



7<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2022

## St Nicholas CIW Primary School – 2021/00005/PAC

The Pre-Application Consultation concerning replacement primary school for 126 pupils plus additional capacity for 24 nursery places, including associated works was considered at an extraordinary meeting on December 16, 2021.

It is clear that a replacement building is urgently required due to a considerable backlog of maintenance work that's built up over many years.

Of utmost concern are issues related to traffic. Whilst the new school would provide off-street parking for some vehicles, it's not believed that this would solve the problem of vehicles queuing on school lane each afternoon. Parents stop on the highway, queuing, waiting for children to be ready to be collected each afternoon blocking school lane. The obstruction of the highway is of particular concern to residents of neighbouring dwellings that are opposite and east of the school. School Lane is a single-track road, and queued vehicles block it entirely.

The residents of one particular dwelling must approach their driveway from the east, going against the school traffic that's stationary along School Lane. It's often impossible to pass the stationary, queued, waiting oncoming traffic.

Section 137 of the Highways Act (1980) is relevant here, because "If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway he is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding £50."

A future planning application needs to make provision for vehicles within the school grounds so that the highway is not obstructed at any time.

Although there is an established principal of the site being used for education, the new school will be larger, and the existing school has resulted in unlawful obstruction of the public highway. Residents would like determination of a future planning application to acknowledge that at this time, the existing road infrastructure isn't fit-for-purpose, just as the classroom sizes and facilities of the existing building are not fit-for-purpose.

Residents believe that a school bus is a possible solution to the traffic issue that must be explored – and fits with the Climate Emergency / Future Generations Act.

To the north of the site is the Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes Special Landscape Area, and to the east and west are historic sites. The frontage of the school sits within the St Nicholas Conservation Area. Many residents do not believe that the generic design of the school is suitable for this location.

Of particular concern is the height of the proposed school hall, the carpark and kitchen fronting the Conservation Area, the aesthetic design and choice of cladding materials is out of context for a minor rural settlement.

Further, the bins are located too close to a residential boundary, the water tanks are too prominent and need to be buried, and the MUGA is also very close to the neighbouring property – with the potential for unacceptable noise nuisance.

*Cllr Ian Perry*

For and on behalf of St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council

