

Community Update

Proposed development of land adjacent to Limburg Road, Lichfield



David Wilson Homes



Aerial view of the existing site

Planning application submitted

David Wilson Homes Mercia has now submitted a full planning application to Litchfield District Council (LDC), to develop land adjacent Limburg Avenue with 157 new homes, including affordable housing, extensive new landscaping and public open spaces. The Council's planning application reference is: **14/00465/FULM**

This site is ideally suited to deliver new homes, being adjacent to the existing built settlement and within close walking distance of local facilities including Waitrose and local bus links.

Local planning background

- The development of the proposal site will help meet to Litchfield District Council's housing needs, including the provision of much needed affordable housing.
- Litchfield District Council needs to deliver at least 9,600 new homes during the plan period to 2028.
- Not enough new homes have been built in recent years to meet local requirements and there is currently an insufficient supply of housing land to address this shortfall in the immediate term.
- Although the proposal site forms part of the 'Western Recreation Zone' identified in the adopted Local Plan, it is currently used for agricultural purposes and the Council's own evidence shows that it will not be required for recreational uses in the future.

Community consultation

Prior to submitting its planning application it was important to David Wilson Homes that the local community was consulted. To achieve this, the project team discussed its preliminary plans with locally elected councillors and offered individual meetings over 40 neighbouring properties.

A public exhibition was also held in October 2013, to which over 1,500 surrounding homes were invited to view the preliminary plans, speak with members of the project team and provide comments.

A total of 85 people attended the exhibition, including representatives from Lichfield City Council and Civic Society. 780 visits have also made to the project's dedicated website and 40 local residents took the time to complete feedback forms about the preliminary proposals.

Local feedback

The local community's response to the proposals has been mixed, with:

- 35% of respondents supporting the proposals, primarily expressing support for the need for additional new homes for local people and the design and layout proposed;
- 47.5% expressing neutral views; and
- 17.5% objecting or primarily raising concern.

Additional meetings

David Wilson Homes has also held additional meetings with Lichfield City Council and Lichfield District Council's Strategic Development Team, and sought further advice from Highways Officers at Staffordshire County Council.

Addressing and responding to local comments and ideas

The main concerns, comments and ideas raised by the local community during the pre-application consultation and the amendments David Wilson Homes has made to its plans are highlighted on the reverse of this newsletter.

Summary of our proposals

New homes

157 high-quality new homes, providing a broad mix of housing types that would include two, three, four and five bedroom homes – to cater for a broad market, including families and first time buyers and to create a balanced community.

Affordable housing

Of the new homes proposed, 25% (39 properties), would be affordable homes for local people. This meets Lichfield District Council's policy requirement for affordable housing provision.

Height

The proposed new homes would be two and two and a half storeys, in keeping with adjacent developments.

New public open spaces

Extensive areas of open space would be created around the edge of the development to blend with the rural surroundings. It is proposed to safeguard an area of undeveloped public open space which could be used for local recreation. The location of the open spaces has been carefully considered to protect the residential amenity of adjacent existing properties and to link with the established, existing open space network.

Pedestrian and cycle links

New pedestrian and cycle links are included throughout the development in order to improve connectivity by walking and cycling to nearby facilities, helping to reduce reliance on cars.

Design and layout

The design of the proposed new homes adopts a traditional approach, whilst creating its own distinctive character, synonymous with the David Wilson Homes brand, as recently delivered on the Victoria Place development, off The Friary, Lichfield. The design would incorporate building materials and architectural features associated with the local area, including traditional brick and render, with the addition of traditional features such as porches to reflect styles found on neighbouring developments.



Access

Vehicle access points are proposed for both the eastern and western sections of the site;

- Eastern proposal; via Limburg Avenue (A461), will be served by a left-in and left-out only arrangement.
- Western proposal; via Limburg Avenue (A461), will include a right turn only lane, preventing traffic build-up on Limburg Avenue.

Drainage

It is intended to use Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) principles on site utilising a combination of underground storage, permeable paving, soakaways and balancing ponds.

Extensive new landscaping

The plans include extensive new tree planting and landscaping to further ensure the proposals contribute to the character of the local area and to ensure the proposal respects its wider landscape setting. A pond is incorporated to the northern part of the western proposal to ensure the development is in keeping with existing, neighbouring landscaping and to accommodate the requisite drainage proposals.

Car parking

Would be provided for each property in accordance with the requirement of the local Highway Authority, with at least 2-3 car parking spaces per dwelling (not including garages). Additional visitor and on-street car parking will also be available, ensuring that there is ample car parking within the site.



Responding to local issues raised:

Community feedback was received in the form of comments, concerns and suggestions regarding the preliminary proposals. David Wilson Homes is encouraged that 35% of feedback received to date supported its plans for new homes on this site, particularly the design and layout and the range of housing proposed. However, we also recognise that 47.5% of feedback was neutral and 17.5% in objection. **The main comments, suggestions and ideas raised by the community about our preliminary plans and our response, including amendments made, are summarised below:**

Provision of open space/location of open space and children's play areas:

The location of the open space, particularly the children's play area was a key concern and interest raised by neighbouring residents. Most felt that it should be located away from existing homes. Others queried whether additional open space was required given the existing provision in the local area.

DWH response: Residential developments providing over six new homes require the provision of additional open space and developments of this size are required to provide it on-site.

Amendment resulting from community feedback: The proposed children's play area has been relocated from being originally adjacent to dwellings served by Chatterton Avenue to now being located to the east of the scheme closer to Darwin Hall.

Adequacy of local facilities, including schools:

One of the main concerns from respondents was the capacity of local schools. Local concern was also raised about the adequacy of local health facilities, including GP surgeries and dentists.

DWH response: We understand there is local concern regarding the capacity of local facilities to accommodate additional growth. Issues with regard to school capacity and any requirement for additional financial support will be dealt with during the application process by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the County Council. Any requirement to pay contributions, including towards local education, will be met by the developer as part of a Section 106 Agreement.

Traffic generation:

Concern was raised that the development will increase traffic locally and that the nearby roads would not cope with additional demand.

DWH response: Preliminary discussions have been held with Highways Officers at the County Council (the local Highway Authority) to ensure our plans, including the proposed access points, are acceptable in terms of local highway safety and capacity. A Traffic Statement (TS) has also been submitted as part of the planning application which fully considers all highway issues associated with this proposal. The Highway Authority will consider if additional improvements are required as a result of the proposal. If this is the case, DWH's would be required to make a financial contribution towards local highway improvements.

Neighbouring amenity:

A number of nearby residents raised concern about the proximity of the proposed development to existing homes, including potential overlooking.

DWH response: The design of the layout has been developed to ensure that it adheres to all space standards with regard to distances between existing and proposed properties, to ensure neighbour amenity and privacy is respected. The plans also include extensive landscaping around the site's boundaries, which will further screen the proposed new homes from existing homes.

Density:

Some concern was raised regarding the number of houses proposed on the site.

DWH response: In the interests of sustainability, the density proposed seeks the efficient use of this site whilst recognising the need to respect the character and appearance of the local area. The proposed houses will be built to an overall density of 32 dwellings per hectare (dph), which is considered to be in keeping with the character of surrounding properties. The density on the western site is 27dph to reflect the adjacent density in Darwin Park, while the eastern site has a higher density of 41 dph where it adjoins the neighbouring commercial uses. We also received local support for our proposed layout, which supportive respondents thought complemented existing developments and was spacious and well laid out.

Affordable housing:

A number of neighbouring residents queried the need for and the location of the affordable housing.

DWH response: 75% of the homes will be private for sale and 25% will be affordable housing for local people, which is a requirement of Lichfield District Council's local planning policy

Amendment resulting from community feedback: The location of the affordable housing was amended in the proximity of Chatterton Avenue, Walnut Walk and Whitehouse Drive so that it was located further away from existing properties.

Summary of benefits

- Development of a site which can accommodate new homes and lies adjacent to the existing built settlement and close to local facilities.
- A high-quality, sensitive residential development, providing new homes at a time when Lichfield District Council is short of housing.
- A good mix of high-quality homes to cater for the broadest markets, including families downsizers and first time buyers
- Provision of new affordable housing.
- A spacious layout delivering generous new areas of attractive open space for use by the wider community and new landscaping.

Questions

If you have any further questions or would like more information you can visit our website at **www.consultation-online.co.uk/hallampark** or call our Freephone information line on **0800 298 7040**