

Kenneth Unwin
4 Shawe Park Road
Kingsley Holt
Stoke on Trent
ST10 2BD
1st December 2024

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Planning Dept
Moorlands House
Stockwell Street
Leek
Staffs
ST13 6HQ

Dear Planning Officer

Re: Planning Application SMD/2024/0400 – Proposed 10 new dwellings on the former Youth Club Playing Field of Holt Lane, Kingsley.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning application. I write to you as a long-term member of Kingsley Parish Council and long-term representative of the local village communities of Kingsley and Kingsley Holt.

This issue was considered by Kingsley Parish Council at their meeting in early November 2024. This was the first meeting I have missed for some time due to a long planned foreign holiday. I understand that the decision not to object to this proposal was made by a very narrow majority, with the majority of Councillors abstaining.

I fully appreciate that there is recently increased pressure from the new government on local authorities to identify land for residential development. That said, I hope you will resist this background influence in the overall interest of our local community.

The land in question, the former Kingsley Youth Club football pitch, was the subject of a previous planning application SMD/2021/0826 which was refused permission by the Planning Officer in early 2022 on a number of well evidenced grounds. Aside pressure from the new government, fundamentally nothing has changed since the previous application, (other than an increase in the number of proposed new dwellings).

I wish to object to the above planning application for the following reasons:

1. **Green Belt Development:** The proposed development is within an area properly designated as Green Belt. There are no special circumstance to justify this unnecessary intrusion into the Green Belt and as such I believe the proposal is in breach of national policy (NPPF) and local policy planning guidance (SMDC Local Plan).
2. **Strategic Planning:** As you will appreciate, the SMDC Local Plan (adopted in 2020) was the subject of many rounds of public / stakeholder consultation. Kingsley Parish Council carefully considered the draft Local Plan on a number of occasions. We did not take a NIMBY approach and identified a number of areas

which we considered as suitable for development within and around the village, (more than sufficient to meet strategic targets for residential development). This site was never ever considered as suitable for development at any stage of that process. The proposed planning site was/is not identified as a potential development land with the SMDC Local Plan and should be refused. This is a speculative planning application by the developer which should be resisted.

3. **Village Development Boundary:** Whilst acknowledging that:

- the former village planning boundary arrangements are no longer applicable,
- the four new bungalows in built in Calvin Court, (adjacent to the proposed site), were built on a brown field site of the former Kingsley Youth Club building and car park.

This is not the case on the proposed site. The proposed development is on a green field / playing field site outside what would be considered as the natural village boundary. The proposal is an unnecessary intrusion into the open countryside surrounding the village.

4. **Loss of Sports Facility:** The proposed site was the former Kingsley Youth Club playing field which was in regular use up to 2013. Sadly the playing field / football pitch has not been available for such use after being purchased by the present owner / developer. There are no other similar facilities with Kingsley or Kingsley Holt, the nearest football pitches are now in Cheadle some distance away. I have no doubt the pitch would be in regular use if available. The proposal would result in the loss a much-needed local sports amenity, (as outlined in representations by Sport England).

5. **Negative Visual Impact:** Kingsley village is in the mid Churnet Valley area located to the south of the valley. The proposed site is in a prominent position on the edge of the village overlooking the Churnet Valley and as such would have a negative visual impact on the area.

6. **Local Footpaths:** Local Footpaths Kingsley 1 (Staffs Way) runs immediately adjacent to the site. Footpaths Kingsley 2, 3 and 4 run across the site. The proposed development would effectively result in the loss of these long established and well used local footpaths.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth J Unwin