

STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD UPDATE – 13th March 2013

APPLICATION NO: 12/3016C

PROPOSAL: Outline Application for New Residential Development and Access Roads for up to 31 residential units

ADDRESS: Rectory Farm, OLD KNUTSFORD ROAD, CHURCH LAWTON, ST7 3EQ

APPLICANT: Northwest Heritage C/O

Officer Comments

Green Belt

Para 7 of the NPPF states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development which give rise to the need for the planning system to perform an economic, social and environmental role.

The site is partly within the Green Belt. The NPPF advises that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt, other than in the case of a number of specified exceptions. Local Plan Policy PS8 follows a similar approach. One such exception in the Framework is 'limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan'.

The last listed exception as set out in paragraph 89 of the Framework is, 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development'.

The Framework advises that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be permitted except in very special circumstances. This proposal is surrounded on 3 sides by existing development and would amount to a natural rounding off of the settlement. It is not considered that it offers any valuable contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the site is previously developed and therefore the proposal involves the development of brownfield land.

Taking this into account, it is not considered that the proposal would have any material harm on the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This proposal will deliver new housing within the settlement as well as much needed affordable units on a previously developed site. The site is sustainable and therefore on balance, there is a presumption in favour of the proposal which amount to special circumstances.

Public Open Space

Since publication of the agenda, discussions have taken place with the Council's Greenspaces section. The Greenspaces section has since amended their request for children and young person's provision to 2 pieces of play equipment to be provided on site. It is considered that this is proportionate to the scale of development proposed and will be secured under the point 1 of the Heads of Terms on p164 of the reports agenda pack.

Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way and the Canal & Rivers Trust have recommended that improvements are made to the footpath link to the canal towpath off Old Knutsford Road. Given that the development would make use of some of the amenities available in Rode Heath nearby, which can be accessed by way of the canal towpath, it is considered that such improvements would be necessary and reasonably related to the development to be approved. As such, it is recommended that this be secured under the heads of terms.

Other Matters

Heads of terms point 4 is an item which can be dealt with by way of a Grampian condition. As such, it is recommended that this be added as condition 20 and excluded from the heads of terms.

Recommendation:

APPROVE as per page 164 of the agenda reports pack with the following amended heads of terms and additional, condition:

1. Provision of public open space and CYPP and ongoing maintenance of the facilities to be determined.
2. Delivery of 9 affordable units (6 social rent and 3 for intermediate tenure).
3. Financial contribution of £21,000 for the Upgrade of Bus Stops
4. Financial contribution for Improvements to footpath leading to canal towpath to be determined

Additional condition:

20. Scheme to upgrade to the existing footpaths fronting the site to create footpath widths of 2.0 metres to be submitted