

Planning Application: 15/03642/FUL
Address: Land at end of Sherbourne Avenue, Chester.
Proposal: Erection of 41 dwellings, associated roads, car parking and landscape works.

The Westminster Park Resident's Association (WPRA), representing 1200 households in Westminster Park, wish to object to the resubmitted application on the following grounds.

The original application, submitted on 29.1.15 was refused on 6.5.15 with eight reasons for refusal given by the Council. The first and principal reason was that "the application was a piecemeal and uncomprehensive planning approach which would compromise delivery of the wider strategic development. It fails to accord with Policy STRAT3 of the Council's local plan (Part 1) and the provision of the National Planning framework".

Although marginal amendments have been made to the new application, which address some of the other reasons for refusal, we do not feel that it addresses the "piecemeal" objection.

The land on which the proposed 41 houses are to be built is part of a larger tranche of land that was redesignated by the Council in December 2014 as non-greenbelt. An application from Paycause, that owns the larger part, is expected shortly and we believe that the applications cannot, and should not, be considered separately.

Joint Approach

We would expect Gladman/Milne (responsible for the smaller development) to have worked with Paycause to ensure an integrated approach. But, from our meetings with Paycause and reading of the Harris Lamb report in support of the Gladman/Milne application, we conclude that there has been virtually no communication between the two sets of companies.

Open Spaces

The application provides for no open spaces (other than the gardens belonging to the houses) although it offers to make a financial contribution to the open spaces and play areas expected to be provided by the Paycause development. As a result the dwelling density is higher than the rest of WP and likely to be much higher than the Paycause proposals. We believe that new applications for development should maintain a uniformity with the rest of the area. In our view this application does not.

Drainage

With regard to drainage of both foul and surface water, the application expects to be able to couple into existing systems (possibly with the use of surface water holding tanks). Although this may be possible for 41 dwellings, it certainly will not be possible for the larger development. From discussions that we have had with Welsh Water the system will need upgrading to cope with the large new development proposed by Paycause and that they would need to undertake a survey taking at least nine months to establish what is needed. We understand that Paycause have commissioned this. We believe that the drainage requirements of the whole Wrexham Road developments should be considered together.

Education

The application states that there is room in local primary schools to cope with the children that would be generated by the 41 dwellings and that they should therefore make no financial contribution to a new primary school "unless the LEA can come up with a good reason why they should". Again this is evidence of the piecemeal approach as a new school is expected to be part of the larger Paycause development. We also understand that, although there may be room in some of the South of the River schools, Belgrave School at the end of Sherbourne Avenue, is over subscribed. This is where we would expect most of the children would want to go.

Traffic

One of the main concerns of WP residents is the effect of the whole Wrexham Road development on traffic flows yet the Gladman/Milne application does not in any way address this, again an illustration of the piecemeal approach - 41 households will not make that much difference!

The amended application does provide cycle/pedestrian access to Wrexham Road but vehicle access will be through WP and Sherbourne Avenue. We are concerned that that this will eventually lead to vehicular access from the whole Wrexham Road development through this route.

This objection to the application has been prepared following a public meeting of WP residents. It represents their views and that of the WPRA committee.

Brian Westcott
Chairman, WPRA