

2013/1679/S LAND AT TANWORTH LANE CHESWICK GREEN

Application No: 2013/1679/S

Ward/Area: BLYTHE

Location: LAND AT TANWORTH LANE CHESWICK GREEN SOLIHULL

Date Registered: 16/10/2013

Applicant: BLOOR HOMES

Proposal: OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 220 DWELLINGS WITH ACCESS, ASSOCIATED OPEN SPACE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARKING PROVISION (ACCESS UNRESERVED).

Documents Online:

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/planning/dc/ViewAppDetail.asp?Y=2013&R=1679>

PROPOSAL

Outline planning permission is sought for the erection of up to 220 dwellings on land at Tanworth Lane (also known as Mount Dairy Farm). The application seeks to determine means of access, with all other matters related to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved.

In line with current guidance, the application, as well as giving full details of the proposed access, provides detail of use and amount of development. Considering the on site characteristics of this plot of land, a design concept evolved and has been refined over time. A movement framework has helped inform a road hierarchy to the site around which perimeter development is achieved. The indicative master plan provides two vehicular access points, the first from Tanworth Lane at the north west corner of the site, and the second to the south of the site at Coppice Walk. A principal or Main Street connects these two entrances, off which perimeter block development is shown. Here buildings define spaces, rather than streets.

At Coppice Walk, the main entrance is made legible by a boulevard of trees framing the entrance and extending into the body of the development, where this tree lined street is enclosed by landmark buildings at its gateway with housing framing the street. Main Street continues northward and arrives at a key landscaped focal point positioned roughly centrally within the site. This key area of open space is intended to provide a natural play space for its residents and wider village.

The development provides a number of character areas Main Street, Green Lanes and Family core. These areas are intended to provide subtle

differences in housing layout and type, materials and boundary treatments, and in doing so achieve a variety of density. The existing field boundary trees are to be retained and are incorporated into public areas of the site. Landmark buildings are positioned at key corner areas that help make legible the street layout whilst overlook these areas of open spaces.

A meaningful area of public open space is laid out to the south and eastern edge of the site forming a continuous green corridor. This area occupies 4.1 hectares and provides public open space as well as drainage mitigation. A series of swales extend around the perimeter of the development on its south and east side, and are positioned outside of the 1 in a 1000 year flood level. There is an infiltration basin proposed almost centrally along the eastern site boundary that provides flood mitigation for this section of the site.

The built form occupies 6.7 hectares of the site and achieves an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare at 220 dwellings. A denser core gives way to a lower density perimeter build, particularly at its north boundary which faces out towards open countryside. 40% on site affordable housing has been offered, although the precise location of these units is intended to be considered at reserved matters stage. The development would deliver a range of house types and sizes ranging from 1-2 bedroom smaller units to 5 bedroom detached houses.

The existing public footpath is retained running along the northern boundary of the site, whilst a new pedestrian link is proposed at the north eastern corner linking to Saxon Wood Road.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways	:	No objection subject to financial contributions
	:	
Landscape	:	No objection
Ecology	:	No objection
Housing Strategy	:	No objection
Planning Policy	:	Objection raised
Environmental Protection	:	No objection
Education	:	No objection
Health	:	No objection
West Midlands Fire Service	:	No objection
Environment Agency	:	No objection
SMBC Drainage	:	No objection

Severn Trent Water	: No objection
Natural England	: No objection
CENTRO	: No objection
West Warwickshire Archaeology	: No objection
Cheswick Green Parish Council	: Objection raised
Neighbours Notified	: 23/10/13
Site Notice	: 24/10/13
Press Notice	: 01/11/13

REPRESENTATIONS

7 letters of support have been received and are summarised as follows:

- Excellent addition to the village.
- Urgent need to provide homes.
- Villages in Solihull need to accept a fair proportion of the many new homes needed in the country and Solihull.
- As a single mother of 2, this proposal would help me realise my dream and return to the village that I grew up in.
- Many people in younger generations like me are likely to support these proposals.
- The planning stage of Cheswick Green in the 1970s would have met with objection, just as this proposal does today.
- Do the villagers really want to deny young families of today the chance to improve themselves and live in a pleasant place as they did many years ago?
- The development allows for nucleus families – grandparents living near grandchildren.
- I grew up in Cheswick Green and would wish to return there to start a family of my own.
- There is sufficient time to provide additional school accommodation.
- Planned proposals include flood mitigation.
- Local business, tradesman and retailers will benefit.

185 letters of objection have been received and include letters from Stansgate Planning on behalf of Cheswick Green Parish Council and the Solihull Ratepayers Association. Objections raised are summarised as follows:

Policy Considerations

- The application is premature. If the development is needed it should happen in the period 2023-2028 as originally scheduled, by which time infrastructure will hopefully be in place to support it.
- Narrows visually the gap between Cheswick Green, Tidbury Green, Dickens Heath and Shirley. This area will become urban sprawl.
- Although designated in the (draft) Local Plan, Mount Dairy Farm had been re-designated as Green Belt in an earlier draft planning stage because of over intensive concerns; a decision only reversed after a change of the Council's present administration.
- Cheswick Green Parish Council wants to be actively involved in discussions about contributions to community facilities as part of S106 obligations. Contributions would be expected towards flooding alleviation, a new Drs surgery for Drs and other medical practitioners, local schools, local road improvements and public transport improvements.
- There are numerous unfinished properties on the Dickens Heath site. Surely they should be completed first.
- 57 homes at Shirley Golf Club, Creynolds Lane; 600 at Blythe Valley and this development provide 877 new homes in the Cheswick Green Parish. This is totally disproportionate and unacceptable.
- There are numerous unfinished properties on the Dickens Heath site. Surely these should be completed first?

Sustainability

- Cheswick Green is unique and its community spirit in keeping the 'village' environment alive is second to none. This village atmosphere would be lost.
- The village has no infrastructure to support these homes.
- The Drs Surgery can't cope: you have to plan to be ill 2 weeks in advance!
- The existing school is single form entry with 260 pupils and is full.
- The school has only recently been refurbished and 30 year old portacabins removed from the site; it is unfair to expect additional disruption.
- Would a new school be proposed or would the school be expanded in size. This would cause considerable disruption to the education of existing children.
- Private motor car is the main source of transport due to being poorly served by public transport.
- No local train station or access to Whitlocks End station by any bus service running through the village.
- Bus service to Cheswick Green is infrequent and irregular. The S4 bus service does not operate in the evenings.
- The proposal at Mount Dairy Farm is not a sustainable form of development, especially if it comes forward of necessary improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of the area.
- The village has a pub, restaurant, 3 shops and a chemist. This is not enough to support the proposed development.

- Lack of access to employment.
- The proposals prohibit recycling.

Flooding

- The site falls on a flood plain.
- Houses that back onto Mount Brook flood being Saxon Wood Road, Willow Drive, Coppice Walk, Coppice Close, Heron Close and other land bordering Mount Brook and River Blythe.
- River Blythe runs along Watery Lane and soon rises and falls.
- Flooding is a risk for every home. Building more will have the effect of placing more new homes at risk of flooding, but also increasing the likelihood of flooding occurring to existing homes.
- The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) concentrates exclusively on mitigating the flood effects from the development, with no regard to the existing situation. There is no protection for existing homes.
- The FRA is flawed and fails to take proper account of the actual recorded flooding, or possible effects of the River Blythe.
- In the rains of 2007, Cheswick Green was cut off.
- The Parish Council holds a sand bag bank.
- The 'once in a hundred years' flood event has already been exceeded twice in the last 6 years.
- For insurance purposes the B90 postcode is listed as a high flood risk areas and the proposed development will only exacerbate the problem.
- The gradient of Mount Brook and the River Blythe from Cheswick Green to the A34 Stratford Road is insufficient to allow increased accumulation of rain water.
- The proposed reduction of the banks to Mount Brook will damage tree roots of established trees that have Tree Preservation Order status.
- Allowing natural drainage into the Mount Brook and raising floor levels by 600mm (2ft) is not an adequate safeguard.
- Proposed swales will retain water which is a health and safety risk.
- If land becomes flooded, the foul sewer that crosses the site will overflow causing a flood plain of contaminated and diseased water.
- I have personal experience of a large proportion of my back garden, green house and shed flooding.
- Increased run off from tarmac drives and roads will increase flooding to existing homes.
- Average annual rainfall is increasing.
- Flooding is likely to block the access route to the proposed development at Coppice Walk.
- Plans require proper scoping and measures required.

Highways

- The cumulative impacts of proposed development as well as committed developments should be taken into consideration.

- Influx of about 400 extra cars cannot be absorbed on the existing road network. There is already congestion on Creynolds Lane/ Blackford Road/ Stratford Road junctions in the morning peaks.
- Proposed accesses on Tanworth Lane and Coppice Walk are unsuited to traffic increase.
- The Coppice Walk access floods and is located on a bend in the road so providing dangerous conditions for road users, increasing the potential for accidents.
- Parking is already a problem at Cheswick Green and St Patricks.
- Extra traffic from Dickens Heath and Blythe Valley will cut through the area.
- Assessment should take account of potential development of allocated housing sites in Dickens Heath, as well as the uncompleted development in the centre of Dickens Heath, and to the possible major developments at Tidbury Green. These developments will have significant implications for the local highway network.
- Can the proposed pedestrian footpath to Saxon Wood Road be delivered?
- Local buses do not run after 7pm on Sundays.
- Families walk or ride bikes around the village – this will become risky.
- Problems with heavy traffic flows at Cheswick Way by Cheswick Green School leading to Creynolds Lane at peak times.
- Difficult to park outside Tesco.

Character

- Too large a development to be accommodated in Cheswick Green and fails to take account of the established village boundaries.
- 220 houses will increase the village of Cheswick Green by about 30%.
- We must protect our village identity.
- This development would alter the fabric of the village forever.
- Cheswick Green is a village of the 1970s not the 21st Century.
- Density is too high and out of character with the village, which is low density.
- Wouldn't want any three storey development – don't want to become a Dickens Heath.
- Absence of green space.

Neighbour Amenity

- Increase in noise and pollution.
- Light pollution.
- Increase crime.
- Loss of countryside views.
- The public open space proposed at the back of Willow Drive and Saxon Wood Road will pose a security threat to residents.
- Stream will be a magnet for children to play in. Adequate anti-vandal fencing must be provided.

Affordable Housing

- Inappropriate to provide affordable housing in this area because of poor public transport links, lack of access to employment, services, shops, schools and GP places. The Council currently accepts that it is not practical on all sites to achieve its affordable housing target and permits payment of a contribution in lieu which would be more appropriate for this site.
- Affordable housing should provide for local need, not a district need and therefore should not encourage migration from outside the area.

Ecology

- Loss of habitat and wildlife.
- Many mature trees, the majority being English oaks are protected by TPO no.999. This provides a constraint to development due to canopy spread and the need to respect root protection areas.
- Mount Dairy Farm is an important ecological site that makes a valuable contribution to the area and should be preserved.
- The River Blythe is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This development would be harmful to it.
- The following species have been sited on the application site presenting concern for their habitat and continued presence being frogs; toads; newts; bats; foxes; buzzards; herons; kingfishers; cuckoos; goldfinches; sparrow hawks; warblers; butterflies.

POLICY

Solihull Local Plan - Shaping a Sustainable Future December 2013

The policies within the Solihull Local Plan that are relevant to this application are as follows:

Policy P4 Meeting Housing Needs

Policy P5 Provision of Land for Housing

Policy P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access

Policy P8 Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion

Policy P9 Climate Change

Policy P10 Natural Environment

Policy P11 Water Management

Policy P14 Amenity

Policy P15 Securing Design Quality

Policy P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets & Local Distinctiveness

Policy P17 Green Belt / Countryside

Policy P18 Health and Well Being

Policy P20 Provision of open space, children's play, sport and recreation

Policy P21 Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Provision

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF advises that there is presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The NPPF also carries forward the thrust of Government guidance in the Ministerial statement “Planning for Growth” by attributing significant weight in the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

The relevant policies to this application are as follows:

- Part 4 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Part 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Part 7 – Requiring good design
- Part 8 – Promoting healthy communities
- Part 9 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Part 10 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Part 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

SPGs

Affordable Housing

New Housing in Context

Planning Guidelines for Housing Developments

Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans

Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines

Solihull’s Countryside

Financial Considerations

The Localism Act makes provision for local financial considerations to be taken into account as a material consideration in determining a planning application. Such matters may include contributions as a result of section 106 agreements, as these are directly related to the development and necessary to make the proposals acceptable, such considerations will carry significant weight. Other financial considerations, including the benefit as a result of an increased New Homes Bonus (paid to authorities based on the number of new dwellings provided), are more general and whilst are a factor in favour of the grant of permission will only carry limited weight (unless otherwise stated in the later paragraphs of this report).

Planning for Growth

This Ministerial Statement advises that the Government's top priority in reforming the planning system is to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. The Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy. When deciding whether to grant planning permission, local planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development.

Planning History

There is no relevant planning history on the application site.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a parcel of land having an approximate area of 11.36 hectares and is set to managed agricultural land consisting of 3 fields that are defined by mature tree lines and hedgerows. The site is located at the western side of Cheswick Green and extends up to Mount Dairy Farm at its north west boundary. There is an area Tree Preservation Order served on all trees within the application site.

The site comprises two managed arable fields and a marshy grassland compartment to the east, an improved grassland field and a wet woodland compartment to the west and a species poor semi-improved grassland field with scattered and dense scrub to the south. Hedgerows define the majority of field boundaries with a number of mature trees contained within. A single pond is located adjacent to the north west of the site. A public footpath follows the northern boundary and provides a link from Tanworth Lane to Saxon Wood Road.

To the north of the application site is open countryside, separated from the site only by mature trees and hedgerows. The eastern boundary is defined by Mount Brook, which runs north south along the site boundary. The brook also defines the rear boundaries of houses at Saxon Wood Road and Willow Drive whose rear gardens about the application site to the east.

The southern boundary of the application site extends directly onto Coppice Walk. Existing dwellings at Coppice Walk both back onto and front the application site.

To the south west are long rear gardens of houses to Tanworth Lane, and are further separated from the site by an existing track that provides access to these rear gardens and defines the site boundary. Beyond this and within the

application site is an area of broadleaved semi-natural wet woodland. Mount Dairy Farm defines the western boundary.

The site forms an east facing slope that ends at a small valley defined by Mount Brook running along its eastern boundary. Land is highest to the north west at Tanworth Lane (139 metres Above Ordnance Datum) sloping downwards to 130m AOD at the south eastern corner. The existing settlement of Cheswick Green forms the west facing slope from the brook rising to around 140m AOD. It is noteworthy that Mount Brook joins the River Blythe south of the application site, where the River Blythe itself flows around the southern edge of the village.

Cheswick Green has a single form entry Primary School, which is located approximately 600m to the east of the site. The nearest secondary school is Light Hall school located on Stretton Road, 3km to the north.

Cheswick Green benefits from a Post Office, two convenience stores, a village surgery and pharmacy, Dalton Pharmacy and the Saxon Public House as well as its village hall. The village is within a 5-10 minute walk from the application site. Larger retail centres can be accessed at the Solihull Retail Park in Shirely, north of the site at the A34 which includes a Sainsbury supermarket. Tesco Extra is located to the east towards junction 4 of the M42.

The village is served by the S4 bus route, where existing bus stops are approximately 250m to the east of the site at Cheswick Way, as well as being adjacent to the proposed site entrance at Tanworth Lane. The S4 provides a half hourly service accessing Solihull town centre within a 15minute journey time.

Two other bus services pass through Cheswick Green. The 823 operated by Claribles provides access to Solihull Station and can be reached from Watery Lane. The 519 service operated by the West Midlands Special Needs Transport can be accessed along Vicarage Road and Salter Street. Both services operate two services a day.

The nearest railway station is Whitlocks End, found approximately 3km to the northwest. However, Solihull Station located 4.5km to the north east can be accessed using the S4 bus service.

MAIN ISSUES

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Principle of Development
- Design and Layout
- Neighbour Amenity
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ecology
- Affordable Housing
- Drainage
- Sustainability Credentials

- Archaeology
- Highways
- Community Infrastructure

APPRAISAL

Statement of Community Involvement

The NPPF recognises that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

In this regard, the applicant has sought pre-application advice from Council officers and statutory consultees. The applicant also organised a public exhibition at the Cheswick Green Village Hall, Cheswick Way on Thursday 27th June from 2.00pm to 8.00pm. About 2,750 leaflets were delivered to homes and businesses in the surrounding area. The leaflet included a concept plan, details of the exhibition, venue and website. The leaflet contained a pre-paid postage response form for comments. In addition, emails and letters were also sent to ward councillors and parish councillors, local community groups and local organisations who were all asked to cascade the information to its members. An advert was also placed in the Solihull, Shirley and Arden Observer newspapers.

On the day of the public consultation an 'A' board advertising the event was placed outside the venue to encourage people to 'drop in'. The exhibition consisted of exhibition boards explaining the proposals in the round, a second dealing with flooding. Representatives from the project team were on hand to discuss the proposals and answer specific questions. Comments forms as well as the previously sent leaflets that included a freepost comment were made available on the day of the event. Two 'general' thought boards were available where people were encouraged to add their general comments or suggestions.

A feedback session was arranged with Parish Councillors on Monday 12th August at 6pm.

215 people attended the public exhibition where 117 comments were left on the thoughts board. 63 responses were received from the Freepost reply paid forms, with a clear majority of responders living within a 5 to 10 minute walk from the site. A website containing the exhibition information went live from 14th June 2013 until 14th July 2013 and attracted 504 visits with 41 people leaving comments.

Flooding was the most frequently raised issue with concern that the development would exacerbate an already unsatisfactory situation. Affordable housing, highway considerations and community facilities were also raised.

In terms of the consultation process carried out before submission, I consider that the procedures undertaken by the applicant were in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and advice contained in the NPPF.

Principle of Development

The site is allocated by Policy P5 (Site ref. 21 – Land at Mount Dairy Farm, Tanworth Lane, Cheswick Green) of the Local Plan, for release in Phase Three (post April 2023).

The Local Plan identifies sufficient housing land supply for fifteen years. This is the first time the Council has planned for such a long period ahead and it was considered necessary to phase the release of housing sites to support the West Midlands urban renaissance strategy, the Local Plan spatial strategy and to ensure a continuous supply of market and affordable housing throughout the Plan period. Land for around 750 dwellings on green field sites in less accessible village locations is phased back in two periods (2018-2023 and 2023-2028). The application site is one of the sites programmed for release in the last phase.

There were objections to the phasing policy from all of the landowners of sites included in Phases two and three. Evidence of the need for phasing was considered in full at the Local Plan examination and there has been no material change in circumstance since.

Firstly phasing is important to support the Strategic Policy Framework for the West Midlands which has at its heart the urban renaissance strategy. The urban renaissance strategy seeks to focus growth in areas in need of investment and regeneration and reverse the trend of decentralisation of economically active population away from the conurbation. The majority of Solihull housing growth (65%) is projected to be from net in-migration (principally from Birmingham). Solihull is a high demand housing market area, without phasing it is likely that all of the phase two and three sites will be delivered during phase one (evidenced by the early delivery of sites allocated by the previous development plan and the pressure from landowners and developers to release the phase two and three sites now). This is likely to accelerate the projected rate of in-migration into Solihull villages away from the conurbation which would undermine the objectives of the urban renaissance strategy.

Secondly the phasing policy is important to the Local Plan strategy. The Local Plan spatial strategy priority for housing growth is within the regeneration area to help support the regeneration programme, followed by the most accessible locations within the Borough, particularly the town centres. Early delivery of sites within the most desirable housing market areas is likely to undermine delivery in the priority growth areas.

Thirdly phasing is important to secure continuous delivery of market and affordable housing throughout the whole Plan period. Housing land supply is

already significantly weighted towards Phase one to address the issues of undersupply which have resulted from high levels of demolition and site clearance in the initial years of the North Solihull Regeneration Programme; the recent period of recession and poor housing market conditions which have offered little incentive to developers to bring windfall sites and sites with planning permission forward and the restricted availability of large strategic sites caused by the majority of the UDP sites having been built out early in the Plan period and Local Plan sites not being formalised. In respect of market housing, early delivery of the majority of the strategic sites will increase the rate of migration into Solihull during phase one and reduce the availability of new housing supply to meet the demands of local households later in the Plan period. In respect of affordable housing, increasing the weighting of delivery of new build affordable housing will restrict supply later in the Plan period and therefore reduce the supply affordable housing to those in priority need further on.

In support of the phasing policy, the Inspector concluded:

“In an area of relatively high demand like Solihull, it is important to ensure that housing sites are not all developed within the early years of the Plan period, otherwise there may be pressures on existing facilities and infrastructure and little land would remain for development in later years. Without phasing, it could also lead to increased migration from outside Solihull and begin to undermine the urban renaissance strategy. Phasing also enables the priorities of the spatial strategy to be reflected, in this instance, the focus on the main urban area and regeneration areas.” (Report on the Examination into the Solihull Local Plan Development Plan Document, paragraphs 100 – 102).

Policy P5 states sites will not be released for development before they reach their specified phase, unless housing land supply falls below NPPF deliverable housing land supply requirements. Local authorities are currently required to identify and maintain five years housing land supply (plus a buffer of 5% in Solihull's case). The Council submitted evidence to demonstrate that this requirement is met on adoption of the Local Plan to the Local Plan examination and there have been no material changes to reduce the supply of deliverable housing sites since.

The number of dwellings likely to be delivered on each of the sites included within the five year housing land supply has been re-examined and has increased as sites have progressed towards delivery. This indicates that the council has a 5.6 year land supply for housing.

The site should not therefore be released for development at this time.

Design and Layout

An indicative master plan for the site demonstrates that 220 dwellings can be successfully accommodated on this parcel of land.

The proposed layout plan provides for two main accesses into the site, the first from Tanworth Lane at the north west boundary and the second from Cheswick Way to the south of the site. These points are connected by Main Street, which provides the principal road through the development. Key areas of existing landscaping, namely the field boundary trees and hedgerows are retained and help inform important areas of open space within the site. Perimeter block development is derived taking account of these key characteristics and in doing so help provide a permeable and legible settlement that has active street frontages that helps create a safe and attractive environment, avoiding dead ends and cul-de-sacs.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted in support of the application. This document gives a clear justification to the development where a concept plan has been devised that takes account of site opportunities and constraints. These studies have combined to ensure an effective layout of development is devised. Landmark buildings are identified at key junctions. These, along with focal points within the public realm and a clear hierarchy of primary, secondary routes together with shared surfaces throughout the development helps ensure that the proposals provide legibility and permeability to the scheme. The applicant points out those landmark buildings need not necessarily be made prominent through an increased height, rather they can be identified through use of variations in materials, colour, frontage treatment or architectural style.

Given the outline nature of the application, exact details of the proposed house type is yet to be submitted. However, a robust contextual survey has already been undertaken of existing housing at Cheswick Green to identify key features of local distinctiveness. This study will help inform future detailed design and appearance of houses.

The master plan demonstrates the variety and hierarchy in street spaces will be achieved. Main Street passing through the centre of the site and linking the two main vehicular accesses off Tanworth Lane and Cheswick Walk is given supremacy through the use of planting verges, pedestrian footways and front gardens that are consistently defined on each side of the street. This produces a successfully defined and enclosed street that has stature and clear legibility through the site. Secondary streets are accessed from Main Street and act as intermediate streets giving access to quieter private drives. These streets are characterised by a built form set closer to the back edge of the pavement separated from it by front gardens. These streets mainly provide a shared surface with pedestrians. Here traffic calming measures such as raised tables with rumble strips will encourage slower motorist speeds and will alert motorists to a change in environment. Lastly, private drives are found within quiet residential areas and are characterised by buildings being set back at varying distances to create more interesting street scene. Here trees can be planted strategically to help motorists navigate the space whilst softening the use of hard paving materials. Such tree planting,

together with a narrowing of road width helps provide an ambiguous space that forces the motorist to reduce their speed, creating a safer environment for pedestrians to use.

Officers are satisfied that the layout of development provides a good movement framework across the site where pedestrians and cyclists are given primacy over the private car.

Character areas have been identified being Main Street, Green Lanes and Core Family Housing. Each character area will contain its own individual design element. This includes changes to built form principles, changes in form, height, materials, set backs, landscape treatments, architectural detailing, colour and use of materials.

Built form of Main Street is intended to reflect its importance as a movement corridor and a place. Here, the street composition intends to provide variety through varied use of house types. The second character area is identified as Green Lanes, which is the area of development facing out northwards towards open countryside. Here dwellings have a looser fit in the streetscene and are at lower density. Buildings are intended to have an increased depth to be greater presence within the street. The final character area is one of core family housing and represents the majority of residential areas. Here the built form is located closer to the back of pavements with a mix of streets and shared surface streets to mark the progression from the core housing areas to the Green Lanes. The area is intended to provide an urban core to the development at a greater density. Hard surface materials are broken by key strategic landscaping and variations in ridge height and materials will create an interesting street scene whilst maintaining Cheswick Green's character.

Officers have requested some design changes to the central area of the site, where proposed areas of public open space lack active frontages and surveillance. Amendments have also been sought to housing mix, where, in line with Policy P4 and the SHMA (2009) a greater number of smaller units is needed in order that local need is met. Amended plans have been received to respond to overlooking at the middle of the site, but at the time of writing details on housing mix have not been received. Nevertheless, such matters could adequately be dealt with through appropriate condition, should the application be approved.

In the round, the submitted master plan is considered a successful piece of urban design. The site integrates well with Cheswick Green and provides clear opportunities to connect with the wider settlement by existing public footpaths as well as new vehicular and pedestrian routes. The layout is permeable and good use of landmark buildings and road hierarchy ensures the development remains legible. The existing landscape structure is supported and integrated into the public realm as well as providing the opportunity for landscape enhancement through new street trees, areas of public open space and informal play.

The proposal is considered acceptable and compliant with Policy P15 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Neighbour Amenity

Policy P14 of the Solihull Local Plan seeks to protect the amenity of existing and potential occupiers of houses when considering new developments. Careful consideration must be made to amenity of both existing neighbours, as well as future occupiers of the proposed dwellings.

The application site shares boundaries to rear gardens of existing houses at Saxon Wood Drive, Willow Drive, Cheswick Walk and Tanworth Lane where these properties span the east, south and west boundary of the application site respectively. The proposed scheme has considered neighbour amenity with care. In terms of impacts to existing residents, a generous green buffer is retained between the application site and its neighbours. Between 70m and 100m separation exists between built form of the development site with residents at Saxon Wood Drive and Willow Way and 170m separates houses at Tanworth Lane. The upper half of the application site at its western boundary provides more of a pinch point to existing residents at Tanworth Lane, but even here in excess of 21m is retained between developments which maintain rear boundaries against rear boundaries.

Third party objectors have, amongst other considerations, raised concern for security of their homes where the rear boundary of their homes will now join a development site and its associated public open space. Officers have considered this point and suggest that should planning permission be given, then planning conditions can be imposed to require details of perimeter planting and boundary treatment to be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

Suitable other conditions should be added to any consent to ensure that noise and dust during construction phases are mitigated against – this is normally dealt with via a construction method statement which would be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. Lighting of the application would also be considered at a more detailed reserved matters application or by condition.

In terms of amenity of future residents, the master plan demonstrates that rear gardens face rear gardens with separation distances between houses meeting 21m, so avoiding unacceptable overlooking. Rear gardens range in size from around 11m to 8m depth. Given the generous areas of open space and play areas that are easily accessible to all, officers are content that private gardens are sufficient in size.

For the above reasons the proposals are considered compliant with Policy P14 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The proposed development lies on an east facing slope and therefore has a greatest impact on properties at the eastern and western boundaries within the north of the site at Tanworth Lane and Saxon Wood Road where views of the development would be made from people's rear windows. Views would be made elsewhere where impacts would lessen over time with the maturity of vegetation planted. It is also noteworthy that the site is identified as a strategic housing site within the Solihull Local Plan and therefore impacts of development have already been considered in the round and found acceptable.

Your landscape architect has considered the application and makes the following observations: It is appreciated that the application is outline only, however the detail provided within the proposed site layout Drwg B.0294_05C is sufficient to make general comments. More detail will be required particularly in order to fully understand the site circulation, especially pedestrian routes and cycleways, including links to any existing assets, but this would be developed at reserved matters stage.

The area lies within the Arden Pastures Landscape Character Area; typically an enclosed landscape, characterised by small fields boarded by mature hedgerows and trees. Fields are often visually contained by trees creating filtered views and a strong sense of enclosure. The site is typical of this and this is borne out in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

The mature trees on site benefit from an area TPO (Ref 999) which is in the process of being revised to a more detailed group T.P.O. The drawing provided (together with the arboricultural assessment) suggests a good level of tree retention which is to be applauded but the retention of the existing hedges are a little less clear. The hedges form an important feature of the site and in general are to be protected where possible.

The indicative layout plan is unclear on proposed planting, however as a matter of principal new tree planting should be located within the public highway as well as private gardens to ensure that there is a good level of retention throughout the life of the development.

The drawing still suggests the provision of a new locally equipped area of play which is not appropriate in this location due the presence of an existing play area within the village. It is felt that an offsite contribution (as requested within Section 106) for the refurbishment and enhancement is a better solution. A 'doorstep park' and natural play should still be provided on site.

The site has good opportunities to provide landscape and ecological and habitat enhancement especially within the areas of the proposed swale/attenuation pond and wet woodland. The attenuation pond appears to be designed to be permanently / semi permanently wet as we would be expected, these should be maintained with some permanent water content to enhance biodiversity and enhance amenity value. There are also Health and safety implications, with current thinking being that it is better to have some permanent volume of water and therefore recognised as a water body (with depth markers) rather than sometimes containing water and sometimes not.

The above approach is supported by SMBC drainage officers.

It is felt that a planning condition should be developed for the future protection of the sites existing and proposed hedgerows as well as seeking requirements for Landscape, habitat and drainage management plans. Additional conditions that seek mitigation in the form of additional planting to reinforce the northern boundary with the existing green belt and neighbouring residential properties as required should also be attached to any consent.

Financial contributions for maintenance of the open space, way marking, natural play, street furniture and contributions towards off-site play has been requested and total £439,941.48.

On this basis the proposal is considered in accordance to Policies P10 and P20 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Ecology

A phase 1 Habitat survey has been conducted and a report produced for the site and a Ecological Appraisal has been submitted in conjunction with application submissions. In addition, a number of meetings have taken place between the applicant's and SMBC ecologists. Your ecologist reports that the principle of development is accepted with regard to the ecological impacts on the current biodiversity with the proviso that the reserve matters applications retain the marshy semi-improved grassland to the north-east, the hedgerows and appropriate management of the flood relief scheme surrounding the eastern boundary of the development is secured. This will also require that the wet woodland to the south west of the site is secured and enhanced. He reports that all these features will require future mitigation that can be secured through planning condition and any S106 legal agreement.

With regard to protected species, there are a number of trees that have been identified with low to moderate potential for bats. These features will require protection and/or further investigation to inform any future works, and can be secured through condition and delivered at reserved matters stage.

A biodiversity impact assessment has been undertaken on the site and assessed by your consultant ecologist. It is agreed that the development would result in a gain, or neutral impact. As a consequence officers are content that the proposals are acceptable and no financial contributions to mitigate against effects to flora and fauna will be required, but a landscape management plan should still be secured within a S106 agreement to ensure this biodiversity gain is delivered. Accordingly, subject to appropriate conditions the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy P10 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Affordable Housing

Throughout the lifetime of the application 40% on site affordable housing has been secured within this development. At the time of writing, the applicant is yet to agree the split of 65% social rent and 35% shared ownership sought by your housing officers in accordance with Policy P4 of the Solihull Local Plan. However, such discussions can be progressed through negotiations involved in the S106 agreement.

Given the outline nature of the application precise details of where these units would be located and their clustering and size remain outstanding, but officers are content that this can be determined at reserved matters stage. Your housing officer would wish to see clusters of affordable housing of between 8 and 10 dwellings, with the housing being tenure blind and integrated into the open market. All properties also need to be built to a HCA DQS design standards. Importantly, the applicant has expressed a commitment to this provision and affordable housing will appear within any S106 associated with the development.

Some residents of Cheswick Green who have commented on the application, including Cheswick Green Parish Council as well as Solihull Ratepayers Association, all question the need for on site affordable housing, and instead consider it more appropriate for off-site commuted sums to be negotiated and agreed. Your housing strategy officer has considered this. He comments that the requirement for the provision of affordable housing is justified on the basis that Solihull has a high level of unmet housing need, as evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). Within the Local Plan, Policy 4 (a) Affordable Housing is set on a Borough wide basis. This reflects the fact that needs cannot always be met where they arise, so use has to be made of the development opportunities that become available. Therefore any development may need to contribute in providing for needs of the whole Borough.

Officers consider that the application site is in a location where accessibility to employment, centres and a range of services and facilities is acceptable for all housing - both open market and affordable. On this basis the proposal is compliant with Policy P4 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy P11 'Water Management' requires new development to, amongst other considerations, take account of surface and ground water systems to include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary.

As part of the application proposal, a flood risk assessment has been submitted, which was also amended by the applicant during the application stage to take account of comments made by the Environment Agency and SMBC as Local Lead Flooding Authority.

The application site is located to the west of Mount Brook and north of the River Blythe. Mount Brook runs along the eastern boundary of the site in a southward direction and joins the River Blythe 150m downstream of the site.

Both watercourses are classified as 'Main River' and fall under the jurisdiction of the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency Flood Map shows that the eastern part of the site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, due to the Mount Brook, and therefore has a medium to high risk of flooding. The rest of the site is located within Flood Zone 1. Due to the sites hillside location and clay soil there is a risk of surface water runoff being generated, and these overland flow routes being redirected on to third party land as a result of the development. An existing foul sewer runs parallel to the Mount Brook within the edge of site, which also poses a potential risk.

Proposed housing of the site is therefore located within Flood Zone 1 and lies above the 1 in 1000 year flood level. This will help mitigate the risk of fluvial flooding and raise the development above the existing sewer thereby mitigating the potential risk of foul flooding also. It is recommended that the proposed development Finished Floor Levels are set 600mm above the 1 in 100 year + 20% floodplain, to include an allowance for climate change and to mitigate against surface water flooding.

It is acknowledged that the access at Coppice Walk could be inundated in events over a 1 in 100 year flood. The second access at Tanworth Lane is on higher ground and is entirely within Flood Zone 1 and therefore will ensure that the development is not cut off from the wider settlement, thus ensuring safe access and egress is provided to the site during times of flood. Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDS) are introduced to the site. This should therefore enable an environmentally sensitive solution to surface water drainage attenuation and assist in the reduction of flood risk. The aim of SUDS is to:

- Mimic or better, the surface water regime on site that is present prior to development;
- Protect and enhance water quality; and
- Encourage natural groundwater to recharge, thus causing minimal change to the hydrological and hydro ecological profile on site and in the surrounding area.

A surface water drainage system is to be provided that seeks to limit discharge from the site to the Mount Brook. Storm water storage will be provided within the site with capacity for events up to the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event. It is proposed that attenuation is provided through the use of on-site ponds, swales, wetlands and detention basins in order to provide a level of treatment to surface water prior to its discharge into the adjacent watercourse. It is also proposed that permeable materials and other source control techniques such as, bio-retention and filter drains are considered to further help reduce run off volume from the development. Swales are preferable to piped drainage systems in conveying surface water through the site.

Your consultant drainage officer has considered the scheme, alongside the Environment Agency. At the time of writing, the drainage strategy is yet to be agreed with concerns cited for baseline flows through which modelling has occurred. These present substantial concerns and until they are resolved there remains a holding objection from the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency has passed the assessment of this application to SMBC who are the Local Lead Flood Authority.

SMBC Drainage officers note: The site is within the flood plain and the hydraulic modelling has yet to be finalised to confirm the flood extents and depths and therefore the impacts of the proposed development upon the new and existing residents. Therefore, we recommend that the hydraulic modelling is finalised to a stage where it will provide certainty in the feasibility of the design put forward within the FRA to demonstrate that all aspects of the design can be implemented within constraints of the masterplan. We are therefore in a position where we object to the proposals.

For the above reasons and at the time of writing, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy P11 Water Management of the Solihull Local Plan.

Sustainability Credentials

The application proposal seeks to provide sustainable development in the round and its detail is considered within this report.

The energy needs of the development and thus carbon reduction is taken seriously by the applicant who intend to achieve residential dwellings at level 3 in relation to Code for Sustainable Homes. This standard therefore supports the Government's desire to achieve new housing stock that is 70% more efficient than pre 1990 standards. Construction of the dwellings will therefore achieve nationally recognised standards, minimising thermal loss which will result in lower demand for energy heating. Careful consideration will also be given to the use of materials, including waste and water, in both the construction and operational phases.

It is noteworthy that the proposal would help provide sustainable economic growth as advocated in the NPPF. This is supported by the January 2013 Key Messages Paper produced by the Home Builders Federation. This Paper reports that even in the current economic crisis, housing supply accounts for around 3% of UK GDP, and provides between 1 and 1.25 million jobs in the UK. Each home built creates 1.5 full time direct jobs, and about twice as many that number is created within the supply chain. The paper also indicates that for every £1 spent on housing, £3 is put back into the economy because 90% of building materials are made in the UK, so the impact on communities is almost immediate.

On this basis the proposal is considered compliant with Policy P10 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Archaeology

A desk based archaeological assessment has been completed by the applicant and its content considered by Warwickshire Field Museum. No designated heritage assets are present within the application site or its immediate vicinity. A low potential for Prehistoric remains exists along the Brook at the eastern boundary, but given this is not to be developed, any such archaeological remains would remain in situ.

On this basis no objection is raised subject to condition. The proposal is considered in accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF as well as Policy

P16 of the Solihull Local Plan.

Highways

The development would result in up to 220 dwellings with two points of access at B4102 Tanworth Lane and Coppice Walk.

B4102 Tanworth Lane forms part of a radial route into Solihull Town Centre. The road is subject to a 40mph speed limit but its wide nature results in prevailing 85th percentile speeds above the posted speed limit at 45mph in each direction in the vicinity of the access. Coppice Walk is a typical residential access road with a 6.0m wide carriageway, street lighting and is flanked on both side by footway. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit and its tight geometry naturally moderates vehicle speed.

Accessibility

The site is located directly west of Cheswick Green Village. As part of a scheme of off-site highway works, the applicant proposes footway works and uncontrolled crossings on Tanworth Lane which would link the site with existing bus stops.

Policy P7 of the Solihull Local Plan sets out accessibility criteria that development should meet, in terms of linear distance and route characteristics (relative attractiveness and perceived safety). The policy goes on to state that investment in improvements to local public transport provision, cycling and / or walking measures will be sought in association with development proposals which do not meet the accessibility criteria set out by this policy. The table below assesses the site accessibility credentials against that set out within policy P7

Service/Facility	Local Plan Criterion	Site Distance*	Attractiveness of route	Consistent with Policy P7?
Primary School	800m	800m	A continuous footway to Cheswick Primary School is available through an urban network of footways	✓

			with street lighting and good levels of natural surveillance.	
Foodstore	800m	300m (3000m)	Fresh food at Cheswick Way is 300m from site but is not considered to offer a good range of day to day facilities. Nearest convenience store is in Dickens Heath centre but this well outside realistic walking parameters.	✓
GP	800m	300m	A continuous footway to GP is available through an urban network of footways with street lighting and good levels of natural surveillance.	✓
High Frequency (every 15mins) bus stop	400m	2000m	Nearest high frequency bus service located at A34 Stratford Road, outside desirable and maximum walking parameters.	x
High Frequency (three per hour) train service	800m	4100m	Nearest rail station is Whitlock's End, well outside of realistic walking parameters. Bus interchange at Solihull Train Station using service S4 is more realistic.	x
Bus stop	400m	200m	Direct footway access to half hourly bus service available.	N/A

*From site access at Coppice Walk

The table above shows that the development is well located in terms of access to day to day facilities. Access to public transport is however not within the required parameters; the nearest high frequency bus service is outside desirable walking distances and the nearest train station (Whitlocks End) is not only outside of realistic distance parameters but also along a route without benefit of continuous footway and which could not be defined as attractive. Access to a half hourly bus service (service S4) is available in close proximity to the site accesses at Tanworth Lane and Coppice Walk but this service is daytime only Monday to Saturday (last outbound service leaving at 17.53 and

inbound service arriving at 18:47) with no services on a Sunday. This is likely to be a significant barrier to accessing employment and facilities outside of the village, particularly rail connections.

With the above in mind, it is considered that improvements to access to bus services are required to make the development acceptable in policy terms, through revenue support for existing bus services to provide half hourly daytime services and evening and weekend services and/or travel planning measures in the form of personalised travel planning to the wider Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green area (to assist increasing bus patronage) and/or subsidised bus travel. To secure these improvements, a contribution of £133.5.k is sought equating to a contribution of £600 per property which is considered proportionate to the development and consistent with the CIL regulations and NPPF.

In summary, the site is not considered to be in an accessible location as defined by Policy P7 of the Solihull Local Plan. However, subject to the S106 contributions and works to improve pedestrian connections to bus stops at Tanworth Lane, as detailed above, it is considered that the accessibility issues can be acceptably mitigated.

Highway Capacity

The development could generate around 160 two-way movements in each AM peak and PM peak. These trip rates are based on data contained within TRICS database and are considered reasonable

The trips have been adjusted to include forecast background traffic growth up to 2018 and additionally include growth arising from traffic associated with the allocated local plan sites in the vicinity, namely development at Braggs Farm and land at Dickens Heath Road. The development trips have then been distributed on the network using existing turning count data and used to model the following junctions:-

- A34 Stratford Road/Blackford Road roundabout
- Blackford Road/Dog Kennel Lane
- Tanworth Lane/Dickens Heath Road

The modelling shows all junctions operating within theoretical levels of capacity in 2018 except for the junctions of A34 Stratford Road/Blackford Road roundabout. However, this junction is already operating above its theoretical level of capacity and the development would only increase traffic throughput at this junction by an average of 1.6%. This level of increase is not at such a level which is likely to have a severe impact on the operation of the junction in your highway officer's opinion

No modelling has been undertaken at the A34 Stratford Road/A34 Creynolds Lane junction. The development would result in a 2.0% and 1.7% increase in traffic flows at the junction in the AM and PM peak hour respectively and likely to add an average maximum demand of two additional vehicles per signal

cycle. This level of increase is not at such a level which is likely to have a severe impact on the operation of the junction in your highway officer's opinion.

Impact of potential other development coming forward

As well as the two local plan sites considered as part of this application, there are a number of other planning applications for residential development (two of which are not allocated within the local plan) close to the site which are currently being considered by either the Council or the Planning Inspectorate.

It should be noted that the modelling completed by the applicant for the 2018 scenario would have inherently assumed additional traffic growth arising from development over and above the local plan sites specifically considered in the transport assessment. That notwithstanding, officers have completed a further qualitative assessment of the cumulative traffic impact of all these development being implemented and occupied within 5 years. For Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green, this assessment specifically includes:

- 72 dwellings at land at Braggs Farm, Rumbush Lane, Dickens Heath (allocated within the Local Plan)
- 130 dwellings at land at Dickens Heath Road, Dickens Heath (allocated within the Local Plan)
- 190 dwellings at Land at Tidbury Green Farm, Tidbury Green (not allocated within the Local Plan)
- 220 dwellings at Lowbrook Farm, Tidbury Green (not allocated within the Local Plan but currently under consideration by the Planning Inspectorate following Public Inquiry in early autumn 2013)

Highway Link (Road) Impact

The total increase in flows on the main distributor roads in Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green are outlined within the table below

	Existing AM 2-way flow	Cumulative development flows	%age increase	Existing PM 2-way flow	Cumulative development flows	%age increase
Rumbush Lane	142	40	28%	136	40	29%
Lowbrook Lane	532	131	25%	536	133	25%
Tilehouse Lane	536	54	10%	380	52	14%
Fulford Hall Road	399	171	43%	243	192	79%
Dickens Heath Road S/W	538	189	35%	431	208	48%

village Dickens Heath Road N/W village Tanworth Lane						
	1080	189	18%	1121	208	19%
	1900	259	14%	1918	278	15%

The table shows that there will be a noticeable increase in traffic on the main distributor roads through Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green, particularly on Dickens Heath Road and Fulford Hall Road.

An increase in traffic, however, is not in itself a reason to refuse development on traffic grounds. In the case of each of the roads detailed above, the increase in vehicles in absolute terms is not at such a level that it would result in insufficient capacity on highway links that would otherwise lead to driver delay and congestion. Moreover, the increase in traffic on these roads as a result of this development is modest.

Highway Junction Impact

The cumulative traffic impact at each key junction around Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green has further been considered. Whilst no detailed modelling has been undertaken of a scenario whereby specifically all five residential sites are implemented, your highway officer has been able to consolidate and reconcile the traffic data submitted in each application with on site observations during the peak periods to qualitatively assess the anticipated impact on key junctions.

Dickens Heath Road/Tilehouse Lane/Lowbrook Lane/Fulford Hall Road crossroads

With all developments being implemented, this junction is likely to operate outside of its practical capacity on the Lowbrook Lane of the junction in the AM peak. Whilst theoretically, there is the potential for congestion, in practise congestion at this junction is considered very unlikely as drivers would gain a time-cost saving by redistributing along Norton Lane and Fulford Hall Road (which requires only a short detour).

Moreover, as detailed above, there is considerable peak spreading within the peak periods at this junction and any congestion is short lived and experienced only for a short duration.

Fulford Hall Road/Norton Lane

This junction is currently operating well within observed levels of capacity. When adding development traffic and the potential for some traffic redistribution from Dickens Heath Road/Tilehouse Lane/Lowbrook

Lane/Fulford Hall Road crossroads, the junction would still be expected to operate within capacity.

Dickens Heath Road/Tanworth Lane roundabout.

The addition of all development will result in a c.15% increase in throughput at this junction. Baseline modelling completed within the transport assessment submitted for this application and the application for development at Dickens Heath Road shows this junction to be currently operating within capacity. The addition of all residential development is likely to result in the junction operating close or at theoretical levels of capacity. Again, in practise the effect of peak spreading and redistribution would limit this.

Creynolds Lane/A34 Stratford Road

The development traffic from the Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green sites is unlikely to impact on the operation of Creynolds Lane as the most direct routes to the M42 and A3400 would be via A34 Stratford Road and Illshalw Heath Road/Kineton Lane respectively. The development at Shirley Golf Club is likely to add a further two vehicles per cycle at the junction. During the AM peak, the proposed and Shirley Golf Club developments may lead to additional queuing on the Creynolds Lane arm of the junction.

However, the Council, as part of the West Midlands Urban Traffic Control project, will shortly be installing MOVA at this junction. MOVA is a smart traffic control system which, in congested traffic condition, operates in a 'capacity maximising mode'. This mode assesses which approaches are overloaded and how efficiently the green is being used and determines a set of signal timings which will maximise the throughput of the junction under the prevailing conditions. Department for Transport evidence suggests that MOVA can reduce delays by an average of 13%.

The installation with MOVA and, as detailed above, the likely effect of peak spreading and redistribution would limit the impact development at this junction.

The cumulative effect of the five planning applications currently being considered for residential development in Dickens Heath, Tidbury Green and Cheswick Green is likely to result in a noticeable increase in peak hour traffic on local distributor roads in Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green. However, these traffic levels would not be at such a level where link (road) capacity would be compromised.

Importantly, the impact of this specific development in Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green is likely to be modest given that traffic accessing services and facilities or the strategic road network is unlikely to route via Dickens Heath Road or make a turning movement into/from the junction of Lowbrook Lane/Fulford Hall Road/Dickens Heath/Tilehouse Lane - the road and junction which respectively experience the biggest cumulative impact of the developments coming forward.

Conversely, the development traffic from the Dickens Heath and Tidbury Green sites is unlikely to impact on the operation of Creynolds Lane as the most direct routes to the M42 and A3400 would be via A34 Stratford Road and Illshalw Heath Road/Kineton Lane respectively.

It also needs to be borne in mind that:

- Para. 32 of the NPPF states '*development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe*'. It is not considered that the effect of the development would meet this test, particularly given the highway improvements in speed reduction, road safety and contributions to bus services.
- The above assessment should be considered as a very worst case scenario as some of the sites are not allocated within the local plan and, therefore, it is unlikely that they will all come forward and be brought into use in the five-year transport assessment period.
- The potential for significant improvements to bus services along with personalised travel planning (through the implementation of a residential travel plan) to the wider Dickens Heath and Cheswick Green area is likely to reduce vehicle demand in the peak hours.

Safety

Personal injury accident data has been interrogated over a wide area around the site. There have been no recorded injury accidents along Tanworth Lane in vicinity of the proposed site access.

There has been one recorded injury accident at the junction of B4102 with Watery Lane which caused serious injury and involved a vehicle pulling out of Watery Lane and colliding with a cyclist.

There have been three recorded accidents at the crossroad junction of Creynolds Lane/Vicarage Road/Watery Lane/Illshaw Heath Road. The first accident caused serious injury and was as a result of a vehicle colliding with another vehicle which was performing a 'u' turn in the junction. The cause of this accident was reported as being the highway layout. The second accident caused slight injury resulted from a vehicle pulling out of Creynolds Lane and colliding with a vehicle. The cause of this accident was again reported as being the highway layout. The third accident, causing slight injury, resulted in a vehicle overshooting the junction from Creynolds Lane and colliding with a vehicle travelling along Vicarage Road.

At this particular junction, the development would generate 33 two-way trips in the AM peak and 48 two-way trips in the PM peak. This increase in trips will result in a relative material increase in junction throughput and, in your

highway officer's view, warrants further mitigation works by the applicant to reduce the risk of increased incidence of accidents. Such a scheme would consist of speed reduction measures on the approach to the junction, provision of a table-top hump on the junction itself and improved signing, lining and lighting. The scheme could be secured via an appropriately worded Grampian style negatively worded condition.

Conclusion on Transportation

Subject to a scheme of off-site highway works to (i) provide footway access to bus stops on Tanworth Lane (ii) reduce the likelihood of additional risk accidents at the crossroad junction of Creynolds Lane/Micarage Road/Watery Lane/Ilshaw Heath Road arising from the development and a S106 contribution for £133.5k to enhance and incentivise bus use (service S4), the development is considered acceptable from a transportation and highway perspective.

Community Infrastructure

Third party objectors to this proposal have described community facilities such as the local schools and doctors as being full without capacity to take on any further population growth.

Paragraph 173 of the NPPF warns that pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision taking. Where safeguards are necessary to make a development acceptable, then the development should not be approved unless the remedy can be secured through condition or by an obligation. Paragraph 204 of the Framework carries onto say that obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

In this regard, colleagues in Health and Education have considered this scheme, alongside other applications as identified within the history section of this report, to consider long term impacts of development should planning permission be granted. Financial contributions have been requested from the developer for improvements to the local doctors at Cheswick Green as well as for improvements to local primary schools.

£19,039.00 has been requested towards improving facilities at the Doctors surgery in Cheswick Green.

£667,393.65 has been requested for improvements to primary schools so that the shortfall in pupil spaces can be met in the village and similarly £764,284.16 is sought for secondary school provision. These sums have been put to the developer supported by a robust justification. The monies are considered to be directly related to the development, necessary to make the

proposal acceptable and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. The request for such monies are considered policy compliant with Regulation 122 of CIL (the Community Infrastructure Levy) as well as to Paragraph 204 of the NPPF.

Subject to the applicant agreeing to these requests the development accords with relevant development plan policy.

CONCLUSION

The application has been submitted in outline with all matters reserved except access. Nevertheless a developed housing layout has been submitted to allow due assessment to be made of these proposals for up to 220 houses. Following receipt of amended plans, your urban designer is content that the planning layout is acceptable and takes due regard to its edge of village location.

Third parties that have written to object to the proposal draw attention to existing flooding that takes place at Mount Brook, itself a short distance from the River Blythe which is approximately 0.12km south of the application site. Careful consideration has been taken of the flood management scheme submitted that has required its amendment.

Financial contributions have been requested for education, health, highways, affordable housing, landscape and drainage. At the time of writing it is unknown as to whether all these requests have been agreed with the applicant. Members will be updated at Committee.

Nevertheless, although the application site is identified within the Solihull Local Plan as a strategic housing site, it falls within Phase 3 of development for release on 1st April 2023. The Inspector to the Local Plan has agreed with the authority's phasing strategy and as such the proposal is considered premature. The authority can presently demonstrate that a five year housing supply exists and therefore there is no policy reason to bring development forward. For reasons of prematurity, the application proposal is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

For the reasons outlined above refusal is recommended for the following reason:

(1) The Solihull Local Plan was adopted on 3rd December 2014 and a five year housing supply can now be demonstrated within the Borough. The proposed development of up to 220 dwellings at this site is therefore considered premature and contravenes the Phasing strategy for development set, where this site is allocated as a Phase 3 housing site for release on 1st April 2023. The proposal is premature and contrary to Policy P5 of the Solihull Local Plan.

(2) The application site lies within a floodplain and hydraulic modelling has yet to be finalised to confirm the flood extents and depths and therefore also to the effect on both new and existing residents. The proposal fails to take account of and is contrary to Policy P11 Water Management in the Solihull Local Plan as well as to the provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework.

For the avoidance of doubt, plan numbers considered in the assessment of this application are as follows: Site location plan drawing no. B.0294_04; Proposed site access arrangements COPPICE WALK ONLY BMW/2147/002 P3; Indicative Masterplan B.0294_05E; Gateway feature Tanworth Lane BMW/2147/008 P5.