

**Consultation Response from KC,
Conservation and Design**
2020/93954 Land at, Lingards Road, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5HY
Erection of 57 dwellings and associated works
Date Responded: 08.01.21
Responding Officer: NG
Responding Ref: CV13/249/250
Context

The proposed site is located on a hillside broadly falling from Lingards Road towards the Colne river valley and is a prominent and widely viewed component of the currently open agricultural land which extends towards the town centre. The field boundaries are flanked by rows of existing C20th residential properties with those of Lingards Road overlooking the site.

The development site borders onto two groups of listed buildings, broadly comprising C18th farmhouse and associated barns, as well as workers' cottages. The listed buildings lie at the lower levels of the site and open onto the current pasture (which forms part of their current settings) accessed from the unadopted road off Lingards Road which joins the public right of way network.

The site is allocated for housing in the local plan for some 36 dwellings, to be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment. The proposals is for some 57 residential units.

The proposals.

The current proposals are considered to present a form of development which fails to address the character and nature of the hillside site, or the special interest and setting of the designated heritage assets upon which it would be imposed.

The number of units means that the development is reliant upon extensive engineering works to maintain the hillside slopes and results in an island of unmanaged, open-space on the steeper sections flanking Lingards Road. This would be enclosed by the rear gardens and fencing of units 28 to 38 and would read as simply space left over after development rather than integrated amenity or green space. The proposal also fails to provide any consideration of the direct or indirect impact on the heritage assets. The setting of the listed buildings would be compromised by the encroachment of a cul-de-sac of smaller units of Road 2, with the proposed flat units tightly enclosing their boundaries.

The hillside location, surviving agricultural character and the potential for distant views also do not appear to have been adequately considered as parameters for the design. Similarly, the submitted heritage assessment lacks any objective analysis of the impact on the identified listed buildings, or indeed the wider character of the landscape.

The proposed layout is characterised by extensive areas of hard-standing surfaces and vehicle parking and appears to be simply focused on the accommodation of the maximum (excessive) number of units and vehicle movement across and along the contours of the site. The proposed residential units are tightly packed with minimum amenity space, no accessible green space, no provision for streetscape planting and insufficient accommodation for the movement of biodiversity.

The proposed development is thus considered to fail to meet the challenge of this site and would result in the adverse encroachment of the listed buildings, negatively transforming the setting of the character-defining former agricultural properties and diminishing their appreciation. The result would be a high-level of harm to the setting of the designated heritage assets and a poor residential design which demonstrably fails to improve the character and urban quality of its context contrary to both the requirements and intent of the Local Plan allocation.

The proposed development would be prominent across the hillside and valley but would contribute little to the enhancement of the character and quality of the locality. On the contrary the excessive proposed development would result in an anonymous collection of insular cul-de-sacs, with little integration into the hillside setting and inadequate linkages to local amenities or greenspace.

The proposal consequently fails to respond to the opportunities to respond positively to the character of its context or adequately consider the impact on the adjacent designated heritage assets.

The hillside setting provides a challenge to create a housing layout which complements this peripheral part of the town, and demands a more spacious and carefully considered residential development which responds to its urban edge character. The current proposal's significant negative heritage and townscape impacts would not be outweighed by any demonstrable public benefits.

Conclusion/Recommendation.

The current proposal is considered to result in an unfortunate and negative impact on the character and appearance of its context. It would significantly compromise the setting of the identified heritage assets, as well as presenting a poorly considered and intrusive residential layout dominated by vehicular movement and hardstanding. Thus, the proposals fail to meet the requirements of the Kirklees Local Plan Policies: LP24 (Design), LP35 (Historic Environment) and the guidance presented in the emerging Residential Design SPD. The proposals are also contrary to the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 127, 130 (Design) and NPPF paragraphs 189, 192 and 197 (Historic Environment), as well as the guidance set out in the National Design Guide.

Therefore, it is recommended that the proposed development is not supported or granted consent in this form. The applicants should be advised to significantly temper their aspirations for the development of this interesting site, in order to better accord with the spirit of the allocation in the Local Plan. Consequently they should reconsider the development options for the site, focusing on a scheme which better integrates the allocated housing into the hillside setting and one which would be identified as complementary contributor to the urban edge character of the place, rather than an intrusive appendage.