



Cheswick Green Parish Council

SOLIHULL

Response to Solihull MBCs consultation on Cheswick Green Primary School

February 2022

CGPS-FEB2022

Our consultant, Adam Lechmere of Pell Frischmann will respond to both submissions below and the Parish Council would also make the following observations.

CGPS-SMBC Highways Response (Construction access) Dated 26th January 2022

We have several concerns arising from 2.1.2 of the technical note. It should not be necessary for a banksman to be present to guide large construction vehicles in and out of the junction. This seems to be an acknowledgement that the junction has not been properly designed to be suitable for large construction vehicles. Therefore, it also risks the possibility of a banksman attempting to control or direct traffic on the public highway. Indeed, you could never guarantee that a banksman would always be present to offer 'guidance' whenever a large vehicle arrives.

The access to the public highway must be designed so that it can be used safely by any legally permissible vehicle entering or leaving the site. And the access must not be closed by a gate during site working hours. A sign is required directing all traffic to turn left only on leaving the site.

The site or the construction compound must have/include proper provision for all employees and trade vehicles to park so that they do not park on Creynolds Lane or Cheswick Way. This should be a condition of use for all vehicles accessing the site irrespective of the length of time that every vehicle is expected to remain on/at the site.

The use of this temporary access requires a planning condition be in place that states all construction traffic to enter and leave the site must be via the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction. In addition, there should also be an assessment of the A34 / Creynolds Lane junction to consider the impact of the additional traffic generated by the proposed expansion of the school. The swept path drawings must be directly via the A34 junction only. Otherwise, to make the left turn in, such vehicles would have to swing out into opposing traffic.

We are concerned that no swept path analysis has been done for large articulated vehicles; they are often used for the delivery of plant, site huts and larger materials such as roof beams. We suspect that this would show the need for a wider gateway on the hedge line, wider footway crossing (all of which should be reinstated before any part of the new buildings are occupied) and modifications to the site road. This would also reinforce our view that there is a need to ensure all access is directly via A34.

We notice that the site compound is shown as being in the extended playing field on one drawing, and in the whole of the field fronting Creynolds Lane in others. This must be clarified; in our view the larger part of the field must be for the access only. Other activity might make it less viable for agriculture, and so ease it towards being built upon just to keep it neat and to fill in an untidy gap!

A basic requirement of all development nowadays as for some decades past, is Sustainability.

Sustainability is about not imposing our problems on future generations.

If approved, a condition should be in place - access and egress from the site is not permitted during peak traffic periods.

We are not aware of a robust reliable assessment of trip generation as a result of the proposed expansion.

Transport Measures Delivery Statement – Dated 12th January 2022

This deliverability statement does not address many concerns that have been previously raised by the LPA, Highways and the Parish Council.

We would reinforce the following:

The School role

We are aware that the school is not at present at full capacity, inclusive of 10 pupils from Blythe Valley who are being transported to school. We estimate that if the school expands to 2 form entry, demand for places from Blythe Valley will increase to 116 at capacity. We estimate that a further 124 pupils will enrol from places other than Cheswick Green Village or Blythe Valley.

The Parish Council commissioned a Neighbourhood Survey in 2018 and 365 respondents replied. The survey shows that 120 (33%) of residents have lived in the village for 21-40 years and 97 (37%) of residents have lived in the village for more than 40 years. This data proves that the majority of residents have and will continue to live in the village. Therefore the demand for school places will hardly fluctuate in future. The Cheswick Place development will be handed over to the Council in April 2022 and will not impact on future intake. Therefore, 240 pupils in total will enrol from elsewhere.

The primary purpose of this school expansion is to serve the needs of Blythe Valley and outlying children without recourse to the impact on Cheswick Green residents.

Mitigation measures

The measures are unrealistic based on the original assumptions made by PJA on behalf of the Council. Several mitigation measures have been proposed based on little or no fact. Expanding a school in whatever way is commonplace both locally and nationally and we believe that if these measures had proven successful elsewhere then PJA would have provided evidence to back up the mitigations they have proposed.

PJA has spoken about the level of uptake, but not considered the consequences should the measures prove very successful.

The walking bus

5.1.3 of Section 5.0 of the 5124 Transport Measures Deliverability Note B states: this equates to an indicative total journey time of 17 minutes for each route. It is considered that this is an appropriate length for a walking bus.

5.1.10 of the same section states: The staffing will be provided in line with the minimum ratio of adults: children as stated within the SMBC guide to implementing a Walking Bus:

- Key Stage 2 – 1 adult : 8 children;
- Key Stage 1 – 1 adult : 4 children;
- Mixed Key Stages – 1 adult : 6 children.

If we apply the median value above and say 30 children use this service, 5 adults will be required twice a day, 5 days a week, at 17 minutes per journey equates to 850 minutes or 14 hours 10 minutes school staff contact time per week. We concede that in such a scenario parent volunteers

would be sought but how much help could be accessed when in most cases both parents work. Such a situation is unsustainable.

In addition, we estimate that the 'stagger' would require children to be looked after for 3hrs 20mins a week - that's more than half a day per week of normal school contact time.

This suggests that the impact of travel to school must be assessed assuming that these measures are not realistic or permanent.

As we have said before these mitigation measures require on-going revenue financial support after 2 years what happens thereafter is vague or silent.

We believe that provided this proposal is approved what occurs thereafter is:-

1. not a concern and sustainability hardly matters.
2. current intentions are good, but how long will it be before a hard-pressed school budget determines that 17 hours 30 minutes of staff time per week is better spent supporting children's education (which is what schools have to deliver) than in trying to influence parental travel behaviour (for which it has no remit and receives no funding).

All the proposed transport mitigation measures, however well meant, are not realistically sustainable even the medium term. The mitigation measures should be discounted as they don't offer any permanent benefit.

In all cases, parents and carers make the travel choice most appropriate for their personal and family circumstances and will continue to do so.

Infrastructure

The Transport Assessment is wildly inaccurate in assuming that the new capacity will be filled by children from within the existing settlement of Cheswick Green, or from Blythe Valley. Even so it predicts unacceptable parking pressures requiring a number of mitigation measures.

We understand that negotiations continue between the bus company and the council with regard to getting children to school on time. The email dated 12 January 2022 (appendix 1) clearly shows that the negotiations have not proved to be successful and would draw your attention to the following extract of that email.

**“Would it not be possible for the school themselves to look at varying the school day slightly in order to fit around the services that are in place, rather than vice versa? Were the school to both start and finish 15 minutes later, it would seem to fit with exactly what is being asked for in length of day, but simply 15 minutes later?
Sorry it’s not better news and please do give me a call if you wish to discuss.”**

As we have said, in practice the greater proportion of 'new' pupils filling the extra school capacity will come from outside the identified areas. There has been no attempt to make any assessment of these trips and their potential impact on either the highway network or the village of Cheswick Green.

The TROs are covered by separate legislation and public consultation. No assumption can, or should, be made about the outcome of this process.

However, had the bus stop TROs been properly enforced, we may have had a better bus service in recent years.

Our concerns are that enforced parking restriction might lead to higher vehicle speed in Cheswick Way in the vicinity of the school entrance, and that parking will be displaced a long way into smaller residential roads, creating a fresh set of problems.

They should either be discounted completely in any determination of this planning application, or any planning approval could be subject to the TRO's being approved exactly as indicated before any development was started, but we suspect the education authority would not want to be hostage to this.

The most recent example of speeding occurred on Monday 31st January 2022. A van travelling at speed turned right into the school end of Cheswick Way from the Stratford Road end of Creynolds Lane. A car was travelling towards Creynolds Lane having driven past the school. The van was turning into Cheswick Way partially on the wrong side of the road, had to swerve and demolished a road sign on the other side of the pavement. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

The Car Park Management Plan should not be beyond the scope of any competent manager to deliver. The prime point is that the school must make proper provision for all staff and for all who visit the school in the course of their employment, to be able to park within the school grounds, and to encourage them to do so.

In our opinion whatever way you assess the school role, mitigation measures and infrastructure the Councils proposals are ill-conceived and should be refused by Officers and Councillors.

The development of 1000 houses on Dog Kennel Lane has been approved by the Council and we understand that a new 2 form entry school is also being considered on this site. If final approval is given by the Planning Inspectorate to develop this site in the first phase of the Local Development Plan would it not be prudent to build a new school on that site.

This alternative mirrors the second form entry proposal at Cheswick Green Primary School.

Appendix 1

From: Jane Overton

Sent: 12 January 2022 16:46

To: Jane Overton

Subject: FW: Cheswick Green Primary School Expansion - A7/A8 Bus service

Jane Overton

Senior Consultant

T. 0121 387 7939

Seven House, High Street, Longbridge, Birmingham, B31 2UQ

www.pja.co.uk

From: Jon Hayes <Jon.Hayes@tfwm.org.uk>

Sent: 23 December 2021 16:52

To: Magar, Sandeep (Resources Directorate, Solihull MBC) <sandeep.magar@solihull.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Cheswick Green Primary School Expansion - A7/A8 Bus service

Hi Sandeep,

We've done some further and more detailed work to look into this. As suspected changing the time of this bus would be problematic as we have fine tuned all of the services to fit in with the start time of a number of schools that are served by the route (specifically Solihull School, Alderbrook School, Tudor Grange and Arden Academy (just to name the secondary schools), and we only have one service travelling in each direction at the time in question.

Historically we would try to focus school trips based more around the trips that pupils make to secondary school, as primary school pupils generally live closer to the school that they go to. However I do appreciate that this is the nearest school for Blythe Valley, and wouldn't really be in walking range, especially for younger pupils.

But that said, I'm reluctant to end up making a change to fit around these hours that would have significant detrimental impacts elsewhere on the network, and the cost of introducing a new bus specifically to cover the requests made for the morning and the afternoon would most likely, based on experiences from elsewhere on the network, be quite high.

Would it not be possible for the school themselves to look at varying the school day slightly in order to fit around the services that are in place, rather than vice versa? Were the school to both start and finish 15 minutes later, it would seem to fit with exactly what is being asked for in length of day, but simply 15 minutes later?

Sorry its not better news and please do give me a call if you wish to discuss.

Kind regards,

Jon

Jon Hayes

Head of Bus

0121 214 7826

Confidentiality: The information in this email may be confidential, contain personal and/or sensitive information, and/or

may be legally privileged. If an addressing or transmission error has misdirected this email, please notify the author by

replying to this email and then deleting the original and your reply. If you have received this email in error, any disclosure, copying, distribution, or any action taken or omitted to be taken in reliance on the email, may be prohibited

and potentially unlawful. Any views or opinions expressed in this email are those of the sender and do not necessarily

reflect the views of West Midlands Combined Authority, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Find out about WMCA by visiting <https://www.wmca.org.uk>

- Please consider the environment, before printing this email.