

TIDBURY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Charlotte Kirby
23 Silver Street
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28th July 2016

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Mr. N. Reeves
Places directorate
Planning Services
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Council House, Manor square,
Solihull
West Midlands B91 3QB

Dear Mr.Reeves,

Planning Application PL/2016/01738/PPRM - Tidbury Green Farm

We make the following comments on this application, and if not pertinent as objections to this particular application, we make them to SMBC directly, as you are ultimately responsible for public safety resulting from the development of this site for many years to come. Either way, given the serious concerns we have set out below, we expect a full answer from SMBC on each and every one of the matters raised within fifteen working days.

1) Bellway has told us that SMBC have insisted that drainage from the site should be based on the present system of open drains. We are very concerned about the drainage being based on open drains. This would be acceptable in a rural environment, but the Tidbury Green Farm development, which replaces agricultural fields by a semi-urban environment, represents a significant change to this status. It is no longer rural. We have noted that the open drain running from Fulford Hall Road, and carrying all the water drainage from this road, being on the south side of this development, is some 6 feet deep and wide. Local residents inform us that this can be fully flooded in times of severe rainfall. This ditch has a constant supply of water from local springs.

We regard this as a serious danger to people, and particularly to children, who might be drawn to such locations, and, in some circumstances, could readily drown in a full ditch, or could fall and drown in as little as 6 inches of water.

Why does SMBC regard this potentially catastrophic drainage solution as the best alternative? Who will be responsible for keeping these ditches from silting up? Why was a system of culverts not considered a safer and less intrusive option?

2) Your consultation with the Environment Agency (EA) in relation to this planning application took place in 2005/6 which as you would agree was some significant time ago and your flood risk policy was only issued in 2011 so would not have taken account of the rise of the water table in this area. The EA state:

‘ however because the planning application related to an ‘ordinary watercourse’ and flood risk was from surface water sources, the environmental issues posed by this development are within the scope of the Lead Local Flood Authority (Solihull M.B.C.) ‘

However as this is not the case and there are identified springs located in this area we would ask that you contact the EA again and give them a true and accurate account of the site so a proper assessment can be made of the flood risk, as per your published Flood Risk Policy.(Click link below)

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/flood>

In addition we have noted that between numbers 48 and 58 Fulford Hall Road, three residents have fitted water pumps or carried out drainage work to keep their properties free from water egress. We also provide you with photographs aimed towards 54 Fulford Hall Road in July 2007, which shows the flooding that has taken place in this road since the last EA consultation. We attach as an Appendix, the photos taken in July 2007.

Should not this issue be readdressed?

3) There appears to be no fencing planned between the Play Area and the Storm Water Lagoons. Unless we are misinformed, these lagoons need to be wide and deep enough to capture storm water. Local residents inform us that the water table in the near vicinity is only a foot beneath ground level at most times in the year. We have already provided details in our submissions concerning planning application PL/2016/01224/MINFDW, 198 Norton Lane. This would mean that these Water Lagoons would generally hold water. Please provide us with the planned gradient of the side slopes of these pools and the depth needed to get the required maximum necessary storage of water. Our present belief is that these pools would provide an unacceptable and significant risk to an unaccompanied child, whether they were empty, half full or full. Our concerns are reinforced by there being no planned barrier preventing children walking from the Play Area to these Water Lagoons.

4) We attach a copy of a letter to Chris O’Hanlon at Bellway, which sets out concerns regarding traffic flows and lorry movements. At the present time, we can see no viable route for 20t lorries to access the proposed site entrance without severely compromising road safety. We find it difficult to understand how Solihull Highways seem to have signed off this site access point, when it appears to have such basic flaws. In conclusion we are therefore questioning what evidence SMBC Highways gathered to sign off the outline planning application, in particular to the location of the site entrance and the consequent traffic issues. Please provide us with the detailed documentation which supported this decision, and let us know if you intend to revisit this issue in the light of the matters we have raised.

Yours sincerely



Charlotte Kirby, Clerk to the Council

Enc: Letter to Bellway

C.C. J. Carpenter (SMBC), Ed. Bradford (SMBC), K. Hawkins (SMBC), J. Walters (CPRE)