

Sent: 05 August 2026 07:50

Subject: Formal Objection to Planning Application 2026/91969 (Land off Fenay Lane, Almondbury)

Dear Council Officers & Councillors,

I'm writing by way of consultation response regarding the planning application for the erection of 6 dwellings, associated landscaping, and infrastructure on land to the north of Fenay Lane, Almondbury.

I'm including Councillors for Almondbury Ward and the relevant Cabinet portfolio holders to ensure that elected members are aware.

This proposal should be refused outright for the following critical material planning reasons:

1. Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

Conflict with National Policy: The application site is situated entirely within the Green Belt. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Lack of "Very Special Circumstances": The applicant has failed to demonstrate any robust or compelling "very special circumstances" that would outweigh the clear harm caused by developing this protected open land. The provision of standard market housing does not justify overriding national and local Green Belt protections.

2. Detrimental Impact on Openness and Visual Amenity

Loss of Openness: A core purpose of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl and safeguard the countryside. Introducing built form, domestic infrastructure, hardstanding, and vehicles onto this agricultural land will permanently erode the openness of the area.

Landscape and Character Harm: Development in this location represents an unwarranted outward creep of residential footprints into open countryside, negatively impacting the visual amenity and rural character of Almondbury.

3. Catastrophic Ecological Deficit and Biodiversity Failures:

Severe Biodiversity Loss: The statutory consultation response from the Council's own Ecology Unit confirms that the developer's submitted metric reveals a staggering net loss of 50.33% for habitat units. This represents an unacceptable environmental deficit that directly violates mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements.

Disruption of Wildlife Connectivity and Foraging: The site serves as a crucial natural corridor for local wildlife, providing vital pathways for movement, dispersal, and ecological connectivity across the wider landscape. The introduction of permanent built structures, domestic gardens, and artificial lighting will severely fragment these networks, destroying irreplaceable foraging habitats for local species, including bats, birds, and pollinators.

Speculative Offsite Mitigation: The application completely fails to demonstrate how the legally mandated 10% net gain will actually be delivered. Relying on vague intentions to purchase offsite units without secured providers, cost details, or updated metrics renders the application incomplete and non-compliant with environmental regulations.

4. Highway Safety, Access, and Infrastructure Pressures

Local Network Strain:

Fenay Lane and the surrounding local highway network are already subject to regular traffic and safety constraints. Adding vehicular access for a new residential development—including the proposed 24 parking spaces—will increase local traffic movements, heightening congestion and risks to pedestrians and other road users at junctions.

Heavy Reliance on Conditions: The high volume of complex pre-commencement conditions required by statutory consultees—such as structural surveys for the retaining burr wall supporting Fenay Lane, Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP), and detailed lighting strategies for sensitive species—demonstrates that this site is fundamentally constrained and unsuitable for housing.

The proposed development fails to meet statutory environmental thresholds, inflicts ecological and Green Belt harm, and offers no overriding community benefit to justify its approval.

I urge Kirklees Council to refuse this planning application.

Yours sincerely,