PLANNING APPLICATION 2024/62/91316/E

OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE PROPOSALS

For the conversion of existing dwelling and outbuilding to create 6 apartments and erection of 17 dwellings

Location: CLOUGH HOUSE, 236 LEEDS RD, BIRSTALL, BATLEY WF17 0HW

FAO Ellie Thornhill, Planning Case Officer

I wish to make you aware of the following strong objections to aspects of the proposed development plans as identified above. As an immediate neighbour to the location of the proposed development on Moat Hill Farm Drive, I am of the view that the proposed development would have a serious impact on my standard of living and that of our local community. My specific objections are similar to those of my neighbours and relate to material planning considerations which are as follows:

1. Inadequate access and highway safety concerns: Proposed new access from the Clough House development via Moat Hill Farm Drive

- Whilst the application would suggest that there is an existing access to the Clough House site from Moat Hill Farm Drive and that traffic levels are low, this is not an accurate statement. There is no existing access, and an adequate topographical plan has not been provided for the proposed access entry from Moat Hill Farm Drive to the Clough House site. There is approx..10-foot height difference at the boundary between the two sites and is currently screened from the existing Moat Hill Farm Drive residential properties via a wooden fence. There is no indication on how the topographical height change will be accommodated to protect the historical buildings at the lower level whilst not compromising road safety and a reduction of amenity for existing residents with the avoidance of a steep gradient of the proposed access road to Moat Hill Farm Drive.

Moat Hill Farm Drive boundary to Clough House site

- Moat Hill Farm Drive is already under pressure from traffic congestion, and I am very concerned about the safety issues for pedestrian, vehicle and commercial or service vehicles using the site, particularly at the junction where it meets the main A643 Leeds Road. The existing residential developments that the road serves total of 57 existing dwellings and includes the original Moat Hill Farm Drive development

approved in 1988 (17 dwellings), Jason Terrace (13 properties), Rose Terrace (6 dwellings), new Moat Hill Farm Drive development approved in 2014/2018 (10 dwellings), 144-158 Leeds Road properties with vehicular and pedestrian access at the rear of those dwellings which feed into Moat Hill Farm Drive (9 properties), 174 Leeds Road known as Moat Hill Farm Cottage with vehicular and pedestrian access from the right of way lane onto Moat Hill Farm Drive and 210a Jason Terrace. The road width is 5.5 metres and unmarked and therefore struggles to accommodate existing pressures. The older properties on Jason Terrace and Rose Terrace were not afforded parking spaces in keeping with their build age but adds significantly to roadside parking volumes.

- I have lived on Moat Hill Farm Drive for 33 years and therefore feel qualified to comment on traffic levels experienced in the context of road safety for both road users and pedestrians. For residents, the access road has become an obstacle course by having to navigate left and right to serve around the parked vehicles to either enter or leave the site between the A643 and their homes. Moat Hill Farm Drive is the highest point above sea level in Howden Clough and is exposed to high winds and severe ice during inclement weather conditions. The gradient of the road and a sharp bend at the top of Moat Hill Farm Drive combined with an ill placed access point on the bend for the new houses, is a cause of concern as a number of near misses have occurred and delivery or service vehicles have at times been unable to access the residents' homes at the top of the road or within the cul-de-sac. Taxi drivers refuse to pick up or drop off at the top of the road when there is snow or frosty weather due to the risk of damaging their cars. I personally have missed medical appointments due to vehicles blocking the road on the hill. There have been some occasions when bins were not emptied due to access difficulties.

Brow of hill on Moat Hill Farm Drive towards A643

Leeds Road (junction cannot be seen from this point)

Access road (marked in red) for new 3 x town houses on brow of Moat Hill Farm Dr

- Additionally, there is low visibility at the junction to Leeds Road at the bottom of Moat Hill Drive due to the boundary walls, trees and parked cars and accidents have occurred, both reported and non-reported (one of which has been included in the Transport Report undertaken by Paragon Highways).

Moat Hill Farm Dr crossroads with A643 and Hill Crescent incl. proximity of bus stop

- The bus stop for public transport is opposite the crossroads junction of Leeds Road with Hill Crescent and Moat Hill Farm Drive and due to the low visibility at that point on Leeds Road, it is impossible for pedestrians to cross the road without walking up Leeds Road first to find a safe place to cross.

View of bus stop from Hill Crescent opposite Moat Hill Farm Drive junction

- The plans propose 11 dwellings at the north section of the site to be accessed via Moat Hill Farm Drive but there are inconsistencies between the planning application, the transport assessment and the floor plans for plots 7 – 17 as follows.

    - Application form: 6 x 4-bedrrom and 5 x 3-bedroom properties
    - Transport Assessment: 4 x 4-bedroom and 7 x 3-bedroom properties
    - Floor Plans for plots 7 – 17: shows 7 x 4-bedroom and 4 x 3-bedroom properties

  Assuming the plans preside over the other documents for the proposals being submitted to the Planning Office for approval, then the intentions would be seeking approval for 7 x 4-bedroom and 4 x 3-bedroom properties. Consequently, the transport assessment has inadequately under-estimated the traffic impact for the development on Moat Hill Farm Drive due to inaccurate data being used in the assessment. I would estimate conservatively that at least 30 additional cars would be requiring access to Moat Hill Farm Drive as a consequence of these plans and I believe that there is insufficient parking provision being provided and would necessitate on-road parking. Given that the proposal only includes 0.5 metre pavements on one side, this is likely to be detrimental to all users of the proposed adopted road and is not inclusive for the community residents.

  I note also that the north section “turning point” is positioned to facilitate further potential residential development to the north of the development site which is not yet included within this planning application. I am deeply concerned of the impact on the safety of vehicle, pedestrian and service access for the existing Moat Hill Farm Drive residents in addition to the new residents.

- A more feasible alternative access to the Clough House site would be from Clough Drive as it is on slightly lower ground to the right of Clough House site (approx. 2 feet to the level of the wall from the road as shown below). It would potentially make a more suitable and safer access road for the Clough House development as the road is wider at 6.2 metres, a shorter route to Leeds Road and is generally level with a very gentle and slight slope towards the A643 therefore does not have the same gradient issues. The road serves 18 properties, each with individual parking spaces / garages and is a simple T-junction with bus stops situated at a safe distance from the junction. There is good visibility from both directions at the junction and would not significantly impact the safety and amenity currently enjoyed by existing residents of Clough Drive.

Clough Drive boundary to Clough House site

A) Clough Drive boundary to Clough House illustrating short, level road route to corner and then B) Clough Drive from corner to A643 T junction (shown in red)

Clear left and right views from Clough Drive T junction onto A643 Leeds Road

- The plans do not comply with the Planning objectives of LP21 and on the grounds of safety and amenity detriment to existing residents of Moat Hill Farm Drive and those properties whose access is via Moat Hill Farm Drive. The requirements of LP21 to provide adequate information which is accurate and consistent has not been fulfilled and the avoidance of a detriment to highway safety has not been addressed. I wish to object to access from Clough House via Moat Hill Farm Dive as the increased traffic would exacerbate existing problems when there is a safer alternative route available to mitigate safety concerns through Clough Drive.

Policy LP21

Highways and access

Proposals shall demonstrate that they can accommodate sustainable modes of transport and be accessed effectively and safely by all users.

New development will normally be permitted where safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and where the residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe.

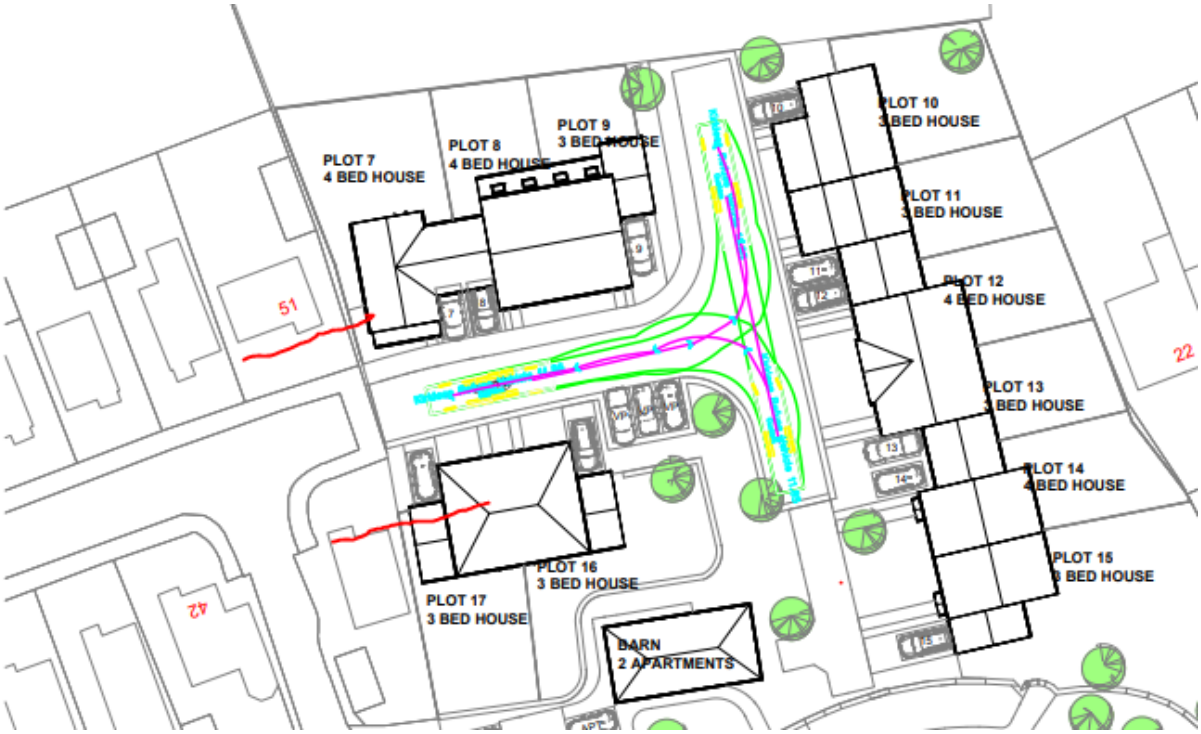
Proposals shall demonstrate adequate information and mitigation measures to avoid a detrimental impact on highway safety and the local highway network. Proposals shall also consider any impacts on the Strategic Road Network.

All proposals shall:

a. ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic within the development and on the surrounding highway network;
b. where needed, provide new infrastructure or improvements on or off site to ensure safe access from the highway network for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and private vehicles;
c. be accompanied by a supporting Transport Assessment or Transport Statement where the development would generate significant trip generation, providing detail as to the impact on highway safety, air quality, noise and light restrictions;
d. take into account changes in site levels and topography to ensure the development can be accessed easily and safely by all sections of the community and by different modes of transport;
e. take into account the features of surrounding roads and footpaths and provide adequate layout and visibility to allow the development to be accessed safely;
f. take into account access for emergency, service and refuse collection vehicles;
g. provide on-site safe, secure and convenient cycle parking/storage facilities to encourage sustainable travel modes.

<u>2. Detrimental impact upon residential amenities: Plot 16 and 17 New pair of 2 storey semi-detached dwellings and building line out of step with existing adjacent buildings on Moat Hill Farm Drive.</u>

- The building line, as shown on the Transport Assessment, shows that the new dwellings are further forward than the existing dwellings on Moat Hill Farm Drive despite their very close proximity.



- In determining applications for residential development, planning considerations should take into account the form, size and character of adjoining development and should not adversely affect the amenities of any existing residential property. There should be sufficient space between old and new buildings to maintain the amenity and privacy of adjoining houses. We believe that the proposed development is a direct contravention of these design principles. The proposals do not respect local context and would be entirely out of the character of the building line to the detriment of the existing residential properties. The proposal would overlook the existing properties whilst compromising the visibility to safely access their drives and parking spaces. In particular the plans would overlook into the adjoining properties of 50 and 51 Moat Hill Farm Drive which would demonstrably harm the amenities enjoyed by these local residents, including safe and available parking and privacy and retain their right to enjoy a quiet and safe residential environment.

- The proposed location of plots 16 and 17 is directly behind the existing barn and Clough House which is a significant departure from the previous proposals on planning application 2022/62/92356E which had proposed to landscape this area, together with the provision of car parking spaces, rather than the creation of any new dwellings. I feel that this aspect of the proposals is a detriment for the following reasons:
  - The context and setting of Clough House and the barn will be dominated by Plots 16 and 17 which will detract from the existing and historical prominence and setting of the existing buildings to the community.
  - I note that the provision of these plots comes at the expense of pavement widths at either side of the access road leading from Moat Hill Farm Drive and hence compromises community safety. As the house types are 3 bedroomed, I assume that the target and potential market will be towards families and therefore it is essential that the pavements continue from Moat Hill Farm Drive at the same width as the existing road and pavements.
  - The building line is not being maintained from the existing dwellings on Moat Hill Farm Drive which would be a detriment to the overall line of sight, visibility and general character of the community.

- Given that the proposed dwellings will be targeted to the family market, there is insufficient garden space to these large 4-bedroomed homes for the children to play. If the proposals were amended for plots 16 and 17 to be landscaped, this would help to address the loss of open spaces.

3. Climate change and environmental concerns.

- All the properties to the north of Moat Hill Farm Drive have additional storm drains due to the location, elevation and windy site. Given the change to development and hard surfaces, I do not believe that the risks of flooding have been adequately addressed for the adjoining residential developments.
- The properties are within close proximity to a hazardous commercial site which is increasing the number of people at potentially at risk from harm.
- The site is within the flight path of bats but I see no bat survey within the supporting information. There does not appear to be any consideration for the protection of wildlife at the site and along the boundary.
- Clough House was previous a pig farm and there appears to be no information about contaminated land and the protection to be made for the community to safely undertake the development.