RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

c/o Workhouse Museum
Allhallowgate
Ripon
HG4 1 LE

info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk
www.riponcivicsociety.org.uk

North Yorkshire Council (Harrogate area)
PO Box 787
Harrogate
HG1 9RW

3rd May 2024

Dear Sirs

Planning Application ref. no: 20/02973/EIAMAJ
21 And 38 Engineers Claro Barracks, Chatham Road, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 2RD

Ripon Civic Society has previously submitted representations on the above planning application which is currently awaiting a final decision. The applicant has submitted new documents: a Planning Update and a summary of the Legal Agreement Heads of Terms. The Civic Society strongly objects to the terms of these documents which will not provide for the protection of the nationally important military heritage on the site.

As background, the Civic Society has a close working relationship with and is fully supportive of the Ripon Military Heritage Trust which is endeavouring to preserve the nationally important huts and other structures within the Clotherholme site. The Civic Society has had regular meetings over several years with the applicants, Homes England. We have been generally supportive of the overall proposals for Clotherholme but we are now registering a strong objection to the application because of the lack of provision of a site for preservation of the huts.

Representatives from both organisations spoke at the meeting of the former Harrogate Council Planning Committee on 23rd February 2023 to stress the historic importance of the huts and other structures on this site. Members agreed to the inclusion of terms in the draft Section 106 Agreement for a strategy to secure the military heritage within the site and to conditions protecting this heritage for the future.

Discussion with Homes England and others following the committee meeting has focussed on exploring locations within the site for the structures and buildings to be preserved, including the bridges and examples of the various types of huts. In these discussions the former depot site on Laver Banks was identified as being suitable for relocation of the huts; however, it is still earmarked in the illustrative masterplan for sports pitches. These could be provided off-site. The Civic Society is concerned that,

after these meetings, neither of the above documents proposes a site(s) for retention of any of the huts or provides for preservation of other structures, which may be identified as worthy of protection in the strategy.

The planning update contains a section titled *Ripon Barracks Legacy* which refers to balancing "*the urgent need for new homes for local people with a strategy for preserving and recording the unique history and heritage of the barracks*". The Civic Society is not asking for the housing numbers to be reduced but for some of the sports pitches to be provided off-site.

The applicants intend to "*keep the main military roads and layout at the site, as well as retaining historic names … provide information and interpretation boards on site and … integrate a walking tour, virtual tour or to develop other forms of public exhibition at the site"*. Up to £100,000 has been committed "*to work with the Trust to develop a feasibility study relating to the preservation and retention of some of the existing military buildings on the site*". Despite this, the illustrative masterplan is unchanged in this document with all the land committed to other uses. We are therefore very concerned that there would be nowhere to site any of the existing military buildings which the feasibility study is likely to recommend for retention.

The Civic Society welcomes the inclusion of new commitments in relation to the military heritage in the summary of the Legal Agreement Heads of Terms. However, the Society considers that a planning permission without provision of a site for retention of any of the huts or for retention in situ of other structures, including the training bridges, nullifies the whole objective of preserving the important and unique examples of military heritage at Clotherholme.

We have been advised that the planning application is to be considered at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on 14th May 2024. It is our intention for a member of the Civic Society committee to attend the meeting to support the Military Trust in its objection to the application. For the reasons outlined above, the Civic Society requests that the application is deferred to allow for changes to be made to secure the protection and preservation of the military heritage, including identification of a site for the huts.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Wigginton

Planning Lead
Ripon Civic Society