

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD

Date of meeting:	11 April 2012
Report of:	Development Management and Building Control Manager
Title:	Proposal Alterations to the Section 106 Agreement to Allow Affordable Rent Provision in Scheme (11/1879N) for up to 400 Residential Units at Parkers Road, Crewe

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider proposed amendments to the resolution passed by Strategic Planning Board in respect of applications 11/1879N.
- 1.2 The report has been presented to Strategic Planning Board because the original application was approved by the Board in October 2011.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 To agree to the amendments to the previous resolutions as stated in this report.
- 2.2 The principle of the residential development has already been established by the previous resolution. Consequently, this report does not provide an opportunity to revisit that issue. This item relates solely to the proposed amendment to the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The site comprises 15.1ha of agricultural land (plus highway land – Parker's Road) located on the north western edge of Crewe. The site is defined by Parkers Road to the south, Moss Lane to the east existing development to the west and a public footpath along part of its northern boundary. It is bisected by a network of existing hedgerows, some of which contain trees. In addition, there are a small number of free standing trees within fields.
- 3.2 Existing residential development lies to the east, south and south west of the site. Leighton Hospital lies to the west of the site. The wider site context includes Crewe Town Centre and railway station to the south west, Bentley Cars to the south on Pym's Lane and the village of Bradfield Green to the North West.

4 Previous Planning Permission

- 4.1 Members may recall that in October 2011, Strategic Planning Board resolved to grant planning permission for a “hybrid” application (i.e. part outline and part full planning permission) for residential development on this site. Full planning permission was sought for 131 dwellings in Phase A to the south of the site close to Parkers Road and outline planning permission was sought for up to an additional 269 dwellings of the remainder of the site (Phase B). In total planning permission for a maximum of 400 dwellings was applied for.
- 4.2 The resolution to approve was subject to completion of Section 106 Agreement making a number of provisions, including:

“Provision of 35% of the 400 units proposed across the whole site as affordable housing in perpetuity. Provision within Phase A shall be 26 units comprising 11 x 2 beds, 14 x 3 beds and 1 x 4 bed, with the remainder to be provided in Phase B. The tenure split within Phase A to be on a 65% social rent, 35% intermediate tenure basis. The mix of house types and tenure for within Phase B (to include key worker housing) to be agreed as part of subsequent reserved matters applications.”

- 4.3 The developer is seeking to amend this working to make provision for properties for “affordable rent” within the scheme as an alternative to “social rent”.

5 Officer Comment

- 5.1 Social rented housing is housing that is owned and managed by Local Authorities and registered social landlords, which are let at guideline target rents as determined through the national rent regime.
- 5.2 Affordable rented housing is let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. However affordable rented housing is not subject to the national rent regime, it is subject to other rent controls that require the properties to be let at no more than 80% of the market rent for an equivalent property type.
- 5.3 Both social rented and affordable rented housing have essentially the same characteristics except the controls over the level of rent the units can be let at.
- 5.4 The Council’s Housing Section commissioned a report produced looking at the impact of the affordability of affordable rents against social rents across Cheshire East and found that in the majority of areas affordable rent set at 80% of market rent for the area would be affordable. For example, in the Cholmondeley Ward the report established that affordable rent at 80% of market rents would be affordable to 74.2% of newly forming households. When the impact of Housing Benefit has been taken into account, this increases to 98.9% of newly forming households.

- 5.5 Due to this, Housing Officers have no objection with Bloor Homes request that the rented affordable units are provided as either social rented units at target rent or affordable rented units at rents set at up to 80% of market rents.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 On the basis of the above, the proposed amendment to the wording of the resolution is considered to be acceptable.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 That the Board resolve to amend the previous resolution in respect of application 11/1879N to read at "point 5".

"Provision of 35% of the 400 units proposed across the whole site as affordable housing in perpetuity. Provision within Phase A shall be 26 units comprising 11 x 2 beds, 14 x 3 beds and 1 x 4 bed, with the remainder to be provided in Phase B The tenure split within Phase A to be on a 65% social/affordable rent, 35% intermediate tenure basis. The mix of house types and tenure for within Phase B (to include key worker housing) to be agreed as part of subsequent reserved matters applications."

- 7.2 Also that the Board resolve:

"In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or addition conditions / informatives / planning obligations or reasons for approval / refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Development Management and Building Control Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Planning Board is delegated the authority to do so, provided that he does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision."

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on the proposals and raised no objections

10 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 There are no risks associated with this decision.

11 Reasons for Recommendation

- 11.1 To allow negotiations in respect of the Section 106 to progress to signing, to enable the development works to commence in a timely fashion to assist in delivering the 5 year housing land supply for the Borough.

For further information:

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Background Documents:

- *Application 11/1879N.*