

Oakland / Glebeland Community Feedback – Steering group response

Forward:

During the end of October through to November 2014, the Bayston Hill community were invited to feed comments back to the steering group who are tasked with maximising the potential benefits from the former Oakland School site and the Glebeland. The steering group is made up of the following organisations:

- Shropshire Council Education Service
- Shropshire Council Assets team
- Diocese Of Lichfield
- Prospects on behalf of York House
- Christ Church
- Bayston Hill elected Shropshire Councillor
- Bayston Hill Parish Council
- Shropshire Council Community Enablement Team

The steering group is chaired by Shropshire Council's area commissioner.

As part of the steering group's work a concept drawing and draft planning brief were prepared. The group also commissioned a tree survey report (including map and schedule) and an independent ecological survey report. Although not mandatory, the group decided to publicise all of these documents and ask for community comments.

The first public forum of these documents was at the LJC (Local Joint Committee) meeting on 30th September 2014 where over one hundred members of the community came to the meeting chaired by Shropshire Councillor Ted Clarke. Due to the overwhelming public response, it was decided at that meeting that there would be further events arranged in the community to provide further opportunities to discuss the documents.

On 21st October 2014 a drop-in session was held between 2pm-7pm at the Methodist Church in Bayston Hill where over 40 members of the public viewed the documents. The documents had been made available online and local residents could comment also on the documents by visiting community buildings and posting their comments in boxes provided.

All of these community responses can be viewed in a separate document. The post codes of those that left comments can also be found on a separate document to ensure anonymity for those that commented.

The purpose of this document is to theme the responses gathered throughout October-November 2014, and wherever possible, to provide answers to the questions and comments made.

Q. We want to know the exact amount of greenspace and the proposed space between new and existing properties

A. The steering group fully appreciate residents' wishes to know these figures. We anticipate that once we've commissioned an illustrative site layout plan and applied for outline planning permission this will better enable us to be more accurate with these figures.

Q. Could the open green space be moved to the south east border to reduce impact on existing houses and minimise impact on wildlife.

The steering group believe that by maintaining the strength and density of the green border along Lyth Hill Road, this will dramatically reduce impact on existing houses. It is envisaged that this buffer will retain all important trees as mentioned in the commissioned tree survey report and any such development must protect the root system of said trees. Therefore it is not envisaged that the green space be transposed to the south east border.

Q. Is the Diocesan land not designated playing fields?

A. The Glebeland is privately owned by the Diocese of Lichfield who leases the land to the Bayston Hill Parish Council. The land is not open to the public on one day a year which enables the land to remain private and not public open space.

Q. The community do not wish to see 3 storey houses

A. The steering group do not wish to encourage any 3 storey housing on the land. This type of housing is considered to be not in-keeping with community wishes and this has been made clear in the planning brief document.

Q. It would be good to have homes for older residents to downsize/retire to or have assisted living facilities.

A. The planning brief document sets out that the steering group would like to see a range of house sizes some of which would be suitable for older residents to retire into.

Q. We do not wish to lose the Glebeland open green space.

A. The Steering group will continue to offer a significant area of open green space for residents. The planning brief and concept plan shows a mix of recreation land for children as well as green space for walking in excess of the minimum amount required. Whilst we understand this might not be as much as the community would like, it is important to make the site financially viable whilst still supporting the community as much as is possible. The minimum amount of public open space for a development of this size is 17%. The Steering group are still committed to providing more public open and green space than the minimum requirement.

Q. We have concerns about anti-social Behaviour (ASB) in evenings already. Will this proposal make it worse?

A. The concept plan showed a new public car park and an (existing) over-spill car park. The steering group have listened to residents during meetings and support the idea of erecting barriers to ensure ASB is kept to a minimum. The Church & Police are also aware of issues outside the front of the Church building which will be addressed separately to the planning proposals.

Q. The new library space looks small. Will residents still get the same service?

A. The new hub building is envisaged to house a Library & the Parish Council office. The current library building is too large given that most of its square footage isn't open to the public (storage garage etc). It is envisaged that the library despite being smaller in square footage, will continue to provide the same level of service in volume of reading materials and ICT space. It is envisaged the building will incorporate the latest space saving technology and have flexibility within its floor space to ensure the public area is maximised.

Q. Will the School be big enough for the amount of housing?

A. Yes. The Education department at Shropshire Council have been consulted and the School will have enough room for the numbers of young people expected. The county standard calculation is based on 18 Primary pupils per 100 houses therefore if the site held 50 houses, the authority estimate it would produce 9 primary school aged children.

Q. What about the Scouts & Guide Hut?

A. The future of the Scout Hut is still to be decided. However the Parish Council have informally agreed a site that could be used by the Scouts HQ near the Stanley Park playing pitches. The Scouts are actively investigating a new purpose built facility at this site.

Q. Have all permissions been granted for demolition the old school? I.E Department for Education and Secretary of State.

A. There have been delays in seeking permissions with the Secretary of State which has held up the process. The delay is because the Secretary of State wished Shropshire Council to approve all sites for disposal at the same time, which meant all school sites across the county which were at various stages of disposal had to be re-aligned. This is now in hand and permission seeking Secretary of State Approval has been sought. The results of this will be published once there is an outcome.

Q. There are considerable drainage issues on the Glebeland, has this been discussed?

A. Yes the steering group are aware of the drainage issues and this has been reinforced in to the planning brief document. Any development scheme will need to address these matters with a new sustainable drainage scheme incorporated within the site layout proposals.

Q. How many houses will actually be built?

A. The steering group fully appreciate residents' wishes to know these figures. An illustrative site layout plan is being commissioned which will give an indication; however, ascertaining the final numbers will involve the eventual developer and the outcome of outline and full planning applications.

Q. What are the plans for; Water supply route, Storm water route & sewer route - It is widely believed in the village of Bayston Hill that the infrastructure concerning water and it' disposal currently operates at its limit.

As part of any planning application a drainage report will be prepared covering storm water and sewerage in outline terms. The final design and routing will not be decided until the developer submits a full planning application and will be subject to negotiations with Severn Trent Water and

Shropshire Council Highways and Drainage. It is also to be remembered that local drains will have had capacity to serve the former School, and as such this capacity will remain available.

Q. We have concerns about access and how many houses (and therefore cars and people) will use the proposed one access point.

A. As the former use for part of this land was a School, we anticipate that a similar number of vehicles coming and going than had previously occurred when it was used by the School. Therefore we have no concerns about volume of traffic accessing the site. The Highways department at Shropshire Council will have to assess all factors upon receiving any future planning application. Having spoken with residents, we do however appreciate a growing concern of parked cars on Glebe Road and busy peak periods joining on to the A49.

Q. We believe there is a formal Right's of Way on this land.

A. Shropshire Council Rights of Way Team has explored claims of a public Right of Way. The Tithe maps do show a route along a historical boundary but it does not follow an existing, used path as far as the authority is aware. Should members of the public wish to pursue assertions of a public route in this vicinity, they will need to make a formal application. The Steering group believe the most expedient solution is to ensure routes are made available through the development that meet current requirements of the local community. To make a formal application, residents can visit the Shropshire Council website for details on how to do this.

Q. What protection is there to ensure that the general guidelines for public greenspace are followed by developers?

The detailed design will be a matter for the developer and the full planning application. The developer will also need to agree it with the principal landowners involved. The principal land owners will ensure not only the provision of greenspace is made available as per national guidelines, but that the additional open space and construction of a community hub will be a condition of sale between the developer and existing landowners.

Q. Who will own and manage the community hub and proposed outdoor space?

A. It is proposed that the community hub will be owned by Shropshire Council. The management and lease arrangements for the building are yet to be determined, however, the authority are eager to involve members of the local community. The ownership of the outdoor space is still to be decided but it is envisaged it might be in the control of the parish council for public use.

Q. When will Tree Preservation orders (TPO's) be put on the high priority trees?

A. The steering group understand the necessity in safeguarding the category A and B trees mentioned in the tree survey. As part of trying to obtain outline planning permission there is a process which needs to be undertaken to ensure all important trees are protected with a preservation order put on them. The steering group will be liaising with the Council's Trees Officers shortly.

Q. I would like to know where the entry Road will be into any new development.

A. As mentioned in the planning brief document, there are two potential, yet only one reasonable access (entry) Road for the proposed development. The two potential access points are off Glebe

Road and Eric Lock Road West. The planning brief document however alludes to only the Glebe Road entrance being suitable for a potential development of this size.

Q. Why is there an extra boundary being planted between York House & the Church and why do these organisations seem to have lots of private open space?

A. During initial discussions with York House, it was argued that residents at York House may require additional privacy due to their special needs should housing be placed on the land, thus this was put in to the draft planning brief document. The request did not come from the Church who are a separate organisation.

Q. We don't want to lose the path that runs from the Scout and Guide HQ on Eric Lock Road West along the south east border of the Glebeland and connects up with Lyth Hill Road.

A. This request has been taken on board by the steering group and will be added to the planning brief document. The group appreciate the need to keep informal walking routes and, should any development go ahead, it is hoped existing walkways will form part of any new development.

Q. Can the local GP surgery cope with the increase of population?

A. It is expected that the GP surgery has enough capacity to see an increase in patients should the need arise.

Q. What is the possibility of included 'self-build' plots within this development?

A. Unfortunately, the steering group are unable to include any plots as 'self-build' within the development.

Q. The former Oakland School building is deteriorating and the greenspace is overgrown. It does not portray the village in a positive light.

A. We agree and this is why proposals are being put forward for a better use of the whole site. Where necessary, repairs and remedial works have been undertaken to protect the buildings and site.

Q. We are concerned about losing the scrub land given what was (not) included in the ecological survey report.

A. The ecological survey did not reveal any scrub of significant value. Therefore, the land owner is under no obligation to protect this space from development.

Next Steps

Since receiving the comments as part of the consultation, the steering group have been making final revisions to the planning brief. The next phase of the work involves the final planning brief being signed off by the Planning Portfolio holder at Shropshire Council. If the document is signed off, the steering group will then be immediately preparing an outline planning application which will include the supporting documents, including an indicative site layout plan showing a housing scheme, areas of open space and siting of the community hub. Finally, if outline planning permission is granted, the steering groups' principal landowners will then commence with their individual disposal processes. This will involve marketing the site to potential developers as well as negotiating conditions of sale with the developers.