About the application

Application number: 2023/91212	
What is the application for?:	Erection of 16 dwellings with access from Laithe Avenue
Address of the site or building:	Land off, Bankfield Drive, Holmbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 2PH
Postcode:	

User comments

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

I would like to object to this Application on the grounds of Pedestrian Safety.

Orion Homes has an excellent record with respect to Road Safety and Kirklees Highways Department are well known for placing Pedestrian Safety at the top of their priorities. (Design Guide -Nov 2019)

Since 1985 , with many more houses being built and car ownership almost doubling ,Holmbridge residents have become acutely aware of the danger to Pedestrians on Smithy Lane and its junction with Bankfield Drive , Laithe Bank Drive and Dobb Top Road. Bankfield Drive and Laithe Bank Drive have extreme gradients of 1 in 5 (20%) and 1 in 6 (16%) with no "level" standing at their junctions. Constructed in the early 1970's , these junctions would not be allowed under modern highway design standards. Many cars have slid across these junctions especially in wet or icy conditions and have severely damaged the adjacent wall . Both Smithy Lane and Dobb Top Road are without pavements , making pedestrians very vulnerable . (Providing such pavements would be prohibitively expensive and a more pragmatic solution would be to reduce road traffic by building fewer houses needing access via antiquated roads)
In 2018 , HM Inspector of Planning was made aware of these dangers by local residents and she specified that a Transport Statement should be submitted with any future plans for Site H183 (then known as H 626). At this time it was implicit that a Road Safety Audit would be included to deal with access to this difficult Site.
Optima Ltd have recently provided Orion Homes with a Transport Statement to be included with their Planning Application but this falls well below normal standards by containing several mistakes and omitting many important facts regarding Pedestrian Safety.
For Example :- (1) A previous Planning Application HAS been submitted . This was refused twice in 1992 on Road Safety grounds.
(2) The extreme gradients of Bankfield Drive and Laithe Bank Drive vs Kirklees current design requirements are never discussed.
(3) The widths of Dobb Top Road and Smithy Lane (3.4m wall to wall and 4.7m wall to wall) are not mentioned.
(4) The Complex junction at the North end of Bankfield Drive is described as "simple" whereas it is a very complex 5 way sloping junction .(Laithe Bank Drive essentially forms part of this junction being only 7m away)
(5) Following a one day site visit , the document also concludes that there are no highway safety concerns at this (see 4 above) junction due to the absence of skid marks and no evidence of "recent" damage to the wall. Kirklees Council data disagrees.

After considering these and similar errors and omissions from their own document , Optima have themselves concluded that there is no need to carry out a Road Safety Audit on the two access roads to Laithe Avenue . I would suggest that HM Inspectorate of Planning might have different views on this matter.

To conclude , could I suggest that Orion Homes withdraw this Application and maintain their good reputation before Kirklees Highways Department decide that housing would be totally inappropriate on this site due to pedestrian safety.