

We are writing in support of the compilation of a local development plan for Colwall. This is essential if we are to have the most appropriate development within the village. However we fully concur with the detailed assessment of the current proposals, submitted by XXXX. XXXX has demonstrated that with regard to area 19,(land around Cowl Barn Lane), the landscape assessment commissioned by the working group is inaccurate with untrue statements. It is superficial, subjective and draws false conclusions not based on fact. In short, it is not an authoritative professional document which can be relied on. This is unfortunate, as we believe the working group have relied almost entirely on this document in reaching their recommendations. It is important for a successful village plan process that the shortcomings of the landscape assessment are recognised and dealt with at this stage otherwise later challenges (which are inevitable) will surely delay the process.

The above comments are in relation to the landscape assessment relevant to land around Cowl Barn Lane, we have not studied other areas with the detail necessary to have a definite view upon its general validity but given XXXX's work it would be prudent for the working group to review the validity of the whole document.

The access problems of Cowl Barn Lane have been dealt at length elsewhere but we would like to emphasise the amenity value of the whole area. It is a green lung from the village centre leading directly to the Malvern Hills and as such is used by many local people and visitors. Any development will destroy this amenity and lead to the northern perimeter of the settlement becoming over developed. The developments along Brockhill Road only make it more important to preserve this aspect of a major access route to the Malvern Hills within the AONB, connecting along the ancient trackway with the network of footpaths beyond the built up area. It is worth mentioning that all informed opinion considers the traditional orchard on Cowl Barn Lane fully capable of restoration and preservation.

Cowl Barn Lane and its environs are within the Colwall Stone/Upper Colwall conservation area which was designated to conserve historic features such as the trackway, its boundary and surrounding woodland and orchard. The designation of the conservation area confirms the landscape importance and sensitivity to damage of this northern portion of the village. It is interesting that the owner of Cowl Barn Farm and adjoining land in the 1980's (Ken Ricketts) recognised the environmental sensitivity of the area so that on disposing of the land he placed covenants on it to prevent future development (or so he took the trouble to specifically inform local residents).

We also believe that the working group has not adequately considered the development possibilities south and west of the village (some examples are given by XXXX), where limited development, including some infill, could take place with far less environmental damage than in the Cowl Barn Lane area and of course with much easier and safer access.

We should like to see these concerns addressed before the next public presentation of proposals.