

Planning reference: 2018/91661

To whom it may concern,

I wish to object to the plans to develop the 'disused' railway embankment in Heckmondwike. I have numerous objections to these plans, which I have explained below.

Infrastructure objections:

I am concerned with the stability of the new proposed houses, the adjacent land and local properties should this developmet go ahead. A survey for the adjacent land and local properties has not been carried out, to my knowledge, and I believe the development of the area is likely to cause damage not only to the proposed new properties, but also ones already in existence. Additionally, the development of the site is, I believe, likely to cause land drainage issues. These may lead to the flooding which already takes place on Walkley Lane and the Greenway becoming worse, as well as the possibility of the proposed new houses suffering from land drainage issues and potential flooding due to the fact that the land is low-lying. Should this occur, there will be another knock-on effect to existing residents – in the form of increased house insurance premiums. Should the intended new properties flood, local residents' post codes will be deemed 'risk' postcodes and their insurance premiums and payments could be incredibly expensive, possibly unaffordable.

As well as this, the development of the site would undoubtedly lead to further road congestion in an area that is already incredibly busy. An additional 120 cars (a conservative estimate) that would come with these new proposed houses, would render the local roads almost unusable during peak times. The B6117 road that runs between Dewsbury and Heckmondwike is already heavily congested, with traffic firm Inrix reporting it as the ninth most congested road in the entirety of the UK. This is the exact road that the road to the new site would lead out on to. 120 additional cars on this road?! It would be chaos.

The local area is already very busy at peak times due to the proximity of several local schools, including Heckmondwike Grammar School, Heckmondwike Primary School, Holy Spirit Primary School, Millbridge Primary School, St John Fisher Secondary School, Spen Vale Secondary School, and many other (particularly primary schools), which I do not know the name of. The traffic to/from Heckmondwike Grammar School is particularly problematic; which I know first hand as both a local resident, a former student of the school, and also a member of staff at the school since September 2016. Following on from this point, as a member of staff at HGS, I know that the school is likely to add 30 more student places to the new intake of year 7 students for the next two years at least. Another 60 (possibly more students) that will be using roads such as the B6117 to get to and from school each day. Added to this the increasing demand

for 6th Form places – and the fact that lots of 6th Form students pass their driving tests and begin to bring their own cars to school. The local roads can barely cope with the current amount of traffic, which is already set to increase, before you even take into account the proposed new houses and cars they will add.

Lastly on infrastructure issues, the local area is already struggling to provide adequate provisions for local residents. School and nursery places; alternative childcare provision such as child-minders; doctors; dentists and a number of other provisions are already at breaking point. Further residents on the proposed site would only add to these issues.

Building/development objections:

If the site were to be developed, this would cause no end of issues, which may stretch on for years depending on how long the development were to take. Firstly, noise pollution from the site would be problematic for local residents. Things such as cutting the trees and plant life growing on the site, compacting, pile driving, scaffolding etc – would mean noise from the site would be detrimental to local residents.

Added to this is air pollution due to the clearing and following building works.

Air pollution from the site would be incredibly detrimental to our breathing due to our close proximity to the site. The same would apply to other local residents who also suffer from various respiratory problems and wider health issues. I can already foresee having to take measures such as keeping the windows closed in summer due to building works and being unable to walk my dog on the green space between Cawley Lane and Walkley Lane due to air pollution. My quality of life, that of my father and other local residents too I'm sure; would be damaged by development and building works on this site.

Environmental objections:

Lastly, the development of this site will have an impact on the local environment. Having lived in this area since birth, I can remember already losing a substantial amount of local green space when the playing fields I had access to as a child became what is now known as Horton Street. The development of this site would mean that further green space would also be lost. Needless to say, with the current issues with flooding on Walkley Lane and the Greenway, and current air pollution caused by road traffic congestion; it goes without saying that trees and plant life are desperately needed. They are not just a damn site prettier to look at that yet more houses, but they soak up rainwater and carbon emissions – it seems incredibly stupid to urbanise the land and lose those benefits.

Additionally, there would be further loss of wildlife habitats and therefore wildlife, which was already decreased due to the Horton Street development.

It is also worth noting that many local people, including myself, spotted people who may have been tree cutters/developers walking on the embankment during the week beginning Monday 6th August. While this may be entirely coincidental and nothing at all to do with the proposed development; as a natural cynic, I do not like the idea or impression that things are going on/going ahead behind closed doors before local people have been given adequate time to object. It's sneaky and underhand and I hope, not the case, but it is very suspicious.