

Application No: 13/0130N

Location: 89A, BRADFIELd ROAD, CREWE, CW1 3RB

Proposal: Demolition Of Existing Bungalow & Garage. Construction Of : 4 One Bed Apartments, 8 Two Bed Houses & 4 Three Bed Houses

Applicant: Mr Nick Powell, Wulvern Housing Ltd

Expiry Date: 08-Apr-2013

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the receipt of an amended plan to address the outstanding highways issues and to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

Impact of the development on:-

Principal of the Development
Renewable Energy
Affordable Housing
Highway Implications
Amenity
Design
Ecology

REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is referred to the Southern Planning Committee as it relates to a small scale major development.

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located to the southern side of Bradfield Road within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as defined by the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan. The site includes a detached bungalow (89A Bradfield Road) and a large car garage to the rear of the site. The area is predominantly residential with residential properties to the north, south and west. To the east of the site is an existing area of public open space.

2. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the erection of 16 residential properties which would be a mix of terraced dwellings and two small blocks of apartments. All properties would be two stories in height. One central access point would be provided at the same point as the existing access.

The development would consist of 1 to 3 bedroom units.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

The site has no relevant planning history

4. POLICIES

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Local Plan policy

E.7 – Existing Employment Sites

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design Standards

BE.3 – Access and Parking

BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources

BE.5 – Infrastructure

BE.6 – Development on Potentially Contaminated Land

NE.5 – Nature Conservation and Habitats

NE.9 – Protected Species

NE.17 – Pollution Control

NE.20 – Flood Prevention

RES.7 – Affordable Housing

RES.2 – Unallocated Housing Sites

RES.3 – Housing Densities

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 – Spatial Principles

DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities

DP7 – Promote Environmental Quality

L4 – Regional Housing Provision

L5 – Affordable Housing

RDF1 – Spatial Priorities

EM1 – Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Regions Environmental Assets

MCR1 – Manchester City Region Priorities

MCR 4 – South Cheshire

Other Considerations

The EC Habitats Directive 1992

Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010

Circular 6/2005 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System

Interim Planning Statement Affordable Housing

Interim Planning Statement Release of Housing Land

5. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

United Utilities: No objection, The site must be drained on a separate system with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer.

Strategic Highways Manager: There is no unallocated parking for visitors anywhere on the site which will result in undesirable parking overspilling onto Bradfield Road, although there are currently no waiting restrictions. Parking on Bradfield Road is most undesirable owing to the level of traffic and the need to maintain visibility at access and junctions. To provide a sufficient provision for visitors to the site 3 visitor spaces should be provided.

The access road will be a 4.5 metre-shared surface, though the initial section will incorporate the existing footpath linking Pear Tree Close with Bradfield Road. This access road will need to have a minimum one-metre strip along its western boundary for clearance and maintenance purposes.

On the east side of the road, a 2-metre service strip is required throughout. The edge of this should be demarcated where it crosses driveways. The first property will need to be set further back so that this 2-metre strip can be provided without obstructing vehicular access while undertakers are undertaking any repairs.

Shared surfaces are only permissible where traffic speeds can be kept low. The straight alignment of the access does not provide any speed containment features so I require a raised table near its midpoint, where the formal footway on the west side ends.

The proposed turning head is insufficient to allow a refuse vehicle to three-point turn. It should be enlarged to 14.5 metres by 14.5 metres from its indicated 11.5m square.

The proposed layout utilises the path linking Bradfield Road with Pear Tree Avenue to form the footway to the new access road. This path will need to be closed temporarily during the period of construction.

The applicant will be required to enter into an agreement under S278 of the Highways Act for the new access and footpath works.

Environmental Health: Conditions suggested in relation to construction hours, piling works, external lighting and contaminated land.

6. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of objection have been received from 18 local households and a petition signed by 41 local residents has been received raising the following points:

- The proposed dwellings would overlook those on Pear Tree Avenue
- Loss of privacy
- Loss of property value
- The dwellings would be too close to existing residential properties
- Noise during construction
- Increase in construction traffic

- Impact upon a local business which operates on Pear Tree Avenue
- The dwellings do not fit in with the area
- Increase in vehicle movements
- Increased light pollution
- Increased burglary and criminal damage
- Increased traffic congestion on an ambulance route
- Over the past 20 years there have been several environmental issues from this site with paint fumes and noise from machinery
- Large cargo containers have been stacked on the land previously and there have been late night disturbances on the site
- There has been damage to the surrounding boundary
- Pedestrian safety
- Impact upon Human Rights
- The proposal would encroach onto neighbouring land
- No street lighting details are shown on the proposed plans
- Disruption caused by the construction works

A representation has been received from Cllr Grant which makes the following points:

- Since receipt of notification for this application objections have been received. I have read the letter of objection and cannot see any reason why this application should not be allowed.
- The main concern is the access to the site, as you may be aware Bradfield road is already a very busy road; the access to the site is in a very congested area already around Underwood Lane, Cliffe road and the garage.
- Careful consideration should be given to the Highway layout.

7. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

To support this application the application includes the following documents;

- Ecology Scoping Survey (Produced by Solum Environmental)
- Planning, Design and Access Statement (Produced by Lothlorian Ltd)

These documents are available to view on the application file.

9. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principal of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 47 there is requirement to maintain a 5 year rolling supply of housing and states that Local Planning Authorities should:

“identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land”.

The NPPF states that, Local Planning Authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. This should take account of various factors including:

- housing need and demand,
- latest published household projections,
- evidence of the availability of suitable housing land,
- the Government's overall ambitions for affordability.

The figures contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy proposed a dwelling requirement of 20,700 dwellings for Cheshire East as a whole, for the period 2003 to 2021, which equates to an average annual housing figure of 1,150 dwellings per annum. In February 2011 a full meeting of the Council resolved to maintain this housing requirement until such time that the new Local Plan was approved.

It is considered that the most up-to-date information about housing land supply in Cheshire East is contained within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which was adopted in March 2012.

The SHLAA has put forward a figure of 7.1 years housing land supply.

In this case the site is located within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and Policy RES.2 of the Adopted Local Plan allows for residential development on unallocated sites in Crewe.

The proposed development would result in the loss of a small scale employment site within the Borough and Policy E.7 states that development that would result in the loss of an employment site will only be permitted where: (i) it can be demonstrated that the present use harms the character or amenities of surrounding properties (ii) the site is not capable of satisfactory use for employment and overriding local benefit would come from the proposed development; OR (iii) it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on the supply of employment land or premises within the Borough.

The NPPF gives less protection for employment sites and states that *'planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose'*.

In this case the site is surrounded by residential properties on three sides and as can be seen from the representations received to this application there is historic on-going complaints over the activities and operations on this site and its compatibility with the surrounding residential properties. Furthermore the proposal would provide an overriding local benefit through the provision of affordable housing for which there is a local need and would assist with the Councils 5 year housing land supply. As a result it is considered that the loss of the employment site is acceptable in this instance

Renewable Energy

In relation to renewable energy a condition will be attached to ensure that the 10% renewable energy provision is achieved in accordance with the RSS Policy EM18.

Affordable Housing

The proposal is for the redevelopment of this site to provide 4 x 1 bed apartments, 8 x 2 bed houses and 4 x 3 bed houses to be provided as affordable rented accommodation.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010 identified a requirement for 256 new affordable homes each year between 2009/10 – 2013/14 in the Crewe sub-area, which is the area this site is located in. The type of affordable housing required each year is 123 x 1 beds, 20 x 2 beds, 47 x 3 beds 40 x 4/5 beds and 26 x 1/2 bed older persons accommodation.

There are currently 130 applicants on the housing register with Cheshire Homechoice who have selected the Selworth Drive or Underwood Lane areas of Crewe which are close to the site as their first choice, these applicants require 20 x 1 bed, 54 x 2 bed, 51 x 3 bed & 4 x 4 bed (1 applicant hasn't specified how many bedrooms they require)

There has been delivery of approximately 280 affordable dwellings in Crewe since 2009/10 and there is some anticipated delivery, however even with the anticipated delivery there will still be a significant shortfall of delivery against the identified need for the period of 2009/10 – 2013/14. As a result there is a need for affordable housing in this area and the development is supported by colleagues within the Housing Team

The mix of properties is also considered to be acceptable as it will go towards meeting some of the identified need from the SHMA 2010 and it also ties-in with the type of property required by people currently on the housing register who require affordable housing for rent in the area.

Highways Implications

The current use of the site does experience a number of vehicular movements daily for both staff and customers. Visibility at the site entrance is good and the highways officer has not raised any objection to the provision and safety of an access in this position. The number of vehicular movements from the proposed development would not raise any highway concerns when compared to those which currently exist.

Adequate provision would be made for the parking of vehicles within the site and an amended plan is awaited to secure visitor parking provision.

The main points of concern raised by the highways officer relate to 'design issues' such as a larger turning area for refuse vehicles, visitor parking and service strips. These issues have been raised with the applicant's agent and at the time of writing this report an amended plan was awaited. An update will be provided in relation to this issue.

Amenity

To the front of the site No 89 Bradfield Road includes a number of non-principle windows to its side elevation facing the site. The apartments would have a blank elevation to this side and the rear elevation would be set just 1m further back than the rear elevation at No 89 with a separation distance of 3 metres between the buildings. As a result there would be no significant impact to this side.

There is one window to the side elevation of No 91 and this appears to serve a landing and would not be affected.

Excluding the existing single storey additions there would be a separation distance of 19.5m from the side elevation of plot 3 and the rear outriggers of 87 and 89 Bradfield Road, a separation distance of 32.5m from the front elevation of plots 8-10 to the rear elevation of 30-32 Pear Tree Avenue, a separation distance of 19m from the side elevation of plot 11 to the rear elevation of 26 Pear Tree Avenue and a separation distance of 24m from the rear elevation of plots 11-16 to the rear elevations of 8-16 Pear Tree Avenue. Except the separation distance to 87 & 89 Bradfield Road all of these separation distances meet the requirements of the Council SPD and as a result it is considered that there will be minimal impact upon residential amenity. In terms of 87 and 89 the separation distance would be 1.5m short of the guidance contained within the SPD but a reason for refusal could not be sustained. Furthermore there would be significant benefits from the removal of the existing use from this site.

In order to protect residential amenity it will be necessary to condition that the first floor windows in the side elevations of plots 3 and 11 are fitted with obscure glazing.

Design

The importance of securing high quality design is specified within the NPPF and 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.”

In this case the proposed development includes the provision of a two storey unit which would consist of 2 apartments. This building would be set back from the front elevation of No 89 but in front of No 91 Bradfield Road, this siting is considered appropriate and would improve the appearance of the site. To the side elevation this block would include a number of windows to add interest to this elevation which would be prominent in the street scene.

Within the site plots 3-10 would be sited with their front elevations facing west, and at the head of the cul-de-sac plots 11-14 would be sited to terminate views when entering into the site. On the whole parking would be sited to the front of the properties at plots 4-9 and 11-13, but there is considered to be sufficient landscaping to help break this up and to prevent a car dominated frontage. Plots 1-2, 10, 14-16 would have more discretely sited parking.

The proposed dwellings would be two storeys with a pitched roof. The elevational treatment of the dwellings shows that they would have projecting gables, lintel and sill detailing, fan-lights above the front doors and ridge detailing. It is considered that the design is acceptable and would not appear out of character in this part of Crewe.

Ecology

The Council's Ecologist does not anticipate there being any significant ecological issues associated with the proposed development. As hedgerows are a Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat and hence a material consideration the Ecologist recommends that the existing hedgerows on site be incorporated into the landscaping scheme for the development. Conditions are also suggested in relation to breeding birds.

The original plans did encroach slightly onto the rear garden of 32 Pear Tree Avenue. This was an error and amended plans have been received to address this issue.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The site is within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and the loss of this employment site is accepted. The principle of residential development is considered to be acceptable and in this case it is not considered that there are any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or there are any policies within the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted.

It is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of affordable housing provision and there is a need for this development.

The proposal would not raise any significant highway implications and an amended plan is awaited to address some minor internal design issues. An update will be provided in relation to this issue.

The scheme complies with the relevant local plan policies in terms of amenity and it is considered that the proposal is an acceptable design and layout.

No ecological issues are raised as part of this application.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with the relevant local plan policies and would not compromise key sustainability principles as set out in national planning policy. Therefore there is a presumption in favour of the development and accordingly it is recommended for approval.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the receipt of an amended plan to address the outstanding highways issues and the following conditions

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Hours of construction limited to 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 14:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays**
- 4. Pile driving limited to 08:30 to 17:30 Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 13:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays**
- 5. No development shall take place until details of external lighting has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**
- 6. Prior to the commencement of development a Phase II Contaminated Land Assessment shall be submitted to the LPA for approval in writing.**
- 7. Submission and approval of materials**

- 8. No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority showing how at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the development will be secured from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. The scheme shall be implemented as approved and retained thereafter.**
- 9. Landscaping details to be submitted and approved**
- 10. Implementation of landscaping**
- 11. Boundary Treatment details to be submitted and approved**
- 12. Obscure glazing to side elevation of plots 3 and 11**
- 13. Works to take place outside the bird breeding season**
- 14. A scheme of nesting bird mitigation measures to be incorporated into the development**
- 15. Dwellings to be retained as affordable housing**

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee'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 Development Management and Building Control has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Southern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.

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