

CHESWICK GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Cheswick Way, Cheswick Green, Solihull, B90 4JA

BLYTHE VALLEY PARK DEVELOPMENT PL/2016/00863/MAOOO

This report is the Cheswick Green Residents Association response to the above planning application. It also makes recommendations in respect of related aspects of the proposed development.

INTRODUCTION

Blythe Valley Park (BVP) lies within the parish of Cheswick Green, adjacent to the M42 motorway. Also situated within the parish are approximately 950 residential dwellings of which around 900 are located in the village of Cheswick Green and its surrounding lanes. The remaining 50 dwellings are located within the hamlet of Illshaw Heath. The parish enjoys a rural environment, which is of great importance to all residents and pivotal for them when deciding to settle in the neighbourhood.

While the Solihull Local Plan assumes that BVP will be developed to accommodate up to 600 dwellings, this application seeks outline approval for up to 750 dwellings, a 250 unit Care Facility and a 200 Bed Hotel. The application also seeks approval for a second access road across Green Belt Land.

In addition to the BVP proposal, applications for a further 300 dwellings within the parish have recently been approved. Collectively, this will put untold pressure on the parish infrastructure, create traffic congestion and erode the rural environment.

MARKET RESEARCH

Residents recently received a questionnaire from the Parish Council which the Residents Association viewed as misleading and designed to deliver the results that suited the Parish Council's agenda.

In order to derive an accurate assessment of resident's aspirations, the Residents Association issued a similar questionnaire which contained implications of the various choices and asked an additional question in respect of resident's vision for Cheswick Green Village (CGV).

In addition to the 900 hard-copy questionnaires circulated during the weekend of 2/3 July 2016, an online version was made available some 2 days later. In total, 237 responses were received which is ample to give a clear view of resident's required direction. The key findings are as follows:-

- Usage of current roads/no second access road 39.4%
- Second access road on/off Stratford Road 44.6%

- Second access road on/off Kineton Lane 14.0%
- No change to current footpaths 60.7%
- Improved access across fields 15.0%
- Footpath along IHR leading to bakery 15.8%
- Enlarge CGV medical practice to accommodate BVP business 13.1%
- Build a second medical practice on BVP 86.9%
- Expand CGV school with a rear drop-off point 9.6%
- Build a second school on BVP 86.2%
- CGV should be independent with its own facilities 93.2%
- CGV should have good connectivity to BVP 6.8%

The results are regarded as truthful and fair, providing a solid foundation of opinion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having the benefit of both the market research results and detailed discussions with many parishioners, the following recommendations are made:-

HOUSING VOLUME

The proposed increase in housing from 600 to 750 dwellings is over intensive and would push the local infrastructure and road congestion to breaking point. It is therefore recommended that new BVP housing is capped at 600 dwellings.

The Residents Association has a neutral opinion on the Care Facility and Hotel with the decision resting on a supportive infrastructure.

SECOND ACCESS ROAD

There are no special circumstances to warrant the building of a second road on Green Belt Land. It would inevitably encourage commuters and business traffic to use the parish artery roads as short cuts are sought.

A second access road is not supported and the applicant is recommended to investigate the usage of two way traffic on existing access roads.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

As guided by the questionnaire results, the preference is for CGV surgery to be maintained and a second practice built on BVP. Should the latter not be possible then the Residents Association would support extending the CGV surgery.

However, under no circumstances would the Residents Association support a

relocation of the surgery to a new position. This would break up the heart of the village and destabilise the community spirit that is currently enjoyed by all residents.

PROVISION OF A NEW VILLAGE HALL

As with any re-positioning of the CGV Surgery, this would lead to an unnecessary and undesirable fragmentation of the village.

EXPAND CHESWICK GREEN SCHOOL WITH A REAR DROP-OFF POINT

The view expressed by 86% of residents is that BVP should have its own primary school. Should this not be possible, then the new BVP residents should have the option of sending their children to any of the 3 local primary schools.

The provision of a drop-off point to the rear of CG school is wholly unacceptable. This would require a cul de sac road with access from Creynolds Lane. Experience shows that it would be rarely used due to difficulties in exiting and would serve to congest both Creynolds Lane and Cheswick Way. It would also severely interrupt the outlook for some Creynolds Lane residents.

FOOTPATHS

Residents make it very clear that connectivity to BVP is not needed. Understandably, the survey indicates a clear preference for not changing the current footpaths. **Resident's vision for Cheswick Green Village is that it should be an independent village with its own facilities.**

2nd September 2016