

**From:** Cllr JohnJ Taylor <JohnJ.Taylor@kirklees.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 06 February 2026 18:42  
**To:** Louise Bearcroft <Louise.Bearcroft@kirklees.gov.uk>  
**Subject:**

Hi Louise,

Apologies for how long it has taken me to finally get round to submitting my formal objection to the planning application **2025/60/92776/E**, submitted by Banks Group Ltd, for residential development on land off Eastfield, Shepley. Although I know that you and colleagues have been aware of my concerns about this application for a number of months.

My objection is based on a number of factors:

### **1. Highway Safety, Access, and Unsuitable Egress Arrangements**

The proposed access strategy relies on vehicles exiting the development via Lea Drive and the junction with Abbey Road (A629), with Knowle Park Avenue proposed to operate as a one-way route. The applicant has acknowledged that adequate visibility splays cannot be achieved at Knowle Park Avenue, which is a clear concession that safety issues already exist.

Lea Drive is characterised by a very steep gradient (1 in 7) leading directly onto the busy A road.

Kirklees Highways guidance makes clear that gradients of this nature present an increased risk of loss of traction, particularly in icy conditions, and that gradients above 10% are especially problematic for stationary and moving vehicles in winter conditions.

Given Shepley's elevated location and frequent winter icing, reliance on this route as the sole means of egress for existing and future residents raises serious concerns regarding:

- Vehicle control and collision risk at the Abbey Road junction with vehicles potentially going through the stone wall opposite down a steep sloping embankment.
- The ability of emergency, service, and refuse vehicles to safely access and exit the area.

-The likelihood of residents being unable to leave their homes during adverse weather or in the event of temporary road blockages. This is especially concerning given the older age profile of existing residents.

-This, and the surrounding roads are used by parents at pick up and drop of times for the first school who would similarly be restricted in means of egress.

Policy LP21 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires not only safety, but that access arrangements are suitable, effective, and efficient. In my view, the proposed access fails to meet these tests.

## **2. Traffic Generation and Cumulative Impact**

Applying Kirklees parking and design guidance to the proposed housing mix indicates the development could generate in excess of 250 additional vehicles (based on parking spaces needed), the vast majority of which would route through the Lea Drive / Abbey Road junction and onward to key routes including the Sovereign crossroads.

This junction, and the neighbouring Carr Lane/Cross Lane junctions are widely recognised as a known accident hotspot. Last year I brought forward a petition with over 3000 signatures asking for more road safety measures here. Additional traffic flows would compound existing safety issues, particularly when considered alongside:

The existing peak-time congestion, school-related parking and pedestrian activity associated with Shepley First School, recently approved or operational developments in the wider area generating additional HGV movements e.g. Bromley Farm Quarry and the impact of increased use of online shopping and the associated increase in delivery vehicles.

The Transport Assessment, in my view, understates these cumulative impacts and does not demonstrate that residual impacts would not be severe.

Furthermore, the adjacent roads, Lea Drive, Eastfield and Knowle Park Ave are roads of concrete construction with a thin layer of tarmac on top and the differential way in which the two materials expand and contract leads to the road surfaces constantly breaking and needing repair which is clearly transparent when viewing the roads. I do not feel that they are robust enough to support the weight and volume of heavy construction traffic during any development period.

Finally I would also like to point out that currently these roads are used by the First School for cycling proficiency lessons and if this development were to go ahead the increased volume of traffic on Eastfield and Lea Drive would mean that these roads would no longer be considered safe enough for these lessons, leaving the school without a suitable location for cycling proficiency lessons

## **3. Inadequate Public Transport Provision**

The applicant places great weight on the presence of rail and bus services in terms of the sustainability of this location. However, the reality on the ground does undermine that assertion. Especially when considering that the Penistone Line services are hourly, frequently delayed, and partially single-track, limiting reliability, the infrequency/ reliability of the service makes its use for commuting difficult, especially when returning home. The station is not fully accessible and lacks parking provision. The accessibility issue is one which I and colleagues have been raising now for almost a decade and whilst promises have been made, there has, to date, been no real movement and it is still far from clear if/when the accessibility will be addressed.

Bus services are largely hourly, limited in the evenings, and absent on Sundays, again making reliance on cars a feature of living in a village like Shepley.

Taken together, these factors make it unrealistic to assume a meaningful movement away from private car use, increasing pressure on the local highway network contrary to sustainability objectives.

## **4. Impact on Local Economy, local Business**

I know that a separate submission has already been made about the potential impact of this proposal on the adjoining business, Shepley Spring. This is a long established local business which employs

around 130 people across their 3 sites, many of whom are local and the business contributes well to the local economy and has growth plans which align with the Council's own growth ambitions. It also is a key part of the community and is a regular financial backer/contributor to many local organisations and events which would be impacted if the business were to fail.

Shepley Spring have a SPZ1 zone, which covers a proportion of this site which is to protect the source aquifers which are fundamental to the business as a supplier of spring water. Any drilling and disturbance of this site has the potential to contaminate the water source which would be seriously damaging to the business and so to local employment. All that has been done so far by the developer is a desk top assessment which does not adequately address the risks nor show how any development could proceed safely without damaging the neighbouring business.

If this issue cannot be adequately protected and evidence produced which shows that the water supply will not be at risk of contamination, I would have thought that this alone would be sufficient grounds for the proposal to be rejected.

### **5. Settlement Character and Sustainability**

The site lies on the edge of the existing village and contributes to the open, semi-rural setting of Shepley. The scale and form of development proposed would result in an outward expansion that is not well integrated with the existing settlement pattern and would erode local character, contrary to the spatial strategy and design objectives of the Local Plan.

Furthermore, the supporting submission by Banks Group Ltd falsely states that there is a supermarket in the village. Clearly this is intended to support their sustainability argument. This point was made in their publicity produced for the public consultation meetings in the village. I attended and pointed out to them that this was incorrect.

There is a Co-op store in the village which remains open on Sundays beyond the hours allowed for Sunday trading as a supermarket, ably making the point that this is a convenience store not supermarket and the goods are priced accordingly and do not offer a wide enough range of goods to be used exclusively for a full weekly shop.

The nearest supermarkets are either Aldi or Co-op in Holmfirth 3 miles away or Morrisons at Waterloo 4 miles away. Again given the infrequency of the bus service this means most shopping is done by car or by having online deliveries.

### **Conclusion**

For all of the above reasons, the proposed development represents an unsustainable form of growth, with unacceptable risks to highway safety, inadequate infrastructure capacity, and harm to the character and functioning of Shepley. The application fails to demonstrate compliance with key Local Plan policies, particularly in relation to transport, infrastructure, and sustainability.

If the Planning Authority were minded to recommend approval of this application, I would like to exercise my right to request that the matter is referred to Planning Committee for a decision. Of course, if the decision is to refuse, I would not wish to ask for the matter to be referred to Committee. I trust that this is ok and hope that after considering the above and the "many" other objections that the Local Planning Authority do refuse planning permission for application

**2025/60/92776/E.**

**Regards**

**John Taylor**  
Kirklees Councillor for the Kirkburton Ward