

Comments re the second planning application submitted by Darson Homes, proposing to build FIVE x THREE STOREY DETACHED HOMES on the 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' South of Grove Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, planning application 18/00119/FUL.

I understand that all the previous comments I submitted in relation to the first application will be included in this second planning application and I trust you will include them with my new comments.

The OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT for this site, which was written in January 2018 was not made available to complainants when Darson Homes made the first planning application to develop this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE'. It was only at my insistence that it was added on 13th July 2018, three days after the start of this second application consultation.

Section 2.5 (a) states that 'an assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown that the land is surplus to requirements. The author of this OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT clearly does not know anything about this area of Waterloo, its residents and how they use this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' for their health, well-being and recreation.

This OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT has not been written specifically for this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' South of Grove Street, Ashton-under-Lyne. It is generic and has been copied and pasted, even mentioning 'occupiers of properties on Ann Street, who directly overlook the site.' There is no such street in this locality and shows that the developers have no knowledge at all of this area.

Section 4.6 states that 'there are several alternative open spaces within 10 minutes walking distance of the proposed development. They even specifically mention Richmond Street Playing Fields. A large part of the Richmond Street Playing Fields are taken up by the Curzon Ashton Football Stadium, the Cycle Track Centre, East Cheshire Harriers Athletics Club. These are all facilities which require membership and fees. What remains of the actual Richmond Street playing fields is marked out pitches for hire by clubs and so is not just available for 'free play' for children. Scarcely any of the Richmond Street 'playing field' is available to families and children for free play for FREE! Waterloo Park at Store Street is more than a ten minute walk away and there are several main roads to cross. The playground there is only suitable for under 8s and the five a side pitch is not freely available for families to kick a football together.

Section 4.6 also states in figure eight that the field over the stile, behind the 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' South of Grove Street is an 'AREA OF OPEN AMENITY SPACE'. This field is privately owned and comprises of coarse grass and is grazed by horses. The stile leads only to a public footpath, which crosses the field to the corner of Newmarket Road. THIS LAND IS NOT AN 'AREA OF OPEN AMENITY SPACE' at all. Furthermore, in last draft of Spatial framework, it stated that this land was to be developed, depriving local residents of even more green open spaces to walk.

Section 4.6, figure nine, shows the area of land including and behind Taunton Sunday School as being unallocated. This land is going up for sale soon. It is an area of 'rough ground' with trees, which provide a pleasant 'cut-through' but is not at all suitable for children to play.

Section 4.7 states that there is sufficient amenity space provision across TMBC as a whole and in Ashton-under-Lyne. But what matters to communities, is not that there is a Park eg Stamford Park half an hours drive away, but that there is green open space for children to play in, in the neighbourhood. This is what this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' is to the children of Waterloo, a local space for free play.

In **section 4.8**, the author of this OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT states that exceptions to OL4 have been met 'AS THIS AREA WAS ANCILLARY TO THE LARGER PLAYING FIELD ADJACENT TO THE SITE'. As stated above in section 4.6 this larger field is NOT A PLAYING FIELD, but a privately owned field for horses to graze on with a public footpath running across it.

Section 4.8 further states that the 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' South of Grove Street is 'WITHIN A 3 MINUTE WALK TO FORMAL SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES AT RICHMOND STREET'. I am a very fit person and run marathons and it took me 6 and a half minutes to walk from the nearest corner of the 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' to the closest corner of Richmond Street Playing Fields. The facilities on Richmond Street are indeed 'FORMAL'. As stated in section 4.6 above, Richmond Street is no longer an area where children and families can play freely, without having to pay a fee or get changed into special clothes or footwear. The grass that is not built on, is marked out as pitches, which have to be paid for by clubs, SO THERE IS NO WHERE FOR CHILDREN IN THIS AREA TO PLAY INFORMALLY.

Section 5.1 states that 'The site forming part of this planning application 'IS INCIDENTAL OPEN SPACE'. This 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' is far from INCIDENTAL OPEN SPACE'. Evidence in TMBCs own archives at Heginbottom Mill states this very clearly. In 1981 TMBC carried out their own independent 'OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT' of this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE'. The Director of Planning told the residents of Grove Street, that 'IT WAS DECIDED TO LOCATE THIS AREA OF OPEN SPACE IN THE NORTH WEST PART OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR EXISTING HOMES on Grove Street, Newmarket Grove and Newmarket Rd as well as the new houses, SINCE THERE WAS NO OTHER OPEN SPACE AVAILABLE IN THIS PART OF ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE'. This correspondence, continues stating that 'these houses are a good distance from other public recreational facilities at Richmond Street Playing Fields and Store Street' and that 'Daisy Nook is not a substitute for an 'INFORMAL PLAY AREA CLOSE AT HAND.' This proves conclusively that this piece of PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' was DELIBERATELY LEFT FOR CHILDREN FOR INFORMAL PLAY. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT INCIDENTALLY LEFT. When the estate was built by Leech Homes, house buyers paid separately for the house (to Leech Homes) and for the land to TMBC. TMBC could have made a lot of money if they had developed this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE', but instead they saw that it

was MORE IMPORTANT THAT CHILDREN HAD A SAFE PLACE TO PLAY INFORMALLY, THAT IS CLOSE TO THEIR HOMES.

The rectangular piece of land where it is proposed to build the FIVE X 3 STOREY houses, is the area where children play football, rounders, fly kites etc. If Darson Homes are given permission to build houses on this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' the children's informal play area will be entirely obliterated. The smaller piece of land, behind Grovewood Close, whilst being a small pleasant piece of 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE', is too narrow for children to play games on. Furthermore is proposed to reduce that 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' even further by placing a tarmac turning area into it, so there will hardly be any 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' left at all.

Section 5.2 states that 'this area of open spaces is not demonstrably special to the local community or hold particular significance.' On the contrary, since this estate was built in 1981 and the 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' left for children's free play, the residents' children have played and continue to play on this land. It is special because it is local to them: they don't have to own special clothes or footwear to play on it. If they want to kick a football for 10 minutes before tea time they can. If children want to play nature clubs and look for 'mini-beasts' they can. It is a safe piece of 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' where children can play freely away from traffic and close to home.

Section 5.3 states that 'areas of open space are within easy walking distance of this site and the loss of this site can be justified.' It adds that the land 'is not considered to be of particularly high quality to merit its retention.' As stated above, all other facilities in the area cost money and are too great a distance for children to walk to independently due to traffic. This 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' was not meant to be a pristine sports field. It was left by TMBC for CASUAL INFORMAL PLAY, which the council felt was far more important to the residents and their children, than collecting more money.

Section 5.4 states that because the site is now in 'PRIVATE OWNERSHIP' its use as 'PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IS LIMITED'. This land is still 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' and will remain so until such time as TMBC feel that the new land-owners/developers can satisfy the criteria, which allow building on land covered by the OL4 Policy. The developers have not in anyway shown that they have met any conditions of OL4 Planning.

Section 5.5 states that 'the site offers little to the community in terms of functional open space.' All my comments above show HOW IMPORTANT THIS 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' IS TO THE RESIDENTS of this area. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF THEIR HEATH AND WELL-BEING.

Section 5.6 refers to a supply and demand study being carried out. The supply study in section 4.7 is about the whole of Tameside/Ashton and not about the Waterloo area. Where is the demand study? It is not included in this OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT. This study is supposed to show that it is not necessary to retain this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' since it has no special significance for sport and recreation. Again, everything I have stated above how shows

important this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' is to the health and well being of local residents.

This is not evidence, IT IS ABSOLUTE PROOF, THAT NONE OF THE CONDITIONS OF OL4 PLANNING HAVE BEEN MET by this application. Any plans to build on this site now or at any time in the future should be turned down. The long term future of this 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' should now be assured. The residents should now look forward to having their 'PROTECTED GREEN SPACE' returned to them for informal community use, as it always has been. Current and future generations of children will then be able to play in safety again.