Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Planning Service
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HD1 2JR

54A Wellhouse Lane
Mirfield WF14 0PW

Your Ref: Planning Application: 2025/93355
Erection of 75 houses by Bellway Homes, Yorkshire, Land off Woodward Court/ Hepworth Lane, Mirfield

Dear Sir/Madam

As a resident of Mirfield living with my parents whose property backs onto the proposed development site, I am writing to formally object to the above planning application. I also confirm my full support for the Save Mirfield challenge to this application.

I wish to register my specific concerns and objections both as a neighbouring resident with direct, personal knowledge of the site and its day-to-day conditions, and as a Mirfield resident concerned about the wider impact this development would have on the community as a whole. I am in the process of purchasing my own home as a first time buyer also in Mirfield.

• Traffic Considerations / Highway Safety
The traffic and highway safety issues relating to Bellway's application are, in my view, the strongest grounds for refusing any development of the Balderstone Hall fields. Wellhouse Lane, the only feeder road into Woodward Court and therefore the proposed site entrance, is already problematic without further development. It is truly just a lane and was never designed to accommodate the volume of housing it now serves. The end joining Flash Lane is only wide enough for a single vehicle, and further up towards Jenny Lane, on-street residential parking effectively reduces the road to single-vehicle width along most of its length. Vehicles frequently have to mount the kerb to pass, which is a clear highway safety concern. This situation would already be difficult if only residents used the road, but that is far from the case.

Wellhouse Lane is also used by:
• Mirfield Cricket Ground – Match days and weekends bring an additional 20–30 parked vehicles for long periods, often for many hours and sometimes overnight. Even outside the cricket season, the clubhouse is well used year-round by members.

• Gilder Hall Playing Fields – This valuable local facility hosts children's football leagues and regularly causes parking congestion during evening and weekend matches. On multiple occasions when matches are in progress, we have been unable to exit our own driveway.

• The Church – The church on Wellhouse Lane is well attended. During services, funerals, and evening classes, parking demand is so high that it overflows into the school grounds to avoid safety risks. It sits opposite the school, and parking frequently extends onto the bend, forcing drivers travelling up Wellhouse Lane to pass parked cars on the wrong side of a blind bend, which is extremely dangerous. The same conditions occur at every school drop-off and pick-up period.

• Crossley Fields School – The traffic conditions at school drop-off and pick-up times are chaotic on a daily basis. Police and community officers are often required to manage disputes and unblock

traffic stalemates. The congestion is severe and well documented. The school is a large primary school, bigger than most others locally, and is not located in an area designed to handle the traffic levels it generates. In 2017 Bellway proposed a small car park with a 61-home scheme to help address this issue. With the current 75-home proposal, no parking provision is included, which demonstrates how little impact their earlier offer would have had and highlights their lack of understanding of local conditions and the daily problems residents face.

These concerns have been raised by my family with the school governors and understand they are also objecting to the development. Cars are routinely forced onto pavements, often in heated situations, where very young children walk. This represents a serious safety hazard that risks only being addressed after a major incident. Existing school traffic already gridlocks Woodward Court, which is the sole access to the proposed development, and further vehicle numbers would make it unusable.

A significant proportion of pupils travel from outside the immediate area and must be driven to school. New households from this development would add substantially more vehicles — potentially up to 150 from residents alone, plus visitors and deliveries. The additional load on Sunny Bank Road and access to the A62 would be severe. Queues already extend from the fountain traffic lights to Old Bank Road, and it may become impossible to turn right from Jenny Lane, effectively bringing Mirfield traffic to a standstill.

The proposed egress onto Hepworth Lane risks creating a rat-run through the development and would worsen conditions where vehicles exit onto Flash Lane or join Hepworth Lane. This access route already poses pedestrian dangers due to the absence of pavements and its single-lane nature. Encouraging additional opposing traffic there is unsafe and again shows insufficient understanding of local road conditions. The local plan has already deemed Hepworth Lane unsuitable for intensification.

• Air Pollution
Previous air quality reports have shown levels exceeding acceptable limits. With rising rates of asthma in children, increasing exhaust emissions in this already congested area presents a direct health concern. Due to limited school parking, parents often arrive up to an hour early and idle their engines while waiting, especially in cold weather, further worsening pollution.

• Emergency Service Access
At peak times, congestion would effectively prevent emergency vehicle access. This risk should not be ignored until a real emergency exposes the consequences.

• Mirfield Infrastructure / Medical Services
Mirfield’s infrastructure cannot support further development. GP surgeries, dental practices, and schools are already operating at or beyond capacity. Roads into and out of Mirfield are gridlocked daily, especially at rush hour. GP waiting times regularly exceed appointments already.This indicates an already overstretched system, making the Bellway proposal unsustainable.

• Loss of Recreational Amenity
Mirfield has long been valued as a semi-rural area with excellent green spaces, which is a major reason people choose to live and remain here. I believe these spaces are not being adequately protected. Despite the local plan stating this land should not be reconsidered for development until 2031, repeated applications continue. There is concern that development pressure is being prioritised over preservation of green areas.

I hope local MPs who previously opposed development here remain consistent and are not influenced by incentive payments or affordable housing arguments. Decisions made now will permanently shape Mirfield for future generations and should prioritise clean air and green space protection.

• Effect on Listed Building and Conservation Area
The development would border Balderstone Hall, a Grade II listed building and important Mirfield landmark, harming its setting and heritage value. The proposed housing style and materials are not in keeping with the character of the area. Other Bellway developments locally have been criticised for lacking character and not respecting historic surroundings.

• Layout, Density, and Previous Applications
This proposal seeks approval for 75 homes on a site previously rejected three times — in 1999, withdrawn in 2014 when refusal was expected, and refused again in 2017 on safety grounds. The current proposal increases housing numbers beyond the last scheme. While green space is shown on plans, road layouts suggest easy future expansion into it. There is strong public opposition, with hundreds of objections already submitted and only a handful in support.

• Loss of Recreational Amenity (Field Use)
The fields are well used by the community for walking and dog exercise and are an established local amenity. They are also currently used for horse grazing. Their loss would remove a valued and regularly used green space.

• Nature Conservation
Living adjacent to the site, my family and others regularly experience and value the local wildlife. A barn owl frequently uses a large tree on our property, and foxes are often seen in the fields. While wildlife protection may not always carry decisive planning weight, destroying an established habitat is, in my view, morally wrong.

• Drainage
The application identifies potential drainage and flooding concerns. Existing combined sewers in Hepworth Lane may handle foul flows, but the water authority has confirmed there is no capacity for additional surface water. Surface water would need to discharge to a watercourse or use infiltration methods, yet some surface water already reaches this point through overland flow.

• Personal Objections – 54A Wellhouse Lane
Our boundary consists of a traditional low stone wall overlooking open fields. The proposal places a two-storey house very close to this boundary within a short garden distance. The design and materials are not in keeping with nearby properties and would harm the character of the immediate surroundings.

I ask that these detailed concerns and objections receive serious consideration. The increased traffic risk to children, the strain on Mirfield’s infrastructure, and the broader community impact are significant. For these reasons, I believe the planning application should be refused.

Yours faithfully