

Cllr Ros Taylor
Chair of Eccleshall Parish Council
c/o Clerk to Eccleshall Parish Council
16 Newport Road
Great Bridgeford
Stafford
ST18 9PR

28th October 2025

By post and email

Dear Councillor Taylor

RE: LAND WEST OF BLURTON'S LANE, ECCLESHALL

Further to our presentation to the Parish Council's planning committee meeting on the 5th of March, and in advance of the imminent submission of our outline planning application for development at the above site, I thought it would be helpful to write to you to provide more detail as to the community infrastructure package Bloor and our landowner partners are committing to deliver alongside new homes.

This is an open letter and I am happy for it to be published on the Parish Council's website.

Overall development scheme

The outline planning application shortly to be submitted will be for the following development:

- Up to 480 dwellings of which up to 40% will be affordable;
- A one form entry primary school (210 places);
- A medical centre / primary care hub;
- Specialist older person's housing (up to 75 bed facility); and
- Approximately 8ha of green infrastructure.

I deal with each item in further detail below, based on matters that were raised at the meeting and subsequently through the consultation exercise we undertook over the summer.

New homes

Discussions took place during the consultation as to the amount of affordable housing proposed and whether local people could be prioritised when the affordable properties are allocated.

Dealing with the last point first, a 'local connection' cascade can be included in the S106 agreement which will mean that applicants with a local connection (live, have lived, are employed or have close family in Eccleshall) will be given priority when the affordable homes are allocated.

With regard to the quantum, you will appreciate that we need to comply with adopted planning policy, which requires the delivery of 40% affordable housing unless this renders schemes unviable. However, alongside the usual 'social rent' and 'shared ownership' affordable tenures, we are also exploring with the Borough Council as to whether a 'discount in perpetuity' form of affordable tenure can be utilised on this development. The 'discount in perpetuity' homes would be sold to eligible applicants on the open market but would be subject to a reduction in price (e.g. 20%) that would be applied at initial sale and then every time the house was sold in the future. The local connection cascade would also apply to these homes. We

feel that this tenure would be particularly beneficial for local first time buyers looking to get their foot on the property ladder.

Primary school

During pre-application consultation, Staffordshire County Council (SCC) confirmed their requirement for a new primary school to accommodate pupil demand arising from new development in Eccleshall.

In light of this, Bloor and our landowner partners are committing to delivering both the land and 100% of the funding required to deliver a new primary school, which would more than meet the additional demand created by our 480 unit scheme.

The current cost of a new primary school in Staffordshire is £8,723,000. The land and the funding would be made available to SCC at an early stage of the build programme to give them flexibility as to when the school is built and opened.

Medical Centre / Primary Care Hub

As you will be aware, our original suggestion with regard to improving GP facilities in Eccleshall was to facilitate the relocation of the Crown Surgery to new purpose built premises on the development site. This would have been a jointly funded proposal between Bloor and its landowner partners, the Crown Surgery, and the NHS Staffordshire Integrated Care Board ('the ICB'). It would have required land of about 0.35ha being provided on site so that a new GP practice could be built.

Discussions between the parties over the summer have confirmed that this is not a viable option. This is because the ICB will not provide investment into a 'like-for-like' proposal as this does not align with the recently published NHS 10 year plan. The 10 year plan states that NHS estate investment is to be focussed on Neighbourhood Health Centres that offer services in the community that would previously have required a hospital visit, as well as a GP practice and other social services. However, the ICB have not yet determined what this means for health services in Eccleshall and the surrounding area, and where a new NHC will be located.

In response to this, Bloor and our landowner partners have updated the proposal as follows:

- Make a larger, 0.75ha serviced parcel of land with planning permission for a health use on the development site available to the ICB for a period of 10 years; and
- Provide a financial contribution (which could either be used to refurbish the existing surgery or towards a new facility) in the normal manner via S106 agreement (estimated to be circa £400,000).

The availability of a free, serviced parcel of land will hopefully encourage the ICB to ultimately choose to provide a Neighbourhood Health Centre in Eccleshall, rather than further afield. We would welcome the Parish Council's support in encouraging the ICB to take advantage of this offer.

It is also possible that new health facilities could be provided on the proposed site in an incremental fashion, starting with a satellite GP facility to deal with any immediate demand from new housing development. In the circumstance where a satellite facility is built on site, the existing surgery on the High Street would be retained.

Specialist older person's housing

We have included a later living facility in the proposals as there is increasing demand for this sort of specialist housing in most locations we operate in. If such a facility is provided, the amount of general market housing the scheme can deliver will be reduced to around 460 dwellings.

We feel that the inclusion of a later living scheme here will help to widen the choice of housing in Eccleshall, potentially enabling those in unsuitable housing to move to more appropriate accommodation.

Green Infrastructure

Around 8ha of multifunctional green infrastructure will be provided as part of the development which will be accessible to both existing and new residents. It will comprise of formal and informal walking routes, areas set aside for nature conservation, planting buffers, drainage ponds, and a series of play areas designed to meet the needs of children of all ages, including teenagers.

Other financial contributions

Whilst the exact details of any additional financial contributions secured via a S106 agreement will not become clear until the planning application is submitted, at this stage I expect that the following items will need to be included should the development be approved:

- Improvements to local sports facilities
- Improvements to / support for local bus services
- Support for bus services for secondary school pupils
- Improvements to local walking and cycling routes

As I stated at the meeting, it is as important for Bloor as it is for the Parish Council and local residents that S106 contributions generated by this proposed development are spent in Eccleshall, not elsewhere in the Borough, and any S106 will be negotiated with this in mind.

I hope this letter is helpful and if there are any further matters that still require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me directly or via Johnny Kidney at Sulis Public Affairs.

Yours sincerely,



Max Whitehead
Planning Director

Encs

Cc Cllr Jones
Cllr Pert
Cllr Reid
Leigh Ingham MP