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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | **KH** | **Date:** | **29/04/25** | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **2/5/25** |
| **Site Notice displayed** | **Y** | **Pub Expired** | **05/12/23** |  |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2023/0754 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 15th November2023 |
| **Officer:** | **KH** |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **Decision** | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed change of use of agricultural land to new car park and storage yard. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Judge Walmsley Mill Longworth Road Billington BB7 9TP |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| No comments received.  |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** | The site has been used for manufacturing since circa 1890.Judge Walmsley Mill is the headquarters for Harrisons Engineering, employing approximately 100 people, there are additional sites in Great Harwood (Rishton Welding), Barnoldswick (Harrison’s Engineering) and Burnley (AMR Laser Cutters).Harrison Engineering specialises in metal fabrication and welding and produces large scale structures. The company has a fleet of approximately 15 No. vans; 6 No. other company vehicles and 3 No. wagons. Access to the Mill site is via Longworth Road, which is unclassified, adopted highway subject to a 20mph speed limit. Public footpath 3-6-FP-43 runs between Longworth Road, along the eastern boundary of the site and across the River Calder, connecting to Broad Lane/The Sands, Whalley.There is a single point of access from Longworth Road into the site. HGV's enter the site to load/unload and travel anti-clockwise around the perimeter road, east to west.  The applicant states that a lack of space for HGV goods loading/unloading is causing congestion which disrupts the operation and safety of the site. The proposed changes are intended to address this.  The applicant states that it is not anticipated that the development will lead to greater numbers of vehicles visiting the site. The improvements to site circulation and parking should ensure that all visitors to the site, including cycles, cars, vans and HGV's can be accommodated within the site and manoeuvre safely.  There is no increase in the number of employees as a result of the proposal.  The junction of Longworth Road and Whalley Road has limited manoeuvring space within the carriageway and visibility due to the acute angle of the junction. There are no footways on the first section of Longworth Road where it joins Whalley Road which increases the conflict with pedestrians. In the previous 5 years, there is a single collision recorded at this junction which resulted in one serious and one slight adult injury, both vehicle occupants. The geometry of this junction caters poorly for HGV movements and a significant increase in HGV movements is not likely to be supported. Notwithstanding this, the proposal is not anticipated to generate a significant increase in the number of HGV's to site and is intended to formalise circulation and parking space to improve safety within the site.  Parking There are 101 spaces plus 4 visitor spaces and 9 van spaces proposed, totalling 114 spaces. This is a small increase on the existing 99 spaces.Secure, covered cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points should be provided to support sustainable travel at a rate of 10% of the parking provision which equates to 11 cycle spaces and 11 electric charging points.  Supporting sustainable travel is essential to ensure that employees are travelling to site using sustainable modes.  Employees can travel to site by bus with services through Billington and Whalley numbered 22, 25 and 280 which connect to Clitheroe, Blackburn, Preston and Skipton. Whalley Train Station and Town Centre are within walking distance of the site.  Conclusion LCC acting as the Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.  Should the application be approved appropriate conditions are requested.   |
| **Environment Agency:** | Updated Response dated 26 July 2024The planning application is now accompanied by a further revised Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared by PSA Design Ltd., document reference: T3947-FRA-01-Rev B and dated 21 June 2024.The FRA and appendixes have been updated to address our [previous] concerns. We have reviewed the supporting documents in so far as they relate to our remit, and we are satisfied that the points raised in our objection have now been addressed. We are satisfied that the development would be safe without exacerbating flood risk elsewhere if the proposed flood risk mitigation measures are implemented.We can therefore remove our objection to the development as proposed.  |
| **LLFA:** | Objects to the above application on the basis of: No Surface Water Sustainable Drainage Strategy In the absence of an acceptable surface water sustainable drainage strategy to assess the principle of surface water sustainable drainage associated with the proposed development, we object to this application and recommend refusal of planning permission until further information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Reason Paragraphs 167 and 169 of the National Planning Policy Framework require major developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems that: take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority; have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;  have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and  where possible, provide multifunctional benefits. The submission of basic information on how surface water is intended to be managed is vital if the Local Planning Authority is to make informed planning decisions. In the absence of acceptable information regarding surface water sustainable drainage, the Lead Local Flood Authority cannot assess whether the development proposed meets the requirements of Paragraph 169 of the National Planning Policy Framework or the Planning Practice Guidance in principle. This is sufficient reason in itself for a refusal of planning permission. **Overcoming our Objection** You can overcome our objection by submitting information that covers the deficiencies highlighted above and demonstrates how surface water will beIf this cannot be achieved we are likely to maintain our objection to the application. Production of this information will not in itself result in the removal of an objection. The Lead Local Flood Authority asks to be re-consulted with the results of the amended site-specific flood risk assessment and/or amended sustainable drainage strategy and/or SuDS Pro-forma. We will provide you with further comments within 21 days of receiving formal re-consultation. Re-consultations should be sent to our identified mailbox. Our objection will be maintained until the amended documents, as outlined above, have been received. Production of the amended documents will not in itself result in the removal of an objection. If the applicant wishes to discuss our objection with the Lead Local Flood Authority, they can do so through our planning advice service.  |
| **United Utilities:** | United Utilities provides the following comments to support the Local Planning Authority in their determination of the planning application detailed above, and to direct the applicant to further sources of support and guidance on matters that might impact their proposal.The letter and Appendix should be read in their entirety to support the determination, the design, and should the scheme be approved, the subsequent delivery of the proposal. Noting this is a Full application, we request that the applicant provides a detailed drainage plan, and that United Utilities has the opportunity to review and comment on this plan prior to determination of this application. Should planning permission be granted without the provision of this information we request a condition is attached to the Decision Notice. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| No responses received. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations Policy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMG3: Transport and MobilityPolicy DME3: Site and Species Protection and ConservationPolicy DME6: Water ManagementPolicy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and The Local Economy  |
| **Relevant Planning History:**3/2022/0792 – Proposed acoustic fence to replace damaged and overgrown leylandii to boundary – Pending. |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The site is located off Longworth Road Billington and is a long-established industrial site which has been occupied by Harrison Engineering since 1980. The firm specialises in metal fabrication and welding and produce large scale structures for steel frame buildings, fire escapes, access platforms, pedestrian/bridleway/road and rail bridges and industrial chimneys. The structures which are manufactured on site need to be stored on site before dispatch to the customer. The site is separated from existing residential properties on Longworth Road by an existing wall and leylandii trees which are proposed to be replaced by the outstanding application listed above.The majority of the existing site is within the settlement with the running along the western elevation of the building with the land to the west within Open Countryside. The site also lies within Flood Zone 2 and 3.The extension would project just under 95m for the full 125m width of the site. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**The application seeks consent for the construction of a new 101 space car park and storage yard to the west of the site which measures 2.2 hectares for B2 general industrial use with associated parking and landscaping with the proposal allowing for the expansion of storage facilities at the site of 0.99 hectares.The existing site comprises a range of buildings with hard surfacing utilised for outside storage areas, vehicle parking and circulation space. The built form and site access to the east, south and north lies within the settlement boundary whilst the remainder of the site to the immediate west of the building is within open countryside. To the immediate north of the site is the River Calder. The Grade II Listed railway viaduct lies to the east.The field to the west extends up to the A59, the application site is within this field.Public Footpath 3-6FP43 passes along the eastern boundary on the site.The proposed car park would be sited to the southwest of the site and project 75m containing 101 car parking spaces adjacent to this would be the storage area with permeable finish. The two HGV loading bays would be along the western elevation of the existing building. To the eastern side would be an HGV holding area and four visitor parking spaces. Around the perimeter of the building would be a formalised one-way vehicular access together with pedestrian footpath links.  |
| **Principle of Development:**The proposed external storage area and revised car parking layout will allow the business to expand by creating an additional storage area within the site. All the built form would remain within the settlement boundary with the existing storage to the west extending further into the fields and open countryside.Moving the car park enables a dedicated HGV route around the site and separate traffic from storage areas. Two HGV loading bays and a holding area will be created. The Planning Statement states that the proposals will improve working efficiency, handle HGV movements more effectively and separate out activities to improve site safety, all of which are necessary to sustain the business and allow it to remain in the Ribble Valley. Core Strategy policies EC1 support the expansion of existing business where appropriate in terms of employment generation and economic growth. DMB1 supports expansion of existing firms on land outside the settlement where is it essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape. In this case the specialist nature of the existing business would be retained in terms of the built form on this industrial site with the expansion into the open countryside for storage use only.The proposal would accord with DS1 in terms of the spatial strategy for the borough and with DMG2 which supports development proposals that are considered essential to the local economy. Policy DMG2 also requires the development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape with regard to size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting which will be considered in the Visual Amenity section.As such it is acceptable in principle subject to the material planning considerations below. |
| **Residential Amenity:**The site lies immediately adjacent to residential properties on Longworth Road to the south, however, this relationship will not change with the car parking element currently sited in that area being relocated and the one-way vehicular systems being in place. There is a belt of leylandii trees along the southern boundary which have suffered from fire damage and whilst an appropriate solution to replace this has not yet been agreed, provided these remain in situ until an alternative solution is agreed and comes forward, then the proposed development would not result in any additional concerns above that of the existing situation and the existing established employment use. For the avoidance of doubt this application does not proposed / approve an alternative boundary treatment, however the applicant may decide to pursue this under the separate application that is pending, or a new application at a future date.Provided the existing screening remains in place along that southern boundary until an alternative scheme is accepted then there would be no undue issues raised with regard to impact above that of the existing use. This can be controlled by an appropriate condition. |
| **Visual Amenity:**The extension into the field for storage purposes would result in this industrial use encroaching into the open countryside and closer to visual receptors, however, subject to appropriate landscaping to screen this element it is considered that the extended storage use would be in keeping with the existing built form and use. The encroachment into open countryside and resulting impact on visual impact would be acceptable when balanced against the continuing employment benefits of this specialist use and there is not considered to be a conflict with policies DMG1 or DMG2 in this regard.  |
| **Trees/Ecology/Landscaping:**The existing landscaping to the north and south boundaries must be retained and where possible enhanced. A detailed landscaping scheme will be required to the western boundary where additional tree planting is proposed and this can be controlled by a condition to require full details to be submitted and agreed. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site has been submitted which recommends compensatory planting and habitat enhancement. There is invasive species which need to be clearly demarcated with an 8m exclusion zone to prevent spread and discourage the species from growing on neighbouring land.Any vegetation to be trimmed or cleared should be checked for nesting birds, outside of the bird nesting season this must be conducted by a qualified individual.Subject to timescale for the works there would be no undue impact on ecology this can be controlled by an appropriate condition.The application was submitted prior to the BNG statutory provisions coming into effect.  |
| **Highways:**It is considered that the proposed changes to the car parking provision, one way system and HGV loading will be an improvement and bring specific benefits to the site overall in terms of vehicle movements and pedestrian safety. It will enable goods to be loaded and unloaded easier and a more logical layout for employee and visitor parking. LCC Highways raises no objections regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site subject to appropriate conditions.  |
| **Water Management/Contamination:**The site is in Flood Zone 2/3 where the likelihood of flooding is high. The development is required to pass the flood risk sequential test as it includes operational development, however the operational requirements to efficiently serve the existing business mean that it would be impractical to site the development elsewhere outside of the flood zone. The scheme is classed as less vulnerable development and therefore the Exceptions Test doesn’t apply.A Flood Risk Assessment is required and has been submitted which is acceptable to the Environment Agency. This will be required to be adhered to and can be secured by condition.In terms of a surface water drainage strategy, whilst the objection from the LLFA is noted, the scheme was revised so that it now no longer falls to be considered major development and therefore the LLFA are not a statutory consultee. Their concerns can be addressed through a suitably worded pre-commencement drainage condition including operational and maintenance standards in order to ensure that proper drainage of the site is secured and undertaken in the most sustainable way.  |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**Having regard to local and national planning policy and the material planning considerations it is recommended accordingly.  |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | To grant planning permission subject to appropriate conditions. |