



My main concern is the visual harm that would be caused by the introduction of rooftops into what is currently open green countryside. At present, views across this area—particularly from well-used routes such as The Dearne Way—are made up of fields, hedgerows, and treetops. That is what defines this landscape.

If this development goes ahead, those same views will include rooftops, hard edges, and built form cutting across the skyline. This is not appropriate in the Green Belt and would fundamentally change the rural character of the area.

Put simply: we need tree tops, not roof tops.

Once rooftops begin to appear in these views, the sense of openness is lost, and it cannot be easily restored.

I am also very concerned about the impact on Stephens Wood, which is ancient woodland. These woodlands are irreplaceable and form part of a delicate and long-established ecosystem. They are not just collections of trees, but living habitats that depend on their surroundings to remain healthy.

Ancient woodland needs space to breathe and to expand naturally over generations. That is essential if the woodland, and the wildlife it supports, are to survive and thrive. Development too close to such areas puts that at risk through increased disturbance, activity, lighting, and general pressure on the environment.

I understand that the Kirklees Council ecologist has advised that a minimum stand-off distance of 50 metres from the tree canopies should be maintained. This is an important safeguard, reflecting the need to protect both the woodland itself and its surrounding buffer. Any development that fails to properly respect this distance risks causing harm, even if it does not directly encroach into the woodland. Leeds city council does state 100m distance from ancient woodland, why can't Kirklees do this ?

I am also concerned about the gradual urbanisation that follows developments like this. It is not just the buildings, but everything that comes with them—vehicles, lighting, fencing, and general domestic activity. Over time, this erodes the quiet, natural character of the countryside and replaces it with something far less special.

This area is valued by residents and visitors alike for its open views and peaceful setting. The introduction of visible rooftops and development pressure so close to ancient woodland would undermine that for future generations.

For these reasons, I believe this proposal is inappropriate and harmful. It conflicts with the purpose of the Green Belt, damages important views, and does not give proper protection to ancient woodland.

I ask that this application is refused.

Tree tops not Roof tops