

**KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
INVESTMENT & REGENERATION SERVICE**

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Section 59A

DELEGATED DECISION FOR APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

Reference no.: 2026/59/91861/W

Site: Holmfield Nurseries, Long Lane, Honley, Holmfirth,
HD9 6EB

Description: Permission in principle for erection of up to 9
dwellings

Case Office: Joshua Merriman

Decision Reference: REFUSED

I hereby authorise the refusal of this application for the reasons set out in the officer's report and recommendation annexed below in respect of the above matter.

John Holmes

AUTHORISED OFFICER

Date 25-Aug-2026

Officer Report – 2026/91861

Site Description

The site relates to Holmfield Nurseries, which is located off Long Lane in Honley. The nearest town centre being Honley which is approximately 1km to the north of the site. The edge of Brockholes settlement is approximately 340m to the east of the site. Netherthong is approximately 940m to the south west of the site, Thongsbridge being 860m to the south and Honley being 400m. These are distances from the site to the edge of these closest settlements. Holmfirth town centre is located 2.6km to the south of the site.

Oldfield Road runs to the south of the site and is an identified bus route. Long Lane does not benefit from street lighting and both Long Lane and Oldfield Road do not have clear footpaths delineated by a curb raising the footway slightly.

A terraced row of 5 dwellings is located to the south of the site, with dwellings on the south side of Oldfield Road beyond. To the north east and west is open land, which appears to be in agricultural use.

A public footpath (ref: HOL/29/20) runs adjacent to the northern boundary of the site (as outlined in blue in plan).

The nearest listed building is 285m to the south east, the nearest Conservation Area being 755m to the south west.

Description of Proposal

The application is submitted under the permission in principle consent route. This applicant comprises the first of the two stage consent procedure, with stage 1 being to seek permission in principle (the principle stage).

The scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage.

The applicant is seeking permission for Permission in principle for erection of up to 9 dwellings. As this application relates to permission in principle, the information provided is limited to a location plan and application forms.

The applicant has confirmed the scheme is for a development up to 9 dwellings.

History of Negotiations / Amendments Received

No amendments have been requested by Officers.

Relevant Planning History

The most relevant planning history relates to the following planning applications

91/04562 - ERECTION OF GLASSHOUSE – Refused.

94/93692 - ERECTION OF ONE GLASSHOUSE AND TWO POLYTUNNELS – Conditional Full Permission.

95/90937 - ERECTION OF 3 POLYTUNNELS AND PREFABRICATED BUILDING – Conditional Full Permission.

96/91112 - USE OF LAND FOR IMPORTING AND PROCESSING OF LOGS – Refused.

96/92680 - USE OF LAND FOR IMPORTING AND PROCESSING OF LOGS – Conditional Full Permission.

97/90939 - USE OF LAND FOR IMPORTING AND PROCESSING OF LOGS – Conditional Full Permission.

99/92004 - PROVISION OF CARAVAN FOR SECURITY PURPOSES AND STAFF FACILITIES – Withdrawn.

2004/93599 - AGRICULTURAL NOTIFICATION FOR THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF DETAILS FOR THE ERECTION OF GLASSHOUSE – Invalid.

Representations

Publication of the application has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's Development Management Charter (July 2024).

The application has been publicised on the Council's website and by site notice. The expiry date of the publicity period was the 06/08/2026.

39 comments have been received on this application, of which 35 are objections, 3 are supporting comments, and 1 is a general comment. The comments are summarised below, and responded to later in this report:

Letters of Objection

- The proposed development represents a visually harmful development that will not harmonise with the local area being on greenbelt land and on the edge of a conservation area it will have a detrimental visual impact on the openness and wider character and appearance of the surrounding area.

- Also to consider the noise and disruption to the neighbouring houses and daily farm traffic whilst these houses were being erected.
- The current entrance to the nursery is very close to the long lane junction and on a blind bend making this a dangerous entrance/exit for construction vehicles and cars once houses are built. The proposed dwellings would create a dominant and oppressive impact on the occupants of the neighbouring properties.
- All the houses that are being built will not be affordable for 1st time single buyers which puts our family members out of purchasing a property in the area they were born into.
- Further to this has been no new infrastructure created to support any of the new and recent building projects in this area. The schools are heavily oversubscribed as are the doctors, dentists and other necessary services.
- My principal concern is that the application has not provided sufficient information for members of the public to make an informed assessment of the proposal. In particular, there are no detailed site plans clearly showing the precise position, layout and relationship of the proposed nine houses within the site.
- The site, although a brown field site is surrounded by the greenbelt. The NPPF states urban sprawl, preservation of settings and special character and ultimately aims to the openness and permanence of the greenbelt. This development would have a significant impact in this regard.
- I feel this proposition of the development will impact on extreme noise disturbance and will be highly detrimental to the current landscape of our neighbourhood.
- The wildlife and domesticated animals will greatly suffer from environmental, pollution & daily noise factors.
- Our dogs are extremely vulnerable to noise & changes, and we live where we do as we have been un disturbed and is peaceful to present. This will no longer be the case if you allow unnecessary work to commence.
- This development if allowed will have a major impact on surrounding green belt land.
- The proposal will also adversely impact the issue of urban spread.
- The national planning policy framework (NPPF) excludes agricultural land and buildings from the definition of previously developed land. land used for horticultural purposes should therefore be considered greenfield land rather than previously developed brownfield land.

- The national planning policy framework outlines that development in the green belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the listed exceptions. new housing development is not one of the exceptions and is therefore inappropriate.
- Within the greenbelt, there is a presumption against development which would be harmful to the purposes of including land within it. inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the greenbelt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations
- Residents here would lose their far-reaching views. Breaching policy 1 and 2 of Holme valley neighbourhood development plan. Where it states you should respect long distant public views and where developments should fit in with and neither dominate nor have a detrimental impact on its surroundings and neighbouring properties.
- There would be lots of noise and disruption to the neighbouring houses and daily farm traffic whilst these houses were being erected and excess light pollution once these houses were built from obligatory street lighting.
- There are no cul de sacs in Oldfield and surrounding area making this area unique and a beautiful open space that people admire daily when walking
- This would be unnecessary overspill making Oldfield lose its unique character and almost joining it up to the nearby Honley village.
- There would be lots of noise and dust pollution whilst these houses were being built and neighbouring properties would lose their privacy.
- Residential development here would erode openness, extend built form into the countryside, and conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt.
- Development here would create ribbon extension into open countryside, contrary to local and national policy.
- The old nursery frames were never completed, never glazed, and never operated as genuine horticultural buildings. They don't represent permanent development and shouldn't be treated as evidence of a previously developed site.
- In addition, there are also so many incredibly expensive homes being built in the locality, which is pushing local residents out, and again there is not enough information on this application to tell what kinds of homes are being proposed.

- There is already a substantial residential development by Miller Homes at Holmebank Gardens, located very close to this site, which has provided 137 new homes. The construction of a further nine dwellings in this location would not provide affordable housing and would therefore make little contribution towards meeting identified housing needs, instead representing unnecessary overspill into an attractive rural setting.
- The proposed development of a group of nine houses introduces an estate-style layout contrary to the established local character of Oldfield Road, a semi-rural area with individually designed residential properties, displaying a variety of architectural styles, heights, materials, and footprints. This individuality is central to the area's charm and identity.
- Highway safety is fundamental to whether this is a suitable location for nine homes and should be considered now, rather than being deferred entirely to a later technical details application.
- Long Lane and the adjoining Oldfield Road are rural narrow roads with no pavements for pedestrians. Both roads are used daily by farming/agricultural vehicles, horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians, including the many car drivers and motorcyclists, resulting in it being generally hazardous for all road users there, particularly pedestrians and horse riders who have little or no protection.
- The sloping topography currently absorbs surface runoff naturally. Hard surfacing 9 properties will increase surface runoff down Long Lane toward Netherthong village, exacerbating localized drainage issues.
- The application is contrary to both the principle of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan and not any of the explicitly identified 27 sites for development (para 4.5.6) of the HVNDP dated Dec '21.
- Could Planning Officers dealing with the 2026 / 91861 Planning Application please look back in detail into the previous 2004 application along with the final outcome to verify whether a total of seven large greenhouses were authorised to have been erected on the Holmfield Nurseries site?

Letters of Support

- I support this application as I believe it could provide a sympathetic improvement to the site.
- A high-quality development using appropriate materials would improve the visual appearance of the site and make a positive contribution to the surrounding area. In my view, this proposal would be a far better long-term outcome than the site remaining underutilised, continuing to deteriorate, or being used for more

intensive commercial purposes that could have a greater impact on the local area.

- The road is not a busy road at all and fully capable of maintaining 9 future houses.
- Wildlife will be minimally affected in the erection of the properties, and the peaceful surroundings of Oldfield will not be affected. The so-called hustle and bustle of Honley will not arrive in this area.
- The site is brownfield, not greenfield and the land has been in active commercial use for many years, first as a nursery and more recently for processing logs. Objectors argue that horticultural use falls outside the NPPF definition of previously developed land, but this overlooks the presence of established buildings and infrastructure on site resulting from decades of continuous commercial activity. The existence of these structures, however basic, reflects genuine intensive use of the land, not a "created" or artificial appearance of development, as some objectors speculate without evidence. Redeveloping land that already carries this industrial activity is precisely the kind of efficient land use national policy encourages, sparing genuinely undeveloped countryside elsewhere.
- A modest scheme of nine dwellings on a site already characterised by buildings and commercial activity represents a limited encroachment, not the "urban sprawl" and "hustle and bustle" that objectors describe. Housing delivery, the reuse of underused land, and the removal of unsightly and semi-derelict structures all count as material benefits capable of outweighing the limited additional harm involved.
- The fact that detailed layout plans are not yet available is not a flaw in the application; it reflects the fact this is a permission-in-principle stage submission. Matters of precise siting, scale, landscaping, tree retention and elevational treatment are exactly what reserved matters and conditions exist to control.
- Highway safety can be addressed. Concerns about the junction, visibility at the site access and pedestrian safety are legitimate matters for the authority to assess — and access and pedestrian safety are legitimate matters for the authority to assess — and this is routinely done through conditions such as access improvements, footway provision or traffic management during construction which would take place and actually improve the safety of the area. Also, nine dwellings represent a modest increase in vehicle movements, and objectors' own accounts of the road being used as a "rat run" indicate the traffic problem already exists independently of this scheme; the development is well placed to fund small-scale mitigation that benefits all road users, not just new residents.

- A small, well-designed development of this kind can make a genuine, proportionate contribution to local housing supply, including through any affordable housing contribution secured via planning obligation, and can support the vitality of local schools and services by bringing new families into the area rather than depleting them.
- The presence of wildlife on a site is not by itself a reason to refuse development; it is a reason to ensure mitigation is properly secured, which can and should be a condition of any planning permission be accepted.

Letters of Comment

- Would on road parking be required? If so, the Road would have to be widened.
- The fields adjacent to the plan all have 'agricultural' only rules, does the land shown have same restrictions?

Consultation Responses

No consultations considered necessary.

Allocation and Policy

The site is allocated Green Belt within the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted 2019). The site is also located within a bat alert layer and twice buffer.

The following legislation, policy and guidance is considered relevant to the determination of this application:-

Kirklees Local Plan

LP1 Achieving Sustainable Development
 LP2 Place Shaping
 LP3 Location of new development
 LP7 Efficient and effective use of land and buildings
 LP11 Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan was adopted on 8th December 2021 and therefore forms part of the Development Plan. Policies within the plan relevant to the consideration of this application are listed as follows:-

Policy 1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of Holme Valley.
 Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design.

Policy 6 – Building homes for the future
Policy 12 – Promoting Sustainability.

The application site is located within Landscape Character Area 5 (Nethertong Rural Fringe) of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan. The key characteristics of which are below:

- The elevation offers extensive views of the surrounding landscape with long distance views towards Castle Hill and Huddersfield and the valley sides afford framed views towards settlements in the valley below.
- Within Netherthong and Oldfield views of the surrounding landscape are often glimpsed between buildings.
- Distinctive stone wall field boundary treatments divide the agricultural landscape.
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW), including the Holme Valley Circular Walk, cross the landscape providing links between settlements. National Cycle Route no. 68 also crosses the area.

National Policies and Guidance

National planning policy and guidance is set out in National Policy Statements, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published August 2026, the Planning Practice Guidance Suite (PPGS) first launched 6th March 2014 together with Circulars, Ministerial Statements and associated technical guidance.

The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration in determining applications.

Chapter4	Achieving sustainable development
Chapter5	Meeting the challenge of climate change
Chapter6	Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Chapter12	Making effective use of land
Chapter13	Protecting Green Belt land
Chapter14	Achieving well-designed places
Chapter19	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Assessment

1 – Permission in Principle Purpose

The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. The technical details stage has the effect of granting planning permission.

The scope of Permission in Principle is limited to the following;

- Location
- Land Use
- Amount of Development

Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the Permission in Principle Stage. Other matters should be considered at the technical consent stage (Local Authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for Permission in Principle in the same way they can for planning permission).

It is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle and its terms may only include the site location, the type of development and the amount of development. The LPA can inform the applicants what they expect to see at the technical details stage.

It is not possible to secure a planning obligation at the permission in principle stage.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) may not grant permission in principle for a major development. This means where the number of houses is 10 or more, the floor space created is 1,000sqm or more or the development is carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more. In this case the development is for 9 units, and the site has an area of less than 1 hectare. The resultant floor-space to be created is unknown at this stage but would need to be assessed at the Technical Details Stage.

The LPA may not grant Permission in Principle for Schedule 1 development. This proposal would not be Schedule 1 development.

Local Planning Authorities must not grant permission in principle for development that will cause significant harm to biodiversity, as defined in the NPPF. This site is surrounded by several environmental designations, including a twice buffer zone, and a bat alert layer. There is uncertainty over whether the proposal could impact any sites designated under the Habitats Regulations, the Kirklees Mapping System does not identify the site as falling within such a designation. On this basis, impacts on protected habitats are not considered to be a constraint at this stage. It is, however, noted that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment will be required at the technical details stage should planning permission in principle be approved.

2 –Housing Land Supply

The 2025 update of the five-year housing land supply position for Kirklees shows 4.18 years supply of housing land, and the 2023 Housing Delivery Test (HDT) measurement which was published on 12/12/2024 demonstrated that housing delivery for Kirklees for the past three years (April 2020-March 2023) has fallen below the 75% pass threshold.

As the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, and delivery of housing has fallen below the 75% HDT requirement.

It is necessary to consider planning applications for housing development in the context of policy S5(5) of Chapter 4 of the NPPF which relates to the principle of development outside settlements. It is stated by S5(5) that the policy does not apply to development proposals in the Green Belt or on land designated as Local Green Space, which should instead be determined in accordance with policies HC8, GB6, GB7 and/or GB8 (as appropriate). This policy goes on to state that where development would not be inappropriate in these locations (through the application of policies HC8 and GB7), proposals should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework, and applying paragraph 2 of this policy.

Policy LP7 of the Kirklees Local Plan states that should encourage the efficient use of previously developed land in sustainable locations provided that it is not of high environmental value and a net density of at least 35 dwellings per hectare should be provided. Principle 4 of the Housebuilders Design Guide seeks to ensure a density of 35 dwellings per hectare or more is achieved. Where a density of 35 dwellings per hectare cannot be achieved, policy LP7 sets out that lower densities will only be acceptable if it is demonstrated that this is necessary to ensure the development is compatible with its surroundings, development viability would be compromised, or to secure particular house types to meet local housing needs.

The Council's inability to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land, or pass the Housing Delivery Test, weighs in favour of housing development but this has to be balanced against any adverse impacts of granting the proposal. The judgement in this case is set out in the officer's assessment.

Therefore, an assessment as to whether the principle of the proposal in the Green Belt must be undertaken in order to determine whether the principle of development is acceptable.

3. Location and Land Use – Green Belt

The application site forms a parcel of previously developed land, formerly used as a Horticultural Nursery and currently used as a Tree Surgery business, with access from Long Lane and running adjacent to Oldfield Road. The land is relatively flat in nature with no steep topography and is located in the Green Belt. The site contains dilapidated open buildings/greenhouses which seem to have formerly contained plantings, as well as weathered buildings which have previously been last in use for storage or tree surgery operations. The conclusions drawn in relation to the site being considered previously development are made having regard to the planning history of the site.

Policy LP59 of the Kirklees Local Plan is relevant, this sets out that:

‘Proposals for infilling within existing brownfield sites or for their partial or complete redevelopment will normally be acceptable, provided that:

- a. in the case of infilling, the gap is small and is located between existing built form on a brownfield site;*
- b. in the case of partial or complete redevelopment the extent of the existing footprint is not exceeded; and*
- c. redevelopment does not result in the loss of land that is of high environmental value which cannot be mitigated or compensated for.’*

Paragraph GB6(1) of the NPPF sets out ‘development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the categories in policy GB7’. The policy goes on to set out at paragraph 2 of GB6 that development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In making this assessment, substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness.

Paragraph GB7 of the NPPF details that ‘*The following categories of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, and therefore should not be regarded as harmful to the Green Belt or be required to demonstrate very special circumstances*’:

...e) ‘The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt’

Policy set out by paragraph GB7(e) of the NPPF details that any redevelopment of previously developed land which does not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt has the potential to be considered acceptable.

The Annex B glossary definition of previously developed land, set out in the NPPF, defines such land as:

Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed but where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures (including development related to minerals extraction, waste disposal by landfill and renewable and low carbon energy development, where provision for restoration exists); land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was

previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Reviewing the location plan submitted to accompany the present application, it is considered that the land within the red line boundary appears to be the extent to which such land can be considered to fall into the definition of previously developed land as this denotes the location of existing developed land containing permanent structures. This conclusion is drawn having consideration of the planning history which has lawfully permitted structures within the site.

As such, it is considered that there is potential for the site to be redeveloped in a manner that would not result in substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. However, the information submitted in support of a permission in principle is limited to a location plan and does not provide sufficient detail to enable a robust assessment of the proposal's impact on Green Belt openness. In particular, the absence of a site layout plan and supporting elevations prevents a proper understanding of the scale, siting, form and overall extent of development that would be proposed on the site, and therefore the effect that up to nine dwellings may have on the openness of the Green Belt.

Critically, the LPA cannot make a full assessment as to whether the development of the site for up to 9 dwellings would cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore it cannot be concluded that the development would meet the requirements of policy GB7(e) in this case.

It is therefore concluded that the red line boundary alone, without any indication of the proposed layout, scale or design of the dwellings, is insufficient to facilitate a comprehensive assessment of the development. Consequently, Permission in Principle cannot be supported on the basis of the information submitted.

As a result, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development of up to nine dwellings would preserve the openness of the Green Belt. In the absence of sufficient information to reach such a conclusion, the proposal has the potential to cause substantial harm to Green Belt openness and therefore fails to demonstrate compliance with Paragraph GB7(e) of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, the principle of residential development on the site cannot be supported in terms of meeting the requirements of GB7(e). Whilst the technical matter stage would see finalised design provided, there would be no scope for the LPA to assess such design against the principle policy applicable in this case.

Turning to policy GB7(g), and in particular part i, consideration must be given as to whether the site constitutes grey belt land. If so there is scope for the principle of the development to meet the requirements of policy GB7(g). In this case an assessment must therefore first be undertaken as to whether the site is grey belt, and then, if so whether it would meet the requirements of policy GB7(g)(i) (ii) and (iii).

Annexe B of the NPPF defines Grey Belt as the following:

'For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in policy GB2.'

The purposes of policy GB2 of the NPPF are listed below as follows:

*'a. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
b. Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
c. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
d. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
e. Assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'.*

When considering the land's contribution to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) and (d) the assessment must focus solely on the land as it currently exists. The strength of this contribution should be evaluated objectively, regardless of any proposed redevelopment. Annexe E of the NPPF details the considerations which inform the judgements on what level of contribution the site/land makes to the Green Belt purposes.

The location of the site in relation to neighbouring settlements is set out in the site description section of this report. In this context, it is considered that the land appears to make a strong contribution to purpose (a) – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. The site is situated such that it is beyond the confines of the identified settlements and would see urban development which is sporadically sited in light of the location of other development within the wider context.

It is considered that spatially the site cannot be considered to make anything other than a strong contribution in terms of the Green Belt allocation of the site. This conclusion is drawn notwithstanding any previous development of the site in this case which has been undertaken in the past and in terms of an analysis of the sites contribution in terms of purpose (a)

With regard to purpose (b) - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another the site makes a moderate contribution, this is considered in light of distances from neighbouring settlements.

The land does not form part of the setting of a historic town therefore makes no contribution to purpose (d) – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

It is therefore considered that in relation to purpose a of GB2(a) the site makes a strong contribution. Therefore it is considered that the site does not fall to be considered as grey belt land. Notwithstanding this, for complete a full assessment of the development in relation to policy GB7(g)(i) (ii) and (iii). is undertaken as follows.

GB7(i) requires that development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.

The proposal would lead to some level of encroachment (purpose c) into the countryside, the proposal would clearly undermine purpose (c) of GB2. The development would diminish the visual openness that defines this locality and lead to an increased urbanising impact as a result, however in the context of the development of the site being on land previously development it is considered that such impact would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining green belt across the area of the plan. However, as detailed earlier in this report the site is not considered to meet the definition of grey belt land and it is therefore concluded the proposal does not meet the requirement of policy GB7(g)(i).

There is an identified unmet need for the type of development proposed (as detailed earlier in this report).

Therefore the proposals are concluded to meet part (ii) of GB7(g).

Turning to part (iii) of GB7. It is considered that the reliance upon vehicular transport as a result of the distance of the site from any nearby shops, service / amenities and the high vehicle speeds of the roads from which access is taken is such that the site would not realistically be able to be utilised by alternative modes of transport and the requirement of part (iii) would not be met. This conclusion is drawn having regard to the requirements of policy TR3, which at part 1(a) requires that development proposals should be such that the location should limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users.

It is therefore concluded that the site would not constitute a Grey Belt site in this case, and therefore would not meet the requirements of policy GB7(g).

Having regard to the fact the proposal is not considered to constitute any of the exceptions within policy GB7, the development is considered to constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt for which no very special circumstances have been demonstrated and is therefore concluded to be unacceptable in principle.

4 – Amount of Development

The proposed development is seeking permission in principle for nine dwellings. Policy LP7 of the Kirklees Local Plan establishes a desired target density of thirty-five dwellings per hectare. In this case, having regard to the assessment set out at section

3, it is considered there are relevant considerations which are such that a lesser density of development of the site could be concluded acceptable in this case.

5 – Other Matters

Matters relating to highway safety, drainage, contaminated land and biodiversity would be dealt with at a technical details stage.

6 – Representations

Letters of Objection

- The proposed development represents a visually harmful development that will not harmonise with the local area being on greenbelt land and on the edge of a conservation area it will have a detrimental visual impact on the openness and wider character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not assess the visual amenity of a development. This would be dealt with in latter stages of an application.

- Also to consider the noise and disruption to the neighbouring houses and daily farm traffic whilst these houses were being erected.

Officer Comment: This is a matter which could be afforded little weight as a consideration of an application seeking permission in principle.

- The current entrance to the nursery is very close to the long lane junction and on a blind bend making this a dangerous entrance/exit for construction vehicles and cars once houses are built. The proposed dwellings would create a dominant and oppressive impact on the occupants of the neighbouring properties.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not assess highways safety considerations of a development. This would be dealt with in latter stages of an application.

- All the houses that are being built will not be affordable for 1st time single buyers which puts our family members out of purchasing a property in the area they were born into.

Officer Comment: the quantum of development is such that a requirement for affordable housing would not be triggered by the development.

- Further to this has been no new infrastructure created to support any of the new and recent building projects in this area. The schools are heavily oversubscribed as are the doctors, dentists and other necessary services.

Officer Comment: the quantum of development is such that a requirement for contributions relating to education or other infrastructure would not be triggered by the development.

- My principal concern is that the application has not provided sufficient information for members of the public to make an informed assessment of the proposal. In particular, there are no detailed site plans clearly showing the precise position, layout and relationship of the proposed nine houses within the site.

Officer Comment: As a permission in principle application, the requisite information has been provided as part of the application.

- The site, although a brown field site is surrounded by the greenbelt. The NPPF states urban sprawl, preservation of settings and special character and ultimately aims to the openness and permanence of the greenbelt. This development would have a significant impact in this regard.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- I feel this proposition of the development will impact on extreme noise disturbance and will be highly detrimental to the current landscape of our neighbourhood.

Officer Comment: As an application for principle of the development is only being sought minimal weight can be afforded these considerations.

- The wildlife and domesticated animals will greatly suffer from environmental, pollution & daily noise factors.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does allow for the consideration of this aspect of the development and is solely related to the principle of the proposal.

- Our dogs are extremely vulnerable to noise & changes, and we live where we do as we have been undisturbed and is peaceful to present. This will no longer be the case if you allow unnecessary work to commence.

Officer Comment: As an application for principle of the development is only being sought minimal weight can be afforded these considerations.

- This development if allowed will have a major impact on surrounding green belt land.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- The proposal will also adversely impact the issue of urban spread.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- The national planning policy framework (NPPF) excludes agricultural land and buildings from the definition of previously developed land. land used for horticultural purposes should therefore be considered greenfield land rather than previously developed brownfield land.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- The national planning policy framework outlines that development in the green belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the listed exceptions. new housing development is not one of the exceptions and is therefore inappropriate.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- Within the greenbelt, there is a presumption against development which would be harmful to the purposes of including land within it. inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the greenbelt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- Residents here would lose their far-reaching views. Breaching policy 1 and 2 of Holme valley neighbourhood development plan. Where it states you should respect long distant public views and where developments should fit in with and neither dominate nor have a detrimental impact on its surroundings and neighbouring properties.

Officer Comment: This does not constitute a material planning consideration. Consideration of the visual impact of the proposals could only be considered at the later application stage.

- There would be lots of noise and disruption to the neighbouring houses and daily farm traffic whilst these houses were being erected and excess light pollution once these houses were built from obligatory street lighting.

Officer Comment: As an application for principle of the development is only being sought minimal weight can be afforded these considerations.

- There are no cul de sacs in Oldfield and surrounding area making this area unique and a beautiful open space that people admire daily when walking

Officer Comment: This does not constitute a material planning consideration.

- This would be unnecessary overspill making Oldfield lose its unique character and almost joining it up to the nearby Honley village.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- There would be lots of noise and dust pollution whilst these houses were being built and neighbouring properties would lose their privacy.

Officer Comment: This does not constitute a material planning consideration and is rather a civil matter. Privacy issues would be assessed at reserved matters stage.

- Residential development here would erode openness, extend built form into the countryside, and conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- Development here would create ribbon extension into open countryside, contrary to local and national policy.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- The old nursery frames were never completed, never glazed, and never operated as genuine horticultural buildings. They don't represent permanent development and shouldn't be treated as evidence of a previously developed site.

Officer Comment: This has been addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- In addition, there are also so many incredibly expensive homes being built in the locality, which is pushing local residents out, and again there is not enough information on this application to tell what kinds of homes are being proposed.

Officer Comment: the tenure of the properties is a matter the LPA could not insist upon in this case given the scale of the development.

- There is already a substantial residential development by Miller Homes at Holmebank Gardens, located very close to this site, which has provided 137 new

homes. The construction of a further nine dwellings in this location would not provide affordable housing and would therefore make little contribution towards meeting identified housing needs.

Officer Comment: This application is assessed on the basis of its own merits

- The proposed development of a group of nine houses introduces an estate-style layout contrary to the established local character of Oldfield Road, a semi-rural area with individually designed residential properties, displaying a variety of architectural styles, heights, materials, and footprints. This individuality is central to the area's charm and identity.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle relates solely to the principle of development and would assess visual impacts at a later application stage.

- Highway safety is fundamental to whether this is a suitable location for nine homes and should be considered now, rather than being deferred entirely to a later technical details application.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development.

- Long Lane and the adjoining Oldfield Road are rural narrow roads with no pavements for pedestrians. Both roads are used daily by farming/agricultural vehicles, horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians, including the many car drivers and motorcyclists, resulting in it being generally hazardous for all road users there, particularly pedestrians and horse riders who have little or no protection.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development

- The sloping topography currently absorbs surface runoff naturally. Hard surfacing 9 properties will increase surface runoff down Long Lane toward Netherthong village, exacerbating localized drainage issues.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development.

- The application is contrary to both the principle of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan and not any of the explicitly identified 27 sites for development (para 4.5.6) of the HVNDP dated Dec '21.

Officer Comment: The application is assessed on the basis of the detail submitted and its own merits.

- Could Planning Officers dealing with the 2026 / 91861 Planning Application please look back in detail into the previous 2004 application along with the final outcome to verify whether a total of seven large greenhouses were authorised to have been erected on the Holmfield Nurseries site?

Officer Comment: The planning history / lawful structures at site are considered in the assessment of this application.

Letters of Support

- I support this application as I believe it could provide a sympathetic improvement to the site.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not assess the visual amenity of a development. This would be dealt with in latter stages of an application.

- A high-quality development using appropriate materials would improve the visual appearance of the site and make a positive contribution to the surrounding area. In my view, this proposal would be a far better long-term outcome than the site remaining underutilised, continuing to deteriorate, or being used for more intensive commercial purposes that could have a greater impact on the local area.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not assess the visual amenity of a development. This would be dealt with in latter stages of an application.

- The road is not a busy road at all and fully capable of maintaining 9 future houses.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development and is solely providing an opinion on the acceptability of housebuilding at the application site, however, this is noted.

- Wildlife will be minimally affected in the erection of the properties, and the peaceful surroundings of Oldfield will not be affected. The so-called hustle and bustle of Honley will not arrive in this area.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development and is solely providing an opinion on the acceptability of housebuilding at the application site, however, this is noted.

- The site is brownfield, not greenfield and the land has been in active commercial use for many years, first as a nursery and more recently for processing logs. Objectors argue that horticultural use falls outside the NPPF definition of previously developed land, but this overlooks the presence of established buildings and infrastructure on site resulting from decades of continuous

commercial activity. The existence of these structures, however basic, reflects genuine intensive use of the land, not a "created" or artificial appearance of development, as some objectors speculate without evidence. Redeveloping land that already carries this industrial activity is precisely the kind of efficient land use national policy encourages, sparing genuinely undeveloped countryside elsewhere.

Officer Comment: This comment is noted and addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- A modest scheme of nine dwellings on a site already characterised by buildings and commercial activity represents a limited encroachment, not the "urban sprawl" and "hustle and bustle" that objectors describe. Housing delivery, the reuse of underused land, and the removal of unsightly and semi-derelict structures all count as material benefits capable of outweighing the limited additional harm involved.

Officer Comment: This comment is noted and addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report.

- The fact that detailed layout plans are not yet available is not a flaw in the application; it reflects the fact this is a permission-in-principle stage submission. Matters of precise siting, scale, landscaping, tree retention and elevational treatment are exactly what reserved matters and conditions exist to control.

Officer Comment: This comment is noted and addressed within the 'Location and Land Use' section of this report. Although this is a permission in principle application, it is somewhat considered that the extent of impacts upon the openness of the Green Belt cannot be completely assessed due to the lack of information submitted. As a result, the principle of development cannot be wholly assessed.

- Highway safety can be addressed. Concerns about the junction, visibility at the site access and pedestrian safety are legitimate matters for the authority to assess — and access and pedestrian safety are legitimate matters for the authority to assess — and this is routinely done through conditions such as access improvements, footway provision or traffic management during construction which would take place and actually improve the safety of the area. Also, nine dwellings represent a modest increase in vehicle movements, and objectors' own accounts of the road being used as a "rat run" indicate the traffic problem already exists independently of this scheme; the development is well placed to fund small-scale mitigation that benefits all road users, not just new residents.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development and is solely providing an opinion on the acceptability of housebuilding at the application site, however, this is noted.

- A small, well-designed development of this kind can make a genuine, proportionate contribution to local housing supply, including through any affordable housing contribution secured via planning obligation, and can support the vitality of local schools and services by bringing new families into the area rather than depleting them.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development and is solely providing an opinion on the acceptability of housebuilding at the application site, however, this is noted.

- The presence of wildlife on a site is not by itself a reason to refuse development; it is a reason to ensure mitigation is properly secured, which can and should be a condition of any planning permission be accepted.

Officer Comment: A Permission in Principle application does not yet assess this aspect of the development and is solely providing an opinion on the acceptability of housebuilding at the application site, however, this is noted.

Letters of Comment

- Would on road parking be required? If so, the Road would have to be widened.

Officer Comment: Although this comment cannot be entirely addressed as layout plans have not been submitted, it is considered unlikely that on-street parking would be required as part of the development as Highways standards ensure each dwelling must have adequate off-street parking when erected. This would be addressed at technical matters stage.

- The fields adjacent to the plan all have 'agricultural' only rules, does the land shown have same restrictions?

Officer Comment: No restrictions are found on the use of the application site..

Recommendation

REFUSE PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

Decision Authorisation: Delegated Powers

Application Number: 2026/91861

Officer Recommendation: REFUSE PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

Reason for Refusal

1. The application seeks Permission in Principle for the erection of up to nine dwellings within the Green Belt. The site is not considered to constitute grey belt land and the specific manner and subsequent impact to the openness of the

Green Belt cannot be fully assessed as the submission is supported only by a location plan and does not include sufficient information regarding the layout, siting, scale, massing or form of the proposed development. In the absence of such details, the Local Planning Authority is unable to robustly assess the impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt. The development would not comply with the exceptions set out in GB7(e) or (g) of the National Planning Policy Framework. The development therefore constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt which is harmful to the Green Belt and for which no very special circumstances which clearly outweigh this harm have been demonstrated.

Plans and specifications schedule:-

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Location Plan dated 30/06/2026	-	-	03/07/2026
Application Form	-	-	03/07/2026

Pursuant to article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Authority have, where possible, made a pre-application advice service available, complied with the Kirklees Development Management Charter 2024 and otherwise actively engaged with the applicant in dealing with the application. No negotiations were required to be undertaken during the application process as the application is a matter of determining the principle of residential development on the site.