

Application No. 2021/62/90980/E – Works Around former Chartist Public House/Extensions to Pennine Industrial Equipment Premises, Commercial Road, Skelmanthorpe

Our Position on this Application

- We have no objection to the proposals relating to the alterations and renovations to the former Chartist Public House premises which will form a considerable enhancement to its present shabby state in the centre of Skelmanthorpe.
- However, we do have **strong objections** relating to the currently proposed western extensions to Pennine Industrial Equipment Premises on the land directly behind the former public house.
- Firstly, we **STRONGLY OBJECT** to the proposed felling of, it appears, around 11 (although this is not clear as the Tree Report on the web site appears incomplete) healthy, mature trees which have considerable amenity value to the centre of Skelmanthorpe and the newly created park adjacent to them. We have lost many mature trees in the area over the last few years to the general detriment of amenity value, biodiversity and their carbon capture value in soaking up the pollution caused by the ever increasing level of traffic on the B6116 through Skelmanthorpe. The planting of new, very immature trees in no way compensates for these losses until several decades hence.
- Secondly, we **STRONGLY OBJECT** to the current proposals for the erection of 4 industrial units on the former pub car park and old play area, part of which is within the Conservation Area boundary and the rest immediately on its boundary. We cannot recognise the claims, justification and conclusions reached within the Design and Access Statement + Heritage Impact Assessment. An on- site, on foot inspection will clearly reveal the inaccurate and misleading statements made in this document. The drawings submitted are no way near adequate in that they fail to present a 3D representation including the juxtaposition to the surrounding areas. These should be presented both for the benefit of the Planning Officer and Planning Committee members who have complained in the past about the lack of such drawings/presentations.

The proposed industrial units are oversized compared to existing buildings. To the western elevation (adjoining the park), they present a very long, ugly, domineering and intrusive impact on the park, and the centre of Skelmanthorpe, particularly so when travelling from west to east. The proposed materials and colour scheme makes them even more so. We find them totally unacceptable for this setting.

Assessment of the considerable impact on the existing residential properties on Commercial Road between the pub and the entrance to Pennine Industrial Equipment seems to have been overlooked.

The southern elevation hides most of the children's play area. Why should young children be forced to play behind an ugly industrial unit in what is the only such area for young families in the centre of Skelmanthorpe? This is a newly developed park area, financed with S106 monies raised from a nearby new housing development. This also raises anti-social activity and child safety issues.

The north elevation completely negates the proposed heritage-linked work on the former pub premises with the corners of 3 industrial units projecting from right hand side of the old building as they progress uphill. If this were not visually offensive enough, the apex of the industrial unit roofs are higher and clearly visible above the roof line of the former pub premises.

We believe this scheme and the materials proposed need further serious work to mitigate its very negative impact on the centre of Skelmanthorpe and those living around it and using the park. It may be that the units could be reduced in height further and their northern, western and southern walls constructed of stone and planted with attractive climbing plants to break up such a long, solid wall. The trees in the park will not form an effective screen for these units for decades. Whilst some of the latter are a genus of Oak, Hornbeam and Mountain Ash, others appear to be small-growing ornamental type trees of very limited, potential screening value.

Perhaps at least some of the mature trees could be preserved within an on-site roundabout arrangement?

At present, the whole western side of the scheme **IS DETRIMENTAL** to the character of the general area and Conservation Area. In its present form, it presents a **significant negative impact** on Skelmanthorpe and arguably it needs to be seriously questioned whether this harm is justified when only 3 extra jobs appear assured with up to 5 others that may happen.
