

PLANNING APPLICATION REF: 2022/62/92406/W - CHIPPINGS SITE, CHAPELGATE, SCHOLES

I wish to register my opposition to the above, my reasons being as follows:

GREEN BELT – the proposed site is in the green belt, and whilst national planning guidance may allow certain infill development in villages, this site is not ‘infill’ and is not within an otherwise built- up frontage. In fact, it will actually extend the existing street scene with new frontage, and add a completely new street scene along Dean Bridge Lane where none currently exists.

Furthermore, although the Applicant has conducted various surveys, the first one (Holme Valley online housing survey) was generic and could be used anywhere in the country, the next two being the Scholes consultations with 3100 and 3300 flyers, none of the surveys or flyers mention, or ask, ‘should we build this development on Green Belt land’ which surely is a basic question giving respondents the opportunity to either object or agree to the proposal. The lack of employment in Scholes and the lack of evidence that only local people will have the benefit of these properties do not meet the very special circumstances that justify this planning applications’ acceptance as required by the National Green Belt policy. Local people are worried that approval of this scheme would set a precedent for building within greenbelt areas, the SOSGB (Save Our Scholes Green Belt) survey which was mainly Scholes Village based also indicating that 78% of respondents said that ‘Green Belt should not be built on at all’ and 91% thought that ‘building affordable houses on the site was not the best use of the land’.



HIGHWAYS/ACCESS ROAD CONCERNS – the topographical survey has been used as a basis for the layout/block plans and the position of the access road. It has been **incorrectly** assumed that the edge of the verge is the edge of the tarmac road, whereas the above photographs show that, due to a lack of maintenance, the verge has been allowed to encroach onto the highway by some 1.20m in places and probably even more if the whole verge was cut back to fully expose the edge of the tarmac*. The point at which the access road joins the main highway is therefore set further back onto the site as is the ‘springing’ point of the visibility splays, thus reducing them and rendering them incorrect on the site layout/block plan. In my opinion, a left-hand visibility splay of only 27m is a more accurate assessment which does not meet with the regulations/requirements of the Highways Design manual.

*In any event, this work should be carried out (a) to clarify the fundamentals of the existing highways position at the junction of the access road, and (b) to provide a better/safer line of sight at the bend for both pedestrians and motorists.

LOSS OF AMENITY AND ECOLOGY – the proposed site has been used for many years as a green space for the public to walk dogs, children to play and is home to a variety of wildlife, insects and plants. It is also home to various tree species which also provides a crucial element in the fight against climate change. The availability of accessible open spaces in the green belt is vital as a means of improving personal health and well-being. Although a small number of trees are to be retained, the removal of trees, bushes and hedges will contribute to a loss of habitat for nesting birds and other animal species and is contrary to the Climate Emergency Plan which has been adopted by Holme Valley Parish Council. Whereas a mandatory landscaping scheme will be seen as a compromise to the removal of these trees and shrubs, it cannot and will not, provide the same current positive effect to the fight against climate change for many years.



FLOODING/DRAINAGE – although the site cannot be classified as a flood risk from watercourses, the site does flood after rainfall (see above) and could be construed to be performing a natural floodplain role helping to alleviate any run-off which would impact elsewhere, particularly in view of recent problems with Dean Dyke. The above photograph shows a random measurement of 27cm of rainfall after the storms in February this year, bearing in mind that these are not a 1 in 30 year storm event, nor even a 1 in 100 year event. I am concerned that the details submitted within the drainage and foul sewerage assessment and the current methodology for calculating the effects of 30 and 100 year storm events may be out of date and therefore this surface water management solution may not meet the necessary requirements over the lifetime of the development when considering how climate change has affected weather patterns. Furthermore, the use of the Highway drain in Dean Bridge Lane as a means of discharge for the total surface water from the site may only add to the recent problems at Dean Dyke where I believe this drain discharges.

HOLME VALLEY NDP – this has now been adopted and forms part of the development plan alongside the Kirklees Local Plan. However, approval of the proposed development would be in conflict with the objectives of the NDP with regard to policies 10 and 13 in particular, and also the results of both community and public consultation and engagement (NDP refs 4.1.24 and 4.5.8) citing ‘residents gave a clear message that to support the preservation of the landscape, brownfield sites should be developed rather than greenfield’, and, ‘specific areas are often cited such as Scholes..... no more housing in these areas, the roads, services, schools etc can’t handle the influx of new residents.....Green belt to be preserved’. Other comments regarding poor sight lines, narrow roadways and limited pavement provision here are also pertinent to the immediate vicinity of this planning application.

If strict planning rules and guidance are not adhered to, then there is the danger of general feeling amongst local people that, because of the relationship between the Holme Valley Land Charity and Holme Valley Parish Council, this is a ‘done deal’ with local peoples’ concerns and feelings being of little or no consequence. This of course would then suggest that the whole process is one of ‘nepotism’ rather than being seen as honest due process in the public domain.