

MATTER 3 - EMPLOYMENT

We believe that Old Mill Road should be one of the safeguarded employment sites and that by not allocating it this status North Somerset Council's plan is not sound.

This site currently provides for circa 300 jobs, all the units are occupied and thriving, and provides an area of mixed use ie retail, service and light industry which is in short supply in Portishead. Our town is constrained by water (the Estuary, the River, various rines) and the green belt. To our knowledge there is nowhere within Portishead for these businesses to be relocated even temporarily while redevelopment work took place.

The Plan is unsound because

- a) it has not been positively prepared in this instance as it fails to take account of all housing developments in our town
- b) it is not justified as this is not the most appropriate strategy to provide 20 more dwellings in the town which is what is proposed
- c) it is not effective to lose circa 300 livelihoods with a dramatic impact on the economy of the town in order to provide 20 dwellings which is what would happen if this site is redeveloped

It appears to us that some sites within the Plan have been double counted eg at the bottom of page 62 of schedule 3 it states Kestrel Court/Portishead Quays/Harbour Road outline permission for emp dev at Severn Paper Mill whilst on page 50 of schedule 1 it states south west of Severn Paper Mill 70 dwellings previously allocated employment site. There are

other similar contradictions within the Plan eg the location of the railway station.

There are 14 developments of varying sizes in process in our town which are not counted in this Plan producing a total of 168 ~~237~~ dwellings so we fail to see any need to disrupt our successful businesses on Old Mill Road.

1
in recent
years

In our view the freeholder has done his best to run down this area by/pnly allowing short term leases over a period of time which is grossly detrimental to developing businesses. For example, around 2-3 years ago an indoor skateboard park was proposed but unless the lease was for 5 years or more it simply was not a viable option for that business so it did not happen.

There is nothing wrong with the buildings/existing environment on Old Mill Road: the area is certainly not a blot on the landscape so why cause untold harm by redeveloping it to include a mere 20 dwellings when more than this number are already in the process of being built or already have planning consent in our town.

There appears to have been a lack of comparison surveys by NSC eg why is it better for a development to be carried out in one area rather than another.