

Charlotte Bogg

From: S. Robinson
Sent: 14 December 2015 00:53
To: Charlotte Bogg
Subject: Development Proposals in West End, Ampleforth

From:
Miss S. A. Robinson

13th December 2015

Dear Ryedale Planning Department,

Re: Development Proposals in West End, Ampleforth

Sites 616 and 111 are inappropriate for housing development for so many reasons.

Ampleforth is a Conservation Area.

In Ryedale's own "Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan" both sites are specifically referred to as areas to be preserved.

Important Views and Vistas into and out of the Conservation Area are:

- The view out to Knoll Hill
- The view into the village from the western approach
- The view from the footpath running along the western edge of the village

And

Important open spaces in the Conservation Area are:

- Land to the west of Nettle Meadow
- Land to the north, south and east of Brookfield

On the Conservation area map <http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/planning/planning-advice/building-conservation/conservation-areas/conservation-area-appraisal-and-management-plans/Ampleforth-map-additional-open-space.pdf> , two large green arrows highlight the fields on Knoll Hill and around Brookfield for their important vistas.

These are exactly the areas identified as site 616 and 111.

They also fall outside the limits for development shown on them 2002 Local Plan Map.

Any building here would intrude into established agricultural use. Both locations are productive agricultural sites.

They are farmed for hay and silage and also grazed. Sheep and cattle use Knoll Hill throughout the year.

The majority of site 111 is rented by the owners of Fern villa, who use it for their 2 horses. It also yields a good annual crop of hay.

Not only are these sites wholly inconsistent with Ryedale Councils' own policies, they are also practical problems with their location.

The road at the West End climbs out of the village toward Wass. It is not a gentle slope, but has a 14% gradient.

In the icy winter weather this hill becomes a very slippery challenge for vehicles.

I hadn't realised how bad it could be until I moved here.

Despite being gritted, the hill can defeat cars and lorries in a freeze.

In normal conditions, it is well known that drivers speed in this area. They fly down into the village, normally slowing only when the parked cars force them to break.

As for going up the hill, speeds well in excess of 30 mph are often reached before the top, and people do actually overtake on the way out, despite the top of the hill being 'blind'.

Heavy vehicles need to take a run up the hill because of the gradient.

This means that the drivers tend not to let cars pull out onto the road in front of them as they need to keep their speed up.

Any new housing on site 616 or 111 would require vehicular access to the road half way up this hill. A dangerous proposition, given the way that the road is used.

Knoll Hill is part of the identity of Ampleforth. It is a prominent local landmark, visible not only from within the village, but also from across the valley. The hill brings the countryside right up to the old houses on the approach into the village. This is not new housing stock. In fact, Fern Villa is one of the oldest properties in the area and is Grade II listed. Site 111 goes up to its fence boundary.

Any house or houses built on this wonderful pillow of green would be so detrimental to the character of the village. Both Knoll Hill and the surrounding fields are of such merit that a bench has been put by the road so that people can sit and admire the view. A view which would be destroyed by any development.

The footpath which runs around the East and South of site 111 connects the North of the village with the road to Yearsley.

It is a popular route appreciated both by locals and tourists who enjoy the stunning scenery.

Although the village is so close, once you walk into the field with the grazing horses, you cannot see any houses. Ampleforth nestles into the slope, and the footpath takes you straight into the countryside with glorious views both up to Knoll Hill and also across the valley to the South.

These views are also vital to the Tourist business in the village, with B+B's making the most of the vista.

Also, Knoll Hill has been used by generations of village children for sledging in the winter.

Whilst not being in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park, these proposed sites are only separated from it by the road so any development here might as well be in the Park itself.

The destruction of the landmark and surrounding fields would be easily seen from all around, as the sites are so prominent.

The approach from the West, with the 19th century low density housing gently introducing you to the village from the surrounding hills would be gone forever.

As I write, there are 17 houses for sale in the village. 6 are in 'Abbey Park' and are new builds. The other 11 are a mixture of small to large properties. Many of these latter homes have been on the market for a long time and have not sold. The Abbey Park houses are not exactly being snapped up either. David Wilson Homes is also advertising affordable homes

With around 40 houses having been built recently, and existing properties always coming up for sale, where is the justification for another development which, in these locations – built next to some of the oldest houses in the area - would fundamentally change the appearance and character of the village?

There have been a number of attempts to build on this land, which have all been rejected. The objections to any development here are the same as they have always been.

The Conservation Assessment Plan states that 'It is important that the Conservation Area is taken as a material consideration when assessing development sites that would affect the setting of, or views into or out of the Conservation Area.'

Please, please continue to defend 'the special character' of Ampleforth by refusing to consider sites 616 and 111 for development – both now and in the future.

Many thanks,

S.A. Robinson