

Planning Application: 2025/93016

Site: Land adjacent to 15 Burton Royd Lane, Kirkburton

Proposal: Outline application for erection of a detached dwelling

To: Planning Services, Kirklees Council

FAO: Elenya Jackson (Case Officer)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to planning application 2025/93016 for the erection of a detached dwelling on an undeveloped paddock forming part of the open land off Burton Royd Lane.

My property adjoins Burton Royd Lane, and I experience the physical conditions of the lane and the surrounding landscape daily.

Having reviewed the submitted planning documents, including the Planning Supporting Statement and associated reports, I remain firmly of the view that the proposal conflicts with both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Kirklees Local Plan, and that **the circumstances identified in previous refusals and the dismissed appeal remain materially unchanged.**

For clarity, my objection is structured around the principal planning considerations:

1. Green Belt – inappropriate development and harm to openness

The site lies within designated Green Belt.

The construction of a new dwelling on undeveloped land is, by definition, **inappropriate development** unless very special circumstances clearly outweigh the harm.

The Planning Inspector previously concluded that development on this site would:

- appear as a conspicuous new development
- detract from the openness and character of the Green Belt
- conflict with the purposes of Green Belt designation

Those conclusions remain directly relevant today.

The land remains an open paddock that forms part of the wider rural landscape and contributes to the openness of the Green Belt.

In accordance with national planning policy, inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

No such circumstances have been demonstrated in this case.

2. Grey Belt classification is not justified

The applicant's planning statement relies heavily on the argument that the site constitutes "grey belt" land.

However the site is clearly undeveloped grassland and does not meet the National Planning Policy Framework definition of previously developed land.

The land forms part of the open countryside behind Burton Royd Lane and contributes to the openness of the wider Green Belt

The classification of this site as "grey belt" is not supported by the physical characteristics of the land.

3. The site is not infill and does not form part of a continuous frontage

The planning statement argues that the proposal represents "sustainable infill".

However the planning history demonstrates that this argument has already been tested and rejected.

The Planning Inspector previously concluded that:

- Burton Royd Lane does not constitute a settlement
- the site is not part of a continuous built frontage
- the gap between properties is substantial
- the land forms part of a wider green wedge

These conclusions remain accurate.

The land does not form part of a continuous street frontage but instead represents an opening into the wider countryside. The site performs an important spatial function by maintaining a gap between built development and the surrounding fields.

Approving development on this plot would extend built form into open land and fundamentally alter the character of this section of Burton Royd Lane.

4. Wildlife corridor and ecological connectivity

The site forms the only remaining open gap between fields on either side of Burton Royd Lane and therefore provides an ecological connection between these habitats.

There is a clearly identifiable wildlife corridor running from the fields on the opposite side of Burton Royd Lane, across the unmade lane and directly through the centre of this plot into the open countryside beyond.

Development on this site would sever that corridor and fragment an existing ecological route used by wildlife moving between habitats.

The Council's ecology officer has already identified that the site provides habitat and foraging opportunities for several species including bats and hedgehogs, and that additional ecological survey work is required before the application can be determined.

Given the location of the site between areas of open land and the ecological connectivity it provides, the loss of this corridor would represent a significant ecological impact.

5. Highway safety and condition of Burton Royd Lane

Burton Royd Lane remains a very narrow, unadopted and poorly maintained access route.

In many places it is only wide enough for a single vehicle, has no formal drainage or pedestrian provision, and is regularly used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

The planning statement suggests that highway conditions have improved because passing places have been created. However, the passing bay shown on the application drawings lies beyond the field access and therefore provides no practical benefit to vehicles associated with the proposed development.

The lane is already in poor condition. Construction of a dwelling would inevitably generate significant construction traffic, including delivery vehicles, contractors and plant equipment over an extended period.

Given the current condition of the lane, such activity would likely worsen the surface and increase risks for pedestrians and other users.

As Burton Royd Lane is privately maintained by residents rather than the Council, the impact of this additional traffic would fall directly on neighbouring households. The planning submission does not appear to assess or mitigate the impact of construction traffic on this substandard access route.

These concerns are consistent with those previously identified by both Kirklees Council and the Planning Inspector regarding the suitability of the access.

6. Drainage and nearby watercourses

The application documents do not provide a detailed drainage strategy, and the Climate Change Statement simply states that flooding “does not apply”.

However local residents are aware of drainage features and watercourses in the vicinity of the site.

Development introducing additional hardstanding, roof areas and driveway surfaces would inevitably increase runoff. Without a clear drainage strategy or modelling, it is not possible to assess the implications for nearby land and properties.

This absence of information is particularly concerning given the slope of the land and the proximity of drainage features.

7. Recent alteration of the site

Residents observed the site being cleared last year (at around the time of the first submission of this planning application), with trees, vegetation and shrubs being removed from the entrance area, and the plot being cut back.

At the time, the site worker noted that the landowner planned for hardstanding to be laid for caravans or motorhomes.

While this did not materialise, this recent clearing appears to have altered the appearance of the land shortly before the planning application was submitted.

Given that the planning statement relies heavily on describing the land as underused or degraded, it is important that the planning authority considers the historic character of the land rather than any recent temporary alterations.

Residents also observed works being undertaken to repair and re-roof the dilapidated shed on the site approximately a year ago.

As bats frequently occupy older outbuildings, any alteration to such structures can potentially disturb or remove evidence of roosting activity.

Given the ecological sensitivity of the site and the presence of suitable habitat corridors nearby, it would be prudent for the planning authority to ensure that ecological surveys fully consider the condition and history of the structures on the site.

8. Precedent and cumulative impact

The Planning Inspector previously warned that development on this plot could create pressure for further development along Burton Royd Lane.

Allowing development on this site would significantly weaken the Council's ability to resist future encroachment into the surrounding Green Belt.

Conclusion

The proposal remains fundamentally inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Kirklees Local Plan.

In particular:

- the development represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt
- the site does not constitute infill within a settlement frontage
- the proposal would disrupt an important wildlife corridor between open fields
- the access route is substandard and unsuitable for construction and residential traffic
- the application lacks sufficient drainage information
- the proposal conflicts with previous planning decisions relating to this site

The proposal would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt, together with additional harm to openness, rural character, ecology and highway safety, and no very special circumstances have been demonstrated to outweigh that harm.

I therefore respectfully request that planning permission is refused.

Yours faithfully,

I attach some photographs on the next pages of the plot, showing both the condition of Burton Royd Lane and the wildlife corridor that runs through the centre of the paddock. The site forms the only remaining open gap between fields on either side of Burton Royd Lane and therefore provides a direct ecological connection between these habitats.



1. This photograph evidences the wildlife corridor directly through the centre of the paddock.

This field forms a natural break and provides long views across the local countryside in all directions – a real feature enjoyed by walkers along this lane.



2. The entrance to the paddock is to the front left of the picture – the passing / turning point that has been added to the lane can be clearly seen to be much further down the lane to the right, which has no beneficial impact to this plot.



3. The condition of the lane. This was taken last year when the initial planning application was submitted. The conditions have worsened since and holes are deeper.