

DC Admin

From:
Sent: 11 February 2026 12:46
To: DC Admin
Subject: 2025/60/93572/E - objection to application

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I formally object to this outline planning application.

Prematurity and Process

The application has been submitted prior to the adoption of the Local Plan and without meaningful pre-application engagement. This raises concerns regarding prematurity and whether the proposal aligns with the emerging spatial strategy.

Furthermore, while the application seeks outline consent (access and quantum), detailed drawings have been submitted. This creates ambiguity regarding the scope of determination and suggests a lack of clarity in the submission.

1. Green Belt

The site lies within designated Green Belt. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, paras 152–153), inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated that clearly outweigh the identified harm. Substantial weight must be given to Green Belt harm.

The proposal would conflict with the fundamental purposes of the Green Belt, including safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and preserving openness.

2. Ancient Woodland

The site is adjacent to ancient woodland. Paragraph 180(c) of the NPPF states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons.

The Woodland Trust recommends a minimum 50m buffer. There is insufficient evidence that the required buffer and the woodland's setting have been properly assessed or safeguarded.

3. Ecology and Biodiversity

The site provides foraging habitat for birds and bats. Under NPPF paragraph 174, planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment. Any biodiversity harm must be robustly assessed and justified. At present, the ecological impacts and mitigation strategy appear inadequate.

4. Highways and Sustainability

The development would increase traffic on local roads, raising concerns regarding capacity and safety (NPPF para 111).

The village is not a sustainable location for development of this scale. Residents are heavily reliant on private vehicles, contrary to the sustainable transport objectives set out in NPPF paragraphs 105–109.

5. Drainage and Infrastructure

The existing drainage infrastructure is already under strain, with frequent maintenance issues reported locally. It is not evident that the network has capacity to accommodate additional dwellings without significant upgrades. This raises concerns regarding flood risk and infrastructure adequacy (NPPF para 186).

6. Landscape Impact

The site forms a prominent greenfield approach to the hills, with long-distance views from Barnsley Road and Birdsedge. These views contribute to the rural character and the setting of the adjacent ancient woodland. Development would cause significant and irreversible landscape harm, contrary to NPPF paragraph 174(a), which requires protection of valued landscapes.

7. Community Engagement

Community consultation has been minimal and ineffective. Limited notification was provided, and attempts to contact the applicant have gone unanswered. This falls short of meaningful community engagement.

9. Layout and Design

The indicative layout submitted does not adequately respond to the site's constraints or policy context.

Good design is required under both national policy (NPPF Section 12) and the Kirklees Local Plan, which emphasise that development should be informed by site characteristics, landscape setting, ecological assets, and infrastructure capacity. The proposed layout appears to be a standard housing arrangement rather than one genuinely shaped by the site's environmental and policy constraints.

In particular, the layout fails to:

- Demonstrate appropriate respect for the adjacent ancient woodland and its required buffer.
- Reflect the sensitivity of the Green Belt setting and the importance of openness.
- Respond to local topography and long-distance views.
- Address drainage constraints in a meaningful or evidenced way.
- Show how ecological corridors and foraging habitats would be retained and enhanced.

If a proper constraints-led design approach were undertaken — fully accounting for Green Belt designation, ancient woodland protection, ecological value, landscape prominence, access limitations, and drainage capacity — it would clearly demonstrate the significant limitations of this site and its importance as protected Green Belt land.

Instead, the layout appears to attempt to maximise dwelling numbers rather than respond sensitively to site context. This further reinforces the conclusion that the site is unsuitable for development and that its value lies in remaining as open Green Belt countryside.

Conclusion

This proposal represents inappropriate Green Belt development, fails to demonstrate very special circumstances, threatens irreplaceable habitat, harms landscape character, and is located in an unsustainable location with infrastructure constraints.

There is no clear environmental or community benefit that outweighs the substantial harm identified. Alternative, more sustainable sites exist within Kirklees.

For these reasons, the application should be refused.

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