

Kirklees Rural Sub-Area Matter 44 with reference to H626 : Land to the west of Bankfield Drive

Supplementary Hearing Statement reference General issues on Matter 44

Intrusion into Open Land.

When a previous application for development was turned down in 1992/1993 (please refer to our Hearing Statement reference highway inadequacies), Kirklees stated that 'the proposed development would significantly detract from the character and scale of Holmbridge and destroy the visual amenity'. The Department of the Environment, when rejecting an appeal, commented 'the proposed development would constitute an intrusion into this area of open land and as such would detract from the character of the area'. Very close to H626, Yorkshire Water spent millions building underground as it was recognised that building above ground would again 'destroy the visual amenity'. Public footpath 91 (part of the Holmbridge and Holme Way) also runs adjacent to the top of the site. This is the only part of the Holmbridge section of the path which gives clear views across the valley.

In the 'Character Assessment' (July 2015) Kirklees recognised the importance of Holmbridge as a tourist attraction, mentioning the views and the 'clear intervisibility with the Peak National Park and Holme Moss'. The Peak National Park is 600 metres from the site which, according to Kirklees, is not close as it is not within their buffer zone of 500 metres. Natural England consider 500 metres to be too short and have written to Kirklees to ask why this distance was chosen.

Is it the case, therefore, given the history of this particular site, that Kirklees have changed their views on the importance of the protection of this open space?

Stephen Elvidge

For and on behalf of Holmbridge Residents Group

