

Planning Reference No:	10/4124N
Application Address:	Former Factory, Chestnut Grove, Crewe
Proposal:	14 Two Storey Dwellings at Former Factory Site Chestnut Grove Crewe
Applicant:	Mr D. Beecroft
Application Type:	Full Planning
Grid Reference:	371303 356012
Ward:	Crewe East
Earliest Determination Date:	15 th November 2010
Expiry Dated:	10 th January 2011
Date of Officer's Site Visit:	29 th October 2010
Date Report Prepared:	24 th November 2010
Constraints:	N/A

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Loss of employment site
- Design/Impact on character and appearance of area
- Impact on adjoining residential amenities
- Impact on highways

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is referred to the Southern Planning Committee as it involves a residential development of more than 10 dwellings.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located on the northern side of Chestnut Grove within the Crewe Settlement Boundary. The factory unit which once stood on the site has now been demolished. The area is predominantly residential with the majority of the surrounding properties including those opposite being traditional terraced dwellings. The properties to the rear of the application site fronting Beech Grove are semi-detached dwellings while a railway line runs to the east of the application site. A separate parcel of land to the east of No 19 Chestnut Grove also forms part of this planning application and is currently used as an informal car park (previously it was used as a car park for employees of the now demolished factory).

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposed development is for the erection of a single terrace of 14, two-bedroom dwellings. The proposed dwellings would be of a traditional appearance with bay windows at ground floor alternated between pairs of dwellings. The proposed dwellings would be set back from the pavement by 2 metres with a 1 metre high wall enclosing a front garden area. To the opposite side of Chestnut Grove is a separate parcel of land which also forms part of the application site, this would be developed to form a 15 space car park which

would serve the proposed dwellings. An alleyway would be provided to the rear of the dwellings with all of the proposed dwellings having access to this alleyway. An application for the same development was approved under planning application P07/0431; however this permission has now expired.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

P07/0431 – Fourteen two storey dwellings – Approved 1st June 2007

P02/0899 - Change of Use to Store, Offices and Car Park for Roofing Contractors – Withdrawn 4th November 2002

P02/0404 - Removal of Condition 3 on Planning Permission P01/0980 – Approved 25th August 2002

P01/0980- Change of use to Assembly, Storage and Distribution of Agricultural Equipment and Products – Approved 4th December 2001

P00/0926 - Outline Application for Residential Development – Approved 6th December 2000

7/12709 - Manufacture of glass units aluminium and UPVC window frames – Approved 19th December 1985

7/06909 - Change of use to office and warehouse – Approved 29th May 1980

5. POLICIES

Development Plan 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)

RES.2 (Unallocated Housing Sites)

RES.3 (Housing Densities)

CF.3 (Retention of Community Facilities)

NE.9 (Protected Species)

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 – Spatial Principles

DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities

DP4 – Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure

EM1 – Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets

EM18 – Decentralised Energy Supply

MCR4 – South Cheshire

National policy

PPS 1: (Delivering Sustainable Development)

PPS 3: (Housing)

Supplementary Planning Document on Development on Backland and Gardens

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

The Strategic Highways and Transportation Manager: No objection. A condition should be attached to ensure that the parking provision shown on the plans is provided.

Environmental Health: Request conditions regarding contaminated land, construction hours, pile driving, external lighting and a noise assessment

Network Rail: The developer should ensure that the works do not encroach onto Network Rail land. The developer must ensure that storm water/surface water must not be discharged onto Network Rail's property or into Network Rail's culverts or drains except by agreement with Network Rail. The Developer must provide at their expense a suitable trespass proof fence (of at least 1.8m in height) adjacent to Network Rail's boundary and make provision for its future maintenance and renewal without encroachment upon Network Rail land. Network Rail's existing fencing / wall must not be removed or damaged and at no point either during construction or after works are completed on site should the foundations of the fencing or wall or any embankment therein be damaged, undermined or compromised in any way. The applicant must ensure that the construction and subsequent maintenance can be carried out to any proposed buildings or structures without adversely affecting the safety of, or encroaching upon Network Rail's adjacent land, and therefore all/any building should be situated at least 2 metres from Network Rail's boundary. Any scaffold which is to be constructed within 10 metres of the railway boundary fence must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles over-sail the railway and protective netting around such scaffold must be installed. The potential for any noise/ vibration impacts caused by the proximity between the proposed development and any existing railway must be assessed in the context of PPG24 and the local planning authority should use conditions as necessary.

United Utilities: No objection. The site must be drained on a separate system with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer, deep rooted shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of the public sewer and overflow systems, the level of cover to the sewers must not be compromised either during or after construction and a separate metered supply to each unit will be required

7. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Three letters of representation have been received from the occupants of 15 & 19 Chestnut Grove and 101 Richmond Road raising the following points;

- The proposed parking area is dangerous with visibility limited when vehicles are reversing onto the road
- Cars parked so close to the boundary fence would impact upon privacy
- Noise caused by vehicles using the proposed car park
- The number of parking spaces should be reduced to 15 with a landscape buffer between the car park and 19 Chestnut Grove
- Car parking problems in the area
- Increase in anti-social behaviour
- Car parking should be provided to the front of the dwellings
- Concern over health and safety due to the building works
- Bin storage

8. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement

- The site is in an established residential area
- The design is of a typical period housing development
- The site is arranged with the front of the houses facing Chestnut Grove and running along the length of the site with a small front garden with pedestrian access to the front doors
- A garden area to the rear of each dwelling is accessed via a rear alleyway
- Off road parking for 21 cars on the opposite side of Chestnut Grove
- There is provision for four refuse/recycle bins to each property with wheelchair access
- Each house has a storage shed to the rear garden with room for secure storage of two cycles and tools etc
- The scale of the houses is commensurate with houses in the vicinity

Pre-development Ecology Report (Compiled by CES Ecology and dated October 2009)

- Subject to any other constraints being satisfactorily addressed, any site clearance work should take place outside the birds nesting season. If this is not possible, a nesting bird survey should be undertaken immediately prior to any planned clearance works taking place. Should a nesting bird be discovered, an appropriate strategy to avoid damage or disturbance must be formulated and implemented. Management of the site should be undertaken to ensure that the site does not become suitable for nesting birds, i.e. vegetation should be kept below 15 centimetres
- Care should be undertaken during the proposed development not to kill or injure any grass snakes, slow worms or adders on the site. Careful checks of each area should be made before any site clearance works take place. However it is worth noting that reptiles might use as cover items such as tarpaulins and sheet metal. Leaving such items on a site could encourage reptiles to remain within the development area which could potentially cause them to be injured or killed
- Should protected species be found, it is possible that an appropriate licence would have to be obtained from Natural England before any development works can take place.

An Environmental Assessment Report & Outline Remedial Action Plan has also been produced in terms of the possible land contamination at the site.

- This report is available to view on the planning file

9. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Policy RES.2 of the Adopted Local Plan allows for residential development on unallocated sites in Crewe. Whilst the density of development is above that required by RES.3 of the Local Plan it should be noted that the site is in a sustainable location in close proximity to Crewe Town Centre and the density of the site is consistent with the surrounding terraced residential properties. Furthermore approval for the same development has been given in the past.

Although the factory which stood on the site has now been demolished the site was last in an employment use. The proposed development would result in the loss of a small scale employment site within the Borough and Policy E.7 states that development that would result in the loss of an employment site will only be permitted where: (i) it can be

demonstrated that the present use harms the character or amenities of surrounding properties (ii) the site is not capable of satisfactory use for employment and overriding local benefit would come from the proposed development; OR (iii) it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on the supply of employment land or premises within the Borough.

In this case the Council has previously accepted the loss of this employment site following the approval of application P07/0431. This was because of historic on-going complaints over the activities and operations on this site and its compatibility with the surrounding residential properties. As a result it is considered that the loss of the employment site is acceptable in this instance.

Design

The surrounding area is mainly characterised by traditional red brick terraced dwellings. It is considered that the design of this terrace which includes alternate pairs of dwellings with ground floor bay windows respects the character and appearance of the area. The proposed windows are lined through at ground and first floor levels with stone headers and cills, while other details such as brick corbelling at eaves level and contrasting plinth and string courses all add visual interest to the proposed terrace.

The rear elevation is of a more simple design but still contains stone headers and cills to the windows, brick corbelling at eaves level, and contrasting plinth and string courses, while single storey out-riggers help to break up the rear elevation all of which is considered to be acceptable design.

To ensure the design is acceptable conditions will be added to ensure that adequate boundary treatment, materials and landscaping details are provided while a further condition will be added to ensure that an adequate reveal to the windows is provided.

Amenity

The main properties affected by this proposal are those on the opposite side of Chestnut Grove. The proposed development would result in a separation distance of just 13 metres between the front elevations of the existing and proposed dwellings, compared to the separation distance with the former factory unit of 11.2 metres. The development is in an area characterised by terraced properties with short distances between front elevations, and it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its impact upon other residential properties on Chestnut Grove. The intimate residential relationship should be judged against the numerous complaints received by the Council over the previous use of the site. On this basis the proposed development will bring benefits to the amenities of properties fronting Chestnut Grove.

The proposed car park layout has been amended to take into account the concerns of the occupiers of 19 Chestnut Grove. A buffer will be created between this property and the parking spaces resulting in a reduction in the number of spaces to 15. The car park layout as amended will not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the occupiers of 19 Chestnut Grove through loss of privacy or noise and disturbance. This site was used as a car park to serve the former factory, and the proposed car parking would also be overlooked by 5 of the proposed dwellings increasing the surveillance of this area of land. It is considered that laying out this parcel of land as a formal car park would provide amenity improvements.

In terms of the distance to properties fronting Richmond Road, there would be a distance of over 18 metres with a blank side elevation of the proposed end dwelling facing the properties fronting Richmond Road. The proposal is not considered to raise any amenity issues to the properties fronting Richmond Road.

To the rear there would be a distance of over 25 metres between the two-storey rear elevations of the proposed dwellings and the rear elevations of properties fronting Beech Grove. This distance is considered to be acceptable as it is consistent with existing development in the area with the development having no impact upon the amenities of dwellings fronting Beech Grove.

As part of the previous application the railway line was not considered by the Council's Environmental Health Department to raise any amenity issues for the future occupiers of the dwellings. An updated noise assessment will form a condition as part of any approval.

Highways

As part of this application an amended plan has been provided which reduces the amount of parking from 21 spaces to 15 spaces. This is to provide a buffer between the proposed car park and 19 Chestnut Grove.

Although the Strategic Highways Engineer's comments contained within this report are based on the original plan it is not considered that the reduction in car parking to just over 100% would raise any significant issues. The application site is within a highly sustainable location and is within walking distance of Crewe Town Centre. As a result the proposed parking provision is acceptable.

It is not considered that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact upon highway/pedestrian safety and these issues have not been raised by the Strategic Highways Engineer.

Ecology

As part of this application a pre-development ecology report has been provided. This indicates that it is unlikely that protected species would be affected by the proposed development and this is accepted by the Council's Ecologist. Conditions will be attached to the permission in relation to the timing of construction works outside the bird breeding season and the provision of bird nesting features.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The application site is a brownfield site within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and the proposal corresponds with policies for residential development in the locality. The proposed development will not adversely impact on residential amenities at nearby properties, raise any highway safety/parking implications or adversely impact on the character and appearance of the area. The development is therefore considered to comply with policies in the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

- 1. Standard time limit 3 years**
- 2. Materials to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 3. Condition to specify the approved plans**
- 4. Remove PD Rights for additional windows to the western gable**
- 5. Provision of parking spaces for the dwellings before first occupation**
- 6. Landscaping scheme to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 7. Implementation and maintenance of landscaping**
- 8. Rear alleyway to be a minimum of 1 metre in width with gated access to all the proposed dwellings**
- 9. Boundary treatment to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 10. Reveals to windows and doors to be a minimum of 55mm**
- 11. Drainage to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 12. Bin storage details to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 13. Details of how the proposed development will secure at least 10% of its predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing**
- 14. Surfacing materials to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 15. Details of the external lighting to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 16. Prior to any commencement of works between 1st March and 31st August in any year, a detailed survey is required to check for nesting birds**
- 17. Details of the bird nesting measures to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 18. Details of any pile driving to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**
- 19. Construction hours (and associated deliveries to the site) shall be restricted to 08:00 to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays, 09:00 to 14:00 hours Saturdays, with no working Sundays or Bank Holidays to safeguard the amenity of local residents**
- 20. Prior to the commencement of development a Noise and Vibration Survey together with any mitigation measures which may be required shall be produced with reference to the adjacent railway line. The survey shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing**
- 21. Prior to the commencement of development a Contaminated Land Assessment shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing and any remediation measures that are required shall be implemented**

Location Plan : Licence No 100049045

