



Strategic Planning Board Update

Date: Wednesday, 24th March, 2021

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Virtual

The information on the following pages was received following publication of the Board agenda.

Planning Update (Pages 3 - 6)

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APPLICATION NO: 19/3097M

**LOCATION: Land Between Chelford Road And Whirley Road,
CHELFORD ROAD, HENBURY**

**PROPOSAL: Reserved Matters application for the erection of
134no. dwellings, vehicular access, roads and
footways, hard and soft landscaping, drainage and
other associated works following outline approval
17/4277M**

CONSULTATIONS

The following consultation responses have been received since the preparation of the report:

Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) – Further reiterate their objection on the following grounds:

- Proposal will not result in a Biodiversity Net Gain
- The loss and/or modification of peat deposits at this site will undermine any potential future restoration for biodiversity or carbon sequestration
- Consider this development contrary to Cheshire East's Sustainable Development policy (SD 1 (11), Cheshire East's Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (Action 4.2 (a) (b)) and the NPPF (para 148 and 150(b))
- Object unless a peat management plan (PMP) is developed in line with the recommendations set out in the report Commissioned by Henbury Parish Council and a voluntary contribution towards Biodiversity Net Gain is secured or a condition is applied

Other

MP David Rutley has written to confirm agreement with the objection and representations made by Henbury Parish Council in relation to matters regarding peat and the loss of the community woodland. The MP comments that 'reports commissioned by Henbury Parish Council raise important issues that must be addressed before decisions can be made on the sustainability of the site'.

OFFICER COMMENT

Peat

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that the "*planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: Shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure*"

(para 148). Para 150 point (b) advises that “New development should be planned for in ways that: can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government’s policy for national technical standards.”

Similarly, Local Plan Policy SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East, point 11 states that wherever possible, developments should “*use appropriate technologies to reduce carbon emissions and create a low carbon economy*”. This policy framework is aimed at harnessing new technologies, for example encouraging the use and uptake of electric vehicles, reducing the need to travel and more carbon efficient energy technologies e.g. renewables. These are not aimed at the management of peat.

Whilst peat deposits do serve a purpose in the sequestration of carbon (CO₂), and the extraction of peat will likely result in the release of some CO₂, this will be minimised as far as is practicable using detailed conditions for the management of peat as recommended in condition 18 on page 22 of the agenda reports pack.

Cheshire East’s Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (Action 4.2 (a) (b)) advises that the council will ‘*plan and develop natural climate solutions such as tree planting and peatland management to sequester carbon on between 41 and 1,347 Ha of non-council owned land by 2025*’ and ‘*develop and implement restoration and/ or management plans for 100% of peatlands in Cheshire East*’. However, this does not include the site subject of these applications which prior to its publication, have already been released for housing development through allocation in the Local Plan and subsequent outline approval for residential development.

Biodiversity

The further objection from Cheshire Wildlife Trust is noted. However, the biodiversity impacts of the proposal have been assessed and deemed acceptable subject to mitigation and conditions in a number of areas. This includes a requirement for the developer to either update their Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy or for the scheme to be entered onto into Natural England’s District level licencing scheme for biodiversity enhancement. This is recommended in condition no. 12 on page 41 of the agenda reports pack and is in line with the Council’s own specialist Nature Conservation advice.

Other Matters

With respect to the representation made by MP David Rutley, Henbury Parish Council’s representations have been carefully considered and are reported in the main agenda reports pack. An assessment with regard to matters relating to the loss of the community woodland can be found on pages 21 and 36 of the main agenda reports pack.

RECOMMENDATION

The benefits of the scheme are highlighted in the main agenda report, along with the other points raised above regarding the management of peat and the loss of the community woodland. The recommendation remains as per the main agenda report found on page 41 of the Agenda Reports Pack.

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