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North Yorkshire Council
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18th November 2026

Dear Sirs

RIPON BARRACKS, CHATHAM ROAD, RIPON, NORTH YORKSHIRE, HG4 2RD
26/06823/DISCON - Partial discharge of conditions 19 (Construction Management Plan), 29 (Dust Management and Monitoring Plan), 30 (Noise and Vibration Management and Monitoring Plan), 42 (Foul Drainage), 44 (Phase BNG Report), 45 (HMPP), 48 (Surface Water Drainage), 49 (Exceedance Flow Plan), 50 (Tree Survey and Arboricultural Report), 51 (AIA) and 52 (Arboricultural Method Statement and Root Protection Area) for Phase 0 only; and a full discharge of Conditions 37 (Military Heritage Record) and 47 (Heritage Strategy) of planning permission 20/02973/EIAMAJ.

Ripon Civic Society strongly objects to the proposal to discharge Condition 47 (Heritage Strategy) of the above condition discharge application.

As noted in the comments by Ripon Military Heritage Trust (RMHT), the submission of information intended to discharge Condition 47 runs to hundreds of pages, and we too are not proposing to comment in detail. We would however note that the extent and scope of the work that has gone into recording, reviewing and assessing the viability of retaining the huts to be demolished surely indicates the importance of the individual buildings, the wider site and the work that was undertaken there. This application allows for the almost complete loss of a site of local, national and international importance.

Whilst it is recognised that the approval of the outline application (HGT20/02973/EIAMAJ) in 2025 allowed for the residential development of the site, Condition 47 was attached to the consent specifically to allow the applicant to explore the feasibility and deliverability of retaining and reusing military heritage structures. This process is evidently now complete, and they have found that it is not feasible or viable to retain any huts in situ, and that only a small number could potentially be dismantled and re-erected. We share RMHT's conviction that the costs put forward in the AECOM report are simply not realistic based on evidence from other sites in the country, and even if they were, that the value of retaining some semblance of significance on site far outweighs this.

At other military sites of similar significance, the retention of WW2 buildings was considered vital for the significance and interpretation of the site. The buildings at Bletchley Park for example were retained in situ, when they had much more extensive levels of asbestos present which had to be removed with robots prior to their conversion.

The excessively high retention costs at Ripon Barracks seem to be deliberately set for the sole purpose of the applicant being able to say that they have explored the viability of retention, without reference to other similar works that have been carried out elsewhere in the country.

If approved, this application will allow for the almost complete destruction and loss of significance of one of the most important military sites in the north of England. The token relocation of a small number of the huts in no way provides compensation for this loss and the indicative masterplan that was submitted with the outline application indicates that no heed has been (or likely will be) paid to the historic layout or appearance of the site.

Ripon has seen several large housing developments in recent years, and we are of the opinion that these are severely lacking in good design, quality or appearance with little or no reference paid to local distinctiveness or historic patterns of development. Surely on a site of the scale of Ripon Barracks, there exists the opportunity to deliver a heritage-led development, with enough space to retain huts around a large open space, without affecting the viability of the wider development. No such opportunity will ever exist in Ripon again and rather than allowing for the homogenisation of the towns and cities around the county and country with low-quality housing developments, the Council has the chance to stand up for quality, local distinctiveness and heritage values in insisting that at least some of the historic huts are retained in situ, and that this is viable.

We would hope that the viability arguments set out in this application are robustly investigated by the Council and any consultants it appoints in the same way that they would be if an argument was being made for enabling development under Historic England's guidance document 'Enabling Development and Heritage Assets'

There exists, at this time, the chance to hold the applicant to account on the disingenuous consultation exercises that it has undertaken with local stakeholders, including the RMHT, and to seek to achieve the best possible heritage outcome for Ripon Barracks – a site of local importance for the City, but of international military heritage significance. We strongly urge that this application is refused unless the proposal is amended to include a suitable site allocation for huts to be retained on-site.

We trust you will take these comments into account when considering this application.

Yours faithfully

Richard Taylor
Chair, Ripon Civic Society

Cc.
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Nic Harne, North Yorkshire Council
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