

Statement of Community Involvement

Land north of Chiswell Green Lane and west of The Croft, Chiswell Green

ADDISON PARK

local homes for local heroes



Up to 330 Discounted Affordable Homes for Key Workers

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Land north of Chiswell Green Lane and west of The Croft, Chiswell Green

Outline Planning Application with Access Sought

The demolition of existing buildings, the building of up to 330 discounted affordable homes for Key Workers, including military personnel, the creation of open space and the construction of new accesses.

On behalf of Mr Steve Collins, Headlands Way Limited

Ref: SC/AP/sci

Brian Parker
BA MSc MRTPI
McPartland Planning Limited

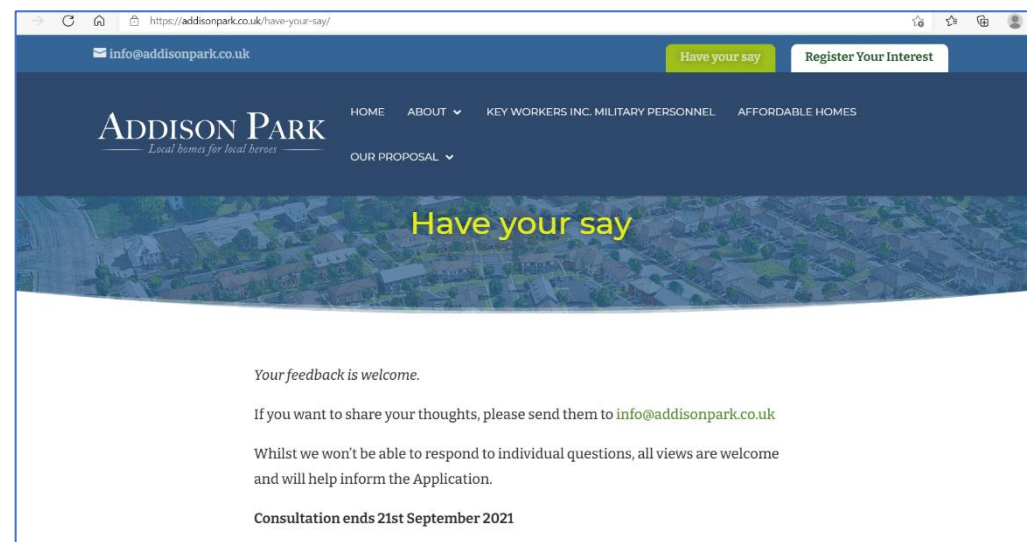


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Between 1st and 21st September 2021, McPartland Planning Limited embarked on an extensive public consultation to comply with the requirements of Section 122 of the Localism Act.

As, at the time, the Council still practised social-distancing in its public meetings and encouraged virtual engagement, an online consultation was considered the most appropriate vehicle. A website was created, addisonpark.co.uk, which included extensive details about the scheme, including the rationale behind it, an Indicative Masterplan and an opportunity for consultees to “Have Your Say” via email. Given the lacuna of local evidence, the website also took the opportunity to gather some information about the housing need of Key Workers.

Details of the consultation were sent by first-class post to neighbouring properties on Cherry Hill, The Croft and Chiswell Green Lane. A number of local residents have complained that the consultation inviting people to “Have Your Say”, was biased and didn’t allow people to, well, have their say: a curious complaint with which I strongly disagree.



Letters were also despatched to West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust and all state primary and secondary schools in St Albans. Emails were sent to MPs covering the five South West Hertfordshire districts, namely:

Bim Afolami MP (Hitchin and Harpenden)
Daisy Cooper MP (St Albans)
Oliver Dowden MP (Hertsmere)
Gagan Mohindra (SW Hertfordshire)
Sir Mike Pelling MP (Hemel Hempstead)
Dean Russell MP (Watford)

In addition, letters and leaflets promoting the consultation were sent by first-class post, to:

St Stephens Parish Council

St Albans Council:
Community Services

Contaminated Land Officer
Design and Conservation
Environmental and Regulatory Services
Housing
Landscaping
Spatial Planning
Trees and Woodland
Waste Management
Cllr. Sue Featherstone (St Stephens Ward)
Cllr. Aaron Jacob (St Stephens Ward)
Cllr. David Winstone (St Stephens Ward)
Cllr. Chris White (Leader)
Cllr. Jacquie Taylor (Chair, Housing and Inclusion Committee)
Amanda Foley (Chief Executive)

Dacorum Borough Council
Hertsmere Borough Council
Three Rivers District Council
Watford Borough Council

Hertfordshire County Council:
HCC Growth and Infrastructure
HCC Herts Ecology
HCC Highways
HCC Lead Local Flood Authority

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Services

Affinity Water
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (Hertfordshire)
Chiswell Green Residents Association
The Environment Agency
Hertfordshire Constabulary
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group
The Ramblers Association (St Albans)
The Royal College of Nursing
St Albans Civic Society
St Albans and District Footpath Society
Thames Water
Unison

All responses received were noted and, where possible, taken into consideration in the completion of the Outline Application.

The objections received from local residents are set out, anonymously on the next page.

Objections from Local Residents

In addition to inviting comments from St Stephen's Parish Council and the Chiswell Green Residents' Association, 47 letters were sent inviting comments from adjacent or nearby neighbours, i.e.: 1-31 Cherry Hill, 17-29 The Croft, 30-48 and 59-73 Chiswell Green Lane, the Chiswell Green Riding School, The Gardens of the Rose, Butterfly World, 1 and 2 Bone Hill Cottages, The Mansion House and Challain Ltd (land at Cherry Hill).

At the end of the 3-weeks' consultation, 16 local residents had emailed to object, some with multiple reasons. Their objections and my responses can be summarised as:

Objection	No.	Response
The consultation gave no right to reply	9	The consultation literally asked people for their views.
Spoil the area/community	4	The landscaped scheme will be required to increase biodiversity and the housing of Key Workers will strengthen the community and social cohesion.
Additional burden on clogged roads	2	Additional traffic will inevitably be caused by any housing development. The Application has been informed by detailed surveys as well as discussions with Hertfordshire County Council.
Destroy wildlife and decrease biodiversity	2	Ecological experts disagree. Landscaping, including tree planting will increase biodiversity significantly. By the time of a Reserved Matters Application, it's expected that there will be a statutory requirement to increase biodiversity.
There should be a full EIA	2	Following a formal request for a Screening Opinion, the Council concluded that an EIA was unnecessary (Ref: 5/2021/2520).
Decimate the Green Belt	1	The scheme will not, of course, "decimate" the Green Belt. Currently, over 80% of the District is Green Belt: if Addison Park is built, over 80% of the District will still be Green Belt. The Council has long-since acknowledged that houses must be built on the Green Belt if the housing crisis is to be addressed.
Harm to openness of land the community values	1	The Site is private land, well-screened by trees on all sides. The scheme will create new open space for the community.

Object to any proposal on the Green Belt	1	Such an approach is contrary to national and local planning policy. Planning statute and policy recognises that circumstances may be such that inappropriate development in the Green Belt is perfectly acceptable. If "very special circumstances" apply, the scheme is compliant with the NPPF and the Local Plan.
Apartment blocks aren't in keeping	1	The Scale and Appearance of all the dwellings are indicative at this stage and will be addressed in detail at the Reserved Matters stage if Outline Permission is Granted.
Reduced quality of life	1	I don't believe having high-quality houses for Key Workers built nearby can reasonably be seen to harm the quality of life of any reasonable member of society. The quality of all our lives will suffer if there are insufficient Key Workers to serve and protect us.
Walkers' and cyclists' lives will be put at risk	1	A new Public Right of Way is included in the scheme to improve safety.
Laudable to build homes for Key Workers ... but this is the wrong place	1	With respect, this sounds like "Not In My Back Yard".
The proposal is ridiculously opportunistic.	1	With respect, it's neither ridiculous nor opportunistic to seek to deliver discounted affordable houses for local Key Workers, who've been systematically over-looked by the Council's for decades.

Brian Parker
BA MSc MRTPI
November 2021