About the application

Application number: 2021/92301	
What is the application for?:	Erection of one dwelling, demolition of existing dwelling and associated works
Address of the site or building:	5, Birchroyd Close, Birkby, Huddersfield, HD2 2ES
Postcode:	HD2 2ES

User comments

Type of comment: A general comment	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	Yes

Unlike others who have placed objections on the portal, we are not directly affected by this demolition and rebuild, but live close by.
Our concern is the interpretation of sustainability by the author of the report from Jade3.
There is a worrying trend to demolish large, relatively modern houses, often no more than 20 years old, to rebuild larger developments on the same site. We recognise, that in order to gain extra living space, houses are very often extended, but the trend of demolition and rebuild is becoming more prevalent.
Our concern is the environmental impact and the cumulative effect of this trend on climate change. These types of projects do not accord with the overriding statement in the national planning framework and in Kirklees' own local development plan, which both have sustainability leading to social, economic or environmental benefits at their heart. Building materials are scarce and in most cases the materials are not reused but end up in landfill. The carbon cost of demolition is very high. These projects are not bringing back into use old or derelict buildings, they are not creating any additional affordable housing, they do not create any more revenue through council tax for the LA, they do not enhance the street scene, visual amenity or community amenity.

Around 50,000 buildings are demolished in the UK each year, generating 126 million tonnes of waste.
VAT is charged at 20 per cent on most refurbishment work, but at zero on much new-build construction. We note that extending the existing house was considered but being able to invest another one fifth of the available finance into the project rather than pay it in tax, influences decisions.
We understand that under VAT construction rules (708), all the costs of demolition and rebuild of residential buildings is zero rated, therefore the fiscal system encourages this approach.
The architects' statement says "the property will get the facelift it deserves so it can keep up with the trend or be ahead as a market leader, in the trends of modern living ". This project is not a facelift; it is a rebuild. The property could be given a facelift and improved for family needs by refurbishment, instead of demolition.
The statement concludes that the site "offers the opportunity to meet growth in demand for local housing stock within the district." This project demolishes one house and replaces with one house. How can this add to the local housing stock?
The architect says " the new build will be subservient as compared to the original host building." This is an odd statement as the new building is 475 m sq, an increase of over 70%, compared to 275 m sq of the house which it replaces.
The house is one of a number all built at the same time, in a similar style in the close. The proposed is part rendered, whereas the existing and surrounding houses are all of random stone.
We hope you will take account of these visual and environmental concerns in considering this application.