

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

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SE/22/02495/OUT: Land south of Greenview Avenue, Leigh

Leigh Parish Council continues to strongly oppose this application. The latest document submitted by the applicant does not resolve any of the fundamental concerns of Leigh Parish Council about the suitability of the land south of Greenview Avenue as a site for development. As stated in the Parish Council's previous comments, the proposals present a risk to the safety of residents, pedestrians, road users and the children of Leigh Primary School. There is also a very serious concern about the potential of irreversible damage to the veteran oak tree situated on The Green as well as to The Green itself and surrounding conservation area. The development also negatively impacts the leisure and amenity value of The Green by compromising the safety of access. The Parish Council believes that this development does not demonstrate the exceptional circumstances necessary to justify construction on a Green Belt site, and reiterate that this development is not objectionable itself, but is deemed unacceptable by its unsuitable, sensitive and unsustainable location.

The Parish Council will address specific issues below but in summary members believe the report to be inaccurate in numerous areas both in terms of fact and opinion. The factual inaccuracies are so serious and widespread that the Parish Council believes that they render any conclusions invalid.

In addition, despite its obvious flaws the report does not fully address concerns raised in the Parish Council's letter of response to the application dated 11th November 2022 namely:

- 3 – Access
- 4 - Highway Safety Issues
- 5 - Impact on The Green and the surrounding Conservation Area
- 6 - Safety of Leigh Primary School and Scribbles Preschool children
- 7 - Lack of Secondary Access

Leigh Parish Council has the following comments in relation to Motion's Further Response to KCC Highway Comments dated 5th April, but with a published date of 17th April.

Para 2.1-2.7 & Appendix B.

1. KCC requested a survey on 6m spaces but the consultants appear to have ignored this and focused on 5.5m spaces. This increases the number of available spaces with the effect that the percentage stress measurements quoted are less than they would be if the specified 6m was used.
2. In paragraph 2.4 of appendix B the survey is stated to include times of 15:00, 15:30 and 16:00 on 21st March, a weekday but we can see no mention of these times and their results in the Survey Results and Analysis. The omission of these results, presumably because they identify significant stress presents an incomplete and false picture of the situation as is the failure to include any survey or date for the morning "rush hour" which would also, we predict, show significant stress.
3. The survey included, at KCC's request, a Saturday afternoon when a football match was being played on The Green. Parking was at 120% of capacity.

2. Fig. 3.1: there is no footpath on Lealands Avenue.
3. Para 3.5: there is no mention of pedestrian footfall, access to the footpaths and the water meadows by walkers. The statement is that pedestrian volumes are low. This is incorrect.
4. Road widths in Greenview Avenue, The Green Lane and, in particular, in the very narrow road around The Green would make access by large construction vehicles exceptionally difficult and in some cases impossible where there are parked cars. Turning space for these large vehicles is not sufficient with the space available. The following photo shows a large lorry having to mount the kerb in order to pass a parked vehicle.



Photo showing a lorry having to mount the kerb to pass a parked vehicle

Para 4.0 Construction Access and Specific Measures to maximise Road Safety

1. The Title Plan above shows the extent of the Parish Council's ownership. The road around The Green is included, although this road is adopted. The Parish Council would need to be consulted on any Construction Management Plan, and so would Sevenoaks District Council as owners of The Green Lane.
2. The weight of HGVs and other vehicles during the construction phase would have a detrimental impact on the extremely narrow road network around The Green and on The Green Lane and Greenview Avenue. The roads are not constructed to a standard that could withstand this weight and volume of traffic. This is a major concern.
3. The Green Lane is not a straight road as mentioned in the report, it is a very narrow road with bends, and completely unsuitable for construction vehicles. The Green Lane measures just 3.6m in places. There is no footpath on The Green Lane and visibility is poor due to the bends in the road. This would put pedestrians at severe risk if this road is used by construction vehicles.
4. The report states that the road around The Green has 'wider sections' and Figure 4.2 shows two routes for construction vehicles, one past the school, where the road width is measured as 4.4m, and one past Oak Cottage, where the road width is measured as 3.7m.
5. The suggestion by Motion that grasscrete could be installed along the edges of The Green opposite Greenview Avenue is not possible because the safety of the sports players would be at risk.
6. The mention of the BAM Contractors using the site on a temporary basis due to works on the railway track is misleading. BAM is not using the 7.5m long lorries as suggested within the Motion document, they are using 3.5 ton lorries.

The report makes no reference to the veteran oak tree which the road around the Green passes by and which must be protected. There is no suggestion how any damage might be prevented to the tree itself which abuts the edge of the road and whose root system lies under it and branches overhang it. Heavy construction vehicles passing so closely will damage the tree and its root system and it is likely that tall loads, such as roof trusses will break off branches. The report and application fails to address this.

The Parish Council notes that KCC Highways submitted further comments by letter dated 24th April, based on this report from Motion. Members believe that in making these comments KCC failed to identify a number of the inaccuracies identified above which are perhaps more glaringly obvious to the Parish Council with local knowledge. The Parish Council would welcome anything further that KCC officers may have to say now these have been identified, particularly now that clarification has been provided over the ownership of The Green land and the fact that a pedestrian pavement cannot be constructed. KCC Highways had made the provision of this a pre-condition of any grant of planning permission.

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