

**Response from Barnt Green Parish Council to Bromsgrove District Council's
Consultation on its Draft Development Strategy
30 June 2025 to 20 October 2025**

Barnt Green Parish Council thanks Bromsgrove District Council for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Development Strategy. This response is based on the views expressed at a public meeting held on 29 July 2025 at which around 150 people attended and a survey, drafted by the Parish Council, which generated 132 responses. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached.

Below are the responses to the questions posed by Bromsgrove District Council. The number in brackets refers to the paragraph above the question in the Draft Development Strategy document.

Q1 (2.4) Do you think Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) should adopt the Council Vision for the Local Plan or continue to develop a separate Local Plan Vision?

- No specific comment

Q2 (2.4) Please provide any comments on changes which you would like to see made to the Vision.

- None

Q3 (3.14) BDC are keen to hear your views on what infrastructure should be provided in any location.

- As increased cycling and walking are assumptions being made by Bromsgrove District Council, proposals should be drafted now and included in the development strategy on improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. For pedestrians, additional footpaths are needed to access neighbouring villages, e.g. from Barnt Green to Alvechurch where the Middle School is sited and the public library. For cyclists, proper cycle lanes are needed (not just painting a bicycle on the highway) on all the routes connecting the adjacent villages to Barnt Green. It is understood that the roads are more akin to country lanes and that this infrastructure proposal would incur major capital expenditure on the highways; but increased urbanisation (a 40% increase in housing for Barnt Green), makes the highways unsafe for a larger community when the expectation is that travel will increasingly be by foot and bicycle.
- With significant increases in the number of homes proposed in some locations, such as Barnt Green with a 40% increase, consideration must be given and duly evidenced of the

social impact and the need for, and location of, new community facilities such as a community hub or village hall.

- Further infrastructure requirements have been specified under Q18 for BAR01, BAR02 and BAR03.

Q4 *(4.11) Do you agree with the draft Development Strategy BDC's chosen for Bromsgrove District?*

- No

Q5 *(4.11) Please explain the reason for your answer to Q4.*

- There is too much focus on existing infrastructure in rural or semi-rural areas as the reason for more homes. It does not seem as though the status or condition of this infrastructure has been analysed, though it is appreciated that this information is being sought as part of this consultation.
- The infrastructure has to be in place before new homes are occupied and before s106 funds become available.
- The infrastructure costs (or associated s106 monies) needed for infrastructure risk making the building of the homes required on the smaller sites financially unviable for house builders.
- In the case of Barnt Green, there is a proposed 40% increase in homes which is hugely and adversely disproportionate when the District's 9,000 new homes equate to a figure closer to 15%. Being technically accurate, it is recognised that 2 of the sites are not within the Barnt Green parish, yet they are so close that the greatest impact will be within Barnt Green.
- From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 95% of respondents endorsed the view that the proposed 340 homes allocated to Barnt Green is too many for its existing infrastructure. The view is that this high number will have a material affect on the character and nature of the current Barnt Green settlement.
- The new homes needed by Bromsgrove District Council should be from a broader base across the whole Bromsgrove District. Improved or new infrastructure will be required wherever the location.

Q6 *(4.11) If you do not agree with the Draft Development Strategy for Bromsgrove District, please describe an alternative strategy for consideration.*

- See response to Q5. A broader based allocation is considered to be more equitable and important to, inter alia, sustain the communities with less developed infrastructure.

Q7 *(4.12) Do you have any comments to make on any of the other sites BDC's assessed and not included for potential allocation? (Please quote the site reference number)*

- The reasoning is not clear as to why some sites that have been assessed as green for development have not been included in these proposals, yet some that are rated amber have been included. There seems to be a degree of dogmatic reasoning that if there is already infrastructure, this warrants additional housing irrespective of the state of that infrastructure. Some infrastructure is already at capacity and insufficient to accommodate additional housing.
- The overwhelming view is that housing located more than 10 minutes' walk away from the village will result in significant additional traffic congestion and parking pressure. We recognise the aspiration of Bromsgrove District Council that more people will walk or cycle, but in practice, for accessing the services and infrastructure of Barnt Green, the view of the Parish Council and its residents is that this will not happen.
- Alternative sites in Fairfield should be reconsidered, some of which have a green RAG status. Site reference numbers 041, 181, 265, 316, 345 and BDC 0688 fall into this category, though it is not suggested that they should all be included in the potential allocation.
- Alternative sites in Belbroughton should be reconsidered, some of which have a green RAG status. Site reference numbers 057, 097, 107 and 206 fall into this category, though it is not suggested that they should all be included in the potential allocation.
- Alternative sites in Edge of Birmingham Conurbation should be reconsidered which have a green RAG status. Site reference numbers, 025, 107, 231a and 232 fall into this category, though it is not suggested that they should all be included in the potential allocation.

Q8 (4.12) If you think alternate sites should be allocated, which sites do you think BDC should reconsider and why? (Please quote the site reference number)

- See Question 7.

Q9 (4.12) Please suggest alternative housing sites for allocation (Please provide: the site address, postcode, site area, details of proposed development e.g. number of dwellings, density, infrastructure proposed. Please let BDC know if the site has previously been submitted to the Council. Please explain why the Council should consider your site for allocation. Please submit any supporting documents such as a site location plan, indicative masterplan etc.)

- See answer to Q14.

Q10 (4.12) Do you think BDC should be allocating some land for employment development within the sites BDC's selected across Bromsgrove district?

- Yes.

Q11 (4.12) Explain the reason for your answer to Q10?

- Employment land is essential in determining where housing should be allocated.
- The location should be based on realistic commuting distances by cycling or walking.
- The location should be where there is infrastructure in place, such as the A38 corridor, rather than peppering village communities where the supporting infrastructure is inadequate to support such development.

Q12 (4.12) With new development comes supporting infrastructure. What supporting infrastructure do you think would benefit Bromsgrove district and should be prioritised when development comes forward?

- There will be a need for additional educational establishments. In considering the pressure on Middle Schools and High Schools, consideration should be given to using this opportunity of moving from a 3-tier educational structure to a 2-tier educational structure.
- There will be a need for additional NHS facilities, not least doctors, their surgeries and NHS dental facilities. However, the disparate nature of the district is such that the outlying villages need their own doctors' surgeries and NHS dentists in their individual villages because public transport is weak and driving may not be an option for the more elderly population.
- Better rail services are required. They are heavily biased on northbound travel to Birmingham. Although there is an hourly service to Worcester, it is not possible to travel from Bromsgrove to Cheltenham direct (for access to South Wales and the South West). For Barnt Green, there is only an hourly service to and from Bromsgrove. When returning to Barnt Green from Worcester, there is normally a wait of 47 minutes at Bromsgrove where the facilities for waiting that long are totally inadequate - two bus shelters on each platform and no toilets (only available when the ticket office is manned).
- Better footpaths are needed between communities. Though the Barnt Green area is semi-rural, it is not possible to walk safely between the village and Blackwell along Blackwell Road. Similarly, the footpath along Bittell Road ends suddenly before the canal bridge. Walking between Barnt Green and Alvechurch cannot be done safely. There are physical constraints but, if it is expected that there will be more walking and cycling, the infrastructure needs to accommodate this in a safe manner, as in these 2 examples.

Q13 (5.2) BDC'd welcome your feedback on any of these employment scenarios or opportunities you think BDC might have overlooked.

- No specific comments from residents

Q14 (6.3) Do you think it would be a good idea for BDC to pursue this as a potential longer-term growth option for Bromsgrove? [New M5 junction south of Bromsgrove, remodelled J1 of M42, new railway station near to Stoke Prior]

- Yes – Stoke Prior may be more appropriate than tacking development onto the current stretched infrastructure.

Q15 (6.3) Explain answer to Q14?

- With a new site, the infrastructure can be built in with, for example adequate car parking at the railway station. In the case of Stoke Prior, there would be access direct to both Birmingham and Worcester, unlike Barnt Green.

Q16 – Q17 Focussing on Bromsgrove Town and Alvechurch

- No comments from residents

FOCUSSING ON BARNT GREEN (Q18)

Q18 (7.28) BDC would like to know your thoughts on the suitability of allocating the 3 potential sites in Barnt Green in particular the potential infrastructure required to deliver these sites. BDC are keen to understand the issues faced by the local community e.g. traffic congestion, how local facilities and services operate such as schools, doctors and public transport, and anything else you feel it is important for us to consider. Please specify which site(s) you are referring to e.g. BAR01.

BAR01 – Land between Twatling Road and Cherry Hill Road (140 homes)

(7.26) How do you feel about BAR01 as a potential allocation?

- Category – **Dissatisfied**
- There are concerns about the implications on health and education infrastructure and the loss of green belt. The principal issue is, though, the adverse impact on the road and parking infrastructure in the centre of Barnt Green. At present, there is inadequate parking. There is considerable illegal parking which not only creates traffic congestion but blocks the footpaths to the detriment and danger of pedestrians. Notwithstanding the view that more people will walk and cycle, this site involves a steep hill and is more than a 10-minute brisk walk away from the centre of the village. There is no evidence in Barnt Green that there is a societal shift to travelling by foot or bicycle for walking distances taking over 10 minutes. School drop off is still normally by car which indicates that the schoolchildren of today will expect the comfort and ease of car travel in their adult life and for their future offspring. Increased use of cars will ensue from this site. There is no obvious parking location for additional parking in the village centre. This site will, therefore, cause damage to the Barnt Green community and its facilities.

- Should an application for this site be submitted for planning approval, it must be preceded by a plan, with committed funding, for enhancements to the centre of Barnt Green to ease traffic congestion and for a site for parking close to the village centre.
- In assessing this site, the additional pressures on the infrastructure of Barnt Green also impact Blackwell, the Lickey area and the Alvechurch area whose residents use Barnt Green's facilities.
- From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 20% of respondents agreed with the proposals for homes on this site (15% unsure, 60% opposed). A significant or unacceptable adverse impact on traffic was recorded at 86% and the same figure of 86% on the adverse parking impact.

(7.26) What infrastructure is likely to be required to deliver this site?

- **Active travel** - The suggestion that a segregated walking and cycle route between Cherry Hill and Barnt Green railway station/village centre is not understood. It is not clear what is meant by Cherry Hill, though there is a footpath which is part of the Lickey Hills Country Park which runs opposite the railway station exit on Fiery Hill Road to Cherry Hill Road. The route of the footpath continues across into the main Lickey Hills complex. If the segregation is for safety between mountain bikers and walkers, the proposal has some validity. However, the condition of the footpath would need to be improved if it is to serve the existing households on Cherry Hill Road. However, for the proposed site BAR01, such an enhancement serves no viable benefit because accessing the footpath would involve walking up or down the steep and narrow portion of Cherry Hill Road which is a safety concern unless the road were to be widened and a pavement installed. Access to the village centre by foot or cycle is best via Fiery Hill Road and Hewell Lane. From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 83% thought that homeowners would not walk or cycle from the site to Barnt Green village centre.
- A solution to the traffic congestion and paucity of parking in the village centre is needed. Much of the traffic congestion is caused by the volume of parking, often illegal. A site for parking needs to be village centre as close to the shops as possible. Parking needs to be free. There is, though, no obvious location without damaging the nature of the village centre and its prosperity.

(7.27) Issues and challenges in the community and how local facilities and services operate?

- **Traffic Congestion** - One of the major impacts of this site will be the increased pressure on the village centre of Barnt Green. There are no closer amenities to the site than Barnt Green, yet it is such a distance away that it will result in increased traffic in the village centre with associated parking.
- **Parking** - It is naïve to assume, from looking at a map, that the new homeowners will walk or cycle. The topography is adverse and, although we aspire to be a fitter society with more cycling and walking, the practicalities are that this will not happen with this

site. To find a site for a new car park at the centre of the village does not appear viable without a major loss to the centre of the village.

- **Road Safety Concerns** – The road access from the site has not been specified but it has to be on Twatling Road. The possible exit closer to Barnt Green is Cherry Hill Road, but this is a steep narrow lane where cars have difficulty passing each other. There is no pavement, and it is dangerous to walk up or down Cherry Hill Road.
- **Public Transport Provision** - For the foregoing reasons which will exacerbate parking difficulties in the village centre, cars are likely to be used to the railway station as part of a commute. The charges by West Midlands Railway already push commuters onto the streets where they can park free. The capacity of the station car park is only 40 cars and is inadequate for pre covid levels of commuting which are now being reached again.
- **Public Transport Provision** – The statement (7.21) that Barnt Green benefits from a railway station on the Cotswold and Cross City Lines is incorrect. The Cotswold Line is nowhere near Barnt Green as it runs from Worcester, Worcestershire Parkway and Evesham through to Oxford. The Cross City Line does serve Barnt Green, but Barnt Green is the only station south of Birmingham New Street where some trains pass through without stopping. There is only 1 train per hour between Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. Barnt Green does, though, have 2 additional morning services which run direct to Worcester (07.45 and 0815) and 1 late afternoon service (16.24) from Worcester. These specifically call at Barnt Green to serve the educational establishments between Bromsgrove and Worcester and is used by about 40 children a day. Out of these times, to return from Worcester to Barnt Green normally involves a wait of 47 minutes at Bromsgrove for a connecting service to Barnt Green. It is not a viable service for travel southbound on a regular basis. At a practical level, this means that the railway only provides a commuting service from Barnt Green to Birmingham and Redditch.
- **Education** – Residents have a major concern about schooling and question the ability of the current schools to accommodate additional children coming from new homes. St Andrews CofE First School in Barnt Green has a capacity for 225 pupils and has 217 on roll. There are 6 children on waiting lists (not in the age group where the places are available). The school has 36.7% (82) of its pupils from its catchment area. Pupils normally proceed to Alvechurch Middle School which will have to take on new pupils from the proposed developments in Alvechurch as well. Senior schools in Bromsgrove are the norm. Additional educational facilities will need to be made available within the Bromsgrove district, though St Andrew's CofE First School could take on more pupils from the proposed homes and lower the numbers taken from outside its catchment area. There could be expansion of St Andrew's CofE First School with possibly 2 classrooms upstairs. This must not be at the expense of any reduction in the square footage of the playground or playing field. Note that extension of the premises was considered by Worcestershire County Council about 8-10 years ago and was rejected.
- **Healthcare** - There is already pressure on the doctor's surgery in Barnt Green which has 7,000 patients on its books. The proposed additional housing would add 1,000 patients. It is constrained by its premises, the capacity of which is already exceeded. It is not possible to extend the premises any further. Although the services offered by the

surgery could be adapted, this would negatively affect accessibility and the quality of care. There is no parking for patients. If a contribution for a new surgery were to be proposed from s106 monies, this would cost £1m+ and not be a simple solution because funding would be phased/staged. Additionally, a new surgery on this site would be inappropriate for the existing residents of Barnt Green because of the poor access from the village centre where most people live. Walking up a hill of 150 feet (Fiery Hill Road) is the pedestrian route and there is no public transport. This is not viable for the elderly population of the village or for those who attend the doctor's surgery because they are sick and weak. An increase in car use and traffic would ensue. Substantial car parking facilities would be needed at a new surgery on this site.

- **Healthcare** – From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 90% of residents think the development would have a significant or unacceptable adverse affect on the doctor's surgery. Concerns were raised about the inadequate NHS dental facilities which would be under greater pressure.

(7.28) Views on the site and other issues?

- **Local Wildlife** – There will be a loss of wildlife to which residents object. From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 78% of residents thought the development would have a significant or unacceptable adverse impact.
- **Flooding** – Excess surface water during heavy rain is a feature of Twatling Road. The loss of natural run off from housing development will exacerbate the problem and would need to be mitigated.
- **Parish Boundaries** - The way in which the parish council boundaries are drawn will mean that the precept from the homes on this site will go to Lickey & Blackwell Parish Council, yet it is Barnt Green that will be servicing their needs and bearing the burden with no recompense. Should the site proceed to development, it is recommended that the parish council boundaries are redrawn so that Barnt Green Parish Council has the funding from the precept to provide facilities for these new homes.

BAR02 – Land north of Kendal End Road – 50 homes

How do you feel about BAR02 as a potential allocation?

- **Category – Satisfied**
- The proximity to the village centre of Barnt Green with the shops and railway station means that it is viable for people to walk rather than use their cars. From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 42% thought that homeowners would walk or cycle from the site to Barnt Green village centre. This is a disturbingly low figure given the proximity to the centre of Barnt Green, its shops and railway station. When considered against the backdrop of the Draft Development Strategy's unwritten

assumption that walks of more than 10 minutes will be the norm for the next generation of homeowners, there is no discernible local evidence to support this.

- We acknowledge that the greater Barnt Green area has to accommodate some of the homes required by Bromsgrove District Council and believe that this is the most appropriate site. Having said that, we would not wish it to be enlarged geographically because the walking distance to the village centre will lengthen, and the traffic and parking difficulties will then be exacerbated. However, we feel that the site should consist of houses no bigger than 2 or 3 bedrooms and the number of proposed homes may be able to be increased to 60 from the proposed 50 with an appropriate allocation of affordable homes.
- From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 34% of respondents agreed with the proposals for homes on this site (22% unsure, 44% opposed).

(7.26) What infrastructure is likely to be required to deliver this site?

- An additional commuter car park, with free parking, is needed as close to the railway station as possible.

(7.27) Issues and challenges in the community and how local facilities and services operate?

- **Traffic Congestion** – The parking facilities on the site must be sufficiently adequate to avoid any overspill. Parking on Kendal End Road would lead to traffic congestion. Furthermore, the commuter car park off Fiery Hill Road on the Butterwick Close development is for commuters and maintained by Barnt Green Parish Council and its use and purpose as a commuter car park must not be compromised.
- **Road Safety Issues** – The exit junction from the development will require careful design because visibility under the railway bridge on Kendal End Road is impaired at the Fiery Hill Road junction.
- **Public Transport Provision** – The statement (7.21) that Barnt Green benefits from a railway station on the Cotswold and Cross City Lines is incorrect. The Cotswold Line is nowhere near Barnt Green as it runs from Worcester, Worcestershire Parkway and Evesham through to Oxford. The Cross City Line does serve Barnt Green, but Barnt Green is the only station south of Birmingham New Street where some trains pass through without stopping. There is only 1 train per hour between Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. Barnt Green does, though, have 2 additional morning services which run direct to Worcester (07.45 and 0815) and 1 late afternoon service (16.24) from Worcester. These specifically call at Barnt Green to serve the educational establishments between Barnt Green and Worcester and is used by about 40 children a day. Out of these times, to return from Worcester to Barnt Green normally involves a wait of 47 minutes at Bromsgrove for a connecting service to Barnt Green. It is not a viable service for travel southbound on a regular basis. At a practical level, this means that the railway only provides a commuting service from Barnt Green to Birmingham and Redditch.

- **Education** - Residents have a major concern about schooling and question the ability of the current schools to accommodate additional children coming from new homes. St Andrews CofE First School in Barnt Green has a capacity for 225 pupils and has 217 on roll. There are 6 children on waiting lists (not in the age group where the places are available). The school has 36.7% (82) of its pupils from its catchment area. Pupils normally proceed to Alvechurch Middle School which will have to take on new pupils from the proposed developments in Alvechurch as well. Senior schools in Bromsgrove are the norm. Additional educational facilities will need to be made available within the Bromsgrove district, though St Andrew's CofE First School could take on more pupils from the proposed homes and lower the numbers taken from outside its catchment area. There could be expansion of St Andrew's CofE First School with possibly 2 classrooms upstairs. This must not be at the expense of any reduction in the square footage of the playground or playing field. Note that extension of the premises was considered by Worcestershire County Council about 8-10 years ago and was rejected.
- **Healthcare** - There is already pressure on the doctor's surgery in Barnt Green which has 7,000 patients on its books. The proposed additional housing would add 1,000 patients. It is constrained by its premises, the capacity of which is already exceeded. It is not possible to extend the premises any further. Although the services offered by the surgery could be adapted, this would negatively affect accessibility and the quality of care. There is no parking for patients. If a contribution for a new surgery were to be proposed from s106 monies, this would cost £1m+ and not be a simple solution because funding would be phased/staged.
- **Healthcare** – From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 76% of residents think the development would have a significant or unacceptable adverse affect on the doctor's surgery. Concerns were raised about the inadequate NHS dental facilities which would be under greater pressure.

(7.28) Views on the site and other issues?

- **Local Wildlife** – We are not aware of any material wildlife constraints.
- **Sewage** – The stream that runs north west to south east through the rear of the proposed site currently has some sewage discharge. This is evidenced further downstream on the south side of the railway embankment as it winds behind Barnt Green Sports Club and behind the Parish Council's Playing Field. This will need to be addressed and resolved with any new housing development.
- **Flooding** - From the Government's website on surface flooding (which has not been mentioned in the site assessment), there is a high risk of flooding (1 in 30 per annum) at the rear of the proposed site. The risk requires assessment. Mitigation needs to be built into any proposed development.
- **Parish Boundaries** - The way in which the parish council boundaries are drawn will mean that the precept from the homes on this site will go to Cofton Hackett Parish Council, yet it is Barnt Green Parish Council that will be servicing the homeowners' needs and bearing the burden with no recompense. Should the site proceed to

development, given the proximity to central Barnt Green and the long distance from the centre of Cofton Hackett, it is recommended that the parish council boundaries are redrawn so that Barnt Green Parish Council has the funding from the precept to provide facilities for these new homes.

BAR03 – Sandhills Farm

How do you feel about BAR03 as a potential allocation?

- Category – **Unhappy**
- As proposed with the local reaction, the development of this site would lead to a loss of social and community facilities for the village and create significant additional traffic, road safety issues and parking difficulties. It does not sit well as part of a harmonised community.
- There are a number of practical difficulties with the site which is why it has an amber rating. We accept that the exit should probably be on Blackwell Road because the alternative on Sandhills Green is problematic with the narrow railway overbridge on this road. The site itself stretches away from the centre of Barnt Green and parts of the proposed housing will result in additional driving to access the village centre of Barnt Green rather than walking and cycling (for both the shops and railway station).
- From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 58% thought that homeowners would not walk or cycle from the site to Barnt Green village centre (14% thought they would, 28% unsure). The sites, like BAR03, in the Draft Development Plan assume that there is a societal shift to travelling by foot or bicycle for walking distances of more than 10 minutes to railway stations and retail outlets. The survey results show otherwise and undermine this core assumption. Furthermore, there is no physical evidence in Barnt Green of such a change taking place. Although some of the future home purchasers may still be in education, school drop off is still normally by car. This indicates that the schoolchildren of today will expect the comfort and ease of car travel in their adult life and for their future offspring.
- In assessing this site, the additional pressures on the infrastructure of Barnt Green also impact Blackwell, the Lickey area and the Alvechurch area whose residents use Barnt Green's facilities.
- The physical location of this site is peripheral to the village of Barnt Green, because it sits on the far side of the railway line to Redditch and is elongated parallel to the motorway. It also sits on rising land and is perched on a hillside overlooking the village centre which will materially and visibly detract from the nature of Barnt Green as a village in a green belt setting.
- From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, only 8% of respondents agreed with the proposals for homes on this site with 90% opposed (2% unsure). A significant or unacceptable adverse impact on traffic was recorded at 96%. A significant or unacceptable adverse impact on parking was recorded at 90%.

(7.26) What infrastructure is likely to be required to deliver this site?

- A solution to the traffic congestion and paucity of parking in the village centre is needed. Any new car parking site needs to be in the village centre as close to the shops as possible. Parking needs to be free. There is no obvious location without damaging the nature of the village centre and its prosperity.
- Should an application for this site be submitted for planning approval, it must be preceded by a plan, with committed funding, for enhancements to the centre of Barnt Green to ease traffic congestion and for a site for parking close to the village centre.
- An alternative entrance to the site is needed rather than through the Barnt Green Social Club so the village does not lose this important amenity.

(7.27) Issues and challenges in the community and how local facilities and services operate?

- **Traffic Congestion** – The preferred exit from the site is to Blackwell Road, through the Barnt Green Social Club site. Most of the traffic emanating from the site will head towards the B4120 through the village centre (along Hewell Road) or along Sandhills Lane and Bittell Lane. The route through the village centre past the shops is already heavily congested. In recent years, the level of street parking on the alternative route on Sandhills Lane and Bittell Lane has risen significantly. Stand offs between vehicles are not uncommon on both routes as they weave through the parked cars. This site will increase the difficulties.
- **Parking** - Parking in the centre of Barnt Green will be an issue. Though homes built close to the Blackwell Road access are within a practical 10-minute walk into the village centre, those at the eastern end of the proposed development are further away and there is adverse topography. To find a site for a new car park at the centre of the village does not appear viable without a major loss to the centre of the village.
- **Parking** - For the foregoing reasons which will exacerbate parking difficulties in the village centre, cars are likely to be used to the railway station as part of a commute. It is necessary to get to the northern end of the station to get a train to Birmingham or Redditch. This involves access via Station Approach from the village centre, from the Fiery Hill entrance by the footbridge or from Hewell Lane by walking the length of Platform 2. It is a 5 minute walk from the railway bridge on Hewell Road to get to the platforms which when added to the exit time and the topography of the proposed site is likely to tempt people to drive to the station. There is inadequate parking at the station which only accommodates about 40 cars. The charges entice commuters to street park, clogging up the village centre to the detriment of the retailers. There does not appear to be an appropriate new parking site in the village centre without damage to the community.
- **Road Safety Issues** – The proposed exit from the site is already a difficult junction with limited visibility through the railway bridge, the blind bend on Blackwell Road and the adjoining Hewell Lane. Safety, specifically for pedestrians, must not be compromised. As

the exit for traffic will be through the centre of Barnt Green or via Sandhills Lane and Bittell Lane, the increase in traffic will adversely affect the safety of these roads not only for motorists but also for pedestrians. Cars are often parked on pavements and cars often pass each other by mounting the pavements. There will be an increased material risk to pedestrians, especially the elderly and the disabled.

- **Public Transport Provision** – The statement (7.21) that Barnt Green benefits from a railway station on the Cotswold and Cross City Lines is incorrect. The Cotswold Line is nowhere near Barnt Green as it runs from Worcester, Worcestershire Parkway and Evesham through to Oxford. The Cross City Line does serve Barnt Green, but Barnt Green is the only station south of Birmingham New Street where some trains pass through without stopping. There is only 1 train per hour between Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. Barnt Green does, though, have 2 additional morning services which run direct to Worcester (07.45 and 0815) and 1 late afternoon service (16.24) from Worcester. These specifically call at Barnt Green to serve the educational establishments between Barnt Green and Worcester and is used by about 40 children a day. Out of these times, to return from Worcester to Barnt Green normally involves a wait of 47 minutes at Bromsgrove for a connecting service to Barnt Green. It is not a viable service for travel southbound on a regular basis. At a practical level, this means that the railway only provides a commuting service from Barnt Green to Birmingham and Redditch.
- **Education** - Residents have a major concern about schooling and question the ability of the current schools to accommodate additional children coming from new homes. St Andrews CofE First School in Barnt Green has a capacity for 225 pupils and has 217 on roll. There are 6 children on waiting lists (not in the age group where the places are available). The school has 36.7% (82) of its pupils from its catchment area. Pupils normally proceed to Alvechurch Middle School which will have to take on new pupils from the proposed developments in Alvechurch as well. Senior schools in Bromsgrove are the norm. Additional educational facilities will need to be made available within the Bromsgrove district, though St Andrew's CofE First School could take on more pupils from the proposed homes and lower the numbers taken from outside its catchment area. There could be expansion of St Andrew's CofE First School with possibly 2 classrooms upstairs. This must not be at the expense of any reduction in the square footage of the playground or playing field. Note that extension of the premises was considered by Worcestershire County Council about 8-10 years ago and was rejected.
- **Healthcare** - There is already pressure on the doctor's surgery in Barnt Green which has 7,000 patients on its books. The proposed additional housing would add 1,000 patients. It is constrained by its premises, the capacity of which is already exceeded. It is not possible to extend the premises any further. Although the services offered by the surgery could be adapted, this would negatively affect accessibility and the quality of care. There is no parking for patients. If a contribution for a new surgery were to be proposed from s106 monies, this would cost £1m+ and not be a simple solution because funding would be phased/staged.
- **Healthcare** – From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 90% of residents think the development would have a significant or unacceptable adverse effect on the

doctor's surgery. Concerns were raised about the inadequate NHS dental facilities which would be under greater pressure.

- **Community Facilities** – The loss of Barnt Green Social Club will be a major loss of social facilities to Barnt Green. In context, it has over 500 members. It brings people into Barnt Green from outside the village who use the other facilities available. At present the Club is more likely to want to close than move to new alternative premises. A recent poll of its current membership (those who have been members for over 2 years) has indicated by 94% to 6% that their preference is for the club to close rather than relocate. If it were to move, it would be further away from the village centre and be less attractive for residents to access on foot. From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 86% of respondents opposed the access through, and the potential loss of, the Barnt Green Social Club.

(7.28) Views on the site and other issues?

- **Local Wildlife** - The Site Assessment & Site Selection Methodology states that there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the site. We have been informed that there are 5 close to the proposed entrance to the site. The manner of any development on the site would need to preserve these trees.
- **Local Wildlife** - From a survey conducted by Barnt Green Parish Council, 90% thought the development would have a significant or unacceptable impact on wildlife and 94% thought it would have a significant or unacceptable impact on the green belt.
- **Flooding** - Flooding is a material consideration yet it has not been mentioned in the Site Assessment & Site Selection Methodology. Any proposed development would require a report on the risks. There are already problems with the stream which runs from the site alongside the access road to the Scout Hut on Blackwell Road which runs underground and under the Redditch line railway embankment. At times of heavy rain, the drainage at the junction of Blackwell Road and Hewell Road is inadequate and flooding results under the railway bridge. In the past, cars have drowned out under the bridge which is why Barnt Green Parish Council installed a flood depth marker. If increased run off from the Sandhills Farm site is likely, mitigation of the increased flood risk will need to be factored into any plans.
- **Flooding** - From the Government's website on surface flooding (which has not been mentioned in the site assessment), there is a high risk of flooding (1 in 30 per annum) at the back of the houses on Blackwell Road between the access road to the Scout Hut to the railway embankment next to the Barnt Green Social Club. The extent of the surface flooding risk is significantly greater at the rear of the Social Club building. The risk requires assessment. Mitigation needs to be built into any proposed development.

Q19 – Q23 Focussing on Catshill, Hagley, Wythall, Stoke Prior and Frankley

- No specific comments from residents

Q24 *(8.8) Do you have any thoughts as to what the additional Green/Grey Belt Assessment should consider and how information could best be presented?*

- The Draft Development Strategy appears somewhat flawed in that the bedrock of BDC's greenbelt assessment was done using the now outdated green belt criteria. At the time, grey belt did not exist. As many sites across the district were ruled out on the basis of high green belt harm, these sites should be reassessed under the new green/grey belt criteria.

Q25 *(8.8) BDC's evidence documents to date are published on the website, and you are welcome to comment on these parts of the consultation process.*

- The greenbelt assessment is flawed - this underpins the whole Draft Development Strategy. Therefore, the plan is flawed and not sound.