

DCAdmin

From:
Sent: 10 June 2024 18:55
To: DCAdmin
Cc: Johnjtaylor@kirklees.gov.uk; Cllr Richard Smith; Cllr Bill Armer
Subject: Ref: 2024/62/91242/E Proposal by Newett Homes to build 50 houses off Shepley Road, Stocksmoor, Huddersfield.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Proposed Planning Permission for 50 houses off Shepley Road, Stocksmoor, Kirklees Planning Ref: 2024/62/91242/E

I have noted that you propose to consider planning permission requested by Newett Homes for the above new houses in Stocksmoor and I would like to make the following comments in advance of this planning meeting:

1. The number of houses proposed will increase the size of Stocksmoor by 30%; this is completely disproportionate in a small rural village and there is not sufficient local infrastructure to support this. The developers propose to use cheap, reconstituted building materials on unimaginative designs of uniform nature, wholly out of keeping and effectively a large housing estate, although they seem reluctant to use this word. Whereas I recognise that new houses are needed in all areas of the country, I understand the shortages are for smaller, affordable housing and for bungalows, neither of which are well represented in this proposal. The proposal seeks to build larger family homes in order to be more profitable for the developers rather than actually meet local need. Furthermore I would like to bring to your attention that, because the land rises up behind the existing houses along Station Road, the new 2.5 storey high houses here would blot the skyline and the sunrise/sunsets for all occupants on this side of the village, as well as those on Shepley Road and at Sunside.

2. I have lived on the crossroads of Station Road, Shepley Road, Fulstone Road and Cross Lane for over 30 years and we have raised our own family here. During that time, we have sadly been witness to many accidents (at least one of them was fatal) on the crossroads; approaching the Shepley Road junction, driver visibility is partially obscured by a slight bend and hedging. There have also been multiple accidents in the dip along Stoney Wood Lane, particularly during icy weather. Driving along Shepley Road towards Shepley, there are no less than 3 sharp, obscured bends in this single track road with many drivers going too fast and often into the middle of the road, with no anticipation of what they might meet. We all know that modern cars are a lot wider than they used to be and there simply isn't room to safely pass each other at these three bends and along the very narrow strip up the hill towards Shepley. Travelling along this road at busy times of day necessitates much blowing of horns to warn of approach and frequent expectation to drivers to reverse back around a dangerous bend or right back down to the bottom of the hill as there are no passing places on the Shepley side of the hill; tempers often run high between drivers and I have been witness to this on many occasions.

Stoney Wood Lane is part of the Trans Pennine Cycle Trail but, in addition to cyclists, I see many large groups of walkers, horseriders and also large amounts of farm traffic with trailers using this road; indeed at weekends, we witness extra parked cars in the village for walkers coming from further afield, so they too would feel the massive impact of this new housing and extra traffic. There are no pavements for walkers after the first bend on Shepley Road and, as a regular dogwalker myself, I always feel unsafe and vulnerable when having to walk in the road. To build a new housing estate with just one entrance and exit on this first dangerous bend would be extremely irresponsible -

50 houses equates to at least 100 cars using this new junction. Even a fool can see that the accident statistics will rise sharply.

I note that the developers optimistically state that new residents in these houses will have the benefit of good public transport and so may not need to use their cars. Are they really so naive to believe this and have they not properly checked their facts? Yes we have a train station for the hourly service between Huddersfield and Sheffield but this is not a reliable service for commuters etc and services are often disrupted. The buses come through about four times a day and the routes only link to Huddersfield, rather than offering a choice of destinations. This has perpetuated a vicious circle where most Stocksmoor residents know they have to use their car to reliably get from A to B and its obvious that residents of the new houses will do exactly the same! The extra traffic that would result from this development will not just be from the residents themselves but also the army of vehicles meeting their needs for internet and supermarket shopping deliveries.

3. Stocksmoor and Shepley residents place great value in the woodland and nature in the green belt woodland that lies between our two villages; in the past thirty years I have regularly seen owls, badgers, bats, hedgehogs and rabbits, even the odd deer. In spite of the empty promises made by Newett Homes, the building of 50 houses on this sloping field down to the edge of Stone Wood will greatly upset the ecological balance in this special area and I fear some rare breeds will be lost to us for good. Also, there has been an increasing problem of fly-tipping and litter at the lowest point of Stone Wood Lane and I fear this too will increase with the extra traffic, once again adversely affecting the fragile balance we have with nature.

4. It is well known that the higher ground between Stocksmoor and Thunder Bridge cannot cope with the existing drainage provision. Any heavy rainfall results in huge torrents pouring out of our manholes and tipping openly down the road towards Thunder Bridge, which is then often on high flood alert. Extra development and concreting over of our fields in Stocksmoor will further aggravate what is already a severe problem; the drains will tip over their breaking point and the consequences will be severe for many. Extra surface water will also detrimentally impact the stream through Stone Wood, which has a protected status.

In summary, I urge the decision makers on the planning committee to give full consideration to these points, to visit the site and acquaint themselves fully with the unique characteristics of our village, which make it so utterly unsuitable for a housing development of this size.

Yours faithfully,

1, Station Road, Stocksmoor. HD4 6XN.