

## Informal Residents' Meeting

### Bloor Homes Outline Planning Application – Fradley

Venue: BOD Café and Bar, Streethay

Date: Monday 15 December

Time: 6.00pm

Chair: District & Ward Councillor Richard Stephenson

#### Attendees

- District & Ward Councillor: Richard Stephenson (RS)
  - Staffordshire County Councillor: Richard Holland (RH)
  - Members of the public: 21 residents
  - Other attendees: Representative from the Badger Trust
- 

#### Purpose of the Meeting

The meeting was convened to:

- Allow residents to raise concerns regarding the Bloor Homes outline planning application and the Lichfield District Council (LDC) Planning Committee decision to approve the development.
  - Enable District, Ward and County Councillors to explain the planning framework, current constraints, and what influence remains.
  - Discuss what benefits, mitigations or improvements could realistically be sought as part of a forthcoming Full (FUL) Planning Application.
- 

#### Overview of the Planning Process

RS opened the meeting with a general overview of the planning system at LDC, with reference to national planning guidance:

- Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local authorities must demonstrate a minimum 5-year housing land supply.
- Changes issued by central government have significantly increased housing targets.
- As a result, Lichfield District Council's housing land supply has fallen to approximately 3 years, which substantially weakens the Council's ability to refuse development in principle.

- RS explained that this position limits the discretion of local planning committees when applications are brought forward.
- 

## Key Issues Raised and Discussion

### 1. Drainage and Flooding (Church Lane)

- RS identified drainage and flooding on Church Lane as a primary concern.
- Bloor Homes have offered to *“make good and maintain”* drainage in this area.
- RS expressed scepticism that the developer fully understands the extent and complexity of the existing drainage issues.
- Residents agreed that flooding is already a serious and unresolved problem.

NPPF reference: Paragraphs relating to flood risk require development not to increase flood risk elsewhere and to be supported by appropriate drainage solutions.

---

### 2. Ecology and Badgers

- A representative from the Badger Trust attended and commented on the proposed relocation of badger setts.
- Concern was raised that badgers may not relocate to the artificial setts provided by the developer and could instead move into nearby gardens.
- It was noted that the Government has recently removed “Amendment 40”, allowing developers to offset biodiversity impacts by paying into a mitigation fund, reducing direct ecological protection.

NPPF reference: Paragraph 180 requires planning decisions to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible.

---

### 3. Scale of Development and Infrastructure Capacity

Residents raised broader concerns including:

- *“When is enough housing enough in Fradley?”*
- Lack of infrastructure for existing residents, let alone additional population.

RS acknowledged:

- Fradley is earmarked for further growth.

- He shares residents' frustration with the cumulative impact of development.
- 

#### 4. Highways, Traffic and Construction Impacts

- RS explained that Common Lane was never intended as a through-route and was designed with traffic calming.
- The former straight road alignment was intentionally removed and is now the pedestrian and cycle route known as Fletcher Drive.
- Residents raised concerns about:
  - Construction traffic and parking
  - Diversion of traffic via Daisy Lane and Long Lane
  - Whether additional passing places could be provided during construction

RH suggested that a Highways Report could help support these concerns, but this may require independent funding.

NPPF reference: Paragraphs on transport require developments to promote sustainable transport and ensure highway safety.

---

#### 5. What Can Still Influence the Full Planning Application

RS emphasised that this meeting was about:

- Compiling a clear list of reasonable and evidence-based requests to present when the Full Planning Application (FUL) is submitted.

Examples discussed:

- Improved privacy for existing residents whose properties face or back onto the site
- Reconfiguring layouts to retain existing trees
- Increasing affordable housing provision to support younger residents
- Ensuring infrastructure (roads, drainage, services) is delivered before house building commences
- Exploring alternative access, including a possible A38 slip road or lay-by access

RS summarised this approach as:

*"It would be much better if..."* — focusing on achievable improvements rather than outright opposition.

---

## 6. Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plan and Policy Context

A resident provided context on planning policy delays:

- The existing LDC Local Plan is out of date, and progress on the new plan has been slow.
- The emerging Local Plan favours larger, standalone developments with their own infrastructure rather than small “bolt-on” schemes.
- Fradley Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan is now over 5 years old and nearing the point where it carries limited weight.
- Developers are accelerating applications due to changes in national policy that put previously “banked” land at risk.
- This explains the recent surge in planning applications.

RH commented that due to forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), there is a possibility that a new Local Plan could be delayed or superseded.

---

## 7. Planning Enforcement

- Residents expressed concern that LDC is effective at imposing conditions but weaker on enforcement.
  - RS stated he had recently attended Planning and Enforcement training at LDC and confirmed that:
    - Additional full-time enforcement officers have now been appointed.
- 

## Next Steps and Actions

- Residents were advised to monitor the LDC Planning Portal for the forthcoming Full Planning Application.
- It was suggested that a joint meeting be arranged in the New Year involving:
  - Bloor Homes representatives
  - County, District and Ward Councillors
  - Residents
- Possible actions discussed:

- Commissioning a Highways Report
  - Commissioning an Ecological Report
  - Exploring a JustGiving page to fund independent evidence
  - RS stated that while delaying the development is difficult, the cost and complexity of drainage solutions could impact delivery timescales.
- 

#### Closing Remarks

The meeting concluded with thanks from Jon Sealey, who expressed appreciation to Richard Stephenson and Richard Holland for attending, listening to residents' concerns, and answering questions openly.