

Recommended conditions

Reducing the scale of development from that previously dismissed on appeal does not fundamentally alter the overall planning balance. While the number of dwellings has been reduced, the Inspector's findings in the 2023 appeal made clear that the harms arose not solely from quantum, but from the **inherent unsuitability of the location, the spatial conflict with the development plan, and the unsustainable nature of the proposal**.

In practical terms, a reduction in unit numbers may lessen some impacts marginally; however, it also diminishes the weight of the public benefits, particularly in relation to housing delivery, affordable housing contributions, and associated economic uplift. In this case, the key harms—relating to landscape and character, settlement pattern, accessibility, and conflict with adopted policy—remain substantial, enduring, and unresolved.

The appellant's approach seeks to rely on a smaller scheme to overcome the previous refusal, but this fails to engage with the Inspector's core findings, which related to the principle and location of development, not merely the extent of built form. Where the benefits have been reduced, but the harms persist at a high level, the overall planning balance is only further tilted against the proposal.

It follows that a revised scheme of lesser scale cannot justify approval where the previous Inspector found the development to be unsustainable and contrary to the development plan. If anything, the reduction in benefits with no meaningful reduction in harm makes the case for refusal even more compelling.

In conclusion, the adverse impacts of this development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole. This conclusion does not change even if the Environment Agency withdraw their objection and the BNG baseline is agreed. Delivering housing is important but sustainable development is not assessed on numbers alone. It must also reflect location, accessibility, scale, environmental impact, and whether it complements the established character of the area. This proposal is in direct conflict with these principles. The tilted balance does not override the need to avoid patterns of development that are inherently unsustainable and inconsistent with national policy.