

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to comment on planning application 2023/93667 relating to the redevelopment of Storthes Hall student village into 261 dwellings. As a local resident I support the redevelopment of the site into housing, it is much preferable to the site becoming dilapidated or simply demolished. However, I have the following concerns that I would like Kirklees planning to consider before granting permission.

Penistone Road junction. The current junction layout of Storthes Hall Lane onto Penistone road is wholly inadequate for the existing traffic flow. Adding 261 houses as well as those planned for construction at the Younger Homes site under construction further up the road could add 1000+ (2 cars per household, twice per day) daily cars to the road and greatly increase congestion. At present parked cars in the junction to Penistone Road prevent any vehicle turning left from filtering past those turning right onto Penistone Road. A single right turning right vehicle can block flow out of and into the junction leading to high queue times. This junction should be assessed before permission is granted and a plan for its improvement set forth. Traffic lights or filter lanes would greatly improve flow here.

New estate road layout and dangerous upper exit. The proposed road layout should be revised to encourage traffic to use the lower entrance further down Storthes Hall Lane. At the upper entrance speeding traffic and parked cars reducing visibility have resulted in a lot of near misses recently. Reducing the road speed to 30 would improve this but encouraging traffic to use a newly bi-directional entrance/exit at the current lower entrance where there is improved visibility and more space for traffic would improve road safety and reduce the impact on existing residents.

Biodiversity. I am alarmed by the apparent significant reduction in size of Little North Spring Wood (labelled G40 on document ref. 1826-SI-05) and the resulting removal of mature trees (including oak, beech, sweet chestnut, horse chestnut and hazel) and their valuable under-canopy that greatly contribute to the biodiversity of the site. These mature woodlands should be retained at their current size and the plans adapted accordingly, with less, lower density housing if necessary to meet biodiversity improvement requirements. Additionally, the existing site already has a huge range of biodiversity from the mature shrubs, hedges, trees and grasslands which will be removed during redevelopment; it is questionable that replacing these valuable ecosystems with lawned gardens will meet the requirements for new developments to provide a biodiversity net gain of 10%. Kirklees planners and the developers should note that the proposal to retain the patch of fir woodland (labelled W1 on document ref. 1826-SI-05) would be much more suitable to remove to build houses since this monoculture of fir has lower biodiversity value than native mixed woodland and mature trees throughout the site.

Existing site use by community groups. The submitted plans and removal of significant amount of parking do not consider the current use of the site by local community groups and its potential impact on new and existing residents. Reduction of on-site parking used by existing social/community groups (astroturf, football pitches, walkers) may cause parking problems on the new site and Storthes Hall Lane. Reduction of housing density and count while retaining The Venue and its parking as a public space (see next point) would allow the development of new properties without adversely affecting existing neighbouring community land use.

Loss of public amenities. The new plans do not include commercial spaces or amenities, nor detail replacement public transport plans. The existing student accommodation shop (Costcutter) and bar (The Venue) are well used by local residents and visitors; their loss would be disappointing and further exacerbate local traffic problems by forcing car journeys into Kirkburton village, which has its own

traffic and parking problems. The plans should be subject to arrangement of public transport to the area and contribution to funding if necessary since removal of the student accommodation will mean the loss of the 399 bus.

Removal of historic buildings. The new plans propose demolition of the current student reception and bar. These historic buildings are two of only three remaining large buildings from the original hospital site. These have great character and history and should be retained and redeveloped as residential or commercial spaces as their loss would be unfortunate.

Construction management plan. While I welcome the redevelopment of the site into housing if done sympathetically to the rural location, please consider the impact of construction traffic to the existing residents of Storthes Hall Lane. Limiting construction traffic to using the lower Storthes Hall Park entrance would go a long way towards goodwill from existing residents as the number of 32 tonne 8 wheel lorries required for demolition and rebuilding would cause significant disturbance.

Drainage: Currently water from the allotment field near Dale Bank drains on to the road above the Mansion boundary after heavy rain and flows down Storthes Hall Lane, crossing the road several times. In cold weather this washes away road grit and freezes making the road hazardous. I'm concerned that the storage of surface water in a basin shown in document DR-C-0100 will contribute to this existing problem with the site. Please ensure that this is investigated and fixed as part of the redevelopment.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Kind Regards,