

Planning Reference No:	10/3955N
Application Address:	Tesco, Vernon Way, Crewe
Proposal:	Reserved Matters Application for Erection of Replacement Foodstore (A1 Retail) with Ancillary Café, Associated Parking, Highway Work and Landscaping.
Applicant:	Tesco Stores Ltd.
Application Type:	Reserved Matters
Grid Reference:	370800 355392
Ward:	Crewe East
Earliest Determination Date:	17 th November 2010
Expiry Dated:	10 th January 2010
Constraints:	Settlement Boundary

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

- **APPROVE** subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES:

- **Principle**
- **Access.**
- **Layout**
- **Appearance and Scale**
- **Landscape**

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application has been referred to committee because it is a commercial building of over 1000 square metres in floor area. It was brought before the Strategic Planning Board on 5th January 2010 when Members resolved that the application be deferred for further discussions to take place in respect of the design, the public transport link, access to Mill Street via the arches, mitigating the impact upon the Heritage Centre and congestion issues.

Negotiations have taken place with the applicant's agent, and the report below has been updated accordingly.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application relates to the existing Tesco store in Crewe, which is a single storey retail unit of red brick construction with a pitched and tiled mansard roof. The store occupies a 2.5ha site and was built in the early 1990's as a Safeway store and was taken over by Tesco in 2004. The store is situated to the rear of the site, with a large surface level car park in front and a petrol filling station (PFS) adjacent to the site entrance. The site is bounded to the east by the West

Coast Main Line, to the west by Vernon Way and to the South by the Crewe Heritage Centre and Crewe to Chester Railway Line.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission was granted on 2nd November 2009 for the demolition of the existing 2,740sq.m store and the erection for a replacement 5,500 sq.m store, which will be constructed over two levels. The permission was in outline, with all matters reserved, although an indicative layout was provided with the application. This application seeks approval of all reserved matters, including access, appearance, landscaping layout and scale.

The existing PFS will be retained and integrated into the scheme.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

7/13945	Use of Land as Heritage Centre – Approved 17 th February 1987
7/18292	Use of land as heritage centre. 45,000 sq/ft foodstore, associated car parking and petrol filling station. – Approved 15 th March 1990
P95/0582	Extension to form coffee shop and crèche. – Approved 24 th August 1995.
P05/0507	Single storey extension and alterations to service yard- Approved 9 th June 2005
09/2329N	Outline Planning Permission for Erection of a Replacement Foodstore (A1 retail) with Ancillary Café, Associated Parking, Highway Works and Landscaping – Approved 2 nd November 2009

5. POLICIES

North West of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2011

Policy DP 5	Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility
Policy DP 7	Promote Environmental Quality
Policy DP 9	Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change
Policy RDF 1	Spatial Priorities
Policy W 1	Strengthening the Regional Economy
Policy W 5	Retail Development
Policy RT 1	Integrated Transport Networks
Policy RT 2	Managing Travel Demand
Policy RT 3	Public Transport Framework
Policy RT 9	Walking and Cycling
Policy EM9	Secondary and Recycled Aggregates
Policy EM 11	Waste Management Principles

Policy EM 12	Locational Principles
Policy EM 15	A Framework For Sustainable Energy In The North West
Policy EM 16	Energy Conservation & Efficiency
Policy EM 17	Renewable Energy
Policy EM18	Decentralised Energy Supply
Policy MCR 4	South Cheshire

Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan

Policy 11 (Development and Waste Recycling)

Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011

BE.1 (Amenity)
 BE.2 (Design Standards)
 BE.3 (Access and Parking)
 BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources)
 BE.5 (Infrastructure)
 TRAN.1 (Public Transport)
 TRAN.3 (Pedestrians)
 TRAN.4 (Access for the Disabled)
 TRAN.5 (Provision for Cyclists)
 TRAN.6 (Cycle Routes)
 TRAN.9 (Car Parking Standards)
 S.10 (Major Shopping Proposals)
 S.12.2 (Mixed Use Regeneration Areas) Mill Street, Crewe
 E.7 (Existing Employment Sites)

National policy

PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
 PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres
 PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk
 PPG 13: Transport
 Department for Transport – Manual for Streets
 Proposed Changes to PPS6: Planning for Town Centres – Consultation

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways Authority

- There is a signed 106 agreement for this development, which included all of the agreed highways improvements.
- No highways objections.

Sustrans

1. The site lies hemmed in by railway lines and a busy road, Vernon Way taking traffic around the town centre. Pedestrian access is limited currently to the pelican crossing and the rather unattractive route into the town

centre, and the existing footways on Vernon Way. There are no pedestrian facilities on the Mill Street/Vernon Way roundabout which can be quite difficult to cross.

2. Cycle access is very poor currently, since Vernon Way carries a lot of traffic and is not wide enough for cycle lanes. The roundabout at Mill Street/Vernon Way is not easy to negotiate due to gradients; High Street is one-way only outbound, and the crossing on Vernon Way is a pelican only.
3. The site is being expanded to attract more custom and potentially more car journeys will result in a congested part of Crewe. Therefore, we would expect the developer to make a significant contribution to improve walking/cycling in the location. A range of measures discussed in the past with the council are:
 - Vernon Way cycle tracks as long as they are constructed to a high standard on width, crossings etc
 - High quality town centre access from the Tesco site and Mill Street for pedestrians and cyclists via the Sainsburys site, requiring a toucan crossing at a convenient location over Vernon Way.
 - Contra-flow to be permitted on High Street
 - These type of measures are also important to encourage pedestrian/cycle access to the adjacent Crewe Heritage Centre.
 - Secure and convenient cycle parking is required for staff as well as customers

Environment Agency

Have no objection to the above reserved matters application and no further comments to add to their previous comments.

United Utilities

No objection to the proposal subject to the following:

- The applicant must demonstrate the current drainage system currently discharging in to the public sewerage system
- This site must 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.

Environmental Health

Environmental Health have no objections to the proposal.

7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL:

N/A

8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

Sainsbury's

- Paragraph 5.2 of the Design and Access Statement states that the gross external floorspace of the proposed store is 9,767sq.m. rather than 8,231sq.m that was approved in the outline permission. This represents a 1,536sq.m. difference or 19% uplift in the gross floorspace which is considered to be materially different to that consent. In the light of this, it is, in their view questionable whether the current application can legitimately form a reserved matters submission to the outline consent, and consider that the Authority should give this matter due consideration prior to determination of the application.
- In the event that the reserved matters submission is found not to be consistent with the outline then either a new outline application is required or the current scheme should be submitted as a full application with all of the necessary supporting information.
- The Design and Access Statement states that the proposed net floorspace complies with the condition of the outline permission limit of 5,5500 sq.m. However it is not possible to determine that from the submitted first floor (trading level) plan which does not provide sufficient detail to confirm the position. It appears that the sales floor area exceeds that permitted when considered as a percentage of the claimed gross floor area, even when discounting the cafe and WC areas.
- In order to clarify the position, they suggest that the Council requires that the applicant provide evidence of the proposed net floorspace by the submission of clearly marked internal floor plans to an appropriate measured scale. They consider that this is necessary and given the issues of inaccurately built floorspace at the Tesco store in Stockport.
- The submitted plans illustrate a substation on the western side of the car park. This building was not included on the outline permission approved site plan and cannot therefore be included within the reserved matters application. A separate planning application is therefore required for this element of the proposal.
- Savell Bird and Axon highway consultants to Sainsbury's have undertaken a preliminary review of the Transport Assessment submitted with the outline application scheme and considered that in the context of the increase gross floorspace proposed in their reserved matters application. That exercise concludes that the replacement store as consented (gross floorspace of 8.231sq.m) will have a material impact on the operation of the Earle Street / Vernon Way roundabout during the weekday pm and Saturday peak, hours, particularly increasing queuing on the Earle Street east arm. (It is their view that the highways impact of the larger store should, therefore be fully assessed by the Council Highways Officer prior to the determination of the current application)

9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Design and Access Statement

This document provides an explanatory design and access commentary on the application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 1 of planning permission 09/2329N. The detailed drawings prepared by Saunders Partnership Architects and Charnwood Landscape Design which accompany the submission address the reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, and indicate a high quality development which incorporates an innovative mix of environmentally friendly design, materials and technology in response to the aims of Tesco's Climate Change Programme.

Response to Sainsbury's Letter

Gross Floorspace

The difference in the gross floorspace referenced in the outline planning submission (ref. 09/2339N) and the application for the approval of reserved matters (ref. 10/3955N) is accounted for by the floorspace created by the atrium and means of escape at ground floor and first floor levels (i.e. void or stair/elevator areas necessary to accommodate an elevated store development above car parking). The size and position of the building indicated on the site plans submitted with the application for approval of reserved matters (ref. 6457 P04 Rev C and 6457 P05 Rev C) is the same as that shown on the drawings approved under the outline planning permission (ref. 6457 PL02 and 6457 PL03), i.e. there is no actual increase in the floorspace of the building above that which is indicated in the drawings approved under the outline planning permission.

Although a gross floorspace figure of 8,231 sq m was referred to in the planning application forms, Design & Access Statement and other documents accompanying the outline planning application, the 'increase' in floorspace attributable to the atrium and means of escape at ground floor and first floor levels does not affect the conclusions of the Retail Assessment (which is based on net sales floorspace) or the Transport Assessment (see below).

Significantly, Condition 3 of the outline planning permission states that *"the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans 6457 PL03 and PL02 unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation"*. The outline planning permission therefore specifically includes a condition which requires development (and subsequent reserved matters approvals) to be in accordance with the drawings submitted at the outline stage. The outline planning permission does not contain a condition which restricts the overall gross external floorspace, nor is the gross external floorspace referred to in the description of development. As we have set out above, the reserved matters submission is consistent with the plans approved under the outline planning permission and therefore meets the requirements of Condition 3.

Net Floorspace

The reserved matters scheme for the store complies with Condition 21 of the outline planning permission which states that the overall net sales floorspace should not exceed 5,500 sq.m. The area dedicated to the sale of comparison goods is less than the 2,200 sq. m permitted by Condition 18. Sainsbury's are therefore incorrect in their assertion that the sales floorspace indicated on the drawings submitted with the application for the approval of reserved matters exceeds that permitted under the outline planning permission.

Electricity Sub-station

An electricity sub-station to the rear of the replacement store is clearly indicated on drawing ref. 6457 PL02 (Proposed Site Plan – Ground Level), which was submitted with, and approved under the outline planning permission for the replacement store (ref. 09/2329N). However, due to Tesco's operational requirements it has been necessary to relocate the proposed sub-station to the west of the site for the purposes of the reserved matters submission. As the sub-station was part of the scheme approved under the outline planning permission, it is wholly appropriate to include it in the reserved matters submission. No condition was attached to the outline planning permission requiring the sub-station to be located in a specific position on the site. Therefore, there is no requirement to submit a separate planning application as suggested by Sainsbury's.

Impact on Local Highway Network

We have sought advice from Tesco's highway consultant, Mouchel, on this point who has confirmed that the TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) database was interrogated to find trip rates for the proposed replacement foodstore. These trip rates are based on comparable foodstore sites which are all at-grade, i.e. the store and car park are all at the same level. These sites do not have an entrance atrium or other vertical circulation facilities, and the only reason that the proposed replacement store at Crewe has these is to provide customer access between the car park and the store. The atrium floorspace and means of escape are not considered to generate trips on their own right and are therefore usually excluded from the trip generation calculations.

A full Transport Assessment was submitted in accompaniment with outline planning application 09/2329N. This assessment was accepted by Highways Officers of Cheshire East Council, subject to a contribution to pedestrian and cycle links with and within Crewe town centre, which has been secured through a Section 106 Agreement. On this basis, there is no requirement to further consider the highway impact of the proposed store.

10. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Acceptability in Principle

The site is located outside, but adjacent to, the Crewe Town Centre Boundary. However, the acceptability in principle for the demolition of the existing 2,740sq.m store and the erection for a replacement 5,500 sq.m store was established by the previous outline permission. Consequently, the impact of the development on the vitality and viability of the town centre has already been carefully assessed and found to be acceptable.

Sainsbury's have argued that the reserved matters application does not comply with the terms of the outline permission because the design and access statement submitted with the reserved matters makes reference to a gross external floorspace of 9,767sq.m., whereas, the supporting documentation submitted at the outline stage referred to a gross floor area of 8,231sq.m.

The reason for the discrepancy is that, in preparing the supporting documentation for the outline planning application, Tesco neglected to include within the floorspace calculations, the atrium and emergency staircases.

Notwithstanding this inconsistency, it is considered that the store, as now shown on the current drawings, can fall within the parameters of the outline consent for the following reasons. Firstly, matters of scale, design and layout were reserved and did not form part of the outline approval. Secondly, there was no reference to gross floor area in the description of development on the outline consent. Thirdly, there were no conditions applied to the outline consent limiting gross floor area. The only floor area restrictions were conditions limiting the overall net sales floorspace to 5,500 sq.m net sales and the area used for the sale of comparison goods to 2,200 sq m. The reserved matters application complies with these restrictions.

Sainsbury's have claimed that the sales floor area exceeds that permitted when considered as a percentage of the claimed gross floor area, even when discounting the cafe and WC areas. However, given that the sales floor restrictions are based on specific areas, rather than percentages, there is no conflict with the terms of the outline consent. For the avoidance of doubt, Sainsbury's have agreed to submit a more detailed floor plan to show clearly the area of net retail floor space and areas proposed for comparison and convenience goods.

Consequently, the principle of the development has already been established and this application does not present an opportunity to re-examine those issues. The main issues in the consideration of the reserved matters, therefore, are the acceptability of the proposed access, layout of the site, the scale and appearance of the building and the landscaping.

Access

The traffic impact generated by the additional floorspace was considered, along with the other matters relating to the principle of the development at the outline stage. A full Traffic Impact Assessment was undertaken and a package of mitigation measures including off-site highway works and a £50,000 contribution

to cycling infrastructure within the town centre was secured. The access point will be the same as that utilised by the existing store from the roundabout on Vernon Way. This is a well constructed junction and at the time of the outline application it was considered that it was of sufficient capacity to serve both the new Tesco development and the proposed Sainsbury's store. Therefore, this application does not present an opportunity to re-open issues relating to traffic generation.

Members suggested at the meeting on 5th January 2011 that additional Section 106 funding for items such as off-site roundabout works, public transport enhancements and improvements to Crewe Heritage Centre should be sought from Tesco. However, this issue was dealt with fully at the outline planning application stage, and there is no justification for the Council to seek additional S106 contributions in respect of the application for reserved matters. Furthermore, the Section 106 agreement has been enacted and the money in respect of the pedestrian and cycle links has been fully paid to Cheshire East Council.

Members requested that the opportunity for Tesco to provide a bus stop on Vernon Way was explored further. However, the southern end of Vernon Way (beyond the Earle Street Bridge) does not form part of a bus route and this would not therefore provide a practical solution to improving public transport access to the site.

Notwithstanding the above, officers have discussed the matter with Tesco who are currently in negotiations with a local bus operator to provide a free shuttle service between the temporary store on Lockett Street and Crewe bus station. Tesco have agreed to consider introducing a similar service from the new store on Vernon Way following its completion. It is noted that such a service has been provided by Tesco previously, but was withdrawn in early 2010 due to lack of patronage. In this instance, however, it may be that the service proves to be more viable due to the increased customer attraction to the improved store. However, the service will be provided on a trial basis and Tesco have reserved the right to withdraw it, should it become uneconomical.

Members raised the issue of Tesco providing, or contributing to, the provision of a pedestrian walkway beneath the second arch of the Mill Street railway bridge, to link the Mill Street regeneration area, with Crewe town centre and railway station. Officers have raised the matter with Tesco, who acknowledge that this is a desirable objective in planning terms, but the difficulties in securing this link are caused by the need to negotiate with Network Rail on operational railway land and with the Crewe Heritage Centre who own or lease part of the land that would be required, as well as the considerable engineering challenges involved. Furthermore, no part of this route requires land within the ownership of Tesco. On this basis it is considered that it would be unreasonable for the Council to impose conditions or legal agreements requiring the provision of the Mill Street link as part of the Tesco redevelopment.

479 parking spaces are to be provided underneath the new Tesco store, along with disabled spaces, parent and child spaces and a drop-off zone to the front. Provision is also to be made for cycle parking.

A decked service yard is to be constructed to the rear of the store, with access via a ramp from a service road to the side of the store, which will also provide access to the railway heritage centre.

Whilst the comments of Sainsbury's highway consultants, about the up-lift in gross floorspace, referred to above are noted, given that the increase relates to stairwells and non-retail areas, it is not considered that there would be any increase in traffic generation as a result of the amendment. In the absence of any objection from the Strategic Highways Manager, it is not considered that a refusal on access grounds could be sustained.

Layout

The existing store is set back from the Vernon Way frontage, and is separated from it by a large surface carpark. Consequently, there is no active frontage to this part of Vernon Way and the street scene is dominated by an expanse of parked cars and hard surfacing. The carpark also provides a significant barrier to pedestrians wishing to access the site from either the footway along Vernon Way or the town centre.

The proposed building, by contrast will be sited much closer to Vernon Way, helping to provide a sense of enclosure to the street and a more active frontage as a result of the glazed atrium. The store has been orientated in such a way that the main entrance to the building is at the closest point to the Vernon Way boundary and immediately adjacent to the pedestrian crossing giving access to the town centre. This is a considerable improvement over the existing arrangement.

Although the decked service yard is a more undesirable feature in design terms, it will be concealed to the rear of the building and will only be visible from the heritage centre, and the railway line. In this location it will be viewed in the context of railway infrastructure, which is industrial in nature. Furthermore screen planting is proposed to the boundaries and is therefore considered to be acceptable.

In terms of ancillary development within the site, the existing petrol filling station will remain. The existing recycling centre will be relocated, to a new position, close to the store entrance, where its visual impact will be no greater than in its existing location, which is also close to the site frontage. An electricity sub station is proposed in the south west corner of the site. Sainsbury's have argued that because this was not mentioned in the outline planning approval, a separate full planning application is required. However, it is considered that this is ancillary to the supermarket, similar to other features on the site, (such as the recycling centre and other plant within the service yard to the rear,) which, although not mentioned by name within the description on the outline permission are to be expected with a development of this nature.

The substation is in a concealed location in the corner of the site, where it is bounded by the carpark to the north and east, the railway to the south and is surrounded by dense tree planting and landscaping the west. It will therefore

have minimal visual impact. However, whilst elevational drawings have been provided of the recycling centre, no elevational details of the substation have been provided. It is therefore recommended that these are secured by condition.

Given the town centre location and the nature of the surrounding land-uses, which are predominantly associated with commercial and retail activity, this impact on neighbour amenity is not considered to be a significant issue in this case

Appearance & Scale

Due to its very large scale and prominent location, the proposed building will have a significant visual impact on the immediate area and the character of the town centre as a whole. However, it will be similar in appearance and scale to the approved Sainsbury's store which will be constructed on the opposite side of Vernon Way and is similar in terms of overall form and massing. It incorporates many similar features including the glazed atrium giving access to the first floor retail area, the ground level under-croft parking and the decked service area.

At the previous meeting, Members expressed concern about the elevational treatment of the building and suggested that steps should be taken to break down the massing of the building, introduce more vertical emphasis and to make reference to the traditional railway architecture of Crewe.

The case officer has researched the old railway works buildings which originally stood on the site. These were substantial 3 storey structures, with a strong vertical emphasis created by the regimented pattern of fenestration. The massing of the blocks was also broken down horizontally, with a dominant ground floor and subservient first and second floors. The original building was also characterised by arches, which could be found on both window and door heads. The building also included a distinctive clock tower feature. The case officer suggested that the architect should incorporate these features into the new building

This has been done successfully, and arches have been added to the oversailing canopy to the front of the building and a clock tower has been incorporated at the entrance, albeit in a modern style. The arches will be constructed from glu-lam which is a modern and sustainable material. Vertical emphasis has been introduced into the building through the use of a dark material to highlight the vertical joints in the cladding panels. The horizontal effect of the dominant ground floor and subservient upper floors has also been replicated through the use of different cladding materials to the side elevations and coloured glazing to the front.

Overall, it is considered that the revised design is a considerable improvement over the proposals as previously presented to committee and that the design modifications serve to break up the massing of the building, reference both the history of the site and the traditional railway architecture of Crewe and to create a distinctive and unique building which will be significantly different to the standard Tesco corporate model.

Landscape

There is a significant amount of existing well-established landscaping around the site perimeter. It will be important to ensure that as much of this as possible is retained and integrated into the development to soften the impact of this large new building. The retention of the semi-mature trees along the Vernon Way frontage will be particularly important to screen the undercroft parking and unslightly service area and rear elevation to the petrol station.

This has been achieved within the submitted design, the building is set back sufficiently from the frontage to avoid adverse impact on the trees, and the extent of the hard surfacing forming the access road, will not extend beyond that of the existing car park. Furthermore, no changes are proposed to the layout of the main vehicle access or petrol filling station. Therefore, subject to appropriate tree protection conditions, there will be no adverse impact on exiting access. The majority of the site will be taken up by the proposed building, and therefore opportunities for new planting with the development are limited. However, areas of new planting are proposed around the substation, in the area in front of the recycling centre, adjacent to the service road to the north eastern side and on the boundary with the heritage centre to the south east. No details of species, spacing's, height on planting etc. have been provided and it is therefore recommended that conditions are imposed requiring these details to be submitted and approved.

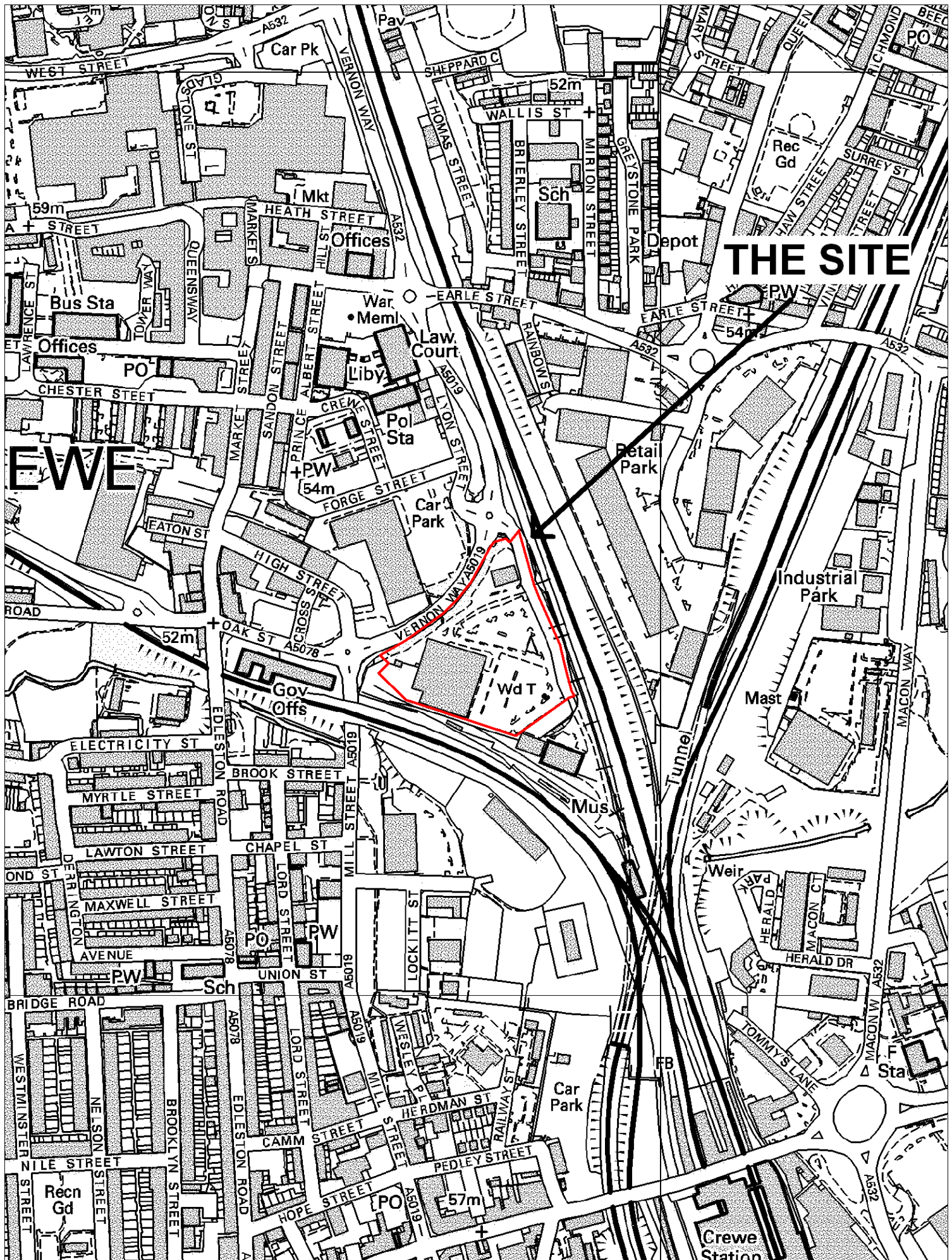
10. CONCLUSION

For the reasons given above, and having due regard to all other matters raised, it is considered that the access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposed store are acceptable and in compliance with the relevant Development Plan policies, and in the absence of any other material considerations, it is recommended for approval subject to conditions as set out below.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to conditions

- 1. Plans**
- 2. Scheme of tree protection**
- 3. Implementation of tree protection**
- 4. Scheme of landscaping**
- 5. Implementation of landscaping**
- 6. Elevational details of substation to be submitted and approved**



THE SITE

TESCO SUPERSTORE VERNON WAY CREWE
N.G.R; 370.810 - 355.380

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