

10 AUG 2018



Planning, Investment & Regeneration Services - Kirklees Council
PO Box B93,
Civic Centre III
Off Market Street
Huddersfield,
HD1 2JR

08 August 2018

Dear Mr Wakefield and Planning Contact Centre & Department staff,

Re: Planning Application No:- 2018/62/91661/E
Outline permission for a residential development of 74 dwellings, and for facilitating the necessary engineering operations.
Also full planning permission for access and a spine road.

This planning application has been presented to Kirklees Planning Department by Ernest Gordon Ltd and his architects, Vida Architects Ltd. The wording on all the submitted plans mentions land at Walkley Terrace and Brunswick Street.

My first objection therefore concerns the wording, in that it should read, "land **BETWEEN** Walkley Terrace and **HORTON** Street, because the proposed access road cannot be in Brunswick Street at all. Secondly, the proposed houses at the **WEST** end of the proposed development are proposed not to start until they are in line (north and south) with No 14 Horton Street, and therefore nowhere near Brunswick Street at all.

I also object to this planning application for the following reasons:-

My objections to the full planning permission for access and spine road

- **Noise from pile drivers and Pollution from Dust** – Residents living in houses closest to this site (of whom my husband and I are two) would have to put up with more than **2½ years** of heavy duty articulated lorry traffic backing down the cutting and dumping their waste. Both the pile driving noise and the polluted air caused by the waste would be constant over this prolonged period. Many local residents have medical conditions such as asthma and the resulting air pollution in close proximity to our homes would be extremely detrimental to our health. We also feel that volunteer residents would have to do a) the "policing" of the pile driving noise to ensure that noise levels are within permitted decibels, and b) regular checks on the lorries providing the infill so that only uncontaminated waste is dumped, and c) make sure that the site traffic kept to the designated dumping times between 9.30am-15.30pm. This is because we know that Kirklees Council would not be able to do these three vital jobs on our behalf.
- **Transport policies and Access** – Heavy articulated lorries will enter the site from either:- a) a very narrow entrance from Walkley Terrace or b) a sharp bend in Horton Street. In addition, gabions will have to be erected supporting sloping platforms from

various areas down into the valley in order to create the concrete foundation blocks along the valley floor. Not only will this be dangerous for the lorry drivers, but it will be endlessly disruptive to the residents on Walkley Terrace, Horton Street, Sunnyside and Brunswick Street – I understand for 2½ years. The traffic on Walkley Lane is already substantial, and the addition of 20 articulated vehicles a day backing into Walkley Terrace or Brunswick Street from a busy road seems to me to be ridiculous at the very least. As to whether Kirklees Council – Highways will allow it is dealt with below.

- **Highways** – The bridges at either end of this site crossing Walkley Lane and Brunswick Street do not belong to the current owner of the cutting between these two bridges. Presumably Kirklees Highways Department is responsible for their maintenance and upkeep. Therefore the infill or pile driving will not be allowed to enter the space under these bridges without penalties being attached.
- **Cost of the Infill or pile driving** – It should be a **pre-condition** (if ever planning consent is given for this infilling of a wonderful haven for wildlife) that work on the **ONCOSTS** of building houses in this cutting should be undertaken by the owner first. If this pre-condition has not been undertaken, then planning consent should not be given. The Planning Department should take into account the fact that the houses built will have to be extremely luxurious ones, as the buyers will also have to be able to afford the “on costs” of the infill as well as the erection of their particular house on very expensive foundations. **This negates the fact that the proposed development will include 18 affordable homes.**
- **Impact on Urban Greenspace** – A pleasant footpath and cycle track known as the Spen Valley Greenway threads its way along the old railway track bed between Dewsbury and Cleckheaton – **apart that is for this particular cutting between Walkley Terrace and Brunswick Street.** The railway track in question was part of the London and North West Railway (L&NWR) – Heaton Lodge and Wortley Line, and most of it was sold to the sustainable transport charity called Sustrans in 1999. But the “then” owner of this section would not sell his particular area of track to Sustrans at the time; hence it does not form part of the Spen Valley Greenway at present. **I notice that this current planning application states that the developer has allowed for space to access the Greenway at the east and west ends of the development, but this will entail walkers and cyclists using the proposed residential street with all its extra vehicle traffic, i.e. 74 x 2cars each dwelling = 148 vehicles.**
- **Environment and the local Historical Importance of the site** – This section of railway line has historical importance, as outlined in a book held by Kirklees Libraries called, “The Lost Railways of Yorkshire’s West Riding – The Central Section” by Neil Burgess, 2014. The following is an excerpt from that book:- *“By the 1880s the L&NWR was becoming increasingly concerned about congestion on its existing route from Manchester to Leeds. They saw a solution in building a 14¼ mile line from Heaton Lodge to Wortley, and unsurprisingly it became known as, “The Leeds New Line”. The new line was far from easy to construct because the earlier routes had taken some of the more favourable terrain. A tunnel one mile and 379 yards long a Gildersome and a number of large viaducts and climbs in both directions to the summit at Birstall had to be constructed. The Heaton Lodge –*

*Northorpe section opened to goods in 1899, and passenger services started in October 1900, but the route was mainly useful for goods traffic which could be kept separate from the faster trains." Consecutive declines and closures to sections happened in 1921, 1952, 1953, 1965 and 1986. There must be a reason why this particular section has never been built on to date, whereas many of the other sections have either had houses built on them or been improved for community use previously as the Spen Valley Greenway. **The answer to this is probably that it is one of the deepest parts of the Spen Valley floor, and very near to the water table.** As seen from the extract above the environment proved difficult to the Railway Company to build its track way on this terrain over a century ago!!*

- **Ecology** – foxes, *ingfishers, and bats have all been sited by residents in this area, although the Ecology Report in the Planning Application only mentions bats. This Middlemarch survey was undertaken on 7th June 2017, and mentions retaining walls, building B1 (Kingdom Hall), hard standing, scattered trees and scrub land. She did not pick up on the adjacent communities' needs and material considerations were not taken into account at all. Accessibility to the urban Greenspace was not taken into account, and specific grass species under the UK bio-diversity framework were not itemised in conjunction with neutral grasslands/acid grassland/sandstone terrain/priority habitats etc. Finally, the local residents know that a number of trees have already been felled by the landowner a couple of years ago, and we wonder whether this timber was felled with **permission from the Forestry Commission.** Permission has to be granted if the felled tree site covers an area more than 5 cu metres, which we suspect that it did.*

My objections to the Outline Planning Permission for 74 dwellings (including 18 affordable homes) and facilitating engineering operations (whatever the latter may mean)

- **Congestion, transport policies, Highways & Access** – 74 houses each with 2 parking spaces all entering into the proposed one huge cul-de-sac of 74 dwellings off Horton Street would increase the traffic flow by six fold at least to approximately 148 extra cars entering the junction Sunnyside/Horton St/Brunswick St for access. The surrounding roads are already too busy especially at Heckmondwike Grammar School opening and closing times. In the past our group of residents living close to the proposed development site have conducted our own traffic surveys at different times of the day, and on different days to prove that the amount of cars which will be added to current traffic is going to be unsafe and unsustainable.
- **Impact on and loss of Urban Greenspace** – We need to preserve this area of urban open Greenspace in an already built up area of Heckmondwike. The Sustrans cycleway needs to be extended into this track of land which is **not suitable for a housing development.** There are a lot of other Brownfield sites in Heckmondwike which would be much more suitable and less costly to build on than this site.
- **Environment, Noise and lack of architectural design details for the wide variety of houses.** - The noise levels for the building of a large scale housing development will interfere with current residents' enjoyment of the area. It is also anticipated that

a site on this grand scale will take at least 10 years to build and there will be a lot of pollution, noise and disruption for this inordinately long length of time.

- **Ecology** – foxes, kingfishers, and bats, owls and many more have their natural habitat on this site – we need to keep this ecologically important area as uninterrupted as possible in the future.
- **Over development in an area where there is already a lack of Nursery, Primary and Secondary school places available in the locality** - the proposal is for an extremely high density multiple cul-de-sac development on a small piece of land. Too many houses on this space will make it hard for the local schools to cope, as they are already full to capacity. The roads will not be able to cope with the extra volume of traffic. The area cannot absorb this over development.