

## Charlotte Bogg

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**From:** Simon Reac  
**Sent:** 12 November 2015 18:14  
**To:** Charlotte Bogg  
**Subject:** Ryedale Local Plan - Development proposals in West End, Ampleforth - sites 111 and 616

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to express my opposition to any proposals to advance the development status of the above sites in the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the Local Plan. It should really by now be pretty obvious that such development is not in the public interest, viewed either in neighbourhood terms, locally, regionally or nationally. A similar development proposal for this site was refused on appeal to the Inspector in 1987. A repeat application was threatened in 1989, with the prospect of continued applications until the developers got what they wanted. In 2009 the owner tried to get approval again. Enough is enough, and local residents are sick and tired of this attritional approach by a series of linked developers who are all members of the same family.

- Any potential benefits of residential development would be greatly outweighed by the disadvantages to the existing environment. It would have a substantial effect in terms of size alone, but it will have huge visual impact due to its particular location.
- As a Service Village (not a designation chosen by inhabitants), Ampleforth should henceforth have only small developments: projected housing need anticipates this to be at a rate of around 2 or 3 houses a year. At least 40 have just been developed anyway, just a few hundred yards away. Either of these sites (111 & 616), developed at any density, would result in extra houses, irreversibly changing the village's character and appearance.
- Do not be mistaken - most residents do support limited, sympathetic development in the village, even in the more attractive West End and East End areas, but on an appropriate scale. Development here would entirely fail to meet those criteria, while not all of the sites available for "infill" development have been used up.
- The proposed development would be located in the Howardian Hills AONB, and on land directly bordering the National Park. To all intents and purposes, the site should be taken to be in the National Park, in terms of its impact. In 1987, the AONB had not yet come into being: the designation needs to be properly respected, and development here would wholly undermine it.
- The proposed development would amount to a substantial extension of the settlement area of Ampleforth, as marked on the previous Ryedale Local Plan. It would intrude into open countryside with established agricultural use. The Written Statement accompanying the Ampleforth section ("Insert 9") in the 2002 Local Plan says further development will only be permitted within the limits shown on that map, and the proposals fall outside those limits.
- All of the buildings bordering the proposed development are in the Ampleforth Conservation Area, which shows that the Council has already recognised that the appearance of the built environment of this area is to be treasured and preserved. An estate of new housing would be outside its current boundaries but immediately next to it, and would be wholly inconsistent with the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The development, or any extension of the village development envelope at this site, would irreversibly change the character and appearance of Knoll Hill, a prominent and attractive feature which is a well-loved local landmark, clearly visible not only to village residents but to anyone passing through. It is one of the outstanding features that make the West End of Ampleforth picture-postcard pretty, attractive to all tourists as well as those who stay in the 4 B&B businesses that I am aware of in the West End, and development will destroy that.
- Approaching from the east, the development would block the attractive and striking green contour of the hillside as you leave the village. Coming from the west, it would disrupt the harmonious way in which the village nestles in a valley below the hill-slope. A memorial bench is presently sited alongside the road just uphill from the site and its proposed access road, specifically to allow passers-by to enjoy the view. A number of businesses in the West End rely on tourism, attracted by the pretty landscape as it currently stands.
- Viewed from the south, across the valley; or from the north, down the slope, the development would look intrusive and unnatural, and does not correspond to the pre-existing traditional pattern of settlement in this part of the village, which runs directly alongside the main road. Much of the attractiveness of this part of the village is owed to the way

the low-density 19<sup>th</sup> century housing fits into the landscape. From whatever approach, the relationship between built environment and landscape would be broken by the proposed development.

- As the Inspector found in 1987, this development would detrimentally affect the rural character of Knoll Hill and its relationship to the wider landscape. Extending development into the countryside will harm this important landscape. Just as in 1987, the residential development of the site would conflict with the aims of the local planning policies: and destroy attractive and valuable countryside.
- There are also real concerns about road safety, traffic management and control. The access to the site opens onto a hill with a 14% gradient, just inside the 30 mph zone, where speeding is already common, which is the Caravan Route to avoid Sutton Bank, and which can get heavy traffic when that route is closed.
- There is no overriding need in this area for yet more housing: and certainly not at this cost to the environment and to visual amenity. Without demonstrating an exceptional need for housing which would justify overriding the protection of this important landscape, any decision which would facilitate development of these sites must be unequivocally refused.

Yours sincerely

Simon Read