

From:
To: [DCAdmin](#)
Subject: Planning Applications Heybeck and Chidswell
Date: 22 November 2022 20:14:08

Planning applications

2020/92331/E Land East of Leeds Road and 2020/92350/E Heybeck

I object in the strongest possible terms to these two applications for the following reasons.

Though these are presented as two separate applications they are in effect the same development that is the creation of what amounts to a new town that will effectively join the urban landscapes of Kirklees and Leeds council areas. This creates the urban sprawl that planning policy is supposed to be designed to avoid. To assess the overall impact on the area, both applications should be considered as one. A holistic approach to decision making is essential when considering these proposals.

Kirklees Council have wisely declared an intention to be carbon net zero by 2038. These applications should be measured against that aspiration. Do these applications detail how the release of many tons of carbon through the excavation works on site is to be mitigated? If not, the matter should at least be deferred until the applicant gives details of mitigation or offsetting. Replacing a carbon store with a massive development of carbon emitters will not help towards the net zero targets. The application should be deferred until such time as the applicant addresses this issue. In any case, any approval should be conditional on all buildings to be constructed to at least Passivhaus standards for dwellings and Bream Platinum standard for commercial buildings.

The ecological survey that supports this application is now out of date. Compiled in 2018 the survey was inadequate from the start, failing to identify red listed species using the site. Other wildlife on the site was similarly neglected. There is an impressive list, kingfisher, roe deer, bats, barn owl, red kite, skylark and other ground nesting birds. Few if any of these are given any prominence in this out-of-date report. It is considered that ecological reports that are more than three years old should be completely overhauled with another survey. This should be a full survey, not just a confirmatory site 'walk over'. This application should be deferred until a full, accurate ecological survey can be presented.

The survey suggests a 14% net gain in biodiversity. Independent assessments suggest a 10% biodiversity loss on the site. As the kingfisher, roe deer, skylark and other ground nesting birds will have their habitat destroyed and the barn owl, bats and red kite will have their foraging areas built over leaving them with no option but to find alternative places to live. Presumably the biodiversity will consist of house sparrows and feral pigeons. This application should be at least deferred until such time as the biodiversity issue has been properly resolved.

There are two areas of designated ancient woodland in the area of the proposed development. It is considered likely by some experts that the mitigation proposed by the developer is inadequate and will lead to the eventual loss of the woodland. These woodland areas support a bat population which are an integral part of the special fauna of the area. Putting the woods at risk puts the creatures that rely on them at risk. This application should not proceed until acceptable safeguards are in place to protect irreplaceable woodland.

The area has been used for agriculture for many years. There has been no analysis of the state of the soil on the site. Instead, the applicant has relied upon a generic map which suits their purpose by downplaying the value of the land for agriculture. When previous applications have been made to use this land, soil surveys have shown that large parts of it are valuable for growing of crops. As a country we are heavily reliant on food imports. Food miles are an issue within the climate emergency debate so productive land should not be given over to development without a proper report being available to enable the best possible decision to be made. This application should be deferred until such a report has been produced.

Taken in conjunction with other developments already under construction in the area there is little doubt that the infrastructure as it exists will be overwhelmed. There are no proposals to improve this being put forward. Until such time as there are plans in place to provide additional secondary education facilities, additional health care facilities and a viable plan to enable residents to get from place to place without having to rely on their own private vehicle then this development should be deferred, or better still, refused.

Jim Aveyard,
Morley Town Councillor,
Woodkirk ward.