

**Jubilee House**

13<sup>th</sup> December, 2015

Forward Planning  
Ryedale District Council  
Old Malton Road  
Malton  
YO17 7HH

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed our comments on the Local Plan Sites Document.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher and Sophie Long

Enc.

## **Local Plan Sites Document**

I am writing to make representations regarding the site assessment work undertaken to progress the Local Plan Sites Document. As a resident of Amotherby, my comments are predominantly confined to the sites under consideration in Amotherby and Swinton.

### **Our Views on the Council's Preferred Sites**

As we have previously advised (email of 2 December 2014 submitted to Amotherby Parish Council for inclusion in their submissions to you), we are fundamentally opposed to your selection of Site 8 in Amotherby as a preferred development site for a number of reasons:

#### **Traffic Problems**

Amotherby already has very serious traffic problems which have a range of causes:

➤ **Village School**

At school dropping off and picking up times (and when fairly regular school events are taking place) the village daily suffers extreme congestion, often to the point of complete gridlock. This results in traffic situations that are unsafe and the grass verges are regularly churned up by large lorries mounting the pavements to enable traffic flow to resume. As residents in close proximity to the school with a driveway exiting onto Main Street, there are frequently times when we are literally unable to leave our home until the traffic has subsided.

➤ **BATA**

Lorries from BATA need to travel through the village at regular intervals, adding to traffic problems.

➤ **General Volume of Traffic**

We have noticed a marked increase in general traffic flow through the village going to and from the Kirkbymoorside and Pickering direction, much of it at unacceptable speed, during the past 10-12 years. Amotherby is already a very busy village.

In short, selection of a development site that will exit anywhere onto Main Street or High Street and exacerbate the traffic problem

would be very ill-advised and to select a site in such close proximity to Meadowfields and the school would seem to be beyond comprehension, especially when there are alternative sites available. Having attended the Amotherby Public Consultation meeting, the overriding concern of all present was the issue of traffic. The residents did not want Site 8 to be developed for this reason.

### **Access to Site 8**

Access to Site 8 would present problems. The logical access to the North of the house between Station Farm and Zetechtics is owned by a third party. The area to the south of the house is very narrow and would be unacceptable as an access road both in terms of safety/visibility and as it would be so close to both Station Farm and the neighbouring property. We are not aware if the plan is to demolish Station Farmhouse, but if this is the case, we feel this would be completely unacceptable. Although not a listed building, the house is nonetheless a historic and attractive property which is part of the current character of the village and we do not feel that it should be compromised in any way.

### **Size of Site**

The size of the site is too large for the number of houses envisaged, leading to a risk of further unacceptable development in the future.

### **Special Qualities, Landscape and Setting**

We agree strongly with your own analysis that “in terms of the character of this site, its rural, pastoral qualities would be lost through development; harming the character of the settlement.”

### **Proximity to Church**

St. Helen’s is a historic Grade 2 Listed Church, currently able to be enjoyed in a peaceful village setting. The development of Site 8 would inevitably have an adverse impact on the setting and people’s experience of the Church and Churchyard.

### **Potential Archaeological Remains**

It is widely acknowledged that there may be important archaeological remains on Site 8, both Roman and medieval.

### **Public Water Supply**

There is the potential for a serious risk to the public water supply, including a risk of pollution from food manufacturing.

### **BATA Noise**

As near neighbours of BATA, we are often aware of noise emanating from the operation of the mill, particularly when sitting outside in the summer. This would be highly likely to have a negative impact on householders if Site 8 were to be developed and whilst mitigating steps can be taken for the houses, the noise would definitely be noticeable outside. We have at times also been aware of the humming noise while in bed at night with the window open and many people like to have bedroom windows open at night.

### **Land Instability**

It is well known that there has been evidence of land instability in the vicinity of Site 8, both in terms of the area near the current entrance to Meadowfield and as recently as 2001 when there were major subsidence issues during the building of Jubilee House and Cornwell House which resulted in Cornwall House needing to be piled to a great depth.

### **VIEWS ON HOW THE SITES HAVE BEEN SELECTED**

Having studied the Site Selection Tables, we note with some concern that there are various mentions of “the submitted scheme” which could be seen to be playing a significant part in your deliberations. As far as we are aware, the information contained within the scheme has not been made available to consultees. We would hope and expect that if transparency is to be maintained in the decision making process, the fact that one site has submitted a detailed and further advanced scheme will not be a factor in unduly influencing planning officers’ recommendations. We note in your October 2015 Sites Consultation document that you strive to “collate a range of information to ensure that balanced decisions on sites are made in the light of as much information as possible and in a way which is transparent.”

Amotherby and Swinton have no Group 4 sites identified and 6 Group 4 sites have been identified by you in other villages with adequate provision for the number of houses required, in addition to the Sherriff Hutton Group 3 site at Pecketts Yard that you

currently favour. In view of this, we simply cannot see a rationale for selection of Site 8 taking into account the multitude of negative issues outlined above.

We see no logical reason for your preference of Site 8 in Amotherby to site 148 in Amotherby or Site 341 in Swinton. Site 148 is also large but this site has the potential to improve the village rather than harm it, with the provision of access to the school and parking provision. This would remove traffic from the village, the biggest problem currently experienced by residents and would also be of benefit to the school. We are aware that site 148 has a number of landowners and recognise that this has the potential to make for a more time-consuming process but hope that this would not be a bar to taking a decision that is in the best interests of the residents of the village.

Regarding Q3, Site 148, there is an error as the pavement extends to Appleton-le-Street.

We do not see how site 148 could be seen to adversely affect the setting of AONB in this location.

Sites 148 and 635 both perform better than Site 8 in terms of 'Amenity'.

Q46 – We strongly disagree with your analysis of Site 8 regarding Highway Mitigation as 'Mitigation required but no unacceptable impact after mitigation' as stated many times above. It seems a contradiction in terms to develop a site that would add so considerably to the traffic problem and then mitigate against it. Additionally, there most definitely would be "conflicts with existing factory traffic".

We think that Q50 has a factual inaccuracy in that there are issues with the drainage system in Amotherby and Swinton particularly in the lower part of Swinton which has suffered sewage problems during heavy rain. We periodically experience torrents of water cascading through Amotherby in heavy rain and overflowing drains.

Q52 – Assessment is seriously flawed – Site 8 will have an impact on the Church and its environs. Site 148 should have a higher rating owing to the potential for a school car park and direct access to the B1257 with the resultant reduction in traffic problems in Amotherby.

We believe that there are a number of serious errors/flaws in the SSM and that it needs a lot more refinement.

**Are there better sites for housing developments in these locations and why?**

Yes.

Site 148 – Although large only a portion would need to be developed with the previously stated advantages of direct access from B1257 & village traffic reduction.

Site 635 – Again, access directly onto B1257 would alleviate traffic problems within High St./Main St. and the existing linear nature of the village is not compromised.

Site 341 – No identified adverse impact on Groundwater Source Protection Zone. Scrapyard noise is of an intermittent nature and takes place within normal working hours, unlike the noise at BATA which sometimes continues into the night.

Site 538 – We do not agree that distance from Amotherby School should be viewed as negatively as it has given that many children already travel to the school both from Swinton and further afield. Furthermore, it would appear that there is a 'direct connection to a highway maintainable at the public expense' – in fact a very similar access to the existing highway as at Site 8.

**Further sites that should be considered for allocation**

Group 4 sites in Ampleforth, Nawton/Beadlam and Sherburn should definitely be considered and we believe Group 3 sites in Rillington, Thornton-le-Dale, Staxton & Willerby, Hovingham and Sherburn should also be considered.

Christopher & Sophie Long