

We are here, yet again objecting to yet another proposal for the development of this site. Are the planning officers really going to allow themselves to be manipulated into recommending this application for approval when the applicants are blatantly trying to get around the rules laid down in previous applications?

When the Planning Committee passed the original approval, it was with 38 conditions, bearing in mind the complete unsuitability of building an industrial estate in green fields. Local democracy and public concerns were ignored by the Planning Committee who were in haste to comply with the Ribble Valley Core Strategy – indeed one member of that committee believed the Council always needed to “keep something in their back pocket”.

Hothersall is one of the smallest and greenest parish councils in the Ribble Valley and as such I believe to be thought “an easy target” by developers. Why do planning officers think it is acceptable to ride rough shod over local opinion?

Coming to the facts: -

BKW application 3/2107/0317 passed with 38 conditions 4/9/2017 to date no work has started despite being for sale for over a year.

Harrison application 3/2019/0666 for industrial units on neighbouring land passed 29/11/19 with 25 conditions and despite claiming to improve access over land not owned by the applicant. Indeed, mysteriously the email from the landowner objecting to the application did not make it into the files. This was raised at the Planning Committee, but the planning officer said he did not know anything about it despite there being an internal memo questioning it on file.

Harrison application 3/2020/0507 again for industrial units. Our objection is that Mr Harrison is now applying for planning permission to build on smaller plots of land, each application attracting fewer conditions.

Each of the applicants has stated they have people ‘queuing up ‘to take on the units and they will provide local jobs for local people. None of this has happened. No names have been mentioned and nobody has ever provided a calculation proving the need for jobs and how we would ensure jobs went to local people.

Harrison has provided numerous plans showing how increased traffic will not be a problem. None of these plans can be implemented because he does not own the land. The information given for public transport is laughable since it includes school buses in its timetable and the number of buses per hour does not add up. What is the point of bus stops when there are no buses? The access road is already used by established businesses, but the report makes no mention of the taxis for Hillside School queuing up opposite the entrance. Large lorries already stop the traffic as they manoeuvre around these. The fact that this entrance is on the 30-mile speed limit means people leaving Longridge accelerate past it,

making this far more dangerous than the traffic report implies. Nor does it mention the large stone pillars which will restrict widening of the road.

The Planning Committee should now take a step back and realise the approval given in 2017 was a misjudgement and should not be repeated here and in the future when the next application comes in! At the Planning Committee meeting when the last Harrison application was narrowly approved, one councillor said you could only refuse for specific planning reasons. I hope we have given you enough reasons to refuse this application.

Debbie Gale
Chair
Hothersall Parish Council