

Simonstone Parish Council

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10th September 2026

Nicola Hopkins

Director of Economic Development and Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
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Dear Nicola

PLANNING APPLICATION 3/2026/0356 – LAND AT HAMMOND GROUND, WHALLEY ROAD, READ – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 77 DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

An Extraordinary Meeting of Simonstone Parish Council was held on Monday 17 August 2026 to consider the above planning application. Following discussion, the Parish Council unanimously resolved to object to the proposed development.

The Council's objection is based on the following grounds:

1. Highways, congestion and road safety

The development would result in a significant increase in traffic through both Read and Simonstone, during the construction period and following occupation. The A671 is already heavily congested, particularly at peak times, and the Parish Council is concerned that the existing highway network does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional vehicle movements generated by a development of this scale.

2. Air quality and environmental impact arising from additional traffic

The additional vehicle movements associated with the development, including construction traffic, would inevitably increase traffic-related emissions through Read and Simonstone and add to the environmental impact experienced by residents along the A671 corridor.

3. Housing need and housing mix

The Parish Council is concerned that the proposed housing mix does not adequately respond to locally identified housing needs. The Parish Plans for Read and Simonstone identify a particular need for smaller affordable starter homes and bungalows or other

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suitable accommodation enabling older residents to downsize and remain within their community.

The Parish Council also notes that there is already significant availability of larger family accommodation within the local housing market. At the time of our review, more than 379 properties were advertised for sale or rent within a three-mile radius of Read and Simonstone, of which 322 had three or more bedrooms. While we appreciate that current property listings alone are not determinative of housing need, they provide further local context for our concern about the balance of accommodation being proposed.

4. Affordable housing provision

The proportion and nature of affordable housing proposed does not, in the Parish Council's view, sufficiently address the locally identified requirement for genuinely affordable homes appropriate to first-time buyers and other households with a local connection.

5. Pressure on health and community infrastructure

A development of this scale would place additional pressure on existing local services and infrastructure. Of particular concern is access to primary healthcare, with residents already reliant principally upon practices in Padiham and Whalley.

6. Loss of undeveloped agricultural and countryside land

The proposal would result in the permanent loss of agricultural and undeveloped countryside land and would materially alter the rural setting and character of the area between and around Read and Simonstone.

7. Biodiversity and ecological impact

The Parish Council is concerned about the impact of development on existing habitats and wildlife and considers that the ecological and biodiversity consequences of developing this currently open land require particularly careful assessment.

8. Impact upon Simonstone Lane and the surrounding highway network

The Parish Council is particularly concerned about additional traffic using Simonstone Lane as an alternative route. There are already difficulties with vehicles using the Lane with insufficient regard to the existing weight restriction. Additional development traffic and subsequent residential traffic could exacerbate this problem, with consequences for highway safety, residents and the condition and character of the Lane.

9. Archaeology and historic environment

There is local evidence and concern regarding the potential presence of an historic English Civil War burial site within or in the vicinity of Hammond Ground. Given the potentially significant archaeological implications, the Parish Council considers that this should be fully investigated and appropriately assessed before any development which could disturb or permanently damage archaeological remains is permitted.

Wider strategic planning considerations

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The Parish Council is also concerned about the timing of this application in the context of Ribble Valley Borough Council's wider strategic planning work, including its Call for Sites process.

While we recognise that the application must be considered on its individual planning merits and against the relevant development plan and material planning considerations, determining a substantial housing development at Hammond Ground before the Council's emerging strategic work has sufficiently established the future pattern and distribution of development risks prejudicing a proper consideration of the wider future of Read, Simonstone and the surrounding area.

This is particularly important where Hammond Ground and adjoining land could have implications extending well beyond the 77 dwellings contained within the present application.

The Parish Council believes that residents should be able to understand and contribute meaningfully to proposals affecting the future development of their communities in the context of the overall strategic picture, rather than being required to consider substantial individual developments in isolation before that wider picture has emerged.

For all of the reasons set out above, Simonstone Parish Council formally objects to Planning Application 3/2026/0356 and respectfully requests that planning permission be refused.

We would ask that this letter is placed in full on the planning application file and that the Parish Council's objection is taken into account in determining the application.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Anna Haines, on behalf of:

The Councillors of Simonstone Parish Council