



This planning application should be rejected on environmental grounds.

The development will have an affect on a number of protected species such as bats and kingfishers. It is notable that the the biodiversity net gain figures submitted by the applicant are notably different and much better than a previous report based upon the same conditions. Having seen the bats and kingfisher whilst walking the site, I wonder where these creatures will go as their habitat is changed for the worse. The river being subject to silting incidents over 20 years of construction. The river feeds an Environment Agency nature reservoir further downstream.

With regards to bats and deer in the ancient woodlands and also the trees themselves, it should be noted the fact that the area of buffer between the sites and woods has been identified as too small to prevent irrecoverable damage to these ancient woodlands. I note that both the Woodland Trust and CPRE have both objected to the development around the two ancient woodlands.

I further object to the loss of the arable farmland. The need for arable farmland outweighs the need for more housing in the area. There are in fact multiple developments in excess of 290 homes within 3 miles of the site, albeit some of these are outside of Kirklees and therefore not considered which is just daft. Further with the ear in Ukraine showing the value of farmland, it is notable that the applicant has refused to undertake a land quality assessment as repeatedly requested by Natural England on numerous occasions. I note that the planning department have stated they don't know if the land is of better quality than that stated by the applicant...

Finally I object on the basis of the loss of the green buffer zone between Kirklees, Wakefield and Leeds areas. This area has become an important amenity for many of the residents of Soothill and West Ardsley, especially following the COVID lockdowns and the loss of the only other nearby green area in Soothill/West Ardsley now that Redrow are building at Haigh Woods.

So let's think about the environment that will be destroyed and the quality of life for residents surrounding the development rather than cheaply accepting a way to gain more tax income.