

Warwick District Council's Local Plan
Consultation on modifications to the Local Plan (Closing date 22nd April 2016)

Reference Warwick District Councils Decision
to extend further the 'Village Envelope' leading from Spring Lane
Radford Semele (Site Reference H52)

The extension to the Radford Semele Village Envelope proposed, forms a continuation from the development granted to A C Lloyd under planning Application W/14/0433 for 65 Houses.

(It is noted as particularly relevant to the Parish Council's response that the A C Lloyd Application W/14/0433 was granted by the government inspector on appeal, after a three day inquiry, January 7th- 9th 2015, at Leamington Town Hall when Warwick District Council opposed this development using full legal representation)

1) Radford Semele Parish Council submits, in this statement, the collective conclusions of directly affected residents living in the village.

2) Access to the proposed extension to the Village Envelope

2.1 School Lane provides the access road to Spring Lane which leads to the new A C Lloyd site which in turn leads to the proposed extension to the Village Envelope. School Lane also provides the access road to The Gardens, Hatherell Road, Hamilton Road and the various estate roads that lead from them. In all, there are more than two hundred and fifty homes whose residents naturally exit/enter the village by using School Lane. This is set to increase by a further 65 homes when the A.C. Lloyd's development W/14/0433 is complete.

2.2) School Lane also provides the only access to the village primary school. The school pupils and their parents generate significant extra traffic at arrival and departure times during school terms.

3) Comments on the extended Village Envelope

3.1) The enclosed portion of land extends, on its southern boundary, to a deep ditch which carries flood water from The Valley, Valley Road, Williams Road and the sloping land draining from the south east of the village. Serious flooding occurred to the southern end of the proposed extension to the Village Envelope in 1998 and 2006. The Envelope forms part of the flood plain and this continues to flood at times of excessive rainfall.

3.2) The western perimeter of the proposed extension to the Village Envelope extends closer towards the Leamington Spa/Whitnash boundary. It therefore encroaches further into the area previously protected by WDC as "An Area of Restraint" and later as a "Green Wedge" in order to avoid coalescence of the village with Leamington Spa.

4) Impact of the development arising from the enlarged Village Envelope

4.1) The Warwick District Council previously opposed development on the A.C. Lloyd site in January 2015. Important reasons given for rejection were:-

High impact on the village centre,
Coalescence with Sydenham Leamington Spa
Protection of the rural landscape.

4.2) The Parish Council's main objections/concerns are:-

4.2.1) Protection from merging with Leamington Spa is vital to preserving the future separate identity of the village. Leamington Spa has already extended eastward to its ancient brook boundary. Protection of valuable agricultural land, providing a Green Wedge, in this attractive rural landscape to the south and west, with its interesting wild life is important.

4.2.2) Access to this site is via the narrow School Lane which has no scope for widening. Where School Lane exits on to Southam Road there is already serious traffic disruption at peak times. Local traffic surveys confirm that more than 1500 vehicles an hour pass the exit from School Lane at the junction with Southam Road. This traffic flow is continuously increasing caused by the new housing developments in Southam and the surrounding villages. Traffic tailbacks from Leamington on the A425 to Radford Semele are becoming a frequent event at peak times when people are trying to reach their place of work. The increased traffic, post the AC Lloyd development, will add to the access problem and extending the Village Envelope will further intensify the problem.

4.2.3) Access to the Primary School in School Lane is already a congestion point, often requiring police intervention. It is the key pick-up and drop-off point for school children. Congestion will increase in the future with the resulting population growth.

4.2.4) Residents from The Gardens, School Lane Hamilton Road and its subsidiary roads currently find it necessary to avoid using the exit through School Lane during school arrival and departure times due to congestion and consequent delays which lower the esteem of the neighbourhood. The congestion also impacts on both Hatherell Road and Lewis Road. Both of these roads are already experiencing restrictions on vehicle access and movement.

4.2.5) Heavy construction traffic initially and then increased traffic in School Lane in the future will be a perpetual hazard for future generations of school children.

4.2.6) The extended Village Envelope borders the old spinney which is an interesting site for wild life including foxes, buzzards and many other varieties of birds. These will be lost. The nightly display of bats on summer evenings will also be lost.

5) Parish Council's conclusions

5.1) Radford Semele Parish Council has collaborated closely with Warwick District Council in recent years.

5.2) Both parties supported the Planning Application No W/14/0322 for 60 houses now being developed by Bovis Homes. This Planning Application met the required number of houses needed at Radford Semele in the then WDC Plan.

5.3) Both parties opposed the Planning Application W14/0433 made by A.C. Lloyd for 65 homes, only to be overruled on appeal by the National Planning Inspector. It is important to recall that the National Planning Inspector walked to the Whitnash boundary to check the visual impact that the A. C. Lloyd development would have when viewed from the Whitnash direction. He had concerns but relied on new trees bordering the site, taking 15 years to maturity, to mitigate the impact. This choice would no longer be an option.

5.4) Warwick District Council responded to an earlier request by the Parish Council to change its 'Preferred Option' for development, away from the land adjoining St Nicholas Church, in order to protect an important village landscape. To the relief of residents this was subsequently endorsed by the National Planning Inspector on appeal.

5.5) To date approval has been granted for 125 homes.

Village growth represented by 125 dwelling is approximately 17%. The proposed extension to the Village Envelope would provide for a further 60 to 80 homes giving potential growth of 27%. This would create serious congestion in Radford Semele

Two further Planning Applications (W/16/0196 for 150 homes and W/15/1761 for 25 homes) are pending and may be approved. Growth from all of the current Planning Applications would amount to approximately 50% growth.

5.5) Growth in excess of 17-20% is considered totally unacceptable. Development of 50% would transform the village into a suburban district of Leamington Spa with a population in excess of three thousand people.

5.6) In final conclusion, the Parish Council requests Warwick District Council to reconsider the proposed change to the Village Envelope in the light of this representation and allow the present village the opportunity to maintain some of its rural character for the next 25 years.

Prepared and approved by the Parish Council- April 2016

Signed Clerk to Parish Council

Mr David Leigh-Hunt_____