

**Inspection 8 October 2019 – Matter 14 Hearing Session
Planning Application 2019/0335 – Grane Village, Helmshore**

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(i) What is the nature of the surface water flooding risks on the site? Can this be mitigated?

The proposed housing development at Grane Village is not at risk from flooding. The site is rated as category 1 [little to no risk]. There is a major risk beyond the site from run-off. The developer's hydrological study states 'to restrict surface water run-off to mimic the pre-development situation'. This is in accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines. This is not achievable. The developer's proposals would not prevent major run-off from intense rainfall events

The whole site is 6.21 hectares [15.12 acres]. When one millimetre of rain falls on a square metre of ground the result is one litre of water. During the high rainfall event of 26 December 2015 [the Boxing Day Flood] there fell certainly fifty millimetres of rain in a few hours. This piece of land therefore received 3,060 cubic metres of water. The land slopes to the south, and at the bottom two commercial premises and a number of houses. Were these properties affected by massive run-off from the land? No, not at all, because it was all absorbed in the ground. It has always been known as a giant sponge.

The developers' assessment of the proposed built-up area is 4.47 hectares [11.04 acres]. With fifty millimetres of rain this area will receive 2,235 cubic metres of water. Run-off will come from hard surfaces - roads, pavements, drive ways and roofs. The consultant hydrologist considers that the run-off would be 55%. This would amount to 1,229 cubic metres of water. I dispute the 55% figure. People will lay flags for patios, build conservatories and cars will be parked on percolating driveways [if installed], rendering them useless. I consider that the run-off would be more like 70%. This would mean 1,564 cubic metres flowing out of the built-up area from a fifty millimetre rain event.

The development plan shows two attenuation chambers with a notional capacity of some 1,300 cubic metres with run-off to the pond and then to the River Ogden. This suggested solution to run-off will not work. The land holds a huge amount of groundwater - far more than what it receives from rainfall. The land is old mossland, enclosed as meadows by the Holden estate probably in the seventeenth century. It has deep peaty topsoil overlaying pockets and plumes of hillwash. There is constant movement of underground water from the high ground to the north. This would mean that the attenuation chambers would always be full from groundwater movement. A fifty millimetre rainfall event [c. 1500 cubic metres of water] would pass right over these holding chambers and the pond and go straight into the River Ogden. The river takes the overflow from three reservoirs and has three major tributaries - the Swinnell, Musbury and Alden Brooks. It has a history of flooding. Parts of Helmshore and Irwell Vale will be put at risk from the massive run-off from this proposed development. High rainfall events are becoming more frequent on

account of the increasingly erratic meanders of the Jet Stream. On the 25/26 October 2019 a 1.000 mile front from the southern North Atlantic, carried by the Jet Stream dropped enough rain in England and Wales to initiate 89 flood alerts.

The proposed housing development in Grane Village is a bad idea for many reasons. The flood risk from run-off is almost certain. The development should not be allowed.

A M Hodbod
27 October 2019

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In support of the representative from Edenfield at the hearing

Some few years ago the Cameron government encouraged local authorities to grant planning permission to private developers to build more houses. There was an incentive - to relax planning controls. The official response from Rossendale was that the Borough had enough housing stock for its present and future needs. This was reported in the Rossendale Free Press [citation not immediately available]. The proposed developments in Edenfield and Grane Village have nothing to do with Rossendale's housing needs. They are speculative developments of expensive houses aimed at footloose people with higher earnings from surrounding areas so that they can more easily commute by car to their well-paid jobs elsewhere. Haslingden is already a large dormitory area - a recent report finds that some 14,000 people leave Rossendale every day to gain an income elsewhere. Surely enough is enough.

A M Hodbod
27 October 2019