



Forward Planning
Rydale DC
Old Malton Road
Malton YO17 7HH

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BY EMAIL

ryedaleplan@ryedale.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

I am writing to comment on the development proposals for West End Ampleforth at Knoll Hill.

Can I make the following points:-

1. Any potential benefits of residential development would be greatly outweighed by the disadvantages to the existing environment. The proposals would have a substantial effect in terms of size alone, but it will have huge visual impact due to its particular location.
2. As a Service Village, 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. Either of the proposed sites, developed at any density, would result in a large number of extra houses, irreversibly changing the village's character and appearance.
3. Residents do support limited, sympathetic development on an appropriate scale. Development here would entirely fail to meet those criteria.
4. A similar development proposal for this site was refused on appeal to the Inspector in 1987. A repeat application was threatened in 1989. In 2009 the owner tried to get that approval again.
5. 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.

6. The proposed development would amount to a substantial extension of the settlement area of Ampleforth as marked on the 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 of those limits.
7. 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, and would be wholly inconsistent with the appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. 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 very attractive feature which is a well-loved local landmark, clearly visible not only to village residents but to anyone passing through.
9. Approaching from the east, the development would block the attractive and striking green contour of the hillside which can be seen from much of 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 landscape as it currently stands.
10. 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 19th century housing fits into the landscape. From whatever approach, the relationship between built environment and landscape would be broken by the proposed development.
11. 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.
12. 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 30mph zone where speeding is already common. It is also the Caravan Route to avoid Sutton Bank and which can get heavy traffic when that route is closed.
13. 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, development of these sites must be unequivocally refused.

Yours faithfully

SER Millward