



I object to the plan. Firstly, the proposals will have a negative impact on wildlife habitat, ecology and trees. The proposal does not include a Biodiversity Net Gain submission. Secondly, the proposals will adversely impact the existing public rights of way that currently traverse Clayton Fields.

The Kirklees Local Plan, adopted in February 2019, states in section 13.1 that “the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils and minimise impacts on biodiversity, providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.” The current proposals are in breach of this aim. As others have stated in their objections, the mature woodland bordering Clayton Dyke at the lower part of the field contains many mature trees and provides habitats for a variety of birds, mammals and bats. The proposed houses at the lower end of the development appear to have gardens which encroach on the area of mature woodland. The development would inevitably damage an area that is rich in biodiversity. The council should require any development on this site to be a suitable distance from the mature woodland bordering Clayton Dyke.

The council has recognised a number of public rights of way that cross Clayton Fields used regularly by local residents. At present, children and parents attending the nearby St Patrick’s School cross Clayton Fields using an earth path running along the upper edge of the mature woodland bordering Clayton Dyke. It will no longer be possible for people to use this route if the current plans are approved. Section 10.72 of the Kirklees Local Plan is about transport, specifically the objective of promoting Active Travel. It states that a strategic objective of Kirklees Council is to “Protect and improve green infrastructure to support health and well-being, giving residents access to good quality open spaces, sport and recreation opportunities, and to support habitats, allowing wildlife to flourish. Promote development that helps to reduce and mitigate climate change, and development which is adapted so that the potential impact from climate change is reduced.”

The council should aim to retain a “green corridor” running across the upper side of Clayton Dyke. Keeping the path would protect the mature woodland by separating it from the housing development. It would also allow people to continue using a public right of way and route to school. These aims align with the objectives specified in the council’s Local Plan as it related to both Active Travel and Biodiversity.

The current plan should be rejected.