

Application No: 17/5838M

Location: LAND EAST OF, ALDERLEY ROAD, WILMSLOW

Proposal: Outline permission for residential development, with all matters reserved except for means of access off Alderley Road, highway improvements to Alderley Road, together with associated infrastructure and open space.

Applicant: Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Ltd

Expiry Date: 30-Mar-2018

SUMMARY

The site is allocated within the Local Plan for residential use and consists of the part of the site identified as LPS 54. This application is for a part of the undeveloped site to the east of Alderley Road. The development accords with the Local Plan policy relating to its allocation by providing housing.

The applicant is providing financial contributions required in order to make the development acceptable and is providing the full amount of affordable housing on site which is essential in order to make developments sustainable in the future. It is considered that the proposals are environmental, socially and economically sustainable and accord with the development plan and the framework. The site is sustainably located within the town and the proposals represent an efficient use of the land.

As the application is in outline certain matters are left unresolved at this stage and will be fully addressed as part of any future reserved matters application.

Cheshire East is currently able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing however this proposal will make a valuable contribution in maintaining this position.

It has been demonstrated the development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network, the trees on and around the site or to local ecology. Although some matters must be dealt with by way of conditions at this stage to ensure adequate mitigation is put in place.

It is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and accords with the development plan policies outlined in the report and national planning policy and guidance. Therefore for the reasons mentioned above the application is recommended for approval.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION
Approve subject to Section 106 Agreement

PROPOSAL

The application is for outline permission for residential development, with all matters reserved except for means of access off Alderley Road, highway improvements to Alderley Road, together with associated infrastructure and open space.

Access is proposed to be taken from Alderley Road to the north of the property known as The Coach House. Layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for future approval.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site consists mainly of a piece of land that is located to the north and east of the existing Royal London Campus that is located between Alderley Road and the West Coast Main Line. Part of the application site adjoins Alderley Road between the properties on Whitehall Close and The Coach House. Some trees are located in this part of the site. The site then extends eastwards towards the railway on land in use for agriculture. Open land is located to the south of the site that has permission for a new office development. Mature trees are located at various locations throughout the site.

RELEVANT HISTORY

The site has been subject to applications in the past; however they are not relevant to the consideration of this application.

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy

The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy:

- MP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- PG1 Overall Development Strategy
- PG2 Settlement Hierarchy
- PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development
- SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
- SD2 Sustainable Development Principles
- SE1 Design
- SE2 Efficient use of land
- SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- SE 4 The Landscape
- SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
- SE 6 Green Infrastructure

SE 7 The Historic Environment
SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management
CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport
CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments
SC 1 Leisure and Recreation
SC 2 Outdoor Sports Facilities
SC 3 Health and Well Being
SC 4 Residential Mix
SC 5 Affordable Homes
IN 1 Infrastructure
IN 2 Developer Contributions

Directly relevant to this site is the following allocation that covers the entire application site and beyond:

- Site LPS 54 Royal London including land west of Alderley Road, Wilmslow.

It should be noted that the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy was formally adopted on 27th July 2017. There are however policies within the legacy local plans that still apply and have not yet been replaced. Macclesfield Local Plan policies are set out below.

NE3 – Protection of Local Landscapes
NE11 – Protection and enhancement of nature conservation interests
NE17 – Nature Conservation in Major Developments
BE2 – Preservation of Historic Fabric
RT5 – Open Space Standards
DC3 – Amenity
DC6 – Circulation and Access
DC8 – Landscaping
DC9 – Tree Protection
DC15 – Provision of Facilities
DC17 – Water Resources
DC35 – Materials and Finishes
DC36 – Road Layouts and Circulation
DC37 – Landscaping
DC38 – Space Light and Privacy
DC40 – Children’s Play Provision and Amenity Space
DC41 – Infill Housing Development

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Health – No objection. Conditions have been requested relating to noise, air quality electric vehicle charging points and contamination. These will be included on the decision notice.

United Utilities – No objection. Conditions have been requested in respect of surface water drainage from the site and that the site shall be drained on separate systems.

Highways – No objection. The comments made by the highway engineer and all highway matters are addressed in full later in this report.

Environment Agency – No objection.

Housing Strategy – No objection. The development triggers an affordable housing requirement and this matter is addressed in detail later in this report.

Flood Risk – No objection. A condition is requested relating to submission of a scheme to manage surface water.

Education – No objection. This is based upon the applicant committing to pay a financial contribution for the provision of additional school places generated by the development. This is addressed in detail later in this report.

ANSA (Open Space) – No objection. This is subject to a financial contribution being agreed in respect of recreation open space, indoor recreation provision and the detailed layout going forward providing a LEAP and the required amount of open space within the site based on the number of units proposed. This matter is addressed later in this report.

Countryside Rights of Way – No objection. Conditions are requested in respect of submission of a Travel Plan and a scheme for signage for pedestrians and cyclists within the site. Concerns were raised over a footpath link to the north of the site but this will be dealt with through a condition on the decision notice.

Natural England – No objection.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Wilmslow Town Council – Wilmslow Town Council recommend refusal on the grounds of the traffic highways issues that would be created by access to the site at the proposed location and that the existing entrance to the Royal London development would be better used during both the construction phase and subsequently. Wilmslow Town Council has no confidence that robust scrutiny has taken place with regard to the Highway Assessment and would call for independent assessment of this.

The Town Council also requests that the conditions listed in the responses by regulatory services and healthcare providers are applied. The Town Council welcomes the proposed layout of the Whitehall Brook roundabout but felt that this does not remove its objections, only exacerbated by the granting of planning permission for a car wash in that area of Alderley Road. Finally, should approval be granted, the Town Council would request that a condition be placed on any planning permission to ensure that all contractor parking is accommodated within the site itself.

Alderley Edge Parish Council - The Parish council recommends refusal as it is inappropriate development in the greenbelt and despite its local in Wilmslow will put strain on Alderley Edge infrastructure.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Representations were received from 72 properties over the course of two periods of consultation. The points of objection relate to the following;

- Impact of the proposal on highway safety and an increase in traffic in an already congested area.
- Too many access points along Alderley Road
- The site was meant to be protected from development.
- Loss of an open field
- The site is in the Green Belt
- Local schools are already over-subscribed.
- Impact on protected species that use the site.
- Lack of capacity in local doctors and dental practices.
- The affordable housing is not really affordable
- No need for additional housing
- The proposal should comply with the Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan.
- Loss of trees and hedgerows
- Increased risk of flooding
- The buildings on site will be too large.
- Impact on local air quality.
- Royal London are leaving the site so the houses are not needed.
- Impact on residential amenity / overlooking
- Adverse impact on heritage assets.
- Disturbance caused during the construction process.

The following points in support of the proposals were also made;

- Welcome the provision of affordable housing within the development.
- Increase in footpath and cycle routes is welcomes
- Local housing market is too constrained.

APPRAISAL

Key Issues

- Principle of development
- Sustainability
- Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
- Education
- Open Space and Recreation
- Health Provision
- Residential Amenity
- Impact on Listed Buildings.
- Impact on Local Highway Network / Access
- Design and Layout
- Ecology
- Trees

- Flood Risk
- Economic Sustainability
- Section 106 agreement
- CIL
- Representations
- Conclusions
- Recommendation

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

On 27th July the Council adopted the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy. Accordingly the new Local Plan now forms part of the statutory development plan. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that *“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise.”* This is the test that legislation prescribes should be employed on planning decision making.

The ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ at paragraph 14 of the NPPF means *“approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay”*.

As a consequence where development accords with the adopted Local Plan Strategy the starting point should normally be that it should be approved – and approved promptly.

The Inspector’s Report on the Local Plan was published on 20 June 2017 and signalled the Inspector’s agreement to the plans and policies of the Local Plan Strategy. The Inspector has now confirmed that on adoption, the Council will be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land. In his Report he concludes:

“I am satisfied that CEC has undertaken a robust, comprehensive and proportionate assessment of the delivery of its housing land supply, which confirms a future 5-year supply of around 5.3 years”

The Inspector’s conclusion that the Council had a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land was based on the housing land supply position as at 31 March 2016.

Following the adoption of the Local Plan Strategy, the Council released its annual Housing Monitoring Update, in August 2017. It sets out the housing land supply as at 31 March 2017 and identified a deliverable housing land supply of 5.45 years.

On 8 November 2017, an appeal against the decision of the Council to refuse outline planning permission for up to 400 homes at White Moss Quarry, Alsager (WMQ) was dismissed due to the scheme’s conflict with the Local Plan settlement hierarchy and its spatial distribution of development.

However, in his decision letter, the WMQ Inspector did not come to a clear conclusion whether Cheshire East had a five year supply of deliverable housing land. His view was that it was either slightly above or slightly below the required 5 years (4.96 to 5.07 years). In this context, the Inspector engaged the ‘tilted balance’ set out in the 4th Bullet point of paragraph

14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This introduces a presumption that planning permission is granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

On 4 January 2018, an appeal against the non-determination of an outline planning permission for up to 100 homes at Park Road, Willaston was dismissed due to conflict with Local Plan policies that sought to protect designated Green Gap, open countryside and rural character. The Inspector also took the view that the housing land supply was either marginally above or below the required 5 years (4.93 to 5.01 years). On this basis, he adopted a 'precautionary approach' and assumed a worst case position in similarly engaging the 'tilted balance' under paragraph 14 of the Framework.

The Council is continuing to update its evidence regarding housing land supply to ensure that decisions are taken in the light of the most robust evidence available and taking account of recent case law.

For the purpose of determining current planning applications it is therefore the Council's position that there is a five year supply of deliverable housing land.

The application site consists of part of the LPS 54 allocation (land to the east of Alderley Road) that was a site released from the Green Belt in order to assist the Council in achieving a five year supply of housing. Therefore the principle of residential development is acceptable in this location and subject to all other matters being satisfied the application should be determined without delay.

In addition to around 175 dwellings across the whole allocation and around 120 dwellings on this part of the site the development is expected to deliver the following in respect of this parcel of the site;

- 1. The retention of the existing Royal London Campus unless buildings become surplus to the requirements of existing occupiers, in which case the council will consider their suitability for reuse or redevelopment for a range of alternative uses;*
- 2. The delivery of around 175 dwellings (around 80 on land to the east of the existing campus, around 20 to the north of the existing campus and around 75 on land west of Alderley Road);*
- 3. The provision of 5 ha of employment land for up to around 24,000 square metres of B1 employment space and a hotel;*
- 4. Incorporation of green infrastructure and the provision of public open space at the southern end of the land west of Alderley Road;*
- 5. Retention and extension of the existing Wilmslow High School playing fields for educational use in the area marked as protected open space on the map. This may include additional buildings for education use provided they do not harm the integrity of the open space overall;*
- 6. Provision of at least 1 ha of land set aside for use as school playing fields within the land to the east of the existing campus, in addition to the areas marked as protected open space on the map, and an appropriate level of amenity open space and children's play space; and*
- 7. Pedestrian and cycle links and associated infrastructure.*

The Royal London Development Framework was endorsed by Cabinet on 10 October 2017. This framework is a guide in determining planning applications on the whole of the Royal

London site. The application site is identified in the framework as being developed for residential use and therefore the application is in compliance with this framework.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the golden thread running through the National Planning Policy Framework, and proposals for sustainable development should be approved without delay. There are three strands to sustainability, social, economic and environmental.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Cheshire East Local Plan Policy SC5 states in Settlements with a population of 3,000 or more the percentage for affordable housing for all allocated sites will be a minimum of 30%, in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment carried out in 2013. This percentage relates to the provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. A ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing is required.

The SHMA 2013 shows the majority of the demand in the Sub Area of Handforth and Wilmslow Per Year until 2018, is for 49x 3 and 5x 4 bedroom General Needs dwellings. The SHMA also shows a need for 13x 1 bedroom and 3 x 2 bedroom dwellings for Older Persons. This can be via bungalows, lifetime homes, cottage style flats and flats.

The current number of those on the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list with Wilmslow as their first choice is 123. This can be broken down to 53x 1 bedroom, 44x 2 bedroom, 19x 3 bedroom and 7x 4 bedroom dwellings, therefore a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings for General Needs and 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings for Older Persons on this site would be acceptable.

This is a proposed development of around 120 dwellings therefore in order to meet the Council's Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 36 dwellings to be provided as affordable dwellings. 23 units should be provided as Affordable rent and 13 units as Intermediate tenure. The applicant has agreed to make this provision.

The Affordable Housing IPS requires that the affordable units should be tenure blind and pepper potted within the development, the external design, comprising elevation, detail and materials should be compatible with the open market homes on the development thus achieving full visual integration. This issue will be addressed through the reserved matters application.

The affordable housing should be provided no later than occupation of 50% of the open market dwellings and this will be addressed within the s106 agreement. The s106 agreement also ensures the following;

- requires the affordable units to transfer any rented affordable units to a Registered Provider

- provide details of when the affordable housing is required
- includes provisions that require the affordable homes to be let or sold to people who are in housing need and have a local connection. The local connection criteria used in the agreement should match the Councils allocations policy.
- includes the requirement for an affordable housing scheme to be submitted prior to commencement of the development that includes full details of the affordable housing on site.

Given the above the proposal complies with the requirements of Local Plan Policy SC5.

EDUCATION PROVISION

The Local Plan is expected to deliver 36,000 houses in Cheshire East; which is expected to create an additional 6,840 primary aged children and 5,400 secondary aged children. 422 children within this forecast are expected to have a special educational need. This development of around 120 dwellings is expected to generate the following need:

22 primary children (60×0.19) – 1 SEN
 18 secondary children (60×0.15)
 1 SEN children ($60 \times 0.51 \times 0.023\%$)

The development is expected to impact on both secondary school and SEN places in the locality. Contributions which have been negotiated on other developments are factored into the forecasts both in terms of the increased pupil numbers and the increased capacity at schools in the area as a result of agreed financial contributions. The analysis undertaken has identified that a shortfall of secondary school and SEN school places still remains.

Special Education provision within Cheshire East Council currently has a shortage of places available with at present over 47% of pupils educated outside of the Borough. This is an existing concern, however the 1 child expected from this development will exacerbate the shortfall. The 1 SEN child who is thought to be of mainstream education age have been removed from the calculations above to avoid double counting. The Service does not claim for Early Years Foundation Status (EYFS) or Sixth Form at present therefore those children cannot be removed from the calculation above.

To alleviate forecast pressures, the following contributions would be required:

$18 \times £17,959 \times 0.91 = £294,168.00$ (secondary)
 $1 \times £50,000 \times 0.91 = £45,500.00$ (SEN)
 Total education contribution: £339,668.00.

The contribution has been agreed by the applicant and is subject to change when the final form of development is known and will be delivered through the s106 agreement.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Until the housing schedule is finalised it is not possible to accurately calculate the Public Open Space (POS) requirements. However, in line with the Policy SE6 of the CEC Local

Plan, there is a public open space requirement of 40m² per family dwelling. On a development of this size it would expect to see all of this space on site.

Play must be provided as part of this development, either within the residential area or within the proposed area of POS. Any play area should not be located directly adjacent to Alderley road, beneath retained mature trees or by the West Coast Main Line. Further consideration on how the POS can be laid out and what features it can comfortably contain is required and this will be included as a condition that requires these details to be submitted as part of any subsequent reserved matters application.

Amenity greenspace should be functional and flexible space, adaptable over time and should reflect local heritage/culture/wildlife to create distinctive, high quality spaces that compliment and strengthen the identity of the overall development and wider community as well and encouraging community cohesion. They should be large enough to accommodate informal recreation activities without disturbing residents of neighbouring properties. Therefore narrow buffers around the perimeter will not be considered amenity green space.

The LPS policy requires at least 1 hectare of land to be set aside for playing fields for Wilmslow High School. This has been shown on the indicative layout submitted with the application and is considered to be in the most appropriate location.

There is a requirement to provide Recreation and Outdoor Sport (ROS) in line with Policy SC2 of the Local Plan and the playing Pitch Strategy. In this instance the developer has opted to make a contribution rather than on-site provision. This contribution will equate to £1,000 per dwelling (excluding the affordable properties) with the final contribution determined upon the final number of properties on site.

Depending on the nature of the discussion in respect of the s106 on the delivery of the playing field it may be appropriate to waive the contribution for ROS if the Council is gifted the land for the playing field. The s106 agreement will be drafted to ensure delivery of the playing field as part of the development or the financial contribution will have to be made. This approach is considered appropriate at this stage as discussions need to take place over the transfer of the land and with Wilmslow High School over its future management.

Policies SC1 and SC2 of the Local Plan Strategy provide a clear development plan policy basis to require developments to provide or contribute towards both outdoor and indoor recreation

The Indoor Built Facility Strategy has identified that any existing shortfalls for Wilmslow should look to focus on improvement of provision at Wilmslow Leisure Centre. Whilst new developments should not be required to address an existing shortfall of provision, they should ensure that this situation is not worsened by ensuring that it fully addresses its own impact in terms of the additional demand for indoor leisure provision that it directly gives rise to. Furthermore, whilst the strategy acknowledges that the increased demand is not sufficient to require substantial indoor facility investment through capital build there is currently a need to improve the quality and number of health and fitness stations at Wilmslow Leisure Centre to accommodate localised demand for indoor physical activity.

The requirement is calculated as follows;

- 120 houses at 1.61 people per residence = a population increase of 193
- The annual Sport England Active People Survey Results for 2016 showed 42.7% participation rate for Cheshire East. = 41 additional “active population” due to the new development in Wilmslow.
- Based on an industry average of 25 users per piece of health & fitness equipment this equates to an additional 3 stations. Therefore a requirement exists for a contribution of £16,670.

The applicant has accepted the need for this contribution although the level of contribution may change based on the number of houses eventually approved on site. The contribution will be delivered through the s106 agreement.

ACCESS TO HEALTH FACILITIES

Eastern Cheshire has the fastest growing over 65 and over 85 populations in the North West with more than one in five people being over 65 which will become nearer to one in four people by 2021. The number of very elderly people is growing even more rapidly, with a higher estimated average annual growth rate when compared to England (2.7% vs. 2.3%). The overall population is forecast to grow by 28,000 (14%) by 2035. Although deprivation levels in Eastern Cheshire are lower than the national average people living in these more deprived local areas experience worse health outcomes than those living in areas identified locally as least deprived.

Both Kenmore Medical Centre and Wilmslow Health Centre are open to further development of their sites for the benefit of the local patient population, and there is an expectation that further development will be needed in order to meet the projected increase in local population over the next 5-10 years. Both GP practices are therefore actively engaged with the CCG in investigating potential primary care estates development opportunities. Both GP practices have identified estates development work which, if funding can be sourced, would allow for further expansion and greater utilisation of the buildings. The s106 contribution would go towards the construction of a raised parking structure in order to meet the increased demand for car parking spaces in the Wilmslow Health Centre car park and the development of a large first floor void space into usable clinical space at the Wilmslow Health Centre.

It is suggested that the Section 106 funding for the planning application under consideration is based on a calculation consisting of occupancy x number of units in the development x £360. This is based on guidance provided to other CCG areas by NHS Property Services.

Size of Unit	Occupancy Assumptions Based on Size of Unit	Health Need/Sum Requested per unit
1 bed unit	1.4 persons	£504 per 1 bed unit
2 bed unit	2.0 persons	£720 per 2 bed unit
3 bed unit	2.8 persons	£1008 per 3 bed unit
4 bed unit	3.5 persons	£1260 per 4 bed unit
5 bed unit	4.8 persons	£1728 per 5 bed unit

The applicant has agreed to a financial contribution in respect of this issue and this will be based on the number and size of dwellings that come forward as part of the reserved matters application.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

In order for the proposals to be acceptable, it is important that they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of existing residents. Local Plan policies DC3, DC38 and H13 seek to ensure that new development does not significantly injure the amenities of adjoining or nearby residential property.

Many of the issues relating to overlooking, impact on privacy, and overshadowing will be addressed as part of any reserved matters application. Highway matters are addressed separately in this report.

Environmental Health has commented on the application and has raised no objections with regard to contaminated land, air quality or noise and vibration subject to conditions. A key aspect of this is the impact the access road into the site will have on the amenity of residents to the north. As only the details of the access into the site are for approval at the moment a condition will be included on the decision notice requiring submission of a noise impact assessment. This will identify any appropriate mitigation that may be required.

It is inevitable that some disturbance will occur as part of the construction process. However this will be for a temporary period only and separate legislation is in place to ensure this does not occur.

IMPACT ON LISTED BUILDINGS

Two listed buildings are located just outside of the application site, these are Fulshaw Hall and its neighbouring building. Both are Grade II listed with the hall currently in use as offices and the other building in use as a staff restaurant. The allocation within the Cheshire East Local Plan 54, at point (h) says “ respect for the setting of the listed buildings on Fulshaw Hall”.

A Heritage Assessment has been submitted with the application and whilst this is lacking in the assessment on the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets these are issues that can be considered in further detail as part of a future reserved matters application. Therefore a condition will be included on the decision notice requiring a full heritage assessment to be carried out and submitted with any reserved matters application.

Social Sustainability Conclusion

The proposals for the residential development will make an affordable housing contribution through the provision of 36 units of the correct tenure. The scheme does make a valuable contribution towards affordable housing which will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

The proposed development will make a full education contribution, health contribution and will make a contribution towards open space, indoor recreation and outdoor sport. The affordable housing provision will meet the requirements

Overall the provision of a reasonable mix of housing for the community as part of a large strategic allocation along with on site affordable housing and education and open space and outdoor recreation contributions which can be provided by the development are considered to be socially sustainable.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

IMPACT ON HIGHWAY NETWORK/ACCESS

This application has been submitted in conjunction with another residential scheme on land to the west of Alderley Road, the assessment submitted includes both sites and also the committed office development on the Royal London campus. The scope of impact of the development was agreed with the applicant and considers that principal junctions on Alderley Road that would likely be affected by the development traffic.

A development framework has been prepared for the Royal London Campus that covers the whole of the site, this includes a indicative masterplan of site layout. In addition, to this application there is a current application submitted for up to 60 dwellings on land to the west of Alderley Road. In addition to the Transport Assessment the applicant has submitted a further Transport Addendum on transport matters.

As part of the new office scheme approval, a mitigation scheme was agreed for Alderley Road that increased the number of approach lanes southbound to the Melrose Way roundabout thereby improving capacity on the arm that experienced the longest delay. As there is uncertainty that this scheme will in fact come forward, this application has assessed the impact without this mitigation in place and considered the existing road network.

The capacity assessments undertaken at the Royal London site accesses show that the development has a very small impact on the junctions between 2% and 3% and these would work within capacity. The Bedells Lane roundabout with traffic growth added and the combined development traffic is indicating that its capacity is being reached in 2022 especially in the AM peak on Alderley Road (N) approach. However, the queue lengths are not extensive at the junction and the introduction of the combined residential developments only have a minor impacts on capacity and are not considered significant. The A34 Melrose Way roundabout does suffer from congestion, especially during the evening peak where long queues form. The base capacity assessment undertaken confirms that the junction would operate over capacity in 2022 with long queues on the Alderley Road north arm of the junction. The base plus combined development assessment does increase queue lengths in 2022 but the development only has a limited impact on the length of queues and is not of a sufficient impact that could be considered severe and warrant a refusal reason. The other arms of the Melrose Way roundabout are largely unaffected by the development traffic and operate at capacity in 2022.

Despite the applicant's view the development will not have a significant traffic impact they have submitted an improvement to the A34 Melrose Way roundabout, this scheme is a similar but smaller version of the improvement scheme approved in the office scheme. The improvement provides an additional lane on the Alderley Road approach to the roundabout by increasing road width, this scheme can be extended further back in the future. The improvement scheme only forms part of this application and not for the 60 unit scheme on the land west of Alderley Road.

In summary, the traffic impact of the combined developments is confined to the A34 Melrose Way roundabout and in particular the Alderley Road (N) approach. In mitigation of the impact on this approach there is an improvement scheme submitted.

Access

There is a single point of access to this site, a ghost island priority junction arrangement, the access width is 6.75m wide with 12m radii and the 1.5m wide advisory cycle lanes on both sides have been retained with the right turn lane. The submitted design is in accordance with DMRB (Design Manual for Road and Bridges) and has been subject to safety audit, the proposed access is considered acceptable. This access arrangement has also to be considered with the access to the residential site to the west of Alderley Road in place. The applicant has submitted an access drawing that indicates the two ghost right turn lane operating together, this arrangement has also been subject to a safety audit and does operate acceptably in combination.

Highways Conclusion

The principal highway consideration arising from this application is the impact the site will have on existing congestion levels on Alderley Road. The capacity assessments undertaken show that Alderley Road approach to the Melrose Way roundabout has significant queues in the evening peak hour. Despite the length of existing queues the additional traffic generated by this development does not materially enlarge the existing queues and it is not considered that this results in a severe impact on the road network.

Although the application has a limited impact, the applicant has submitted a mitigation scheme that improves the capacity of the A34 Melrose Way roundabout that both mitigates the impact of this application and reduces the existing delay at the junction. The access proposals to the site are acceptable, the existing on carriageway cycle provision is unaffected by the access proposals.

In summary, there are no objections to the development, the access details will be subject to a S278 Agreement to be implemented by the applicant as well as being subject to a condition on the decision notice requiring these works be carried out before any houses approved as part of this application are first occupied.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The importance of securing high quality design is specified within the Framework. Paragraph 61 states that:

“Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations.

Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”

This approach is fully consistent with CELPS Policy SE1 and the recently adopted Cheshire East Design Guide.

The application is in outline and details of layout, scale and appearance will be dealt with as part of any reserved matters application.

The illustrative site plan shows a layout that is unacceptable and contrary to the adopted Design Guide. It shows no incorporation of green infrastructure and proposes the use of standard house types. The site is located along a main route into Wilmslow so it would be expected that any design solution would be of the highest quality.

The Design Guide advocates submission and agreement of a design code and as a result a condition will be included on any approval. This will be required to be submitted in advance of any reserved matters application. A condition is also required in relation to materials.

Given the stage the proposals are at the proposals are acceptable subject to the above conditions.

ECOLOGY

The application is accompanied by a comprehensive ecological assessment within the Environmental Statement that addresses the following issues;

Northern ditch and water voles

Water vole, a protected species, was historically recorded at the ditch on the northern boundary of the site. Whilst no evidence of this species was recorded during the surveys undertaken to inform this application only a single survey visit was completed. So whilst the results tend to suggest that this species is absent insufficient survey has been undertaken to completely discount the presence of this species. That said provided the northern ditch is retained and safeguarded within an 8m undeveloped buffer zone the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant impact upon this species.

A condition will be attached requiring the provision and safeguarding of an 8m undeveloped buffer adjacent to this ditch. A further detailed survey is also required at the reserved matters stage if any works affecting the ditch are proposed as part of the detailed design.

Common Toad

This priority species was recorded during the submitted reptile surveys and was also recorded within one of the ditches on site during the great crested newt survey. The proposed development will result in the loss of an area of terrestrial habitat and the ditch where it was recorded. In order to provide compensation for this loss and provide an enhancement for biodiversity in general a wildlife pond should be provided within the open space scheme. This pond should be separate to and additional to any SUDS scheme for the site. This matter will be dealt with by means of an ecological enhancement condition as described below.

Reptiles and Great Crested Newts

No evidence of these protected species was recorded during the surveys undertaken in support of this application and reptiles and great crested newts are not reasonable likely to be present or affected by the proposed works.

Badgers

A number of minor badger setts have been recorded on site. Based upon the current level of badger activity on site it is likely that some of these setts could be retained as part of the development proposals, but three setts may be directly affected by the proposed development. To avoid badgers being harmed during the works the submitted report advises that these setts should be closed under the terms of a Natural England license. This approach is acceptable.

The precise impact of the scheme on badgers would depend upon the detailed design proposed at the reserved matters stage and the level of badger activity occurring on the site at that time. The proposed development will however result in the loss of an area of badger foraging habitat. This impact is likely to be relatively minor, but would lead to a more significant cumulative impact on badgers when the adjacent proposed developments are also considered. The impacts of this loss would be partially mitigated through the retention of part of the site as public open space and the incorporation of fruit trees into the landscaping scheme for the site.

In the event that planning permission is granted a condition will be attached to the decision notice which requires an updated badger survey to be submitted in support of any future reserved matters application.

Bats

A number of trees were identified as having low bat roost potential. The ES states that no trees with bat roost potential would be removed as part of the proposed development. However, based on the illustrative layout plan it appears that a number of these trees would be affected by the proposed access road through the site.

A low/Moderate level of bat activity was recorded on this site. The diversity of bat species and the level of activity recorded is as would be expected for a site of this type. The submitted ES anticipates a minor adverse impact on bats which are considered to be of Local value in the absence of mitigation. In order to mitigate the potential impacts of the proposed development upon roosting bats it is important that any detailed design proposed at the reserved matters stage seeks to retain boundary features and provide additional native planting in the open space area. Wildlife sensitive lighting would also be required to minimise impacts on bats.

Hedgerows

Hedgerows are a priority habitat and hence a material consideration. The proposed development is likely to result in the loss of Hedgerow 3 which runs north to south through the site. Whilst hedgerow planting is shown on the key for the submitted illustrative landscape master plan, it is not clear where this would be provided on site. A condition will be included on the decision notice to ensure adequate mitigation is provided within any reserved matters application.

Polecat hedgehog and brown hare

These three priority species have been recorded in the broad locality of the application site and hedgehog and polecat may appear on the application site on at least a transitory basis. The proposed development will result in the loss of an area of habitat potentially utilised by these species.

In order to compensate for this loss the detailed design should include features for these two species. This matter is dealt with by means of an ecological enhancement condition.

Barn Owl

There are records of barn owls in this broad locality. A number of trees were identified during the bat survey as having cracks that lead to an internal cavity. The submitted addendum ES states that none of the trees examined have potential to support barn owls. However, only trees that would be lost as a result of the proposed development have been surveyed. The development of this site may result in the significant disturbance of barn owls even if the trees supporting a roost were retained.

Further information is awaited in respect of this matter and will be addressed either in the form of an update report or verbally at the committee meeting.

Ponds

The proposed development is likely to result in the loss of a pond. The loss of this pond should be compensated for through the creation of a replacement wildlife pond. This pond is also required to address the loss of habitat for common toad as discussed above. This matter will be dealt with by means of an ecological enhancement condition.

Plantation woodland

There is a network of tree planting throughout the site including areas of mix and broadleaved plantation woodland. The submitted parameters plan now shows the retention of the plantation woodland. A condition will be attached to the decision notice which requires the retention of the existing woodland on site.

Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement

This planning application provides an opportunity to incorporate features to increase the biodiversity value of the final development. It is recommended a condition should be attached to the decision notice which requires the submission of an ecological enhancement strategy.

Ecology Conclusion

The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on any protected species, subject to the inclusion of the following conditions;

- Updated badger survey to be submitted in support of any future reserved matters application.
- Wildlife friendly lighting
- Stand off requirement from the ditch on the northern boundary
- Retention of woodland
- Submission of ecological enhancement strategy

IMPACT ON TREES/HEDGEROWS

The Royal London site is identified as a Strategic site within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (LPS54). Site specific principles of development include:-

- High quality design and appropriate landscaping/green infrastructure to be provided to preserve the character of the area and acceptable relationship between residential and employment uses.
- Provision of open space within the scheme.
- Retention and enhancement of feature within the site that are of amenity value, where feasible, specifically the mature wooded area to the west of the site and the tree and hedge lines frontages to Alderley Road

Selected individual trees, groups and areas of trees are protected by the Macclesfield Borough Council (Wilmslow - Harefield/Fulshaw Hall) Tree Preservation Order 1975 and is a material consideration.

An Environmental Statement Addendum has been submitted which assesses the updated scheme and includes an Arboricultural Impact Assessment. There are a number of trees scheduled within the TPO located within and immediately adjacent to the site which are relevant to this application.

The scheme includes a highway proposal to the north of the site to accommodate the widening of the highway and improvement works to the Alderley Road (Whitehall Bridge) roundabout. This includes widening of the road to provide 3 lanes, realignment of the existing footway/cycleway and extending the existing culvert to include a new headwall and trash screen. The Improvements to the junction of Alderley Road approach to the roundabout formed part of the highways improvement scheme approved under a previous planning application (16/2314M).

The proposed access off Alderley Road will require the removal of 3 False Acacia, 1 Sycamore and a group of Cypress protected within Group G3 of the TPO. The trees have been categorised as Moderate and Low Category in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). It is considered that given the site constraints, including avoiding the northern residential boundary, the Coach House to the south and retaining more significant adjacent trees, including a High category protected Beech (T126) and protected Lime (T150), the position of the proposed access was deemed the least harmful. The impact of this tree loss is considered to be slightly adverse, localised, and not have a significant wider impact on the landscape/townscape.

A road link to the existing Fulshaw Hall car park from the internal access road is proposed and will require the removal of a group of 15 protected trees, (TPOG4/G96). The majority of these trees are Moderate (B) category specimens, although there have been previous removals from the protected group in the past and others are mutually suppressed. The group is internal to the site and is not significantly visible to wider public views. A larger Beech tree located to the east of the group was identified as a valuable tree within the group and is to be retained.

The internal route of the access is to be determined and it will be necessary to remove a number of unprotected moderate and low category groups of trees. These include a low value Holly (G8e), a standing dead tree (T12) and early mature Alder, Holly and Sycamore (G9e).

The submitted drainage strategy identifies potential locations for swales, culverts and attenuation ponds. The Arboricultural Statement identifies that a protected tree (part of TPOG6/G11e), two low (C) category trees (T100, T101) and three groups (G51, G52 and G53) will require removal to accommodate an attenuation pond and new culvert route. The removal of these protected trees is a worse case scenario and following further discussions with the applicant's Arboriculturist it has been suggested that some modifications to the attenuation ponds could be undertaken in order to retain some of these trees. The drainage details are subject to a condition requiring details to be submitted as part of any reserved matter application.

The removal of these trees presents a minor-slightly moderate adverse impact but no significant impact upon the wider amenity of the area. Their loss should be expected to be adequately compensated by replacement planting as part of a wider landscape scheme for the site.

Any future reserved matters application should therefore be supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment that addresses the above issues and a Tree Protection Scheme and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations*. On this basis the proposals are considered overall not to have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area as a result of tree loss. Replacements will be sought as part of the reserved matters application.

FLOOD RISK

The site is classified as Very Low Risk (former EA Flood Zone 1), which is land that has a less than 0.1% chance of flooding (less than 1:1000). The Environment Agency and the Council's Flood Risk Team have considered the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and further submitted information and have raised no objections to the proposals. A condition has been requested that requires the submission of a detailed strategy for surface water drainage and this will be included on the decision notice for submission as part of any reserved matters application.

United Utilities have commented on the application and raised no objections to the proposals. No objections have been raised in relation to flooding and drainage subject to suitably worded conditions.

Environmental sustainability conclusions

It is considered that the proposed development is environmentally sustainable. The proposed design of the site is acceptable, there are conditions required in respect environmental matters raised above.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Employment

The proposed development will provide employment in the short term during the clearance and construction of the development in the area.

Economy of the wider area

The addition of 120 units within the town will undoubtedly boost the economy in the local area through the increased use of shops and services making them more sustainable, which is especially important in Wilmslow Town Centre to be sustainable into the future. Additional population can create more demand for local services, increasing the likelihood that they will be retained into the future and improvements and investment made.

Economic sustainability conclusions

The proposals will result in additional employment in the sort term through the construction of the site along with an economic boost locally through the increase in population to this area of the town. It is considered that the proposals will make efficient use of the site which is part of a wider strategic allocation.

SECTION 106

A section 106 agreement will accompany the application and is required to secure the following:

- Provision of 30% affordable units, of these dwellings 65% will be social rented and 35% intermediate housing.
- Educational contribution towards secondary and SEN provision of £192,584 based on 60 dwellings being built on site.
- Contribution towards ROS £1,000 per open market house or delivery of the playing field.
- Contribution towards health provision, the final figure is dependent on the number and size of properties that come forward at reserved matters.
- Contribution towards indoor recreation of £8,330 based on 60 dwellings being built on site.
- Management Plan for the on-site public open space and LEAP
- Contribution for monitoring of Travel Plan £5,000

The final levels of contributions will be determined on the make up of the development that comes forward in the reserved matters application.

CIL REGULATIONS

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010, it is necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following: a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; a) Directly related to the development; and b) Fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. It is considered that the contributions required as part of the application are justified meet the Council's requirement for policy compliance. All elements are necessary, directly relate to the development and are fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of development. The non-financial

requirements ensure that the development will be delivered in full. On this basis the S106 the scheme is compliant with the CIL Regulations 2010.

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS

The majority of the points of objection have been addressed in the main body of the report or are issues that will be considered as part of the future reserved matters application.

A number of representations objected on the grounds the site is within the Green Belt and therefore should not be developed. However, on adoption of the Local Plan the site was removed from the Green Belt and is now allocated for residential use.

Some representations referred to the fact Royal London are intending to relocate and on that basis the development is not needed. Royal London leaving the site is not a material planning consideration as the site is allocated within the Local Plan for development.

Numerous representations have made the point the development should be considered against the Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan. However the Neighbourhood Plan is at a relatively early stage in its preparation and no detailed policies have yet to be produced, therefore the application cannot be considered against the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

The site forms the part of the allocated site LPS54. The proposed development accords with the Local Plan policy relating to its allocation by providing housing and all the other policy requirements. Shortfalls in health and education provision are mitigated through financial contributions to improve existing facilities. The applicant is providing further financial contributions in order to make the development acceptable and is providing the full amount of affordable housing on site which is essential in order to make developments sustainable in the future. It is considered that the proposals are environmental, socially and economically sustainable and accord with the development plan and the framework. The site is sustainably located within the town and the proposals represent an efficient use of the land.

Cheshire East is currently able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing however this proposal will make a valuable contribution in maintaining this position.

It is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and accords with the development plan policies mentioned in the policies section of this report and national planning policy and guidance. Therefore for the reasons mentioned above the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to a s106 legal agreement to secure

- Provision of 30% affordable units, of these dwellings 65% will be social rented and 35% intermediate housing.

- Educational contribution towards secondary and SEN provision of £192,584 based on 60 dwellings being built on site.
- Contribution towards ROS £1,000 per open market house or delivery of the playing field.
- Contribution towards health provision, the final figure is dependent on the number and size of properties that come forward at reserved matters.
- Contribution towards indoor recreation of £8,330 based on 60 dwellings being built on site.
- Management Plan for the on-site public open space and LEAP
- Contribution for monitoring of Travel Plan £5,000

And the following conditions:

1. Standard contaminated land condition
2. Importation of soil
3. Unexpected contamination
4. Access available for use before occupation
5. Positive and proactive
6. Time period to implement permission.
7. Approve reserved matters details
8. Plans
9. Details of surface water drainage
10. Pedestrian and cycle signage
11. Submission and implementation of Travel Plan
12. Submit arboricultural impact assessment
13. Implement access
14. Levels
15. Carry out development as per the FRA
16. Construction environment management plan
17. Bat friendly lighting scheme
18. Ecological enhancement strategy
19. Landscape and habitat management plan
20. Boundary details
21. Dust control
22. Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points
23. Updated otter and badger survey

- 24.Noise Impact Assessment,
- 25.Implement landscaping scheme
- 26.Noise Impact Assessment as part of RM application.
- 27.Details of materials
- 28.Details of play area
- 29.Retention of hedgerows
- 30.Submission of heritage impact assessment.
- 31.Details and implementation of cycle way and footpath
- 32.Buffer zone for water voles
- 33.Submission of design code
- 34.Retention of woodland
- 35.Submission of design code before submission of reserved matters application.

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Board's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions / informatives / planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning (Regulation) delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Board's decision.

