

ARMTHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Comments from local residents about the Pre-submission 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 to which was added a further six weeks consultation in February and March 2014).
3. The most recent consultation exercise, therefore, involved the publication of the Draft Armthorpe NP Pre-submission version from 3 February to 17 March 2014.
4. In addition to 12 consultation responses from developers / land owners / agents / statutory consultees, email replies were submitted by twenty-six local residents and a further 43 written replies from local residents (69 in total).
5. The following analysis is, therefore, a summary of the views of sixty-nine local residents. Of the 69 replies, 26 objected to a proposed development put forward at Nutwell Lane South for a large residential scheme for 500 dwellings and a by-pass. This scheme, in essence, had been rejected by the Parish Council in selecting sites for housing development in the Pre-regulation and Draft versions of the Armthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.
6. Of the 26 objecting to the Nutwell Lane properties, a significant number lived over-looking the Nutwell Lane site or close to it. It was not surprising, therefore, that they would be likely to object to the Nutwell Lane proposals. Certainly the proposal for a by-pass as part of the Nutwell Lane scheme attracted little support and its effectiveness was often challenged by residents who responded.
7. An analysis of the 42 representations deposited at the Armthorpe Library, the Armthorpe Community Centre, the Maple Grove Centre and the Charles Court Centre revealed the following overall positions:
 - **representations in support of** the Draft Armthorpe NP – 16
 - **representations concerned** about the Draft Armthorpe NP proposals – 19;
 - **representations very concerned** about the Draft ANP proposals – 6

- **representations objecting** to the Draft Plan – 5

Representations objecting to the Draft Armthorpe NP

- Greenbelt should never be built on
- No more room for houses
- Traffic is already horrendous and the village cannot take any more.
- Existing services and facilities e.g. schools, doctors' surgeries are already overloaded.
- Nutwell Lane by-pass won't work.
- Developing Nutwell Lane will benefit the developer / landowner but not the community.
- Against further building on our countryside.
- Countryside should be preserved for wildlife.
- Not safe for old people.
- No need for any more houses.
- Green buffer zone needed between proposed development at East and West of Hatfield Lane and existing housing in Fern Bank / Mercel Avenue.

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 Draft Armthorpe NP. 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: Several 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 should 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 25 representations 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. Of particular

concern is the pressure on local primary schools in Armthorpe. This is being addressed by the LEA which is committed to constructing additional facilities to accommodate existing and future pupil members. 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 16 respondents in favour of the Pre-Regulation Draft proposals. The additional residential development was positively welcomed at West and East of Hatfield Lane – providing it did not go any further and providing increased traffic flows were catered for. In the meetings with Residents' Groups, there was a recognition that 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. A number of the residents agreed that of the options available to the Parish Council, the West of Hatfield and the East of Hatfield sites were the best. By contrast, there were a number of objections (26 referred to above) which agreed with the Parish Council that the sites South of Armthorpe should be rejected in favour of the Hatfield Lane ones.

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 fully accepts that the impacts of the developments need to be taken into account and that developer contributions must be sought to lessen those impacts, particularly traffic ones, but also on other services and facilities such as schools. Indeed, as mentioned above, DMBC as Local Education Authority has made a commitment to provide extra-facilities at primary level, although no site specific proposal has, as yet, been made.