

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 object to this application for the following reasons: Highway safety This site does have a planning history. As part of a larger site (which includes the current adjacent safeguarded land) it was rejected for development in 1993 due to highway safety concerns. Since then the level of car ownership has increased and more houses have been built in the area. During the Local Plan consultation this site received one of the highest number of objections for a site of its size, primarily due to the concerns regarding highway safety. Over 95% of the objections commented on the existing dangers of the inadequate minor road network. It is unsafe to add a further 16 houses and 40+cars. There is insufficient mention in the Transport Statement submitted by Orion Homes of the steepness of Bankfield Drive and Laithe Bank Drive. These roads have no level standing at a dangerous 5 way junction, which also involves Smithy Lane and Dobb Top Road. The junction intersects at acute angles and has very poor sightlines due to the steep gradient of Smithy Lane coupled with a high wall. Visibility to the West of the Bankfield Drive, Dobb Top Road, Smithy Lane junction is therefore blocked. There have been collisions and resulting wall repairs at the bottom of Bankfield Drive and Laithe Bank Drive (30m + sheer drop) and also Smithy Lane where vehicles have lost control or been involved in accidents, not only during Winter. Pedestrians walk in the roads due to the gradients and poor state and camber of pavements or because there are no pavements. Dobb Top Road has parked cars and no pavements and is well used by pedestrians and cyclists including as a Rural School Route. Smithy Lane has a small industrial complex (including M&M Motors) with an entrance at the junction with Bank Lane adding to the hazards particularly at peak times.	

times.

The transport statement describes this location as 'Suburban Edge of Town'? Semi-rural seems more fitting, most residents require a car for travel anywhere as the local bus service is very restricted in terms of destination, service frequency and reliability of journey times. The number of journeys that the development would generate seems understated. Walking times appear to take no account of the topography.

Most traffic from the development will head towards Holmfirth (58% seems another understatement). From Holmbridge to Shaw Lane, the majority of the Woodhead Road is now only 1 way due to the obstruction of parked cars. The existing traffic dangers will be exacerbated by the 19 dwellings which have already been given permission to be built at the Water Street development in Hinchliffe Mill.

Development design and layout

The proposed development observes only 'minimum' distancing guidelines from existing properties. Given the uneven sloping nature of the site and the differences in levels of existing properties the new development will dominate and overshadow the existing houses on Bankfield Drive. No elevation plans have been made available which show how the new houses (or any new boundary fencing/planting or possible garden terracing) will sit in relation to the existing adjacent properties and existing boundary wall heights. The open outlooks of existing properties vary considerably due to the slope and how they were set out e.g. 'built up' or 'dug down'. There is only a 10m gap proposed between a principal room of No 8 and the side on of the Belfry property, which is unacceptably close. Particularly in winter, there will be a significant loss of natural light.

The new development does not share the same character as the adjacent housing stock e.g. wholly detached, open front gardens, some single storey properties and it is also higher density. It will therefore be an intrusion on the landscape and will not blend in with the greenbelt it abuts. Artificial stone is also not in keeping.

As others have noted there are significant concerns regarding the structural integrity of site retaining walls and responsibility for future maintenance and the potential impact of collapse on other existing walls/roads/properties/drainage.

Visual amenity and wildlife

This site is less than 1 km from the Peak District National Park. As a hillside sloping site in a popular area for recreation it is highly visible and enjoyed by locals and tourists. From the public footpath there are currently open views and intervisibility to the moorland fringes.

The habitat ecological study was conducted 1 March (rather than the optimal time of April-September). It is therefore likely to underestimate the detrimental impact on the abundant local wildlife e.g. house martins, owls, sparrowhawks, curlews, which are frequently seen.

I therefore request that the planning application be rejected.