

1. Ampleforth

1.1 Location, Landscape Context and Setting

Ampleforth is located on the southern boundary of the National Park, on the steep dip slope of LCA 5a – the Western Limestone Hills. The boundary between the North York Moors National Park and the Howardian Hills AONB runs east-west along the main street (known as East End and West End).

The village is located on a south-facing valley side at approx. 110m above sea level. It is on the springline which occurs at the junction of the Jurassic calcareous grits of the Limestone Hills and the Kimmeridge clay of the Vale of Pickering. To the north of the village, land rises steeply into the wooded hillsides and pastures of the National Park. Strip fields can be seen above the village. To the south the land flattens out into the western edge of the Vale of Pickering (a post glacial lake which provides a low-lying basin of flat and gently undulating topography). This enables long views south from the village.

Visible trees and glimpsed views into the surrounding countryside contribute to the setting of the village, which is influenced by both the National Park to the north, and the Howardian Hills AONB to the south.

1.2 Settlement form and character

Ampleforth is a linear springline settlement, and its development pattern closely reflects the local topography. The historic core of the village runs east-west along a road following a terrace in the steep hillside. The land to the north rises very steeply, so 20th Century settlement expansion has taken place on the south side, on land sloping more gently down into the Vale of Pickering which is outside the National Park.

The village contains the remains of a Saxon market cross, and is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Ambreford ('ford of the sorrel plant'). The church is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The village was primarily agricultural, with land enclosed in the early 16th Century and through Parliamentary enclosure in 1804-1806. In 1803 the village had three shops. Today it has a range of services including post office, doctor's surgery, two pubs, a shop, churches and two primary schools. Significant residential expansion has occurred on the south side of the main street (along Station Road) from the 1950s onwards.

Buildings along the main street are often close to the road, so glimpses between and/or over them to the trees and countryside beyond are key to village character and sense of place. Structures which are not buildings also add to its character, including stone steps, walls, drinking troughs, pump and bridge.

1.3 Key views, approaches and gateways

The clearest long view of Ampleforth within its landscape setting is from the minor road on rising ground on the south side of the Vale of Pickering. The combination of topography and vegetation means that distant views of the settlement are very limited from the National Park, and also from the roads approaching it from the east and west.

The approach to the village from the east along Beacon Bank is down a tree-lined hill curving southwards into the built-up area, with glimpsed views into the valley below.

When approaching from the west along Jerry Carr Bank, the village remains hidden until the summit of Knoll Hill, close to the edge of the village. From here, the road drops down into the village and crosses a beck. The built-up village street curves gently northwards out of view.

Approaching from the south along Thorpe Lane, the former railway station on the valley floor is passed at some distance from the village. Views of the village are screened by topography and vegetation until past the bend by Watergate Farm. This approach into the village passes mid-20th Century estates and cul-de-sacs, then a more modern estate on the right hand side. Approaching the historic core of the village there are glimpses of St Hilda's church on the left before arriving at the T-junction with the main village street.

1.4 Settlement edges

The linear form of the historic core means that the countryside extends close to the built-up area. Development is slightly denser to the south (outside the National Park), and from the middle of the estates there is a less immediate connection with the countryside. Nevertheless there are still glimpsed views out into the setting between and over properties, reinforcing the sense of place. Green backdrops, formed by trees or more distant hills, occur throughout the village. Long views over the Howardian Hills and Vale of Pickering add to the sense of space.

Older parts of the village are characterised by irregular property boundaries and mature gardens which create a soft edge to the village and a gradual merging with the surrounding countryside. Newer areas have more abrupt edges, with straight boundaries where former fields have been developed. The most recent development has fenced boundaries which appear harsh.

1.5 Heritage and nature conservation sites

The Conservation Area focusses on the historic core of the village, resulting in a linear Conservation Area which takes in properties and garths on both sides of the main east-west street. It covers 22ha and contains approximately 100 buildings. The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are small, stone-built cottages with pantile roofs although slate is also common. Most properties front onto the road, but there are some larger detached properties set further back, and some gable-to-road properties.

Within the Conservation Area are 13 Listed Buildings, all Grade II.

As mentioned above, the northern part of the village is within the North York Moors National Park, and the southern part is within the Howardian Hills AONB.

1.6 Summary of key elements and features which may be sensitive to development

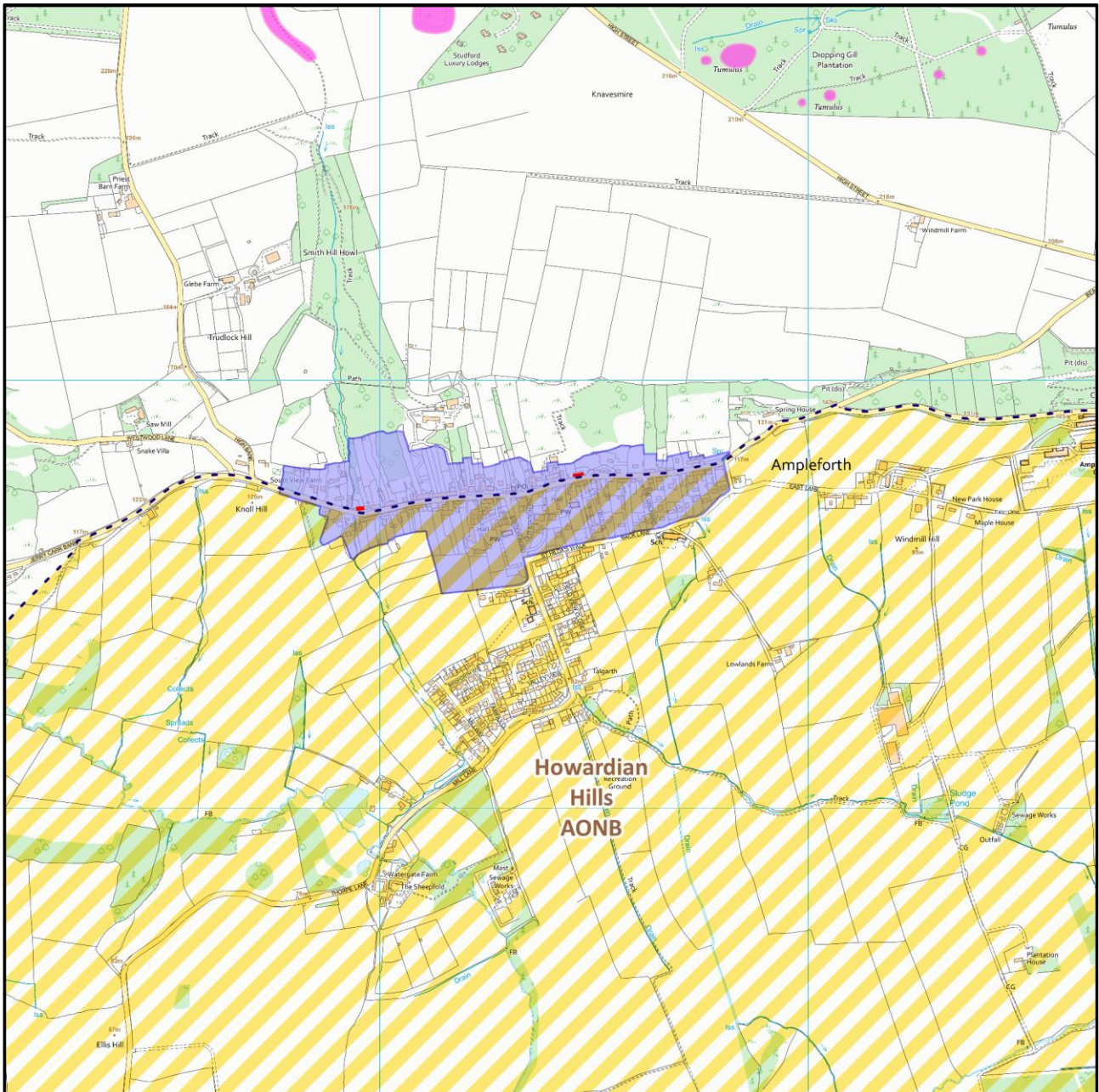
- Glimpsed views to the surrounding landscape between and over buildings.
- Irregular edges in the older part of the settlement, with a gradual transition from gardens and garths into surrounding countryside.
- The close relationship between built form and topography, where building on the steepest land has been avoided.
- Traditional street patterns, plot forms and property boundaries, particularly in the older part of the village.
- Constructed features which are not buildings, such as stone steps, water troughs etc.
- The village's green backdrop as seen in views from the south across the Vale of Pickering.
- Listed Buildings, Conservation Area, and their settings.



Ampleforth village as seen from the south, across the Vale of Pickering. The historic core of the village follows the road east-west, parallel to the scarp slope. Newer houses are visible on the south side where the village has expanded onto flatter ground. The steep dip slope of the Limestone Hills forms a backdrop to the village, comprising woodland and scrub on the steepest land, and strip field pastures above. The foreground of the view is comprised of lush agricultural land in the Vale of Pickering, within the Howardian Hills AONB.



Glimpsed view south towards the Howardian Hills AONB, seen through a gap between buildings on the south side of the main street



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**North York Moors Landscape
 Character Assessment Update 2021**
 Settlement Sensitivity Study
 Ampleforth



- - National Park Boundary
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Listed Buildings

Map showing designated sites in Ampleforth and its environs