# Village dispute in Norfolk intensifies over boundary claims for 2,000-home Robertson Barracks project



In Norfolk, a rare and heated dispute has unfolded between two villages, Swanton Morley and Hoe and Worthing, over the future of a significant housing development that promises to reshape their communities. The controversy arises not from opposition to the development itself—planned for the 165-hectare Robertson Barracks military site—but rather from a tussle over which village should claim ownership of this ambitious project, which aims to accommodate up to 2,000 new homes.

Swanton Morley parish councillor Roger Atterwill has been at the centre of the debate, suggesting the need to reconfigure parish boundaries to better represent the realities of the housing development. At a recent Breckland District Council meeting, he articulated concerns that while the bulk of the new homes would technically fall within the smaller Hoe and Worthing parishes, the associated traffic and construction disruptions would predominantly affect Swanton Morley. He argued, “Between the two villages, Swanton Morley would have all the traffic and all the construction vehicles,” which has led to accusations of a “land grab” from the neighbouring community.

This tension has been echoed by local residents and council members from Hoe and Worthing, including Celia Daniel, who countered that any move to extend Swanton Morley's boundary would effectively diminish her parish to an “utterly irrelevant, moon-shaped sliver.” The underlying fiscal implications of the development also add a layer of complexity to the dispute; Atterwill highlighted a stark contrast in financial positions, with Swanton Morley facing a £98,000 funding shortfall compared to Hoe and Worthing’s mere £1,800. This disparity has intensified the stakes of the development, not just for housing but also for potential tax revenue and economic benefit to the communities involved.

The plans for Robertson Barracks, currently home to the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, are set against a backdrop of broader housing needs in the area. Local authorities are positioning the project as a transformative opportunity. If realised, it would approximately double Swanton Morley’s current population of about 2,200 residents, while also promising enhancements to local infrastructure, services, and employment opportunities. Authorities have stressed the importance of a collaborative approach to the redevelopment to ensure that it is beneficial for both communities.

However, as the battle for ownership continues, the future of the housing development hangs in the balance, illustrating a unique intersection of community dynamics, fiscal desperation, and ambitious urban planning. As these villages grapple with their identities in the face of such sweeping changes, their response to this emerging challenge may set a precedent for future developments in similar settings across the country.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061014/neighbour-row-norfolk-villages-mega-project-row), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cv2g31gv0w0o)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061014/neighbour-row-norfolk-villages-mega-project-row), [[4]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23954378.norfolk-army-base-swanton-morley-become-2-000-homes/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24451565.swanton-morley-council-backs-robertson-barracks-development/), [[6]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/20856480.swanton-morley-military-base-closed-government-plans-axe-56-sites-uk/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061014/neighbour-row-norfolk-villages-mega-project-row> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cv2g31gv0w0o> - Plans are underway to redevelop Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley, Norfolk, into a self-sustaining neighbourhood with up to 2,000 homes. The 165-hectare military base, currently housing the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, is set to cease operations by 2029. The development aims to address housing and employment needs in the area, potentially doubling the population of Swanton Morley, which currently stands at approximately 2,200 residents. Local authorities are collaborating to ensure the project benefits the community while addressing concerns about infrastructure and services.
3. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24451565.swanton-morley-council-backs-robertson-barracks-development/> - Swanton Morley Parish Council has endorsed plans to transform Robertson Barracks into a self-sustaining neighbourhood comprising 2,000 homes. The 165-hectare site, currently home to the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, is scheduled to close by the end of the decade. The council views this development as an opportunity to bring significant local investment, employment, and improvements to services such as transportation and healthcare, aiming to more than double the village's population of around 2,200 residents.
4. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23954378.norfolk-army-base-swanton-morley-become-2-000-homes/> - Plans are in place to redevelop Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley into a new community featuring up to 2,000 homes. The 165-hectare site, currently housing the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, is set to cease operations by 2029. The development is part of Breckland Council's local plan to build thousands of new homes across the district, aiming to address housing and employment needs in the area and potentially doubling the population of Swanton Morley, which currently stands at approximately 2,200 residents.
5. <https://www.derehamtimes.co.uk/news/housing/22050100.norfolk-army-base-redeveloped-400-new-homes/> - Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley, Norfolk, is being considered for redevelopment into a new community, including approximately 400 homes and a range of businesses. The 165-hectare site, currently housing the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, is planned to be disposed of by the Ministry of Defence by 2029. The development is part of Breckland Council's wider plans to build thousands of new homes across the district, aiming to address housing and employment needs in the area.
6. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/20856480.swanton-morley-military-base-closed-government-plans-axe-56-sites-uk/> - The Robertson Barracks at Swanton Morley, Norfolk, is among 56 military sites in the UK slated for closure under a government review. The barracks, currently home to the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, is scheduled to close by 2031. The Ministry of Defence plans to dispose of the site by 2029, with potential redevelopment into housing being considered as an alternative to abandonment.
7. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robertson\_Barracks,\_Swanton\_Morley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robertson_Barracks%2C_Swanton_Morley) - Robertson Barracks, formerly RAF Swanton Morley, is a military installation near Swanton Morley in Norfolk. It is home to the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards and is set to close in 2029. The 165-hectare site has been earmarked as part of Breckland Council's local plan for the next 20 years, with potential redevelopment into a self-sustaining neighbourhood comprising up to 2,000 homes.