

Nidderdale AONB
The Old Workhouse
King Street
Pateley Bridge
Harrogate
HG3 5LE
T: 01423 712950
E: nidderdaleaonb@harrogate.gov.uk
www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk



FROM AONB - JAC
TO Chief Planner
OUR REF
DATE 12 December
ORIGINATOR Nidderdale AONB Manager

PLANNING CONSULTATION

APPLICATION TYPE: 001 Dwellings Major Largescale
APPLICATION NO 17/04923/OUTMAJ
PROPOSAL Outline planning application for a residential development of up to 82 dwellings and medical facility (D1) plus public parking spaces with access considered.
LOCATION Hampsthwaite
GRID REF:
APPLICANT: The Trustees Of Sir Cecil Aykroyd Bt Settlement

My observations on the above application are as follows:-

The site forms part of the setting of the AONB, being under 1km from the boundary. In its response to the Draft Local Plan in December 2016, comments by the Joint Advisory Committee highlighted the potentially adverse impact of development on land close to the AONB as a result of some or all of the following:

- a) *Blocking or interference of views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints*
- b) *Blocking or interference of views of the AONB from public viewpoints outside the AONB*
- c) *Loss of tranquillity*
- d) *Introduction of abrupt change of landscape character*
- e) *Loss of biodiversity, particularly of species of importance in the AONB*

The Council should ensure that such impacts are avoided. If they cannot be avoided, they must be minimised by good design or mitigated by appropriate on-site landscaping. The Council should insist that the developer compensates for any residual impact by investing in off-site work inside the boundary of the AONB.

The Committee notes that the assessment of potential new housing sites by the Council's officers concluded that this 'Site makes an important contribution to the rural approach to Hampsthwaite and its development would harm the landscape setting of the village and the character of the valley'. It is clearly visible from a range of surrounding vantage points in the AONB and is a significant component of the network of pasture and silage fields which, including the site in question, extend into the heart of Hampsthwaite, and which help integrate the village into the surrounding countryside. It is a transitional landscape between the AONB and the urban edge of Harrogate clearly visible to the east and further development could harm the designated area by bringing urban development ever closer to the boundary.

The landscape study that accompanies the application identifies landscape features but it lacks a systematic analysis of the impact of the proposed development except for a rudimentary description of views from a limited and carefully selected number of viewpoints. The Committee does not agree with its conclusion that the visual impact of the development will be adequately mitigated by existing vegetation. The report does not comply with the standard of assessment recommended by the Landscape Institute.

The scale, density and layout of the proposed housing development on a site that will form the edge of the village facing the AONB within 1km of the boundary is unacceptable. The landscape report hints at the possibility of structural planting on land to the west - 'Although the development proposals will only fall within the red line boundaries indicated, larger areas are within the control of the site owner. These areas offer additional, potential areas for vegetation planting and mitigation' - but does not contain firm proposals.

The AONB's Joint Advisory Committee objects to this application.

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