

Scalby Village Trust

Media Release

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2010

### **CAMPAIGNERS HOPE PLANNING CHANGE WILL SCUPPER HOUSING SCHEME**

Campaigners are hoping a radical change in Government planning rules will scupper development plans they fear would ruin a village near Scarborough.

Members of Scalby Village Trust are optimistic that the abolition of Regional Strategies will mean that plans to build 520 houses at High Mill Farm, Scalby will be halted and the views of the local community listened to.

And they also hope that broader plans – to build 1,720 homes on three sites in the area – will also have to go back to the drawing board.

When it granted outline planning consent for the High Mill Farm development, Scarborough Borough Council said it had to deal with the application in the context of regional guidelines.

Scalby Village Trust Chairman Caroline Pindar said: “We have always said that local democracy was being ignored because of the regional targets that local authorities were forced to follow. Now those regional strategies have been scrapped we now hope that the application will be looked at again and that local democracy be respected and local feelings and objections carry more weight.”

The Trust campaign group – Save Our Scalby – has always argued that the High Mill Farm development of 520 houses was far too large, would put too much strain on local amenities and ruin the village. When it went to council there were 455 objections - around 35% of the properties in the area.

The Government is abolishing Regional Strategies – guidelines which dictated to local authorities how many houses they had to build and where. Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said decisions of housing supply should rest with local authorities, without the framework of regional numbers and plans.

He said the change was to stop the destruction of the green belt and put power back into the hands of local communities.

"It will no longer be possible to concrete over large swathes of the country without any regard to what local people want," he said. "From now on communities will be trusted to make the right decisions about what development is suitable for their area, not bossed around by central Government and unelected regional quangos."

And he told local authorities to apply the change in legislation to any decisions currently being taken.

“We are delighted at this change of policy, particularly at the speed at which it has been made,” added Mrs Pindar.

“But we now want to see councillors and the local authority respond to this change and listen to the strength of opposition to the High Mill Farm development, which would ruin the area.”

Overall proposals to mark out Scalby for a total of 1,720 new homes were set out in two Council documents, the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Housing Allocations Development Plan Document (Preferred Options). The documents suggest that three areas of land could ultimately be allocated for housing: Northfield Way/Castlemount for 800 homes, Ridge Green for 400 homes and High Mill Farm for 520.

“These plots of land were identified to satisfy the demands of regional planning strategy. Now that that strategy is no longer in place the authority can decide for itself what housing need there is and, most importantly, where it can properly be allocated,” Mrs Pindar added.

“A lot has changed since the framework documents were drafted – not least an economic recession. We feel they need to be looked at afresh, in the light of the scrapping of Regional Strategies and what the Secretary of State has said.”

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