

[REDACTED]

Planning Officer,  
Ribble Valley Borough Council,  
Clitheroe.

14th February 2022

Dear Sir,

**OBJECTIONS TO PLANNING APPLICATION**

**3/2022/0082 OLD GARAGE SITE, NEWTON ROAD, DUNSOP BRIDGE, BB7 3BB**

We refer to the above application submitted on behalf of the [REDACTED] and we wish to bring to the notice of the Planning Committee our concerns and objections, regarding the proposals to develop the above site, as per the plans before the Committee, under the above reference.

Please note we have detailed below our reservations and objections within each of the specific impact areas identified by the Planning Department. There is some overlap in our specific concerns but these only are where applicable to the specified areas under which, the Committee may take consideration.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this unavoidable repetition.

Our concerns all relate to :

1. **Scale of the proposal**
2. **Impact upon our home – noise, privacy, nuisance, safety.**
3. **Impact upon the area,**
4. **Effects on Highway safety, including parking**
5. **Effects on nature and the environment**
6. **Effect on a conservation area.**

We set out below our concerns in the above order.

1. **SCALE OF THE PROPOSAL.**

This redevelopment will be a major project in such a small village area. It comes on the heels of a yet another major redevelopment by [REDACTED] of this new project. The impact of additional construction traffic, noise, dust, and general disruption at [REDACTED] will start

this coming spring and the [REDACTED] redevelopment completion in around 2 years and be possibly co-terminus with the start of this second substantial project at [REDACTED]

Allowing for inevitable construction delays, this small village and its environs - an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - could be subject to continuous, severe, dislocation and nuisance for up to 5 years. We also respectfully draw the Committees attention to the major construction by United Utilities at Newton, barely a mile away, together with collateral effects on Dunsop Bridge. This will be compounded by the addition of both major redevelopments by the Applicants.

The village will effectively be victims of a (triple) tsunami of volumes of heavy construction traffic, detritus and severe disruption for a period of up to 5 years. This environmentally damaging work, albeit necessary and of such a duration, will have a profound effect on this village, its attractions, visitors, residents and our wildlife, alike.

The scale of the redevelopment involves a café, shop, tearoom and other amenities. The other amenities – meeting rooms etc., are not demand driven. There is already a popular, well established, village hall here and which holds a very important place in the hearts of all residents. Nor are the Tearoom plans demand driven. The generally held view in the village is that a row of 2/3 bedroom terraced houses, bringing affordable accommodation to families, would be far more welcome than any tearoom. The Tearoom brings nothing of value to the village. It has never employed any full time local staff, nor does it use, or retail, locally based products.

The new tearoom is going to be substantially larger in terms of seating than the present building. This increase in size will inevitably draw more people to the site and *ergo*, the village, and the surrounding area. The Applicant has said in discussions that this is not their intention. No evidence has been produced by the Applicant to demonstrate any substantial local, unqualified support for such an opinion, nor has the Applicant conducted any footfall surveys, or visitor questionnaires, as to why people visit the area and what they expect to find here, perhaps supporting their argument that there will be no increases in visitors resulting from this redevelopment. There are approximately only 100 households in the Dunsop area.

Very few, if any, residents use the present tearoom, particularly in its current, truncated operation. Very few even visited it previously, with its welcoming, spotlessly clean, indoor seating and a full, 7 day menu, availability. The tearoom is solely sustained by visitors. Not locals. The absence of a well stocked shop and (especially) a functioning Post office, is not conducive to attracting locals' custom. The shop has not re-opened since March 2020. The Post Office too, closed in the first Covid lockdown and has never reopened. The Applicants' plan to see the new development with a Post Office included, may be fanciful. The Post Office here is small and business very low. Already shut for 2 years, we find the Applicants view highly optimistic that the Post Office will still want to re-open this small branch, after a further 3-4 years of closure, during re-construction.

For this new development to be an effective commercial operation, it must have an increased footfall. The area is hugely dependant upon weather and holiday periods. Even then, the numbers of visitors appear more pronounced, largely due to the cramped location and very poor car parking facilities. Put simply, there really are not the numbers of visitors, 52 weeks a year, to make an enterprise on this scale, profitable

We, therefore, challenge any assumption by the Applicant that this business, on this scale, will NOT attract considerably more visitors, but WILL, inevitably add to more pressure on the village, its limited facilities and its inhabitants. By its very size and scope we consider that this significant

redevelopment in such a small, but beautiful area, is in danger of completely overwhelming the ambience and aesthetics of the The Green/riverside area in particular, and the village as a whole.

## 2. IMPACT ON OUR HOMES

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The Duchy have proved to be good, responsible, landlords in every way. We have no complaints against them, as Applicants, in this plan.

At the outbreak of Covid, in 2020, the existing tearoom closed in accordance with HMG guidance. In July that year HMG permitted reopening - under strict guidelines. At the behest of the tearoom tenants, The Duchy (arbitrarily) took it upon themselves to allow the tenants to resume their trading, but only in their residential garden, [REDACTED]. The decision itself was questionable in law and we, [REDACTED] were given no say in that decision.

We asked that a large high, solid fence be erected between the tearoom garden [REDACTED]. This was for [REDACTED] to inhibit nuisance and noise. Although it was agreed with the Duchy, no fence ever erected. The result was an utterly horrendous period of 10 months of noise, foul language, barking dogs, appalling behaviour and screaming unsupervised children, just running a mock in the tea garden area. ( We attach photographs of the nuisance [REDACTED] [REDACTED] see Appendix I- which also highlight the all 3 garden areas, wildlife and residential use.)

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
We highlight these issues to the Planning Committee as an example of just how much nuisance, noise and ill-will this has caused, simply because of the proximity [REDACTED]. We repeatedly asked the Duchy to provide the long promised solid fence [REDACTED] but this was refused at every request.

The Applicant's new plans for the tearoom site now indicate that a footpath should be cut through [REDACTED] existing tearoom. This of course, [REDACTED] and the of the planned flats, any use of an adequate outdoor space, as well as totally destroying the long established gardens. These garden areas are comprehensively included in the tenants signed lease and legal tenancy agreements, prepared by the Applicant in 2016. Does the Applicant intend to change, without any consultation, these legal agreements [REDACTED].

This concept is to provide visitors direct access, from the rear of the present (under-used) public car park, walking closely past, [REDACTED] in order that they may then access the playground and walks beyond.

**Please allow us to offer our experience of a 'footpath'** [REDACTED]

Following a history of major issues with public decency, fouling, privacy and safety with the old tearoom customers exiting that garden area and using the playing field as a footpath [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

This was because the tearoom customers were using the rear garden gate to exit the premises and return to the public car park. This gate opened directly onto the playing field. Customers turned

short cut FOOTPATH TO THE

CAR PARK.

children screaming

They were apprehended and their parents

Visitors were interrupting

constantly asking assorted questions about the area, or directions. It was a nightmare experience.

**This is the identical route that the Applicant now wants divert visitors to/from the walks/new tearoom.**

In further considering the Applicants new footpath plans, it is clear that the volume and demand for such a pathway has not been independently evaluated. To our knowledge, there has been NO physical survey by the Applicant of visitor numbers to determine whether such a short cut is necessary, or desirable. Or whether it really will be used and if so, by how many and how often. No survey has been taken to establish visitors' current routes from that car park to their ultimate destination – nor has the Applicant questioned their intentions for their visit.

Additionally, such a path will need to have an all-weather surface, wide enough to allow two families with prams, wheelchairs, walkers with sticks and crutches, walking frames, bikes, and several dogs to pass safely. We estimate that width to be at least that of a single highway carriageway, about 12'.

The Applicant makes no mention of who should be responsible for maintaining this pathway – clearing dog droppings, human urine, litter, masks, weeds, or ice/mud other obstructions. Who will maintain the shrubs etc.? Who would be liable if an accident occurred between a cyclist and a pedestrian? Will e-bikes and e-scooters be permitted?

What measures does the Applicant intend to take to guarantee the privacy and security if this footpath is granted planning consent? At present the Applicant shows that young shrubs are to be the only screening.

Evidence of this conduct was ALL fully supported by photographic and audio evidence, which was supplied to the Applicants. In fairness, the Applicants, recognised the unacceptable breaches to

In this plan before the Committee, the Applicant has now completely disregarded all that history and its own previous recognition and acceptance of serious nuisance and privacy problems, caused

But in this plan, the Applicant clearly is prepared to see all these issues resurrected by not only

This is **EXACTLY** the very opposite of the Applicant's position 9 months ago. **ANY** footpath so close to **ANY** [REDACTED] will cause major issues of privacy, nuisance and potential disorder. That was accepted by the Applicants 9 months ago. Why is not accepted now?

We note the new café is also to have outside space – and, of concern - the intention to install cycle shelters alongside the fence line between [REDACTED] and the new development. Given the already proven difficulties with excessive noise and commotion from customers outside, especially cyclists, when the public are allowed too close to residential properties, it is essential the Applicants honour their pledge - made during discussions with [REDACTED] and the new development, then create a second fenced "void" area about 6' away from the first fence, so as to try to minimise the effects of any foul language and abuse from unwitting cyclists.

[REDACTED]  
play in the garden in summer months, and weekends. Foul language and behaviour from café cyclists – and other users – would not be fair upon the [REDACTED] security and privacy will be compromised unless a proper solid fencing is installed. At present the Applicant has not made that clear in the plans.

Environmentally, it is an poorly conceived and inconsiderate plan. Installing this pathway will destroy forever [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
here for more that 50 years. All provide a superb habitat for birds, bats, insects and nature. We have carefully nurtured and further cultivated [REDACTED] We all feed the birds in [REDACTED] daily – and the ducks on the village green.

We are all environmentally conscious tenants. This planned footpath, on this route, makes mockery of the Applicants' – and the Royal Family's – oft publicly stated desires to "protect and enhance the countryside and wildlife". Not to tear it down, destroying it forever, and certainly not to do so simply to install in its stead, a huge, ugly, footpath. A footpath of highly dubious worth, based upon nothing more than the Applicants "belief" that it "might" be used by 'some' visitors.

The destruction of so much [REDACTED] and its environment and wildlife is a travesty. It denies [REDACTED] privacy, peace and quiet throughout the year. It denies them opportunity to enjoy [REDACTED] and watch the resident wildlife, [REDACTED] by [REDACTED] from the all noise and bustle at the [REDACTED] What steps are to be taken by the Applicant in this plan to guarantee [REDACTED] privacy and safety?

The Applicants' plan totally disregards all the [REDACTED] needs and rights in [REDACTED] **NO** discussions took place about this "last minute decision" to include the footpath project. We were TOLD this footpath scheme was in place, but not until just days before the plans were quickly submitted. [REDACTED] last, brief, meeting, but which left us so little notice we had no time to pursue it constructively with any of the Applicant's Senior staff. Had this occurred we may have been able to reach a compromise with the Applicants, avoiding this Planning Objection.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The existing tearoom 2 flats are now planned. This is a welcome, but small, addition to the residency of the area. Why flats? That property could easily be returned to use as a 3/4 bedroom house, highly suitable for a young family. It has off road parking and a nice secure garden area at the rear. Surely a house would better for the village community than 2 flats? Young single people would not likely to be long term residents, contributing village life, unlike an established family with children. The Applicant has repeatedly and openly said that it wants to build and strengthen the community around its new development. Perhaps the Applicant might wish to think again about providing a much more useful house, rather than 2 flats.

However, where are these new residents to relax and enjoy any private outdoor space if their garden is also be taken away? How does that help to build a community, or provide much needed leisure resources for residents??

[REDACTED] we have recorded at least 32 bird species, including 8 species which nest with us annually. (Appendix II) We have Swifts, Swallows and House Martins all nesting under our eaves, feeding late afternoons and evenings on the vast insect life which currently thrives in our gardens. We have 3 distinct well established colonies of bats, nesting [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These too, feed nightly on the countless insects which thrive in our long established [REDACTED] We have at least 5 species of butterfly, countless types of moth, even underground wasps nests. We have toads, mice and dozens of other bugs all thriving in these gardens. For the last 4 years, [REDACTED] hibernating hedgehogs.

If it is that all destroyed, or even severely disturbed, all these creatures, all this life, this colourful, eclectic mix of nature, will be lost. And for what? A footpath? A footpath whose need and demand has never been quantified, considered, or justified..

That footpath is, in our opinion, **UNNECESSARY** . If it is deemed to be so absolutely vital, and fully supported by evidence of independent surveys etc., then surely, a footpath could easily be run around the far northern outer side of the playing fields, with easy direct access from the café and the playground. The distance to the playground will be exactly the same if the path goes along that far side of the playing fields, or if it goes – as the Applicants wish -through and destroys our

[REDACTED] There is **AMPLE** available space to make a wide pathway around the far side of the playing field, without destroying [REDACTED]

The Applicants plan appears to suggest a further “motive” and one which we feel may be their real “cause celebre” for their choice of routing for the footpath. The Applicant wishes to build a large stone structure, effectively in [REDACTED] This is in **ADDITION** to the footpath, taking **even more** of [REDACTED] This is to house some (potential)

future under-soil heating machinery to supply (eventually - perhaps 10-15 years hence), all the residential properties, replacing their current oil and calor gas systems.

This will be a substantial, highly visible, stone faced structure which will be completely out of place in the Applicants' suggested location. Quite apart from the huge environmental destruction already caused by the demolition of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Applicant now wants to place this eyesore on the playing field side of the footpath, that runs through the garden areas. The visual impact of this isolated building will be appalling, totally out of place and visible to all visitors from any west/east or north perspective. Why there? A prominent structure such as this is surely wholly out of place in an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

At the rear of the old garage is a small, compact, United Utilities water pumping station. There is AMPLE space in this area in which to build such a structure. Room too, to pleasantly screen both commercial plants off, without affecting ANY wildlife, or the destruction of environmentally friendly [REDACTED]. There would be no distraction to café customers, or any significant diminution of available working space.

The Applicants' plan to place the shed at the point on the plans - as presented - is incredulous. It almost appears as an after thought. There cannot be any substantial cost reasons, only perhaps some additional inconvenience to the Applicant, who has clearly overridden the concept of the loss of habitat to the environment of the area. This Development is at a very significant cost to the Applicant and surely, any additional costs in relation to the re-siting of that shed would be minimal, taken in context. We are only talking here about moving it just 35 yards east.

The shed construction in front of the footpath, will be a carbuncle on the entire the area. That building is substantial and it is essentially a commercial structure and, like the water pumping station, ought to be in a commercial area. The Applicant is attempting here to mix commercial units within a long established private domestic/ residential /leisure area and visitor facilities.

If the footpath / shed goes ahead, again, what then [REDACTED]. We have been through this situation all through 2020/21 [REDACTED]. The Applicants are **FULLY AWARE** of the countless issues of near proximity of public and private areas and that they **do not mix**. There **MUST be privacy and safety for residents**. This footpath /shed plan, if granted, - as per the Applicants' plan - will be catastrophic for residents lives, and blight the beauty of this conservation area. It is grossly unfair, unkind, totally ill conceived and is being pushed through on highly spurious and speculative grounds of 'unsubstantiated need'.

**Where do we see here any hard evidence that the Applicant is really serious about "enhancing and supporting the environment in Dunsop Bridge" when they have set upon this large redevelopment which will simply destroy a long established micro-system of nature, at a stroke.**

**And for what reason?**

**Affordable 2-3 houses for young families? NO**

**A visitor Centre? NO .**

**A young peoples facility? NO.**

**Adding family accommodation? NO**

**Enhancing the environment and natural habitat? NO**

**The Applicant just wants a FOOTPATH and a SHED!**

A footpath of unproven, purpose, or use. A footpath, like the shed, which can so easily be repositioned. Utterly wrong, utterly out of place in a long established AONB, conservation area.

### **3.IMPACT ON THE AREA**

This development will inevitably attract more visitors to this area. In fairness, currently the area copes remarkably well. There are plenty of safe, open air walks and outdoor experiences available, once beyond the village core. The real issue with attracting more visitors is traffic volumes. The village cannot be accessed by public transport. The parking issues are very real and extremely obvious. Principally, the problem lies with the freedom to park, free of charge, on the main roads, **absolutely anywhere** in the village. This causes obstructions, serious damage to the grass verges, friction and restricts access

Serious litter issues arose during 2020/21, with the change of operation by the tearoom from an indoor full menu café, to a takeaway-only outside shed. The takeaway was initially popular with the "Covid visitors", when many catering operations were still unable to open. Sadly, the result was a village left badly despoiled by their litter. Since Covid has eased, so too, have the numbers of visitors to this area. The Applicant should be aware of and be prepared to deal with, any increases in litter.

To the Councils credit, complaints about the litter issues over the past 12 months have been very effectively addressed. The issue would have to be regularly reviewed if this significant redevelopment goes ahead.

### **4. HIGHWAYS AND SAFETY**

We have referred to parking issues vis-à-vis traffic volumes. We believe these issues could and should be addressed co-terminously with this application. More visitors mean more traffic. The village really cannot accommodate more traffic at peak times. The problem lies with uncontrolled, unrestricted parking. It is pointless to expand the public car park and not deal with roadside parking. Drivers will do anything to avoid paying in the public car park. As residents, we would suggest that Council Highway Officers and Police visit the area and discuss with residents, the issues and available solutions.

An obvious solution would be double yellow lines both sides of Newton Road in the village. This would 'force' cars into the public car park, reduce congestion, stop kerb erosion and damage, increase Council revenue and improve pedestrian safety on the road. The absence of cars parked in every nook and cranny will also significantly enhance the aesthetics of the village. The Applicants could act now to reduce unlawful off road parking of up to 20 cars, by blocking off vehicle access beyond the boundary signs on their private road from the exiting tearoom, to Home head.

Currently, pedestrians arriving in the car park invariably cross Newton Road by the car park pedestrian exit and walk on the pathway by The Green, crossing again at the shelter opposite the tearooms. As parking on the road fills up, it often causes a "pinch" opposite Forge Cottage, which in turn inhibits carriageway width still further, as cars continue to try to park towards Thorneyholme Estate corner entrance. In turn, this then can restrict pedestrian access to The Green, forcing pedestrians onto the main carriageway, which is unsatisfactory, although no accidents have been reported for many years. Double yellow lines, regardless of appearance, have to be a very serious contender towards a cheap, fast, solution to this issue of unreasonable parking.



The public toilets are well sited, but very poorly signed. The only signpost is 6' from the actual toilets!! Better placed and additional signing would encourage more use and less public urinating.

If this development is to be approved, car parking must receive urgent Council attention.

## **5. ENVIRONMENT**

The impact [REDACTED]. We see absolutely **NO** justification for destroying [REDACTED] all sustaining a comprehensive thriving eco-system. The theory suggested by the Applicant, that this development 'could' encourage all visitors to use the new footpath, as a short and safer route to the main walking areas, is unsupportable without hard evidence. Until the Applicant conducts visitor surveys, that notion must remain unproven and specious.

The new Café will have its entrance on its west face, allowing access from both the road and the rear. Cyclists and most car users parking on the road, will use it entering from Newton Road. Some may approach from the north i.e. the rear. Exiting will be a personal choice, depending on the customers next destination. By no means all visitors visit the tearooms, or trudge off on long walks, or even visit /use the playground. Some prefer to just sit on The Green.

Nothing in this application confirms the utopian concept that all visitors will use the new route or tearoom – or even demonstrate a genuine desire to use that route or tearoom – is proven.

The Applicants' plans fail to acknowledge the main village attraction (massively popular in hot weather) of The Green and its beautiful, easy, safe, riverside access and of course, the semi-tame collection of ducks, which really do attract the children's attention. In hot weather, The Green is packed to capacity with visitors, who bring camping stoves, chairs, tablecloths, barbeques and umbrellas, sit to paint, or photograph, or read, or just take in the views and then spend the whole day on there. These customers are generally self contained, only occasionally using the tearoom for, perhaps, ice creams, but little more.

## **6. IMPACT ON A CONSERVATION AREA.**

The foregoing represents a comprehensive overview of the effects of this development. We make it clear that we have **NO** objections to the plans for the café structure and use. Its commercial viability rests entirely with the Applicant. Despite our reservations as above, We believe it could enhance facilities, principally for visitors, but to be fair the opportunities are there to hopefully establish a business which does ultimately offer residents services, in which case, it will certainly be for the better. We consider that it is absolutely essential the Applicant recognises the need to install an experienced, competent operator in this operation. This is not a [REDACTED] venue. The village wants a retail unit selling everyday commodities. It wants its Post office reopen. An operator and the Applicant needs to be fully aware of the expectations of the village

**WE DO OBJECT MOST STRONGLY** to the Applicant's plans which, if implemented, will totally destroy all [REDACTED] in the name of putting an unnecessary, unwanted, footpath - merely for the "perceived convenience" of visitors. In our opinion, the lives of residents must be respected and the destruction of [REDACTED] thriving wildlife, providing food and comfort for bats, insects of all kind, amphibians and 32+ species of wild birds, including nesting swallows swifts and house martins etc,. Creatures which have nested [REDACTED] every single year for 50 years,

simply because of the reliable plentiful, food sources here, are far more important than the notion of perhaps, saving a visitor a few minutes walk..

**WE OBJECT MOST STRONGLY TO PLANS TO SACRIFICE [REDACTED] TO INSTALL A SUBSTANTIAL FOOT PATH AT [REDACTED] WHEN THERE ARE CLEAR SIMPLE OPTIONS AVAILABLE WHICH ARE FAR LESS INTRUSIVE AND MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY.**

**WE OBJECT MOST STRONGLY TO THE SITING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A STONE CLAD SHED ON THE GARDEN AREAS - AND FACING THE PLAYING FIELD. WE CONSIDER THIS BE AN INTRUSIVE EYESORE, INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE AREA AND WHICH LIKE THE FOOTPATH, CAN SO EASILY BE REPOSITIONED JUST 35 YARDS EAST, IN THE CAFE REAR AREA ALONGSIDE THE UU WATER PUMPS.**

We beg the Planning Committee to decline permission for these last two applications. This is our **only opportunity** as residents of the village and the Borough council, to put our objections forward for your consideration.

We do not object to any other aspects of the Applicants plan. Our concerns and comments above on all other plans are for your information and full consideration, in arriving at a fair and reasonable decision on this application.

We would be most pleased to welcome ANY inspection by planning authorities, or the Applicant, to visit us personally, at any time, to see at first hand, all that is at stake for us, our everyday lives and all village residents.

Thank you for your time. [REDACTED]





## APPENDIX II

### RECORDED BIRDLIFE IN GARDENS AT

Wood Pigeon  
Collard Doves ( nesting)  
Great Tit (nesting)  
Blue tit (nesting)  
Coal Tit  
Long Tailed Tit  
Blackbird (nesting)  
Song Thrush  
Mistle Thrush  
Redwing  
Fieldfare  
House Sparrow ( nesting)  
Tree Sparrow  
Robin (nesting)  
Wren (nesting)  
Chaffinch (nesting)  
Goldfinch  
Greenfinch  
Chiff Chaff  
Wood Warbler  
Nuthatch  
Tree Creeper  
Great Spotted Woodpecker  
Sparrowhawk  
Buzzard  
Tawny Owl  
Rook  
Jackdaw (nesting)  
Jay  
Mallard  
Pheasant  
Swallow (nesting)  
Swift (nesting)  
House martin (nesting)