

Cheshire East Council
Development Management
PO Box 606
Municipal Buildings
Earle Street
Crewe
CW1 9HP
20/6/15

Marton Parish Council
Clerk Catherine Clowes
14, Downesway
Alderley Edge
Cheshire
SK9 7XB

FAO John Williamson

Dear Mr. Williamson.

Re: Planning Application Number 15/2274M. Land Off School Lane Marton

The Parish Council wishes to make you aware of our strong objection to this proposed development which we feel is totally inappropriate in scale and sustainability. Our residents fear such a development would have a serious impact on the quality of life and enjoyment of the environment.

Our specific objections are as follows:

1 The development is not sustainable.

Marton is a small rural village with very little infrastructure or facilities. A development of this size would more than double the number of residents within the core of the village. Marton does not have mains gas, nor any public transport, post office or petrol station. There are no shops apart from a gift shop and farm shop which only has a very limited range of products. Being in a rural area there are few opportunities for full time employment. The nearest supermarket is 3.6 miles away in Congleton. If you require a doctor, dentists, chemist, or hospital treatment you need to travel to Macclesfield or Congleton. Existing broadband is extremely slow with no definite date for an upgrade. To secure employment, residents would probably have to commute by car to the towns North and South or the larger conurbations; this development could easily add 30 to 40 car journeys twice daily.

To support their transport policy the applicant makes a number of claims that are either not true or misleading. They cite walking as an option and show pedestrian access from the proposed development to the existing footpath network; these cannot be achieved as shown, because:

- The pedestrian connection to the A34 on the South of the site leads directly on to the carriageway on a dangerous bend; this is exactly the position of an accident on the 27th May 2015.
- Their plan wrongly shows a footpath along the carriageway, this does not exist nor can it be created.
- The footpath to the west of the site along School Lane basically goes nowhere heading north and is therefore pointless; where this heads south it can only continue as far as the curtilage of the site. It cannot connect to the existing footpath at the junction with the A34 as this is through a private garden: it is wrongly depicted on the plan.
- Pedestrian access to the Church, shops, and cafe can only be achieved by crossing the busy A34 twice which is hardly appropriate or safe for children.

Despite claims by the applicant, Marton does not have any public transport. The D&G Little Bus Service referred to by the applicant is a demand-responsive flexible service not run to a regular timetable. However D&G confirm this is no longer available in Marton. The AH6 is an oversubscribed bus taking pupils to All Hallows College in Macclesfield during term times; this can hardly be described as public transport.

Reference is made to the National Cycle Route 55 which passes down School Lane, suggesting that cycle routes could be used to reach Congleton (approx 5 miles) and Macclesfield (approx 6 miles) for shopping and work. Route 55 and the lanes around Marton are used extensively by serious cyclists (teams and individuals) and by recreational cyclists. We are not aware of anyone using their bikes for work or shopping. This is not a practical proposition particularly during the winter months where the lanes are not on the gritting schedules.

As stated previously Marton does not have access to mains gas nor are there any prospects of providing this in the near future. The main alternatives are oil or LPG which in both cases require delivery by HGV's via School Lane which has a weight restriction of 7.5 tons. The applicant advocates the use of LPG for the development, presumably because it would reduce his capital costs. This could double the heating costs, is neither sustainable nor efficient energy use and could risk creating fuel poverty, particularly for the occupiers of the low cost houses.

In conclusion the only viable means of transport to and from Marton is by private vehicle, which in the case of this proposal could generate an increase of over fifty vehicles.

Although the applicant demonstrates how services can be provided to the site they do not explain how foul and surface water drainage would be dealt with. We understand there is a duty imposed upon United Utilities to treat the sewage but we are not convinced that the existing sewage plant serving the village is capable of coping with the increased demands. Whilst this may not directly be a planning issue, should a larger plant be required it in turn would need the necessary consents, in which case this proposal could not proceed unless a secondary application to enlarge the plant was approved.

Finally we refer to the emerging CEC Local Plan Section 9 Planning for Sustainable Development. The applicant fails to achieve the objectives set out in Policy SD1, specifically sections 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13,14,15,&16. It also does not comply with many of the Sustainable Development Principles set out in Policy SD2, specifically sections 1i,1ii,1iii,1iv,1v,1vi,2i,2ii,&2iii.

2 Highway safety, inadequate parking and access

2.1 There is a good primary school in Marton, which serves the surrounding villages and the north of Congleton.

Pupils arrive at the school by private car and by school bus. The number of private cars in use has gone up over recent years and the use of the school buses has gone down, resulting in problems with the number of cars parking in the area around the school.

While we fully understand that the school necessarily brings traffic to the village, and wish to support the school in its activities, the increase in the number of cars parking around the school causes problems for residents. The introduction of a reception class, expansion of the school nursery

and Cheshire East's new policy on assisted transport for children attending denominational schools has also impacted on parking.

Though school has increased the parking available within its boundaries recently, there is limited parking in the school grounds, and on occasions staff have to park outside on the road.

Parking spaces that have been used in the past by parents have also been reduced. A verge in Oak Lane has been coned off and a large paved area in front of the school now has a number of flower planters on it to prevent parking for safety reasons. As a result desperate parents have to use whatever space they can find, resulting in residents drives being blocked, traffic jams and the use of unsafe verges.

The main area that parents use for parking is School Lane. The lane does not have a footpath and is a narrow country lane. Parking can stretch all the way down School Lane to the A34 and on occasions causes problems on the A34. Parents, some with pushchairs and toddlers, have to make their way down the centre of the road, dodging in and out of parked cars to avoid passing traffic, which can include heavy farm vehicles and large 50/60-seater school buses.

Parents also park on the verges north of the vicarage, this area is close to a bend in School Lane.

Pupils and parents are a risk from passing traffic and from collision when reversing out onto the road. On occasions parking on these verges has blocked the road to large vehicles. This could have serious consequences if an emergency vehicle was prevented access.

Any increase in vehicle movements as a result of proposed development would make the current situation even worse. It would be both foolhardy and dangerous. Councillor Lesley Smetham in an e-mail to Councillor Rachel Bailey (15 May 2013) recognised the problem and stated "I have been at the school at home time and seen carers with children in pushchairs and toddlers walking alongside weaving in and out of parked cars with huge coaches and passing traffic and no footpaths along a narrow country lane. It is most worrying".

At a meeting held 3rd Mar.2014 between the school and Marton Parish Council (see Appendix 1) both the school and council recognise that there is a safety issue for the parents, children and residents.

Stuart Bateman from CEC Traffic and Road Safety Team following a visit to the school at bell time stated in an e-mail dated 2 July 2013 "As the school is placed in a rural setting with narrow lanes, from a highway perspective there is not a great deal we can do. I would suggest the most appropriate course of action would be to create additional parking facilities within the school grounds".

Additionally when the leader of the Council, Michael Jones, attended our Parish Council meeting on the 9 Feb 2015 on the subject of school parking, he said "the answer was not to carry out a risk assessment because there is clearly a danger to school children and therefore action must be taken".

2.2 As well as the problems on School Lane many of the parents leave via the single carriageway of Oak Lane which in one case also delayed emergency vehicles. The applicant proposes an 8 vehicle car park off Oak Lane to help the problem: it would not. The entrance is on a single file road with no passing areas and spaces may well be occupied by overspill from the development. Also the capacity will be more than taken up by the loss of parking on School Lane created by the new entrance, visibility splay and driveway to the first house, which is not indicated on the plan.

2.3 The whole issue of parking and highway safety is of serious and ongoing concern to the Parish Council. On receipt of this application we commissioned an independent report from Progress 10 Design (please see Appendix 8). This not only reinforced our views but also highlighted a number of serious issues and omissions in the application.

2.4 The Parish Council has expressed concerns about the increased traffic flow on the A34 resulting from the additional houses being planned for the Congleton area. Currently, during the morning rush hour, it can be difficult to get out of School Lane on to the A34, particularly if there is a problem on the M6.

Additional traffic from the proposed development will only compound the problem.

3. Loss of green field and preference for brown field development

Despite an exhaustive and comprehensive ecology report the inescapable fact is that we would lose 1.28 hectares of agricultural land which has been in constant use for generations. The applicant seeks to prove a minimum environmental impact but the reality is a change from rural to urban landscape. The farmland cannot be replaced and will be lost forever.

CEC has stated its policy is to develop brown field sites in preference to open countryside. Marton Parish Council endorses this policy and recognises the need for more housing. Although the Local Plan does not identify Marton as an area for future development we have however engaged with local land owners and to date located a number of potential residential development sites which could yield between 10 and 20 dwellings. Specifically these are, Brickyard Farm, Church Farm, New House Farm plus a single dwelling on Bunce Lane which has already been granted planning permission. These are all either conversions or brown field sites which we confidently expect to reach planning stage within the next 12 months. This would more than fulfil our quota without the need to encroach upon the green field in the middle of the village.

4. Overlooking surrounding properties, loss of privacy

The proposed development would invade the privacy of many of the homes that bound the site.

The three houses situated on the A34 are surrounded by the proposed houses all of which are close to the boundaries and easily overlook the gardens. The existing houses along School Lane are built on ground lower than the proposed ones and again can be easily overlooked; even parts of the footpath are more than 2.0m higher than some of their gardens. The ground rises steeply to the North of the site which means the four houses will not only dominate the landscape but also look down on the garden of the house below. The most vulnerable properties are the elderly people's bungalows and affordable housing along Oak View, all of which have gardens backing on to the development. Not only would they lose their view over the pasture but they would be overlooked by new housing. Because of the height and position of the new houses limited screening would not mitigate the loss of privacy. We note on the design and Access statement the proposed Scale Parameter for height is 4.5m – 12m. This is beyond the height for conventional housing and could easily accommodate an apartment block which would be totally unacceptable.

The car park on the high ground to the North would not only be visually intrusive but also increase noise levels. The proposed village green has no value to the community and seems to be the developer's way of offloading the area surrounding the tree. If children were to congregate there, the ensuing noise could cause upset to the elderly neighbours.

5. Loss of trees and hedgerows

Although the applicant confirms the regrettable loss of some trees and hedgerow in order to develop the site it would be necessary to take out more than has been stated. Our highway survey shows that in order to construct the necessary visibility splays the two Oak trees T4 and T5 would have to be removed. The Ash tree T1 would also be in the way of the driveway to the first house along School Lane. Space and height would mean the footpath bordering the A34 could not be constructed without the loss of the large Ash and Sycamore trees. The loss of the Scot's Pine T18 is also of concern because it is highlighted as relevant to the feeding bats.

Trees play an important role in the village, the Parish Council has an ongoing tree and hedgerow planting scheme overseen by our Tree Warden. We would deeply regret any unnecessary losses.

6. The proposed development is inappropriate for the area

A development of this size is totally inappropriate for Marton: it is disproportionate to the number of dwellings within the core of the village and would represent an increase of approx. 70%. It would destroy the character of the village by infilling a much loved green space that has been enjoyed by the surrounding households for many years.

It does not respect local context or street pattern nor the scale and proportion of the existing buildings. The village core has a mixture of large individual plots, well-spaced apart, old listed buildings, a row of elderly persons bungalows, social housing ,plus privately owned ex council houses (please see appendix 7). This mixture works well and results in an excellent community spirit from residents with a wide and diverse range of interests. The introduction of a new estate mainly comprising of large individual plots does not fit in with the character of the village.

It is sometimes said that we should all accept change is inevitable, this is not the case. We in Marton quite like it as it is, and feel additional housing within the village should be proportionate to its size. Barn conversions and small scale developments on brown field sites, as described in other parts of this document, are far more appropriate.

7. Previous Planning decisions on this site

The applicant states in Planning Statement 3.1 “There is no known relevant planning history for this site.” This is not the case as a previous application was made by W.A.Bromley Davenport (for Capesthorpe Estate, the present land owner) in 1988/9. The applications were for 9 dwellings, LPA ref. no. 5/49464P and 20 dwellings, LPA ref.no. 5/58234P. Planning permission was refused by Macclesfield borough Council, and also refused on appeal.

8.0 The Marton Residents Views

8.1 A Village Plan dated May. 2014 was submitted to Cheshire East Council. The Plan had been drawn up after extensive consultation with the residents and discussions with CEC officers. (Appendix 2)

Schedule of events :

- a. Extraordinary Parish Council meeting Jan. 2013 to discuss the CEC Plan. Extracts from the plan were circulated to all Marton residents in a leaflet requesting feedback by post, phone or e-mail.
- b. CEC Planning Officer Adrian Fisher presented the Plan at the Marton Annual Village Meeting Mar. 2013.
- c. Councillor David Brown presented an update of the Plan at the Marton Annual Village Meeting Mar. 2014. (Appendix 3).
- d. Parish Council Meeting 8th April 2014 to discuss the building site allocation requirements for Marton in response to CEC request (Appendix 4)
- e. Village Plan submitted CEC May 2014.

8.2 The feedback from the above meetings and surveys relating to housing development showed clearly that Marton residents wish to retain the green fields and the rural nature of Marton, especially protecting the green fields at the heart of the village. The village accepted that some development must take place and the Parish Council had identified brownfield sites which can accommodate 10/12 new dwellings. As Marton already has a very high proportion social/affordable housing there is no perceived requirement to add to the stock.

8.3 Marton has an emerging Neighbourhood Plan and considerable progress has been by the Steering Group.

The latest version of the draft Plan is available at:

<http://www.marton-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/marton-neighbourhood-plan-draft-v1.9.pdf>

Status of Plan:

- a. Steering Group appointed Oct. 2014
- b. Application for neighbourhood area designation granted by CEC Feb. 2015.
- c. Project Plan time scale drawn up Feb. 2015.
- d. Questionnaire circulated to village residents Mar. 2015.
- e. Annual Village Meeting 16th Mar., plan was discussed and explained. Tom Evans CEC Planning gave a presentation on Neighbourhood Plans.
- f. Results of questionnaire accessed and quantified April 2015.
- g. First Plan;Outline (draft) produced with Vision Statement, Objectives and supporting Policies 15th April 2015.
- h. Areas identified where additional professional help is required to provide evidence to support the Objectives and Policies.
- i. Preparations being made to apply for CEC grant to fund work to be undertaken by consultants

The answers to the questionnaire relating to housing development are shown on pages 32-33 of the Marton Neighbourhood Plan (draft v1.9) (Appendix 5). The overwhelming opinion is that the village did not want to see large scale greenfield housing developments. Small scale developments would be supported e.g. infilling on brownfield sites such as barn conversions.

8.4 The section of the Marton Neighbourhood Plan (draft v1.9) page 29 (Appendix 6) entitled "Issues Raised as Part of the Consultative Process" has the top concerns as Traffic on the A34 and Parking Issues Associated with the School. Both these concerns would be made worse by the proposed development.

8.5 The results of the HSL questionnaire circulated to residents in the vicinity of the proposed development produced the same outcome as the surveys for the Village Plan and Neighbourhood Plan i.e. there is no support from the residents for this type of development in Marton.

The developers "Statement of Community Involvement" Letters/leaflets item 1.5 is incorrect and misleading to claim "there was strong points of support for the development by local residents". Not one of the residents' responses supported the proposal. The Head Teacher and Chair of Governors do not live in the village and do not have to endure the parking problems the school creates and will not be subjected to the problems the proposed development will bring to the village.

9. Errors in the application

Apart from the inaccuracies highlighted in the Progress 10 Design report the Parish Council have also found a number of errors in the application which we summarise below.

1. Framework Travel plan 2.3 “Marton is a small village with a population of circa 300 benefiting from excellent links to Congleton”. The population of Marton at the 2011 census was 245 which has remained constant; this makes the proposed development a higher percentage than indicated plus, as demonstrated elsewhere, the transport links to Congleton are non-existent.
2. Framework travel Plan 2.28. “The records show that only one slight accident has occurred in the local vicinity.” A number of accidents have occurred on the A34 close to the junction with School Lane, including fatalities and serious accidents. We have recorded two accidents in the last few weeks, both of which would have impacted on the proposed footpath. CEC recognised how dangerous this stretch of the A34 is and as well as the 30mph restriction through the village it recently made the whole length from the outskirts of Congleton to Monks Heath a 50mph zone.
3. Statement of Community Involvement 1.5. “There were strong points of support for the development which were raised by both residents and the local school.” Not one of the resident’s responses to the HSL survey showed strong points of support for the development. This lack of support is confirmed in surveys carried out by the Parish Council when compiling the Village Plan and the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
4. Planning Statement 2.4. “Marton is a residential community and as such residents benefit from the primary school.” A survey carried out by the Parish Council for the Neighbourhood Plan revealed the top dislike for the people living in Marton was the problems caused by parking around the school. The number of children from Marton who attend the school is in single figures.
5. Design and Access Statement page 4 “This is predominately Greenfield land that is used sporadically for grazing purposes.” This site has for many years and still is being used on a regular basis for grazing.
6. The application is for 27 houses but only 26 are shown on the plan, later confirmed to us by HSL.
7. The access to the first house along School Lane is by a separate drive and not via the estate road. Neither details nor specification of this access are shown.
8. Planning Statement 6.16 “The application proposals include the provision of a high quality village green/community open space....” This is not the case: the applicant shows an area under the canopy of a large tree which is of no particular use to the developer nor to the village.

9. Planning Statement 6.17 is without foundation and meaningless.
10. In various parts of the application it states there are no clear views of open countryside from the site. This is not factual as surrounding fields can easily be seen.
11. The applicant proposes the use of LPG for heating the dwellings which would be distributed from three underground tanks. There is no provision for these tanks on the plans.

In conclusion we believe the proposal contravenes the Government guidance detailed in Government Planning Policy Statement PPS1, Paragraphs 17-19, Government Planning Policy Statement PPS3 Paragraphs 13-14, CEC emerging Local Plan section 9 Planning for Sustainable Development, Macclesfield Borough Councils Local Plan 2004, and Marton Parish Council's emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It is inappropriate, unsustainable and against the wishes of the residents of Marton.

We would be grateful if the Planning Officer and Council would take our objections into consideration when deciding this application.

Yours sincerely

Marton Parish Council

Appendices:

1. Meeting with Marton & District C of E Aided Primary School Feb 2014
2. Marton Village Plan 2014
3. Minutes Annual Village Meeting March 2014
4. Minutes Parish Council Meeting April 2014
5. Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015
6. Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015
7. Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015: Housing Data Cheshire East
8. Report from Progress10 Design

Appendix 1: Meeting with Marton & District C of E Aided Primary School Feb 2014

Subject: School Parking Meeting 28th February 2014

From: DEREK SCHWENDENER (jananddick.schwendener@btinternet.com)

To: head@marton.cheshire.sch.uk; sue.furness@hotmail.co.uk; gogsbailey@gmail.com;

Cc: marton.clerk@gmail.com; Lesley.Smetham@cheshireeast.gov.uk; jdmcgowan09@googlemail.com; john.rylands@northernventure.co.uk;

Date: Monday, 3 March 2014, 15:04

Hi Sue,

We thought it would be useful to record the main points of our meeting at Marton School on Friday 28 February 2014

resent: Sue Furness - Chair of Governors, Georgina Bailey - Governor,
Nevin Deakin - Headteacher, David McGowan - Marton P.C.
Dick Schwendener - Marton P.C.

1. The Parish Council is concerned at the increase in cars parked around the school and the problem this creates.
2. Both the school and Parish Council recognize that there is a safety issue for the parents, children and residents. Of particular concern is the parking on the verges north of the Vicarage. Also of concern is the parking from the top of School Lane to the school, resulting in parents and children having to walk down the centre of the road.
3. At the meetings with Chris Williams (Cheshire East Transport) at the school in Oct 2013 and with Marton Parish Council in Aug 2013, he expressed the view that the HSE had ruled that schools do have responsibility for problems outside the gates. Neither the school or the Parish Council have been able to verify this position. Following the Parish Council's informal discussion with the HSE, it would seem that if the school has concerns about safety with the parking, it should ask Cheshire East to carry out a risk assessment. The school agreed to contact Cheshire East with this request. Should Cheshire East refuse to undertake the risk assessment or claim it is not their responsibility then either the school or the Parish Council will inform the HSE who will take this up directly with Cheshire East.
4. The school felt a 'Park Stride' scheme was not feasible as all the possible parking sites would require the children to walk along the A34 and as the foot path is very narrow in some places it would be too dangerous.
5. The School and Parish Council confirmed again the only real solution is to create a car park within the school grounds and that we should continue to work together to achieve this objective.

Regards

Appendix 2: Marton Village Plan 2014

MARTON & DISTRICT VILLAGE (“MDV”) VILLAGE PLAN SUPPLEMENT TO THE EAST CHESHIRE PLAN CONSULTATION

1. Background

- 1.1 The 2014 East Cheshire Strategic Plan proposed no changes to the development of MDV.
- 1.2 An extraordinary Parish Council meeting was held in January 2013 to discuss the East Cheshire Plan. Following the meeting, extracts of the East Cheshire Plan were circulated to all Marton residents in a leaflet which offered opportunity for feedback by post or by phone or via East Cheshire Council’s website.
- 1.3 Marton & District residents were invited to attend the 8th February 2013 meeting at the Scout Hall organised by Gawsworth Parish Council at which details of The Plan were outlined at length and discussed by Adrian Fisher of Cheshire East Planning Department.
- 1.4 Matters arising from the special activities were discussed at the scheduled February 2013 meeting of Marton Parish Council.
- 1.5 Cheshire East Planning Officer, Adrian Fisher, presented the East Cheshire Plan and the consultation process to MDV’s 2013 Annual Village Meeting.
- 1.6 An extraordinary village meeting was convened to discuss Planning proposals in July 2013.
- 1.7 Councillor David Brown presented an update of the Plan and its process to the MDV 2014 Annual Village Meeting. Both meetings were well attended.
- 1.8 MDV Parish Council met on 8th April, 2014 to discuss the site allocations requirement in response the East Cheshire’s request, also outlined by Councillor David Brown (1.6 above.)
- 1.9 The feedback from the above meetings has been coordinated by MDV Parish Council and fed back to East Cheshire Council both in the form of written responses or *via* Ms Lesley Smetham, elected Councillor for MDV *et al*.
- 1.10 This paper sums up, as a Village Plan, the aspirations for the future development of MDV discussed at the various MDV meetings.

2. RURAL NATURE OF MDV

- 2.1 The clearly expressed will of MDV is that the village should retain its rural nature with its green fields, especially those in the heart of the village, being protected. A “Green Gap” has been requested to discourage development north of the proposed Congleton Relief Road.
- 2.2 MDV presently contains a significant percentage of social housing component and there is no perceived requirement for further social housing.
- 2.3 The rise in house prices generally has impacted Marton along with many other rural communities. There is a small requirement to find opportunities for affordable housing so that MDV does not lose its young population.
- 2.4 As the nature of farming has changed, some farms in Marton have excess buildings and brown field space. MDV has expressed the clear view that Brownfield sites are likely to be

available for its future development needs and wishes to stipulate that Brownfield sites be exhausted before planning permission be granted for Greenfield sites.

- 2.5 Specifically, MDV Parish Council has, with site owners, already identified Brownfield sites which can accommodate some 10 new dwellings.

3. MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 **Traffic.** MDV is conscious than planned new developments in East Cheshire will significantly increase the traffic through Marton. MDV recognises the need for research and planning in order to mitigate negative effects of increased traffic.
- 3.2 **St James & St Paul's Church.** MDV notes the cultural importance of Marton Church to the village. Marton Church is also a significant tourist attraction and important for weddings. MDV will continue to plan to support the successful long term development of St James's and St Paul's Church.
- 3.3 **Marton & District Primary School.** MDV notes the significance of the village school to the life of the village. MDV will work with Marton & District Primary School to foster good relations between the School and its Community.
- 3.4 **Employment.** MDV recognises that the drift of agricultural employment away from the surrounding farms in the village is unlikely to be reversed. MPV recognises the significance of the contribution to the development of the village which superfast broadband can contribute.
- 3.5 **Rural Issues.** MDV recognises the importance of local landowners and businesses to its rural community. The Council will work to foster the rural way of life.
- 3.7 **Public Transport.** MDV recognises the value of greater access to public transport to the lives of members of the village.
- 3.8 **Ageing Population.** MDV recognises that the village population is ageing. MPV will work to plan for the needs of the ageing population in order to improve the benefits to the lives of elderly individuals in the community.
- 3.9 **Community.** MDV recognises that the decline in the working opportunities within the village has altered village community cohesion. MDV will work to improve association and community opportunities for young people, in particular, and village members, in general, to create an enhanced sense of community within Marton.
- 3.10 **Community Pride.** MPV recognises the value of maintaining and improving the infrastructure of the village. MDV Parish Council will endeavour to maintain the village infrastructure and assets – from trees, hedgerows, paths and signs to the village green - to a high standard for the village.

Appendix 3: Minutes Annual Village Meeting March 2014

Marton Parish Council

Clerk: Catherine Clowes
14 Downesway

Alderley Edge

SK9 7XB

Email: marton.clerk@gmail.com

Brief report of the Annual Village Meeting held on Monday 10th March 2014 at 7.30pm in the Village School, School Lane, Marton

Minutes

Present: Mr J Rylands (Chair), Mrs C Clowes (Clerk), Mr D McGowan (DM), (JR), Mrs W Basnett (WB), Mr AG Darbyshire (AD), Mrs L Nixon (LN), Mr B Nolan (BN), Mr D Schwendener (DS), Cllr David Brown, Rev Ian Arch and Mr John Heselwood plus 37 parish residents.

1. John Rylands welcomed everyone to the meeting. Thanks were expressed to Mrs Lucy Nixon for all the hard work she has put into setting up the Parish Council Website and to Mr John Percival and his sons for all the planting and maintenance work that they carry out in the village of Marton. The sad passing of a number of parish residents within the last 12 months was noted. A brief recap was given on the village meeting which took place to discuss the Capesthorpe Development Proposals. It was noted that a lot of successful maintenance and refurbishment work of village roads had taken place during the year and the process of Marton receiving fibre optic broadband was ongoing but slow to progress.
2. Cllr David Brown from Cheshire East Council gave a presentation on Planning, the Cheshire East Local Plan and what the next steps for Marton are. Cllr Brown advised that the plan had now been passed by the council and would be released for public viewing on 14th March. Within the plan sites have been allocated to meet the requirement to build 23,000 new homes within Cheshire East in the next 15-20years. 2,000 of these homes will be built in rural areas but sites have already been identified to cover around 1,100 of these therefore it is now necessary to identify possible sites for the remaining 900-1,100. Therefore there will be a further public consultation during which Cllr Lesley Smetham will be visiting Marton Parish Council to gather local opinions about new housing development and possible sites for this to take place (SLAA). Cllr Brown advised that the wishes of the village would where possible be taken into account in this allocation process and that he is of the opinion that it is preferable to develop on brown field sites and incorporate farm building conversions.

John Rylands advised that although Marton does not have a village plan in place, the views of the majority of the villagers gathered in a recent consultation have been incorporated into a document outlining Marton's views on future development. Anyone present who was not aware of or involved in the consultation process is welcome to ask members of the Parish Council about it. Cllr Brown was thanked for his clear and informative presentation.

3. Rev Ian Arch gave an interesting presentation on the history of St James Church, Marton and other timber framed churches in the world as a backdrop to planned renovation work and opportunities to get involved and raise funds. The first planned fundraising events are to take place in May in a Marquee on Marton Meadows Golf Course. These include:

- * Saturday 17th May, 6.45pm – Pea, Pie and Chip Supper - Tickets £12.50 *
- Sunday 25th May, 12 noon – Parish Luncheon – Tickets £15.00 *
- Monday 26th May, 12 noon – Family Fun and Games Afternoon including Afternoon Tea.

4. Mr John Heselwood, Rural Policy Manager for Cheshire Community Action (CCA) gave an informative presentation on the challenges that face rural areas today and what CCA can and are doing to help. The talk ended with the presentation of a Little Gem award for the Marton Kitchen Café awarded by the CCA Best Kept Village Competition.

5. The meeting closed with the Chairman thanking the guest speakers, the ladies for providing refreshments and everyone for attending.

Appendix 4: Minutes Parish Council Meeting April 2014

MARTON PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING AT MARTON MEADOWS 8TH APRIL 2014 TO DISCUSS EAST CHESHIRE'S SITE ALLOCATION REQUEST

Present: Wendy Basnett - WB
David McGowan, - DM
Lucy Nixon - LN
John Rylands - HJR
Dick Schwendener, - DS
and Lesley Smetham (Councillor) - LS

Purpose To discuss the site allocation requirement of Marton

1. LS outlined the East Cheshire planning process. She noted that some 2,000 sites had been allocated already to Local Service Centres (towns) and another 2,000 allocations had been made in rural areas. LS was of the view that another 882 allocations have yet to be found from some 110 parishes.
2. The meeting discussed the village needs and the potential requirement to raise funds from developers for community projects. Village parking and the School's requirements were flagged.
3. It was noted that the SHLAR has elicited potential sites on the village field, Mere field, the sewage farm field, the Vicarage field and Mr Rigby's field by the garage.
4. The meeting discussed the need for future housing needs to 2030. After some discussion, it was considered that Marton should be prepared to allow development for 10 new dwellings in the period to 2030.
5. The meeting heard that Brownfield sites had been offered by the following owners:
 - Bunce Lane (Mr Kellett) – 1 dwelling
 - Brick House Farm - 3 dwellings
 - Ms Basnett property - 3 dwellings
6. The meeting further noted that extensive unused building at the following sites may in time be considered for conversion to dwelling by their owners:
 - Marton Meadows Farm
 - Church Farm
 - Mr Kennerley's estate farm buildings on Bunce Lane
 - Mr Worth's farm buildings on Bunce Lane
7. The meeting noted the very clear wishes of the Village expressed in the 2013 consultations for development to be restricted to Brownfield sites and agreed that an allocation of 10 dwellings for the period to 2030 could be accommodated on Brownfield sites and that this target was therefore recommended.
8. Councillor Lesley Smetham was asked to feed back to East Cheshire Council Planning Department Marton Parish Council's recommendation that 10 sites be allocated to Marton in the forthcoming Site Allocation process.

H J Rylands
Chair
Marton Parish Council
8th April, 2014

Appendix 5: Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015

9. DEVELOPMENT: ISSUES RAISED AS PART OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The development of large-scale housing is the biggest single issue raised by people, and so we discuss this in a standalone section here.

Housing development has been discussed regularly (see 2014 Village Meeting and Village Plan (see appendices), and is a sensitive issue in Marton. So people were asked what kind of development they would object to, and what kind they would support.

Naturally there are diverse and sometimes contradictory views on this; however, it is clear that the village does not want to see large greenfield housing (or industrial/commercial) development.

There are potential brownfield development sites around the village which are yet to materialise, but due to confidentiality, these can't yet be explicitly identified.

DEVELOPMENT THAT PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO SEE IN MARTON:

In order of frequency of mention, people responded that they do not wish to see:

- Housing estate of any size
- Large scale (>6) housing development
- Industrial development
- Intrusive, inappropriate development
- Housing in the middle of the village
- Expansion of school
- Development breaching the green gap
- Development or widening of the road
- Any greenfield development

Note that a frequent comment was that the infrastructure in the village would not be able to cope with significant development.

DEVELOPMENT THAT PEOPLE WOULD SUPPORT IN MARTON:

We asked people what kind of development they would support in Marton.

In order of frequency of mention, the responses were:

1. Infill development (residential or business, or live/work) on brown field sites such as barn conversions
2. Small scale developments (1-4 dwellings) on brown or green field sites
3. Development that is sensitively located and designed in the local vernacular
4. Affordable housing for local people on a suitable site
5. Small business development/diversification
6. None

A significant proportion of people commented that it was important that any development included a mix of housing types—including bungalows, which were specifically mentioned twice--and a mix of housing for different income groups.

Other responses in this section have been discussed elsewhere in this document, and included:

- Bus route
- Cycle routes
- Nature reserves / ponds
- Village hall / community centre
- Sports / playground facilities

Appendix 6: Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015

8B. ISSUES RAISED AS PART OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

During the consultation process, people were invited to list the things that they don't like about living in Marton. These are:

- **33.3%:** Parking issues around school pickup/drop off times
- **30.0%:** Traffic on the A34 (speed, volume, noise, pollution)
- **26.7%:** Volume of school traffic on Oak Lane and School Lane
- **23.3%:** Lack of public transport
- **20.0%:** Slow internet / poor mobile signal
- **16.7%:** No village hall, community centre or sports facilities
- **13.3%:** No traditional village shop or post office
- **6.7%:** Litter
- **6.7%:** No mains gas
- **3.3%:** Poor quality roads with potholes
- **3.3%:** Lack of pavements and cycle paths on the narrow lanes
- **3.3%:** Power cuts and water shut-offs
- **3.3%:** Incivility of cyclists
- **3.3%:** Lack of footpaths across fields
- **3.3%:** no longer a farming community
- **3.3%:** Would like to see stronger involvement with the village from Church and school

How important is the (lack of) infrastructure?

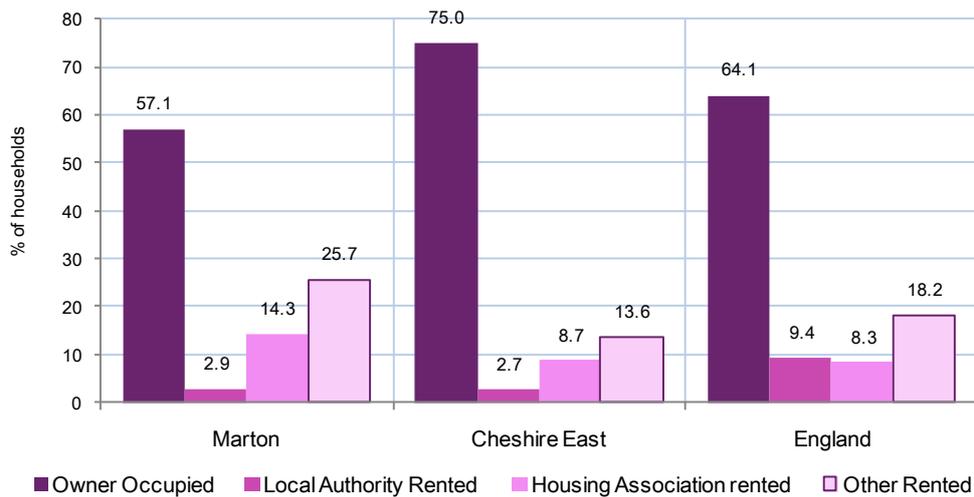
Residents said: **7.6 out of 10**

How important is the issue of transport and roads?

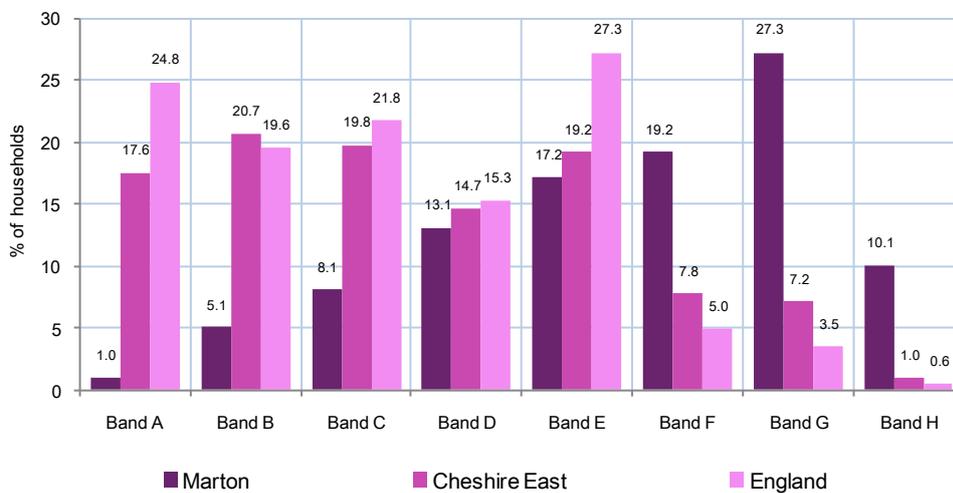
Residents said: **6.7 out of 10**

Appendix 7: Extract from Draft Marton Neighbourhood Plan 2015: Housing Data Cheshire East

Housing tenure breakdowns



Dwelling stock by council tax band



(data from Census 2011, courtesy of Cheshire Community Action)

Appendix 8: Report from Progress10 Design

Appendix 8 begins on next page.

**Proposed Housing Development Site.
Land off School Lane, Marton.
Planning Application No: 15/2274M
For 27 Dwellings.**

Technical Note

Prepared by

Progress10 Design

Report No: P10-0028-NPC

Report No.	Date	Written	Checked	Approved
P10-0028-NPC	JUNE 2015	N.C.	C.E.C.	N.C

Mission Statement.

Progress10 Design have been appointed by **Marston Parish Council** to produce a technical note addressing highway issues related to a proposed housing development within Marston Parish. The requirement is to identify highway issues which have a bearing on other aspects of concern expressed by the Parish Council with regard to the Cheshire East Council planning application No: 15/2274C

In addition **Progress10** have been asked to comment on detail aspects of the Transport Statement which accompanies the planning application, with regard to the accuracy and detail submitted, and whether some aspects may constitute a further concern that insufficient information has been submitted to support the access strategy which is the only detailed aspect of this outline planning application.

The following technical report seeks to provide a view on the above mission statement so that the Parish Council can determine whether these aspects will support their planned objection to the development.

This information has been developed after: detailed research, site visits and appropriate site survey work to understand traffic conditions and the necessary junction design approach.

Contents:

1. Introduction.....	Page 3
2. Site description and local Highway Network.....	Page 3
3. Proposed site access junction.....	Page 4
4. Highway safety.....	Page 6
5. Sustainability.....	Page 6
6. 6. Overview of the Transport Statement.....	Page 10
7. Conclusion.....	Page 11

Land off School Lane, Marton. Planning No: 15/2274M for 27 Dwellings.

Transport Note.

1. Introduction.

Progress¹⁰ have produced the following technical note to support the concerns of Marton Parish Council with regard to a planning application at land off School Lane, Marton for 27 houses.

The Parish have concerns regarding the proposed development and wish to object to the proposal on a number of grounds.

The purpose of this report is to provide an opinion on some of the aspects of the proposed access strategy which will have an impact on other areas of concern held by the Parish Council.

2. Site description and local highway network.

The site comprises 1 parcel of greenfield land with its main frontage to the adopted public highway of School Lane.

School Lane is a local village lane which serves the Marton and District CE Primary School and a small number of local residential properties. The lane has sufficient width for two vehicles to pass up to a point just beyond the school where the lane becomes less wide and more rural in nature.

Beyond the school the 30mph speed limit changes to national derestricted (60mph). There is no street lighting along School Lane and there are no footways with just a small amount of pedestrian refuge outside the school itself. There are very narrow highway verge areas which provide very limited pedestrian refuge against the hedge lines and this was noted as an uncomfortable position for pedestrians at the site visit. This is the environment within which school pupils are delivered to school by parents on a daily basis in term time.

Oak Lane has a junction with School Lane immediately alongside the south west boundary of the school and also with the north east boundary of the proposed development site.

It is on this site frontage that there is a proposal within application 15/2274M to provide a local car park of just 8 spaces and a footway link from the development site onto a short length of footway on Oak Lane. This footway link would allow access to a pedestrian access into the school grounds and a link from this school access into the new development.

There is no street lighting on this length of Oak Lane fronting the site and the carriageway is extremely narrow and will not allow two cars to pass. There are no identifiable passing

places along the frontage of the site at this location despite the claim in the submitted Transport Statement (TS), that passing places are available.

There are passing places further along Oak Lane however they do not front the site and give the site no benefit. In addition these localised widenings on Oak Lane frequently hold parked vehicles.

3. Proposed site access junction.

The proposed access is for a priority controlled junction on the School Lane frontage and the TS provides speed survey readings taken from the automatic traffic counters which were employed on site and which record both traffic flow and speed.

The junction is indicated to serve a 4.8 metre wide carriageway at the junction mouth and SK Transport Dwg No: SK21519-001 demonstrates the offered junction geometry along with the proposed visibility splays which are based on Manual for Streets guidance against measured 85th-ile vehicle approach speeds.

It is evident from the TS that there is some ambiguity in evidence within the SK Transport TS which at 2.11 shows 85th %-ile vehicle approach speeds at table 2.1 to be: 31.1mph southbound and 30.2mph northbound. Thus equates to 49.76km/h and 48.32km/h respectively.

At 3.3 in the TS, SK state that the visibility splays have been calculated from the speed survey data and at Table 3.1, SK Transport state that the approach speeds used for the calculation of the visibility splays are 46km/h and 45km/h respectively for the southbound and northbound approaches.

It is noted therefore that there is a clear discrepancy between the speeds shown at Table 2.1 and 3.1, with the Table 3.1 speeds being stated at a lower value than they should be.

The effect of this discrepancy is that the visibility splays shown on SK Transport Dwg No: SK21519-001 should actually be longer in the 'Y'-distance than shown.

This extra visibility requirement would be a small dimension in length in each direction however it has bearing on one of the issues which are of concern for the Parish Council and this is examined below.

Impact on trees.

SK Transport Dwg No: SK21519-001 is based on a topographical survey and can therefore be considered to be of good accuracy.

The drawing shows existing trees on the frontage of the site and Progress10 notice that there will be significant impact on two of the frontage trees which are of significant value according to the arboricultural survey completed by the applicant for the development.

These two trees fall within the visibility splays which are currently shown below standard on SK Transport Dwg No: SK21519-001. They would receive further adverse impact if the correct visibility splays were applied to the proposed access as follows:

- The tree trunks are wholly within the visibility splays and the alignment of the trees mean that there would be a material impediment to the leading visibility splay (looking to the right on egress), even when the lane is not heavily parked due to school arrival and dispersal traffic.

In addition the two trees in question are also growing in a raised hedge cop which would provide a vertical impediment to the proposed visibility splay which would render the splay largely ineffective due to the hedge cop and tree trunk widths and alignment. This would require the following action if the visibility splay were to be provided effectively:

- The two trees would need to be removed and the hedge cop excavated down to a level which would allow an emerging driver to use the visibility splay effectively in the leading direction when emerging from the proposed junction.

Further to this, the junction position and geometry mean that the excavation for the construction of the junction in its proposed position would have a significant invasive effect on the root system of the nearest tree and this would almost certainly have a strong adverse effect on the stability of the tree and its likely life.

In addition the hedge bank within which the two trees are situated would also provide a vertical impediment to the visibility splay even at the sub-standard provision shown in the SK Transport drawing.

In order to provide the visibility splay this hedge bank would need to be excavated to a degree to reduce the ground level and this would further impact on the root spread of both trees and again this will threaten the stability and likely life of the trees.

It is likely that these two trees will be lost if the proposed junction was constructed.

In any event the combined effect of the placement of the junction and the requirement for excavation to provide visibility splays could not effectively be provided without the removal of two mature trees and the raised hedge cop within which they are situated.

4. Highway Safety.

Given the concern in 3 above it may also be a consideration of the Highway Authority that due to the clear impediment at this junction in terms of visibility and the on-street parking congestion, the applicant should demonstrate that this junction location would be able to operate safely through the provision of a Road Safety Audit.

It may also be deemed that the junction is not acceptable due to the impediment and therefore its failure to meet correct standards. This information is not offered in the TS.

This could lead to the junction being re-located or the application being rejected on highway safety grounds.

Progress10 do consider that these issues may prove to be strong concerns for the Highway Authority when this application is appropriately considered through the planning process.

5. Sustainability.

The TS claims that this site is sustainable in a number of ways.

Clearly there are some local facilities however to complete a family shop or travel to out of village facilities the TS suggests that the site is sustainable by: pedestrian links, cycle links and by car to the railway station to take a train. It also notes that there are cycle stands at the railway station. There is also a reference to the D&G bus service which is a very limited facility.

The TS is also accompanied by a Travel Plan Framework which gives all of the right general comments about Travel Planning and its management.

Marton Parish Council express concern regarding the sustainability of the site as the claimed links within the TS appear to be given status more credible than they perhaps deserve.

The TS states that the site will be sustainable via pedestrian links which are: 'pedestrian leisure routes', however these routes are not defined and tied into the body of the TS though reference is made to public rights of way and lowly trafficked roads. The Parish Council are concerned that with no real pedestrian refuge and despite low traffic volumes, there is a real concern over pedestrian vehicular conflict should these local carriageways be relied upon by the new development.

Provision of new footways.

The site also aims to provide new footway links to the A34 Congleton Road and via School Lane, again to Congleton Road.

There is no offered technical design for the footways proposed and there are clear issues on the respective frontages with available verge width and local trees and high hedge banks.

These restrictions on the potential for minimum design standards are a real concern without an offered design and again any design which provides new features within the existing

public highway should be subject to the Road Safety Audit process which has not been provided within the application detail. There would also be a need for legal agreements under the Highways Act 1980 which should not be agreed if provision is not certain.

This lack of detail is a real concern for the Parish Council and Progress10 Design consider that this may be deemed a lack of information in an outline planning application which has access strategy as a detailed aspect of the application proposal.

Indeed the frontage footway proposed for School Lane relies on highway verge only, to connect to the existing narrow footway at the junction mouth of School Lane with the A34.

This existing footway is only 0.6 metres wide at this point and the available highway verge width available to construct the proposed link footway varies from 0.6 metres wide to approximately 0.8 metres wide (if the hedge was cut back), and this verge width falls significantly short of the preferred footway width of 2.0 metres and is also significantly short of the minimum required width of 1.2 metres.

Clearly this narrow verge will not allow the proposed footway to be provided within standards and therefore would not provide safe footway refuge and passage for pedestrian traffic wishing to access the limited facilities in Marton on foot.

Proposed footway link from the development to the A34.

Marton Parish Council are concerned that the proposal to provide this footway link will have an adverse impact on the frontage trees and hedge bank and in highway design terms the following information is considered to be relevant.

This proposal for this footway is shown on the master plan for the development and is referenced in the Transport Statement (TS).

On inspection it is clear from the A34 frontage that there is a high hedge bank on this frontage which is approximately 1.5 metres higher than the carriageway of the A34. There is no footway provision at this point. The hedge bank also supports mature trees.

The requirement at this point would normally be for the provision of a 2.0 metre wide frontage footway and such a footway is shown on the master plan. The existing verge is broadly wide enough to support this level of provision.

However whilst this provision is shown in plan view there is no drawing to demonstrate cross section or indeed level differences and no detailed design is provided.

There is also a question with regard to the safe generation of pedestrian traffic onto this frontage. Without a design which will safely receive pedestrians and perhaps provide a staggered barrier or similar to reasonably slow pedestrians or even cyclists before meeting the A34, there is no offered detail of a safe design.

The significant level differences will also demand excavation to match emerging levels onto the A34 and this will have a significant impact on the root spread of the mature trees on this frontage and reduce their stability and be likely to affect their life. Indeed it is likely that these trees would be lost to this footway provision.

Cycle Routes.

It is accepted that there are recognised cycle routes which give a continuous route to reach facilities in Congleton and the Parish Council agree that this is the case.

It is however a concern of the Parish Council that these routes whilst available are circuitous and only reach Congleton by more lengthy routes than can be taken by convenient transport such as the private car.

It is therefore considered that whilst these cycle routes are available, they are unlikely to be attractive as a commute to work or indeed to do a family shop and therefore the Parish Council feel that these routes are only of limited value and should not be considered to be a robust provision locally for anything other than leisure cycling for exercise or recreation.

Progress10 concur with this view and having travelled the cycle routes which do link to Congleton they measure almost three times the distance of a short car journey to the same destination via the A34.

These cycle routes are not likely to be considered a practical option to the use of the car from this rural village when needing to complete significant retail trips or work travel.

Bus Service.

The Parish Council have expressed concern that the D&G bus service referenced in the TS is limited to: dial service 24 hours in advance and only for passengers with disability and over the age of 80.

The SK Transport TS states at 5.1 that:

'Marton is served by D&G Little Bus Service. This is a demand responsive, flexible bus service providing public transport connections for rural areas in Cheshire East.'

Unfortunately this statement is incorrect.

Contact with D&G has revealed that in fact this service is no longer provided by D&G and their service only reaches as far north as Congleton itself.

The claim that Marton is served by bus as a sustainable mode of transport is therefore incorrect in terms of the D&G service.

Congleton railway station.

The TS quite rightly states that the railway station in Congleton can be reached by cycle journey and that there are cycle stands at the railway station and the TS also references car travel as the likely option to reach Congleton railway station.

Conclusion.

The Parish Council consider that the claim that the Marton development site is a sustainable site is flawed and the examination above in this report does provide evidence which would support that view.

6. Overview of the Transport Statement.

Marton Parish Council have read the TS and have discussed some points which they feel are not accurate in detail when considered on site at School Lane.

Progress10 have assessed the TS and find a number of areas where the detail appears to be incorrect. They are numbered in the TS as follows:

2.3 'Marton is a small village with a population of circa 300 benefitting from excellent links to Congleton and other regional destinations via the A34.'

It is clear from the assessment above that the pedestrian and cycle links are less than 'excellent' and the bus service no longer exists.

2.8 'Oak Lane is a generally single track lane circa 3m in width with short sections of

widening allowing vehicles to pass.'

There are no passing places on the Oak Lane frontage to the site.

2.12 'Existing traffic flow levels are very low with less than 400 vehicle movements per day in each direction. Peak traffic levels clearly coincide with school arrival and departure periods on weekdays.'

There is no real assessment of the on-street parking at school arrival and dispersal times and the Parish Council have much photographic evidence that this parking reaches back to and passes the proposed junction position in the morning peak hour. The extent of the parking is acknowledged at 2.6 in the TS but the potential obstruction to the junction and its visibility splays is not considered.

4.13 'Policies T2, T3, T4 and T5 of the Local Plan outlines support for development that promotes and caters for opportunities for movements by walking, cycling and public transport. The TS shows that the proposed layout, village location and existing sustainable transport infrastructure meet the requirements of the Local Plan.'

Given the doubt cast on the sustainability of the site by the Parish Council and the assessment in this report which identifies shortfall in these sustainable travel opportunities there is significant doubt that the TS is accurate in this regard or indeed that the TS does show compliance with the Local Plan requirements.

5.10 'Marton is served by D&G Little Bus Service. This is a demand responsive, flexible bus service providing public transport connections for rural areas in Cheshire East.'

Marton is not served by a D&G bus service.

5.13 'Access opportunities exist by public transport that are in line with the advice on rural developments in NPPF.'

The quality and practical use of these sustainable links is thrown into doubt by the views and knowledge of the Parish Council and the evidence in this report supports that view.

From the Travel Plan:

2.6 'Signalised crossing points are provided on Belle Vue Road north and south of the site at the junctions with Greyfriars Road and Betton Street.'

All of these named public highways appear to be situated in Shrewsbury.

Vehicle Trip Rates.

The trip rates for traffic generation given within the TS are taken on a general examination of the TRICS database and this has drawn on data from many suburban sites within TRICS.

Suburban sites are not a good match for the rural nature of Marton village and Progress10 consider that a more accurate production of trip rates would have been gained from either:

specific selection of rural sites from within the TRICS database or a specific site survey of a similarly situated site of comparable scale within the Cheshire area.

Clearly this has not been considered and the trip rates offered are relatively low for such a remote rural location which has limited sustainable transport options.

The above issues all provide question against the accuracy and validity of the Transport Statement provided in support of this planning application and given the strength of the concerns of the Parish Council should be considered as material evidence in their favour.

7. Conclusion.

Progress10 have considered the real concerns of Marton Parish Council and have provided assessment of relevant areas of the submitted Transport Statement and examined details against them.

The Transport Statement falls short of detail in terms of design provision and does not provide evidence in a number of areas noted above. It also has incorrect details within the body of the document such as bus service provision and incorrect site references.

In addition there are questions regarding safe highway design which remain unanswered given the lack of sufficient room to provide footways.

As a result Progress10 Design would recommend that a sustainable highway reason for refusal would be on the grounds of: 'lack of information'.