
From: ROSEMARY JONES [mailto:]
Sent: 12 April 2011 15:54
To: Development Plans
Subject: Proposed land for housing development in Natland

Attn. Development Plans Manager. SLDC

I wish to make an objection to the proposal to build on the land on Sedgwick Road, Natland.

Natland is an historic village which has already grown considerably in recent years. Until now development has been on small plots, and currently the "brownfield" site of Holmes nurseries, thus preserving the village feel of the place. I would argue that further development on such a large scale will change the nature of the community, making it yet another commuter suburb.

Recent developments (St Marks Fold, Smithy Close, Charnley Fold, Holmes site) are concentrated in the same area of the village, making this a disproportionate number of dwellings concentrated in the west of the village..

The village of Natland is already short of amenities. The proposed site was until recently used for village events, such as the annual bonfire. From time to time proposals are made to increase recreational facilities for children and older people - such as a playground, multi-use pitch for games and tennis courts. As this field is currently owned by the Church of England Children's Society for the use of local children, surely this would be a better use of the field, without any loss of amenity to the existing community.

I would argue that, whilst the council has a responsibility for affordable housing, you also have a responsibility towards local residents, and brownfield/ex-farming sites rather than greenfield sites would provide a better solution. There is an assumption that more and more housing will be needed in future. In fact the birth rate is dropping and it is currently typical for properties in the area to remain unsold/unlet for many months if not years. I would argue that in fact planning permission granted for "affordable" homes is almost always then matched by the provision of more "executive" homes. This is not acceptable in any community.

The field, and the footpath alongside the field is a well used amenity by villagers who wander along at all times of day to enjoy the unspoilt open views towards Scout Scar and sunsets towards Morecambe Bay. At the same time there is the historic wooded mound, known as The cockpit, where starlings roost and bats can be seen in the evening. Building on this land would be to take away a valuable amenity from the community.

The provision of any housing development on this site of historic and public amenity is unacceptable. I suggest that other sites are explored, smaller in scale and with the provision of recreational space for residents, new and existing, to be a top priority.

Yours faithfully

Rosemary Jones