

To Whom it May Concern

I am writing to object to the revised plans for development on land adjacent to 127 Westgate
Heckmondwike: Planning application number 2018/60/92686/E

Local plan

- 1) The Strategic Planning Committee reports that this site is allocated for housing in the Kirklees Publication Draft Local Plan, and that the benefits of housing surpass those of the proposed development. Despite these findings, and the objections raised by councilors, council departments and local residents, this development is still being considered. It has to be asked why the benefits to the residents of Heckmondwike are seemingly being overlooked by those who are in positions of responsibility and who are meant to be representing our interests. Heckmondwike residents do not need the interests of commercialism put before them, they need safe spaces to live and rejuvenate.
- 2) It seems illogical that this development is being considered when there are many empty spaces within the local area, or within a couple of miles from the site. Heckmondwike has numerous empty retail premises where stores such as B&M could be based. Alongside these empty premises we have an empty market space. Would it not be more prudent for Kirklees Council to invest in Heckmondwike as a community and not just in the interests of commercialism. We are well served already by bargain stores (B&M in Dewsbury, Wilkinsons at Birstall, Home Bargains at Cleckheaton). There are also empty retail units at Fountain Court, which of course Wharfedale will be well aware of since it is their development!
- 3) The lack of development where the fast food outlet was penciled in for is suspicious. It appears as though maybe the developer has only temporarily removed this and may plan to add this in at a later date. My former objections still exist that such a business would bring a myriad of problems for local residents such as vermin, litter gangs of people, increase in anti-social behavior, smells and increased traffic. If this current development plan is passed I feel that a clause would need to be added that prevents any future applications to add such a business.
- 4) The planning committee does not appear to be considering the needs of the residents who live adjacent to the site.
- 5) The proposed opening times of this development are intrusive to local residents and do not take in to account the extra acts required to serve such businesses. As someone who spent 10 years living opposite the loading bay of a major supermarket as a teenager I can reliably attest to the

intrusion of this. Deliveries, bin collections, staff entering and leaving the premises all create noise and disruption. If any development was agreed I feel limits need to be put on the opening hours (no longer than opening before 8am or closing after 8pm. And servicing the businesses (deliveries etc) no earlier than 7am and only at times that the store is open.

- 6) Wildlife in the area will be affected by this proposed development as there will be no vegetation where it can thrive – a car park does not offer this, nor does a fence. There are bats in the area – we see them regularly. There is also an abundance of birds which use the site and adjacent trees for foraging and nesting, as well as hedgehogs and foxes. The trees on the site are also significant not only to these, but also to the adjacent park and the landscape of Heckmondwike. The limited green space and vegetation we have needs protecting.
- 7) It needs reiterating that the traffic in Heckmondwike is terrible not only at peak times, but also throughout the day. There are queues throughout the day and this development would without doubt add to that. This, as well as the proposed changes to bus stops, etc would likely lead to an increase in road collisions, put pedestrians at risk, increase the risk of accidents involving local school children as well as cause potential problems for the emergency services. Heckmondwike does not need this – it is already a traffic heavy town.
- 8) There is no indication that the site will be closed off by a barrier at night which will make it a site for anti-social behavior at night time. This already occurs in the local area and at sites such as Mcdonalds and Morrisons. There needs to be some protection for residents adjacent to the site and any development would need to be barriered at night time. If not local residents will be put at risk of burglary, being affected by people using the site as a race track and gatherings of people.

Heckmondwike could be a lovely town if the Council cared for its residents and local community. Invest in the current town centre and watch it thrive. The community feeling in Heckmondwike already exists – harness this! Give us a town centre to be proud of, not one full of takeaways and bargain shops. We do not need such a development. We need safety, security and a thriving community. This development does not offer us this, it offers us disruption, congestion and insecurity.

Regards