

NYMNP PLANNING POLICY REVIEW – 2017

SUBMISSION BY BOTTON VILLAGE FAMILY GROUP (BVFG)

The BVFG is a group of 90 family members of Botton Village residents who have been actively campaigning on behalf of their loved ones in Botton Village since 2011. This is a general statement of shared views and proposals with regard to the current Planning Policy Review.

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1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The current undefined status of Botton Village in the 2008 Core Strategy is highly unusual

9.17

“Community facilities and houses in which **members of the community** live in larger **family groups** are located in **neighbourhood areas**, each centred around established dwellings/farmsteads. **Residents of the community** find their daily work within the community and its well-developed social and cultural activities provide support and leisure activities for all. Physically and socially Botton Village is different to all other settlements and communities in the park and therefore requires specific mention in the policy **to allow development for local needs without damaging the landscape”**. *(our italics)*

In the past the unsalaried community members, acting on behalf of the Botton community, have used that freedom of action wisely and have as a result created a unique and world-renowned community and environment in a remote area of the national park.

Most regrettably this review is being held at a time when Botton Village is in a state of what can only be called a “chaotic planning vacuum” . See attached statements from Wayne Mason, the General Manager of Botton Village with a wide range of possible plans for the village – none of which relate to the status of the village as laid out in paragraph 9.18.

- **SEE APPENDIX 1- What plans does CVT hold for the redevelopment of Botton?**

However – Botton Village does not in the 2008 document enjoy complete freedom.

CORE POLICY J

This policy refers to building houses in Botton Village – referring to new buildings within the eight neighbourhoods. It allows building **“to maintain the vitality of local communities”** – stating that development would be acceptable in the eight Botton neighbourhoods “where it can be demonstrated **that the development is necessary to meet the needs of the existing community”**.”

- CVT is planning to build a highly visible car park at the entrance to Botton Village on prime agricultural land which has been biodynamically farmed for over 40 years. Although the application has been rejected by an overwhelming majority of the National Park planning committee the very

fact of the application indicates that CVT (but not the Esk Valley Community, who are now the only people who both live and work in Botton according to the life sharing model) wishes to take advantage of Botton's relative planning freedom to bring about radical changes to the environment of the village.

The BVFG therefore proposes that the current "carte blanche laissez faire policies" be abandoned and that restrictions be written in to Botton's planning framework to ensure that development can only be accepted for local community needs.

Specific mentions should be made that

- specify more clearly what has always made Botton Village unique and important
- ensure that the guidelines are respected in planning terms. See section 4 of this document.

2 EXISTING POLICIES IN THE 2008 ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO APPLY BOTTON VILLAGE

Please read the following comments while referring to the Adopted Core Strategy 2008.

Paragraphs 2.2 – 2.3

Here it is clearly stated in the 1995 Environment Act, Paragraph 62, that there are two purposes for a national park – enhancing (1) “natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage” and (2) to provide opportunities for “understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public”.

And

“if it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes ***to attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area***”.

Botton Village “ticks all these boxes”. This internationally respected community, with its life sharing structure

- has enhanced the natural beauty of the Esk Valley in which it is located
- through its biodynamic farming, horticulture and tree planting has enhanced the natural environment in the Esk Valley
- has, by means of Botton’s world famous organic community buildings, sensitive to the landscape and of prime importance to the community and its residents, carried out by architects from within the Camphill movement, added something unique of universal cultural significance to the Esk Valley

There are many statements of policy in the Adopted Core Strategy 2008 document that support some or all of these three areas. Namely

Paragraph 3.12 – North York Moors National Park Management Plan – many references to

- “diversity and distinctiveness”
- “biological and cultural diversity”
- “way of life is respected”
- “communities are more self-sustaining”

- “pleasure, inspiration and spiritual well-being”

Paragraph 3.13 – Special Qualities – a selection from the list

- “Distinctive dales”
- “Locally distinctive buildings”
- “A place for spiritual refreshment”
- “Tranquility”
- “Dark skies at night”
- “A heritage of authors”

Section 6 – CORE POLICY C

“All developments projects and activities will be expected to:

5 – Maximise opportunities for enhancement of ecological...assets

4 – Maintain and where appropriate enhance other sites, features, species or networks of ecological...interest”

Section 7 – CORE POLICY G

“The landscape, historic assets and cultural heritage of the North York Moors will be conserved and enhanced. High quality sustainable design will be sought which conserves and enhances the landscape setting, settlement layout and building characteristics of the landscape.....3 – Historic Parks and Gardens”

The Adopted Core Strategy contains makes it clear repeatedly that developments in the National Park are always subject to stringent conditions.

CHAPTER 8 – 8.18

“the authority will not support development which would adversely impact the integration between social, economic and environmental benefits.”

There are many aspects of the Adopted Core Strategy that potentially give teeth to this overarching policy.

Paragraph 8.23

“Proposals for new accommodation will only be permittedwhere...the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the character of a local area”.

“Proposals should be in locations which can be accessed by public transport cycling or walking and development should not result in the generation of increased levels of traffic”.

DEVELOPMENT POLICY 16 – Chalet and camping sites

“will only be permitted where:

Point 3 – The site is in close proximity to the road network (categories 1, 2 or 3) and the proposal will not result in an increase in traffic generation...” (the roads leading to Botton are uncategorised and are already overloaded).

DEVELOPMENT POLICY 18

“Proposals for new retail development ...will be supported

Point 3 – Where new proposals are ancillary to an existing enterprise provided that the proposal does not result in a cumulative increase in activity which would have an unacceptable impact on the...amenity of local residents or the wider vitality and viability of villages”.

3 – BOTTON VILLAGE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Following the three-part terminology of the 1995 Planning Act - “the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area” - here is a brief description of the character and significance of Botton Village.

NATURAL BEAUTY

Botton Village, with its mix of woodland and farms, in the head of the glaciated Esk Valley, is located in an area of great natural beauty. Surrounded on three sides by heather covered moorland its trees and green fields create a fine natural vista.

However, the land management unique to the life sharing community that used to make up Botton Village has enhanced this natural beauty.

- A fifty year tree-planting scheme mainly around the perimeters of the village has enhanced the landscape, in contrast to rather bare upland valleys of some of the Esk Valley’s neighbours, and by moderating the harsh climate has enhanced the agricultural productivity of the village.
- The intensive cultivation that the community has historically maintained has created a lushness in the fields quite different from that found in many other upland valleys in the National Park.
- The market gardens are very rare in the upland area of the National Park and source of natural beauty in themselves.
- Hedges are well maintained, and waterside areas are well covered with mature undergrowth, which contribute to their ecology and natural beauty.
- Both traditionally constructed rural buildings and post-war Camphill structures are of a high quality, and in many cases surrounded by beautiful gardens, unusual for isolated buildings in the national park. The human environment thus contributes to the natural beauty of the site.
- There is a network of footpaths joining up the nine Botton neighbourhoods, linked to the existing public rights of way, thereby expanding a foot-friendly environment to an area traditionally short of such amenities and arguably contributing to the beauty of the site.

ALL OF THESE FEATURES OF BOTTON VILLAGE WERE CREATED WHILE THE CAMPHILL LIFE-SHARING COMMUNITY STRUCTURE WAS EVOLVING OVER ITS SIXTY YEAR DEVELOPMENT.

ENVIRONMENT

Botton Village has a much richer environment than other nearby valleys in the National Park. This is because of a unique mix of factors –

- **Biodynamic agriculture.** The valley has been farmed organically according to the biodynamic system ever since the foundation of the village in the post-war period. This has resulted in better soil quality, creating better grass and market garden produce. Crops have been grown in Botton Village unknown in other upland areas of the National Park. The quality of Botton produce has been exceptional. Milk from Botton's dairy herd was of superior quality as was the cheese made from the milk.
- **Forestry.** The woods planted around the village moderate the climate and contribute to the Village's productivity. Until recently Botton woods provided much of the necessary fuel for heating, adding to the superior environment, as well as high quality timber for the toys and other products of the Botton wood-workshop.
- **Gardens, market gardens, hedges and scrub** all contribute to an unusually rich natural environment in the upper Esk Valley.
- **Lack of pollution.** The biodynamic system that uses no artificial fertilisers or pesticides, allied to Botton's natural reed beds for water purification purposes, means that the quality of water courses is as good as the other special areas of the National Park.

THE OVERALL RESULT OF THESE FACTORS IS THAT THE CAMPHILL COMMUNITY BUILT UP OVER THE DECADES A WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION AS A CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE. IN ADDITION, IT IS A HAVEN FOR WILDLIFE.

- **A rare colony of Pearl Mussels is located in the River Esk below Botton. It is assumed that the high quality of the water coming down from Botton is a factor.**
- **The Yellow Pimpernel is to be found in woods in Botton – a rare plant in this area, undoubtedly as a result of the superior environment.**
- **Barn Owls are commoner in Danby Dale than in much of the National Park.**
- **Botton Village has thriving breeding colonies of bats – as a result of its undisturbed environment and rich invertebrate ecology.**

UNFORTUNATELY, THE DECLINE IN THE ENVIRONMENT IS MARKED. PART-TIME, PAID FARMERS WHO LEAVE WORK REGARDLESS AT 5PM, HAVE LED TO A FALL IN ANIMAL WELFARE AND A DROP IN MILK QUALITY. FIELDS ARE REVERTING TO SCRUB, UNDOING YEARS OF SOIL IMPROVEMENT, AND MARKET GARDENS, GARDENS, AND HEDGES ARE NEGLECTED. HEAVY MACHINERY IS USED ON VALUABLE ORGANIC SOILS, IN PREFERENCE TO COMMUNITY WORKERS, LEADING IN TURN TO SOIL DETERIORATION.

SEE APPENDIX 2 – Letter from –

- **The Sustainable Food Trust**

CULTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The complex of fields, gardens and buildings that make up Botton Village has been created by the worldwide Camphill Community, working with the community members living on site. The built environment is a blend of traditional buildings converted to community use by Camphill architects and builders, commercial structures modified for community use, and new buildings in the unique Steiner style of architecture.

- **Botton Hall** – built in 1901 for the Macmillan family of publishers and politicians, it was donated to the Camphill organisation of the time in the 1950s and forms the core of the village. (*not* to CVT which has played *no part at all* in creating Botton Village. It is very important to note that CVT is responsible for very little of the physical environment of Botton Village).
 - Botton Hall has been modified internally to convert it from a family home to a community residence, and its layout has been carefully designed to function as a dwelling for members of a life sharing community.
 - Together with Hall North, built in 1906, it forms a group where traditional sandstone architecture typical of the area blends with new designs and functions.
- **Rock House** – This building was created in 1958 by the Anthroposophical Kenneth Bayes Architects. It represents a brave radical and successful attempt to create a modern community home in a bare upland landscape. It is world renowned in the Organic Architecture movement and has been featured in many publications.
 - Rock House was built for a specific purpose related to the community structure. Volunteers who joined to community on a temporary basis, for example when there was a lot happening in the farms and market gardens needed accommodation. Rock House is built to provide this sort of accommodation with many small but supportive bedrooms and a large community communal area.
 - This is organic architecture at its most dynamic and transformative which works with nature and both blends with the environment and stands out, both a part of the living rock upon which it is built and rising from it.
- **Woodwork Shop** – although this is an off-the-peg commercial structure it has been modified by architects from within the movement – its shape has been modified to blend with its surroundings. And also – the roof has been pierced with large windows oriented to gain maximum light. This creates a welcoming space far removed from a traditional workshop space.
- **Church and Community Centre** – these two buildings represent Anthroposophical Architecture at its most life transforming. These buildings with that stand out from their surroundings but reflect at a deeper level organic processes are designed to create a feeling of enclosure and belonging for the

community members who use them. The Church was designed in association with the Christian Community, and creates a focal point for the community – weddings, funerals, study groups. In a harsh climate these buildings help to reaffirm community values. The Church was constructed on very soft peaty soil and required large scale foundation works before building was commenced. Most conventional builders would not have bothered to do this.

- The Church was built in 2005, while the Community Centre was created in stages – 1966, 1977, 2001, by the international partnership Camphill Architects. The leadings designer was Garbo Tallo, an organic architect with an international profile.

SEE APPENDIX 3 – letter from

- **Camphill Architects**
- **Camphill North America**
- **The Karl Koenig Foundation**



Joan of Arc Hall – Botton (Camphill Architects)

4 – PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO THE 2018 LOCAL PLAN

Please note that the NYMNP Planning Authority has an obligation under the General Public-Sector Equality Duty to carry out impact assessments upon any proposed changes in use at Botton Village.

To date no such assessment has been proposed.

- Addition 1
 - Paragraph 9.17 should be retained as it stands with some additions – namely
 - future developments in Botton Village will only be allowed if it can be clearly demonstrated that they are necessary for the purposes contained in this paragraph
 - enterprises whose aim is to generate income by increased visitor numbers or by tapping into government funding cannot be allowed unless they can be shown primarily to maintain and improve the original community life and values (as accepted in the 2008 strategy) of those who actually live in Botton.
 - Core Policy J-4
 - The current mention of permitted development in the nine Botton neighbourhoods if “development is necessary to meet the needs of the existing community” should be allowed to remain but clarified and extended in order to prevent non-housing developments, including change of use.
- Proposal 2
 - In accordance with the 1995 Environment Act, paragraph 62, priority must be given to protecting and preserving the unique Camphill cultural heritage. This would involve writing into the Core Strategy –
 - added protection for the world renowned architectural heritage that Botton Village possesses.
 - the fact that the community is and should remain the guardian of a unique and unpolluted ecology by means of its biodynamic land management and extensive tree planting.

- Mention should be made of the fact that the community has been created in a certain way that enhances both the environment and the lives of the community members.
 - Agreeing a set of descriptors for the whole valley as a planning framework
 - Acknowledging that the entire Botton environment is the creation of the unique Camphill community, life-sharing system.
 - Setting benchmarks for the maintenance of the Botton environment.
- Proposal 3
 - It should be stated in the Core Strategy that Botton Village does not have a special dispensation to ignore existing protections –
 - Restrictions on Retail developments that impact on the amenity of local residents
 - Restrictions on the upgrading of access roads to Botton Village
 - As in 3.21 – changes to land management in Botton Village due to the lack of community input must not be allowed to lead to a decline in the quality of the natural environment
- Proposal 4
 - As in Core Policy C Botton Village should be brought into future Habitat Enhancement Area plans.
 - According to Core Policy G Botton Village could become the subject of specific Character Assessments.

DUNCAN CAMERON, ON BEHALF OF THE BOTTON FAMILY GROUP

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29 NOVEMBER 2017

APPENDIX 1

What plans does CVT hold for redeveloping Botton Village?

It is widely believed that Wayne Mason, the Botton Village General Manager is in possession of a five-year plan to redevelop Botton Village.

However, no such plan has been shown to the public while a series of hints interspersed with denials form a possibly inadvertent pattern of obfuscation.

Nevertheless, a series of statements from Botton management indicates that radical changes to the Village are being planned.

This is not a complete list –

1. 5 December 2015 – Letter from Norman Lamb to David Cameron concerning Botton Village written when David Knowles was General Manager –
 - “there is recognition of the need to diversify sources of income, and mention was made to the development of microenterprises in the village to ensure this aim, potentially including a luxury camping “glamping” offer”.
2. 14 February 2017 – Details of pre-application advice concerning an extension to Botton Village store - given to NYMNP Planners by CVT managers –
 - “Officers gauge that there is a shift in organisation remit from the closed format that has been in operation for many years to a wider inclusive arrangement with a business case likely to be forthcoming in the next couple of months. In order to accommodate visiting members of the public parameters are required to be put in place to deal with the shift”.
3. April 2017 – Letter to families from Wayne Mason –
 - “We do need to increase footfall. Botton Village should be a destination...the re-imaging of the village centre will primarily drive production and workshop activity into the consciousness of the visiting public”.
 - “By creating a visitors’ centre ...we will be able to share our history”.
 - “We do need to increase footfall...Botton Village centre should be a destination”.
 - “By creating a Visitor’s Centre, staffed and supported by residents we shall be able to share our history and better explain our culture and uniqueness”.
 - “From the visitors centre our guests will be encouraged to explore further and will be led into the glass covered walkway...where they

can see production taking place and our residents taking pride in their activities”.

- “A potential transfer of some of our workshop and enterprise activity into the village centre”
 - Our village can be transformed into a thriving and commercially viable hub of activity”.
4. 5 May – Ecological Appraisal – Botton Hall Botton Village North Yorkshire. By Ecosurv Ecological Consultants – page 18 – accompanied by a map with certain buildings numbered
- Building 3 – “This building is to be demolished.....the oldest part of the building is of sandstone block work”
 - Building 5 - “This building is to be removed as part of the proposed development”
5. 19 October 2017 – Meeting of NYMNP Planning Working Party
Wayne Mason tells the meeting that CVT are considering bringing army veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome into Botton Village.

Over the past five years various projects for Botton have been mentioned (unofficially) to relatives by senior CVT management, including the building of a hotel and a spa. The very fact that on the Ecosurv Appraisal map there is mention of a coach park leads us to believe that CVT are now keen to begin to put some of these plans into practice bringing increased numbers of the public into Botton and changing the focus of the village to a far more commercial venture.

CONCLUSION –

It is hard to escape the impression that wide-ranging, disparate and maybe on occasion contradictory plans are well advanced to bring about radical and non-community oriented change to Botton Village, which have for reasons unknown remained up to the time of writing beyond public scrutiny.

APPENDIX 2



To Whom It May Concern: The importance of Botton Village as a pioneering local food system

The Sustainable Food Trust (SFT) advocates for food production systems that are diverse and integrated, those that work with natural systems and obey the law of return so they can be truly regenerative to the earth, and its plants, animals and people. The SFT recognizes that biodynamic farming is one approach to farming that is highly sustainable and puts into practice these aspirations. Biodynamic farming is an inspirational international movement that promotes a uniquely holistic approach to organic agriculture and gardening, and food and health. Today, the biodynamic movement encompasses thousands of regenerative gardens, farms, ranches, orchards, and vineyards, in a wide variety of climates, ecological contexts, and economic settings.

Over the last 60 years Botton Village has gained recognition internationally as a thriving example of a community engaged in environmentally friendly farming methods to provide healthy food. Biodynamics and land work has been central to the rural Camphill communities and the social care provided in these communities. In the past, the Botton Village community operated five biodynamic farms and gardens, established food processing units, including a bakery and creamery, and a unique biodynamic plant breeding and seed producing cooperative. Richard Swann, editor of the *Star and Fallow* (Journal of the Biodynamic Association) describes Botton Village as having been "a very significant place for the development of the biodynamic movement in the UK and a true example of a community of people engaged with biodynamics both through working on the land and through eating the food produced." Because of its great success in farming Botton Village became a centre of training for biodynamic apprentices, but unfortunately this has ceased in recent years.

The impact of the biodynamic farming methods practiced in Botton has had a net positive impact on the local environment. All pesticides and herbicides are banned under biodynamic certification which has greatly improved the soil and aquatic life in waterways. Diverse crop rotations including cover crops has encouraged wildlife. Extensively grazed livestock that are integrated in the mixed farm systems were until recently fed only using home-grown grains, hay and silage. The fields have been cultivated using minimal machinery, made possible by a large number of people involved in hand-work. In addition, the community makes all of its own compost and manure and does not buy any in. Self-sufficiency and closing the nutrient cycle by not importing external inputs is of key importance on all biodynamic farms and has been successfully demonstrated in Botton Village.

Striving for self-sufficiency by living on the land as a community in Botton Village is clearly a unique lifestyle and one that has enabled outstanding farming practices and high quality produce. The key to its success has been community living where a large number of people are engaged in land work and share a sense of responsibility for it. This has required skilled biodynamic farmers to live on site to be able to carry out this committed approach to farming.



Sustainable Food Trust

A global voice for sustainable food and health

It has become apparent that recent changes in Botton Village's management practices has caused a steep decline in the integrity and productivity of farming methods practiced. Where once the community was mainly self-sufficient in vegetables, meat and dairy now the majority are bought in. The award-winning Botton Creamery now struggles to make cheese due to the reduced supply of milk from the farms. The maintenance of drains and fences has also declined. For such a significant example of a local sustainable food system to be under threat is of concern to the Sustainable Food Trust as we believe such beacons of inspiration are of critical importance for making progress towards a more sustainable farming future. We very much hope a way can be found of protecting this unique food system for the future.

Yours faithfully,
Hannah Steenberg
Projects Officer, Sustainable Food Trust

APPENDIX 3 - 1



CAMPHILL ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you regarding something that has recently been brought to my attention, and would ask for a moment of your time to read and take this email seriously.

I am the President of the Camphill Association of North America, which is a membership organization comprised of all of the Camphill Communities in the United States and Canada.

The Camphill Community of Bolton Village has historically played a role in preserving the activity of Biodynamic agriculture, Organic architecture, and respectful forestry practices that have only enhanced and preserved the special environment in the North Yorkshire Moors upon which it sits. The identity of communities such as Bolton has always, as part of their activities, taken seriously their role in stewardship of the land, and in fact the very care of the land is directly affected by the unique community building impulse that permeates a Camphill community.

I would like to underline that any consideration of the special exception provided to the Camphill Village upon this nationally protected land in the North Yorkshire Moors, needs to ensure that this land continues to be preserved in its current state, and that the Camphill community is still in a unique position to care for it.

Any alterations or attempts to partition this land would be detrimental to this historic partnership and, as a member of this broader, international, intentional community building movement, I would certainly take exception to such a step and be very concerned.

Please feel free to reach out to me for further comment should it be required, and I look forward to hearing back from you regarding this request.

Warmest Regards,

Joe Harris
President
Camphill Association of North America,
PO Box 327
Kimberlin, PA 19442,
Email: Joe@camphill.org
Cell: 610.310.6704

APPENDIX 3 – 2



To Whom It May Concern

The Importance of Botton Village for the Camphill Village Movement.

The Karl König Institute in Berlin has been founded to support activities concerned with preserving and promoting the legacy of Karl König, like research, teaching and cultural events.

Karl König, a medical doctor from Vienna had to flee from the Nazis and settled near Aberdeen on an estate called 'Camphill', where, in 1940, he founded with friends a school for children with special needs. The school grew quickly and spawned other schools in many countries around the world. The schools were followed by training centres for young adults and village communities for adults with special needs. These schools, training centres and villages make up together the 'Camphill movement', places where people of all abilities learn together and care for each other and the land they live on, in the spirit of freedom, equality and brotherliness.

The Camphill movement is not an organisation. It is built on relationships between people inspired by the idealism that all human beings are here on earth for the purpose of growing and developing their humanity, and that for this they need each other. Developmental obstacles are valued as an encouragement for learning. Individual places that are part of this movement are usually independent organisations rooted in their locality. They associate freely with each other locally, regionally and internationally.

In the history of the Camphill movement Botton Village takes a special place. Camphill special schools had been established in the early fifties in England, Northern Ireland and South Africa. Again, on the initiative and insistence of parents, that Camphill could create a community for adults a diversification took place and a community was established in the Yorkshire Moors at Botton, the country estate of the Macmillan family. Karl König wrote in a report in 1952:

I would wish that in later years Camphill might become a place where the conscience for curative education will be kept awake—a place where the true destiny of the handicapped child will always be known... It should always grow into a place where those children not attaining sufficient improvements to go out into the world could remain and have a sheltered yet useful life.

They could do some limited work in the various kitchens and workshops, the houses, the farm and the gardens. They should not live in dormitories but in small houses in the lap of the family to which they belong and where they feel safe and secure. Thus around each one of our houses a very small village should grow with four or five small houses occupied by a few families finding their place in life and work. The idea of a true village community, growing ever deeper, will have to find roots in our efforts.

p.t.o.

The institute's goal is the material, financial and ideologic support of the KARL KÖNIG ARCHIVE, and all social, artistic and cultural activities that emerge from or are connected to the Archive's work, with the particular objectives:

- to build competent working groups to support the edition of Karl König's legacy
- to follow up and deepen Karl König's research directions
- to promote research by spoken and written word and through activities

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APPENDIX 3 - 3

Camphill Village Copake



To: The North Yorkshire National Park Authority
The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, York,
North Yorkshire - YO62 5BP,
UK

Re: Botton Village

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you concerning the special status Botton Village has enjoyed within the North Yorkshire National Park. The village has more or less a special dispensation to build and develop according to the community needs.

During the early 90's I lived in Botton Village as a coworker for 4 years. Those were wonderful years in a then thriving community. I worked both on the land and in the woodwork shop. The land was farmed according to the principles of Biodynamic agriculture as developed by the Austrian Philosopher Rudolf Steiner. He incorporated many practices of our ancestors. I think biodynamic agriculture fits very well in the philosophy of the North Yorkshire National Park. Since 1998 I live in Camphill Village USA, Inc. in New York State. This is a Camphill Village very much like Botton Village used to be.

Recent decisions made by the CVT management have changed many practices in Botton Village. This has caused many of the Camphill practices to disappear. Botton Village used to enjoy a prominent role in the worldwide Camphill movement, being the very first Camphill Village to be established, but in recent years that has changed dramatically. Although the CVT still uses the Camphill name they have basically distanced themselves from the Camphill movement. This was noticeable at the International Camphill Board members meeting (The Dialogue), which was held in Aberdeen, Scotland in May 2017. There were no representatives from the CVT present.

Although the fundamental Camphill values and practices carry on, taking place in the independent Esk Valley Camphill Community (which is located within CVT property i.e. Danby Dale), it is unlikely that any future-planning applications by CVT be driven by Camphill ideals.

I urge you to (re)-consider the appropriate status of Botton Village within the North Yorkshire National Park.

Sincerely,

Kerst de Jong

Executive Director,
Camphill Village USA, Inc.

Camphill Village USA, Inc. 84 Camphill Road Copake, NY 12516

An integrated community where people with developmental differences are living a life of dignity, equality, and a sense of purpose.

APPENDIX 3 – 4

Review of Core Strategy and Development Policies/ North York Moors National Parks

To the Planning review body:

Darby Dale has been home to an intentional community impulse which integrates a particular approach to social community living with people with learning difficulties. This unique social organism requires a unique architectural response given the size and type of accommodation required for such community living based on sustainable principles.

For the most part this is unlike the scale of housing in the typical Parks dale as house units will integrate a core family with children and a group of adults with special needs with additional social and activity spaces. In addition to the residential aspect, social, cultural and workplace activities form part of an important daily routine which aims to be therapeutic and healing. This supports the integrity and dignity of each individual, regardless of his or her special condition.

Emphasis is placed on a sustainable approach to landscape, farming and architecture.

The architectural philosophy attempts to re-establish a closer relationship between the human being and nature as part of a therapeutic approach. Today the world is experienced as a duality whereby the individual and the world are experienced as being separate. Also in a mechanistic age, which has seen great advances in technology, buildings tend towards an expression of rectilinear forms.

An organic approach is a response to the human need to create built environments that have a clear relationship to nature as a living entity. It recognises that architecture has a social and cultural responsibility to create buildings that support the physical needs, soul qualities and spiritual aspirations of its users. The architectural expression can be experienced as having a corresponding resonance to the life forces of the genius loci and the laws of nature. When the essence of the function in its context can be experienced in gesture, form and material, then this will create a supportive interaction between individuals and enhance positive human values.

This ecological impulse is central to social community as well as its architectural expression. I trust that this unique social enterprise will continue to be given the recognition it deserves within the context of other important and atypical ventures in the North Yorkshire Moors.

W. Radysk, Camphill Architecture / 24 November 2017