

Planning application comments



War Memorials Trust

Our ref: WMO/131112 (WM7535)

www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/131112

Date of comments: 11/12/2025

Local Authority:	Kirklees Council
Planning ref:	2025/60/92776/E
Description:	Outline application, with all matters reserved, for residential development with associated open space, landscaping, drainage infrastructure, acoustic mitigation, and associated works

War Memorials Trust, the national charity for the protection and conservation of war memorials in the UK, has been advised of the above outline planning permission in relation to Shepley Memorial www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/131112/. We note it is Grade II listed see www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1453913?section=official-list-entry.

Based on the information available the Trust would make the following comments. We are happy to comment further if additional information is made available which addresses some of the issues where we have noted more detail is needed.

War Memorials Trust is aware of this war memorial. Our file goes back to 2013 and includes details of a funding application which was cancelled.

Proposed Development

From the information provided the proposals do not appear to significantly impact the war memorial and its setting.

The proposed development is in outline with all matters reserved. The development site (hereafter 'site') is located to the northeast of the memorial, beyond a mature woodland area. The indicative landscape masterplan indicates siting and possible layout. This is described in the Heritage Statement (HS) as avoiding the higher topography and allows a set back away from the memorial to ensure 'no clear visibility' and to allow separation and reduce effects of noise (HS, p.27).

The HS concludes that in respect of the listed war memorial the proposed development would 'not result in any harm to the significance of this asset' (HS, p.28).

Noise

Insofar as effects upon tranquillity, the siting and orientation of the closest houses are understood to have been varied in response to earlier concerns to minimise the effect of noise from 'everyday activities'. The previous layout is unknown but the illustrative masterplan shows these houses orientated to provide the associated gardens to the rear (north). This results in an access road being sited to the south side of the houses. The road would form part of the anticipated activities therefore whether this provides sufficient minimisation of developmental effects insofar as any noise intrusion from vehicle movements is uncertain.

Separation, visual and physical effects

It is apparent that the development would bring the built edge of Shepley significantly closer to the memorial. Whilst the complete visual isolation of Shepley was likely never intended, the heritage significance of the later woodland to the north of the memorial has not been established.

Historically the siting of the memorial provided a level of physical isolation and will undoubtedly be reduced by the proximity of the development. Further, the ability to experience this the HS describes that the ridges of housing might be glimpsed – if at all, and even then ‘only in winter’ (HS, p.26’).

As per Historic England Good Practice Advice - 3, seasonal and diurnal effects resulting from development are relevant. Any effect of seasonal variation upon the experience of the asset should be explicit. Further, as mentioned above there is an indicative access road to serve the houses and will presumably include street lighting. The effect of lighting upon significance is not identified in the HS.

Heritage Benefits

The HS identifies that there is potential for heritage benefits and cites examples including management of the woodland to open-up and restore visual links with Shepley and potential improvements to public access footpaths etc.

In isolation, subject to the understanding of any significance the later woodland might possess, the principle as to the likely affect upon significance by reinstating and revealing the visual connection with Shepley could be generally acceptable. However, evidence of any value of the later woodland upon the significance of the Shepley memorial is not provided. Similarly details of the suggested enhancements and crucially how those might have informed the parameters and attributes of the proposed development nor ultimately the proposed mechanism of how they would be forthcoming. Noting that whilst the development site and land to the south and west (respectively edged red and blue) are in the same ownership, the woodland is not.

In summary, the information and evidence to adjudge the likely effect of the proposed development upon the significance of the listed war memorial requires enhancement. To allow confidence in decision-making Trust recommends the LPA seek further evidence relating to the heritage significance that might be attributed to the later woodland to Shepley memorial.

In addition, further information as to the developments attributes upon significance from the effects of noise and light e.g. details of anticipated levels as compared to the present baseline and the ability to experience these effects as a result of seasonal variation of the woodland. This should also include assessment that demonstrates that with any proposed ‘heritage benefits’ e.g. any proposed change or management of woodland being proposed.

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