

**SOUTHERN PLANNING COMMITTEE – 15 March 2023**  
**UPDATE TO AGENDA**

**APPLICATION NO.**

22/4472N

**LOCATION**

*SOUTH CHESHIRE MAGISTRATES COURT (LAW COURT), AND LAND TO WEST UP TO AND INCLUDING THE LIBRARY BUILDING, PRINCE ALBERT STREET, CREWE.*

**UPDATE PREPARED**

**KEY ISSUUS**

**Trees**

The consultations response from the Councils Forestry Officer was received following the publication of agenda. It is advised that the application site presently benefits from low and moderate quality trees which mostly border the perimeter of the existing building. The trees are not afforded any statutory protection but are accepted to contribute to the amenity of the area.

The proposal has been supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement. The report confirms the presence of 6 individual and 2 groups of moderate quality trees and 9 individual and 2 groups of low-quality C Category trees. Of these, 1 individual and 2 groups of moderate quality trees and 1 individual, 1 group and part of one other group of low-quality C Category trees are proposed for removal to accommodate the proposal.

A linear group of low and moderate quality trees stand to the west within hard standing along Prince Albert Street and outside the site edged red. The Forestry Officer considers that trees to the north (south of Memorial Gardens) presently make an important contribution to the existing sylvan setting and these are all shown to be retained. Mostly moderate quality trees are sited to the south of the existing Library building, either side of the access and exit to the understorey car park. These trees are required to be removed to accommodate the access to the replacement car park. The position of the replacement building (History Centre) with retained trees has been appraised and is not considered to present a significantly inferior relationship to that which presently exists.

The Forestry Officer advises that the AIA has satisfactorily considered the impact of demolition and construction and identified conflicts arising, although the tree protection plan needs to be amended to identify the locations of all areas requiring supervision during the demolition process. The installation of hoarding is indicated and accepted as essential in affording adequate above ground protection to retained trees to the west of the site during demolition/construction. Its installation would require some excavation by hand in rooting areas to accommodate supporting posts to minimise root damage to the retained trees. The Forestry Officer notes that pruning will be required to accommodate the hoarding, and the tree protection scheme should be

amended to ensure that the hoarding is relocated to the suggested line of tree protection fencing, or a more prescriptive pruning specification provided to ensure that retained trees will not be negatively affected by the proposal.

Furthermore, proposed drainage routes will not have any significant impact on the retained trees subject to adherence with the methodology proposed. The removal and reconstruction of a wall to the north of the development area and removal of existing steps and installation of kerbs within the Root Protection Areas of retained trees T2 (C Cat), T4, T5 & T7 (B Cat) will arise in some minor conflicts including from alterations to existing levels. The Forestry Officer advises that the proposed construction methods to acceptable, although the areas where special measures are proposed should be clearly identified on the tree protection plan with details of existing and proposed levels provided.

New tree planting as indicated on the Landscape General Arrangement suggests that a total of 31 new trees will be planted which is considered to adequately compensate for the proposed loss of 11 trees. The loss of moderate quality trees which are not afforded any statutory protection can be therefore mitigated.

The AIA and AMS have demonstrated that demolition and construction will not have a significant impact on retained trees and the Forestry Officer raises no objection to the application. Conditions are however recommended as regards details of tree protection and areas requiring supervision during the demolition process, construction within Root protection areas during landscaping works, and pruning works should be amended within an updated AIA and AMS.

### **Drainage/Flood Risk**

The consultation response of the LLFA has been received and has no objection in principle to the development. In particular the LLFA notes that the proposed drainage layout includes the provision of SUDs including rain garden, tree pits and permeable paving.

However, the LLFA requires further technical and detailed information to be provided in respect of the on-site surface water drainage scheme, including detailed engineering drawings and cross-sectional plans of these SUDs structures and future management arrangements. A planning condition is recommended by the LLFA secure the submission and approval of these details.

The LLFA also require a condition to be imposed requiring the submission and approval of ground levels and Finished floor levels (FFLs) to ensure flood risk is contained and satisfactorily managed on-site, and not transferred off site.

### **Low Emission Boilers**

Condition 11 refers to the provision of ultra-low emission boilers. The applicant has now confirmed that there are no gas boilers proposed as air source heat pumps are being installed. This condition can now be removed from the recommendation.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are no suggested changes to the recommendation, but additional conditions should be added to the main report to address the impact on retained trees and LLFAs requirements in respect of the surface water drainage scheme, as detailed below;

- ~~11. Provision of ultra-low emission boilers~~
17. Tree Retention
18. Tree Protection scheme
19. Tree Pruning/Felling Specification
20. Arboricultural Method Statement
21. Details of on-site Surface Water drainage scheme, infrastructure and management
22. Details of levels