

## Response to Matters, Issues & Questions

### Brinsley Vision

#### Matter 9 (Policy 5)

Brinsley Vision supports the BBC site for development in Brinsley and the plans of the promoter of that site.

There is much concern in the village about the way Brinsley Parish Council (BPC) and its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SG) has chosen to fight for their alternative site off Cordy Lane rather than the BBC preferred site, also off Cordy Lane but referred to as the Church Lane site. Large numbers of villagers have attended some BPC meetings questioning the BPC choice, feel they have not been listened to, and a formal complaint by residents was made some time ago to BBC and the local MP. That complaint has not yet been resolved.

Consultations about the sites have been carried out by the BPC Steering Group. Misleading information was been given, and only their Cordy Lane site details were on display. Pressure was brought to bear to persuade villagers that not choosing that site would result in building along the whole length of Church Lane, hiding the Headstocks site from view and adversely affecting the nature reserve.

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016, after discussions and agreement, BBC reduced the site to its present dimensions, located behind the playing field, and not beside Church Lane. The promoter of the site was present at this meeting together with representatives of BPC, including the writer of this response. This change has not been made clear to residents by BPC and SG, who are adamant that their alternative site should be chosen.

A presentation by the writer was made to BPC on 9 November 2016 explaining the change and showing a map with the reduced site clearly marked. Unexpectedly the promoter attended that meeting, offered assistance and explained in detail what the 'Church Lane' site would involve. Although his presence at that meeting has since been criticised, at the time he was warmly thanked by the Chairman for his invaluable help and information. The writer's integrity with regard to the promoter's attendance has also been questioned.

At the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting the writer was asked to draft a letter to BBC stating that BPC agreed in principle to the BBC preferred site. The content was agreed by another councillor present at the BBC meeting on

31 October, and was circulated for approval by BPC members. It is not clear whether it was actually sent to BBC.

BPC Minutes of a further meeting held on 30 November 2016 (attended by S Saunders of BBC Planning Policy) detail BPC agreement in principle to the 'Church Lane'. The meeting also noted that the presence of a developer for the site added strength to its recommendation. There is no reference to the draft letter. (See Minutes herewith item 3125 )

Subsequent to this meeting action started behind the scenes regarding the alternative Cordy Lane site. Evidence of this can be found in Minutes of BPC and SG, which will be provided if required.

The public has been encouraged in the view that the 'Church Lane' site would ruin the landscape of Brinsley, the Headstocks Heritage site and nature reserve, and adversely affect the wildlife of the area. Note that most of the open landscape of Brinsley is actually in the Hall Lane area, far away from the site, and most of the SINC sites are also far away from the site, in the Erewash Valley area. The plans of the promoter of the 'Church Lane' site would actually improve connectivity and access to the Headstocks site and would mitigate any adverse effects on wildlife. The fears of residents will be proved to be unfounded.

The public has also been led to believe that the 'Church Lane' site would pose severe difficulties re access to the school and shops, with dangerous roads to cross, unlit pathways, and a detrimental increase in cars. In fact, the 'Church Lane' site is closer to the school and shops, and crossing Broad Lane to get from the Cordy Lane site more dangerous than crossing Church Lane. Broad Lane has fast traffic, parked cars reducing the width of the road, no pedestrian crossings, and poorly-lit unpaved footpaths from the Cordy Lane site onto Broad Lane. Church Lane also has some speeding traffic, but has a pedestrian crossing in the right place for school, shops and bus stop access, and a surfaced footpath across the playing field which is adjacent to the development site. Increase in cars would occur whichever site was developed.

Much has been said about the poor quality of the Cordy Lane land and that it has little interest to nature lovers, contrary to the opinions and experience of residents adjacent to that site. The report of SABRHE prepared for the last Local Plan includes detailed survey reports for both sites. It is available if required. A press report in the Eastwood &

Kimberley Advertiser on 19 July prompted incensed residents to confront BPC on 28 July 2017 about the inaccuracy of the descriptions of the Cordy Lane site; they were not listened to, and their points regarding wild life, sewage seepage and flooding on the site were dismissed as untrue. An audio record of that meeting is available if required – it presents a different picture from the minutes of the meeting.

That led indirectly to the setting up of Brinsley Vision to represent them and other villagers, and to correct the misinformation being circulated by BPC and the SG.

In our view the BBC site, situated behind the playing field with its outdoor facilities and open space is the best for the village. The location of the self-contained site will encourage engagement between the children of the village much more easily than the more remote Cordy Lane site. The enhanced connectivity to the Headstocks site and nature reserve, already used to good effect by the children at the school, will benefit the community. It is unfortunate that a few residents along Cordy Lane will have their green outlook changed, but the development will be shielded from their view by planting and landscaping.

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