

Objection to development – Land at Cliff Hill, Denby Dale, Huddersfield – 2023/62/92191/E

Ground Stabilisation Remediation Strategy - Coal mining and intensive grouting

The Developers are proposing to undertake open cast mining and significant grouting circa 500 boreholes together with the removal of circa 4500 square meters of coal which underlie the site. The true extent of the previous workings are not known. Prior to and following this, according to the site history, from about 1851 'the site has remained undeveloped, shown as agricultural fields/open land throughout its history' (Desk Top Study Report & Coal Mining Risk Assessment). The previous planning application of 48 houses was rejected due to the proposed coal mining works.

I am incredulous that the council can consider mining for coal in a rural area, surrounded by houses, especially in the current climate of focus on green energy and cutting back on carbon emission. The developers have stated that over 4150m³ of coal will need excavating and removing from site as part of the remediation and ground stabilisation works. They have not stated exactly how this mining and grouting operation will take place or how long it will take to complete. -This process alone will cause huge noise, dust and pollution for the residents of Denby Dale and in particular neighbouring properties. It will cause health issues to nearby residents who have respiratory conditions. Where is the risk assessment to the neighbouring properties? are they going undertake a dilapidation survey before this work is carried out due to the high risk of causing subsidence and damage to property caused by heavy construction and mining machinery. The neighbouring gardens are already starting to subside due to the investigation work already carried out.

Can Kirklees Council confirm that the public footpath (DEN/61/10) will not be used for this construction / waggon activity, this is an unadopted narrow path, which cannot support the weight of the muck a way lorries. This footpath is accessed regularly by school children and members of the public and would cause a safety issue, there has already been large plant accessing the 'Cliff Hill field' which has churned up the tarmac on Cumberworth Lane already. The access onto Cumberworth Road also has poor visibility with narrowing of the road by the Methodist Chapel for such heavy waggons, how is this going to be mitigated?

Access

I object to the proposed access onto Cumberworth Lane, visibility at this location is poor and enters onto the very narrow lane. The Transport Assessment describes the lane as lightly trafficked; I would disagree with this statement, it is a very busy road with large HGV waggons, buses, agricultural vehicles using this daily. Cumberworth Lane, was designed as a Lane not as a busy road network. There is a pinch point already by the Methodist Chapel (grade II listed building), where two large vehicles cannot pass, add to this at least 580 extra exits from the new development every day, there is going to be congestion leading up towards Lower Cumberworth and further congestion with cars queuing down to Wakefield Road. The transport assessment states a two-metre-wide pavement is necessary from this site towards Denby Dale to maintain pedestrian safety, the developers land does not reach to the existing pavement, how can the pedestrian safety be ensured when they will have to cross at this pinch point over to an already narrow footpath with poor site lines.

The council owned retaining wall on Cumberworth Lane adjacent to the public footpath (DEN/61/10) was knocked down and had to be rebuilt due to a large van hitting it. The reason cited for this accident was due to the narrow road, with the van and another large vehicle unable to pass.

The traffic on Cumberworth Lane at this point I would suggest are in excess of the 34-mph speed limit recorded by the Transport Assessment there are clear skid markings in the tarmac where vehicles are slowing down, in particular the HGV wagons which regularly go down at speed.

Drainage Issues

An existing watercourse exists from Leak Hall Farm, with a further culvert on site. Where will this water go to when the site is built on, Wakefield road and the old nursery site already flood and the existing drains cannot cope, flooding has occurred to the houses next to the library due to the 6 large houses being built and grouted at Springhead Gardens on leak hall crescent. If the open cast mining goes ahead, there is potential for water pollution as well. The developers have not provided details on how they will mitigate against any pollution risks caused by the coal mining works. The proposed 500+ bore holes and grouting below ground to fill in any voids will cause the field at Cliff Hill to become non impermeable which will cause further surface water run-off and flooding to the downstream properties towards Wakefield Road and to the rear gardens of the existing properties along Leak Hall Road.

Ecology

Owls, bats, hedgehogs and other wildlife and birds are known to live on the site. An owl has been resident on this site for a number of years, illegal clearing was carried out on this site on 19th April 2022 (during bird nesting season) against known planning policies and again a few days after. An objection to Kirklees planning was made by myself and a neighbour, no response was received from Kirklees regarding this objection. This clearing has compromised the Environmental study submitted by the developer.

Despite this bats are seen on a regular occurrence living at the site

The large tree with the TPO in the middle of the site has been damaged during previous site investigation works and spoil material piled up in and around its trunk - this needs resolving urgently to avoid permanent damage to the TPO tree

Education

Scissett Middle school is already oversubscribed, the surrounding schools will have the same problem with all of the developments taking place in the surrounding area, ie Cumberworth Road, Skelmanthorpe , Barnsley Road, Denby Dale, Woodnook, Denby Dale and the extremely large new development at Scissett.

Denby Dale First and Nursery School had a problem with oversubscribing when the 'Bluehills development' was built. The school was oversubscribed, the children were forced to go to alternative schools in the surrounding area, there were many upset children who could not walk/go to school with their friends.

We have a three-tier system in our catchment, there is no viable alternative when the schools are full.

I am rather surprised by the Education response to planning, when one of the reasons for initial rejection of the site in 2015 & 2017 was an 'amber warning' with regard to school planning.

Design

The introduction of 3 storey houses is detracting from the character of the village. The 3 storey houses will also impact on the existing properties that surround the proposed development by overlooking them

The previous rejected planning application was for 48 new houses on this site, this has now increased to 62 properties.

The developers have not made it clear what proportion of these 62 will be affordable properties. Their reports are conflicting as they state 12 houses on one document but zero on another due to affordability/building costs on another.

There does seem to be quite a lot of conflicting statements in particular referencing documents made for the previous rejected planning application which does not help.