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The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/Z3825/W/25/3364755

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/Z3825/W/25/3364755
Appeal By	PRESTIGE PACKAGING SOLUTIONS LTD
Site Address	Bridge Farm Coolham Road Coolham HORSHAM RH13 8GP

SENDER DETAILS

Name	[redacted]
Address	Purveyors Farmhouse Coolham Road Coolham HORSHAM RH13 8GP
Company/Group/Organisation Name	Shipley Parish Council

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- ☐ Appellant
- ☐ Agent
- ☑ Interested Party / Person
- ☐ Land Owner
- ☐ Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- ☐ Final Comments
- ☐ Proof of Evidence
- ☐ Statement
- ☐ Statement of Common Ground
- ☑ Interested Party/Person Correspondence

☐ Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

As chair of the Parish Council I would like to refer PINS to correspondance provided by me to the planning committee on the day the case was heard and rejected unanimously by District Councillors, (1st April 2025).

"Cllr Alex Jeffery and I have been working on these applications and their predecessors on and off for the past 2 years and you will note in the published minutes of the Parish council and the dozens of objections on all applications in that time that we have the full support of the Parish Council, County Councillor Amanda Jupp, and local Coolham community in wanting to see their operations limited to their 2019 consent, ie standard commercial office hours as is usually applied to haulage activity in a Residential location. Not an unreasonable position when there are already over 100 movements a day of 44t lorries thundering through Coolham past the primary school in office hours let alone at 3am as many of the 100s of videos we have received show.

To clarify, Prestige haulage have been acting with supposed immunity since 2019, the owner seen shouting at residents in Coolham who have objected to his lorries, threatening to block their driveways if they didnt stop "making trouble" for him. The 2019 consent allowed for 13 vehicles to operate in office hours. Since the pandemic lock downs ended, there are been 28 operating 24/7 bringing danger and misery to over 100 local residents who are woken by hissing air brakes and vibrations at 3/4 am every morning, not to mention countless insurance claims for bent cars and broken walls.

To clarify, these are retrospective applications in an attempt to legitimise their unlawful behaviour which has been going on for many years, and I would urge councillors not to entertain as well, simply as this retrospective activity is becoming a well known channel to bypass the planning process. If Prestige applied for a 24/7 operation of this size from scratch in a tiny hamlet on a C road next to a school, we all know it would not be entertained by anyone. The planning officers argument that it is an existing operation whose economic activity should not be curtailed should be ignored. It is an unlawful activity and economic activity for the sake of it should not be pursued in lieu of the rule of law, or at the expense of local residents.

Cllr Alex Jeffery and I met with [redacted], Head of Planning Enforcement in December 2024 to understand when enforcement would step into act after what has now gone into its 4th year. They wait alone for these retrospective applications to come to an end. Every time they have one rejected as this same application was last time, they reapply with supposed new information. She has confirmed however, that after the outcome of this application she will act and bring some quiet enjoyment back for Coolham residents, if it is rejected as we all hope.

2 facts to consider also.

1) the Acoustic report is flawed. It measures only the sound of ONE idling lorry in their depot, which yes wouldnt make much noise, there is only 1 local resident in ear shot. However, when a large diesel engine is pulling its trailer half a mile down the road at 3am outside 50 local properties it makes 3x the noise in the report, the same as a chainsaw around 100dbs, and there is usually a convoy of 20+ lorries at 3am (video footage of local residents). This also doesnt take into account the vibrations that shake the houses and the noise of air brakes and clanging metal parts as the trailers go over a bumpy C road.

2) the Planning officer has made a mistake. Brooks Green Road is not a B road. Confirmation here. https://www.findmystreet.co.uk/map?usrn=17602785. HGV traffic should not be consented to operate on a C road at all let alone 24/7. The road in Coolham is too narrow, residential and has shallow foundations like all C roads do."

This communication aside it is important PINS understands the gravity of the unlawful behaviour Prestige lorries are trying to legitimise with these applications and now appeals. They were granted

consent to operate 13 lorries out of a site to the north of the hamlet Coolham, all of which lies on a narrow C road, narrower than most of their lorries. The consent was provided basically for office hours use to keep disruption to local people to a minimum. A mistake in the wording of the consent has given Prestige the licence to operate any number of lorries from the site provided no more than 13 are on site at one time, so they use this loop hole to operate 28 currently, passing each other through the night in convoys. These convoys act unlawfully by not only leaving the site after 6.30pm but regularly all through the night down into Coolham where most of the 50 or so properties are road side and where the narrow C road has very shallow foundations. Residents are woken up repeatedly thorugh the night by the vibrations of laden 44t HGVs going passed their front doors, often at 1/2/3/4 am, air breaks hissing, trailers clanging. Videos show they often come through Coolham in a long convey, waking everyone in the village up as they pass. This is effectively a tiny quiet little hamlet in the open countryside, and should not have to have their quiet enjoyment and sleep ruined every night by this unsuitable traffic. These type of restrictions on commercial HGV traffic are quite common where haulage depots are close to residential locations, and this arguably is a worse scenario as not only is the road too narrow, the foundations non existant, but cars are often damaged, wheelie bins smashed down the road (caught on video camera).

The "spirit" of the consent provided in 2019 was for a small family run haluage business to operate a small number of small lorries out of the location to support a small local business. In expanding the site, the number of lorries and now with these appeals on all night movements the applicant wants to turn it into a massive commercial operation that is more akin to being found at the side of a motorway network or well connected A road, not off a tiny C road on the edge of a small hamlet that is bringing misery to local people. In my time as Parish chairman, there has not been one single case that has brought more upset and distress to parishioners than the behaviour of Prestige haluage and their completeley dismissive attitude to the local community. We of course welcome small local businesses like Prestige to integrate into the local community but only if they are prepared to be considerate to the people that already live there.