

# Long Lawford Primary School current Parking Observations

At its meeting held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, Long Lawford Parish Council resolved to submit observations reference the expansion of the School carried out by Cllr. Mr Jonathan Steed.

**Cllr. Mr Jonathan Steed.**

I am Jonathan Steed, I am a Parish Councillor for Long Lawford and responsible for the Health & Safety and Security & Policing for the village.

I work full time in policing, I'm a 37 yr old married man and father of two children of ages 6 & 3 who both attend Long Lawford Primary School (the 3 yr old starts in Sept 16)

I moved to the Long Lawford from Coventry in 2010 and seen the village undergo mass development of new housing estates and of course the school almost doubling in size since.

I have a keen interest in assuring Long Lawford maintains its excellent record of being a lovely place to live along with being a safe place to live for all residents from the youngest to the oldest in our village.

## **Why produce this report?**

This report has been put together to evidence the major discrepancies in the Long Lawford Primary School Transport Survey document produced by Curtins.

The enclosed information has been gained by using photographic evidence that has been captured by Parish Councillor Jonathan Steed along with photographs provided by other concerned parents and residents of Long Lawford who have daily near misses with poor driving and parking by other parents who need to drive to the school.

I have had a very short timescale to put this report together to prove why the Long Lawford Primary School extension should not be allowed to go from a school of 454 pupils to 630. The current road infrastructure cannot withstand any more traffic during peak travel time.

The photographs and comments attached to each photo will show the current crisis situation that the School has lost control of. The Curtins Surveyor seemed to avoid taking photos that show the

twice daily chaos residents and parents are faced with. The police also have no control of the situation and Police Officers have been seen watching the mayhem and ignoring it.

However, parents have nowhere to park safely. Occasionally when the police do patrol near the school, Parents then Park more dangerously on surrounding streets. So police presence will ease congestion at the school gates but disperse it around the village.

The only solution is to reduce the number of vehicles travelling to the school which is currently an impossible task to achieve. Another plan would be to try double yellow lines along one side of Townsend Lane and Holbrook Road. I understand that option has already been rejected by the council highways department. If the planning department authorise the school extension, they are authorising further congestion and danger.

### **What are the discrepancies/issues with the Curtins Transport Survey?**

1. Curtains do not appear to be independent in this report. According to the Transport Survey, (1.1.1 on page 1) they have been appointed to complete the report and offer support and advice to Ashe Construction who is the school building contractor. This is a serious conflict of interests and should be addressed to be more transparent.

Whilst we were appointed by Ashe Construction, we have a professional responsibility to report accurately and without bias. Many of our staff including myself have been professionally chartered as Transport Planning Professionals and whilst also being a member of the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, have a moral and professional obligation to the industry and not the client.

Our role has been to review the development proposals, advise the client on the planning requirements of Warwickshire County Council (the Local Highway Authority) and where required, appropriate levels of mitigation.

Should we have been appointed to undertake this piece of work by another agency or organisation, our findings would have been unchanged.

2. Section 1.3 scope of the report. The report does not satisfactory meet all the points listed and my report will evidence why, simply by looking at the photographs taken on 13/07/2016 I have added below

The photographs included within the report are not intended to provide the sole basis for our evidence and conclusions, but more to serve as an example of what we encountered during the site visit and to inform the highway description sections of the study.

The findings and conclusions made within the report have been arrived at following our assessment of the entire site, and observations during the school PM peak period which places the greatest strain on the surrounding network with respect to on-street parking demands. This is because the AM peak see's parents who drive to school stop momentarily to let children alight their vehicles, whilst the PM peak experiences greater demand for on-street parking and parents park and wait for short periods to meet their children.

3. 1.3.5 States that the surveyor attended the site on 30/6/16 between 14:00 – 16:00. Residents have stated the surveyor was seen on Holbrook road but left before the traffic build up started.

Our surveyor was not only considering the impacts of the proposed development on Holbrook Road, but also the streets surrounding the site. This requires them continually review the accumulation and dispersal of traffic in the area by touring the site over a period of time and making observations at regular intervals.

Our surveyor notes that during his visit he was approached by a local resident who discussed the traffic impacts of the site. It was reported that vehicles 'regularly speed in excess of 70mph', 'there has been a number of crashes' and that once the pick-up peak traffic had cleared, that 'that's about as bad as it gets'.

4. 2.2.1 Existing Site. This shows the school has current capacity for 476 pupils but currently accommodates 454. The school is not yet at capacity, so such a large extension to 630 pupils will clearly bring in more pupils from outside Long Lawford via vehicle.

The number of existing and consented pupils is correct.

5. 2.2.3 The surveyor states there is a single point of access on Holbrook Road. This is correct for vehicle access, however there is access to the school via a gate on the school boundary inside King George 5<sup>th</sup> Field. It is this entrance that those parents that park on pavements obstructing Townsend Lane use.
6. 2.2.6 The surveyor severely under estimates congestion on Holbrook Road by writing the words "occasionally congested during school pick up and drop off times, however this is short term in nature and clears quickly" Interestingly his photograph named Figure 2.4 shows a vehicle parked illegally being parked on a junction.

Our assessment is correct and based on our observations, discussions with local residents and key staff members at the school. We have significant experience of

reviewing schools nationally with consideration for their appropriateness for development and conclude that Long Lawford School does not create a severe detrimental impact on the local highway network.

7. 2.2.7 The surveyor states that there is a maximum of 20 parked on Holbrook Road! That statement needs challenging as at peak time you will see much more than 20. I would estimate 40 – 50 vehicles moving on and off the pavements and junctions at peak hours My photos will show sections of Holbrook Road at 3pm on a typical day

Our reporting is based on observation rather than estimation. The figure of 20 does not relate to the sum of vehicles parking, but rather the maximum accumulation at any one particular time.

8. 2.2.8 The surveyor states there is no disruption on surrounding roads. He clearly did not look on Townsend Lane at 3pm when the pavements both sides are fully obstructed and the number 86 bus to Rugby is trying to get through along with school traffic.

Our surveyor undertook a full assessment of the site during the PM peak period. Whilst personal interpretations of 'obstruction' and 'disruption' may vary, we take this to mean as to cause unacceptable delay and severe detriment to the highway network. Whilst parking was observed which led to a short term reduction in available carriageway widths, this was not found to be unacceptable.

9. 2.3.1 The Surveyor correctly states Holbrook Road is a unclassified road with no parking controls beyond the zig zag yellow lines. Despite this being a unclassified road, the report makes no mention of Holbrook Road being a bus route and serve access to many residential properties that are not easily accessible during peak times twice daily. There is no mention how a fire engine or ambulance would get through this unclassified road without parking restrictions during peak times of congestion.

As per response to item 8 above.

10. 2.3.2 The surveyor states the footways on Townsend Lane are 2.5 meters wide. This is incorrect information. I have measured the footpath outside my house on Townsend Lane to be 1.84m wide and 1.61m wide on the opposite side. This was measuring the tarmac pavement from kerb to verge. I did not measure the verge to boundary edge as that is NOT the pavement although may still class as the highway, you cannot walk or use wheelchairs on wet lumpy verge when there is a tarmac pavement to use. He also states minimal parking occurs on Townsend Lane!! Please see below photographs for the true reflection.

As with most carriageways, footway widths vary along their length. The measurements of 2.5m were taken on Townsend Lane immediately to the west of the Holbrook Road junction.

11. 4.1.2 School Operations Vehicular Operations. This paragraph is highly economic with the truth. The surveyor is stating that vehicles are parking legally and without causing obstruction to passing vehicles and pedestrians. Please see below photographs for Holbrook Road and Townsend Lane taken between 14:50 and 15:15 hrs on 13/07/2016. Please consider that mornings can often be even worse with parents dropping off children whilst rushing off to work. Please also consider that during the winter months, traffic around the school increases with those that usually walk; drive to school because of inclement weather. Inclement weather is also a factor in many winter accidents. When you add the weather factor with illegal parking, small children using the footpath and severe congestion, accident is highly likely.

As per comments made previously regarding our observations and interpretations of acceptable vs inconvenient. Whilst the travel to school modal split may change with the seasons, there is no evidence of safety concerns and no related reported incidents that require further attention.

12. 5.1.2 The surveyor states that that the proposal is to extend the school for 454 pupils to 634 and full time staff increase from 18 -24.

The updated reported (based on comments from WCC) states correctly that consented capacity will increase from 476 to 634.

13. 5.1.3 goes on to state that the school is currently operating under capacity at 454 with capacity set to be 476 pupils. We need to be clear on why are we expanding the school further? What are the plans? I acknowledge there are plans to build 112 new homes on Back Lane with another 100 being discussed currently. The Parish Council were told at the July Meeting by Borough Councillor's that no more building of a large scale will be considered in Long Lawford until at least 2031. Long Lawford has a low turnover of housing stock. According to source property website Zoopla, there have been 54 recorded house sales in Long Lawford during the last 12 months; that's an average of 4.5 sales per month! So where are the extra children going to come from? How will they travel to school?

Not one I'm best placed to answer. WCC Major Programmes / Education?

14. 6.1.4 The surveyor uses the attached school Travel Plan to suggest only 36.2% of children travel to school by car. He fails to mention that this information was gained from 166 parents responses to the survey, NOT all 454 parents as 288 parents did not respond. When the children were asked how they travelled to school 47% answered by car! It is also clear that any new house building is going to be built on the edge of the village away from the school. This indicates the

majority of those children will travel to school by car (especially in winter)  
Another point to raise is that due to such a low turnover of property transactions in Long Lawford (54 transactions in the last 12 months, source Zoopla) once the current children leave the school for secondary education, how does the school plan to fill 630 places from the village? It is certain that the plan is to take children from much further away outside Long Lawford. This means a huge increase of traffic from people outside of Long Lawford. There is no need for such a large school in Long Lawford at it's current size including the two developments to be commenced.

The concern relating to the response rate to pupil travel survey has been addressed in response to comments from WCC. In order to provide a more robust assessment the revised version of the TS considers that 40% of pupils will be driven to Long Lawford School.

It concludes that once car sharing is taken into account, this proposed development will result in an additional 39 vehicular trips. This is considered to be a robust assessment as it does not take into account the potential for reductions in the percentage of pupils being driven to school that would result from the application of the school Travel Plan.

Now please take a look at the information and sixteen photographs I have gathered. By using photographic evidence I can prove Curtins Surveyor has chosen not to look properly at the effects of the school peak traffic in Holbrook Rd, Elizabeth Way & Townsend Lane in a unbiased and satisfactory manner and proves his statement in his report section 4.1.2 as complete fabrication.

I can confirm our assessment is an accurate portrayal of observations undertaken on a typical, neutral weekday.

Whilst the Cllr refers to a number of issues, they each stem from his concerns relating to the build-up of on-street parking. Whilst there is no evidence that this is resulting in personal collisions and in respect of local and national planning guidance, there is no reason to refuse the application, it is worth noting that measures can be taken to reduce the potential for contributing to an increase in the highway impacts.

Local parking enforcement is the responsibility of the Local Highway Authority and not the Police as stated above. The school can liaise with the WCC Road Safety Team who in turn can request an increase in site visits from enforcement officers.

Furthermore, the school shall liaise with pupils and parents, highlighting where the most appropriate parking places are (as identified within the latest TS submission) and discourage inconsiderate parking where this may occur.

I appreciate the Cllr and his neighbours may have concerns relating to the proposed development due to their perceived experiences of disruption and objections to wider residential development proposals for Long Lawford, however the observations and conclusions made within our TS are accurate, valid and appropriate with respect to these specific development proposals.

Again, though there may be some neighbours who do not want to see an increase in the school's capacity, we find no evidence in highway terms that would prevent the proposed development from taking place within the current local and national planning guidance by which the application shall be assessed.

Picture 1 Townsend Lane outside number 199





Townsend Lane parking at 2:55 on 13/07/16. This photograph shows traffic starting to build up with vehicles parked on both sides of the highway with two wheels of their vehicles on the pavement. This photograph highlights a red vehicle travelling on the left carriageway trying to pass a black vehicle travelling on the right carriageway. Much difficulty was observed watching these vehicles pass one another and this was before parents and children try to use the footpath and indeed cross the road.

Picture 2 Townsend lane (near junction with Holbrook Road



This photograph shows vehicles parked on both sides of Townsend Lane at 2:57pm. This picture was taken near the Holbrook Road junction with Townsend Lane. The majority of the vehicles are parked on the side adjacent to King George the 5<sup>th</sup> Park. This is the most frequently walked side of the road that provides pedestrian access to the school via a gate accessed from the park. Despite this, the obstructions that already occur with the school at its current size means parents or general cannot safely use the pavement or get pushchairs past parked vehicles. The obstruction will at some time be the cause of a child being run over by a vehicle as when small primary school age children try to cross the road, they cannot see vehicles past the parked obstructions. Likewise vehicles using the heavily congested road cannot see the children between the parked vehicles waiting to cross the road. As picture 1 shows, with Townsend Lane becoming a single track road when vehicles park on both sides of the highway, two way traffic flow is still present, including the 3pm bus as seen in picture.

Picture 3



Another Townsend Lane photograph taken at 3pm on 13/07/2016 that shows clearly my points raised in picture 2 above. Townsend Lane becomes single track road for vehicles due to parking on both sides. The busiest side for foot traffic is the right side when looking at this picture which is alongside King Georges park and pedestrian gate school access. As you can see the vehicles are parked close together and obstructing the pavement which makes using the footpath difficult and dangerous or impossible with a wheelchair or pushchair. You should see my concern regarding children trying to cross the road between these parked vehicles. Another point to raise is that whilst parents and children try to squeeze along the bit of remaining footpath, **vehicles start to move on and off the path causing serious dangers!**



Picture 4



At 2:57pm traffic is building up on Townsend Lane and Holbrook Rd. This is a photograph of the Holbrook Rd junction showing the red Peugeot turning in.

Picture 5



Townsend Lane at 3pm. Both pavements are now closed for access with pushchairs/wheelchairs

Picture 6



Townsned Lane at 3pm. Now the number 86 bus is trying to get through!

Picture 7



Townsned Lane looking towards the direction of School Street.



Picture 8



At 15:05 on Townsend Lane on the 13/07/16 a lady with a small child in the pushchair is prevented from using the footpath!

Picture 9



Townsend Lane at 15:05 on 13/07/16 is prevented from using the footpath for a second time!



Picture 10



Townsend Lane on 13/07/16 at 14:57. A small child with parent is trying to use the heavily congested footpath of parked vehicles alongside King Georges Park. Ahead where the Telegraph pole is; is the entrance gate into the park. (You can see the tarmac go into the park) the pavement outside this gate has a dropped kerb so pushchairs and wheelchairs can gain access from across the road. Cars park over that piece of dropped kerb every day at peak times.

Cars also drive on the pavement behind pedestrians beeping their horns to move pedestrians out of the way. Small children like the one in the picture stand no chance of being seen by traffic moving on the pavement or between parked vehicles.

If the school is expanded further to 630 pupils from the current 454 pupils, a serious accident involving a pedestrian or child will happen in the future. Let's work together and try to prevent this by dealing with the current inconsiderate and dangerous parking rather than create more.

It's worth noting that parking is worse during the winter months when it is cold, dark, wet and freezing etc. More parents use their vehicles than I can evidence currently in these already shocking pictures. Please bear in mind additional vehicle usage during autumn and winter.

Picture 11



This is Holbrook road opposite the school at the junction of Elizabeth Way at 3pm. As you can see vehicles are parked both sides of the highway, on junction's, on the footpath and makes the footpath impassable along the school boundary side. Again Holbrook Road becomes a single track road with vehicles trying to travel in both directions. This road becomes highly congested and on the 15/06/17 a ambulance first responder was attempting to reach the school on a emergency call with its audible and visible lights and sirens activated. This road was described by witnesses as mayhem and blocked with parents unattended vehicles. This caused unnecessary time to be wasted in emergency treatment being able to be administered to the child patient.

I would like to add, if this emergency call was for a property anywhere along or off Holbrook Road to treat somebody in cardiac arrest for example; during the two peak times of the day (morning or afternoon) it is with no doubt that poor parking on Holbrook Rd could cause a unnecessary death if it holds up emergency treatment like it has been witnessed by residents on 15<sup>th</sup> June 16.

Picture 12



Vehicles parking on the pavement and junction of Elizabeth Way onto Holbrook Road

Picture 13





This was taken outside the school entrance by a parent at approx. 15:05 on 13/7/16. This shows the twice daily illegal parking on the junction of Elizabeth Way and Holbrook Road.



At 14:57 on 13 July 2016 this shows a vehicle parked at the bus stop and pavement on Holbrook Road near the school entrance.



At 14:57 on 13/07/17 this vehicle is parked four wheels on the pavement on Holbrook Road near the junction with Townsend Lane. Clearly no pedestrians can get by whilst this vehicle remains.





Another Vehicle parked on the footpath with all four wheels at 14:57 hrs on 13/07/16 on Holbrook Road with Junction with Townsend Lane. This was parked behind the vehicle on Pic 15

To finish please see the below summary of complaints gained from talking to other parents who worry about the safety around the school due to the inconsiderate and illegal parking I have shown you above in the 16 photos.

1. Nose to nose parking restricting the view to be able to cross the road safely, especially children on their own and people with several children to manage.
2. Parking on pavements and cars pulling away with children walking alongside
3. Parking on pavements restricting access to pedestrians unable to get past, especially with pushchairs and wheelchairs, double pushchairs and pushchairs with toddlers walking alongside.

4. Double parking resulting in being unable to cross over and use the other pavement. This also causes issues for vehicles being unable to get past, including buses.
5. Parking on Junctions and corners on Elizabeth Way, serious safety issue.
6. Parking blocking drives. Several Complaints made to school by local residents.
7. Police presence has not made any difference, neither has repeated requests by the school to ask parents park considerately.
8. The above issues make it extra difficult for wheelchair users in the community

Thank you for taking the time to read my report regarding this serious matter

Cllr Jonathan Steed