

To: DCAdmin
Subject: OBJECTION to planning application number 2018/92686 Westgate, Heckmondwike

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER 2018/92686 LAND ADJ, 127, WESTGATE, HECKMONDWIKE, WF16 0EW RETAIL UNIT, DRIVE THRU RESTAURANT DEVELOPMENT, CAR PARK, LANDSCAPING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

To Whom It May Concern

We object to planning application number 2018/92686 on the following grounds:

TRANSPORT IMPACT

The main road through Heckmondwike is consistently saturated at peak times, with traffic queues extending in both directions and on to surrounding roads. These queues also occur at off-peak times. This development will add to this.

The main road on Westgate is a major access route for emergency vehicles whose potentially lifesaving access, and response, may be hindered should this application be approved. This would affect not only residents of Boundary Street but also response times in the local area.

Increased risk of traffic incidents as the volume of traffic increases. Entering and leaving Boundary Street is already negatively impacted by the volume of traffic, by the HGVs entering and leaving the industrial units opposite and by the speed of traffic as it moves around the bend in the road leading from Heckmondwike town centre. Adding further traffic and another junction to this mix would increase the risks to local residents and the vehicles moving along the main road. They would also pose an increased risk to people crossing the main road.

Public transport would be negatively impacted on a daily basis as the volume of traffic would increase.

Increased risk of vehicles congregating in the car parking areas (especially the lower car parks) and subsequently travelling at high speed in the local area, as noted happening previously at Heckmondwike Morrisons.

RESIDENTIAL IMPACT - risks to local residents include the following:

As a person who lived opposite a retail centre (included a large grocery store, local shops and a large car park) for all of her teenage years I have seen first-hand the negative impact that retail and food premises have. I have also worked in the food industries (KFC, pubs and restaurants) so know the day to day impact that these premises have in the local area.

Noise impact

Initial substantial noise pollution from excavation and construction work to construct premises.

Substantial noise disruption from delivery vehicles, from vehicles visiting the retail/food units, from security shutters raising/lowering, from car stereos, from vehicle doors closing, from people shouting, from people congregating and from generators running.

Potential for travelling communities to base themselves on the site so increasing noise levels from generators, increased traffic and daily living activities.

Waste

Increase in vermin and scavengers such as foxes, of which there is already many in the local area. This will have a negative impact not only on local residents due to foul odours, but also on the local wildlife population.

Increase in refuse in the local area as people do not discard their litter properly. Health risks to residents of Boundary Street and nearby as food is thrown over/behind adjacent walls and discarded on local streets.

Antisocial behaviour/criminality

Potential for an increase in antisocial behaviour/criminality due to gangs of people congregating at the location proposed. This already happens at the local McDonalds and in Algernon Firth Park.

Access to a large secluded car parking area and a main road could increase opportunities for local youths to congregate in vehicles. This could place local residents at risk owing to joyriding, racing vehicles and vehicle 'meets'. We hear vehicles revving and racing through the local area at all times of day and night already.

Loss of physical and psychological security for the residents of Boundary Street and adjacent properties – potential increase in personal robbery, burglary, trespassing and jumping over garden walls. The adjacent car park could also increase this likelihood as criminals will have ready access to a vehicle to leave the crime scene.

Impact on physical and psychological health and well-being of local residents

The negative impact that increased noise and light pollution can have on the physical and psychological well-being of nearby residents should not be underestimated. There is sufficient medical literature to evidence that these people are at increased risk of health related decline if they do not get sufficient restful waking and sleeping periods.

These people live both in council owned bungalows and in privately owned houses and do not all have the option, or financial resources, of moving away from these developments.

Boundary Street is already affected by excessive light and noise at night due to floodlighting from the warehouse buildings/businesses at the rear of the houses, from lighting around the park, noise from town centre traffic and from the noise of the steel work warehouses at the end of the road.

Increase in health risks to local residents due to increased air pollution.

IMPACT ON LOCAL WILDLIFE

There are Bats present in the evenings on Boundary Street and the local area – potential for negative impact on this population. Potential for a negative impact on a wide range of other wildlife which use the local wild spaces.

IMPACT ON HECKMONDWIKE AS A COMMUNITY

Heckmondwike is already a town centre populated by takeaways so the benefits of this development are not foreseeable. Traffic already dangerous/pressured around McDonalds which increases risk to local residents.

Heckmondwike does not need another retail park in an area where there are already empty retail units at other retail parks in the area. We are already surrounded by numerous warehouses, a chemical works, industrial units, a bus depot, a neglected town centre and vast amounts of traffic. The nearby Fountain Court development only has 2 units let and has seen an increase in crime in the direct area/in the stores. Heckmondwike town centre also has several empty shop units – the council needs to invest in Heckmondwike and its residents rather than focusing only on the more affluent areas nearby.

Potential for increased pressure to be placed on local Policing services if criminality increases/traffic accidents increase/increase in crimes against people/homes.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

No food outlets to be built on this site. Retail only with limited trading hours (no later than 1800 in the evening or earlier than 0800 in the morning).

Garden Centre on Boundary Street side of the development with controlled car parking (barrier/gated to close it off at 1800 to limit the potential for people congregating)

Sympathetic, landscaped, environmentally conscious screening between the site and Boundary Street (not metal).

Placing of noise polluting machinery away from Boundary Street to reduce the impact on local residents.

Deliveries not to be made before 0800 in the morning

Restrictions on construction times to 0900 - 1700

Softened, sympathetic lighting on the site which is not focused in the direction of Boundary Street (not flood lighting). Or lighting turned off at night with the condition that the car park will be physically closed at 1800 to prevent people congregating