

**WESTONING PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Application CB/22/03113/OUT**

Please find below the comments from Westoning Parish Council on the above application. Many of these comments resulted from members of the public who attended the special meeting of the council specifically to consider this application. Westoning Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application in its current form and request that the following observations be carefully considered before members determine the application.

**Over-development and lack of Greenspace**

This development is of very high density. The initial allocation for this site was for 85 units yet this application is for 99 units. The density has been further exacerbated by the nature of the site. Due to the need for a buffer on the eastern boundary towards the railway line and a wayleave on the southern boundary, the site size is in effect considerably reduced, and a number below 80 would be more realistic. With all the greenspace located at the periphery of the site very limited greenspace is provided within the development itself. Properties should have a reasonable front garden with greenspaces within the development not just on the edges. The development of a Management Company to ensure that the grass is cut and the roads and recreation areas are maintained for at least 25 years on the site

**Parking**

Given the tight layout we are also concerned regarding lack of parking. Westoning already has significant issues with lack of on road parking, thus need to ensure the development has more than adequate parking including guest parking spaces. In our view it is essential that the detailed application provides sufficient on site parking to avoid parking outside the curtilage of each property.

Parking is often exacerbated by commercial vehicles parking on or near residential properties so consideration needs to be given to imposing a covenant banning all commercial vehicles from being parked on the site.

**Highways Access**

We are concerned about the proposed access onto the A5120. The proposed entrance is very close to the 60mph limit and cars and HGVs frequently speed into the village. To ensure the safety of road users:

* There should be a 40mph transition zone entering the village and potentially move the 30mph limit further south. A 40mph to 30mph speed limit transitional zone should be developed.  This should consist of a 40mph speed limit starting at LMC Trade Sales on the A5120 or even from the Harlington roundabout on the A5120 north of Poplars Garden Centre and the repositioning of the 30mph speed limit and signs on the A5120 to further south before the access to the application site.
* There should be design features that give good visual indications of entering a village including good lighting, road marking and potential gateway type features;
* The existing speed camera on Park Road should be updated to a digital unit and relocated further south;
* Double yellow lines need to be positioned for a reasonable length either side of the entrance to the site and on the opposite side of the road to prevent casual parking there;
* We feel that careful consideration should be given to extending the street lighting south on the A5120 to ensure that the new access to the site is clearly visible at night.

**Links to Westoning**

The provision of a pedestrian footpath from the new development through to the green space at the bottom of Spensley Road to allow easy access to Westoning Lower School and allow for integration of the new development with the village

**Sustainable Transport**

There is an urgent need for the development of a sustainable transport and cycle path from Westoning to Harlington for recreation purposes and to act as an accessible link to Harlington Upper School.

In the vast majority of incidences residents will need to travel from the village by car to access services and work. Long term this is not sustainable and alternative approaches are needed. Bus services are limited and are not practical for instance to get to work. Cycling and walking is also dangerous with no footpath to Harlington, where the upper school is situated and getting to Flitwick the path is narrow in places and also involves crossing the A507 on the “Flitwick Bends”. There needs to be a contribution to sustainable access, in particular to support CBC’s aspirations of a safe cycle/pedestrian route to both Harlington and Flitwick and ultimately on to Toddington. Given other developments in the area this is a realistic prospect. The path in front of the development should also be improved to a shared cycle/pedestrian standard with suitable crossing of the new entrance road.

**School**

Although Westoning Lower School currently has a below capacity intake, the new developments in the village will generate more pupils than can be accommodated in the school. Provision will need to be made for additional capacity at the school.

**Sports and Leisure facilities**

There is a shortage of provision for out-door leisure in the area in particular football. The local recreation ground does have a football pitch, but this needs substantial funds spending on it to improve drainage so that it is playable all year round. There is also a “rough junior pitch” which could be upgraded to standard. Funding should be secured to achieve this.

The local play area in the Recreation Ground also needs upgrading and Westoning would benefit from the development of an illuminated MUGA to meet the needs of a 20% increase in the population of the village from the two Local Plan development sites.

Currently Westoning Village Hall is heavily used and needs additional investment to enable essential maintenance to be done. The recreation club also needs to replace its decking area which is unsound and urgently needs replacement.

The play area in the middle of the new development is unnecessary as there is already a play area and recreation ground in the village.  A separate play area will not assist in integrating the new development with the rest of the village.  The area should be left as an open grassed area for all to use.

**Cemetery**

The current Cemetery in Church Road is now full for burials and the village needs support both to find a new site and the requisite investment, including access and landscaping, to make it useable for burials. It is essential that any grant of planning permission also includes a contribution to the provision of a cemetery.

**Other**

Full fibre broadband should be provided to all dwellings on the development. Charging points for electric vehicles should also be provided and energy efficiency and the use of solar panels should be provided for as many dwellings as possible.

Kind regards

Karen Barker

Clerk to the Council