

Planning Committee Meeting

7<sup>th</sup> June 2011

Mick Coughlan

I live on Wakefield Road in Copley and object to this application. At peak times I and my neighbours often have to queue in order to park outside our own homes, due to tailbacks. This application will add in the region of 370 extra vehicles an hour at peak time – one extra car every 10 seconds – the effect of such a high volume of traffic will increase the back up of vehicles in both directions and lengthen the peak time period, causing problems for emergency vehicles using the road to gain access to and from the hospital. Motorist will seek to escape from the valley – up both Woodhouse Lane and Copley Lane both unsuitable for such volumes of traffic.

Vehicles going towards Sowerby Bridge will add to the already busy junction at Bolton Brow by the school, increasing tailbacks in an area that is an Air Quality Management Area. It is the council's duty to work to decrease noxious exhaust gas fumes in this area, to minimise the risk to public health. This scheme will add to these fumes. The mitigation offered that electric vehicle usage will negate this effect is at the moment mere pie in the sky – they may as well claim we might be using laser powered scooters – this is not realistic mitigation.

The risk to the two primary schools on Wakefield Road is unacceptable. Traffic generated by this proposal will place an increased risk of accidents for the parents, staff and children. Again it is the committee's duty to consider the extra volume of traffic that will be put onto the roads outside these schools and the increased risk of danger to the public.

Copley Lane has recently had an attempt at making it safer for pedestrians under "The Safer Routes to School programme". This has taken the form of a solid painted white line indicating a pedestrian area and yet according to the agenda notes you will have read for tonight, numerous incidents have occurred of adults and children being clipped by wing mirrors. The application acknowledges that this scheme will add a further 54 vehicles at peak time. Already there are regular altercations between drivers attempting to cross the single carriage railway bridge, causing tail backs in both directions – the added traffic can only make this situation worse and no mitigation is offered to soften or solve this situation.

The so called "mini by-pass" from Station Road in Sowerby Bridge along Holmes Road and along the planned new road can never be a preferred option for motorist due to the single lane narrow tunnel on a blind bend outside Dugdales at Valley Mill. This road as it passes the existing allotment site, according to the plans will reach a narrowing of the road by the pumping station, down to single lane. This at busy times will cause stationary traffic right alongside the allotments. This scheme now proposes to expose the allotment holders to

traffic noise and noxious gasses from vehicles including skip wagons heading to and from the waste transfer station.

The junction of Wakefield Road and Stainland Road, The Calder and Hebble Junction is projected to have extra 207 vehicles an hour at peak time from this proposal. The agenda notes acknowledge that this junction is already a major congestion hotspot – without the extra added traffic. The notes ask “where do we draw the line?” A good question – at capacity is the common sense answer! Without further investment to develop the junction (around £1.2m according to consultants) this junction will become an accident blackspot and possible gridlock as capacity is exceeded. Unless Genr8 are willing to pay for this under s106 monies then this application should not be approved.

### Education

The Director of Children’s and Young Peoples Services for Calderdale states that “All local schools are full” and that £1,1950.00 (*1 million, 1 thousand 9 hundred and 50 pounds*) is required to provide the necessary infrastructure” to cater for the increase in pupils from this proposal. The applicant is offering a mere £145K towards this. Where is the balance to come from? The taxpayers of Calderdale? At this time of cuts and stringent budgets I think I can speak for the majority of residents that we should not be making up a shortfall for a developer who wishes to maximise profit on an unviable scheme.

### Financial Gamble

Councillors – this scheme is a massive gamble. In order to access £6.25m of public money there are financial implications. This scheme is tied into the provision of NEW jobs – that is newly created jobs – not jobs simply transferred from elsewhere.

The condition is that this scheme will create 600 Full Time Equivalent Jobs. According to the applicant the proposal before you will create 577 jobs. However when this figure was reached it also included staffing for a 40 bedroomed hotel that is now excluded from the proposal, therefore the projected jobs will be lower than 577. Councillors, the applicant is planning to fail in this respect.

The penalty for failure according to Yorkshire Forward is that the money may be “clawed back”. This cannot be assessed until Genr8 have finished and gone back over the Pennines to bank the profits. Therefore any money clawed back will be from the Taxpayer of Calderdale – this is unacceptable.

Mr Willerton, in his summing up claims this scheme offers much to the people of Calderdale – Councillors I say it offers a gamble that is not worth the risk on financial, health, traffic and environmental grounds and therefore say tonight you must not grant this application.