DC Admin

From: Victor Grayson
Sent: 11 April 2025 13:59
To: DC Admin
Subject: Application: Cliff Hill, Denby Dale - 2024/93458

Hello, BST. Please could you log these comments from Cllr Bamford?

Thanks,

Victor Grayson
Development Management Masterplanner
Majors and Minerals Team
01484 221000 x77803

From: Cllr Tim Bamford <Tim.Bamford@kirklees.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 April 2025 11:45
To: Victor Grayson <Victor.Grayson@kirklees.gov.uk>
Subject: Appeal/ Application Cliffe Hill, Denby Dale 2023/92191- 2024/93458

Good morning Victor,

Would you please submit the following to the Planning Inspector and the Strategic Planning committee for applications 2023/92191 and 2024/93458.

I am writing as an experienced transport manager and excavations operations manager with extensive experience in heavy transport and mining operations—including many years of driving heavy goods vehicles, some in the opencast coal industry—to formally register my objection to the proposed planning application. I have carefully reviewed the application documentation and wish to highlight significant concerns that, in my view, necessitate a rejection of the proposal.

1. Site Access and Traffic Safety

Inadequate and Hazardous Access
The proposed site access on Cumberworth Lane contradicts earlier planning assurances that recommended access from Leak Hall Road. This alternative route that provided a safer junction with Wakefield Road avoids the congested centre of Denby Dale and is already supported by the Planning Inspector's concerns. In contrast, Cumberworth Lane is busy and narrow—particularly near the Methodist Chapel where its width does not permit the safe passage of two heavy vehicles simultaneously.

Heavy Vehicle Operations and Congestion

The vicinity of the proposed site features regular heavy vehicle movements. For example, a nearby haulage company on Coal Pit Lane operates fifteen HGVs and thirty trailers, and 44-ton trucks are routinely using this route. Cumberworth Lane is also the designated route for 32-ton clay trucks traveling from Peace Wood Quarry to Naylor Clayware, potentially adding hundreds of journeys per week. These vehicles require extended stopping distances—especially under wet conditions and on the steep downhill section from Lower Cumberworth—greatly increasing the risk of collisions and accidents.

Articulated Vehicle Operations and Resident Safety
I am particularly concerned about the challenges associated with manoeuvring articulated vehicles, especially when they are laden with plant and machinery. Given that these large vehicles may be unable to avoid driving on pedestrian pavements, the safety of Denby Dale residents, including schoolchildren, the elderly, and mobility-restricted individuals, is jeopardized.

2. Coal Extraction and Environmental Concerns

Coal Extraction Classification and Licensing
The application notes that approximately 4,500 m^3 of coal will be extracted, which is comparable to the volume of two Olympic-sized swimming pools. This will generate at least 550 truck movements of coal from site and 550 return movements. This could rise as stated by the applicant. Although described as waste by the developer, this still constitutes coal extraction and should therefore require licensing by the Coal Authority. I question whether appropriate waste transfer documentation will be maintained should the coal be classified as waste and disposed of via landfill.

Carbon Release and Regulatory Compliance
The release of carbon resulting from this extraction raises additional concerns. How this aligns with the Kirklees Climate Emergency Declaration and the environmental standards outlined under para 223 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) remains inadequately addressed. Moreover, the lack of a detailed site investigation report further obscures the true extent of extraction, potentially opening the door to a full-scale opencast operation similar to those previously rejected.

Financial and Operational Uncertainties
Without an intrusive site survey, it is unclear how much grouting or remediation will be required. This omission not only poses significant logistical challenges but could also lead the developer into a financially untenable situation.

3. Conditions and Overall Suitability of the Development

I am deeply troubled that this planning application is supported by no fewer than 42 conditions. Key measures—such as the remediation strategy and the intrusive site survey—have been deferred as conditions rather than being included in the core application documents. Such arrangements do not inspire confidence that the risks associated with destabilising the site, potentially releasing contaminants, or increasing flood risks have been sufficiently mitigated. In my opinion, this site is not suitable for development, and any further progress would be a disservice to the community's safety and well-being. The adjacent site was grouted, this resulted in underground waterflows to be diverted towards neighbouring properties resulting in a collapsed wall and a flooded house. I am concerned where this water will be diverted to if Cliff Hill is grouted.

Conclusion

In view of the risks to public safety, potential environmental hazards, and the apparent deviation from previously agreed safe practices and planning policies, I respectfully urge the Planning Committee to reject this planning application in its entirety. This has come before committee twice and has been refused and is fundamentally the same application with the same issues. I trust that the Committee will give due consideration to the issues raised above and take necessary action in the best interests of Denby Dale and its residents.

Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Kind Regards

Tim

Tim Bamford
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