

From:
To: [DCAdmin](#)
Subject: Objection
Date: 23 November 2022 21:21:08

Planning Applications: 2020/92331: Land east of Leeds Road, Chidswell and
2020/92350: Land south of Heybeck Lane.

The objection below is intended to apply to both applications, being made by the same applicant and with Heybeck Lane being used simply to try to ensure early delivery of a significant part of the overall proposals, providing considerable gain and with very little pain for the developer.

Could you therefore ensure that this objection is uploaded onto the planning portal's comment/ neighbour representation list for each application.

I would take this opportunity to strongly object to the application on the following grounds:

The **disproportionate concentration** of development with this and other allocations (some already under construction) in this area is staggering. An earlier objection, emailed to the Planning Case Officer (19/09/2020), detailed a list of allocated housing sites in the immediate vicinity of, and including Chidswell and Heybeck Lane. These totalled in the region of 2,850 dwellings. This did not even include nearby proposed housing allocations of the neighbouring authorities of Leeds - potential for a possible further 1,500 dwellings - and Wakefield. All this whilst not forgetting the 122,500 sq.m./ 1,318,579 sq.ft. of industrial and warehousing floorspace proposed at Chidswell.

The **impact on the surrounding road network** is a source of major concern. The level of development mentioned above will adversely impact the immediate, surrounding and already struggling road network. The applicant and the relevant parties/ authorities have seemingly reached agreement to what is considered to be the necessary remedial measures and the apportionment of the relevant contributions to achieve the same. However the applicant would now seem to be attempting to distance itself from the agreed "predict and provide" (in advance of, or at the very least concurrent with, development) to a "monitor" (sometime in the future, perhaps) approach.

The issue of **redactions** is a worry. A further email to the Planning Case Officer (25/09/2020 - not replied to) highlighted what appeared, to me at least, selective redaction of the authors of some consultations/ responses. At that time it was an objection from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (incidentally an objection supported by Kirklees Council's own Ecology Officer). Since then I understand that similar author redactions have been used in connection with objections from CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) and the Woodland Trust. Why? These are respected organisations, all with very specific knowledge and expertise. They cannot be accused of "nimbyism", a dismissive term which might be levelled at comments made by local residents directly affected by the proposals (however merited such comments might be).

The **loss of a huge area of greenbelt** is a grave concern. As mentioned earlier the disproportionate concentration of development would ensure that the area would be transformed from rural/ semi-rural to one vast urban sprawl, with one of the principle tenets of the original greenbelt allocation - to prevent the coalescence of settlements - being completely disregarded.

The **loss of invaluable agricultural land** (a problem brought into sharp focus by the situation in Ukraine) is again concerning. I understand that the Planning Authority has seemingly accepted the applicant's assessment of the land classification/ quality (apparently based on strategic data not appropriate for use at site level). This despite repeated requests from Natural England (both at Local Plan and this Outline Planning Application stage) for an independent ALC - agricultural land classification and soil assessment - to be commissioned. This in the knowledge that one of the reasons for refusal of a previous application for this site (for open casting by RJB Mining) had been that a significant proportion of the site had a BMV - best and most versatile - agricultural classification.

Accompanying this would be the significant and myriad **loss of wildlife habitat** (and the impact on the wider Kirklees wildlife habitat network), together with the impact on the long term and irreversible displacement of notable evidenced (Kingfisher, Red Kite, Barn Owl) and endangered/ red listed (Skylark, Yellowhammer, Lapwing) birds. This notwithstanding the applicants claim that these species are not resident, but merely foraging! This presumably based on the applicant's out of date Ecological Surveys and confirmed by a single site walk-over last month!

Then there is the inevitable **damage to Ancient Woodland** - Dogloitch and Dum Woods - since the current rural setting would be totally lost and the inconsequential buffers proposed totally incapable of amelioration. It is worth noting that the standing advice from both the Forestry Commission and Natural England is that "it is Government Policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland".

Additionally there is the **loss of an invaluable local amenity** with its, now recognised, positive benefits for mental and physical health.

There will be an impact as far as **climate change** is concerned. The site's current contribution to climate resilience as a "green lung" would obviously be lost if the proposals are approved and implemented.

Finally the **Biodiversity** figures claimed by the applicant's Ecologist (with an admission that the impacts of the proposals are significant and very hard to mitigate) are puzzling to say the least. The claim is that the development will deliver a 10% net gain compared to the current site situation! Really? Are we seriously expected to believe that the proposed development would "leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand"? A previous (2020) Biodiversity Report, independently carried out and advised by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust assessed a 14% net loss. Seemingly it would appear that this onerous assessment is, in this instance, to be conveniently ignored.

I trust that at the forthcoming Strategic Planning Meeting the Chair and Councillors are made fully aware of the deficiencies in the applicant's submission and supporting information and fully appreciate the objection and advice of respected bodies, together with local resident's very real and grave concerns. The application should certainly be deferred pending clarification on a number of issues.

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