

P e l l F r i s c h m a n n

Cheswick Green Primary School

PJA Technical Note and Delivery Strategy Audit

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Executive Summary

This Technical Note has been prepared by Pell Frischmann on behalf of Cheswick Green Parish Council, in order to review the proposals for an expansion to Cheswick Green Primary School in Cheswick Green, Solihull. In particular this review considers the highways and transport issues of the development proposals based on the November 2021 Technical Note and Transport Delivery Strategy prepared by PJA, on behalf of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

Whilst the new documents prepared by PJA address some of the comments raised by Pell Frischmann previously, the audit concludes that there are still a number of fundamental issues with the proposed expansion of the existing school and the assessment presented. The primary concern is that the basis for the proposed expansion is to cater for additional pupil demand from outside Cheswick Green and in particular from the Blythe Valley Park development, which PJA acknowledge is not accessible by active modes, such as walking and cycling. The existing public bus services also do not provide a practical means of accessing the school due start and end times not correlating with these services. Whilst there are aspirations to increase service frequency, no progress or firm commitment from the operator has been made to deliver these improvements. The proposed expansion therefore directly contradicts current planning policy at national, regional and local levels and this conclusion has not changed as a result of the new information provided.

As a result of children from outside Cheswick Green being unable to walk, cycle or use public bus services in order to travel to school, the TA proposes to fund a dedicated escort bus service from Blythe Valley Park. Whilst additional details have been provided in the PJA response, this confirms that the approved mini bus service that currently caters for 10 children will need to have a step change in service and funding commitment in order to accommodate the estimated demand of 68 pupils. Notwithstanding the issues around whether the uptake of this service would be successful, there are still concerns about the long-term sustainability of this proposal should the required funding not be maintained indefinitely. If the service is withdrawn, then parents will have no other option but to drive their children to school. Again, this directly contradicts current planning and transport policy at national, regional and local levels and this conclusion has not changed as a result of the new information provided.

The TA provides a review of the current on-street parking issues that are generated by the school operations, but is primarily focused on parents dropping off and collecting their children rather than also considering the impacts from long stay on street staff parking. Survey data collected by Cheswick Green Parish Council confirms that on street staff parking of between 14 and 20 vehicles currently occurs on a regular basis.

In order to address the existing staff parking issues, the Delivery Strategy confirms that additional on-site parking is provided in the form of tandem spaces. As stated in the initial response from Pell Frischmann, this proposal is reliant on an overly complex Parking Management System, which is based on permits and the provision of telephone numbers so that those drivers blocked in can be contacted. This approach does not guarantee to rectify the problem in a timely manner, and it may also not be practical for some staff to leave their location in order to move their vehicle whilst supervising children. As a result, staff will soon become frustrated and revert to parking on street in greater numbers. This increased demand will encourage parents to park in unsuitable locations rather than walk further to reach the school and thus exacerbate existing issues for local residents and impact on road safety.

In order to justify the use of tandem spaces, further information has been provided on operations at other schools within Solihull. However, a review of these sites confirms that there are more extensive restrictions that prevent on street parking in these locations and alternative travel options by public bus are available to provide staff with travel choices. In the case of Greswold School, there is evidence to suggest that staff do not fully utilise all of the available spaces in order to avoid being blocked in and as such this reduces the overall parking supply.

In terms of the appraisal presented within the TA, this still includes a number of errors and discrepancies. In particular, despite the PJA response acknowledging that Cheswick Place is fully occupied with a substantial number of children already attending the school, no changes to assessment trip generation methodology have been undertaken. If this assessment is updated, then it is clear that the estimated 'new' demand from Cheswick Place would substantially reduce from 25%.

Furthermore, the assessment includes no allowance for new pupil demand originating from other disbursed locations beyond Cheswick Green. This is a trend that is clearly evident from the existing pupil catchment data and so should be reflected for new demand accordingly.

In addition to the above, the sustainable travel targets are extremely optimistic and the Travel Plan that has been supplied is based on the existing school rather than the proposed extension. There is also still no information provided on the proposed phasing of the development over a 'number of years' and how this relates to the 'temporary' construction access on Creynolds Lane. Despite requests from SMBC during scoping discussions, no detailed assessment of the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction is presented. This is considered fundamental to determining the impact of the proposals.

In summary, whilst the additional information provided by PJA addresses some of the comments raised, it does not address the fundamental issues relating to the proposed extension or fully address the errors and discrepancies with the assessment presented in the TA.

Overview

Pell Frischmann were commissioned by Cheswick Green Parish Council in June 2021 to review the proposals for an expansion to Cheswick Green Primary School in Cheswick Green. This review considered the highways and transport issues of the development proposals based on the May 2021 Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by PJA, on behalf of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

Following the review prepared by Pell Frischmann PJA has prepared a Technical Note responding to the comments and issues that were identified as well as a further supporting Technical Note, which presents the Delivery Strategy. Pell Frischmann has therefore been commissioned by Cheswick Green Parish Council to review these additional documents that have been submitted to accompany the planning application.

This technical review follows the same basic format as the Technical Note provided by PJA in response to Pell Frischmann's comments and where necessary makes reference to the information presented within the Delivery Strategy. In particular this document is structured on the following basis:

- **Pell Frischmann Comments** – these sections summarise the comments made previously by Pell Frischmann on the submitted May 2021 Transport Assessment
- **PJA Response** – these sections present the response prepared by PJA to Pell Frischmann's comments on the May 2021 Transport Assessment
- **Additional Pell Frischmann Comments** – these sections provide additional comments from Pell Frischmann based on the responses provided by PJA

The assessment will determine whether the evidence presented within the Technical Note and Delivery Strategy demonstrates that the highways and transport aspects of the proposals are in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and in general that:

- Satisfactory access can be provided for all people;

- The development proposals are accessible and sustainable; and
- Off-site traffic impacts are not 'severe' or their effects can be mitigated.

In addition to the above, this audit will once again consider whether the requirements set out by SMBC during scoping discussions with PJA have been met. These scoping discussions are summarised within the original TA as follows:

- Details regarding the impact of COVID-19 should be included within the assessment, to understand the impact this has on observations made during site visits, parking beat surveys and mode share data collected;
- The number of pupils attending before / after school clubs and wrap around care should be provided within the report;
- Justification of the on-site parking provision for staff should be provided;
- Concerns raised regarding the number of vehicle trips that would be generated by the expansion should suitable mitigation measures not be implemented, and the impact this would have on the capacity of the local highway network and occurrence of on-street parking within the vicinity of the site access;
- Consideration should be given as to the impact of the expansion at the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction;
- Proposed mitigation should form a coordinated package of measures, with evidence to demonstrate that these would be used by parents;
- Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) should be consulted to understand current and future aspirations for bus routes to / from Cheswick Green and how S106 monies from Blythe Valley Park have been spent.

1 Introduction

1.1 Pell Frischmann Comments

Section 1.1.2 of the TA states that the proposed school expansion will be phased over a 'number of years', however no details are provided to confirm the extent of building works that are to be undertaken during each phase and when these will be implemented.

In particular, it is not clear when the proposed increase in parking supply is to be constructed and how this relates to the associated phased expansion of the school buildings and parking demand. It is considered that no additional buildings should be implemented in advance of suitable parking supply and/or management measures being provided.

Furthermore, no details are provided in order to confirm how access for construction vehicles will be maintained over a 'number of years', given that the proposed route from Creynolds Lane is only intended to be provided as a 'temporary' access arrangement.

Further details on the proposed phasing should therefore be provided within the TA in order to fully clarify the associated parking and construction impacts and justify their appropriateness.

1.2 PJA Response

A Construction Traffic Management Plan will likely be conditioned on the application to demonstrate how the building works will be undertaken and project managed to minimise the impact on the local highway network, existing school, and local residents. The construction access off Creynolds Lane will be maintained for the duration of the construction period.

The proposed additional car parking will be provided prior to occupation of the new classrooms.

1.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

Should the planning application be approved, then it is noted that a Construction Traffic Management Plan is likely to be conditioned and that this will provide more detailed information on the potential impacts to residents, the existing school and local highway network. However, the comments raised in our initial response were in order to seek clarification on the overall strategic approach towards extending the existing school, due to concerns about the duration that a temporary access road may be in place. For example, will the proposed extension be implemented as part of a single continuous construction phase or will particular phases be implemented separately as part of a long term strategy over a number of years? If the development is to be implemented in phases over a number of years then this would suggest that impacts could be prolonged.

1.4 Pell Frischmann Comments

Figures suggest a disproportionate increase in the number of pupils when compared to staff and so further clarification on the assumptions surrounding the likely increases should be provided within the TA.

1.5 PJA Response

PJA were provided with current and future staffing numbers by Cheswick Green Primary School. The school advised that they currently have 44 members of staff. Assuming one headteacher, two assistance headteachers, one site manager and one business manager, the school estimated there would be 65 members of staff post-expansion.

It should be noted that expansion of a school would not generate an equal percentage increase in both pupils and staff numbers, as some staffing functions would not need to increase, in the case of this expansion. The ratio of pupil: staff based on the figures in Table 1-1 of the Transport Assessment is forecast to increase from 6.1 to 7.8.

1.6 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

It is noted that initial estimates of the additional staff required has been provided by Cheswick Green Primary School and acknowledged that some functions would not require any additional members of staff. However, in order to ensure that these figures are robust, it is suggested that staff data from primary schools in Solihull with a similar number of pupils is provided for comparison purposes. This is particularly important given the existing and future issues surrounding staff parking provision on site and the impacts on surrounding streets.

1.7 Pell Frischmann Comments

Section 1.1.4 suggests that additional primary school places are required in order to accommodate demand from the Blythe Valley Park and Cheswick Place developments. However, the application information appears to confuse those existing, completed and occupied residential developments, with proposed or committed future housing. These developments have been under construction for a number of years, and, in the case of Cheswick Place, all properties have been occupied for over 1 year.

Further details on the number of properties completed and those still to be developed, should therefore be provided within the TA accordingly. This is required in order to justify the proposed assumptions around the future generation and distribution of trips as a result of the expansion proposals.

1.8 PJA Response

It is recognised that the Cheswick Place development is fully occupied and so some of the pupils will be included within the existing pupil data for the school, however, this does not prevent additional pupils being drawn from this estate or indeed the wider Cheswick Green area.

The Blythe Valley development is in the early stages of occupancy and build out, however it is understood that some pupils attending the school are already attending Cheswick Green Primary School.

All assumptions made in relation to Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley are set out in information provided by the SMBC Education team in **Appendix A**.

1.9 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA estimates that 25% of new pupils will be from the Cheswick Place development, as a result of 250 new properties being constructed. The comments previously provided by Pell Frischmann queried this assumption, given that Cheswick Place is already fully constructed and occupied and this is now acknowledged in the response from PJA above.

However, the suggestion from PJA that no changes to their TA assumptions are necessary is considered to be flawed. The methodology used to estimate trip generation and distribution is based on demand from new properties and so should be updated accordingly. The postcode plot provided in Figure 3.2 of the TA confirms that a significant number of pupils attending Cheswick Green Primary School already live in Cheswick Place. This is also the case for properties in the remainder of Cheswick Green, which has not had any new properties constructed. The future demand from both Cheswick Place and Cheswick Green will inevitably fluctuate, but no new properties have planning permission. The estimated 'new' demand from Cheswick Place and/or Cheswick Green should therefore be reduced accordingly.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that no allowance for potential growth in trips that are external to the 'primary catchment' area have been accounted for in the TA trip generation figures. As can be seen in Figure 3.2 of the TA, a substantial proportion of trips currently generated by Cheswick Green Primary School are beyond Cheswick Green, Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley. The assumption that no new trips would be drawn from these areas is questioned and indicates that the appraisal methodology needs to be reviewed and updated.

2 Policy Framework

2.1 Pell Frischmann Comments

... there are a number of fundamental issues which suggest a contradiction between the proposed school extension and the policies that are listed in the TA.

2.2 PJA Response

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

Paragraph 110 a) of the NPPF states that development should ensure “*appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location*”.

This policy makes it clear that any opportunity to promote sustainable transport modes must be appropriate for the type of the development and its location. It does not specifically require developments to promote walking and cycling, rather, sustainable transport modes that are appropriate in the context of the site. Given the age of the pupils and distance between Blythe Valley Park and Cheswick Green Primary School, the Transport Assessment has acknowledged that it would not be suitable for pupils to walk/cycle to school using existing infrastructure, and land within the applicants control/publicly maintained highway boundary. On this basis, the mitigation measures set out within the Deliverability Note for pupils drawn from Blythe Valley primarily focus on those modes which would be appropriate, for example, public bus services, dedicated school buses and car sharing, all of which are sustainable transport modes.

In addition, whilst it would not be appropriate to encourage pupils drawn from Blythe Valley to walk and cycle for their whole journey, the proposed Walking Bus, and complementary softer measures e.g., School Travel Plan and Car Parking Strategy, will encourage parents/children to walk for the final part of their journey, whilst also reducing parking demand within the direct vicinity of the school access. It is considered highly appropriate for existing pupils from Cheswick Green and additional pupils drawn from Cheswick Place to walk/cycle to and from school. Mode share surveys undertaken as part of the Transport Assessment illustrate that some families living within suitable walking/cycling distance of the school currently travel by private car. Mitigation measures such as the Walking Bus, Travel Plan and Car Parking Strategy aim to encourage those who are able to walk/cycle to do so.

It is therefore considered that the proposed mitigation measures will provide appropriate opportunities for parents/pupils to access the school via sustainable modes. This includes both new pupils drawn from Blythe Valley Park and Cheswick Place, and existing pupils.

Policy P7 a iii) – Solihull Local Plan (2013)

Policy P7 a iii) states that:

“iii) Proposed education, health and other public service facilities should be located where they are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and bus by the local community they serve;”

To mitigate the impact of the development, it is proposed to implement the following measures to improve accessibility by bus for the local community served by the school:

- Increased frequency of A7/A8 bus service between Cheswick Green Primary and Blythe Valley Park; and
- Provision of dedicated school bus service between Cheswick Green Primary School and Blythe Valley Park.

The local community served by the school does not only increase pupils drawn from Blythe Valley. Mitigation measures have been included within the development proposals to improve access on foot/by bike from Cheswick Green and surrounding areas, including implementation of a Walking Bus, provision of dedicated cycle parking on-site for staff and pupils, and implementation of a School Travel Plan to promote sustainable modes.

Policy P7 states that “*Development will be expected to meet the following accessibility criteria, unless justified by local circumstances*”. The local circumstances of this development, as follows:

- Blythe Valley Park was consented for residential development in March 2017, with no education provision on-site. The nearest primary school to the development is Cheswick Green Primary School;
- Despite being the nearest primary school, Blythe Valley Park is c. 1.2km as the crow flies from Cheswick Green Primary School. There are no existing suitable walking/cycling routes for pupils to/from the school, and previous appraisal work has identified that there are no alternative routes that can be provided using land in public maintainable highway/within the applicants control, that would bring the site within acceptable walking/cycling distance of Blythe Valley Park.

On this basis, it is considered that given these local circumstances, there is adequate justification for the proposals to focus on ensuring Blythe Valley Park is well-connected to Cheswick Green Primary School by bus only, as walking/cycling are not appropriate modes for the distances involved and age of the pupils.

Policy P8 – Solihull Local Plan (2013)

3.2.10 A summary of the development proposals accordance with Policy P8 of the Solihull Local Plan is provided in Table 1, below.

Table 1- Summary of accordance with Policy B8

Policy		Summary of Measures
P8 a i)	Development will not be permitted which results in a significant increase in delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists or a reduction in a safety for any users of the highway or other transport network	Following the implementation of the staggered start/ end times, the demand for parking would not considerably exceed that currently experienced at the school. Spreading the arrivals/ departures across a 45-minute period will also minimise any impact on vehicle delay at junctions on the local highway network. In addition, 6-43% of trips to the school in each peak are likely to be linked trips to/from destinations other than home, a proportion of which will already be present on the local highway network. Therefore, it is not considered that the development will increase delay for any users of the local highway network.
		Following implementation of the staggered start/end times, the demand for parking would not considerably exceed that currently experienced at the school. It is acknowledged some inappropriate parking during school peaks does occur, which would be addressed through mitigation measures that seek to reduce demand for parking within the vicinity of the site either by encouraging uptake of alternative modes or encouraging parents to park further from the school in more appropriate locations. As outlined within the Deliverability Strategy, this could also include implementation of TROs to restrict parking in specific locations within the vicinity of the site access, and a formal crossing provision on Cheswick Way, which would improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. A walking route audit of the key routes to/from the school has identified that there is suitable infrastructure to accommodate any uplift in pedestrian trips. On this basis, once the identified package of mitigation measures has been implemented, it is not considered that there will be a reduction in safety for any users of the local highway network.

P8 a ii)	Travel demands associated with development should be managed to minimise detrimental impact to the efficiency of the highway network;	A range of mitigation measures have been presented which both manage, and minimise the detrimental impact to the efficiency of the highway network, through encouraging the uptake of non-car modes, ensuring parents park appropriately within the vicinity of the site, and providing additional on-site parking for staff.
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Policy		Summary of measures
P8 a iii)	Ensure new development reduces the need to travel e.g. by promoting linked trips and encouraging mixed use development where appropriate;	The provision of a dedicated school bus for pupils from Blythe Valley will reduce the need for parents to travel and increasing the frequency of the A7/A8 bus will encourage parents to utilise this for linked journeys into Solihull Town Centre for work, retail, or leisure purposes.
P8 a iv)	Provision for parking and servicing will be required in accordance with a Supplementary Planning Document on managing travel demands associated with development;	Based on providing 16 classrooms, this equates to a maximum provision of 32 parking spaces in line with SMBC parking standards (2006). It is proposed to provide 36 car parking spaces, which will reduce surplus parking demand generated by staff. The School Travel Plan and On-Site Car Park Management Strategy will seek to manage this parking, and encourage the uptake of sustainable modes amongst staff.
P8 b i)	Ensuring the design and management of the development enables and encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport;	The design incorporates dedicated cycle parking for both staff and pupils, encouraging the use of cycling for journeys to/from school. The Walking Bus will be managed by a member of staff, ensuring that this sustainable travel modes remains available for families to utilise as the school expands.
P8 b ii)	Ensuring transport planning measures are implemented to help and encourage people accessing the development to use sustainable transport modes;	The use of sustainable modes will be prompted to all users of the site through the School Travel Plan, to encourage uptake by all users of the site.
P8 b iii)	Ensuring the routes to the site from nearby services and local public transport stops are good quality, direct and attractive to use for all users.	A walking route audit has been undertaken within the Transport Assessment which identifies that key walking routes to/from the school have suitable provision to accommodate walking/cycling trips generated by the site.

2.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

The PJA response provides an interpretation of the NPPF which suggests that the sustainable travel opportunities are appropriate for the type of the development and its location. However, Pell Frischmann's interpretation of the NPPF differs from the response provided by PJA.

In the context of sustainable travel opportunities from Blythe Valley, it is considered that these are extremely limited. As acknowledged by PJA, it would not be possible for children to either walk or cycle to Cheswick Green Primary School from this location. The alternative sustainable travel options suggested by PJA are public bus services, dedicated school buses and car sharing.

In terms of public bus services, these do not currently provide a viable means for parents to take their children to school from Blythe Valley Park and details of future expansion aspirations for these services are currently unknown. This is recognised in the PJA response, which confirms that these trips would be limited.

The existing dedicated mini bus which operates between Blythe Valley and Cheswick Green Primary School for up to 10 children will require a step change in service provision and funding support to accommodate the estimated demand from Blythe Valley (65 children). As such it is considered that this does not represent a long term sustainable travel solution.

The suggestion from PJA that children will be driven 3km from Blythe Valley to Cheswick Green and then dropped off to join the local walking bus for the final 660m of their journey is considered highly unlikely and would not address the overriding sustainability aims as the majority of their journey would be undertaken by car.

The response from PJA also places great emphasis on trips within Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place, however these journeys relate to existing demand from properties that have already been developed and occupied from some time.

In summary, the options presented for sustainable travel are not considered to provide appropriate opportunities for journeys associated with the expanded Cheswick Green Primary School and are therefore not in accordance with the NPPF.

Policy P7 a iii) – Solihull Local Plan (2013)

The PJA response makes reference to policy P7 within the Solihull Local Plan (2013), which states that “*Proposed education, health and other public service facilities should be located where they are **easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and bus** by the local community they serve*”.

The above policy is explicit in its requirements that ‘proposed’ education facilities should be located where they are ‘easily accessible’ by each of the sustainable travel options listed, including walking, cycling and bus. The TA assumes that 75% of new pupil demand will be from Blythe Valley but acknowledges that it will not be feasible for these children to walk or cycle to school and so clearly does not comply with SMBC’s own planning policy.

The increased frequency of the A7/A8 bus service has yet to be agreed and the current provision is acknowledged as not being practical to serve the school start and end times. As with walking and cycling, the absence of an easily accessible public bus service provision confirms that the proposed school extension does not comply with SMBC’s own planning policy.

In an attempt to overcome the absence of walking, cycling and public transport options, it is proposed that the existing mini bus service provision between Blythe Valley and Cheswick Green Primary School is increased. This service provides travel for up to 10 children currently, however the estimated demand by PJA suggests that a step change would be required in funding and service provision in order to accommodate demand for 68 pupils.

The PJA response suggests that other measures are in place to promote walking and cycling for the remaining 25% of new pupil demand, which will be from Cheswick Place. However, the assumptions around trip generation and distribution are challenged in this Technical Note because the properties at Cheswick Place have been completed and occupied for over 1 year and a significant number of pupils are already attending the existing school from this location. Whilst this is acknowledged by PJA, the methodology used to determine the expected pupil demand has not been updated. Given that no further properties are due to be constructed within Cheswick Green or Cheswick Place it is likely that a greater proportion of ‘new’ trips will be from locations beyond Cheswick Green and therefore also not within a feasible walking and cycle distance.

Based on the above points it is clear that the proposed development does not comply with Policy P7 a iii) of the Solihull Local Plan (2013).

In addition to the above, policy P7 states that “*Development will be expected to meet the following accessibility criteria, unless justified by local circumstances*”.

Given that the development does not comply with the expected accessibility criteria listed in the Local Plan, further justification of the local circumstances has been provided by PJA. This justification is based on the fact that the Blythe Valley Park development was granted planning permission with no education provision on site and that Cheswick Green Primary School is the nearest existing school to this development.

In order to accommodate the education needs of the Blythe Valley development, there will inevitably be alternative options that could have considered and progressed by SMBC. The aim of this Technical Note is not to comment on these alternative options, but what is clear is that the current proposal to extend Cheswick Green Primary School does not meet the necessary sustainable access criteria set out by Solihull Council in their Local Plan (2013).

In terms of Policy P8 a i), this states the following: *“Development will not be permitted which results in a significant increase in delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists or a reduction in a safety for any users of the highway or other transport network”.*

The response from PJA suggests that the staggered start and finish times will offset the potential impacts on the local highway network, however no assessment has been undertaken in order to determine the impact on the Creynolds Lane / Stratford Road junction, despite this being requested by SMBC during scoping discussions.

Furthermore, the true impact of trips generated in the AM and PM peak hours is not fully considered, as staff trips are not accounted for and the figures for pupils need to be updated to reflect the fact that Cheswick Place is already constructed and occupied and a proportion of trips will come from locations disbursed beyond Cheswick Green.

In addition to the above, PJA has suggested that the development is compliant with each of the individual policies listed under P8. However, the additional comments from Pell Frischmann detailed throughout this Technical Note confirm that this is not the case.

3 Baseline Conditions

3.1 Pell Frischmann Comments

Information has been provided regarding the levels of occupation in the morning at Pre-School (6 pupils) and Nursery (20 pupils) which represents 20% and 66% of capacity respectively. In addition to this, the TA indicates that 5 staff were on-site, however no details are provided in order to specify what a normal level of staffing would be without the reduced COVID-19 capacity. Given the reduced capacity of the Pre-School and Nursery it would also be fair to assume that staffing levels would be similarly lower than normal.

Whilst attendance levels of both the pre-school and nursery have been provided for the day of the site visit, there is no information on the levels of occupation for those other year groups at the school or the number of staff present. For consistency and in order to understand the overall impact it is suggested that this additional information is provided within the TA.

3.2 PJA Response

The attendance was as follows on the dates of the site visit:

- Tuesday 10th November 2020
 - Children: 222
 - Staff: 48
 - Visitors: 7
- Thursday 12th November 2020
 - Children: 255
 - Staff: 48
 - Visitors: 4

This represents the majority of children and staff; therefore, it is considered that the findings of the site visit are valid.

3.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

3.4 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA states that the school offers before and after school provision in the form of Breakfast Club (from 07:30) and After School Club (until 18:00), attended by approximately 30-40 pupils each day Monday to Friday; After School Sports Clubs (15:30-16:30) are attended by approximately 15-20 pupils at each session, Monday to Thursday; and Before School Club (08:00-08:45) are attended by approximately 10-15 pupils at each session two days a week. There is no information within the TA regarding any crossover between pupils attending before and after school provision, as can be seen above, there is potential for quite significant fluctuation in the number of pupils on site before and after school. Given the similarity in timings it is highly likely there is some crossover between the 'clubs' and as such this should be clarified.

3.5 PJA Response

It is recognised that there is potential for crossover between each of these before, and after school activities. To account for this, subsequent assessments presented within the Transport Assessment only removed the vehicle trips associated with 30 pupils/14% of primary school age children attending the Breakfast Club/After School Club (Cheswick Chimps) during school peak periods. This was explained within paragraph 5.3.6 of the TA. This presents a worst case assessment of likely vehicle trip generation for the site, as no trips have been removed for the after school sports club (15 – 20 children) or before school club (10 – 15 children).

Therefore, it is not considered that providing further details regarding the potential crossover would alter the assessment contained within the TA.

3.6 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

3.7 Pell Frischmann Comments

Within the TA, **Figure 3.2** provides a plot of current pupil postcodes and the primary catchment area of the existing school. Whilst it is possible to establish some of these current trends, the key information included within this figure is not legible and as such an updated plan should be provided accordingly.

3.8 PJA Response

Figure 3.2. was included within the Transport Assessment to demonstrate the surrounding areas from which current pupils are drawn. The legibility of the plan is considered suitable to draw out these key trends. For completeness, a revised version of this plan is provided within **Appendix B** (Figure 1).

3.9 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The plan provided within Appendix B is much clearer than Figure 3.2 included in the TA and so is suitable to draw out the key trends

In addition to the comments provided in 3.7, Pell Frischmann also included the following associated comments, which have not been addressed within the PJA response:

“Despite the legibility issues, some of the key trends shown within Figure 3.2 can be established. For example, there is currently a cluster of pupils living within Cheswick Green itself as well as those in Cheswick Place. This is not surprising given the proximity and size of the surrounding residential area and the fact that Cheswick Place has been completed for over 1 year. However, beyond Cheswick Green, it is clear that the existing catchment is spread across several locations, which includes Monkspath and Shirley.

The TA suggests that additional pupil places are expected to come from Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley Park. However, as Figure 3.2 suggests, the current trends show a more sporadic catchment beyond the immediate village extents. Given the potential impact on travel patterns, it is suggested that evidence to support the assumption that additional places will be limited to Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley should be provided within the TA. If this is not the case, then further consideration should be given to the allocation of trips from those other residential locations.”

3.10 Pell Frischmann Comments

Existing mode share data was established through surveying pupils, parents and staff. Whilst details of the survey period for pupils (December 2020) are provided in section 3.4.1., the same information is not included for the parent and staff surveys. As such, it is requested that further details on these surveys are provided within the TA.

3.11 PJA Response

A link to the online parents and staff surveys was sent out to the school on 18th November 2020. The online survey remained open until the end of November, at which point, 102 parents/ guardians had responded and 32 members of staff.

3.12 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

3.13 Pell Frischmann Comments

In terms of changes in travel behaviour due to COVID-19, the TA has sought to address this through an additional parent travel survey. The TA suggests that the majority of respondents are using the same mode of transport as they did prior to March 2020, however a total of 14% of respondents stated that they now use a different mode. In total 10 respondents suggested that they now walk rather than drive their children to school, with only 1 respondent now walking rather than driving. If these values are applied to the parent survey data, then this results in a 5% increase in car (driver) trips from 43% to 48%.

3.14 PJA Response

One of the survey results listed above is incorrect and does not reflect the survey results or the text in the Transport Assessment. Correct results are provided below (result in bold shows that which was incorrectly replicated by Pell Frischmann):

- 19% (10 respondents) of those who currently walk previously travelled by car (just their child) to school;
- **2% (1 respondent) of those who currently travel by car (just their child) previously walked to school;** and
- The number of respondents who car share (with multiple families) has decreased by 50% (1 respondent).

A range of questions in relation to mode share were included in the parent survey, as follows:

- Since March 2020, which mode do you most frequently use to travel to/from Cheswick Green Primary School?
- Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed how you and your child travel to/from Cheswick Green Primary School?
- If yes, which mode did you use most regularly to travel to/from school prior to March 2020?
- What would be your preferred mode of travel to Cheswick Green Primary School?
- If this is different to your current mode of travel, is there any particular reason that you do not use these travel modes more frequently to travel to Cheswick Green Primary School?

The results of the parental survey provided in Table 3-2 of the TA, relate to Question 4 and outline the preferred method of travel, not the actual mode of travel. Therefore, it would be unsuitable to apply the survey results highlighting the impact of COVID-19 to this data.

3.15 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

No further comments.

3.16 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA states that a Travel Plan for the school targets a **2%** reduction in pupils travelling by car with a **2%** increase in trips made by cycling and scooting, compared with current modal splits. This is considered to be only a modest target but reflects the limitations on the potential for cycling trips to occur. As previously indicated, travel to the school on foot or bicycle is only considered to be feasible for those that live within Cheswick Green. This is due to the distance from other surrounding settlements being too far, the age of pupils and the fact that there are no dedicated cycle facilities that link the village with surrounding areas.

Given the above, any increase in cycling is likely to result in a corresponding drop in walking trips to the school rather than an overall decrease in those travelling by car. This is because the majority of those trips made on foot are currently from within the village itself. Trips from within Cheswick Green being made by car will most likely be due to a specific reason and so changing these trips to cycle is likely to be very limited.

3.17 PJA Response

The Travel Plan on Modeshift STARs has been designed to be implemented at the school prior to expansion, with measures expanded as the school increases in size. Therefore, the 2% reduction in pupils travelling by private car reflects the mode share of pupils currently travelling to the site, and provide a target for this academic year only.

Within the TA, analysis was undertaken using guidance on acceptable walking distances to school contained within the IHT guidance document "*Providing for Journeys on Foot*". This demonstrated that based on the postcode data for pupils in Reception – Year 6 (currently 214 pupils on roll):

- 95 pupils (44%) live within desirable walking distance of the school;
- 154 pupils (72%) live within acceptable walking distance of the school; and
- 161 pupils (75%) lived within preferred maximum walking distance of the school.

The hands-up survey conducted with pupils in December 2020 found that **57%** of pupils currently walk/cycle to school. Based on the above pupil numbers and percentages, it is therefore likely that all pupils that live within desirable walking distance travel on foot/by bike, but a proportion of those living up to 1,000m away, within 6-12 minute walk (acceptable distance) travel by private car.

It is therefore considered that there is some potential to influence the travel behaviours of these parents and increase the mode share of cycling and walking resulting in a decrease in those travelling by car. Whilst it is acknowledged there is a reason why some parents travel by car to school, the measures contained within the Travel Plan and proposed mitigation measures for the expansion seek to address these, for example, the Walking Bus could be used by families who currently drive to the school due to time pressures.

3.18 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA confirms that the submitted Travel Plan has been developed in order to promote sustainable travel to the existing school prior to expansion. The catchment plot for the existing school confirms that the majority of pupils currently live in Cheswick Green or Cheswick Place and are therefore within the maximum thresholds contained within the following IHT guidance document '*Providing for Journeys on Foot*'.

- Desirable – 500m
- Preferable – 1km
- Maximum – 2km

However, given the limited potential for new trips to be generated from properties already occupied in Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place, it is clear that the proposed expansion will result in a significant reduction in the proportion of children living within the preferred maximum walking distance of 2km. For example, the proposed Blythe Valley development is predicted to generate 75% of total new pupil demand but is over 3km from the school.

As a result, the proposed expansion will make the already limited 2% reduction target for pupils travelling by car even more difficult to achieve.

The response from PJA confirms that 57% of pupils currently walk or cycle to school and so it is therefore likely that all pupils living within the desirable walking distance (500) travel on foot or by bike. The proposed walking bus routes are approximately 660m long and so this suggests that there is only limited scope to transfer trips from cars as a result of the development proposal. Furthermore, it is clear that the proposed walking bus will not provide a viable alternative to travelling by car for the majority of the 'new' pupils generated by the extension. The estimated 75% of new demand from Blythe Valley will be over 3km from Cheswick Green Primary School and therefore substantially beyond the maximum walking distance of 2km.

In summary, the response from PJA implies that the impact from 'new' trip generation as a result of the school extension can be offset by Travel Plan measures that look to change the established trends and habits of those currently travelling to Cheswick Green Primary School. However, the evidence from surveys suggests that walking and cycle trips already make up a substantial proportion of those pupils living within an acceptable walking distance and so the scope for substantially changing these trends is limited. This point is reinforced by the fact that the current 2% target for reducing car journeys has been set at a relatively low level.

3.19 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA notes that both Cheswick Way and Creynolds Lane are designated as quiet roads for cycling by SMBC and, as a result, suggests that these could facilitate connections from the school to residential areas, including Monkspath and Dickens Heath. However, due to the existing conditions, it is considered highly unlikely that parents would opt to cycle along the carriageway on these routes whilst accompanying their young children to school. As already noted, during school hours Cheswick Way is characterised by parked cars which restrict visibility and the flow of traffic, whereas Creynolds Lane is subject to a 40mph speed limit and is predominately rural in its nature. At school start and finishing times these roads are often busy and so the attractiveness of using the road for cycling will also be diminished. In addition to this, the practicalities of travelling between areas such as Monkspath and Cheswick Green with young children by bicycle do not make it an attractive mode of travel. The designation of these routes as 'quiet roads' by SMBC is considered to be more reflective of older and more proficient cyclists than suggested within the TA.

3.20 PJA Response

The Transport Assessment has undertaken a review of baseline conditions in terms of accessibility to the school for all users – parents, pupils, staff, and visitors.

Traffic count data for Creynolds Lane¹, directly to the north of Cheswick Way, shows that the road is used by a modest number of cyclists over a 24hr period, as follows:

- • 2019 – 42 cyclists; and
- • 2020 – 82 cyclists.

It is therefore considered that it may not be suitable for parents with young children to cycle along Creynolds Lane, however, it may be a suitable route for some staff and visitors.

3.21 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA confirms that Creynolds Lane is not suitable for parents to walk or cycle with their young children. This means that pupil related walking and cycle trips are limited to those existing properties occupied within Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place and so all external trips will be made by car or bus.

Whilst it is acknowledged that Creynolds Lane provides a suitable route for staff to travel to Cheswick Green Primary school, the potential for staff cycle trips to occur is likely to be limited due to staff living further away, although limited data on the catchment area for staff has been provided in order to verify this assumption.

3.22 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA notes that based on postcode data of pupils, the majority reside within 2km of the school and as such the level of accessibility by bicycle has the potential to be high. However, as already noted, the practicalities of parents travelling to school by bicycle and then returning home before going about the rest of their day means that increasing the levels of travel by this will be challenging, as those that can do this already are. Whilst this is acknowledged within the TA, it is suggested that cycling may be a more viable option for staff. However, the catchment area for staff is expected to be much wider than for pupils and as such for many this would mean that travel by this mode is not viable.

3.23 PJA Response

The National Travel Survey (NTS) is a household survey designed to monitor long term trends in personal travel and to inform the development of policy. NTS Table 0614 outlines modal split data for journeys to school, by age and travel distance. Table 2 shows the modal split for cycling journeys for pupils ages 5 – 10 years (primary school age pupils).

Table 2- Cycling Modal Split- Journeys to School (5 to 10 years), 2019

Distance	% of trips
Under 1 mile	1
1 to under 2 miles	4
2 to under 5 miles	1
5 miles and over	0

Table 2 demonstrates that nationally, 1% of pupils living within one mile, and 4% of pupils living 1 to 2 miles from school travel by bike. Currently 12% of pupils travel by cycle/scoot, which is above the national average.

The viability of cycling is also dependent on the availability of suitable cycling infrastructure. It is considered that existing highway network is suitable to accommodate cycling trips from within Cheswick Green, or Cheswick Place to the school, as set out within the Transport Assessment.

On the basis of the national mode share data, existing travel behaviour at the school, and suitability of the local highway network, it is considered that it would be feasible for additional pupils drawn from Cheswick Place or existing pupils to travel by bike to school.

It is noted that the catchment area for staff is expected to be wider than for pupils, however, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) Technical Guidance document states that cycling has the potential to replace trips of up to 10km in length. Cycle parking will be provided on site and therefore it is considered that it would be a viable travel mode for some staff.

2011 census data for journeys to work within the Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) in which the site is located (Solihull 029 MSOA) has been analysed. A summary of the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3- Cycling to Solihull: Nomis Method of Travel to Work

Method of Travel to Work	Modal Split (%)
Work mainly at or from home	7
Car	82
Car with passenger	4
Cycle	1
Walking	4
Bus	2
Total	100

Table 3 indicates 1% of journeys to workplaces within Solihull 029 MSOA are undertaken by bike. Modal split data collected from staff at the school shows that currently no member of staff cycle to work. Therefore, it is considered that it would be feasible to increase the proportion of staff cycling to school.

3.24 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The comments provided by PJA confirm that cycle trips undertaken by pupils would be limited to those routes within Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place that have suitable cycle infrastructure. This point is not disputed and indeed reflects the comments provided by Pell Frischmann as part of our initial TA Audit.

As a result of trips being limited to Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place, the potential catchment of pupil cycle trips is restricted to a distance of approximately 1km.

The TA estimates that 25% of 'new' pupil demand will be from Cheswick Place, with the remaining 75% of trips being generated by housing proposed at Blythe Valley. However, as already noted, these figures are disputed due to the fact that the Cheswick Place development has already been constructed with properties fully occupied and accounts for a substantial proportion of existing pupils. The TA provides no allowance for 'new' trips to be generated from other disbursed locations beyond Cheswick Green, which would be consistent with data recorded from the existing pupil catchment.

3.25 Pell Frischmann Comment

The only realistic bus service that could be used to travel to and from the school stops on Creynolds Lane (approximately 350m from the school). As can be seen in the photo below, using this service requires children to cross Creynolds Lane immediately, as no footway is provided on the southern side of the carriageway and there is only limited waiting capacity. As a result, pupils would need to be carefully supervised when crossing the road. For the return journey, the closest stop is over 550m from the school. Unless parents were to commit their time to accompany their children on these buses, and for their own return, a very high level of responsible adult supervision would be required.

3.26 PJA Response

The majority of demand on public transport will be accommodated on the dedicated school bus between Cheswick Green Primary and Blythe Valley Park. This will be staffed, and so will not require parents to accompany pupils on their journey to school. The demand for the public bus service will mostly be for staff and visitors, with some demand generated by parents/pupils. The bus stop shown in the photograph on page 13 is the stop from which bus users would alight from the service (from Blythe Valley Park) and therefore waiting capacity is not a key consideration. Dropped kerbs are present in this location to aid crossing and given the age of the pupils it would be expected that all would be accompanied by an adult.

3.27 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA confirms that journeys undertaken by pupils on public bus services will be limited and so on that basis should not be considered a key part of the mitigation strategy for children travelling to school from Blythe Valley.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the bus stop referenced would be for alighting only, there are other underlying factors which suggest that public bus travel between Blythe Valley and Cheswick Green school is constrained and is therefore likely to generate limited demand from staff, visitors and pupils accompanied by parents. For example, the total journey time based on the existing A7 bus route between Blythe Valley Park and Cheswick Green Primary school is currently 15 minutes during the AM peak, whereas the equivalent travel time by car is 6 minutes. The service currently operating nearest to the school start time departs at 07:30 and so pupils would arrive at 07:45, which is approximately 45 minutes prior to earliest staggered start time at 08:30. Whilst it is noted that Section 106 funding has been secured to increase this public bus service to a 30 minute frequency, the specific details and therefore overall viability has yet to be resolved.

Table 4- Accident Data Summary

Location	Severity			Sensitive Road Users		
	Slight	Serious	Fatal	Pedestrian	Cyclist	Motorcyclist
Vicarage Road/ Illshaw Heath Road/ Watery Lane/ Creynolds Lane	4	0	0	0	1	0
Cheswick Way	1	0	0	0	0	0
Stratford/ Creynolds Lane	1	0	0	0	0	0
Creynolds Lane	2	0	0	0	1	0
Watery Lane/ Tanworth Road	1	0	0	0	0	0
Tanworth Road/ Noble Way	1	0	0	0	0	1
Saxon Wood Road	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	10	1	0	0	2	2

Table 2 demonstrates that across the study area there is an average of 2.2 collisions per annum over the five-year study period. Furthermore, Figure 2 illustrates that there is a low frequency of collisions within the vicinity of the school over the given study period. The following paragraphs outline the key differences between this data and that summarised within the Transport Assessment.

The junction with the highest frequency of collisions occurred at junction of Vicarage Road/ Illshaw Heath Road / Watery Lane / Creynolds Lane. All incidents recorded at this junction were slight in severity and only involved one sensitive road users (pedal cyclist) who was not of school age. Additionally, the incident involving the sensitive road user occurred on a Saturday, outside the operational hours of the school.

Along Creynolds Lane, where two slight collisions were recorded at two different locations. One collision involved a pedalcyclist who was of school age (12-15 years), who reportedly entered the road from the pavement into the path of an oncoming vehicle.

Along Saxon Wood Road there was one serious collision reported which occurred on a Sunday, between an agricultural vehicle and a motorcycle. The causation was attributed to the agricultural vehicle travelling too fast and closeto the motor cyclist. It is understood that this incident does not demonstrate a concern with regard to highway safety.

It is concluded that based on the assessment presented above there has been a low frequency of collisions within the study area. The collisions have not involved children of primary school age, nor occurred during school peak periods. In addition, none of the reported collisions have occurred in close proximity of the school. This revised data does not change the conclusions drawn in the Transport Assessment.

3.30 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischamann.

4 Development Proposals

4.1 Pell Frischmann Comment

The school currently has 13 on-site car parking spaces with one disabled parking space. The staff surveys undertaken as part of the TA indicate that 75% of staff currently travel to work by car, meaning there is currently demand for approximately 33 spaces leaving a surplus of vehicles. The TA states that anecdotal evidence suggests that some staff double park within the site, with the rest parking on Cheswick Way. However, feedback obtained as part of this review suggests that the vast majority of surplus parking is understood to park on Cheswick Way rather than double parking within the site. As already noted, the level of staff parking along Cheswick Way is estimated to be between 14 and 21 vehicles. This suggests that more parking currently occurs on-street than within the site itself.

4.2 PJA Response

No further information regarding this “feedback” has been provided in the audit, in particular the source of the feedback or date at which it was obtained. Therefore, it is not possible to verify the validity of the conclusions drawn from this feedback.

Feedback has been obtained from the school about whether staff currently double park on site, and the following response was provided:

“There is frequently double parking and blocking but staff manage this”

4.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The feedback regarding the presence of on street staff parking was provided to Pell Frischmann by Cheswick Green Parish Council. This feedback included parking data recorded for Cheswick Way on Wednesday 8th June 2021 during school term time. The observed on-street parking data confirmed that between 15 and 20 vehicles were present throughout the duration of the day and therefore were not associated with parents dropping-off or collecting their children at either the beginning or end of school day.

By way of comparison, the photograph below was taken on a weekday during the May 2021 half term and this confirms that no on street parking was present on this section of Cheswick Way when the school was closed. The recorded data reflects the trends that are regularly observed by residents and representatives of Cheswick Green Parish Council in these locations at weekends and during school holidays.

It should be noted that the initial comment provided by Pell Frischmann was intended to highlight the extent of the existing on-street staff parking issues rather than suggest double parking does not occur within the site.



4.4 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA states that the development proposals will increase provision in order to provide 36 car parking spaces, with nine of these being tandem spaces, plus one disabled space. However, a review of the site layout plan included as Appendix A shows provision of 33 car parking spaces, ten of which are tandem spaces with two disabled spaces. The actual proposed number of parking spaces therefore needs to be clarified and consistent between the report and site layout.

4.5 PJA Response

It is proposed to provide 35 car parking spaces on-site, 10 of which will be tandem spaces, and 2 will be disabled parking spaces.

4.6 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

It is noted that the total parking supply has changed from the figures presented in the TA, however an updated drawing of the proposed layout is not provided as part of the PJA Technical Note.

4.7 Pell Frischmann Comments

Given the existing off-site parking trends and the unrestricted and readily available parking supply on Cheswick Way, it is considered highly unlikely that staff will choose to use all of the tandem spaces and risk being blocked in. As a result, this could reduce the overall on-site parking use by approximately 10 vehicles.

...The proposed car park management strategy noted within the TA is considered to be fundamentally flawed and is unlikely to result in mass take up of the tandem parking spaces. This is because the provision of telephone numbers in order to contact people that are blocked in does not guarantee to rectify the problem in a timely manner. It may also not

be practical for some staff to leave their location in order to move their vehicle whilst supervising children. As a result, staff will soon become frustrated and revert to parking on street.

4.8 PJA Response

The proposed on-site Car Park Management Strategy will ensure that staff utilise tandem parking spaces appropriately. This approach is a well-established method of providing additional car parking demand at education facilities, including those across Solihull. Feedback has been sought from the above schools, in terms of how their spaces are managed, how well the spaces are used and any other general feedback on the provision, as follows:

Table 5- Tandem Parking and Car Park Management Feedback

School	Tandem Parking Provision	Feedback
Greswold Primary School	10 tandem = 20 spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All day staff are encouraged to use the rear parking space and half day staff are encouraged to use the front parking space so that no day staff are blocked in when they leave; and Role modelling by senior members of staff is useful to demonstrate the best way to use the spaces.
Sharmans Cross Primary School	5 tandem = 10 spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spaces are available on a first-come, first-serve basis; Tandem parking bays work well, and they are monitored by the Site Manager on a regular basis to ensure that all staff are parking appropriately; and The office maintains a list of car registrations to resolve any vehicles that are blocked in
Blossomfield Infant and Nursery School	4 tandem = 8 spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spaces are available for use primarily by staff, on a first-come, first-serve basis; Staff are provided with a laminated car number which is displayed on their windscreen. If anyone is blocked in, staff can use this number to locate the relevant member of staff with the office who keep a corresponding list of car numbers and owners; and The above system rarely causes problems
Coleshill Heath School	Tandem parking implemented on temporary basis during construction works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff sent a form to complete to find out what times they arrived and departed from school Parking zones are allocated based on staff that fall within each category; The above system works well

As part of the on-site Car Park Management Strategy and using the above feedback from existing schools in Solihull, the school have confirmed that staff would be paired based on working days/hours to utilise the tandem parking spaces, and that staff regularly based at the site would be allocated specific spaces. This would ensure that part-time staff utilising the tandem spaces would be paired with those who work similar hours i.e. those who leave at lunchtime park together. A record of registration numbers will be kept in the school office, including for visitors, in case there is a need to move any vehicles, however, if managed effectively, the risk of being “blocked in” is reduced considerably.

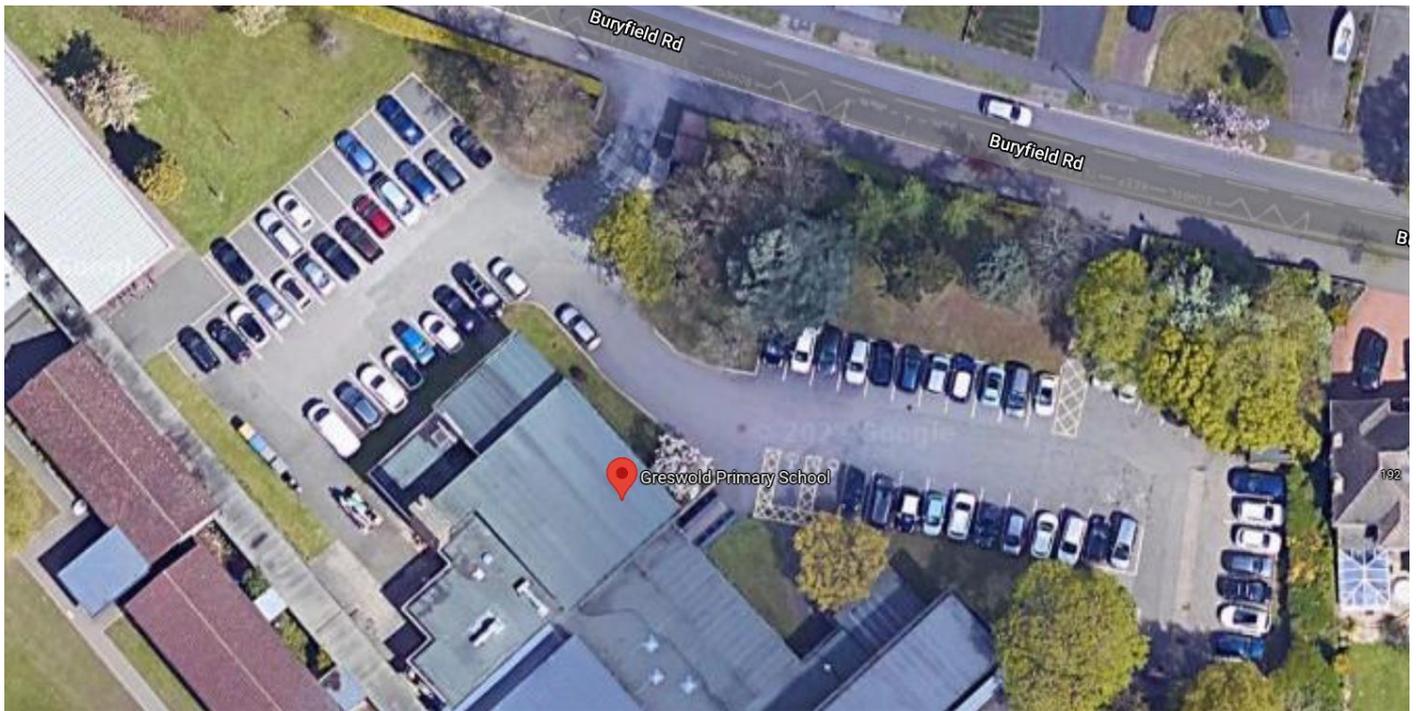
On the basis of the above, it is considered that all tandem spaces would be utilised on site by staff.

4.9 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

Having reviewed the feedback on existing Tandem spaces from other schools within Solihull and Birmingham, the following observations can be made:

- A review of streets surrounding each of the schools listed, confirms that there are more extensive on street parking restrictions that prevent parking in these locations. Even with the proposed introduction of TROs on Cheswick Way there would still be easily accessible locations on side roads for staff to park.

- A review of the schools listed also confirms that these sites have much better public bus services available than at Cheswick Green in order to provide staff with travel choice
- The sites at Sharmans Cross and Blossomfield have far fewer tandem spaces to manage than those proposed at Cheswick Green Primary School and Coleshill Heath School was only implemented on a temporary basis.
- Feedback from Greswold Primary School doesn't indicate how satisfied staff are with tandem parking and if this causes any issues. This feedback does imply that staff try to avoid blocking each other in, which has the potential to reduce the overall parking capacity. These trends are evident from the google screenshot below which shows that 5 of the 10 tandem spaces are blocked off and not available, despite the remainder of standard parking spaces being fully occupied.



4.10 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA states that the school Travel Plan will be used to promote car sharing and uptake of sustainable modes, this will be done in part through the provision of seven cycle parking spaces for staff. However, the Travel Plan states that two staff cycle parking spaces will be provided. The actual number of cycle parking spaces should therefore be clarified accordingly. Given that currently zero staff travel to work by bicycle, it is clear that the likelihood of reducing staff travel by car is very limited.

4.11 PJA Response

As set out within the Transport Assessment, it is proposed to provide a dedicated area for cycle parking adjacent to the existing playground. There will be 50 spaces provided for pupils and 7 spaces for staff, which will meet forecast future demand for cycling/scooting.

The Travel Plan on Modeshift STARS has been prepared for the school to implement prior to expansion. In the future, the Travel Plan will be expanded to ensure there are measures suitable for all pupils based at the school and updated to reflect the increase in cycle parking provision as part of the development proposals.

4.12 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA confirms that the Travel Plan submitted to accompany the planning application is based on the existing school rather than the proposed extension. As a result, the information provided within this document is not consistent with the development proposals being appraised as part of the planning application and should therefore be updated accordingly.

4.13 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA suggests that the proposed construction access on Creynolds Lane is designed to reduce or remove the impact of construction vehicles on Cheswick Way. However, the drawing provided in Appendix H does not include tracking of the likely construction vehicles that are expected to use this access. Furthermore, no information is provided on the proposed width of the access track and so it is unclear whether two vehicles could feasibly pass each other when entering and exiting the site.

The plan also fails to show how construction vehicles will navigate the site once within the school boundary. As can be seen in the drawing below, the proposed access track ends once inside the existing field boundary, whereas construction traffic will need to cross onto the other side of the school field in the vicinity of the existing school buildings

4.14 PJA Response

A drawing showing the geometry of this access and vehicle tracking is provided within **Appendix C**.

4.15 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

5 Travel Demand and Impacts

5.1 Pell Frischmann Comments

Notwithstanding the above, in order to determine the existing mode share at the school, the TA has based its assumptions on a classroom based 'hands up' survey of pupils, rather than the survey of parents that was also carried out. Whilst the response rate of the 'hands up' survey was better than the parents' survey, it is considered that utilising information obtained from young children, especially those in the lower years at the school, is not as robust.

Based on the 'hands up' survey and according to the TA, the proposed school expansion could be expected to generate an additional 88 and 75 vehicles on the local highway network during the AM and PM peaks respectively. Had the parents survey been considered within the TA, then the proposals would be expected to generate an additional 105 vehicles in the AM peak and 90 in the PM peak.

5.2 PJA Response

The parents hand up survey results used to generate the table on Page 15 is using the preferred mode of travel (Table 3-2). This does not represent actual mode share and was presented as contextual information as to why preferred travel modes were not used more often. Therefore, it is considered unsuitable to utilise the results in the way they have been presented in this Audit.

The Transport Assessment utilises the mode share data collected from the hands-up survey with pupils for the following reasons:

- The hands-up survey had a much higher response rate than the online survey with parents (99% vs. 64%) and therefore provides a more complete picture of current trip making patterns at the school; and
- The online survey for parents presents mode share per family, whereas the hands-up survey presents the mode share for each individual child. It is considered that utilising the data from the hands-up surveys presents a robust assessment of the likely future vehicle trip generation as 39% of current families (approximately 56% of pupils) will have a sibling at the school and in these circumstances, each car trip will equate to one vehicle, rather than multiple vehicles.

For completeness, Table 6 and Table 7 present revised versions of Table 5-9 from the TA, which set out the total travel demand for the sensitivity scenario. The sensitivity scenario assumes:

- Mode share of existing pupils remains as per that collected in pupil hands up survey or
- parental survey for current mode of travel (since March 2020);
- Pupils based on Cheswick Place have the same mode share as pupils currently at the school;
- 54% of pupils from Blythe Valley Park will travel by the school bus service, with remainder of pupils travelling by car/car share based on existing mode share split; and
- Take up of before/after school care provision as existing pupils.

Table 6 shows that based on the pupil hands up survey, the expansion is forecast to generate an additional 93 vehicles in the AM peak and 81 vehicles in the PM peak.

Table 7 shows that based on the online survey data provided by parents, the expansion is forecast to generate an addition 96 vehicles in the AM peak and 82 vehicles in the PM Peak. This demonstrates that the forecast number of additional vehicle trips generated by the expansion is comparable between each of the data sources.

Therefore, it is considered that the assessment contained within the TA, based on pupil hands up survey data is suitable for use.

Mode	Existing Mode Share	School AM Peak			School PM Peak		
		Existing	Proposed	Additional	Existing	Proposed	Additional
Walk	45.70%	110	148	38	82	107	25
Cycle/Scoot	11.50%	28	37	10	21	27	6
Bus	0.00%	0	68	68	0	68	68
Park & Stride	2.40%	6	8	2	4	6	1
Car Share	0.50%	1	2	1	1	2	1
Car	39.90%	96	187	91	72	151	79
Total (pupil trips)	100%	240	450	210	180	360	180
Total (vehicles)		102	195	93	77	157	81

Table 6- Existing & Proposed Pupil Travel Demand (Sensitivity Test – Hands Up Survey)

Mode	Existing Mode Share	School AM Peak			School PM Peak		
		Existing	Proposed	Additional	Existing	Proposed	Additional
Walk	48.60%	117	157	41	87	114	26
Cycle/Scoot	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bus	1.90%	4	74	70	3	72	69
Park & Stride	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Car Share	1.90%	4	8	4	3	7	3
Car	45.80%	110	204	94	82	163	80
Total (pupil trips)	100%	240	450	210	180	361	181
Total (vehicles)		112	208	96	84	166	82

Table 7- Existing & Proposed Pupil Travel Demand (Sensitivity Test – Parents Survey, mode since March 2020)

5.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

5.4 Pell Frischmann Comments

Section 5.3.11 of the TA acknowledges that it would not be feasible for pupils to travel on foot or bicycle from properties located at Blythe Valley Park. Given that pupils from Blythe Valley are predicted to account for 70% of the proposed new places at the extended school, it is clear that this represents a fundamental flaw with the proposals and a contradiction of planning policy objectives at all levels. The proposed increase in vehicle trips will also impact on local air quality and remove the potential for children to benefit from healthier active travel alternatives.

5.5 PJA Response

Section 3.2 of this note outlines how the development proposals are in line with planning policy objectives at all levels.

The development proposals are forecast to generate additional vehicle trips, however, through the Travel Plan, and implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, the impact of the expansion on air quality will be minimised and potential for children living within suitable walking/cycling distance of the school to take up active travel modes.

5.6 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

See comments in section 2.3.

5.7 Pell Frischmann Comments

The TA states that a S106 agreement secured as part of the Blythe Valley Park development will fund improvements to the existing A7/A8 bus service for a period of six years. However, no details are provided on when this six-year period will commence and how this relates to the phased extension of the school, which is due to be undertaken over a number of years. Whilst it is suggested that these changes could include amendments to align with school start and finish times, as well as a 30-minute frequency, the specific improvements to the service have yet to be finalised.

Section 5.6.2 of the TA suggests that after the initial six-year funding period, it is expected that the enhanced A7/A8 service will have become commercially viable. However, no evidence is provided within the TA to support this claim. The assumption within the TA that the proposed dedicated service will become commercially viable once the funding period has ended is therefore considered to be optimistic and not based on supporting evidence. Furthermore, given the proposal to stagger start and finish times it is not clear how this service would feasibly be implemented to cater for all year groups.

The existing bus stops are also located over 350m from the primary school access on Creynolds Lane.

5.8 PJA Response

The current timings of the A7/A8 bus service do not correlate well with existing current school start/end times, or the indicative staggered timings presented within the TA. Therefore, the Transport Assessment proposed to increase the frequency of the A7/A8 bus service to coincide with these timings.

The A7/A8 bus service is supported with funding from the Blythe Valley S106 which outlined that:

“the enhanced service should provide a 30 minute service between the development Solihull Town Centre, Cheswick Green and Dorridge Village Centre, Monday to Saturday, or such other bus service serving the development as the Council determines”.

Initial discussions with officers at TfWM have been undertaken via email, however a full response has not been provided at the time of writing this report. TfWM have confirmed that any alterations to these services need take into account the use of the A7/A8 service for journeys to other educational establishments, and that a full response will be provided in due course.

The applicant will continue to undertake discussions with TfWM to seek that the A7/A8 bus service will operate at 30 minute frequency, in line with the signed S106 agreement which supports the use of the bus service for those attending after-school activities, nursery and the proposed staggered timings.

5.9 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA does not address the comments previously raised by Pell Frischmann about potential changes to the A7/A8 bus service, although it accepted that these changes are reliant on the outcome of discussions with TfWM. However, section 3.3.25 of the PJA Technical Note suggests that only a limited number of journeys undertaken by pupils will be made via public bus services. Given these comments and the above issues surrounding future provision, it is concluded that the A7/A8 bus service is unlikely to provide a practical option for pupils and parents travelling to Cheswick Green Primary School from Blythe Valley and therefore has limited value in the overall context of the transport strategy being put forward to support the proposed extension.

5.10 Pell Frischmann Comments

Given the above, it is clear that the only existing viable means of travel from Blythe Valley Park to Cheswick Green Primary School is by car. All other travel options are not currently feasible from this location and so would require substantial mitigation and a permanent funding commitment by SMBC in the form of additional bus services. Based on the figures presented in the TA, this would result in an additional 136 two-way trips being added to the network in both the AM and PM peak periods and further increase the pressure of on-street parking and local air quality within Cheswick Green.

5.11 PJA Response

The school bus is currently provided free of charge to pupils residing in Blythe Valley Park in accordance with the Home to School Transport Policy approved by the CPH for Children, Education & Skills on an annual basis. The provision and funding of the school bus was approved by the Cabinet Member for Education and Children in March 2021. Funding of the School bus will be from the Home to School Transport Budget.

The Transport Assessment has demonstrated that implementation of staggered start/end times to the day would spread the demand for on-street parking at peak periods, and therefore it would not considerably exceed the current parking demand generated by the school or pressure for parking spaces.

5.12 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA Transport Measures Delivery Statement confirms that the existing mini bus service currently provides free travel for up to 10 children travelling from Blythe Valley to Cheswick Green Primary School and that this service was granted cabinet approval for funding via the Home to School Transport Budget.

The estimated demand for the dedicated bus service from Blythe Valley once fully developed is 68 pupils and so in order to accommodate this new demand there would need to be a step change in service provision and funding. Whilst it is acknowledged by PJA that additional service provision would be required, it is not clear whether this step change in funding support has been approved.

The responses provided by PJA confirm that it would not be possible to walk or cycle from Blythe Valley to Cheswick Green Primary School and that public bus services are also not practical options for sustainable travel. The proposed school extension is therefore reliant on a dedicated school bus service to be funded indefinitely by Solihull MBC, which status is currently unknown. The complete absence of alternative sustainable travel options and the need for substantial and ongoing funding support suggests that the proposed extension to Cheswick Green Primary School is extremely poor in the content of planning and transport planning policy.

5.13 Pell Frischmann Comments

Staff Trips Excluded – the assessment suggests that all staff trips should be excluded on the basis that these will occur outside the peak hours of 8am to 9am and 3pm to 4pm. However, this assumption is disputed as some existing staff trips have been observed arriving or departing during these times and the proposed staggering of hours is unlikely to fundamentally change these trends for additional new staff.

5.14 PJA Response

It is recognised that some staff will arrive and depart the site during these peak hours (08:00 – 09:00 and 15:00 – 16:00), however, given the start/end times of the school and likely working patterns of staff, the majority of staff will leave outside these peaks.

The school have confirmed the following:

- There are 4/5 staff that arrive between 07:00 and 07:30 and the rest generally arrive between 07:30 and 08:30; and

- Staff leave the site between 15:40 and 18:00, with teachers generally staying later on staff meetings nights.

This shows that in the AM peak, there is only a 30 minute overlap between the peak hours and typical arrival times, in addition, these trips are unlikely to be concentrated within this 30 minute period based on the information provided by the school. In the PM peak, there is likely to be some overlap, however again, these will not be concentrated within this central peak hour.

In addition, the additional 15 staff vehicles in each peak would not have a material impact on the operation of the wider highway network.

5.15 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The response provided by PJA acknowledges that there will be a 30 minute overlap of some staff trips during the morning (8am to 9am) and afternoon (3pm to 4pm) peak periods. A proportion of staff trips should therefore be included within the overall impact assessment as suggested in our initial comments.

5.16 Pell Frischmann Comments

Linked Trips – the TA suggests that between 6% and 43% of school trips could potentially be linked with other purposes. However, given the proportion of predicted new trips generated by the Blythe Valley development (70%) and the limited number of destinations within Cheswick Green, it is suggested that the potential for linked trips within the immediate network is limited. It is more likely that any linked trips will be diverted from the A34 Stratford Road and as such this would increase movements through the key A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction.

5.17 PJA Response

The Transport Assessment recognised that the potential for linked trips to occur depended on the origin and final destination of these trips, hence why a range of values was presented (6 – 43%). It is noted that there are limited trip generators within the direct vicinity of the site, however, if a resident of Blythe Valley travelled by car and dropped their child off on the way to Solihull Town Centre, there would only be an increase of one two-way trip through the A34 / Creynolds Lane junction, rather than two two-way trips if the journey was not part of an existing trip on the network. Therefore, it is considered that there is potential for a proportion of the trips to/from the school to already be present on the local highway network.

5.18 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The PJA response provides the additional information suggested and so there are no further comments from Pell Frischmann.

5.19 Pell Frischmann Comments

Blythe Valley Park Trip Generation – the TA suggests that trips associated with the already committed Blythe Valley Park development have been accounted for in previous Transport Assessments. However, the assumptions surrounding active trips made by parents and children using public rights of way (85%) indicates that the overall approach to trip generation from this development is fundamentally flawed.

5.20 PJA Response

The planning application, and supporting documentation, for residential development at Blythe Valley Park, has been approved by SMBC and therefore should not be subject to further discussion or dispute.

Notwithstanding that, the Blythe Valley Park Transport Assessment states that it assumed 85% of trips would go to or from Cheswick Green Primary School, and that as a result there could be up to 97 two-way trips by foot and seven trips by cycle to Cheswick Green (paragraph 4.7.16).

However, the vehicle trip generation is based on trip rates extracted from the industry standards database, TRICs and distributed using 2011 Census Journey to Work Data. Therefore, these two assessments are not linked, and the conclusion within this Transport Assessment remains valid – that some of the additional trips will have already been accounted for within the assessment of the local network in the Blythe Valley TA.

5.21 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The additional information provided on the Blythe Valley TA is noted.

5.22 Pell Frischmann Comments

Given that SMBC specifically requested consideration of the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction as part of the scoping discussions, it is recommended that detailed junction assessments are undertaken.

5.23 PJA Response

The development is forecast to add an additional 82 two-way trips through A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Road in the school AM Peak and 56 two-way vehicle trips through the junction in the school PM Peak. Not all of these “new” trips on the network for the reasons set out within 5.4.9 of the Transport Assessment. Following submission of the Transport Assessment and justification contained within it, no further requests for junction capacity modelling have been made by SMBC Highways.

5.24 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

The vehicle trip generation provided in the PJA response above does not represent the true scale of the impact on the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction during AM and PM peak hours. A number of comments raised by Pell Frischmann have identified fundamental issues with the proposed methodology for estimating the vehicle trips associated with the school extension and these can be summarised as follows:

- Despite PJA acknowledging that staff trips would be present on the highway network during the AM and PM peak hours, these have not been included in the overall assessment figures. A proportion of staff trips should therefore be included accordingly.
- The methodology for determining level of trip generation and distribution presented within the TA is based on the development of new properties at Blythe Valley and Cheswick Place. However, following comments from Pell Frischmann it was acknowledged by PJA that properties within Cheswick Place are already occupied and children are currently attending the existing school. The associated figures within the methodology have not been updated to reflect this error and PJA maintain that 25% of demand will still be generated from within Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place. No evidence is provided in order to support this assumption. If these figures are updated, then the proportion of trips external to both Cheswick Green and Cheswick Place is likely to increase.
- In addition to the above comment, there is no allowance for ‘new’ trips to be generated from other disbursed locations beyond Cheswick Green, which would be consistent with data recorded from the existing pupil catchment.

The comments provided above suggest that the overall impact on the A34 Stratford Road / Creynolds Lane junction is substantially underestimated. It is therefore recommended that these figure are updated accordingly and an assessment of the junction is undertaken in accordance with the original scope.

6 Mitigation Measures

6.1 Pell Frischmann Comments

The Travel Plan measures are also focused on active travel measures; however these are of little relevance to the vast majority (70%) of the proposed expansion trips, which the TA acknowledges are not feasible from the Blythe Valley Park development.

6.2 PJA Response

The Travel Plan on Modeshift STARS has been designed to be implemented at the school prior to expansion, with measures expanded as the school increases in size. The Travel Plan will promote awareness of modes such as car sharing and public transport, both of which are relevant to residents of Blythe Valley.

6.3 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

See comments provided in section 4.12 of this document.

6.4 Pell Frischmann Comments

The proposed staggered start and finish times may in fact lead to an overall increase in the dwell time for some parents who are dropping off or collecting more than one child in different year groups (39% with more than one child). Whilst this may have been acceptable to parents during COVID 19, it is evident that a reasonable proportion of respondents (26%) were not in favour of this proposal as a long term measure.

6.5 PJA Response

As stated within the TA, the school would be required to provide wrap around care (20 minutes at the start and end of the school day) for those pupils who have siblings in other staggers, to ensure each family only generates one trip, and to not prolong dwell time. The majority of families at the school currently have only one child (61%). In addition, the year groups within each stagger are flexible and so can be amended to best meet the needs of the school and minimise the number of children requiring wrap around care, reviewed on a regular basis. Further details on how this would be managed and delivered by the school are provided within the Deliverability Strategy.

In addition, whilst 26% of parents were not open to the continued use of staggered start/end times, the majority of parents (74%) were open to continued use of this system.

6.6 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

No further comments.

6.7 Pell Frischmann Comments

There is no indication within the TA as to whether funding of a dedicated school bus from Blythe Valley Park would be free for pupils or if fares would be subsidised. It is also not specified how long the approved funding period will last. If fares are introduced or increased after the funding period has lapsed, then the attractiveness of the service will most likely be diminished and those trips will shift from bus to car and further increase demand for on-street parking in Cheswick Green. Given the limitations within the site as well as presence of on street parking on Cheswick Way, it is also unclear how the bus service will safely access and escort children to school. The specific detail and practicalities of implementing this service should be described within the TA in order to determine their overall feasibility. As already noted, the existing bus service operators have already diverted routes away from stops on Cheswick Way adjacent to the school due to the presence of on-street parking.

6.8 PJA Response

The specific detail surrounding implementation of the bus service, and funding is set out within the Deliverability Strategy.

6.9 Additional Pell Frischmann

Whilst it is acknowledged that further details have been provided in the Deliverability Strategy, additional comments have also been raised within section 5.12 of this document.

6.10 Pell Frischmann Comments

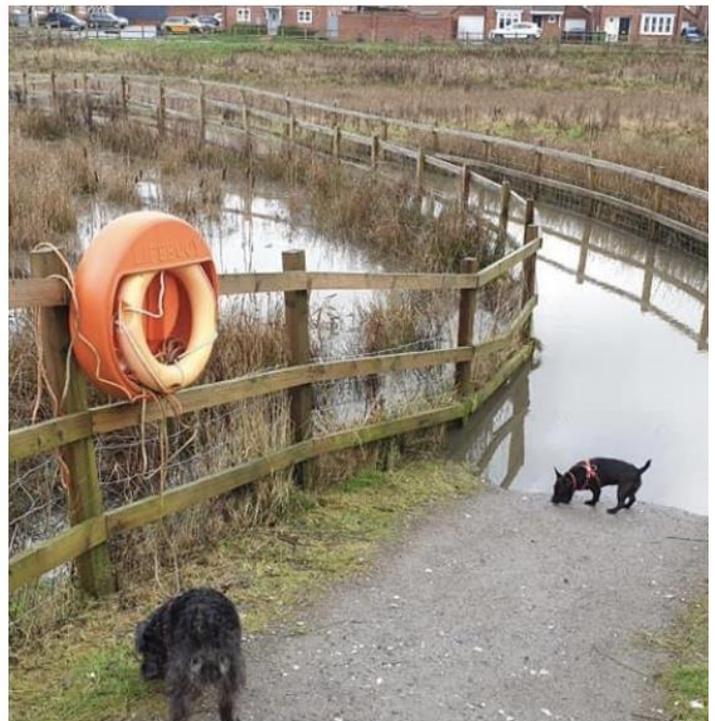
The TA suggests that a walking bus could be implemented but provides no specific details on how this could be applied to the proposed extension.

6.11 PJA Response

The specific detail surrounding implementation of the bus service, and funding is set out within the Deliverability Strategy.

6.12 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

Whilst the Deliverability Strategy does provide further details on the proposed walking bus routes, there are concerns over the suitability of some of these in their current state. In particular, the route between Kingfisher Way in Cheswick Place and Saxon Wood Road is currently inadequate and would require suitable investment in order to provide an acceptable route for children. The photos below demonstrate the existing flooding issues that have been known to occur in this location.



6.13 Pell Frischmann Comments

In terms of the proposed on-site parking strategy, as already noted this is fundamentally flawed and is unlikely to result in mass take up of the tandem parking spaces. This is because the provision of telephone numbers in order to contact people that are blocked in does not guarantee to rectify the problem in a timely manner. It may also not be practical for

some staff to leave their location in order to move their vehicle whilst supervising children. As a result, staff will soon become frustrated and revert to parking on street.

6.14 PJA Response

See Paragraph 3.4.6 (Section 4.8) for response.

6.15 Additional Pell Frischmann Comments

See comments in Section 4.9.