



The countryside charity
Derbyshire

For the attention of Rae Gee, development@ambervalley.gov.uk

11 May 2022

**RE: AVA/2022/0141 - Land Adjacent to Alfreton Golf Club Wingfield Road Alfreton Derbyshire
Outline application with all matters reserved for residential development for over 55s for 240
residential units (C2) with associated ancillary commercial and support units / uses to include
Restaurant, Café, Convenience Store, Beauty Salon, building site management facilities, care
operations facilities, Surgery and Clubhouse (this is not in accordance with the Development Plan)**

Dear Rae,

CPRE Derbyshire very strongly objects to this proposal on the grounds that it is not in the development plan and directly contravenes policy on green field development in the National Planning Policy Framework, Amber Valley Saved Local Plan 2006 and South Wingfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Background

Our primary focus is to ensure that sensitive landscapes are protected from detrimental impacts of development and in line with the NPPF guidelines on sustainability, are preserved and enhanced for both current and future generations from the perspective of distinctive landscape character assets as well as important access and amenity to cherished green spaces conveniently close to where people live.

The value of countryside to people's wellbeing and as a buffer against climate change has never been more obvious and its heritage value, once lost or seriously degraded is virtually impossible to retrieve. Development proposals in open countryside or on undeveloped green field sites, we believe must be considered holistically in terms of what these places mean to people and contribute to communities now and for the future.

Reasons for Objection

Amber Valley Local Plan – Policy H4.3 New development on previously developed or brownfield land

The CPRE, nationally and locally, supports appropriate development first and foremost on brownfield land. Recycling brownfield sites is the most sustainable option for new housing support and the Saved Local Plan also requires that "Initial consideration has been given to potential on previously developed or 'brownfield' land".

Amber Valley Borough Council currently holds 7.31 years of housing stock, well in excess of its required quota and has no need to resort to building on greenfield land, let alone greenfield land which currently serves a settlement gap. The proposed development is located across five agricultural fields adjacent to the A615, Wingfield Road, which links Alfreton and Oakerthorpe. When considered alongside houses currently under construction on the A615 (AVA/2018/0978), this proposal would effectively extend the suburban sprawl of Alfreton to the West to incorporate the small village of Oakerthorpe.

National Planning Policy Framework - part 15, paragraph 174 *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*

Amber Valley Local Plan – Policy LS3 *Conserving or enhancing the natural and built environment*

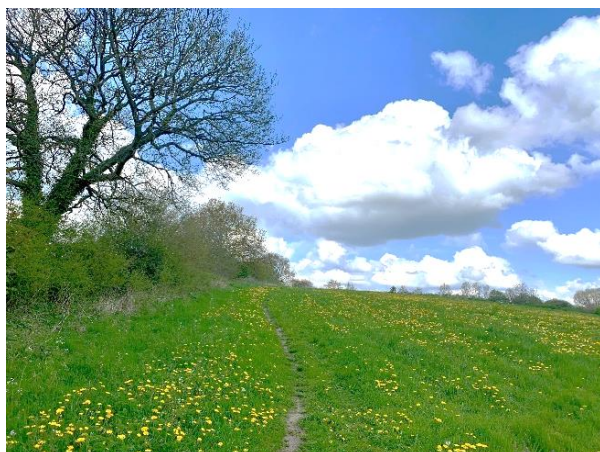
South Wingfield Neighbourhood Plan – Policies NPP1 *Sustainable Development and **NPP2** Development within or adjacent to the built framework boundary*

Having visited the proposed development site, it is our considered view that the scale and design of the proposal is not commensurate with the rural nature of Oakerthorpe and would irrevocably harm the character of this landscape. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (part 15, paragraph 174) which states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It is also contrary to policy EN7 of the Amber Valley Local Plan (2006) and Policies NPP1 and NPP2 of the recently adopted South Wingfield Neighbourhood Plan, which require development to be of a scale and design appropriate to the landscape character within which it is proposed. Two of the five fields included in the application site are pictured below.



South Wingfield Neighbourhood Plan – NPP1 *Sustainable Development and **NPP3** Protecting the Landscape Character and Enhancing Biodiversity*

NPP1 and NPP3 both refer to the creation & enhancement of walking & cycling routes as well as the protection and enhancement of footpaths. The CPRE recognises the increasing importance of access to the countryside as a vital and valued means of supporting people's health and wellbeing. The area between Alfreton and Oakerthorpe has a series of linked public rights of way and one of these (South Wingfield 53) lies directly through the centre of the proposed development. This proposed development would effectively render the current rural footpath pictured below, a walk instead alongside the main road through a housing estate, thus harming the visual amenity currently enjoyed by local residents and visitors to the Amber Valley alike.



Amber Valley Local Plan – Policy EN7 Design appropriate to the pattern and composition of trees, woodlands and field boundaries and the type and distribution of wildlife habitats

South Wingfield Neighbourhood Plan – NPP3 Protecting the Landscape Character and Enhancing Biodiversity

We note that the proposed site ‘masterplan’ includes two areas of woodland and share Derbyshire County Council’s concern that these could be harmed by the increase in footfall created by the residents of and visitors to 240 additional homes.

Footpath 53 leads directly from the application site across Alfreton golf course to the adjacent Derbyshire Wildlife Trust’s Oakerthorpe Nature Reserve. We are concerned that the bio-diversity of the reserve would be compromised by the proximity of such a large development and again by the unprecedented increase in footfall.



The five fields are bordered by mature hedgerow which must be protected. In addition, the A615 road is bordered by mature hedgerow on both sides alongside the proposed development site. We note that the applicant proposes to add a third turning lane and pedestrian refuges on this relatively narrow road and also that Derbyshire County Council have requested that the footway is also significantly widened for safety reasons. We are concerned therefore that this will necessitate widening the road at the point of access, resulting in the removal of or damage to these established hedgerows.



Amber Valley Housing Strategy 2019-24

Finally, the CPRE wants everyone in the countryside to have a fair chance in life, which means including low-cost homes to buy and rent in our rural towns and villages. We note that the applicant in the case proposes zero affordable housing in order for the project to remain viable. This is unacceptable and we trust that you will continue to implement council policy for 30% of affordable housing to be provided in all new developments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

John Ydlibi (Chair, CPRE Derbyshire)

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