

PROPOSED EXPANSION TO CHESWICK GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Residents,

WE ASK ALL RESIDENTS TO REGISTER AN OBJECTION TO THE ABOVE PROPOSAL

From previous communications, you will be aware that Solihull Council (SMBC) is proposing to progressively double the volume of pupils attending Cheswick Green Primary School. The additional capacity is designed primarily to accommodate children from the Blythe Valley Park (BVP) housing development.

Not only would this lead to significant issues in respect of traffic, parking and pollution, but it could easily lead to a reduction in the standard of education. Despite overwhelming opposition from many residents, SMBC is still driving ahead with its proposal and has now issued a second consultation which can be accessed on the following link:-

www.solihull.gov.uk/consultations

The key issues are discussed below:-

- 1) Although both consultations provide limited information, it is evident that the additional planned facilities are restricted and arguably, not in keeping with a doubling of pupil capacity. The hall, after-school club, library and music rooms all remain the same size. Quite clearly, this is not consistent with a good learning environment.
- 2) The parking of school staff cars causes much consternation, an issue that could get much worse. While provision for additional parking in the school grounds is included in a feasibility study, residents should insist that, despite increased staffing levels, there would no longer be a need to park staff cars on nearby roads and that such a practice would be banned by the school.
- 3) A recent survey has found that traffic pollution can reduce children's lung capacity by almost 20%. Also, Public Health England's report into air quality, highlights the need to reduce air pollution in the vicinity of schools. Such facts are in the public domain and it therefore defies all logic why SMBC should be proposing a doubling of pupil numbers with an inherent increase in vehicular traffic. This is completely unacceptable and for this reason alone, the proposed expansion should be rejected.
- 4) SMBC is investigating various options including a second access to the school. It is assumed that the key criteria of such an action would be to drop off/collect children. However, with vehicle engines idling and the inherent

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release of dangerous gases into the air, plus traffic congestion on approaching roads, such a move is likely to have devastating consequences.

5) As a result of the new housing which is focused in our area, SMBC is benefitting from significant Section 106 monies, a contribution from developers to reduce the impact of new housing and provide funding for new infrastructure. With an obvious funding route, it is both fair and logical that BVP should have its own primary school.

6)The consultation suggests that Hockley Heath Primary School and St Patrick's Academy are, in isolation, unsuitable to accommodate an expansion of this size. However, as a key suggestion was to accommodate BVP children across all three primary schools, there is no evidence that this proposal has been taken seriously and properly investigated.

It is noted that the Council's Cabinet Holder for Education is also the Ward Councillor for Hockley Heath. This does suggest a conflict of interests and with this in mind, a reappraisal of allocating children across all three primary schools is requested. This is not the favoured route, but should SMBC continue to reject the building of a new primary school on BVP, then the suggestion would be to the forefront.

SMBC is only likely to withdraw its proposal if it witnesses a strong strength of feeling against their proposal. Residents are therefore asked to take time and make their feelings known. This needs to be completed before 25th February 2021 and communicated either by email or post to:-

Email - researchandpolicy@solihull.gov.uk

Post - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, School Place Planning Team
Council House, Manor Square, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3QB

CHESWICK GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

14th February 2021



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