About the application

Application number: 2019/90356	
What is the application for?:	Erection of 7 dwellings
Address of the site or building:	Land Off, Station Road, Meltham, Holmfirth, HD9 4NL
Postcode:	HD8 8EL

User comments

Type of comment: An objection

I have objections which relate to: the width of the portion of Station Road along the boundary of the planned properties, and the safety of the junction of Station Road with the Huddersfield Road.

Width of Station Road. There is a note on the Proposed Site/Block Layout “Approved Road Improvements/Widening” but I can find no details in the Plans or Correspondence relating to this Planning Application available online which provides details of these approvals.
While I am not a professional in this area I note the provisions of the Design Bulletin 32 “Residential Roads and Footpaths: Layout Considerations”, Second Edition, April 1992. Section 2.84 states that, in addition to making adequate provision for off-street parking: “ … requirements for on-street parking must also be planned for in the design.”. Section 2.88 sub-para (c) states that each small group of dwellings should allow for: “casual parking spaces for visitors' cars and service vehicles as an integral part of the carriageway layout immediately outside or in proximity to the dwellings they are intended to serve”. Finally, Section 3.15 states: “Experience suggests that, whenever roads give direct access to dwellings, the carriageways are invariably used for parking by casual callers and service vehicles. Thus, as a general guide, in these locations and in any other places where parking by service vehicles will normally occur on the carriageway, a minimum carriageway width of 5.5m should be provided to allow one service vehicle to pass another that is parked.”
As Station Road provides access to five dwellings further along the road from the proposed site, it needs to be widened to 5.5m along the boundary of the proposed dwellings. I would wish to have this confirmed or reasons given for not complying with this standard. Should there not be a requirement to widen the road to 5.5m, to what width will the road be widened?

Safety of Junction. I refer to the Paragon Highways Statement, Sep 2018, Revision 1 (Jan 2019) which has been submitted as a basis for a decision on this Planning Application. I submit that it is flawed in the following statements:

Sub-Para 1.2: “large refuse vehicles currently reverse along the highway”. This is incorrect in as far as those servicing house nos 10,11 and 12 turn in the driveway of No 11. A minor point, but any such inaccuracy undermines the credibility of the Report.

Sub-Para 1.3: There are two statements which I challenge:

Sub Para 1.8. There are two statements which I challenge:

(i) “Visibility at the access falls somewhat short of the requirements set out within Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, although it is considered that the access operates safely.” The Design Manual, Vol 6 Sect 2 Table 7/1 shows the visibility distance (y distance) at the Design Speed of 70kph (equivalent to speed limit of 40mph as shown in Sect 1 Table 2) to be 120m. This is the Desirable Minimum Stopping Sight Distance as shown in Sect 1 Table 3. The actual y distance in this case is 36m, taken from the centreline of the junction toward the West to the point at which the stone wall turns to run parallel to the Huddersfield Road (as it is only at this location that a car coming toward the junction on the Huddersfield Road becomes visible to a car waiting at the junction). Even with a speed limit of 30mph the y distance, at 90m, is still over twice the actual distance. Consequently visibility falls grossly short of requirements and is considered to be unsafe.

(ii) “The initial section … allowing for simultaneous two-way flow within the junction area, and for vehicles to completely manoeuvre off the Huddersfield Road.” The approach to the junction (as shown in the Statement's Photo 2) is 4.9m wide with a junction radius of no more than 4m. Consequently a SUV (which I drive) of width 2m, allowing for 0.5m clearance, will arrive at the junction taking up just over half the width. Service vehicles will be well over the centreline. In practice, most vehicles exiting Station Road are well over the centre of the junction. Consequently a vehicle turning left into Station Road off the Huddersfield Road will be blocked at the entrance. Given the comments in (i) this is unsafe.

To conclude (at sub-para 1.8), on the basis that there have been no relevant accidents, that this section of the Huddersfield Road is safe is unacceptable given the facts presented above. All good risk audits and prevention measures are conducted and implemented on the basis of current risk to life due to existing hazards, not on the chance circumstance of whether someone has died. With the main road speed limit at 40mph, no speed calming and no warning signs in the immediate approach to the junction, and with the restrictive layout allowing no off-road waiting for the junction to clear, this junction is unsafe. The probability of an accident occurring in the next five years will significantly increase with the number of dwellings increasing by 140%. Therefore I suggest that the Highway Statement is flawed and I strongly recommend the Council seek a re-assessment and that planning permission is granted contingent upon these issues being addressed.