

ASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION COMMENTS

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
SITE ADDRESS:	Land To The West of Ashington CE School, Ashington
PROPOSAL:	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 180 dwellings, sports pavilion, sport pitches and allotments; with associated access, landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
REFERENCE:	DC/23/0406
RECOMMENDATION:	OBJECTION
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: Please find below, a consultation response from Ashington Parish Council following discussion of the amended plans at the Ashington Parish Council meeting on 11th July 2024.	
ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: N/A	
NAME:	Lee English, Clerk to Ashington Parish Council
DATE:	12th July 2024



Ashington Parish Council

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12th July 2024

F.A.O. Horsham District Council Planning Department
Ref: Planning application -
DC/23/0406 - Land To The West of Ashington C of E School

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write with regards to the above mentioned planning application, and in response to the additional information and amended plans received by Horsham District Council in June 2024, from Savills obo Bellway Homes. We understand the amendments are further to consultation responses that the developers have received to date and following the parish council's most recent consultation response to Horsham District Council (dated 1st February 2024) which was in response to the "Community Update" leaflet sent by Bellway Homes to some Ashington households in January 2024.

The most recent revised plans were discussed at the Ashington Parish Council meeting on Thursday 11th July 2024. It is noted that these amendments still do not address the principal concerns of the parish council, set out in our February 2024 response, namely:

Quantum of Development and Housing Densities

The site allocated in the Ashington Neighbourhood plan was for 150 homes, the proposal to develop 180 homes is in our opinion overdevelopment and a significant contributory factor to the inability of the developer to be able to properly provide the associated community assets (sports pitches, pavilion etc) at a scale appropriate to the community need. A reduction in housing numbers to the level specified in the Neighbourhood Plan would provide the necessary land to deliver the community assets appropriately.

Traffic and Access

A significant community concern remains regarding the proposed site access. Bellway Homes gave verbal undertakings at a public meeting to review these and conduct further swept path analyses of the road junction to alleviate concerns, but these have not been provided. It also remains unclear how the impact on Church Lane and the surrounding areas will be mitigated.

The parish council noted in May 2022 that with the inclusion of a small piece of parish council land, it would be possible to create a safer site access route and welcomed further discussions regarding this – no discussion has ever been requested by the developers, regarding this land.

The revised Transport Assessment does not address the inaccuracies and concerns previously highlighted by the parish council. The swept path analysis at Annex B of the amended Transport Assessment appears to indicate a refuse vehicle is unable to turn in the vicinity of the pumping station without mounting the kerbs. The proposed turning area is also highly likely to become overspill parking and therefore highly likely to be obstructed without further mitigations in place.

We offer the following comments and observations in relation to the most recent amended plans:

Site Layout Amendments

We are pleased to note that the parish council concerns about the location of the proposed pitches have been considered, and the proposal now seeks to co-locate these in the vicinity of the pavilion and parking. It is stated the proposed pitches comply with the Sport England sizing standards, however the dimension quoted 95m x 55m plus a 3m run off are the recommended dimensions for U15/U16 youth games only and do not meet the requirement in ASH8 and ASH11 to provide 'full sized' pitches.

It is also unclear from the designs presented how these pitches will accommodate the recommended 2m spectator area and technical areas recommended by the Football Association and Sport England.

Alterations to the Sports Pavilion

We are pleased to see that the proposed pavilion has been reconsidered. Whilst the revised proposal is an improvement on the initial plan, it remains in the opinion of the parish council not fit for purpose.

Whilst Bellway Homes have been keen to rely on Sport England guidance elsewhere in their designs, they appear to have overlooked the Sport England advice on community spaces in developing the pavilion proposals. (Sport England design guidance note: village and community halls).

In this guidance, the smallest hall with minimum support accommodation (toilets, changing rooms etc) provides a community space of 10m x 10m. It is noted that the revised Bellway Homes proposal offers a community space of 10m x 4m – considerably smaller than what Sport England consider the 'minimum' and not suitable to deliver the objectives set out in ASH8 and ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan, namely:

- A sports pavilion, changing rooms and equipment storage facility.
- A community building providing the following needs:
 - Hall and meeting facilities to serve the needs of Scouts, local youth club and other community clubs
 - A parish council office

Parking Provision

Amendments noted and the increase in parking spaces is welcomed. However, we still have concerns over parking given the current lived experience of parking issues associated with the existing pitch provision in the village.

Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees & Heritage

Clarity over the exact use of the area to the south of the development is sought – we welcome the removal of the proposed pitch but seek clarification on the proposed planting of 'scrub vegetation' to protect the Heritage assets. In other parts of the response this area is referred to as 'woodland and scrub'. We welcome measures to maintain and enhance biodiversity but seek clarity on the exact proposals for this part of the site.

It is disappointing to see many of the issues raised in our initial consultation response to the planning application (dated 17th April 2023) have still not been addressed.

We would ask that all previous consultation responses are considered extant and to be considered along with this response.

The Ashington Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by Horsham District Council in June 2021, we consider that the information, objectives, strategies and policies contained within it should be considered current and therefore be adhered to by the developers.

Ashington Parish Council have reviewed all revised plans and updated information with regards to planning application DC/23/0406 and in its current form -

Ashington Parish Council OBJECT to the application