

**KIRKLEES LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION  
STAGE FOUR HEARINGS**

**HEARING STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY  
SPEN VALLEY CIVIC SOCIETY**



**Re MATTER 27: STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATIONS  
GREEN BELT RELEASES**

**SITE E1831: land to the north and west of Whitechapel  
Road, Cleckheaton**

Date of Submission: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**Issue:** Are the proposed strategic employment allocations justified; effective; deliverable and consistent with national policy?

**Response:**

1. The overriding concern of Spen Valley Civic Society (SVCS) is that nearly all of the proposed employment allocations of any significant size, defined as strategic, are located in and around the Spen Valley on land currently designated as green belt.
2. Document 1D1.1 confirms that **51.4%** of the total requirement for green belt employment sites in Kirklees is to be met in this area on 3 major sites – E1832(c); E1831 and E1985(a), which are all within 2.5 miles of each other and border other Local Authorities [Calderdale for E1832(c) and Bradford for E1831 & E1985(a)]. This is an unreasonable and disproportionate allocation of employment sites in one small corner of Kirklees. As a consequence of their geographic location, Kirklees will be supplying employment opportunities not for its own residents, but for people in Bradford and Calderdale, who live much closer to these sites than most Kirklees residents. Where are the residents of Huddersfield and South Kirklees going to find employment opportunities?
3. With regard to **site E1831**, SVCS accepts the need for this allocation, but we **disagree with the proposed size and boundary** of the site. The part of E1831 which borders Whitechapel Road B6120 is not appropriate for development as it fulfils the key green belt function of preventing the merger of settlements, ie. Cleckheaton and Scholes (which is a Conservation Area). The gap between the two settlements is narrow and will disappear completely in the current proposal, except for the M62, which cannot be considered an acceptable green belt gap.
4. All the buildings to either side of E1831 on Whitechapel Road are residential. It is inappropriate to introduce industrial development on this part of the site. Plans submitted by the developers (Document SS11) show that access will be from Whitechapel Road which is narrow and winds its way through residential areas of Cleckheaton and Scholes. There is a large secondary school (Whitcliffe Mount) about 300 metres away, and the presence of speed bumps along the length of Whitechapel Road is a clear indication of its unsuitability for heavy goods traffic.
5. We are concerned that the Local Plan's highly prioritised requirement for employment sites to promote opportunities for well-paid precision engineering jobs is not reflected in the proposed use of this site. Document SS11 states that use will be based on 35% B2 industry and 65% warehousing. Warehousing produces low employment opportunities and requires very large obtrusive buildings, which are not appropriate for this green belt site.

6. As currently proposed, site E1831 is unsound and should not be accepted for employment allocation. SVCS considers that the site could be made sound by a reduction in its overall size. The allocation should be restricted to that part of the site which borders the A58 (Whitehall Road) and the sloping land above it. Access to the site should be via the A58, which is close to Junction 26 of the M62. The gap between settlements is not such an issue for this part of the site, and being lower down the slope, industrial buildings would not be so obtrusive. The flat elevated area of land at the southern end of the site bordering the B6120 should remain as green belt with no vehicular access. This would result in a reduction of approximately 20% of the total E1831 site as currently proposed.
  
7. There will still be a significant loss of green belt, but SVCS accepts that some allocation of green belt land will need to be made. By re-drawing the boundary as outlined above, to exclude the green belt in the south of the site, a workable solution can be achieved.