About the application

Application number: 2026/91251	
What is the application for?:	Outline application for erection of residential development of up to 9 dwellings
Address of the site or building:	land off, Meltham Road, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6JZ
Postcode:	LS1 2JS

User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	Yes

1. Encroachment into the Open Countryside & Breach of Settlement Boundary
Marsden's northeastern settlement boundary has been clearly defined and respected for decades. The housing at Gatehead Bank, constructed in the early 1980s, establishes a robust, recognisable, and firm limit to the urban edge of the village. The existing pattern of development rising from Meltham Road, combined with long-standing domestic garden boundaries, forms a logical and natural transition between the built environment and the open countryside.
The proposed layout fundamentally alters this form. By extending development further along Meltham Road in a linear strip, the proposal represents inappropriate ribbon development. This outward sprawl would unacceptably erode the distinct boundary that currently protects the rural character of the open moorland.

2. Severe Harm to Green Belt Purposeness and Openness
The application site lies entirely within the designated Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) reiterates that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Kirklees Green Belt Assessment (2017) Alignment: The application site falls within Parcel MA8, which the Council's own evidence base assesses as making a strong contribution to preventing the merging of settlements (Green Belt Purpose 2) and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (Green Belt Purpose 3). It also plays a vital role in preventing an elongated settlement form.

The "Grey Belt" Exclusion: Because this land strongly fulfils core Green Belt purposes, it fails to meet the definition of "grey belt" under national policy.

Inappropriateness under Paragraph 155: Even if the site were erroneously categorised as grey belt, the development would cause substantial harm to the openness of the wider, adjoining Green Belt to the north and west. The applicant has failed to demonstrate the "Very Special Circumstances" required to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

3. Failure to Demonstrate Local Need & Overlooking of Preferable Brownfield Alternatives
The Kirklees Local Plan outlines specific housing requirements for Marsden, which are already being actively addressed through sustainable, sequentially preferable brownfield allocations. Sites such as the Clough Lea development and the proposed redevelopment of New Mills demonstrate that local housing needs can be met without sacrificing protected Green Belt land.

Furthermore, while affordable and social housing are acutely needed within the local community, this application for nine market dwellings offers no clear provision or commitment to affordable housing. The scheme prioritises executive-style housing over genuine local community needs, rendering its contribution to local housing stock negligible when weighed against the permanent loss of Green Belt land.

4. Severe Highways Safety, Access, and Pedestrian Vulnerability
The submitted Transport Assessment is fundamentally flawed and unrepresentative of real-world conditions:

Seasonal Bias: The traffic data was collected exclusively during November. This ignores the significant seasonal variance in road usage, speed, and vulnerable road user activity. During darker winter months, traffic naturally diverts to the street-lit A62, meaning winter data severely underrepresents true traffic volumes and speeds on Meltham Road during peak spring and summer periods.

Speed and Visibility Constraints: Speeds routinely exceed the posted 40mph limit as vehicles transition from the 60mph zone descending the hill into Marsden. The proposed access point fails to provide safe, achievable visibility splays commensurate with these actual operational speeds.

Pedestrian Vulnerability: North of the village, Meltham Road narrows significantly, forcing pedestrians into single file on an inadequate pavement. This route is heavily utilised by walking groups, cyclists, and horse riders accessing Marsden Moor. Introducing construction traffic and additional domestic vehicle movements at this tight pinch-point creates a severe, unacceptable hazard to highway safety.

Omission of Historical Accident Data: The assessment arbitrarily restricts its review to the last five years, failing to acknowledge serious historical incidents along this stretch, including two past fatalities near the adjacent bus stop.

5. Adverse Ecological and Environmental Impact: application site consists of semi-improved grassland rich in wildflowers, acting as a critical buffer zone and ecological corridor to the South Pennine Moors.

Protected Species: The site serves as a known foraging and nesting habitat for ground-nesting birds, including the Curlew - Numenius arquat - a section 41 species of principal importance under the NERC Act and species of high conservation concern. The extensive earthworks and land shaping required for these nine units would result in the permanent destruction of this habitat.

Inappropriate Landscaping: proposed planting scheme introduces ornamental species completely uncharacteristic of the local moorland fringe, fracturing ecological continuity.

Drainage and Amenity Issues: While an attenuation pond is proposed for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), standing water in this specific location will result in vector-borne pest issues (such as midges), severely harming the residential amenity of neighbouring properties during summer months.

6. Incongruous Density and Character
The established character of this edge-of-settlement area is defined primarily by low-density, detached homes. This represents an overdevelopment of the site. The resulting density is entirely uncharacteristic of Gatehead Bank and surrounding rural-fringe built form.

7. Unsustainable Location Relative to public transport: situated well beyond the acceptable, walkable radius defined for development adjacent to well-connected stations. Car use contradicts Kirklees Council's sustainable development