envisaged, therefore, the green countryside area between Armthorpe and Edenthorpe will be reduced from its present width, north south, but will still remain a significant feature in the landscape of Armthorpe and Edenthorpe. There will also be a loss of wild life habitat to a degree. Having said that, the land is mostly arable and, therefore, its ecological value is probably confined to hedgerows and existing wooded areas rather than open fields. The layout diagram shows significant areas of new planting which will have landscape and wildlife value.

11. **Impact on services and facilities:** Again the Parish Council accepts that the additional 780 dwellings will obviously generate some impact on existing services and facilities. However, the impact would normally be assessed through a feasibility assessment associated with site selection and /or the planning application process, at which point developers would be required by DMBC to contribute to improvements by means of the community infrastructure levy (CIL) and /or requirements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, as amended.

12. **Impact on drainage:** New development on the scale proposed, (780 dwellings) will obviously need additional infrastructure both foul and surface water. Again, the site selection process would normally involve a feasibility assessment as would the planning application process and mitigation measures would be required, funded if possible by developer contributions.

13. **Reasons for concern:** The ten residents who were concerned about the Pre-Regulation Armthorpe NP Draft proposals (rather than objecting to or supporting them) raised a number of issues, broadly of three kinds:

- the impact of the proposals on existing facilities, such as doctors and schools;
- the impact on the existing road network which, the residents argued, was already very congested with present traffic volumes - indeed traffic congestion was mentioned by seven of the ten respondents;
- the need to improve public transport and cycling and pedestrian facilities;

14. **Parish Council's response;** as stated above, the Parish Council fully accepts that the additional residential development will increase pressure on existing facilities. However, the use of Section 106 Agreements and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should reduce the impact by improving and expanding existing facilities so they can cope with higher demands on them. Similarly, with regard to impact on the existing road network, amelioration will be sought through the same powers – Section 106 monies and agreements and CIL. Transport Impact Assessments (TIA) should lead to additional measures to improve/reduce existing problems as well as address new needs and demands.

15. **Reasons for support:** As stated above, there were 4 respondents in favour of the Pre-Regulation Draft proposals. The additional residential development was positively welcomed – providing it did not go any further and providing increased traffic flows were catered for. One of the respondents made a telling point - if the Parish Council's ANP proposals were objected to, the Armthorpe community would lose the opportunity to influence how Armthorpe was planned and developed. That task instead would fall to the Government and DMBC. One respondent mentioned the Miners' Welfare site and expressed concern about its future.

16. **Parish Council's Response:** the Parish Council welcomes the support of these residents for the proposed residential and employment developments, for which the Armthorpe Plan makes provision in general conformity with the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The Parish Council also accepts that the impacts of the developments need to be taken into account and that developer contributions need to be sought to lessen those impacts, particularly traffic ones, but also on other services and facilities such as schools.