

Address: 111, QUAKER LANE, LIVERSEDGE, WF15 8DF

About the application

Application number: 2025/93235	
What is the application for?:	Removal of the Cross and reinstatement within the grass verge on Cross Street/Wy
Address of the site or building:	The Cross, Wyke Lane/Cross Street, Oakenshaw
Postcode:	HD1 2NF

User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	No

The following comments are sent on behalf of Spen Valley Civic Society by society member Colin Berry, We do not require any part to be redacted. We do not object to the part of the application dealing with the dismantling of the cross, but do express amazement that it has taken over 3 years to reach this point, given that it is 3 years since it was removed. I met with KMC officers at the time and reminded them that the Authority had a legal responsibility to report this matter.

KMC have not covered themselves with glory in respect of the management of this sensitive matter concerning a listed structure. No action was taken at the time to make a claim against the owners of the offending HGV despite local people witnessing the incident, taking registration details etc, and notifying Kirklees Council. It was subsequently cited that the financial cost of repair/restoration was given as the reason by the Council for initially refusing to consider restoration. Since then the Council have failed to adequately protect the valuable stonework of the cross, which has lain in a pile, covered by a tarpaulin in a council depot in Liversedge.

The Civic Society do object to the application to rebuild the monument in a different location. For this particular structure its location is a very important factor. For centuries it has been the focal point of the villages life, and a monument signifying the centre of Oakenshaw, and visible from all directions. Old photos show the importance of the cross to local people.

This was, of course, at a time when the nature of the traffic was mainly horse and cart, or pedestrian. We understand that the reason for the refusal by Kirklees Council to consider the cross

restoration in the original position is one of road safety. There are 2 points we make in response.

1. We believe that the restoration in the original position will enhance road safety. The issue should not be the siting of the cross, but appropriate traffic restrictions to take account of the numbers of vehicles of all shapes and sizes which now use Oakenshaw village as a rat run, and short cut to travel at speed up and down the main street. The planning committee should be asked to make a site visit in respect of this application, and travel the full length of the road, from Bradford Road up to the end of the village. They will note that the whole length through the village is very narrow with no space for pavements in some places. The presence of the cross in the centre of the village is the only measure to calm the traffic.

2. Given the above, we conclude that Kirklees Council should be seeking an alternative solution for improving road safety by a combination of restricting entry to the village for vehicles over a certain size and weight, tight speed limits ie 20mph, and speed bumps. These are the measures which will enhance road safety. It reflects badly on Kirklees Council that it prioritises the needs of vehicle users who should not be using access through the village in order to achieve a short cut, rather than the needs of the local people to have their cherished historically significant and listed monument restored, and returned to its place in the centre of the village where it can be seen and appreciated. The alternative proposed site is, in our view, totally inappropriate.