

Stone Wood
4 Shepley Road
Stocksmoor
Huddersfield
HD4 6XW

Kirklees Council
Planning Development Control
PO Box 1720
Huddersfield

I am a resident of the above referenced address and I write this letter to raise the strongest of objections to the utterly inappropriate and raise my concerns to the use of factually incorrect 'supporting' documents attached to this planning permission request, to build 50 houses on safeguarded land on Shepley Road, Stocksmoor under planning application reference:

2024/62/91242/E

Transport and Highways

- The proposal to build 50 residences, with a parking capacity for parking 127 cars indicates a disproportionate and inappropriate growth to a small village without sufficient transport links to support it or provide any level of sustainability.
- Most houses in the village already rely on the use of more than 1 vehicle, there is no reason this would not be the same for the new residents.
- The reported accessibility through use of public transport is incorrect, there is only 1 bus stop with shelter in the village and only 1 train per hour (this is however an unreliable service and experiences regular cancellations) therefore residents are reliant on using vehicles to commute.
- No public transport links provide access to local schools or shops.
- There will not be sufficient school places at Thurstonland School to meet the demand from the large scale development so local residents will have no option but to use their vehicles to travel further, increasing traffic at peak times with environmental detriment.
- The proposed site entrance is on a treacherous blind corner (in both directions) at the peak of a hill that is national speed limit, there is limited signage and opportunity for drivers to revert to 30mph at this very point and would be a dangerous place for the entrance to a development.
- The site entrance is on a particularly thin part of the road and due to the restricted visibility would mean that traffic exiting from the proposed development would have to encroach into the carriageway before knowing if it is safe to proceed, causing oncoming vehicles heading in the direction of Shepley to veer into the opposite carriageway on a blind corner, into the direct path of vehicles heading into Stocksmoor at speeds of up to 60mph. This is madness to even think this would not directly result in death or serious injury.
- Furthermore this section of road has no pedestrian footpath. Thus putting pedestrians at severe risk of death having no option but to have to walk in the road itself. There is no street lighting on Stone Wood Lane and the resultant impaired vision increases risk to pedestrians.

- Stone Wood Lane is already a treacherous journey for road users and pedestrians and simply cannot afford to have an escalated volume of road users. It is absurd that the developers believe the majority of new residents would not use this road as direct access to Shepley and beyond, including direct access to large towns (Wakefield and Barnsley) and the M1 south as this is what all residents of Stocksmoor and nearby localities currently do.
- If indeed the new residents were encouraged to use Dam Hill as a route to Shepley and the south the same problems would be experienced on Dam Hill as that road is also not suitable for high levels of traffic.
- The majority of the Stone Wood Lane is single carriageway with insufficient passing points, this causes accidents and road rage incidents between drivers. I have had to assist in managing traffic congestion and de-escalating road rage/public order incidents whilst using the road as a driver and pedestrian. This has put me and my family at risk of assault and harm and this will only get worse with increased volumes of traffic that this road simply cannot sustain.
- Highways officers in March 2024 recognised the challenges for traffic on this road and would **not support** the proposed development as the area is unsuitable for any further intensification in use from the development and there are no possible improvements that could be made to address the existing deficiencies. In this case, how can it possibly proceed??
- Furthermore the increase in traffic on Shepley Road as vehicles approach the junction with Station Road would lead to further danger for road users and pedestrians, given its layout, many drivers fail to recognise the cross roads or the requirement to give way.
- On at least 5 occasions since I have lived near the junction I have been aware/witnessed road traffic collisions at this point.
- A specific example to evidence this was on October 30th 2022 I had to run from my house to render medical assistance having heard a collision at the junction. A vehicle travelling from Shepley Road onto Cross lane failed to give way and hit a vehicle travelling along Fulstone Road into Station Road at high speed, causing both vehicles to spin and leave the carriageway, injuring all occupants of both cars. More historically there has been a fatality at this very junction.
- The travel plan is generic, not specific to the location in question and perpetuates obvious mistakes in the Transport Impact Assessment around bus and train timetables and availability. Home working is significantly reducing post pandemic, with government actively promoting/encouraging the return to the workplace to improve the economy of towns and cities. Transport links within the village are poor and do not meet the needs of most road users and are likely only used by people who do not have a vehicle.
- It appears the Travel Impact Assessment has no concept or consideration of applying a Safety Risk vs benefit assessment, which for obvious reasons has been deliberately omitted, as clearly there are no tangible or achievable benefits that could possibly outweigh the risks to public safety by increasing traffic footprints on this road.
- I have first-hand lived experience of traffic fatalities, causes and its impact on the communities. I deal with risk management on a day-to-day basis. It's fair to say that this is naturally the lens through which I view my daily life and that is why I feel it necessary to document herein my personal concerns about the risks to the public and road safety. I have lived on this road for over 7 years, every day I travel on Stone Wood Lane, knowing

there is a strong likelihood that I may encounter an accident, road rage incident, or worse.

- The residential travel plan makes no mention of 'Stone Wood Lane' and never even mentions Shepley road in the context of the travel difficulties experienced on this road! Did the authors even visit the site?

Appearance & Design

- The proposed design and layout is in no way in keeping with the existing architecture of the village. The use of fake stone and brick does not represent the aesthetic of the village at all. The 1960's brick houses on Shepley road are the only ones that display brick faces, most of these have recently been renovated with natural stone and render, all but 2 of these have been left this way and are owned by elderly residents and would be renovated on re-sale to match the aesthetic of the area, as have all the others (mine included, which is fully natural stone facing). The proposed materials are the cheapest possible and would de-value the natural beauty of the area by default.
- The Design and Access Statement is false and deliberately misleading. It refers to properties on Shepley Road being "Buff Brick, Red brick artificial stone and render"...My houses entire frontage is made from natural Yorkshire stone sourced from a local quarry. As is my neighbours on the same road.
- The proposals have been rushed through without consultation, failing to adhere to due process relating to developing safeguarded land. The proposal cites the out-of-date Local Plan 1 as the basis for its sustainability development assessment and is therefore outdated and no decision should ever be made on inaccurate sustainability assessments.
- Houses are to be built on raised land and the 2.5 story residences (none of which are even present in the village) will dwarf and shade the existing houses on Station Road and Shepley Road, destroying the longstanding views of the countryside over towards Emley Moor.
- The proposed houses, add nothing to the character of the village, big boxy, town centre style housing, using artificial materials.
- By absolutely no means is this an exemplar development as required by the national planning policy is planning permission is required to be made when considering developments on safeguarded land.
- The village has around 170 existing residences, the proposed increase of an additional 50 homes is inappropriate and wholly disproportionate, and significantly changes the community make-up and even the global map layout of the village to an unrecognisable state. This is causes a significant amount of mental stress and is detrimental for the emotional wellbeing concerns for the local residents. Surely this can be seen by the absolutely staggering level of public outrage about the development?
- There will be a significant increase in levels of crime, public disorder, noise and waste/litter and air pollution as a direct result of the scale of the proposal.
- Within the site plans there is a clear intention that the developers intend to extend the plans to build more houses once receiving initial approval by adding the road access to build many more houses on the site. The planning committee need to understand the full intention at the outset, as the greed of the developers is outweighing any benefits to

the community as it is. Further buildings on the same land would exacerbate all of the above points.

- The design and planning documents are poorly detailed, most of the documents appear to be 'cut and pastes' from previous submissions, this lazy approach shows utter disregard and lack of respect for the process and the residents who will be harmed by this application (e.g using outdated bus timetables that show more travel options than are actually available, referring to the location as the North East of the village, there is no toddler group at the village hall etc). This disregard for the detail isn't only insulting to the intelligence of residents but can now obviously also be expected during any subsequent building process.
- There is no consideration for the protection of ancient woodlands, the proposed development will abut this woodland on its eastern side and will be immediately detrimental to its very own significance and value.
- The area is currently defined with detached dwellings with large gardens, the proposed development resembles a concrete jungle, brick, fake stone and over 100 cars in whichever direction you look with tiny garden spaces all crushed together and out of sight.

Environmental

- The site was formerly green belt land, but the councils Local Plan 1 made it safeguarded land, earlier proposals to build even a small parking space on the land adjacent to existing houses was denied, therefore a plan to build 50 homes and 127 parking spaces surely cannot be approved for many of the same reasons. Especially when it contradicts the ambition to protect this land until 2031.
- The land is adjacent to and forms part of existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity.
- The greenbelt around the village is an amenity for both the current residents but also visitors who enjoy the beautiful scenery, history and atmosphere of a scenic village, a refuge for those who seek to get away from commercial properties and large housing developments.
- The open green spaces and woodland support the habitat of wild deers, bats, owls, rabbits, badgers and countless other species, destroying this will be harmful for this aspect of the environment.
- The village sits atop a geographical high point, meaning surface water has no where to go except down hill, this sees regular flash floods at Dam Hill and the drainage system cannot manage the levels of water generated. Building on a field will increase the associated drainage problems, and plans to feed excess water created by the development into the stream at Stone Wood, would be particularly devastating to the make-up and geological value of this ancient woodland.
- With so many 'brown sites' within Kirklees with existing planning permission granted, but no building taking place, why would the council allow approval of the building of residential properties on green protected land?

Economic

- Construction will put unacceptable levels of strain on the poor road system. This will include heavy machinery, deliveries and site traffic accessing the site. There will be no long term benefit in terms of job opportunities once the construction is completed.
- There are no job opportunities within the village itself, most of all new residents will also need to drive out of the village for work.
- The developers suggest the development will generate income for the local council in the form of council tax etc, this has no bearing whatsoever on the planning process and would only make residents suspicious of the councils genuine motivations should they support such an outrageous application.

Please can I respectfully request that all of the above points are considered by Kirklees Planning in consideration of the proposed plans. This build cannot be accepted as it is inappropriate for existing residents but also for any new residents. I support my local parliamentary candidate Mr Mark Eastwood in urging you to reject this application out of hand.

Yours sincerely