

Chairman's Report—May 2009

First the bad news - it looks as if the national Civic Trust is about to be placed into administration. However, this year's Heritage Open Days should hopefully still go ahead. Full details are included inside.

Now for some better news. Over the past year, the committee has had the very welcome addition of a number of committed and hard-working new members. As a result, our Society should be much better placed to provide a more ambitious and interesting service to the membership - including the launch of several new initiatives.

The first of these is a photographic competition that we shall be running during Civic Societies week in collaboration with the Harrogate Advertiser entitled "Harrogate - the Best, the Worst and the Unusual." This project is being organised by committee members, Jacky Little and Ian Brown. Final judging and the award ceremony will be held in the Royal Hall on Monday 29 June. Details will shortly be published in the local paper.

The resurrection of the Society's Design Awards scheme is also proceeding under the able stewardship of Stuart Holland, Susan Amaku and Mike Burke. We have provisionally earmarked Thursday 15 October for the Awards ceremony.

In addition, we are planning some visits and Forums on subjects of interest. The next of these is a visit to St Peter's Church at 7.30pm on Thursday 21st May where we shall be given an illustrated talk on proposals to extend and modernise the church. This will be an interest discourse on how the church is adapting to current social and economic



conditions and how it sees its role developing in today's society.

We are holding our AGM on Thursday 25 June at 7.30pm in Grants Hotel. After the AGM, Sir Thomas Ingilby will talk about "Castle Life in the 21st Century".

In September, we are planning a visit to a neighbouring Civic Society for a guided tour of their town that is bound to be a fascinating and enjoyable local excursion.

As I'm sure you know, Sir Titus Salt was a towering figure in 19th century Britain. Manufacturer, politician and philanthropist, he is best known for the creation of Saltaire near Bradford. This fascinating man is the subject of a talk "The Titus Salt Story" by expert Maria Glot on Thursday 19th November. Don't miss it!

Finally, we are planning to hold a social function in December. More details later.

I do hope as many members as possible will decide to attend these events and thus make worthwhile the hard work of the various committee organisers.

If you haven't already done so, please take a few moments to complete and return the questionnaire sent out recently by the Secretary so that you committee can know better what it is that you expect and would like from your Society.

Howard Hughes

PLANNING MATTER



I have more planning applications to choose from this time. We have looked at 92 in detail and concluded that 34 should result in a response to the Council. Apart from the never ending procession of planning applications, there has been movement on two important forward planning matters - the Core Strategy and the Harrogate SHLAA. Planning is flooded with acronyms - SHLAA stands for Strategic Housing Land Availability assessment. Our Council did not invent it but is obliged by Government to have one! Perhaps more on these matters later.

Signs, Shopfronts and Advertisements



As one would have hoped - expected even - permission to remove the wonderful chemists shop-fittings dating from 1913 at 4 Royal Parade were refused. They may seem inconvenient from the point of view of re-letting the premises, but what would be the benefit of listed building status if such things were not carefully protected?

We do not regard frontages of bars and restaurants that are capable of being opened up to the street as acceptable treatment of the town centre conservation area. Also allowing noise to spill out into the street is a discouragement to town centre living.

One such application at *46-48 Parliament Street* was refused, but it had already been constructed. A new application to replace this is now in, but we had not studied it at the time of writing.

A new shop-front at *34 James Street* (Ernest Jones the Jewellers) has been approved. We were generally content with the design except for one element. How the security shutters would look and how and where they would be mounted was not clear to us from the application drawings. It is very important for the conservation area that shop-fronts do not have ugly security shutters.

A proposal came forward for an advertisement board fixed to first floor balcony railings at *8A Montpellier Street*. The premises were changing use from offices to a therapy centre to which we have no objection. This advertisement application was withdrawn. We are however not happy about signs in this situation and had commented that a similar sign already in place at *2 Montpellier Street* seemed not to have permission.

The *Co-op Store* on Otley Road is very persistent in its desire for an internally illuminated totem style sign. They applied for a third time, having achieved two refusals from the Council! I am pleased to note that they achieved a third refusal, even though the proposed sign had been reduced in size. Another Co-op, the Pharmacy at *111 Cold Bath Road* wanted an internally illuminated fascia, but the Council said no to the illumination. They also wanted two projecting signs - we thought that two on the short frontage was unnecessary as a single one would be seen well enough along the street.

There is a proposal for what we regard as an obtrusive sign in the countryside for

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Oakdale Golf Club. It is a substantial sign, 3.2m wide on two poles and situated at the bend on Penny Pot Lane near the Queen Ethelburga's Estate. The area is designated an Area of Special Control of Advertisements. (An ASCA). We trust that the Council will not give permission.



LARGER HOUSING SITES

An application for re-use of *Grove Road Methodist Church* came forward. It was to have included 11 residential units and studio space and would have involved some demolition of extensions and the erection of a three storey block to the rear. The proposal was refused because of parking problems, harm to amenity for neighbours due to overlooking and the loss of a community facility.

We have an outcome on the proposal for the *Schlatter Building* (Southfield) at the corner of Station Parade and York Place. It was taken to appeal and the Inspector has dismissed the appeal. He did not regard the proposal as being acceptable for the conservation area, being out of scale with Royal House opposite and introducing a 'canyon' effect on Station Parade. He was even more concerned with the appearance of the building from York Place and the Stray and considered that any development here should be of the highest quality to integrate satisfactorily with the elegance and rich variety of buildings on York Place. In his words the proposed building would be 'unduly assertive'. He was not against a contemporary design approach, but did not

find that any of the positive factors outweighed concerns regarding an overbearing impact on the conservation area. There was, he concluded, insufficient evidence to refuse permission on traffic and parking grounds alone, despite the inadequate lay-by provision for larger commercial vehicles. I have heard from a reliable source that the developers no longer intend having any residential uses on the site. There is at present a planning application to convert four existing flats within the Schlatter building to offices.

Having looked at the further application for mixed use of the large block between *Parliament Terrace and The Ginnel-17-23 Parliament Street* - we judged it less acceptable than the plans that were previously given consent. The most notable change was that the yard area at the rear would no longer be available for any car parking or deliveries, due to an additional use for offices being included. We were content with the mix of uses - retail, restaurant, apartments and offices, but it was now too intensive. The approved scheme included handsome replacement dormers at the front, but these were now deleted from the plans, which we found very disappointing. However, the new application was approved. We had difficulty with the plans and information supplied, as some of the paperwork seemed to be from the previous application and did not all agree. This is not, sadly, a unique occurrence.

A highly contentious application for housing was lodged for the *Spa Tennis Club* on Kent Drive. This is an important site on the Duchy Estate and although the site itself is flat (as you would expect for tennis courts!) the area is steeply sloping which could cause overlooking and overbearing problems for residents below on Oakdale Rise, and for future residents of this site, if the club is allowed to be re-developed for housing. The plans as originally drawn were for 14 houses, 10 detached and a terrace of 4. The so-called detached houses were hardly detached at all - a separation between pairs of only about .75m, which looked rather silly for

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anywhere but especially for an area like the Duchy Estate. It was done, no doubt, just for the sake of being able to market them as detached - it certainly was not a positive design feature. These plans were revised with 8 of the houses being made into four pairs of semi-detached properties, one detached house and the terrace of 4. These improvements made a total of 13 houses with a slightly better feeling of space around them. However, we do not believe that the details of design and layout including intensivity are comparable with the Duchy area of the conservation area.

Currently, national and local planning policy will not allow the loss of recreational land unless it has been replaced satisfactorily in quantity, quality and usefulness. The application got as far as the Council planning committee agenda of 17th February, but was withdrawn a few days before, as it was recommended for refusal due to there being no firm proposals for a satisfactory replacement facility. They had intended to move to the Council's preferred site for a major sporting complex at Claro Road/Kingsley Drive, but that of course has been delayed by the Core Strategy Inspector deleting the policy that would have assisted in achieving it. We did not think that the applicant should have got away with only the one reason for refusal, powerful though it was, especially as the planning officer's report was distinctly unenthusiastic about some design elements of the scheme and its effects on neighbours.



SMALLER HOUSING SITES

Since the last newsletter, we have seen another application for a single house at the side of *36 Wheatlands Road East*, which has been passed. Further improvements were made, including setting the garage towards the rear of the site but attached along part of its length to the proposed house. This was a great help in giving a better feeling of space around the property. We were also very

pleased that the front boundary treatment will now include a low wall with railings, which will be an enhancement for the conservation area. The 'coach house' application for 12 Duchy Road came back again (the proposal I mentioned last time was withdrawn) but was refused by the Council.

C.K.Batchelor, the builders, have premises on *Cold Bath Place*, which is off Cold Bath Road. They proposed to demolish the existing builders yard and sheds, to which we have no objection, as they make no positive contribution to the conservation area. Replacing this yard would have been a row of four town houses and offices. Apart from an oddly designed end of the office section, we had no problem with the design. The narrowing of the site at one end had resulted in an ungainly roof. The idea we supposed was to get the very last square inch of footprint out of the site. Consent was refused, due to the development being poorly related to existing residential properties, causing overbearing and increased overlooking and also that the scale in relation to the surroundings would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

A smaller housing site on the Duchy Estate has also been causing a lot of concern. It is *Duchy Cottage*, which is behind St. Wilfrids Church and can be accessed via a narrow land from York Road and also reached via the Church. A row of dilapidated and unused garages would need to be demolished to accommodate the proposed development which would see the cottage made into two dwellings and a pair of new-build houses added. We were not happy about the prospect of vehicular access to Duchy Road via the church. We also saw that extra traffic on the unmade lane to York Road could adversely affect amenity for neighbours. The houses on the Duchy are obviously on very generous plots and, even though Government policy says that 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be considered a minimum so as to minimise land take for housing, exceptions

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can be made for conservation areas for instance where one of the qualities is spaciousness.

We looked at 27-28 Park Parade. There were two parts to the proposal, one was to convert the existing building to six apartments with considerable alterations internally, but only a few changes at the rear. The other part was to build a new block of three flats on what is currently the car park at the rear. The building is in the conservation area and is also listed, along with most of Park Parade. We did not consider that the changes to the existing building seriously impacted on the listing qualities because the front elevation which faces the Stray was to be unchanged. However, our strong objection was to the new block, which would have had an adverse impact on nearby residences due to overlooking and overbearing. It would also have failed to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. The materials for the walls - buff brick and cedar boarding are alien to the location. The only access to the block would be through a narrow arch in the frontage building - too narrow for most construction and servicing vehicles including refuse lorries. Also, only six car parking spaces were being provided for the total of nine flats (three of which had two bedrooms). The developers acknowledged that this was not sufficient, but that other cars could park on the road. In theory yes, but in practice the area is fully parked most of the time! The application has been withdrawn.

Another application that was withdrawn was one to convert *59 East Parade* to three apartments. This house has been well used for many years by the Harrogate Dramatic Society for meetings, auditions, readings, coffee mornings, storage of costumes etc. The HDS is one of the larger performing societies in Harrogate and their contribution to the artistic life of the town is significant. We were very disappointed to feel that the efficient operation of the Society would be seriously affected if they had to find less

convenient and useful premises. Happily, the Council concluded that to lose the premises to apartments would be contrary to Policy CFX - Community Facilities Protection - and it was recommended for refusal. The application was withdrawn just before it was due to go before the planning committee.

OTHER APPLICATIONS

There were two applications for extensions on Leeds Road. The one at *14 Leeds Road* seemed at least partly to be an application due to unauthorised works. In October 2005, consent was given for raising the roof of this distinctive brick built house to provide second floor accommodation. Removing the stone balustrade to the parapet was not part of that application but it had been taken off - the recent application included a balustrade. It seems that the original has been destroyed and the replacement will be in artificial stone. A condition of the consent is that any broken or missing cornice brackets shall be replaced and made good in materials which match the existing.

The other application was at *37 Leeds Road* (which was refused) and included a 3 storey extension, a garage and 2m high front wall with gates. The house is just outside the Harrogate conservation area which runs along its north and east boundaries and is across the road to the west. We found the proposals too intensive and dominating, both for the street scene and the neighbours. The wall was obtrusive and uncharacteristic for the boundary facing the highway. The garage looked impractical, being narrow and with access from the road on the opposite side of the plot with little space for manoeuvring. The proposal gained a detailed refusal on many points except that no mention was made of the impracticality of the garage.

To the left of 14 Albert Street is a yard with a lean-to garage. We saw an application to infill this yard with an office building. The most unfortunate aspect of the proposal was that a very attractive original stone wall would have to be lost. It

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is not just an ordinary straight boundary wall because it curves down from high up on No.14, and uses nicely cut coping stones. It is an integrated part of the design - go and have a look before it is too late, as permission has been given for its demolition. Small losses of something original but unusual and of quality, unfortunately cumulatively conspire to dilute the conservation area.

We received a consultation from North Yorkshire County Council for a large sixth form extension at the Grammar School. The design is uncompromisingly modern but to the rear of the existing buildings. It would be about 70m from neighbours and we did not see any problems with it. Also included was a dining room extension that would not even be seen from public viewpoints. More car parking is proposed along with a kitchen garden, which we hope will be well maintained and useful.

Yet again *Carringtons Night Club* on Station Parade have asked for extended opening hours. There have already been two withdrawn applications to stay open until 6.00 am on Saturdays and Sundays. I cannot imagine why they are trying again for the same extension of hours. The police and

environmental health departments have sent strong objections, as we have, each time an application has come forward. Carringtons currently have permission to stay open until 3.30 am - is this not late enough for anyone? It is certainly already too late for those who live nearby. Thankfully, the application has been refused.

One last small application. Boundary fences especially on frontages can easily spoil the street scene. A high close boarded fence and gates had been erected without planning permission (quite a frequent occurrence these days) at *48 Green Lane*. We made some suggestions for improvement - short of taking it all down! The fence was allowed with two conditions, that it must be stained a dark colour to be approved and that a hedge in front must be maintained at the same height. We had suggested a lattice top for the fence and more attractive gates (wrought iron or timber barred) rather than the straight topped boards the same as the fence.

As always, not every single application that we have responded to since last time is covered in this article, but hopefully it gives the flavour of our activities on the development control front. Please let us have your thoughts on any planning matters.

Henry Pankhurst

SHLAA

The Harrogate Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is not an invention by Harrogate Borough Council, but by order of the Government. The forward planners, in order to consult and involve stakeholders in the process, formed a working group. This consisted of representatives of the Council, house-builders, property and land agents, social landlords and Civic Societies (Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon). I was very interested and pleased to be involved in the process.

There were three meetings of the group, last October, February and March. I

attended all three, as did Council Don Mackenzie, Cabinet member for Planning and Transport, but attendance at the second and third meetings was not good. At the first meeting, just the Ripon Civic Society representative was absent. There was additionally the opportunity between meetings to comment as work progressed on the SHLAA and responses were shared on the Council website and by e-mail etc.

A very large database of possible housing sites has been gathered from various sources - landowners, land agents, house builders, the Urban Housing Capacity Study etc. The sites have been amassed over several years with no restrictions on what land may be put forward. Many of

these sites have already been published in the Council's Site Options for new Homes and Businesses and the Draft SHLAA of January 2008. The SHLAA has identified as many sites as possible with housing potential. The inclusion of a site in the SHLAA is not to be taken as an indication that it will appear in the Local Development Framework as a preferred option or that planning permission is likely. Whether a site actually gets developed or not will depend on Planning Policy and how housing completions are matching up to the targets set in the Core Strategy. Windfall development will form part of the housing provision as and when sites achieve planning consent and are actually built. Only sites that may accommodate 10 or more dwellings in Harrogate, Knaresborough, Ripon, Boroughbridge or Masham, or 5 or more dwellings elsewhere in the District are included. So, there will be a significant number of dwellings that are built on sites not in the SHLAA.

There are about 20 sites with planning permission not yet fully built and a few pending applications, plus, remember, all those below the thresholds mentioned above. The main list includes a large number of sites, 49 of which are in Harrogate town. These sites are those that have a reasonably realistic possibility of being developed, even if it is many years hence. They do, of course, still have to comply with policy and a need for housing in respect of the Core Strategy target for the District of 390 homes per year. In some cases, existing facilities would first have to be relocated. If you have an interest in one of these sites, be assured that there is a long way to go with many of them, even if development for housing happens at all!

I am pleased to say that a large number of potential sites that were put forward have been appended in a list of exclusions - a total for the District of 188. The main reasons are that they are outside of settlements and would conflict with settlement growth policy, that they are within the statutory green belt or are identified for employment use. Those sites below the site size thresholds are also listed in the Exclusion Appendix, but I expect that some of these have a chance of being developed for housing and will no doubt come forward as planning applications, even though they do not get into the LDF as specific housing allocations. The Claro Road Rugby Ground, despite the fact that it was a housing allocation in the old Local Plan, is excluded as not being considered to be available.

The Harrogate SHLAA has now been approved by Councillor Don Mackenzie, cabinet member for Planning and Transport and it is on the Council's website.

Henry Pankhurst

GROVE HOUSE VISIT



Some sixty members of the Society paid a very successful visit to Grove House on Skipton Road

on Thursday 23rd April. Malcolm Neesam and the Grove House guides treated us to a fascinating history of the building - including its origins as the "World's End Inn" (now moved to Knaresborough) in about 1619, and the various uses to which it has been put throughout its long life - school; hospital; private home; orphanage and now a convalescent home for the RAOB. Probably its most famous inhabitant was Samson Fox, one of the town's greatest sons, who greatly extended the building and included many grand features including a laboratory, observatory; ballroom and art gallery. After touring the building and gardens, we were treated to an excellent cheese and wine supper.

The visit was splendidly organised by the Society's Secretary, Chris Holland.

Howard Hughes

A MESSAGE FROM THE CIVIC TRUST

April 20, 2009

The Civic Trust's financial position has come under severe pressure since the loss of the Green Flag Award scheme, a major government contract, last summer. This has been further impacted by unsuccessful bids for Government funding, disappointing results from a fundraising appeal to our membership and a significant drop in the number of contracts secured with local authorities for our BizFizz and High Street UK programmes.

The Trustees met last week to consider a number of options for the Trust's future. They have with great regret concluded that the Trust no longer has the resources to continue operating and have resolved to place the Trust into Administration.

This has been an agonising decision. The Trustees are acutely aware of the Trust's fifty two year history and legacy. We are extremely conscious of our obligations to members, staff, funders and other stakeholders. Working with the Administrator we aim to ensure that, where possible, programmes currently in place are handed over to other organisations to continue delivery with the minimum of disruption.

During its lifetime, the Trust has always sought to deliver its charitable objectives through partnership and a collegiate approach to its work. Our commitment is to try to ensure that as much of the Trust's work as possible continues through our partner organisations, and that the commitment they have shown to our programmes and policies finds its reward in positive outcomes.

Philip Kolvin QC, Chairman of the Civic Trust said "The energy, expertise and uniqueness of the civic society movement is not diminished by this announcement. I am fully confident that the movement will dust itself off and rise again, through a new legal structure, governed by and for its grassroots. Moves are already afoot within the movement to create such a structure, and I look forward to watching it develop. The importance of the movement is such that it must not, and will not, be allowed to languish for long."

Griff Rhys Jones, President of the Civic Trust said "These have been difficult times for a lot of organisations. The Civic Trust have done great work but the economics of current circumstances have meant that it cannot continue. Only a couple of weeks ago I helped hand out some highly regarded and coveted awards. I have learned of recent developments with great regret. My own commitment to the cause is not the slightest diminished and I know that thousands of members of civic societies across Great Britain feel exactly as I do and will want to keep the flame burning in some way."

Philip Kolvin QC
On behalf of Trustees

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR OF THE HARROGATE ADVERTISER

Dear Friend,

May I take this opportunity to tell you about a new Reader Panel I am setting up to make it easy for you to tell my team and I what you think about the Harrogate Advertiser.

I am asking various organisations in Harrogate if their members would join the Advertiser's new Reader Panel, to help shape the future for your local newspaper.

Maybe you want more sports coverage, think we need to improve our letters pages or should make some other changes to the Harrogate Advertiser . Maybe there's an issue in the town or in your particular neighbourhood that you think we should be campaigning about.

I think the Harrogate Advertiser is at the heart of life in Harrogate but we can only stay there with your help. The Harrogate Advertiser is YOUR newspaper so please take this opportunity to make your views known.

Whilst we'll touch on some serious subjects, I hope that you'll find it fun to be part of the Panel. Sign up for the Panel and you'll be entered into a Prize Draw to win a luxury hamper and, once you're a member, we'll give you access to all sorts of other freebies to thank you for your involvement.

We'll also share the survey results with you and tell you what we're doing as a result of your feedback.

Jean MacQuarrie
Editor
Ackrill Media Group

The fine print:

It's easy to join the Panel - just go to our website and fill in our very short survey - visit www.harrogateadvertiser.co.uk and click on Reader Panel on the home page. If you join the Panel, we'll email you a short survey every now and then. We promise not to take up too much of your time and, whilst we'd like you to complete every survey you're sent, it's not a problem if sometimes you just don't have time to help us.

The County Council has recently submitted a planning application for a waste management site along with office and storage facilities on Penny Pot Lane. This proposal contravenes many planning policies and is strongly opposed by Harrogate Borough Council - which has no power to refuse the proposal - only to lodge an objection. We are strongly supporting our local council as shown in the following letters on this important subject

38, St.Clements Road,
Harrogate,
HG2 8LX
29 April, 2009

North Yorkshire County Council,
Minerals and Waste Planning,
Development and Countryside Service,
County Hall,
Northallerton DL7 8AH

Dear Sir,

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of household waste re-cycling centre and highways department at Penny Pot Farm HG3 2SN

We object most strongly to the above proposals.

The Waste Re-cycling Centre

The proposed location is very poor from a sustainability point of view. Such a facility should be within or adjoining a large 'catchment' area. There are always going to be users that have to travel a few miles wherever a re-cycling site is situated, but at Penny Pot Farm there is no local substantial population. All users would have to travel by car or van etc., as bus, foot and cycle are hardly viable means of transport to a waste site! Therefore it is absolutely vital that such a facility should involve the shortest of vehicle journeys for the vast majority of users.

Penny Pot Lane is a narrow straight and fast road. It is proposed to widen this road for a considerable length to ease the situation and to try to accommodate vehicles queuing for the waste site. This would presumably involve destruction of the tree belt that is close to the road.

Just to the north runs the A59 Skipton Road, which is parallel to Penny Pot Lane. About 3.6km of the Nidderdale AONB southern boundary runs along the A59 westwards from a point approximately north of Penny Pot Farm. The northern boundary of the site is only about .65km from the AONB.

We believe that longer distance views would be obtained from many parts of the AONB and other open countryside locations. Large buildings on the site could not be satisfactorily visually accommodated. The Knabs Ridge area does not have tree cover that would naturally screen the development.

The Highways Depot

The comment above regarding sustainability and visual effect on the countryside will also apply to this aspect of the proposal. If this facility is to replace Pateley Bridge and Starbeck Depots, more road miles are inevitable. The salt barn will also be a large intrusive building in the countryside.

The Office Block

We cannot think of any logical reason why this site could be thought of as a good one for offices. Again, travel to this rural site would be almost entirely by private car and the obtrusiveness of the building with large areas of glass creating another blot on the exposed landscape. Offices are an employment use that should, according to national, regional and local policy, be accommodated within the development limits of towns. We believe that accommodation could be found in Harrogate, but we glean no effort to explore such a possibility by North Yorkshire County Council.

This application therefore is in three distinct parts, a Household Waste Recycling Centre and Highways Depot and an Office Block - all three of which are contrary to sustainability policies and countryside policies. The substantial weight of the many national, regional and local policies that are relevant almost all (with the possible exception of environmental health concerns) strongly say that Penny Pot Farm is an incredibly poor choice of site for any or all of the proposed uses. Objections relating to trees, ecology, landscape, lighting etc. could be expanded upon and applied to all three parts of the application.

Harrogate already has an edge of town area at Oak Beck Park, where an additional re-cycling centre could be located. This is even allocated as a site by North Yorkshire County Council in their North Yorkshire Waste Plan Policy 5/5. How is it possible that the County Council would pluck the current site 'out of the blue' when a site without all the planning problems exists already? I commend the Harrogate Planning Officer's report and conclusions on this proposal to you. The planning sense, common sense and detail included therein indicate only one possible outcome - that the scheme for Penny Pot Farm must be scrapped.

Yours faithfully,

Henry Pankhurst
Vice Chairman

38, St.Clements Road,
Harrogate,
North Yorks HG2 8LX
1st May 2009

For the attention of Joanne Davey,
Planning Casework Team,
Government Office for Yorkshire & the Humber,
ESK Wing,
Lateral,
8, City Walk, Leeds LS11 9AT

Dear Sirs,

Planning Application by North Yorkshire County Council for a
Waste Re-cycling Centre etc. at
Penny Pot Lane, Harrogate HG3 2SN

We are seriously concerned that NYCC are considering developing Penny Pot Farm for a household waste re-cycling centre, a highways depot, and an office block.

The site is unsuitable for all of these uses in national, regional and local planning policy terms. NYCC already has a designated site in Harrogate for waste re-cycling and we are at a loss to understand why the County is promoting an unsustainable rural location for uses that can and should be accommodated within the development limits for the town of Harrogate.

To allow the application would be contrary to so many basic and important policy considerations that we suggest that the matter is worthy of your attention. Unless the County is willing to withdraw the proposal, we ask that you 'call in' the application for determination by the Secretary of State.

I am enclosing a copy of our representation to NYCC and a copy of Harrogate Borough Council officer's report to committee. This report gives an excellent detailed analysis of the situation.

Yours faithfully,

Henry Pankhurst,
Vice Chairman