

# Strategic Planning Board

## Agenda

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday, 30th August, 2011</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2.00 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ</b>

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

**Please note that members of the public are requested to check the Council's website the week the Planning/Board meeting is due to take place as Officers produce updates for some or all of the applications prior to the commencement of the meeting and after the agenda has been published.**

### **PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest/Pre Determination**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests and for Members to declare if they have made a pre-determination in respect of any item on the agenda.

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For any apologies or requests for further information, or to arrange to speak at the meeting

**Contact:** Sarah Baxter  
**Tel:** 01270 686462  
**E-Mail:** Sarah.Baxter@cheshireeast.gov.uk

### 3. **Public Speaking**

A total period of 5 minutes is allocated for each of the planning applications for Ward Councillors who are not members of the Planning Committee.

A period of 3 minutes is allocated for each of the planning applications for the following individuals/groups:

- Members who are not members of the Planning Committee and are not the Ward Member
- The Relevant Town/Parish Council
- Local Representative Groups/Civic Society
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicants

### 4. **11-1982N - Construction of a Dual Carriageway All Purpose Road Known as Crewe Green Link South (CGLS), on Land Between Weston Gate Roundabout and the A500 Land between Weston Gate Roundabout and the A500, Weston (Pages 1 - 26)**

<b>Planning Reference No:</b>	11/1982N
<b>Application Address:</b>	Land between Weston Gate Roundabout and the A500, Weston
<b>Proposal:</b>	Construction of a Dual Carriageway All Purpose Road Known as Crewe Green Link South (CGLS) on Land Between Weston Gate Roundabout and the A500
<b>Applicant:</b>	Cheshire East Council
<b>Application Type:</b>	Full Planning
<b>Grid Reference:</b>	372383 353291
<b>Ward:</b>	Haslington
<b>Earliest Determination Date:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2011
<b>Expiry Dated:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> October 2011
<b>Date of Officer's Site Visit:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2011
<b>Date Report Prepared:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> August 2011
<b>Constraints:</b>	Open Countryside, Flood Risk Zone, Hazardous Installation, PROW, Protected Species, Historic Park and Garden

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve with conditions**

### **MAIN ISSUES**

**Impact of the development on:-**

- **Principal of the development**
- **Highway implications**
- **Amenity**
- **Landscape**
- **Trees**
- **Ecology**
- **Flood Risk & Drainage**
- **Impact upon Listed Buildings and the Historic Park and Garden**
- **Archaeology**
- **The impact upon the Public Right of Way**
- **The impact upon the Hazardous Installation**

### **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

This application has been referred to the Strategic Planning Board as it includes an Environmental Impact Assessment.

### **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is located between the A500 and the Weston Gate Roundabout. The site is also known as Basford East and currently consists of an area of relatively flat agricultural land which is peppered with trees, hedgerows and ponds. To the north the Crewe – Stoke-on-Trent railway line crosses the site with a band of woodland located

between the railway line and the Weston Gate Roundabout. Gresty Brook and Basford Brook run to the west of the site.

### **2. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This application relates to the provision of a dual carriageway which would link the A500 and the Weston Gate Roundabout. The proposal would be approximately 1.1km in length and would be a standard two lane dual carriage way with a central reserve. A footway/cycleway would run along both sides over the full length of the scheme and would be separated from the carriageway by a grass verge. A four arm roundabout (70m in diameter) would be constructed approximately half way along the road to provide spur roads into the Basford East development site. At a point 20m south of the Weston Gate roundabout the road would descend approximately 2 metres into a cutting below the Crewe-Stoke Railway line. A bridge would be installed within the railway embankment which would allow the proposed road to cross beneath.

### **3. RELEVANT HISTORY**

P01/1199 – Construction of Crewe Green Link Road (Southern Phase) – Approved 5<sup>th</sup> February 2002

### **4. POLICIES**

#### **Local Plan policy**

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  
BE.14 – Development affecting Historic Parks and Gardens  
BE.16 – Development and Archaeology  
BE.21 – Hazardous Installations  
NE.2 – Open Countryside  
NE.5 – Nature Conservation and Habitats  
NE.8 – Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation  
NE.9 – Protected Species  
NE.10 – New Woodland Planting and Landscaping  
NE.11 – River and Canal Corridors  
NE.12 – Agricultural Land Quality  
NE.17 – Pollution Control  
NE.20 – Flood Prevention  
E.3 – Regional and Strategic Employment Allocations at Basford  
TRAN.3 – Pedestrians  
TRAN.5 – Provision for Cyclists  
TRAN.11 – Non Trunk Roads  
RT.9 – Footpaths and Bridleways

#### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

DP1 – Spatial Principles  
DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities  
DP3 – Promote Sustainable Economic Development

DP7 – Promote Environmental Quality  
DP9 – Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change  
RDF1 – Spatial Priorities  
RT3 – Public Transport Framework  
RDF2 – Rural Areas  
RT1 – Integrated Transport Networks  
RT2 – Managing Travel Demand  
RT4 – Management of the Highway Network  
RT9 – Walking and Cycling  
EM1 – Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Regions Environmental Assets  
MCR1 – Manchester City Region Priorities  
MCR 4 – South Cheshire

### **National Planning Policy**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth  
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment  
PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation  
PPG13 – Transport  
PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control  
PPG24 – Planning and Noise  
PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk

### **Other Considerations**

'Planning for Growth'  
'Presumption in Favour of Economic Development'  
Draft National Planning Policy Framework  
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  
Circular 02/99: Environmental Impact Assessment  
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999

## **5. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**English Heritage:** Do not consider that it is necessary for this application to be notified to English Heritage.

**Environment Agency:** Originally objected to the development on the following grounds:

- There are concerns over the possible impacts to Basford Brook and its ecology, based on the proximity of these proposed works.
- There are proposals to turn semi-natural ponds into SuDS ponds
- There is inadequate detail in regard to the loss of ordinary watercourses and mitigation for this
- Ecological surveys of Lesser Silver Water Beetle carried out at the wrong time of year.

Following the receipt of additional information, the Environment Agency now state that the information submitted showing the drainage culvert to the north of Crewe Green Link

Road meets with the Environment Agency approval and the Environment Agency withdraw their objection.

Land alongside Basford Brook and Gresty Brook is particularly valuable for wildlife and it is essential this is protected. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive also stresses the importance of natural networks of linked corridors to allow movement of species between suitable habitats, and promote the expansion of biodiversity. Such networks may also help wildlife adapt to climate change.

The white-clawed crayfish present on Basford Brook and Gresty Brook appear to thrive on densely vegetated and over grown banks and channel. There has been limited maintenance of Basford Brook and Gresty Brook in the last few years, which appears to provide undisturbed conditions and good habitat for white-clawed crayfish. The proposed development will only be acceptable if a planning condition is imposed requiring a scheme to be agreed for any new bridge across Basford Brook to ensure that this is of an acceptable clear-span type.

The Environment Agency would also like to make the applicant aware that there is an ordinary watercourse at location SJ 72295 53678. After discussion with the applicant this will be diverted and a section culverted. A site visit undertaken on the 17 August 2011 showed this watercourse to contain water and the phase 1 habitat survey describes it as a 'wet ditch'. Therefore white-clawed crayfish could be present within this watercourse and so appropriate protection and/or mitigation should be undertaken.

The Environment Agency Flood Maps show that the route of the proposed road scheme crosses areas that are at high probability of river flooding, from Basford Brook and several un-named tributaries including one to the north side of the railway line, near Weston Road. The Flood Maps are however indicative only and are not of sufficient accuracy to determine the risk of flooding at a specific location.

The submitted FRA demonstrates that the risk of flooding to, and from, the proposed road scheme can be mitigated, which is acceptable in principle subject to the imposition suitably worded conditions.

Based on the reviewed contaminated land information, the proposed development site may be associated with a railway and potentially infilled ponds, which may have led to potential land contamination. Basford Brook runs alongside part of the development and several other surface waters courses are present in the immediate vicinity. The Environment Agency therefore recommend the below conditions to ensure any risks posed to controlled waters from potential contaminated land are appropriately addressed and mitigated.

However the following conditions should be included on the decision notice;

- Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for the provision and management of an undeveloped buffer zone alongside the Basford Brook watercourse, retained non-main watercourse and adjoining ponds shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- Prior to the commencement of development, details of all bridges proposed on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the bridges shall be constructed as set out in the approved scheme.
- Prior to the commencement of development a plan is required for the protection and/or

mitigation of damage to the populations of white-clawed crayfish and water vole and their associated habitat during construction works and once the development is complete.

- The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to ensure that the proposed road at the southerly side of the railway has a flood bund (built to the western side of the road), set at a minimum level of 50.42 mAOD, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to provide compensatory flood storage in the vicinity of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to limit the discharge of surface water from the proposed road scheme so that it will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped greenfield site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the local planning authority for, a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.
- Prior to the commencement of the development approved by this planning permission the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority: 1. A preliminary risk assessment, 2. A site investigation scheme, 3. The results of the site investigation and detailed risk assessment, 4. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy are complete.

A number of informatives are also suggested to be added to any decision notice.

**Natural England:** The proposal does not appear to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes. It is not clear from the information in support of this application what the impact upon protected species will be. Natural England would encourage the LPA to ask the applicant to provide further information that clearly describes the impact of the proposal on protected species and any proposed mitigation together with evidence to show how they concluded what the impacts will be.

**United Utilities:** United Utilities have no objection to the development subject to the following concerns being met:

- A public sewer crosses the site and therefore a modification of the site layout, or a diversion of the affected public sewer at the applicant's expense, may be necessary.
- If possible this site should be drained on a separate system, with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer. Surface water should discharge to the soakaway/watercourse/surface water sewer and may require the consent of the Environment Agency. If surface water is allowed to be discharged to the public surface water sewerage system we may require the flow to be attenuated to a maximum discharge rate determined by United Utilities.
- All surface water drains must have adequate oil interceptors
- The level of cover to the water mains and sewers must not be compromised either during or after construction.

**Network Rail:** The proposal has the potential to impact upon Network Rail land and infrastructure. Therefore the applicant must contact the Asset Protection Engineer for the area, and discuss in detail the proposal and all works planned for the site. No works are to commence until Network Rail has reviewed all plans and approved any works.

**Health and Safety Executive:** The HSE's advice is that there are sufficient reasons, on safety grounds, for advising against the granting of planning permission in this case.

**National Grid:** The works proposed are likely, unless controlled, to adversely impact the safety and integrity of National Grid apparatus. If the works proceed the National Grid will need to be contacted so that they may arrange for technical advice and guidance to be provided. This assessment is related to the potential for the proposed physical works to adversely impact National Grid's assets. It does not imply the acceptability of the proposed development from a planning perspective.

**Cheshire East Public Rights of Way:** Basford FP1 requires access to/through the new highway. In practice this means either gaps or gates in the boundary structure of the new road. If the developers need a temporary diversion whilst works are taking place that's fine. The concern is that when these works are finished the definitive line will be obstructed by the boundary structure(s) so they need gates/gaps to be included as part of the plans before they can lift the objection.

**Cheshire Wildlife Trust:** There are a number of inconsistencies contained within the ES. These errors apart, CWT consider that the submitted ecological information to be a reasonably comprehensive assessment of the biodiversity value of this area and potential impacts of the CGLS development upon it. However, the CWT concludes that there are deficiencies in some of the surveys, as follows:

- Bird Survey: Only one visit, outside the optimum period of April – June.
- Reptile Survey: early August is a sub-optimal survey period.
- Bat Survey: tree assessments are best carried out during winter/spring

In view of the elapsed time between the surveys in 2008 and the current submission nearly 3 years later, CWT consider that these deficiencies (which are recognised by the ecologists and are primarily seasonal constraints) could easily have been addressed. CWT recommend that further breeding and wintering bird surveys, and for additional bat surveys to be undertaken before the wider area is developed. The recommended mitigation is suitable for this development;

**Highways Agency:** No objection to this application being granted consent as there will be no impact on the strategic road network.

**SUSTRANS:** SUSTRANS comments concern local access on foot and by bicycle to and along this road and the proposed adjacent employment sites:

- The provision of a footway/cycle track on both sides of the proposed dual carriageway and spur roads is welcome. As shown, these should be separated from the road edge by a grassy verge. The surfacing of the footways/cycle tracks should be to a machine laid bitmac standard.
- The connection of the footway/cycle track by ramp, at the southern end of the proposed road, to Croatia Mill Lane is important for improving access by bicycle to the future

employment sites from Weston, Hough, Shavington. It is not understood why this has not been included in the planning application boundary.

- In practice, it will be very difficult to cross the proposed dual carriageway on foot or by bicycle at the roundabouts. Sustrans would therefore would like to see toucan crossings installed at the Weston Road and central roundabouts, as Cheshire East Council has done on the recently opened Alderley Edge by-pass.

- The site will only be accessible to public transport bus services if the bus operators are willing to divert existing commercial services through the site. Bus services laid on as part of a planning condition rarely survive.

- This proposal is for a dual carriageway with significant traffic capacity. Sustrans question therefore why the council wants to retain the single carriageway road, the A5020, as an additional route. Sustrans would like to see the Weston Road section in particular downgraded with traffic management measures to restrict general traffic use.

**Strategic Highways Manager:** This proposal enables the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road Scheme which provides general traffic relief across the urban Crewe area. It will also provide opportunities for future development at Basford East employment site. There are no highways objections to this proposal.

**Environmental Health:** The Environmental Health Officer has assessed the application and has made the following comments;

### Noise

The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) is used as guidance in assessing the potential noise operational impacts of the proposed new road. Aided by computer noise modelling software, noise levels have been predicted in accordance with guidance given in the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise, 1988 and is considered as an acceptable method. The noise levels have been predicted and noise monitoring undertaken at representative sensitive receptors agreed in advance. The predictions show that slight increases in noise levels can be expected at some residential properties to the south of the proposal in Weston. The levels of increases are relatively small and the likelihood of annoyance at these locations is also small. Some residential properties are predicted to see a small improvement in noise levels as a result of the proposed road scheme. Based on these findings the EH Officer agrees that noise mitigation is not required on this scheme. However, there appears to be an inconsistency in the data at receptor 3 (Crotia Mill Farm).

Following the receipt of additional information the Environmental Health Officer has stated that the updated noise comments confirm that the noise impacts of this proposal should not cause levels where annoyance is likely and that further noise mitigation is not required. The Environmental Health Officer would expect that noise monitoring is conducted after the opening of the road to confirm that this is the case.

### Air Quality

Following the submission of additional information the EH Officer accepts the findings in relation to Air Quality.

### Construction

The ES considers the dust, noise and vibration impacts of the construction phase of the proposed development. It does not; however give any details of the direct impacts of this at this stage. Impacts from this phase can generally be considered as transient and controllable through nuisance legislation and by following best practice given in BS5228

(2009). However, the hours of construction are to be agreed with Cheshire East Council, prior to works commencing. Also, piling works can give rise to significant noise and vibration impacts and, as a result, details of methods, timescales and potential impacts and mitigation will need to be agreed with Cheshire East Council prior to any piling works commencing.

Conditions suggested in relation to construction hours, pile driving and contaminated land will need to be included on any permission.

**Historic Gardens Society:** No comments received at the time of writing this report.

**Ramblers Association:** No comments received at the time of writing this report.

**Archaeology:** The report demonstrates that although the area affected by the development is not of particularly high archaeological potential, there are a number of specific sites that will require archaeological mitigation if planning permission is granted. In particular the tailrace of Crotia Mill (site 2) will be cut by the new highway and a formal section will need to be cut and recorded across this feature. In addition, the line of the Basford Brook (Site 4), which marks the historic township boundary between Weston and Basford, is likely to be disturbed in the area to the south of the railway and, perhaps, by the western spur road. Previous work on the brook has demonstrated the survival of ancient, well-preserved organic material in the alluvium filled valley and, where significant disturbance occurs, the work will need to be monitored and provision made for the collection of samples for possible macrofossil and pollen analysis. Finally, a general watching brief should be maintained during topsoil stripping to check for any archaeological remains. This should focus particularly on areas of ridge and furrow (Site 3) and obtaining sections through the remaining hedges and banks, which are a remnant of the historic enclosure system. A report on the archaeological mitigation will also need to be produced. The work may be secured by condition.

## 6. VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

**Barthomley Parish Council:** No comments received at the time of writing this report

**Crewe Green Parish Council:** No comments received at the time of writing this report

**Haslington Parish Council:** The Parish Council agree that the project is likely to have major employment and other economic benefits to the area. However the Parish Council wishes to record the following concerns:

- The design and operation of the existing Crewe Green roundabout is not explicitly addressed. Figure 9.2 shows that the traffic flows will change and or increase. Haslington has a legitimate concern that the roundabout needs to be redesigned [potentially within the existing land area] to ensure that access for Haslington residents is achieved safely and the flows from University Way, Crewe Station and the Bypass are managed without vehicles seeking to use the village roads to avoid the congestion.
- After the experiences of University Way what will be done to ensure that the spur roads do not encourage antisocial access and tipping prior to the construction of the employment buildings.
- The development application shows an expected increase in the use of the Crewe Green roundabout and the bypass towards Sandbach and the M6 J17. What will be done to ensure traffic does not divert on to village roads from either Crewe Green or Wheelock?

- The substandard section of the A500 at Barthomley is not addressed in the application. There is a danger that traffic will divert to use the Haslington Bypass as a link to the M6.

**Hough & Chorlton Parish Council:** The Parish Council agrees in principal to this proposal. The Parish Council is concerned that Cheshire East should control the nature of industrial development on the sites in terms of minimizing potential environmental and pollution hazards. The Parish Council appreciate that this development has the potential to reduce congestion on Nantwich Road and Gresty Road. However, there is little evidence suggesting how surrounding rural infrastructure (e.g. Weston Road and Newcastle Road) will be protected from increased traffic use and 'rat running'. This development will result in increased congestion on the Barthomley link road to Junction 16 of the M6 and on University Way and the Sandbach by-pass. The Parish would ask that consideration of mitigating strategies be included in the planning process to ensure that the rural infrastructure is not further compromised.

**Shavington Parish Council:** No observations to make

**Weston & Basford Parish Council:** The Parish Council recognise the need for this road link as part of the economic regeneration of Crewe and accept that it will form a critical link within the strategic highway network for this area. In this context Weston & Basford Parish Council supports the proposal.

A Parish Plan has recently been produced for Weston & Basford. One of the primary aims of this is to protect the integrity and character of the rural communities which make up the parish. The biggest single issue within the plan relates to traffic and highway matters: the need for effective traffic attenuation measures to deal with the high volumes, speed and rat running of traffic through our local road network. This is an existing problem.

The Parish Council is concerned that the volume of traffic within the rural area will increase as result of this proposal and requests that conditions are attached to any planning permission to ensure that permanent and effective traffic attenuation measures are put in place before the construction of the new road takes place to protect the amenities and rural road network. These should include consideration of a heavy vehicle weight limit restriction along Main Road Weston and measures to prevent through traffic "rat running" through country lanes to get on Junction 16 of the M6. It is also requested that a condition is imposed excluding any construction traffic from passing through the Village of Weston or any of the adjoining local road network.

The Parish Council are concerned about the functioning of this new road in relation to the broader strategic highway network, in particular the bottleneck which regularly happens at peak times along the A500 linking Crewe to Junction 16 on the M6. If a solution to this is not handled comprehensively and the detailed implementation properly thought through at this early stage, then the traffic problem within the area will become unbearable and will be exacerbated as Basford East and West start to be developed. There is regular gridlock along this stretch of road at peak times with the traffic backing up, which severely restricts the movement of residents within the Parish. The Parish Council is very much alive to the fact that any improvements here will also affect Junction 17 on the M6 – all of which will potentially be an extremely costly exercise.

On a more local, the Parish Council is concerned that there must be no vehicular access from the new road on to Croatia Lane. However, it is noted that on the submitted plan that there is pedestrian access at this point. It is requested that this be combined with a pedal

cycle access on to the new road to facilitate the movement of local residents between Weston and Crewe.

The Parish Council would also wish to see an effective landscaping/tree planting scheme to visually soften the new road from viewpoints within the village of Weston.

## **7. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

No representations received at the time of writing this report.

## **8. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

To support this application the application includes the following documents:

- Planning and Environmental Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Crewe Green Link Road Major Scheme Business Case Report
- Statement of Community Involvement

These documents are available to view on the application file.

## **9. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

The proposed development relates to a new dual carriageway (Crewe Green Link South – CGLS) which would be 1.1km in length and would link the A500 and the Weston Gate Roundabout. The CGLS would provide access to the Regional and Strategic Development Site at Basford East while alleviating the congested A534 Nantwich Road. A link road between the A534 and A500 was approved by Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council in 2002. However the permission has lapsed and a new planning application is required for the CGLS.

As Members will be aware the Minister for Decentralisation has recently published two statements. The first is entitled 'Planning for Growth' and the second highlighted a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. These statements set out a much more positive approach to development and state that

*'The Government's top priority in reforming the planning system is to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy'*

and that LPA's should

*'approve development proposals that accord with statutory plans without delay and grant planning permission where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date'.*

The above statements were followed by the Draft National Planning Policy Framework which was published in July 2011. Although this is in draft form it is still considered to be a

material planning consideration and some weight should be given to this document in the consideration of this planning application. In terms of economic development the draft NPPF states that

*'planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing'. In terms of transport it states that 'encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion' and that 'local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable economic growth'.*

These recent statements and the draft NPPF support this proposed development which would pass through Basford East and alleviate congestion on the A534.

In terms of Local Plan Policy the site is located within the Open Countryside and the proposed route of the CGLS is identified on the Proposals Map contained within the Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. Policy TRAN.11 (Non Trunk Roads) states that land along the route of the CGLS as shown on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded from development. The proposed route does deviate from the route shown on the Proposals Map to avoid environmental affects arising from the culverting of Basford Brook. However this is not considered to be a significant issue and the principle of the proposed development is supported by the Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan.

In relation to South Cheshire (Policy MCR4) the RSS states that plans and strategies should *'support economic growth in Crewe and focus development on sites which accord with RDF1, DP1-9, W2, W3 and MCR1'* and *'promote the role of Crewe as a regional public transport gateway/interchange to the region'*. There is also support in Policy DP3 (Promote Sustainable Economic Development) which states that it is a fundamental principle of the RSS to *'seek to improve productivity, and to close the gap in economic performance between the North West and other parts of the UK. Sustainable economic growth should be supported and promoted'*.

Finally, in terms of National Planning Policy, Policy EC10 of PPS4 states that

*'Local planning authorities should adopt a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development. Planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably'.*

PPG13 states that in relation to new transport infrastructure that

*'Care must be taken to avoid or minimise the environmental impact of any new transport infrastructure projects, or improvements to existing infrastructure; this includes the impacts which may be caused during construction'.*

It is clear that there is support for the principle of this development at National, Regional and Local levels and there are benefits of this scheme which would alleviate congestion on the A534 and also help to facilitate development at Basford East. It is therefore considered that the provision of this road link is acceptable in principle. However, the application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement and there are a number of complex environmental issues which will need to be considered as part of this application.

## Highway Implications

The road network in Crewe is constrained by the existing rail infrastructure in the town with congestion forming on a number of routes within the town. The Crewe Green Link Road Major Scheme Business Case Report identifies that the main areas facing congestion in Crewe are;

- A500/A530 Middlewich Road roundabout
- A500/A534 roundabout
- A5020/A534/A532 Crewe Green Roundabout
- A534/A5020 Crewe Arms Roundabout
- A534 along Nantwich Road from B5078 Edleston Road to Crewe Arms Roundabout

This congestion occurs mainly at peak times, apart from the A534 along Nantwich Road which occurs in the inter-peak period.

In terms of the impact of the development on the highway network, a SATURN highways model was undertaken. This compared the existing traffic flows with the impact of the CGLS. The proposal would only cause a very slight increase in trips from the existing situation. The construction of the CGLS would have the effect of diverting traffic away from the A534 and the A530 and the new route would provide a better route from the west to the east of Crewe bypassing the A534.

Overall the impact of CGLS on the Weston village area is predicted to provide a general reduction in vehicle flows versus the situation without the road. Specifically, the transport modelling shows:

- Reduction in 12 hour traffic flows on almost all village links (12 hour flows are the most significant in terms of 'local perception')
- Largest reductions on Whites Lane and Weston Lane (which suggest that the current traffic flows is due to rat running)
- CGLS results in bigger reductions in flows through Weston at peak time

The traffic modelling work shows that the scheme has a negligible effect on traffic flow on the Eastern section of the A500 (known as the Barthomley link road) as no new traffic is introduced to the network - rather existing traffic is re-distributed along the new road. Therefore, congestion on this key link is not foreseen to significantly worsen as a result of the Crewe Green Link Road.

However, there is recognition that the current traffic conditions on the A500 Barthomley link are undesirable, and an improvement linked to any future Basford East planning application is seen as the most likely method to improve the situation.

The scheme seeking planning permission does not include any vehicular access onto Crotia Mill Lane. The Crewe Green Link Road includes the provision of cycle lanes on both sides of the road. The intention is to provide a cycle/footpath link to Crotia Mill Lane as part of the scheme.

The construction of the Crewe Green Link Road would result in a re-assignment of traffic around the highway network of Crewe. No new vehicular trips are added to the network as a result of this application. At Crewe Green roundabout, the traffic modelling predicts an

increase in traffic on the University Way, Crewe Road (B5077) and A534 arms – and a reduction in traffic on the Hungerford Road, Sydney Road and Crewe Green Road arms.

The Council recognises that traffic movement and peak hour congestion at the Crewe Green Roundabout is already a problem and is pursuing a solution. Any solution needs to be considered in the wider development/growth of Crewe through the Local Development Framework.

Traffic Surveys both before and after opening will be undertaken to assess the actual impact of the scheme and examine if any additional local traffic mitigation measures are required to be funded from council local transport plan funding.

In terms of road safety the ES identifies that there would be a reduction in vehicle accidents in the area due to traffic diverting away from the older low standard single carriageway roads to the modern dual carriageway.

The construction vehicles will be phased and HGV movements will be restricted to working hours which will help to mitigate the impact upon local residents.

The Environmental Statement has been assessed by the Councils Highways section and also by the Highways Agency. Both have not raised any objection to the development and as a result the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its highway implications.

### **Amenity**

#### Noise and vibration

If the proposal was not developed the results of the noise survey show that the noise levels would increase for 12 properties (slight/moderate adverse) and 112 (slight adverse) by 2027.

If the proposal was constructed there would be a moderate/large adverse impact to 1 property, a slight/moderate adverse impact to 64 properties and a slight adverse impact to 59 properties by 2027.

The results show that only Crotia Mill Farm is the only residential property predicted to experience an increase in noise levels at ground floor greater than 3dB. However the predicted noise level for this property would be 51.8dB<sub>LA10 18hr</sub> which is less than the 55dB<sub>L<sub>Aeq</sub></sub> stated by the World Health Organisation for outdoor spaces. Therefore the ES concludes that it is unlikely that mitigation will be required anywhere along the route of the CGLS. This view is supported by the Councils Environmental Health Officer who states that further noise monitoring should be carried out once the road is operational to confirm that this is the case.

In terms of vibration, the separation distances mean that there will be minimal impact if well maintained. In terms of the construction of the road the impact would be short term and temporary and therefore would not warrant the refusal of this planning application.

#### Air Quality

The pollutants of concern are Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter. A baseline study of existing air quality has been undertaken and the potential impact during construction and operational phases has been considered within the ES. There are no high sensitivity receptors within 200m of the proposed link road. The scattered farms and residential properties on Mill Lane and Whites Lane are considered to be of medium sensitivity.

The concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide predicted at 6 chosen sensitive receptors shows that there would be a detrimental increase in Nitrogen Oxide at Weston Road House (this receptor is adjacent to the roundabout between Weston Road and University Way) with beneficial impacts upon Main Road House and Gresty Road. The assessment also predicts that the concentrations at all sensitive receptors would be below the UK annual mean objective and the EU limit irrespective of whether the road is built with concentrations predicted to decrease at all sites by 2027. This is due to projected decreases in background concentrations as well as improved vehicle emission technology.

In relation to Particulate Matter, the construction of the CGLS would result in an increase at Weston Road House only. The assessment also predicts that the concentrations at all sensitive receptors would be below the UK annual mean objective and the EU limit for Particulate Matter irrespective of whether the road is built.

Nantwich Road is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and the proposed development would reduce the number of vehicles using this road and as a result there would not be a detrimental impact on the AQMA.

The Environmental Health Officer originally raised some concerns in relation to the date of the data, but following the receipt of additional information the findings contained within the ES are accepted and the development would not cause any significant air quality issues.

### Contaminated Land

The application site has a history of agricultural use, railway development and in-filled ponds. As a result, the Environmental Health Officer has requested a condition to require a risk assessment to be carried out to assess the potential risks caused by land contamination.

### Construction

Construction of the road could raise some temporary amenity concerns to local residents through noise, dust and vibration. Such issues are controllable through nuisance legislation and by following best practice given in BS5228 (2009). However, in this instance given the scale of the development, it is considered necessary to attach conditions relating to pile driving and hours of operation.

### **Landscape**

The Planning and Environmental Statement (Assessment of landscape and Visual Effects) has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment, (Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2002). The PES offers an accurate assessment of the Landscape and Visual

Effects that the proposals would have on the surrounding area. The main mitigation measures proposed are as follows:

- Retention of the majority of the existing trees and hedgerows
- Implementation of new planting comprising a high proportion of native tree species. The proposed new planting will include native trees and shrubs which will provide effective long-term screening and will integrate well with the surrounding landscape
- Reinstatement of trees where possible in the areas adjacent to Weston road and the railway line. Supplementary planting on the Crewe-Stoke railway embankment to reduce visual effects, filter and screen views to and from the railway
- New landscaping adjacent to Fir Tree Cottage to screen views and reduce effects of the removal of vegetation on the railway embankment
- New landscaping adjacent to Croatia Mill Farm to minimise the visibility of the road from this property

An indicative Landscape Masterplan has been submitted which indicates that planting will consist of new structure tree planting, new avenue planting, under storey planting, hedgerows and amenity grassland. However, the Landscape Masterplan is just an indicative plan and, since it will be the landscape proposals that will mitigate the road scheme, a detailed landscape scheme for the whole route should be submitted prior to commencement of development. This will be secured by the imposition of a planning condition should the application be approved.

### **Trees**

This application is supported by an Arboricultural Implications Assessment which identifies the implications for existing trees along the proposed link road and associated infrastructure including a roundabout and exits to facilitate the future development of the employment land.

The trees within the application site are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The submitted Arboricultural Report has identified 37 individual trees, 10 groups of trees and one area of mature woodland towards the northern site boundary adjacent to Weston Road. The trees comprise principally of Oak, Ash and Alder located predominantly within existing and partially redundant hedgerows within field pasture.

A total of 11 individual trees (Oak, Ash and Alder) and two groups of trees (G8 and G9 (Oak and Hawthorn)) are directly impacted by the route of the link road and will require removal. Further trees will also require removal within the woodland belt (W1) at the northern site boundary off Weston Road (A5020).

Of the 11 individual trees, 7 are classed in the submitted report as B category trees (trees of moderate quality and value which make a significant contribution). The remaining 4 individual trees are graded as C category (low quality and value). The two groups of trees which are located on and adjacent to the railway embankment towards the northern end of the site comprise of mature Oak and Hawthorn and only provide a limited contribution to the landscape character and wider amenity of the area and have been given a C category rating in the report.

Two trees (T15 and T24): a Horse Chestnut and Hawthorn are identified as poor quality trees of low vigour and are therefore proposed for removal by virtue of their condition.

The most significant feature in terms of impact in landscape and visual amenity terms will be the removal of the section of woodland (W1) located adjacent to the A5020 Weston Road. The woodland presents a significant visual backdrop to the south of Weston Road and provides a well structured mature screen both visually and acoustically to the railway and potentially to the future use of the employment land. Whilst the number of trees to be removed have not been quantified within the report, the extent of tree loss (comprising principally of Oak, Alder, Birch and Holly) within the woodland area directly impacted by the route in terms of land area is some 4900m<sup>2</sup> or thereabouts.

Further trees within the woodland either side of the proposed road within the working area of the route are also likely to be affected and the extent of this in terms of the impact upon the rooting environment of trees will be dictated by working area requirements and the positioning of the root protection area (RPA) barriers.

The location of the proposed route also impacts on parts of tree groups the most significant in terms of its landscape significance is Group G2 (Group of Oak, Alder, Willow and Hawthorn) around a pond. The position of proposed link road will necessitate the removal of a section of trees within the western section of the group, although further tree losses are anticipated due to the nature of the intensity of the development, and possible impacts from development activities on the water table. It is suggested that an amendment, by relocating the route to the west of its current position would allow for the retention of this important landscape feature, but would need to be balanced against other overriding engineering and layout priorities.

Four further groups are partially affected by the route (identified as groups G4, G5, G6 and G10). Groups G4, G5 and G10 within the central section of the site are impacted by the east and west spurs off the roundabout. Both groups are deemed low 'C' category and are of no outstanding merit in landscape terms. The integrity of these groups are unlikely to survive in the longer term given the proposed level of development activity and future intended use of the site. A section of Hawthorn hedge (Group G6), is located to the southern section of the site and is to be removed to facilitate the route: again, this feature contributes little to the wider landscape of the area.

The report also identifies a further 10 trees (of which six are B moderate, to A high category trees) are located on the periphery of the link road. It is likely that without some adjustment to the route of the link road, the development will affect the rooting environment of these trees and impact upon their long term health and safe well being. Again any such amendments would need to be balanced against other priorities.

The link road cuts across a number of hedgerows to the south of the site and within the central section of the site within the vicinity of the proposed roundabout and east and west spur roads. The former comprises predominantly of hawthorn as the primary woody species; the latter hedgerow being comprised of a number of gaps within it and again comprised mainly of hawthorn. Both features are not considered to meet the 'Important Hedgerow' criteria, as defined within the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

In respect of tree losses, it is considered that the impact of the development generally is moderate in terms of its effect on visual amenity and moderate to high in respect of the potential losses within woodland W1 to the north of the site, primarily because losses at this location have not been fully quantified within the submissions.

In mitigation, the application is supported by a Landscape Management Plan which comprises of native tree and associated under-storey planting along the length of the proposed carriageway, which appears to be reasonably comprehensive.

In relation to tree mitigation, conditions will be attached regarding tree protection and mitigation.

### **Ecology**

The application site includes a number of habitats and has the potential to support the following protected species: Great Crested Newts, Lesser Silver Water Beetle, White Clawed Crayfish, Water Vole, Otter, Reptiles, Bats, Badgers, Barn Owl, Kingfisher and Birds. Of these species Bats and Great Crested Newts are both European Protected Species.

The application originally received objections in relation to protected species from the Councils own ecologist, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Additional information has been submitted in order to address these objections.

#### Great Crested Newts

Relatively small numbers of Great Crested Newts have been recorded in a number of ponds within close proximity of the proposed route of the CGLS. The proposed development will not result in the loss of any identified breeding ponds. However, it will result in the loss of terrestrial habitat within 250m of known breeding ponds. The construction phase will also pose the risk of killing/injuring newts. The submitted ES identifies the impact on GCN as being medium and significant.

The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats. The Directive only allows disturbance, or deterioration or destruction of breeding sites or resting places,

- in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment

and provided that there is:

- no satisfactory alternative
- no detriment to the maintenance of the species population at favourable conservation status in their natural range

The UK implements the Directive in the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 which contain two layers of protection

- a requirement on Local Planning Authorities (“LPAs”) to have regard to the Directive’s requirements above, and
- a licensing system administered by Natural England.

Circular 6/2005 advises LPAs to give due weight to the presence of protected species on a development site to reflect EC requirements.

PPS9 (2005) advises LPAs to ensure that appropriate weight is attached to protected species

*“Where granting planning permission would result in significant harm .... [LPAs] will need to be satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on any alternative site that would result in less or no harm. In the absence of such alternatives [LPAs] should ensure that, before planning permission is granted, adequate mitigation measures are put in place. Where ... significant harm ... cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures should be sought. If that significant harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.”*

PPS9 encourages the use of planning conditions or obligations where appropriate and again advises [LPAs] to

*“refuse permission where harm to the species or their habitats would result unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh that harm.”*

The converse of this advice is that if issues of detriment to the species, satisfactory alternatives and public interest seem likely to be satisfied, no impediment to planning permission arises under the Directive and Regulations.

In terms of the 3 tests, it is considered that:

- There are no satisfactory alternatives as the proposed link road would need to cross the development site known as Basford East
- The derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of GCN as the site supports relatively small numbers of GCN and no breeding ponds would be lost. Furthermore, a scheme of mitigation which includes the construction phase of the development, habitat creation and enhancement will be provided as part of the development.
- There are imperative social reasons of overriding public interest as the development would improve transport links across Crewe and ease congestion along Nantwich Road.

### Bats

No bat roosts have been identified during the survey but some trees were considered to provide medium potential to support roosts. The application site includes a range of habitats suitable for supporting foraging and commuting bats. The survey produced as part of the ES indicates that the dominant species were Common and Soprano Pipistrelle with a few isolated Myotis and Noctule bats encountered. Bats were recorded across most of the survey area with the greatest use around the tree lined brooks, hedgerows, to the west of Basford Brook and along the tree lined railway line.

As stated above, no bat roosts will be directly affected by the works. However, there is likely to be some loss of foraging/commuting habitat, which will be compensated for through the proposed landscaping scheme.

The lighting of the road may have an adverse impact on foraging/commuting bats. As a result if planning consent is granted, it is recommended that a condition is attached that the lighting scheme for the road is agreed with the LPA.

### Water Vole

The submitted Water Vole Survey identifies that Water Voles are present in both Basford Brook and Gresty Brook. However the sparse nature of the field signs makes it difficult to be certain how many of the 17 burrows are in use. Due to the spread of the field signs across the two adjoining brooks, it should be considered that the entire length of the two brooks within the survey area is likely to be used by Water Voles.

The installation of outflows into the brook and the construction of the spur road bridge have the potential to have an adverse impact upon this species through the loss of habitat and the disturbance and killing/injuring of animals during the construction process. Currently there is no finalised design for spur road bridge crossing. The impacts of spur road have therefore been assessed on worst case scenario: this being that a 110m section of the brook would be affected.

Mitigation proposals involving the exclusion and/or trapping of water voles from the working area for the duration of the construction period and the restoration of habitats have been proposed.

If planning consent is granted the proposed mitigation is acceptable to minimise the impacts on water voles. A condition is however required to ensure that revised mitigation proposals are submitted once the final design of the scheme has been established.

### White Clawed Crayfish

A survey carried out as part of the application in 2001 recorded a total of 59 white-clawed crayfish by trapping undertaken in Basford Brook. As part of this application further torch surveys have indicated that Basford Brook and Gresty Brook still support a population of White Clawed Crayfish.

This site represents one of the few known, surviving white clawed crayfish populations in Cheshire and the brook is being considered for designation as a Site of Biological Importance.

As the design of the spur road is not known the impact of the scheme has been assessed on a worst case scenario basis: this being that 110m of water course will be affected by the proposed development which in the absence of mitigation would result in a long term adverse impact at the County Scale.

The submitted outline method statement proposed the draining down of those sections of watercourse affected by the works and the translocation of any animals present to the adjacent downstream section. The reinstatement of habitats following the completion of the works is also proposed.

The Cheshire East Ecologist has advised that, if planning consent is granted, the proposed mitigation is adequate to minimise the adverse impact of the development upon this species.

### Lesser Silver Water Beetle

A 2008 LSWB survey recommended a further survey, but in 2010 the road location and working area was fixed and it was determined that only one pond would be affected and this did not provide suitable habitat for LSWB. Therefore the scope was revised and additional survey was not considered necessary.

With regards to the timing of the surveys and the initial objection from the Environment Agency, the LSWB surveys were undertaken at ponds surrounding the Crewe Green site on 18th August and 3rd September during which egg cocoon searches were undertaken as well as hand netting for beetles and larvae.

During the August survey, Pond 1 - the only pond potentially affected by development proposals, was found to be completely dry and devoid of aquatic vegetation. Since LSWB require a floating raft of aquatic vegetation on water to reproduce it can only be concluded that Pond 1 has no potential to support lesser silver water beetle.

Current research indicates that there are two breeding periods for LSWB in the North West; May to June and July to August. Therefore, on this basis, it is acceptable to survey for cocoons and adult beetles during both of these breeding periods. Cheshire based LSWB specialist Andy Harmer states (2008),

*'The timing of the survey (survey date in August) coincides with perhaps the window that would witness most adults and larvae at any one time; adults from the initial breeding period, recruitment from the initial period and larvae from second breeding period'.*

Therefore, the LSWB survey undertaken at Pond 1 on 18th August 2008 was undertaken during an optimal survey season for lesser silver water beetle.

As a result of the above and due to the withdrawal of the objection from the Environment Agency, it is not considered that the development would have a detrimental impact upon the Lesser Silver Water Beetle.

### Barn Owl

Barn Owls are known to forage on the application site. There will be some loss of foraging habitat to the footprint of the road. The road will also pose a significant risk to barn owls due to increased mortality rates resulting from increased road collisions. Research suggests that this impact is severe enough to prevent successful breeding near to major roads. To mitigate this impact the submitted method statement states that the roadside landscaping will be designed to encourage barn owls to fly high above the road and the roadside grasslands will be designed to be unattractive to barn owls. The Cheshire East ecologist has advised that the proposed barn owl mitigation is in accordance with standard best practise for road schemes.

### Kingfisher

There is likely to be some loss of poorer quality Kingfisher habitat as a result of the proposed scheme. The submitted method statement assesses the development as having a very low level of potential impact. The Cheshire East ecologist has advised that the proposed development is not 'reasonable likely' to have an adverse impact upon Kingfishers. To mitigate the risk to Kingfishers an additional survey is proposed immediately before the commencement of any works that affect the brook.

### Other Protected Species/Ecological issues

No significant direct impact on any badger sett is anticipated. There is potential for the operation of the road to result in increased road casualties. The submitted method statement proposes that this will be mitigated by the use of badger fencing designed to deter badgers from crossing the road. The Cheshire East Ecologist is satisfied that

provided the proposed mitigation is implemented the proposed development will not have a significant impact upon badgers.

In terms of breeding birds a number of priority bird species have been recorded on site. The proposed development has been assessed as having an adverse impact on breeding birds at the local level. A well designed landscaping scheme for the site would help to compensate for some of the impacts on breeding birds. If planning consent is granted conditions in relation to the timing of works (which involve the removal of vegetation and a scheme to incorporate bird nesting features) should be incorporated into the development.

In terms of Blue Bells a survey of the woodland has been carried out and this has determined that only non-native Spanish Blue Bells are present. As a result, there would be no impact upon native Blue Bells.

The submitted surveys indicate that the site does not support populations of Otters or Reptiles and this has been accepted.

A number of hedgerows (H1, H2, H8, H11, H12) have been identified as being species rich and consequently of nature conservation value: 40 metres of species rich hedgerow will be lost to the proposed development. To compensate for this loss there are proposals for the planting of additional species rich hedgerows.

### **Flood Risk**

The proposed road runs alongside Basford Brook and crosses several other unnamed watercourses. The Environment Agency Flood Maps indicate that there is potential for fluvial flooding to affect the development where the 1 in 100 year flood event outline extends beyond the river channel.

In terms of the construction phase, a silt management plan will reduce any potential risk of flooding due to the restriction of flows caused by mud/debris entering the surface water drainage system or watercourses. To prevent flooding from the surface water runoff arising from increased hard paved areas or ground water pumps, surface water runoff and temporary drainage is to be discharged to a watercourse at a rate no greater than the existing run off rate. Detention basins or other temporary attenuation structures will be used where necessary to store additional surface water during the construction phase.

Construction should not result in a reduction in flood plain storage. If a temporary loss of floodplain is unavoidable, appropriate compensatory storage will be provided.

In terms of the operational phase, the structures cannot be designed to be above the level for the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event. This is due to the highway being located within a cutting below the railway line, but the proposed flood bund protecting the highway would be set at this level which would achieve the required standard of protection.

Compensatory storage will most likely be required to mitigate the impact of the proposed highway upon the flood extents of Basford Brook.

This information has been assessed by the Environment Agency who has raised no objection to the development, subject to the imposition of a number of planning conditions. As a result, the flood risk information is considered to be acceptable.

## **Surface Water Quality**

Basford Brook is an EC designated river under the Freshwater Fish Directive. It is a Salmonid river (the ability to support Salmon and Trout) as it flows through most of the site and then becomes a Cyprinid river (the ability to support cyprinid fish such as Carp and Minnow). In addition, White Clawed Crayfish are present in this river and they are a protected species. The brook is classified under the Water Framework Directive as having moderate status and there are no nearby water abstractions (although Basford Brook has importance as a receiving watercourse and as a conveyor of seven effluent discharges upstream/downstream of the site). Overall, the ES identifies Basford Brook to be of high importance.

In terms of the other minor watercourses, no water information has been found with regards to these minor watercourses which flow into Basford Brook. As a result they have a low level of importance.

The potential impacts upon water quality are from the construction phase and operational phase of the development. In terms of the construction phase:

- Procedures and mitigation measures will be adopted during the construction phase in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan and will require a number of separate consents and licences from the EA
- A silt management plan will be produced which will aim to help prevent silt from entering the watercourses
- Storage and spillage emergency response measures will be provided

To drain the proposed road and future development land at either side, a number of outfalls into Basford Brook would be required. The 6 outfalls have been aggregated where possible to minimise the number of new structures along Basford Brook.

In terms of the operational phase, the proposed road is not predicted to cause a significant impact upon surface water due to road spillages or highway runoff entering the watercourses. Oil interceptors will be incorporated into the road design and will provide some containment of pollutants whilst a proposed attenuation pond west of the road before it crosses beneath the railway line would provide water treatment prior to discharge.

The western spur road off the central roundabout would cross over Basford Brook. This crossing would be by means of an open span bridge which would minimise the adverse effects on hydrodynamics and river ecology that a culverted crossing would cause.

This information has been assessed by the Environment Agency who has raised no objection to the development, subject to the imposition of a number of planning conditions. As a result, the surface water quality information is considered to be acceptable.

## **Impact upon Listed Buildings and the Historic Park and Garden**

Given the separation distances and the existing landscape buffers it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact upon the setting of any listed building or the Crewe Hall Historic Park and Garden.

## **Archaeology**

The cultural heritage assessment contained within the ES assesses the archaeological potential of the site and identifies 4 sites of interest. The Councils Archaeologist has assessed the application and commented that the application site is '*not of particularly high archaeological potential*'. The Archaeologist has suggested a condition to secure a report on archaeological mitigation.

## **Impact upon the Public Right of Way (PROW)**

Basford FP1 is located to the west of the application site and the spur road would just cross the route of this PROW. The PROW Officer has stated access to/through the new highway is required. This means either gaps or gates in the boundary structure of the new road. This issue could be controlled by the imposition of an appropriately worded planning condition which would protect the route of the PROW.

## **Impact upon the Hazardous Installation**

A TRANSCO gas pipe crosses the application site and this is classified as a hazardous installation. The consultation from the Health and Safety Executive is that they are advising against the proposed development but they have requested additional information relating to the pipeline and a recent diverting/lowering of the pipeline. This information has been provided to the HSE and at the time of writing this report a response was awaited. Further clarification in relation to this issue will be provided as part of an update report to the planning committee.

## **11. CONCLUSIONS**

The principal of the new road link is supported by local, regional and national planning policy as well as emerging planning documents such as the NPPF and the statements made by the Planning Minister in relation to 'Planning for Growth' and a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The proposed CGLS would provide many highway benefits and would relieve highway congestion along Nantwich Road and on other routes within Crewe. The development would not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity, landscape, trees, the surrounding Listed Buildings and the Historic Park and Garden, Archaeology or the Public Right of Way. Subject to appropriate mitigation and the imposition of a number of suitably worded planning conditions the development would not have a detrimental impact upon protected species, ecology, surface water quality or flood risk.

As part of the committee update report an update will be provided in relation to the hazardous installation and the objection from the HSE.

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Approve subject to the following conditions;**

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Development to proceed in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3. Details of gaps or gates in boundary treatment of the road are required in order to allow access to Basford FP1**
- 4. No development shall take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a**

programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme.

5. Prior to the commencement of development a detailed tree felling/pruning specification shall be submitted to the LPA for approval in writing
6. Prior to the commencement of development a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted and approved by the LPA
7. Prior to the commencement of development a detailed Tree Protection Scheme shall be submitted and approved by the LPA
8. Prior to the commencement of development a detailed Landscaping Scheme (including native species only) shall be submitted and approved by the LPA
9. Implementation of the approved landscaping scheme
10. Prior to any development commencing a scheme stating the hours of construction shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
11. Prior to any development commencing a scheme stating the hours of pile driving shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
12. Prior to the development commencing:
  - a. An investigation and Risk Assessment shall be carried out to assess the potential risks from land contamination as defined in the supplied geo-environmental risk assessment.
  - b. If such investigation and Risk Assessment identifies that remedial/protective measures are required, then a remedial/protection scheme shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and shall be implemented.
  - c. If remedial/protective measures are required, a Site Completion Statement detailing the remedial/protective measures incorporated shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA in full prior to use of the development.
13. Additional noise monitoring to be carried out within one month of the new road becoming operational any additional mitigation measures shall be provided within 3 months of the road becoming operational
14. The GCN mitigation outlined in CGLS GCN Method Statement produced by TEP and dated August 2011 shall be implemented as part of the proposed development
15. Prior to undertaking any works between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August in any year, a detailed survey is required to check for nesting birds
16. Prior to the commencement of development the applicant to submit detailed proposals for the incorporation of features into the scheme suitable for use by breeding birds.
17. The development is to proceed in accordance with the Water Vole mitigation measures only
18. Details of all external lighting to be submitted and agreed in writing with the LPA
19. Prior to the commencement of development details of the design and external appearance of the bridge over Basford Brook shall be submitted to the LPA and approved in writing
20. The development is to proceed in accordance with the White Clawed Crayfish mitigation measures only

- 21. Prior to the commencement of the development an additional Kingfisher survey shall be carried out and any necessary mitigation measures shall be incorporated into the scheme**
- 22. Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for the provision and management of an undeveloped buffer zone alongside the Basford Brook watercourse, retained non-main watercourse and adjoining ponds shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority.**
- 23. Prior to the commencement of development, details of all bridges proposed on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the bridges shall be constructed as set out in the approved scheme.**
- 24. Prior to the commencement of development a plan is required for the protection and/or mitigation of damage to the populations of white-clawed crayfish and water vole and their associated habitat during construction works and once the development is complete.**
- 25. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to ensure that the proposed road at the southerly side of the railway has a flood bund (built to the western side of the road), set at a minimum level of 50.42 mAOD, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**
- 26. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to provide compensatory flood storage in the vicinity of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**
- 27. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as; a scheme to limit the discharge of surface water from the proposed road scheme so that it will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped greenfield site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**
- 28. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the local planning authority for, a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.**
- 29. Prior to the commencement of the development approved by this planning permission the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority: 1. A preliminary risk assessment, 2. A site investigation scheme, 3. The results of the site investigation and detailed risk assessment, 4. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy are complete.**

