



# *Upper Stoodley Residents Association*

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## **INCREDIBLE FARM**

### **A policy statement by the Upper Stoodley Residents' Association**

#### **Introduction**

The Upper Stoodley Residents' Association exists to promote the interests of the residents of the Upper Stoodley area. The Association is a channel for expressing residents' common concerns, for example, about the environment, planning issues, local heritage and the maintenance of the Conservation Area which comprises a large portion of the area the Association covers.

The Association has existed as a formal group since October 2018; it already has over 100 members.

The Association's members are gravely concerned about the development of Incredible Farm within the Association's membership area. Although described simply as a farm, in reality, Incredible Farm's site is *a large training and food processing facility, with onsite accommodation arrangements and with both vegetable growing areas and facilities for livestock.*

#### **The Incredible Farm site**

Incredible Farm has been developed on a site which, for as long as living memory holds, was moorland and woodland. The site lies alongside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Langfield Common) and is within the important Lumbutts and Mankinholes Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area was established in 1980. It comprises the two settlements of Lumbutts and Mankinholes and some of the surrounding fields and moorland, including the site now used by Incredible Farm. In the most recent appraisal of the Conservation Area by Calderdale Council (April 2008), the Council describes the Conservation Area as being set in 'stunning rugged upland countryside ... such that views [both inside and outside of the Conservation Area] are a most important part of its character.' Where there are buildings in the Conservation Area, the Council notes that the 'appearance of the Conservation Area is due largely to the building materials which were available locally, [and] the traditional local construction styles and techniques.'

The Upper Stoodley Residents' Association states that Incredible Farm is a blot on this 'stunning rugged upland countryside' and its make-do-and-mend construction is an eyesore which stands in ugly contrast to the traditional buildings nearby.

#### **Despoiling the heritage of the South Pennines**

The only access to Incredible Farm is by the Long Causeway, a former packhorse route and registered bridleway which is part of the network of historic connections between remote farms and settlements and the market towns of the West Yorkshire. Long Causeway, together with other packhorse routes like it would have been used regularly probably from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards to take woven cloth, made by individual craftspeople in their homes, to market. No one really knows how old Long Causeway is, but the characteristic 'causey' stones, the single track of carved gritstone flags along the centre line of the track, is almost certainly 18<sup>th</sup> century. The causey stones are an important part of the pre-industrial heritage of the South Pennines and indeed of the UK as a whole.

In establishing Incredible Farm, a large section of the causeway was destroyed by Incredible Farm's heavy vehicles. The Council has undertaken some repairs, but these repairs have completely changed the way the causeway looks, and have been done with no respect for its history. Destroying local heritage and history is always a terrible thing. To do so in a Conservation Area, where such history is respected and protected, is beyond belief.

### **Incredible Farm: no planning permission**

Incredible Farm has no planning permission for any part of its development within the Lumbutts and Mankinholes Conservation Area, and yet Incredible Farm has erected a large number of buildings and structures and continues to do so. To date, the Council has issued several Planning Contravention Notices and an Enforcement Notice. The Upper Stoodley Residents' Association expects everyone to abide by the law and for the law and relevant regulations to be applied consistently and fairly. Incredible Farm evidently does not share this view.

### **Summary**

Incredible Farm has a philosophy about food production and it has a right to hold the views it does. The Upper Stoodley Residents' Association has taken no position on Incredible Farm's philosophy or outlook; different people will, no doubt, have different views. The Residents' Association objects to Incredible Farm because it is

- Despoiling the landscape, history and heritage of the Upper Stoodley area
- Compromising and degrading the Lumbutts and Mankinholes Conservation Area
- Repeatedly disregarding planning regulations and requirements by which everyone else is rightly expected to abide

The Upper Stoodley Residents' Association is committed to ensuring that Incredible Farm *move from their site, and that the site is restored to its original condition, and that the damage caused by Incredible Farm is put right at Incredible Farm's expense.* The Association will not cease its campaign until these goals have been achieved.