

**From:**  
**Sent:** 30 August 2024 07:47  
**To:** DC Admin  
**Subject:** Ref: 2024/92031

F.A.O Louise Bearcroft  
Case Officer  
Planning Dept.  
Kirklees MBC

Dear Louise,

Thank you for your letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> July, the contents of which I note. My Directors have discussed this matter with me, and feel that I am the most appropriate to respond, as it is my day to day job to manage Operations on behalf of Highgrove Beds limited. As such, my observations of the plans submitted for the proposed residential site adjoining our manufacturing site relate to the actual difficulties that will arise, if permission is granted.

In essence our objections can be categorised as follows:-

Increase in Traffic flow on Headlands Road/Health & Safety considerations

- With three large industrial Sites ( HG Beds Limited, Flair Furniture Ltd & Kirklees Council Transport Depot) already situated on Headlands road, together with a local primary school and throughfare for the Academy School and built up residential areas, also on the curtilage of Headlands Road, that this particular road is prone to severe congestion at the best of times.
- Even with the current road calming measures in place, and our own efforts with other business users to regulate the traffic flow of HGVs onto our site with manned access points, Headland Road during peak times during the day, especially during term time becomes a severe “bottleneck” causing congestion and traffic delays lasting at times for longer than an hour.
- The new development with the no. of houses proposed is indicative of attempting to maximise the greatest number of houses on new developments. As a direct consequence of the new proposed residential development, the situation will become unbearable in my opinion.
- I consider, if “no road widening measures on Headlands Road is part of the proposed development by the Council or developer, financial losses of delayed deliveries will arise for all business users, as our goods will not be meet strict deadlines for delivery, delayed due to congestion departing Headlands Road due to gridlock.
- Further, from a H&S perspective, users of Headlands Road including existing residential users and school users – with the increase of congestion will be face a greater risk of injury/loss on Headlands road, especially with local schools already in situ.

- I note the Transport Assessment report from the Developers – with respect stating that the development meets current govt. policies does not provide any assurance. A comprehensive H&S assessment is required, detailing the actual increase in traffic, with physical audits is needed, e.g most residents have on average 2 cars, so the increase of residential traffic for the proposed development is significant. So , I feel that the Council cannot determine this application without an actual physical study together with physical measures that need to be taken – the report provided does not have the level of detail needed from the developer considering the current ongoing congestion.
- Also, as I am very familiar with the topography of Headlands road, the sight lines coming out of the proposed development seems somewhat optimistic. The number of houses being sought and the sightlines onto Headlands Road would cause difficulty to road users coming and exiting into the development. Of course, I do not confess to be an expert and of course, that is a matter for Highways Dept at Kirklees.

#### Drainage / Impact on existing drainage Infra structure on Headlands road/Existing occupiers

- All existing occupiers on Headlands Road can confirm that the locality is prone to significant flooding in the event of significant rainfall, especially during the winter months.
- It is simply not feasible for any new residential development to connect to the existing infra structure. From our own site together with Flair Furniture limited, we have a Water Pump located at the front of Headlands Road, on a 24 hour basis to pump surface water to avoid our accessway and sites flooding. During periods of heavy rain, even the pump house can be overwhelmed causing flooding off our sites onto headlands road.
- The civil engineers report provided by the developer simply details their proposed layout into the existing council adopted infra structure. From our experience, the topography of the proposed residential site, with the increased number of households will overwhelm the existing conduits available.
- In fact, as we adjoin the proposed residential development, we can say with good authority that the residential site will need to invest in significantly greater drainage measures than what they have proposed. Our own experience is that to mitigate the ever increasing risk of unseasonal rainfall over the last 10 years, we have spent significant sums on drainage to mitigate this risk.
- The reports provided do not show any level of detail showing the additional volume increase of surface water, and/or detailing the potential increase in actual flooding risk as a consequence of the development.

#### Restriction on Future developments

- We are together with other businesses, one of the biggest employers on Headlands Road with in excess of 200 employees on our site, and a similar number for the business users – with aggregate of 500 employees for all the business users in total on Headlands Road.
- The impact of this residential development on our business's future development and our employees, current & future should also be a key consideration in this development. Headlands Road has had a proud history of providing employment in the local area for 100 years or so. As the Council will confirm, that in this Kirklees locality, there has always been a shortage of good commercial sites, and potential new employers have therefore looked elsewhere and outside the district as they grow.
- We appreciate that the Developers are robust in their position that the residential development may meet all local and national policies, but we consider that local & government policies on business generation should be given equal weight, and existing businesses/employers should not be prejudiced by new developments that will clearly restrict our current ability to increase capacity and create far

greater number of jobs, than the number of houses – in what is clearly a mixed commercial/residential site on Headlands Road.

- For example, in our case, we are busy seeking to win new orders nationally and internationally – we are also considering acquisition of outsourced brands, so that production can be moved to our site at Headlands Road. In the next 18 months, if these tenders are successful, we will need to consider within the next 12 months to implement an additional shifts, and within the next 24 months – there is a real possibility that we look to reconvert or build new facilities at the front of Headlands for a foam factory – this would guarantee another additional 60 jobs, with need for carparking, and expansion of existing facilities on our existing site.
- The material concern for ALL existing business users is that there are no safeguards being proposed by the Council to protect our current rights to redevelop on our existing sites for future development. As if there are no safeguards or restrictions on the residential development imposed if permission is granted, in future this will prejudice our ability to expand our businesses or increase employment opportunities, as the residents of the new development will oppose on the basis of sound, noise and general nuisance to them.
- Surely, it is not fair to existing businesses who work every hard to provide employment in the locality, that tomorrow there growth and business is impeded by a development that was openly built in a mixed zone locality. Surely, if the development is to proceed then restrictions need to be imposed to protect the long established businesses already in situ. There is no doubt we will produce industrial noise along with HGV movement at the moment and this should not be restricted based on any future developments.

Afterall, if I have bought a property next to a large commercial factory, I cannot then tomorrow seek the rights for those solely habiting in a residential/greenbelt area. So equal consideration needs to be given to local/National policies by the Council for economic generation, especially for existing business users – of which the Council is also one on Headlands Road.

Finally, I would be grateful if you could keep me updated on this application, as we may need to instruct our own planning professionals, if the matter proceeds without the assurances/restrictions being sought above. The developers reports lack the real detail that we consider the Council really needs to make an informed decision. However, equally we expect the Council not be railroaded into granting permission due to a change in government agenda – as surely the rights/needs of existing occupiers both residential and commercial should be paramount.

Yours sincerely

Operations Manager