

This planning proposal raises concerns on a number of grounds and as such, we wish to submit a formal objection, based on valid planning considerations.

Conservation of the Natural Environment.

The proposed development threatens to destroy critical local wildlife and their habitats. Currently, it is common to see pheasants, foxes, and nesting owls along this part of Quaker Lane and particularly the section from the entrance to Jo Cox Wood and onwards towards Halifax Road. This section of the bridleway has beautiful verges with wildflowers and insect habitat to support the wildlife. (Or at least it did have until this last week when the applicant had contractors remove the verges, even though it is not in their ownership.) Children can often be seen watching and spotting wildlife in this area. The lane and the proposed buildings are all within an area designated as Green Belt, a designation intended to safeguard the environment and ecological value.

Impact on the Character of the Area.

As regular walkers in this area, we can attest to its joy and beauty. It is a safe haven where we regularly walk and play with the grandchildren, a lane where they can experience cycling and experience the joy and adventure of its unmade surface. This area is calm and peaceful in nature, whilst also being well used in a very rural manner; walkers of all ages (some utilising walking aids), dog walkers, joggers, cyclists, and horse riders. Permitting this application would completely destroy that. The significant increase in vehicles, particularly into the traffic-free area, would remove the relative safety and peace that the area offers. The area contains some of the history of the Spen Valley; on the lane, by the entrance to Jo Cox, is a lengthy stretch of old 'causie stones', possibly dating back to the 18th century. This would likely be destroyed by the building process and the increased access traffic.

Access and Safety.

The proposed access route is along public footpaths and a bridleway. It is unsuitable for the increased traffic that would result from passing this application. The lane is narrow, without pavements, unmade, and incapable of supporting heavy machinery and the associated construction traffic. This traffic would bring hugely increased risks to the many current users of the space.

Previous Planning Applications.

In the local plan (2015), the proposed application was within site H225. It was rejected as designated Green Belt.

Objection Conclusion.

As local users of this space, we feel this application is not in the public interest. The space is a wonderful public resource that should be unbuilt upon to preserve the health and well-being of all those who use and live within it; in fact, the very essence of why it is designated as Green Belt. As Green Belt, it prevents the sprawl and merger of the townships of Liversedge and Cleckheaton, a function that is hugely important, helping to ensure that future generations have a local area to enjoy and be proud to live in.