

Application No: 22/1447N

Location: Land adjoining Old Park Road, Weston Road, Main Road and the B5472, Near Stowford, Crewe

Proposal: Outline planning application with all matters reserved for future determination, save for four of the means of access (one on to Main Road, one on to the B5472 and two on to Old Park Road) for: up to 650 dwellings, a village centre, site access and highway works, associated infrastructure, green infrastructure including sustainable drainage, ecological habitats, children's play areas, woodland, amenity green space and food growing area. (Access)

Applicant: Kate McClean, Bloor Homes North West

Expiry Date: 30-Aug-2023

SUMMARY

This outline application proposes the creation of the South Cheshire Growth Village to deliver a sustainable settlement of up to 650 dwellings incorporating a mixed-use village centre located on a greenfield site close to the south-eastern edge of Crewe and adjacent to Crewe Hall and its registered Historic Park and Garden (grade 2). It is proposed that a distinctive and high quality housing scheme in the form of an "estate" village is sited within an attractive parkland setting in line with the requirements of Local Plan allocation Policy LPS 8.

Policy LPS 8 emphasises the need to incorporate green infrastructure with specific landscape mitigation and parkland restoration in accordance with the Heritage Impact Assessment (CEC 2016) to minimise the visual impact of the development on heritage assets. Whilst the scheme would lead to some harm to heritage assets, proposed mitigation and design coding already provided demonstrates that the framework for the development accords with the Heritage Impact Assessment and requirements of Policy LPS8 to offset that harm. In particular, elements of the landscape restoration also constitute public benefit.

Detailed assessments of the urban design and landscape/visual impact of the development have been made and although these matters will need to be considered in more detail, an acceptable framework is in place to further enhance the scheme at the reserved matters stage, including the requirement for detailed design coding which is subject to conditions. The outline proposals are therefore supported in design terms.

The impact on the wider highway network from the proposed development will be mitigated through financial contributions for improvements to Meremoor Moss roundabout (or within the A500 corridor) and alterations to the University Way/Weston Road roundabout.

A suite of indicative drawings and technical information has also been submitted of highway improvements to reduce the desirability of the new village as a through-route and reduce traffic speed. This has established the principles of a package of measures which ensure that an

acceptable scheme is achievable in highway terms, although the detailed design of highway alterations will also need to take account of urban design and place making objectives at the reserved matters stage.

A contribution to bus services will also be secured and the proposals will importantly ensure the provision of sustainable pedestrian/cycle link to connect through to the Basford East strategic allocation facilitated by the delivery of proposed signals at Main Road/Weston Road. No objections on highways subject to conditions and substantial section 106 contributions.

No objections are raised in relation to flood risk/drainage, subject to conditions including the submission of the detailed drainage strategy and emphasis in making the most of Sustainable Urban Drainage in the detailed design for the scheme.

Ecological issues have been satisfactorily addressed particularly in respect to safeguarding habitat, protected species, the provision of on-site ecological mitigation areas and delivery of biodiversity net gain subject to a series of planning conditions being imposed. Tree and hedgerow losses have been accepted and would be mitigated in the proposed landscaping of the site and through off-site habitat creation to achieve biodiversity net gain.

Given the location of residential parcels and the provision of significant areas of intervening planting/landscaping the required separation distances will be achieved between the development and existing properties. The amenities of existing residents will not be detrimentally affected in terms of overbearing impact loss of outlook or privacy, nor because of noise/disturbance from road traffic movements.

Issues relating to noise, air quality, contaminated land and public rights of way have been addressed and are subject to conditions where necessary.

To satisfactorily address the impact on local services/facilities, substantial contributions to education, healthcare provision and indoor/outdoor sport will be secured through a s106 agreement.

The delivery of this large and complex development will be required to be undertaken in accordance with a detailed phasing plan. This will ensure that amongst other requirements, the provision of green infrastructure, heritage mitigation/planting, pedestrian route to Basford East, open space, play facilities, wildlife mitigation and drainage/SuD's are delivered at appropriate stages of the scheme.

On this basis, the proposal is for sustainable development which would bring environmental, economic and social benefits and is therefore considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant policies of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, the Site Allocations Development Policies Document and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE, Subject to the notification of the Secretary of State, the completion of Section 106 Agreement and conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site (39.2 ha) is located about 1km from the south eastern edge of Crewe and adjoins the B5472, Weston Road, Main Road and Old Park Road. This large, greenfield site is broadly flat agricultural land in arable use and for pasture, but also includes areas of woodland and field boundary hedgerows.

The employment area of Crewe Hall Farm abuts the Site's northern boundary. Crewe Hall Enterprise Park also lies to the north and accessed from driveways ways off Old Park Road. The site is bisected by the Crewe-Derby railway line. To the south of the site lies open countryside beyond which is the A500 and village of Weston. Woodland and Englesea Brook lie beyond the eastern site boundary.

The site is located to the south/south-east of Crewe Hall and its registered Historic Park and Garden (grade 2). Aside from Crewe Hall (grade I) and entrance lodge/screen (grade II), other listed buildings are in close proximity to the site at Stowford (grade II) and Crewe Hall Farm (grade II). In addition, the site lies to the east of Holly Hedge Farmhouse (grade II*) located to the south of the railway (grade II*) and fronting onto Main Road.

Public Rights of Way (PROW) Weston FP10 and FP16 run north/south across the site. FP10 runs through the western side of the site and crosses the railway line via a level crossing and the up to Weston Road. FP16 runs across the easternmost side of the site, also crosses the railway by a level crossing and then connects to Old Park Road.

The vast majority of the application site lies within Flood Zone 1 which has the least risk of flooding. A very small area located within the northeastern part of the site is located within flood zones 2 and 3 associated with Englesea Brook.

In terms of the wider site context, the south-western site boundary adjoins the Basford East strategic site (CELPs Allocation LPS 2). The approved development (19/5934N) within this part of Basford East incorporates an east/west pedestrian/cycle greenway route which will run between South Cheshire Growth Village and David Whitby Way. This will connect to new facilities including the future primary school and elsewhere within Basford East.

PROPOSAL

This is an outline application relating to a strategic site allocated within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (LPS 8 South Cheshire Growth Village, South East Crewe). The key elements of the proposals include;

- Up to 650 new homes including 30% affordable housing within an “estate” village Restoration of the historic parkland landscape and heritage mitigation planting Mixed-use village centre providing a market square, community facilities and local retail up to 1,000m² gross floor space comprising Use Classes E and F2 (500m² for shops and 500m² for other community uses).
- Walking and cycling routes, including connection to a new footway and cycle link serving the Basford East Strategic site LPS2
- Landscaping including woodland planting and buffer to the southern edge of the site

- Open amenity green space/POS, children's play, allotments, community orchards and wildlife areas
- New habitat creation to deliver biodiversity net gain.
- Illustrative highway proposals to establish the principle of measures required to reduce traffic speeds and traffic management
- Proposed closure of the railway level crossings and diversion of public footpaths FP10 and FP16.

Notwithstanding the elements listed above, this is an outline application with all matters reserved for subsequent approval, other than four specified accesses serving housing parcels from Main Road (1), B5472 (1) and Old Park Road (2).

All other matters regarding detailed design, such as appearance, layout, scale and landscaping are reserved for consideration at a later date although an indicative masterplan and supporting information has been provided with this application to illustrate how the new village can be delivered in this sensitive location. In particular, Supplementary Design Information has been provided to illustrate the remodeling and de-engineering of the existing Weston Road, B5472 and Old Park Road roundabout junction to serve the village centre with the objective of creating a high-quality public realm, manage vehicle use effectively and enable a sense of place and distinctive village character to be achieved at the heart of the development.

An Environmental Statement (ES) has been submitted with the application, and the following key documents/plans also accompany the application:

- Masterplan (illustrative only)
- Land Use Parameters Plan
- Building Heights and Density Parameters Plan
- Detailed Access plans for approval (4 access points)
- Design and Access Statement (DAS) and Spatial Code
- Supplementary Design Information (DAS)
- Suite of illustrative highway drawings
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Sports Needs Assessment

The proposed development will comprise seven main development parcels as shown on the Land Use Parameter Plan and located as follows:

- Two northern parcels (N1 and N2) to west and east of the access to Crewe Hall Farm north of Old Park Road;
- Central parcel (C), bounded by Old Park Road to the north, Weston Road to the south and Stowford to the west;
- Eastern Parcel (E) south of Old Park Road, north of the Crewe-Derby railway line
- Southern Parcel (S) west of the B5472
- Western Parcels (W1 and W2) to west of Main Road, with W1 north of the rail line and W2 to the south.

The planning application red line boundary is not fully consistent with the defined boundary of CELPS allocation LPS 8. This is primarily due to additional areas being required to accommodate green infrastructure such as landscape buffer planting to the southern edge of the site and, landscape restoration within the Historic Park, additional shelter belt planting and habitat enhancement. All built development as shown on the parameters plans lies fully within the allocation boundary.

In addition, the Green Belt 'wedge' area of LPS 8 defined as "protected open space is not included within the application site given the proposed provision for sports pitches and recreational facilities generated by the development are proposed off-site as set out by the submitted Sports Needs Assessment.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The application site itself has little planning history but lies within the environs of Crewe Hall and the Enterprise Park which do have an extensive planning history. However, this is not considered relevant to this application.

With respect to the site itself

20/3742S - EIA Scoping Opinion for Environmental Impact Assessment. Issued 28-May-2020

POLICIES

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

LPS 8 South Cheshire Growth Village, South East Crewe
MP 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
PG 1 Overall Development Strategy
PG 2 Settlement Hierarchy
PG 5 Strategic Green Gaps
PG 6 Open Countryside
PG 7 Spatial Distribution of Development
SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles
IN 1 Infrastructure
IN 2 Developer Contributions
EG 1 Economic Prosperity
SC 1 Leisure and Recreation
SC 2 Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities
SC 3 Health and Well-Being
SC 4 Residential Mix
SC 5 Affordable Homes
SE 1 Design
SE 2 Efficient Use of Land
SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
SE 4 The Landscape
SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and woodland
SE 6 Green Infrastructure

SE 7 The Historic Environment
SE 8 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
SE 9 Energy Efficient Development
SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land instability

SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management
CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport
CO 2 Enabling Business Growth Through Transport Infrastructure
CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments

Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD)

PG 12 Strategic Green Gap Boundaries
GEN 1 Design principles
GEN 4 Recovery of forward funded infrastructure costs
ENV 1 Ecological network
ENV 2 Ecological implementation
ENV 3 Landscape character
ENV 4 River Corridors
ENV 5 Landscaping
ENV 6 Trees, hedgerows and woodland implementation
ENV 7 Climate change
ENV 8 District heating network priority areas
ENV 10 Solar energy
ENV 12 Air quality
ENV 15 New development and existing uses
ENV 16 Surface water management and flood risk
ENV 17 Protecting water resources
HER 1 Heritage assets
HER 4 Listed buildings
HER 5 Registered Parks and gardens
HER 8 Archaeology
RUR 5 Best and most versatile agricultural land
HOU 1 Housing mix
HOU 2 Specialist housing provision
HOU 3 Self and custom build dwellings
HOU 8 Space, accessibility and wheelchair housing standards
HOU 12 Amenity
HOU 13 Residential standards
HOU 14 Housing density
HOU 15 Housing delivery
RET 5 Restaurants, cafés, pubs and hot food takeaways
INF 1 Cycleways, bridleways and footpaths
INF 3 Highway safety and access
INF 6 Protection of existing and proposed infrastructure
INF 8 Telecommunications infrastructure
INF 9 Utilities
REC 1 Open space protection
REC 2 Indoor sport and recreation implementation

REC 3 Open space implementation
REC 4 Day nurseries
REC 5 Community facilities

Weston and Basford Neighbourhood Plan 2015 - 2030

- Modified plan made on 20th February 2024

However, the Modified Neighbourhood Plan states that” For the avoidance of doubt, the policies in the Plan do not cover the land at the major allocations at Basford West, Basford East and South Cheshire Growth Village.”

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Cheshire East Design Guide
Adopted SPDs

CONSULTATIONS

Natural England - No Objection subject to appropriate mitigation being secured to protect on-site and wider peat mass and features of Sandbach Flashes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Conditions are recommended for the submission of a detailed drainage strategy which prevents the loss or degradation of restorable peat and also a Construction Environmental Management Plan to address potential impacts on bird species of Sandbach Flashes SSSI and supporting habitat.

Historic England – No objection to the application on heritage grounds, as it is considered that the application is based on the parameters and mitigation measures set out in this allocation (LPS 8).

The Gardens Trust – Object. Considers that the application will undoubtedly cause harm to the Crewe Hall Registered Park and Garden (Grade 2). The Gardens Trust *are* “saddened and disappointed that Cheshire East has failed to sufficiently value and protect the heritage value of Crewe Hall’s RPG. It will forever harm the setting and significance of the RPG”.

Environment Agency – No objection in principle subject to conditions.

Sport England - Object. The development would create a need for a contribution toward the provision of sports facilities which should be secured through a S106 Agreement. The type, size, location and costs of sports provision should be informed by a Sports Strategy. The proposal makes no contributions to formal sports facilities, indoor or outdoor sport. (A Sports Need Assessment has since been submitted by the applicant satisfactory evidencing the necessary provision of of-site sport outdoor recreational provision and the financial contribution to be secured through a S106 Agreement as set out in the report below.)

United Utilities - No objection subject to conditions requiring the submission of a phasing plan for the development, a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy for the entire site, and a detailed Foul and Surface Water Drainage Scheme for each phase of the development.

Network Rail - Object. The development will have an unacceptable impact on risk (including a change in the character and volume of user) on Stowford No.1 and Stowford No.2 Level Crossings through the increased use of public footpaths Weston FP10 and FP16 . To address these concerns the level crossings are required to be permanently closed and the necessary footpath diversionary routes completed prior to new dwellings being occupied.

NHS CCG - No objections, subject to a financial contribution to improve primary Healthcare provision in Crewe being secured by a S106 Agreement.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CwT) - Holding Objection. Additional supporting information requested in respect of details for the proposed delivery of Biodiversity net gain. (The requested BNG details have been forwarded to CwT but no further response has been received)

Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service - No objection subject to a condition requiring the submission and approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation and a programme for post-excavation assessment.

Housing - No objection, subject to a Section 106 Agreement securing the policy compliant level and form of affordable housing.

Education - No objection subject to a financial contribution towards Primary, Secondary & SEN Education beings secured by a S106 Agreement.

Environmental Protection - No objection. The submitted odour assessment is considered acceptable. Conditions are recommended for the remediation of contamination. Implementation of noise mitigation measures in accordance with the acoustic report, the provision of electric vehicle infrastructure and use of Ultra Low Emission Boilers. Standard informatives relating to hours of construction, piling and dust management.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) - No objection in principle to the development subject to conditions requiring full details of the drainage strategy, details of proposed attenuation pond(s) and basins and a CCTV survey of the existing drainage network.

Public Rights of Way - No objection in principle subject to a condition being attached requiring the submission of a Public Rights of Way scheme of management.

Indoor Sport – No objection subject to a Section 106 contribution toward indoor sports facilities at Crewe Lifestyle Centre and Shavington Leisure Centre.

ANSA Public Open Space/outdoor sport - No objection subject to a financial contribution towards off-site sports facilities and a management company to maintain all on-site open space being secured by a S106 Agreement. Conditions are also recommended required the submission of Strategic Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy and a management plan for all areas of POS and landscaping.

HS2 Ltd: No objection. Although the red line location plan boundary falls adjacent to land safeguarded for Phase 2b of HS2, the High Speed Rail between Birmingham and Manchester (HS2 Phase 2) has been cancelled.

CEC Highways - No objection subject to conditions being attached and financial contributions for off-site highway improvements being secured through a S106 Agreement and conditions. (Detailed comments have been provided and are addressed in the report below)

National Highways - No objection but recommends that a condition is applied in relation to providing a travel plan for the site.

VIEW OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Weston and Crewe Green Parish Council: Amended observations received in May 2024.

Whilst the Parish Council accepts the principle of this scheme which forms a Strategic Development Proposal in the approved Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, it raises the following issues and concerns;

- Off-site infrastructure and mitigation measures along with access configuration from Weston Road into Main Road Weston has been redesigned as follows,

“40MPH speed limit along Weston Road right up to David Whitby Way / University Way roundabout along with an extended central refuse outside Crewe Hall to assist right turning traffic. Partial 40MPH speed limit along the B5472 towards Meremoor Moss roundabout. Remodelling of roundabouts at junctions of Weston Road and David Whitby /University Way, Weston Road and the B5472, and the A500 junction at Meremoor Moss. 2 sets of traffic signals, one set at the junction with Weston Road and Main Road, and another set either side of the railway bridge over Main Road. A shuttle system will be introduced over the railway bridge. Main Road will be made one way at this point to facilitate pedestrian/safe routes to school access. A partial extended speed limit along Main Road towards Weston Village. The traffic modelling resulting in these proposals has been based on the performance of the network in 2030 with and without the dualling of the A500. / M6 Junction 16 link”.

The Parish Council fully supports these suggested speed limits.

Notwithstanding this, protection of the whole length of Main Road Weston is required from the Weston Hall roundabout with the A531 to the junction with Weston Road to prevent both through and rat running traffic.

- Evidence is required that minimal queues of traffic will build up at peak times on either side of the proposed shuttle system and that this can be achieved in practice.
- The Parish Council considers that the applicant’s proposals need to be supplemented by a strict 30 MPH speed limit along the whole length of Main Road along with a 7.5 tonne weight limit and measures to prevent through traffic entering Main Road at the Weston Hall junction with the A531. The proposals only cater for a partial speed limit along Main Road. The Parish Council notes that there are additional current schemes, notably the proposed Cheshire East ‘A500 Crewe Station Access Corridor’ which also have a direct bearing on Weston and should in our view contribute to the protection of Main Road to prevent rat running and through traffic.
- traffic mitigation measures required to be introduced along Old Park Road to deter rat running through Crewe Green.

- Management of HGV traffic flows from the Crewe Hall Industrial Estate onto the primary road network. “Firstly, access along Weston Road onto David Whitby Way and potential conflict with the Basford East Development (Wimpey, former Onward Homes site, School, Community facilities, Muse etc.). All are of serious concern. Secondly assurances must be given, and the scheme designed to prevent HGVs from entering and exiting the Crewe Hall Industrial Estate through the proposed new Village.”
- Attenuation of noise and smell required from the Crewe Hall Industrial Estate to protect amenities of housing
- Concerns raised regarding the measures to protect and enhance the setting of Stowford (5 Listed Buildings), Holly Hedge Farm (Grade II* Listed), and Crewe Hall Farm (3 Listed Buildings). The planting and landscaping to protect these assets needs to be dense and semi mature to ensure that it sits in the landscape and not on the landscape.
 - Southern landscaped buffer separating the proposed development south of the railway and west of Main Road from the Strategic Green Gap running down to the A500 Shavington bypass. A firmly defined boundary is require to be established to prevent future development creeping towards the bypass
 - All structure planting, bunding and landscaping needs to be established well before development commences.
 - A detailed ongoing maintenance scheme for all the open space areas within the development needs to be agreed before any permission is granted.
- Pedestrian Access routes /safe routes to school. The Parish Council considers that, “These seem to be adequately provided for – priority access across railway bridge on Main Road, pelican crossings etc. at road junctions along with speed limits. The safe route to the proposed primary school abutting the former Onward Homes site adjacent to David Whitby Way needs to be defined in detail along with lighting proposals. The details of pedestrian routes within the development are we understand likely to be resolved at reserved matters stage”.
- Sensitive use of materials to follow CEC and National Design Guide recommendations and considered particularly important in relation to the treatment of the shuttle system / pedestrian access around the Main Road Railway bridge and entry point into Weston Village.
- Design of Village Centre has been improved in terms of creating a more intimate, inviting, and user-friendly space attractive to wander around, albeit that some of this will still be 3 storey.
- Need for local shops to be provided within the Village Centre.
- The proposed residential parking standards within development need to be increased to prevent on street car parking and congestion
- More evidence needs to be demonstrated and greater detail provided as regards. Biodiversity and Climate Change.
- Need for local Health Centre and funding required secured by a S106 Agreement.
- Requirement for community liaison Group to be established (A planning condition is recommended to secure this)

REPRESENTATIONS

A total of three representations have been received.

An objection has been received from the neighbouring property at Holly Hedge Farm raising the following concerns;

- The proposal will conjoin Weston with Crewe and Stowford resulting in urban sprawl contrary to planning policy
 - Development on the Western side of Main Road and to the South of the Railway, would cause urban sprawl and set precedent for more development.
 - The proposed site access opposite Holly hedge Farm will result in increased traffic and congestion along Main Road
 - Detrimental impact to Holly Hedge Farm due to increased traffic noise, air and light pollution from queueing traffic
 - Adverse impact on highway safety from positioning of proposed accesses on narrow sections of Main Road either side of railway bridge due to dangerous pedestrian footway and inadequate visibility in both directions.
 - If the railway bridge becomes single carriageway, this would cause excessive traffic queues and accidents outside Holly Hedge Farm and further down Main Road and Weston Road.
 - Impair use of driveway serving Holly Hedge Farm
 - Adverse impact of development on bat roost, Greater Crested Newts, other protected species and wildlife habitat.
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- The development will exacerbate existing flooding and drainage problems experienced at Holly Hedge farm and on the railway line .
 - Adverse impact on electricity supply, internet services and water supply. .
 - development will severely affect the setting of Grade II * Listed timber framed building. (Holly Hedge Farm)

Two sets of comments have been received from a local resident and summarised follows;

- Although the site is allocated within the Local Plan, and principle of development has been established. Section 106 contributions should be sought to improve sustainable travel within the area and reduce the demand on the highway network
- A S106 contribution should be secured for the installation and maintenance of bus stops within the site (Market Square in the Village Centre core) and for bus services to be provided,
- S106 contributions are required for the provision of regular bus services to be provided to/from Crewe Bus Station with also southbound services towards Alsager, Hanley or Newcastle.
 - Main roads through the development should incorporate an off-road pedestrian and cycle corridor to promote sustainable travel.
- All homes should have secure cycle parking, whilst the village centre should include secure long stay and Sheffield stand short stay parking.
- Section 106 contributions should be sought to also allow a segregated pedestrian/cycle route along full length of Weston Road to promote active travel, in addition to street lighting along Weston Road. The cycle route can then connect onto the core town centre and railway station cycle/pedestrian connectivity plans.
- Cheshire East Council should consider working with developer and Network Rail to provide a railway station On the Crewe-Stoke line to serve this large development and local communities in Weston
- Development should be as energy efficient as possible with buildings incorporating solar panels and provision of electric car charging points.

APPRAISAL

Principle of development

The site is allocated as site LPS 8 in the Local Plan Strategy to deliver a high-quality residential environment, within an attractive setting, in close proximity to Crewe and to the M6 motorway.

The allocation proposes a new sustainable village to provide distinctive new housing in a high-quality landscape setting. Existing woodland and vernacular estate architecture sets the tone for the creation of a new residential community.

Policy LPS 8 sets out the detailed development plan policy for the site and states that

“A new sustainable settlement will be delivered over the Local Plan Strategy period. This will be achieved through:

- 1. The delivery of around 650 new homes. The density and scale of the development should reflect the sensitivities and relationships of different parts of the site and should be directly informed by a detailed heritage impact assessment that will inform and shape a development brief, masterplan and design code for the site. This should have special regard to the relationship to heritage assets and their settings and their collective character and significance and what this rich heritage context contributes to the character of the site and to its wider setting;*
- 2. The provision of a new mixed-use local (village) centre, with a range of uses, including:
 - i. Appropriate retail provision to meet local needs;*
 - ii. Community meeting facility and a new village square and enhanced public realm elsewhere;*
 - iii. Sports and leisure facilities;**
- 3. The provision of open space including sports pitches, multi-use games area, outdoor gym, equipped children's play space and facilities for teenagers;*
- 4. The provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the new primary school and wider adjacent Basford East site;*
- 5. The creation of wildlife habitats, including those for protected species in accordance with detailed ecological assessments and management proposals; and*
- 6. The incorporation of the following green infrastructure:
 - i. In the area to the south of Old Park Road (outside the historic parkland of Crewe Hall), retention and/or creation of hedgerow boundaries with native woodland tree species and associated landscaping along all site boundaries on routes into the site and alongside the railway corridor and for all boundaries adjacent or in proximity to heritage assets (where those are appropriate to the setting of the heritage assets) to offset detrimental visual impact to the open countryside and the setting of designated heritage assets;*
 - ii. Parkland restoration to the north of Old Park Road in the historic parkland of Crewe Hall (including the registered park and garden) would include the retention and restoration of the shelterbelt, clumps of trees and other parkland features;*
 - iii. Additionally, the retention, where possible, of hedgerows and trees within the site that have a cumulative screening impact on development and contribute to the habitat value of the site;*
 - iv. Other targeted landscape mitigation as set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment**

(CEC 2016) and summarised under part b of 'Site Specific Principles of Development' below;

v. The creation of drainage ponds that have visual and habitat potential, allotments and a community orchard."

In addition, the policy also includes 18 site specific principles of development (a-s). These further focus on the need to incorporate green infrastructure with specific landscape mitigation and parkland restoration in accordance with the heritage impact assessment (CEC 2016) This is required to minimise the visual impact of the development on the setting of Crewe Hall (Grade 1) and its registered park and garden (grade 2) and the neighbouring listed buildings at Stowford hamlet, Crewe Hall Farm and Holly Hedge Farm.

Furthermore, it is required that development of the site should be comprehensively master planned with a detailed design code to ensure it is appropriately located and of appropriate scale, density and character in its relationship to heritage assets set out above, the wider context and landscape character of the countryside. Heritage and design issues are specifically addressed in the report below.

Policy LPS 8 also requires;

- The provision of high-quality cycle and pedestrian route to the adjacent mixed-use site at Basford East (LPS 2), including the new primary school.
- Contributions towards education including new primary school at Basford East, health facilities, highway infrastructure improvements including A500 link capacity improvements and A5020 Weston Road junction.
- An appropriately designed green buffer between the site and the village of Weston.

The planning application red line boundary is not fully consistent with the defined boundary of CELPS allocation LPS 8. However, this is primarily due to additional areas being required to accommodate a landscape buffer along the southern edges of the site as well as landscape restoration within the Historic Park, additional shelter belt mitigation planting and additional habitat enhancement.

As required under Policy LPS buffer planting is located along the southern and eastern boundaries of development parcel W2. This will extend into the strategic green gap located between Weston and Crewe as defined CELPS Policy PG5. However planting and landscaping are acceptable uses in the countryside compatible with the objectives of CELPS Policy PG 6 (open countryside) As no built development is proposed here the scheme would not result in the erosion of the of green gap or adversely affect the visual character of landscape in accordance with Policy PG5

As set out in the report below, the application is considered to be consistent with the overall requirements of the LPS 8 site allocation and the Development Plan. However, given that this is an outline application further consideration of the detail at the reserved matters stage will be required.

Heritage

Background

This allocated site (LPS 8) is located to the south/south-east of Crewe Hall and its registered Historic Park and Garden (grade II and at risk). Aside from Crewe Hall (grade I) and entrance lodge/screen (grade II), there are also other listed buildings in proximity to the site at Stowford (grade II), Crewe Hall Farm (grade II) and Holly hedge Farmhouse, south of the railway (grade II*). Consequently, the site is sensitive in terms of its potential impacts upon heritage assets including the registered park and garden.

During the Local Plan process the impact upon built heritage was one of the key allocation considerations and significant work was undertaken to seek to address the concerns raised by Historic England (HE) as the Local Plan process progressed. This culminated in a Heritage Impact Assessment (CEC 2016) being prepared in consultation with HE as well as refinement of the policy itself, which then subject to consideration at the Local plan examination.

A package of mitigation is identified in the policy text of LPS 8, informed by that recommended by the HIA. The required physical mitigation is primarily based upon areas of historic landscape restoration within the site comprising parkland restoration east of the driveway to Crewe Hall (north of Stowford), shelter belt restoration to the southwest, south and southeast of Crewe Hall Farm off Old Park Road and retention of green space and landscape features to the east of Stowford.

In relation to Holly Hedge Farmhouse, a significant buffer of landscaping to the west (on the southern edge of the western development parcel) and maintained open space to the east and south is identified in the HIA. For the land south of Crewe Hall Farm it requires a central space along the access route to enable parkland landscaping and a tree lined avenue (it is understood the Duchy have already implemented the avenue along the driveway up to Crewe Hall Farm), with areas of space to the south of the Crewe Hall Farm complex and along the eastern boundary.

The HIA also identifies mitigation in the form of maximum densities and scale of development for particular parts of the site, with specific consideration in relation to where parcels could impact heritage assets, reducing the density and limiting the storey height at these edges.

It was also required that a further heritage assessment and design steps were necessary to ensure appropriate detailed assessment and to establish a sensitive design framework for the development. This has resulted in a heritage assessment and accompanying HIA (part of the Environmental Statement) and Spatial Design Code (within the Design and Access Statement) as part of the outline application.

Policy LPS 8 of the CELPS allocates the site for a new sustainable settlement, subject to a number of requirements and site-specific principles of development (as informed by the HIA). These requirements/principles include the incorporation of green infrastructure, including a number of historic and other landscape mitigation requirements and the requirement for further HIA, master planning and development of a design code.

Assessment

The proposals are considered to generally reflect the HIA produced in support of CELPS Policy LPS 8. Although it is recognised that there are some areas of departure arising from the subsequent detailed heritage assessment undertaken as part of the evidence base for this application. During the course of the application, further design information was submitted in the form of the Supplementary Design Information document to address the following concerns;

- Land south of Crewe Hall Farm (parcels N1/N2). Concerns were initially raised by the Conservation Officer regarding the proximity of development to the south of the Crewe Hall Farm complex and whether the landscape buffer had been eroded. However, the proposals have been amended to improve separation and the view toward the listed building and provide more generous areas of open space to the south of Crewe Hall Farm.
- Land east of Holly Hedge Farmhouse. The extent of separation has been reduced in this proposal compared to that identified in the HIA supporting LPS 8. However, that change results from the intervening topography and existing landscape features separating the asset from the southeastern development parcels. Further information has been provided during the course of the application to justify the relationship set out in the Supplementary Design Information Document.

The submitted cross-section identifies that the development would be separated from the farmhouse by around 70m, across a shallow valley with restoration/enhancement of landscape features and the proposed location of allotments and community orchard. This variation, subject to careful consideration of the scale and densities and proposed landscape design at the detailed stage, should not materially worsen the impact of the development than anticipated at the Local Plan stage.

Elsewhere densities of development parcels vary when compared to the HIA supporting LPS8. Some of those changes are considered beneficial or neutral and will not materially worsen the impact of the scheme in heritage terms. However, the Conservation Officer points out that development parcels N1/N2 and S will need careful consideration during the detailed design stage to safeguard this. In addition, Parcel W1 located south of the wooded area opposite the main entrance lodge to Crewe Hall will also need to be carefully addressed by detailed proposals.

The early implementation of the landscape mitigation will be important in integrating the development into this sensitive setting. This needs careful consideration as part of the development phasing and secured appropriately. The design of the historic landscape restoration should also be based upon compelling historical evidence of the original planting schemes, as required by policy LPS 8. This will be secured by planning condition.

The Gardens Trust (Statutory Consultee) has objected to the proposals on the basis that the development will significantly impact Crewe Hall registered park and garden and that part of the application site includes the registered parkland.

However, as part of the Local Plan process, detailed assessment and considerable negotiation was undertaken at that stage to address the concerns of Historic England, culminating in the HIA and the requirements of Policy LPS 8. It included consideration of the impacts in relation to the setting of the registered parkland and sets out required mitigation. This is reflected in this

application, including a detailed HIA as part of the heritage assessment in the ES (as required by LPS8).

In regard to the parts of the site that are located within the registered park and garden (land east of the drive to Crewe Hall/north of Stowford and immediately to the east of parcel N2), these areas are not proposed for built development but rather landscape restoration. The area north of Stowford is proposed in the HIA/LPS 8 as parkland restoration, whilst that to the east of parcel N2 proposes restoration of an historic field boundary that was part of the original parkland design and is an addition to the mitigation initially set out in LPS8. Whilst noting the Garden Trust's concern, the inclusion of these areas within the application site is likely to be advantageous in securing and implementing the package of historic landscape restoration/mitigation.

As the impacts to heritage assets are considered to be less than substantial, offset by the extensive mitigation required by LPS8, the heritage impacts should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Heritage public benefits of this proposal include the proposed landscape restoration which forms part of the mitigation. Part of the parkland east of the main drive to Crewe Hall is to be restored as historic parkland, benefitting both the setting to the hall and the registered park and garden. The restoration of the shelterbelts along Old Park Road and the reinstatement of the historic parkland field boundary on the eastern side of N2 will also benefit the setting of the registered park and garden and other heritage assets.

Heritage Conclusion

As part of the Local Plan formulation, this site went through a lengthy process of assessment and negotiation, involving Historic England, culminating in a policy that resulted in withdrawal of their objection and which was also scrutinised found sound following the CELPS examination.

It was accepted at that time, that development would lead to some adverse impact to the setting of heritage assets, including the historic parkland, but it could be mitigated by specific historic landscape restoration and other landscape measures. coupled with a sensitive approach to the density, scale and character of the development through master planning and design coding. This approach has been carried through appropriately into this application.

However, this is an outline application with majority of detail reserved, therefore further detailed design coding to inform the detailed design and refine and improve the concepts as presently proposed is essential. This will be secured through conditions.

It is acknowledged by the Conservation Officer that there will some harm to heritage assets by virtue of this development occurring within their setting. The mitigation set out and the coding provided thus far reassures that the framework for development and the design control mechanisms proposed do generally accord with the HIA/Policy LPS8 of the CELPS to offset that harm. Elements of the landscape restoration also constitute a heritage public benefit.

Design

Policies SD2 and SE1 of the CELPS expect that development proposals consider the wider character of a place in addition to that of the site and its immediate context, to ensure that it reinforces the area in which it is located. These principles are also reflected in the CEC Design Guide.

The outline scheme has been assessed by the Council’s Design Officer using “Building for a Healthy Life”. This is a nationally accepted design development tool used to shape and consider the performance of proposed developments, including mixed use schemes such as this one, and is suitable for consideration of outline schemes.

The BHL assessment uses a traffic light system, with the aim of eliminating reds, whilst maximising the number of greens. The performance of the proposed scheme is summarised in the table below. A more detailed commentary in relation to each of the considerations has also been provided, but not included within this report.

Integrating into the Neighbourhood				Distinctive Places				Streets for All			
1 Natural Connections	2 Walking, cycling public transport	3 Facilities and services	4 Homes for everyone	5 Making most of what’s there	6 Memorable character	7 Well defined streets/spaces	8 Easy to find your way around	9 Healthy streets	10 Cycle and car parking	11 Green and blue infrastructure	12 Back of pavement, front of home
A	G*	G**	G	G**	A	A	G	A	A	A	G

* Subject to inclusion of bus subsidy in the S106

**Subject to suggested phasing controls

Due to the outline status of the application several considerations have been assessed as amber because there is limited information at this stage. However, based on the information presently available no reds are generated by BHL assessment. This is with the proviso that detailed coding and design development builds upon the principles in this application at the Reserved Matters stage.

The parameters, structuring plans and supporting information have been refined during the course of the application to secure general accord with policy LPS 8 relating to the South Cheshire Growth Village and the initial spatial framework upon which detailed design development can be based. This should then enable the development to meet policy and adopted design guidance, including both the CEC Residential Design Guide and the recently adopted SuDS Design Guide.

Performance categories 1, 6, 7, 9 and 11, are currently considered amber as there will need to be further refinement to improve aspects of the design via the detailed design process. Consequently, prior to that, as per the adopted Cheshire East Design Guide SPD, detailed design coding will be required.

In relation to category 6 “Memorable Character” the Design Officer considers that the placemaking structure plan provides the basis on which to develop the principles for the detailed coding/design. This will need some refinement as the detailed coding is developed.

Three main character areas of the scheme are proposed influenced by the parkland setting north of the railway line, the village centre, and that relating to the more open farmland character to the south of the railway. Character coding information has been provided for each within the submitted DAS/Spatial code document, overlaid by the Supplementary Design Information document. It is recommended a condition should be imposed to ensure the coding in the DAS and supplementary information act as the prompt for the detailed design for these areas.

In terms of the Design Officer’s assessment of the main character areas of the scheme;

Local centre - It is accepted that highway and other constraints such as noise, restrict the extent of remodelling of the roundabout junction at the heart of the development. However, works to the public realm to overcome or at least manage vehicular use effectively by reducing the extent of carriageway and create a high-quality public realm that helps unify and connect the local centre to the rest of the development. The inclusion of the village focal space contained by 3 storey mixed use should act as a strong village centre.

Northern parcels - Additional information has been provided in the Supplementary Design Information document improving the relationship of parcels N1 and 2 to the Crewe Hall Farm listed and curtilage buildings.

Southern parcels - The key issue with the southern parcels relates to the relationship with grade II* Holly Hedge Farmhouse ensuring sufficient distance, intermediary landscaping and appropriate height and density on the western edge of development parcel S. Additional information set out in the Supplementary Design Information document indicates that the relationship to Holly Hedge Farmhouse and its setting have been appropriately considered at this point, to inform detailed coding/design. Also, of importance to this part of the site, is ensuring that the southern edges of the development are appropriately landscaped in relation to the more open rural landscape south of the railway.

The Design Officer considers it of critical importance to the place making and overall quality and success of this development that improvements of existing roads and measure for speed management are not wholly fixed at this point, other than in terms of establishing the principles for a package of measures to ensure that a scheme is achievable in highway terms.

Therefore, the approach to de-formalising the existing highway infrastructure, both on the approaches and within the village centre, must also achieve a positive character and a people focused place. This must be shaped by urban design and landscape input and consequently the submitted technical highway information should be treated as indicative at this stage. The Design Officer advises that detailed coding for the development should therefore include coding for these areas informing the detailed design of the public realm and the final design of the highway works.

Summary

Further to the BHL assessment, the Design Officer considers that key aspects will require reinforcement/refinement and further design development through detailed coding which are summarised as follows;

- The quality of the highway improvements, including speed reduction measures, and public realm both on approaches and within the heart of the village, need to build on the indicative highway proposals and the principles/visualisations of the Supplementary Design information Document.
- The approach to passive sustainable design in terms of buildings and spaces, including the approach to delivering a high-quality SuDS train that meets the requirements of the recently adopted Cheshire East SuDS Design Guide. There is scope to be more innovative than is presently identified in the drainage strategy, using this to help characterise and improve the overall quality of the development.

- Further developing/refining the approach to the character and place making of the development, building upon the spatial coding and the Supplementary Design Information Document and having regard to both the built and landscape context.
- Ensuring the detailed design coding and subsequent detailed design positively responds to the relationship to heritage assets, using that to shape the development's character and sense of place.
- Ensuring there is a strong heart to the new community and that this is legible and appropriate in the wider context, encourages mixed uses and enables vitality and community activity with the potential for some organic change over the lifetime of the development (e.g. by introducing flexibility in unit design as advocated in the Cheshire East Design Guide)
- Ensuring that the maximum potential of the blue and green infrastructure is achieved to provide a livable, healthy and sustainable place and to help integrate the development within its setting. Appropriate management will also be necessary to ensure its integrity in the long term.
- Ensuring that car movement and ownership is handled sensitively and creatively so as not to undermine the character of the development, including resolving the design issues for the village centre and approaches, establishing a clear street hierarchy and movement framework and connections to the wider area, and adopting innovative approaches to car ownership and parking design within the development.
- Ensure the provision of space for street greening, particularly trees, commensurate with the street character and formality and ensuring they can be retained for the long term.
- Ensuring appropriate levels and quality of landscaping along the edges of development parcels and especially in relation to the areas of heritage mitigation planting set out in the policy and supporting HIA, including advance planting to allow early establishment.
- Where appropriate, inclusion of feature spaces/events within parcel layouts to help reinforce the social function of streets, better handle concentrations of parking and to create points of interest and focus, i.e. to move away from typical suburban layouts to something more bespoke and imaginative.
- Inclusion of creative play, wayfinding and public art to help enrich the place.

In respect to phasing of the growth village scheme, the Design Officer considers it logical to prioritise the southwestern parcel to provide the required cycleway/pedestrian connection to Basford East, with the village centre identified as phase 2.

The phasing should also provide for advance planting/landscape restoration, particularly for the areas included to mitigate impacts upon heritage assets identified in the LPS 8 /supporting HIA.

It is also essential that the mixed-use local centre is delivered early within the development programme to ensure that this will be a genuinely sustainable community. It is recommended this should be secured either by a condition or Section 106 Agreement with a restriction on commencement of subsequent phases until its delivery.

Conclusion

The Design Officer considers that although the design response could ideally have been more creative, nevertheless the submitted framework is an acceptable basis upon which detailed design development can progress to further enhance the scheme at the reserved matters stage.

The outline proposals are therefore supported in design terms, subject to the requirement for detailed design coding in advance of the submission of detailed schemes, including coding for the highway infrastructure improvements, notwithstanding the technical proposals for speed reduction and road improvements which should be treated as indicative in terms of detail at this stage.

Landscape

The proposal represents a significant development adjacent to Crewe Hall on the south eastern, rural fringe of Crewe. A large development of this type will inevitably have effects upon the local and wider environment. However, the Council's Landscape Officer considers that these effects have been minimised or mitigated against to a satisfactory standard at this stage of the proposal.

Visual Impact

As part of the application a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted within the ES. The Council's Landscape Officer advises that the assessment follows the guidelines and methodology outlined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition 2013.

The assessment refers to sites location the National Character Area, Area 61 – Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain/Cheshire Sandstone Ridge and. At a county level the site is located within the Lower Farms and Woods landscape character type as defined in the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment) and included within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 7f: Barthomley Character Area. Although much of the site is excluded from the LCA 7f Barthomley, the key characteristics identified for this character area continue across the application site. The LVIA assesses the impact on these landscape elements and viewpoints from receptors including surrounding properties, PROW and local roads.

The Landscape Officer concurs with the overall conclusions of the 'Visual' chapter within the Environmental Statement (ES) It is accepted that typically a development of this size will have visual impacts, but several factors have contributed to the minimisation of such effects. These include the mostly flat topography, few existing residential properties and mature blocks of woodland/landscape buffers which helps to filter and screen the development from surrounding sensitive areas, including the Crewe Hall Registered Park and Garden.

It is considered that the proposed green infrastructure over time will further integrate the development into the surrounding areas sensitively. However, over illumination of the street network could have nighttime visual effects such as sky glow and a more detailed appraisal of the proposed lighting types and location alongside measures to reduce light pollution will need to be addressed at the reserved matters stage.

Areas within the site are expected to change in character as mitigation planting reduces existing open views which exist from various receptors across fields etc. The Landscape Officer concludes that *“when planning such a large development the rhythm of visual consequences is inevitable and through good planning and design, can complement the area and its impending change as much as possible, which this proposal has mostly achieved, given the sites constraints”*.

Landscape Design

The parameters plans and supporting information show generous interweaving green ways, footpaths and swathes of mitigation planting to the boundaries of the various parcels of development. Several main or key highways of the scheme indicate strong tree lined boulevards which will complement the parkland aesthetic. The strength of the proposed landscape design elements must be maintained and potentially enhanced once more detailed planting master planning work is carried out in support of proposals. In particular, the use of large linear wooded areas should create way markers, points of interest, recreation opportunities, seating and picnic areas.

The design and access statement and supplementary design information provides a good flavour of the road, street, lane planting strategies for development parcels (N1, N2, E, S, W1, W2, C). Nevertheless, the Landscape Officer emphasises that the inner estate roads should incorporate 'street trees' capable of being maintained long term by an estate management company, to preserve this important green infrastructure. Reliance on front garden trees should be avoided as there are limited ways to control their removal by occupants. It is advised that a street tree hierarchy should range from grand avenues to smaller tree line streets and lanes to enhance the overall masterplan once the landscape/planning details have been finalised.

Notwithstanding the proposed village square, the Landscape Officer considers that ideally a central green amenity space should be provided to act as a community anchor but recognises that given the constraints of the site and need for mitigation planting the masterplan relies mostly on more linear routes for public enjoyment/ amenity.

The SUDs strategy will need to enhance the landscape and its amenity once the detail is complete. This will need to include a good mixture of rain gardens, interactive swales and features.

The Landscape Officer shares the concerns raised by the Design Officer above, that the de-formalising the existing highway infrastructure, including the remodelled roundabout, should be shaped by urban design and landscape input to achieve an appropriate 'village' character. However, the landscaped areas within the village centre as currently indicated are acceptable at this stage, although a substantial artwork to act as a place marker should be included at the village entrance.

Highways

Sustainable access

There is currently an hourly bus service with no links to education services. This will need to be strengthened to improve sustainable access to the site and the applicant has agreed to make a contribution to an enhanced service, with an additional hourly bus service that will link the new site 6 days a week to Crewe railway station, Weston Village and Crewe Bus Station. The funding will allow 5 years of support for this enhanced Bus Service, until it is established on a commercial basis. A Bus Stop layby and shelter will also be provided and integrated into the village centre.

New pedestrian and cycle paths will link various sections of development. This includes a new shared pedestrian/cycle path along Main Road which will involve the narrowing of the Main Road carriageway that runs over the railway bridge. This will be achieved with the introduction of a new

signalled traffic light junction at the Main Road / Weston Road junction. As part of the changes to this junction, the Speed limit will be adjusted on main road to 40mph.

An existing footway runs along Weston Road from the site towards Crewe, and although it has been officially designated as a shared cycleway the Highway Officer advises that it does not adhere to current design guidelines. CELPS Policy LPS 8 requires a new pedestrian/cycle route to be provided to Basford East and to the new primary school, and then connect into existing infrastructure along David Whitby Way in providing an alternative cycle route to Crewe. This will importantly act as a Safe Route to School via safe crossing facilities incorporated into the new signals. Whilst it is appreciated this may not be the most direct route to Crewe; this is supported by the Policy position as set out in the Local Plan Strategy.

The Highway Officer considers that phasing of the development is critical as it is essential that the route (and associated crossing facilities) to the adjacent Basford East development is fully open and available for use before any dwellings are occupied.

Safe and suitable access

There are a number of site access points to be provided off Main Road, Weston Road, and Old Park Road. Changes are also required to the highway to aid safe access for pedestrians and cyclists, reduce the desirability of the new village as a through route and to assist in managing vehicle speeds through the site.

Further to discussions between the applicant and CEC highways a suite of indicative drawings and detailed technical information has been submitted in terms of highway management and measures for speed reduction. This has established the principles for a package of measures that will ensure that an acceptable scheme is achievable in highway terms. However, as the Design Officer emphasises the requirement to ensure high quality public realm and character also needs to be delivered the proposed scheme for the improvement of existing roads and speed management measure should not be wholly fixed at this stage.

The proposed highway changes are summarised below:

Old Park Road/Weston Road roundabout

The overall size of the existing roundabout will be reduced as will the approach lane widths, and informal crossing points introduced on each arm. An additional arm will be added to provide access to the local centre. Whilst the overall geometry and general form of the remodelled roundabout junction is acceptable in highway terms, as set out in the Design section of the report, highway infrastructure improvements will also be subject to the requirement for detailed design coding.

Weston Road junction with Main Road

This will be signalised with additional kerbing and Toucan crossing introduced. The right turn lane will also be extended towards Crewe as part of these work allowing the new junction to work well with acceptable levels of queuing. Although, at present this junction experiences little in the way of congestion. The junction amendments are also part of the wider strategy to improve this route for pedestrians and cyclists and become less attractive to vehicular traffic.

A new access to parcel W1 is incorporated into the junction and the design of the junction prioritises walking and cycling to the Basford East site (and Weston Village). For the safety of

cyclists, the bridge parapet height will be increased to 1.4m above the new cycleway. Full details will need to be agreed with Network Rail and this will need to be conditioned.

Some existing highway landscaping along the western side of Weston Road and Main Road will need to be removed/reduced to make the development visible from the carriageway which will also assist in changing the character of the approach to the village and therefore vehicle speeds.

Old Park Road

The Junction with Old Park Road (Major Arm & Minor Western Arm) will be narrowed to reduce entry and exit speeds into the junction. A “cobbled surface” will be provided to allow large vehicles to overrun if necessary. The highway design is accepted in principle, but final details will still need to be agreed.

On Old Park Road (Major Arm) a Village entry and narrowing of the carriageway is proposed; vehicles will need to give way from the Crewe Green direction, serving to slow speeds through the village. The highway design is accepted in principle although final details will need to be agreed.

On Old Park Road (Minor Western Arm) it is proposed that the road is narrowed but with a build out and length of road serving Parcels N1 and N2 widened to 5.5m wide and two passing places. Localised widening of the Old Park Road to the Employment Area is proposed to maintain a carriageway width of 6.0m. The Highway officer advises that the designs are acceptable in principle, but the final details will need to be agreed.

The B5472

Access to Parcel S is taken off the B5472 which is currently a high-speed road. To both enable a safe access to be provided at this location and ‘transition’ to the new village centre an extensive traffic calming scheme is required. The principles of the general arrangements include the introduction of a cobbled ‘central reserve’ will effectively narrow the running lanes to about 3.1m wide. Given the importance of achieving the required Speed reductions in this area, the applicant has also agreed to fund a scheme of Average Speed Cameras on this section of road. However, if it is determined this funding is not required in this location the Highway Officer advises that the contribution will be made available for wider traffic calming measures, sustainable travel and travel planning measures required in the vicinity of the site.

As part of the changes, a 3m wide Cycleway is also provided to the new access (parcel S) and this requires a minimum 1.4m high parapet height to be provided adjacent to the cycleway. Full details will need to be agreed with Network Rail and a planning condition is recommended.

Some existing landscaping along the western side of the B5472 will need to be removed/reduced to increase visibility of the development from the carriageway to also change the character of the approach to the village and help reduce vehicle speeds. This can be addressed at the reserved matters stage when details of landscaping will be considered.

Speed Limit Alterations

As highway changes are implemented and phases of the development are delivered the Highway Officer advises that changes to speed limits will need to be implemented as follows;

- The New Main Road signals; introduce a 30mph zone, approx. 100m west of Stowford Cottage, with the remainder of Weston Road becoming a 40mph zone to the University Way Roundabout.

The 30mph Zone extends Eastwards to the Weston Road / B5472 roundabout. The signals also require a 30mph zone on Main Road to be provided approximately 100m south of Holly Hedge Farm. The remainder of Main Road until Weston Village will be designated as a 40mph zone. A Build out / Gateway Feature is included in the design of the traffic signals at this transition.

- Village Centre Roundabout; introduce a 30mph Speed Limit on the B5472. This will start from just before the Railway Bridge. A 40 mph zone will then extend from here towards the Meremoor Moss Roundabout until about 100m south east of Jack Lane; where the speed limit will revert to National.
- Old Park Road accesses; the Speed Limit is reduced by means of a Gateway feature from 40mph to 30mph.

Network Capacity

Vehicle trip generation for the development has been forecast using industry standard methods and this data has been used to carry out capacity assessments of nearby junctions. Committed developments have also been included in the assessment including an allowance made for the recently approved Basford East employment development (23/0539N) The junctions modelled include the Main Road / Weston Road new traffic signals, the David Whitby Way / University Way Roundabout, the A500 /B5472 Meremoor Moss Roundabout and the A500/ David Whitby Way Roundabout. An assessment of the revised B5472/Old Park Road roundabout was also undertaken.

Main Road / Weston Road Junction

It is accepted that delays will be introduced at this junction, where currently there is little congestion. This is largely due to the need to introduce single carriageway working across the Main Road railway bridge to accommodate the Cycleway route to Basford East. Maximum queues are predicted to be approximately 50 metres short of the B5472 roundabout so there is no interaction between the two junctions.

Alternatives to this arrangement were considered including a new bespoke Cycleway bridge over the railway. However, providing new infrastructure over a live railway is prohibitively costly and such an obligation could only be justified if there were no acceptable alternatives. In this case as recognised by the Highway Officer, although the alternative highway arrangement introduces some additional delays from the situation today, this is far from what could be classified as 'severe' to justify a refusal on highways grounds (or compel a new Rail Bridge to be built).

Additionally, the Council is aware of the concerns of the Weston Community around "rat running" through Weston village. With the improvements planned on the University Way Roundabout and A500 / Whitby Way and Meremoor Moss Roundabout it is considered that these changes may serve to reduce the attractiveness of the route through Weston Village to non-local traffic.

A Stage 1 Safety Audit of this signal junction has been provided and considered acceptable by CEC Highways

University Way / Weston Road Roundabout

The application for the recently approved Basford East employment development (23/0539N) application assessed the combined impact of both of these large scheme applications at this junction. Both applications had similar impacts at this junction and at the A500 / David Whitby Way junction. It was agreed between the parties that the employment scheme would pick up the cost for providing an improved scheme at the A500/ David Whitby Way junction with the South

Cheshire Growth Village picking up the cost for the solution at the University Way junction; which is also reflective of the balance of traffic impacts.

Given levels of queuing predicted on David Whitby Way an improvement scheme for this roundabout has been agreed with applicant. The amended layout is anticipated to return queuing to about pre-development levels and also provides for a new Toucan Crossing on the western arm of Weston Road.

The Developer has agreed to deliver the improvements at University Way via a S278 agreement; or financial contribution (equivalent value) through a S106 Agreement, to allow the Council to deliver this scheme earlier.

Determining the trigger point for these works to be provided is challenging as the requirement is a function of two developments with independent delivery programmes. However, given the Main Road Signals Scheme will introduce some considerable delays via the existing Weston Road corridor, it is therefore considered appropriate to provide the 'improved' strategic alternative corridor at the same time and encourage traffic to stay on the David Whitby Way Route. This strategy is also consistent with the provision of the A500/Whitby Way improvement early in the development of their approved employment development (23/0539N).

In summary, it is CEC Highways view that the University Way roundabout improvement is delivered and operational at the same time as the installation of the Main Road signals.

A500 / David Whitby Way Roundabout

The Growth Village Scheme (22/1447N) does have an impact at this junction. However, as per the strategy set out above, a scheme has been agreed with the developer for the employment development (23/0539N) to provide for an improved layout. This is conditioned to be delivered quite early on in the development of the employment scheme and is designed to cater for both sets of generated traffic.

David Whitby Way – Central Roundabout

This junction has not been specifically assessed in the South Cheshire Growth Village Transport Assessment. However, the proposals for the Basford East employment Development (23/0539N) did review the operation of the junction.

The junction is forecast to operate with minimal queuing in the future and with the relatively modest flows that the Growth Village push through this junction and CEC highways are satisfied that the impacts will not require any mitigation measures.

However, local concerns have been expressed about residents of the Growth Village driving to the new primary school located on Basford East, rather than making use of the sustainable access via the new cycle link. The Highway Officer considers it preferable if any 'school traffic' was not routed via David Whitby Way and encouraged to use the Main Road / B5472 'local' roads. This could be encouraged by including a formal drop off facility within Parcel W2 and secured through a planning condition for it to be incorporated into the layout at the Reserved Matters stage.

Meremoor Moss Roundabout / (B5472/A500)

The applicant originally considered that there was no need for an improvement at this junction. However, this route will be the main access to the development, particularly as the Weston Road Route via David Whitby Way now has a set of traffic signals.

The Highway Officer advises that the Basford East employment scheme (23/0539N) has very similar impact to that of the Growth Village. Combined, these two developments would add significant congestion to this already congested junction.

The developer of the employment scheme has agreed to contribute £2.45M towards an improvement scheme at this location. The Council is working up a detailed design of the improvements required here now that the scope of the A500 Dualling Scheme has been revised. Initial optioneering has identified a scheme costing approximately £5M that would accommodate development traffic and provide a strategic improvement.

Given the level of impact and the proportionate contribution from the employment scheme, a financial contribution of £2.45M is required to be secured via a S106 agreement. The trigger point for payment of this contribution can be set at a later stage of the development as the most severe impacts are seen only in later years.

Summary

The Highway Officer raises no objection to the application. Although final design details will need to be agreed, overall the proposals will;

- Improve bus services to/from the new village
- improve pedestrian and cycle connections through the site;
- provide a safe route to the nearest school;
- reduce the desirability of the village as a traffic through route
- reduce speed limits; and mitigate the wider highways impact final detail need to be agreed.

It is considered that phasing of the development and the associated highway mitigation works will be required to deliver a sustainable development.

To ensure improved public transport and that the traffic impact of the scheme can be mitigated through off-site highway improvements, financial contributions are required to be secured through a S106 Agreement as follows:

- bus services contribution of £1.083 M to be paid at the following triggers: 50% on occupation of the 150th Dwelling; 50% on occupation of the 325 Dwelling.
- £150,000 towards average Speed Cameras or other traffic control measures on the B5472 or other traffic management measures or Travel Plan incentives required in the vicinity of the site. This contribution will be payable prior to occupation of 325th unit or delivery of the Main Road / B5472 junction alterations.
- Contribution of £2.45m towards the B5472 / A500 'Meremoor Moss' roundabout scheme or broader highway improvements on the A500 corridor with payment of £1.45M prior to occupation of 350 units and of £1M prior to occupation of 500 units.

- Contribution of £1.4M towards improvements at the University Way Weston Road Roundabout prior to occupation of the 150th dwelling unless this has been delivered earlier by the developer under the S278 trigger.

In addition, planning conditions are recommended to be attached as follows;

- Provision of bus Layby to be implemented before the occupation of 50 houses.
- Scheme of street lighting to be approved prior to delivery of any of the highway improvements
- Provision of Cycleway link to the Basford East strategic site through parcel W2 including the delivery of the Signals at Main Road / Weston Road prior to the occupation of any dwellings
- Prior to the delivery of the Weston Road / Main Road signals the improvement scheme to the Weston Road/University Way Roundabout Junction to be completed and available for use
- The submitted indicative drawings and technical information establish the principles for the measures of a Highway Traffic Management Scheme to be incorporated into the development as part of any Reserved Matters application
- Details for the provision of a 5 space parking 'drop off' facility and prior to the occupation of any properties on Parcel W2
- Approval of Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for each phase
- Scheme for the removal of frontage vegetation on the B5427, Old Park Road, Weston Road and Main Road for Parcels W2, S and E to encourage compliance with the proposed speed limits (this can be secured through the overall landscaping proposals as part of a Reserved matters application)
- Submission of a full Residential Travel Plan prior to the occupation of any phase
- Approval of a scheme for the surfacing material and finishes (this will be addressed through a condition requiring design coding)
- Submission of details of minimum parapet height on B5472 railway bridge prior to provision of cycleways.
- Submission of a detailed scheme for the widening of Old Park Road to 6.0m

As recommended by National Highways a further condition is required to secure the approval of a comprehensive travel plan framework for the site prior to first occupation.

Ecology

There are various ecology matters to consider. These are broken down into the following subsections and assessed accordingly. Additional survey information and clarification in respect of ecological issues has been provided during the course of the application.

Statutory Designated Sites

Natural England have been consulted on this application and originally requested additional information to allow an assessment to be made of the potential impacts of the proposed development upon Sandbach Flashes SSSI. Natural England have subsequently advised that they have no objections in respect of the Sandbach Flashes SSSI, subject to mitigation being secured by means of condition.

Information has been submitted in respect of statutory designated sites which includes a Habitat Regulations 'Screening' Assessment undertaken under Regulation 63. This assessment concludes there are no 'likely significant effects', consequently an Appropriate Assessment under the regulations is not required. The Council's Ecologist advises that the Council adopts the submitted assessment and conclusions of the screening assessment.

The Council's Ecologist notes that Natural England (NE) requested further information in respect of Peat Resources on site. This has been provided and no objection is raised by NE, subject to a condition being imposed requiring the submission of a detailed drainage strategy which prevents the loss or degradation of restorable peat.

Green Infrastructure

Substantial areas of green infrastructure are included on the submitted parameters plan. These contribute to the developments aspirations to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain and these areas need to be delivered in the early phases of the development.

The draft Phasing Plan shows one area of landscape restoration/Biodiversity enhancement delivered as part of Phase 2 and the second area delivered as part of Phase 3 of the development. If there is a delay in the delivery of GI, this will need to be accounted for in the Biodiversity Metric calculation.

Priority Habitats

Wood Pasture and Parkland

Wood Pasture and Parkland priority habitat is shown on the national inventory of priority habitats as being present on the application site. The area of land that appears on the inventory no longer appears to support this habitat but is proposed for enhancement as part of the green infrastructure associated with the development. This would deliver a significant benefit for biodiversity.

Hedgerows

The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain report states that 210m of existing hedgerow would be lost as a result of the proposed development. However, the proposed development is anticipated to deliver a net increase in hedgerow biodiversity. Conditions are required to ensure that the extent of habitat creation anticipated by the biodiversity metric calculations is incorporated into detailed designs coming forward at the reserved matters stage.

Ponds

Whilst the Environmental Statement has been based upon the existing ponds on site being retained on site, and this forms a part of the submitted amphibian and reptile mitigation strategy, the ponds are not shown as being retained on the parameters plan or the illustrative masterplan. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure that all existing ponds are retained as part of the proposed development.

Great Crested Newts

This protected species was recorded at ponds both within and adjacent to the red line of the application site in 2017 and 2019 with a medium size meta-population being present. Updated surveys in 2022 confirmed the continued presence of the species.

Based upon the submitted surveys, the Council's Ecologist considers that the proposed development is likely to result in an adverse impact upon this species as a result of the loss of terrestrial habitat and the risk of newts being killed or injured during construction.

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:

- (a) 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;
- (b) no satisfactory alternative and
- (c) no detriment to the maintenance of the species population at favourable conservation status in their natural range

The UK has implemented the Directive in the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 2010 (as amended) which contain two layers of protection (i) a requirement on Local Planning Authorities ("LPAs") to have regard to the Directive's requirements above, and (ii) a licensing system administered by Natural England and supported by criminal sanctions.

Policy SE 3 of the CELPS states that development which is likely to have a significant impact on a site with legally protected species will not be permitted except where the reasons for or the benefits of the development outweigh the impact of the development. Circular 6/2005 advises LPAs to give due weight to the presence of protected species on a development site to reflect EC requirements. "This may potentially justify a refusal of planning permission."

The NPPF advises LPAs to protect and enhance biodiversity: if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) or adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, planning permission should be refused.

Natural England's standing advice is that, if a (conditioned) development appears to fail the three tests in the Habitats Directive, then LPAs should consider whether Natural England is likely to grant a licence: if unlikely, then the LPA should refuse permission: if likely, then the LPA can conclude that no impediment to planning permission arises under the Directive and Regulations.

In terms of the Habitat Directive tests;

- The proposed development is of overriding public interest. The development of this allocated strategic site (LPS 8- South Cheshire Growth Village) would deliver up to 650 dwellings of which 30% would be affordable homes. This supports the overall aims of the Local Plan Strategy and the development of this allocated site makes an important contribution to these objectives.
- The site is allocated for significant development and there is no satisfactory alternative to delivering this scale of development.
- The Council's Ecologist advises that the retention of the on-site pond and enhancement of associated terrestrial habitat, together with standard measures to minimise the risk of newts being harmed during site clearance works, would be sufficient to maintain the favourable conservation status populations associated with the application site

The Environmental Statement includes outline proposals to mitigate and compensate for the adverse impacts of the proposed development upon this species. An indicative plan of GCN and reptile mitigation measures shows the GCN breeding pond retained within an area of enhanced terrestrial habitat.

A second smaller area of GCN mitigation is proposed on the west of parcel W2, but this is shown as being amenity open space on the Indicative Open Space Strategy. If this area is to be used as ecological mitigation it must not be identified as amenity open space.

Therefore, a condition would be required to ensure the submission of a Great Crested Newt mitigation scheme at the reserved matters stage. The Council's Ecologist further advises that as an alternative to a conventionally licensed mitigation scheme the applicant should also consider entry into Natural England's District Level licensing scheme for the species.

It is considered that the proposals would be comply with the relevant policies of Development Plan in terms of the impact upon protected species.

Toad

This priority species was recorded at a pond within the interior of the site. The proposed development is likely to have an adverse impact on this population due to the loss of suitable, albeit relatively low value terrestrial habitat. This impact is likely to be significant at the Local scale. Connectivity with offsite habitats to the west would however be maintained as part of the proposed development and enhancements of terrestrial habitats for Great Crested Newts would also benefit this species.

Polecat

This priority species was recorded on site. The proposed development which is largely restricted to the existing arable and grassland fields would be unlikely to have a significant adverse impact upon this species through habitat loss. The proposed development may however result in the species being deterred from using retained habitats on site due to increased human presence. This is likely to result in a low magnitude impact upon this species, which is likely to be addressed through the habitat enhancement proposed.

Bats

Roosts

A number of trees on site have been found to have potential to support roosting bats. No evidence of roosting bats was however recorded during surveys of trees likely to be affected by the development during 2018, 2019 and 2022. The Council's ecologist therefore advises that the proposed development is unlikely to result in an adverse impact upon roosting bats based upon the current status of roosting bats on site.

A condition is however required to secure the submission of updated bat surveys/assessment in support of any future reserved matters application.

Activity

Bat activity surveys have been undertaken to inform the Environmental Statement. The Council's Ecologist advises that the application site supports sufficient diversity of bat species to meet the selection criteria as a Local Wildlife Site. For the most part important bat habitats would be retained as part of the proposed development, with new suitable habitat delivered as part of the

Green Infrastructure proposals. The biodiversity metric as discussed below, can be used to establish whether sufficient habitat creation is being provided to address that lost. Areas of highest bat activity were associated with three areas (Static Detector Locations 2, 3 and 8). Locations 2 and 3 are within the green infrastructure areas, whilst static location 8 is near existing road and so may already be subject to the effects of light pollution.

To avoid any adverse impacts on bats a condition should be attached requiring each reserved matters application to include details of the proposed lighting scheme which should reflect the Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note 08/18 (Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK)

Dormouse

This species is known to have only one population in Cheshire. The Council's Ecologist that this species is not reasonable likely to be present or affected by the proposed development.

Badgers

An updated badger survey has been submitted. There is significant badger sett on site and there are other setts located beyond the site boundary. It is not anticipated that any badger sett would be directly affected as a result of the proposed development. The development however is likely to result in the loss of suitable foraging habitat. With mitigation and compensation measures in place the proposed development is anticipated to result in a low magnitude adverse impact this species.

The precise impacts of the development will however depend upon the layout proposed at the reserved matters stage and the status of badgers on site at the time. A condition is recommended requiring the submission of an updated badger survey and mitigation strategy in support of any future reserved matters application.

Otter

Evidence of Otter activity was recorded on the periphery of the application site. No resting places (holts) were however identified. The proportion of the site in the vicinity of the otter activity is proposed for habitat enhancement. No significant effects on Otter are therefore anticipated based upon the current status of otters on site. There is a low risk that if otters use the site as a resting place in the future they could be disturbed during habitat enhancement works. A condition is recommended requiring any reserved matters application to be supported by an updated otter survey and mitigation strategy.

Water Vole

No evidence of this species was recorded during the submitted survey and the watercourse on site was not found to be particularly suitable for this species. On the day of the survey visit and distance of the watercourse from the development, The Council's Ecologist advises that this species is not reasonably likely to be affected.

Hedgehog

The proposed development will result in the loss of habitat for this species. However, the majority of habitat lost would however be of relatively low value for this species. The Environmental Statement includes proposals to minimise the risk of the individual animals being killed or injured during the construction phase. The proposed development would result in a minor impact upon this species as a result of the loss of habitat and risk during the construction phase, but these effects are likely to be addressed through the habitat enhancements proposed.

Reptiles

Slow worm was recorded on an arable field margin adjacent to the southern railway embankment on the northern edge of development parcel 'W2'. This species has also been identified in similar habitats on adjacent sites. As this species has been recorded along the railway corridor it is also potentially present within habitats to the south of parcels 'W1' and 'Plot S'. Habitats in these two additional plots were not however particularly suitable for reptiles at the time the surveys were undertaken.

The optimal habitat for slow worms is along the railway corridor outside the red line of the application and so not directly affected, whilst habitats within the red line are likely to be less favourable, with the exception of the field margin north of W2.

Any sites supporting this species, which is uncommon in Cheshire, would meet Local Wildlife Site selection criteria, and receive protection through Policy SE3 of the Local Plan Strategy.

The Environmental Statement (ES includes outline proposals to mitigate the risk of slow worms being killed or injured during the construction phase. In order to reduce the potential impacts of the proposed development upon this species resulting from loss of habitat and risk of harm during construction a 2m undeveloped buffer has been provided in the plots abutting the railway corridor and shown illustratively on the GCN and Reptile Mitigation Plan included with the applicants 'CEC Nature Conservation responses' (November 2023).

A reptile receptor area is shown indicatively on the submitted 'CEC Nature Conservation responses (November 2023). This area is however also shown as being a Childrens Play Area on the submitted Indicative Open Space Strategy. Whilst the two uses are incompatible, this area is not committed as open space/play area and would be available as a reptile mitigation area.

A condition is recommended requiring any reserved matters application for development parcels 'W1', 'W2' and 'S' be supported by an updated reptile survey/assessment and mitigation and compensation strategy which should include the provision of a 2m buffer adjacent to the railway corridor.

Nesting Birds

The application site supports a number of breeding bird species including several that are priority species. The habitat utilised by these species would for the most part be retained as part of the proposed development. The Council's Ecologist advises that adequate suitable compensatory planting must be provided for any habitats lost to the development, and this can be assessed through the biodiversity metric discussed below.

Invertebrates

A number of priority invertebrate species have been recorded within the broad locality of the application site. Much of the application site is not however suitable for these species, and the majority of more important habitat is retained. The proposed development with the associated green infrastructure creation is not likely to have a significant adverse impact upon priority invertebrate species.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Local Plan Policy SE 3(5) requires all developments to aim to positively contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. In order, to assess the impacts of the proposed development upon

biodiversity the applicant has submitted an assessment of the residual impacts of the proposed development using the Defra biodiversity 'metric' methodology. An assessment of this type calculates in 'units' whether the proposed development would deliver a net gain or loss for biodiversity.

The submitted metric calculation shows that the proposed development would result in a net gain for biodiversity. It also reflects the presence of the application site with the CEC ecological network, however the Council's Ecologist point out that has only been applied for habitats of medium distinctiveness and above. Nevertheless, applying this change to all habitats entered in the metric still results in the scheme still delivering a net gain, but the percentage gain is reduced.

The condition assessments undertaken of the baseline habitats has not been based upon the standardised metric condition assessment criteria. As a result, the Councils Ecologist has advised there is a risk that the baseline assessment of the existing habitats on site may not be accurate, affecting the results of the overall BNG assessment.

In their consultation comments Natural England requested greater wetland creation and enhancement proposals as part of the green infrastructure delivered as part of the proposed development. This is supported by the Councils Ecologist.

Planning conditions are required to ensure the reserved matters applications are supported by a habitat creation method statement, 30-year habitat management plan and an ecological monitoring strategy to ensure that the habitat creation anticipated by the biodiversity metric is brought forward.

Ecological enhancement

This planning application provides an opportunity to incorporate features to increase the biodiversity value of the final development in accordance with Local Plan Policy SE 3. A condition is recommended requiring any future reserved matters application to be supported by a strategy for the incorporation of features to enhance the biodiversity value of the development.

Invasive non-native plant species

A number of non-native invasive plant species have been recorded on site. If planning consent is granted. A condition is recommended requiring the submission of a management plan for the control of these species with each reserved matters application.

Conditions

In summary, the Council's Ecologist raises no objection to the development subject to a series of conditions being attached as recommended above. The Environment Agency has also requested that a condition be imposed requiring that an ecological survey shall be carried out prior to the submission of detailed plans to enable an assessment of the risk posed by the development. However, the Council's Ecologist advises against attaching such a condition requiring a 'blanket' ecology survey at this stage, given that recommendations have already been made for specific surveys which need to be updated.

Trees and Woodland

This application is supported by a Preliminary Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Survey Schedule.

The Council's Forestry Officer notes that Tree Constraints Plan is dated December 2018 so pre-dates the submission of the application by over three years. For the purposes of any assessment on this application, it is therefore considered that the reliability and accuracy of the supporting arboricultural information should be given limited weight unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The survey has recorded 110 Individual trees, 46 groups of trees 27 hedgerows and 9 woodlands which are annotated on the plan with indicative crown spreads and root protection areas (RPA). The majority of trees are categorised and A (High) moderate (B) category and should be regarded as principle landscape assets which means there will be a presumption for their retention unless there are exceptional circumstances where there are clear overriding reasons for allowing the development and there are no suitable alternatives. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, such impacts must satisfactorily demonstrate significant environmental gain by appropriate mitigation, compensation or offsetting.

Three mature trees (two Oak T55; T58 and one Sycamore T80) and one group of Elm (G18) are identified as unsuitable for retention due to of arboricultural features that limit their future life expectancy and are identified for removal irrespective of the development proposals.

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas

Trees within and immediately adjacent to the site are currently not protected by a Tree Preservation Order and the site does not lie within a designated Conservation Area.

Ancient Woodland

No Ancient Woodland is listed within or adjacent to the site.

Veteran Trees

The NPPF defines veteran trees are those which, because of age, size and condition, are of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value and are regarded as 'irreplaceable'.

The Woodland Trust maintains an inventory of significant trees which includes some ancient and veteran individuals. Whilst no records of Ancient or Veteran trees are recorded on the site, any arboricultural assessment as part of any future reserved matters application must assess trees for Veteran or Ancient status in accordance with the relevant guidance.

To comply with national and local planning policy development must not result in loss or deterioration of ancient and veteran trees unless wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exist. Should Veteran or Ancient trees be present on the site, it will be necessary to demonstrate through the submission of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment that no adverse impacts will occur.

Priority Habitat Inventory

The Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> identifies woodland types under the habitat type 'deciduous woodland' which are contiguous with Woodlands W1; W4; W5 and W7(G11) of the Tree Constraints Plan.

The Inventory has records of Woodland Pasture and Parkland associated with Crewe Hall and is discussed further in the Nature Conservation Officers consultation comments.

Proposed Access points

Four access points into the various parcels of the site are submitted for approval as part of this application:

Parcel W2 - West of main road and south of the rail line

Northern Parcels N1 and N2 – off Old Park Road

Parcel E - off Old Park Road

Parcel S - Off B5472

No information appears to have been provided within the Tree Survey on the impact of these proposed access points and associated visibility splays on existing trees. Therefore, the Forestry Officer advises that should any A or B category trees be lost as a result of the proposed accesses and there are no suitable alternatives any future reserved matters application must demonstrate significant environmental gain by appropriate mitigation, compensation or offsetting.

Trees and Woodlands

The Tree Survey has identified 110 individual trees within the site of which 25 are High (A) category and 70 are moderate (B) category. The site includes a further 46 tree groups of which 17 are categorised as moderate (B) category. Nine woodlands (W1-W9) have been identified within the site and categorised as High (A) or Moderate (B) quality. The submitted Planning Statement states that most of the existing trees are to be retained as part of the scheme and as previously stated all A and B category trees including woodland must be regarded as principal landscape assets. The indicative master plan shows trees and woodlands to be retained within the schemes design.

As part of any detailed design submitted at reserved matters, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment must fully assess the constraints posed by trees both above and below ground following the design advice provided in BS5837:2012 and ensure sufficient space from development to allow for their long term physical retention without unduly impacting on residential amenity.

Woodlands retained as part of the scheme will need to be subject to a detailed woodland management plan. That will include long term objectives for the woodlands, a management strategy, plan of operations and maintenance schedules for a minimum 10-year period in accordance Forestry Commission and UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) standing advice.

Hedgerows

A total of 210 metres of existing hedgerow is proposed to be lost because of the proposed development. However, the loss of hedgerow is addressed by the Council Ecologist who advises that in view of the extensive GI and planting which is to be provided the development is anticipated to deliver a net increase in hedgerow biodiversity.

In conclusion, the Council's Forestry Officer raises no objections to this application, subject to conditions requiring any reserved matters application being supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and the submission of a Woodland Management Plan.

Flood Risk/Drainage

The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy show that the majority of the Site is situated in Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding) with a small area (less than 1 % of the total area) at the northeast of the Site located in Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with Englesea Brook. All new build development will be in Flood Zone 1. The proposals for the small areas within Flood Zone 2 and 3 include tree planting and landscaping.

The Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy broadly shows how surface water and run-off can be managed and attenuated so as not to increase downstream flood risk. The housing development will drain towards nearby swales, which will convey surface water to Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) attenuation basins.

The drainage basins are indicated to be located within Flood Zone 1 and will be designed to collect and store surface water runoff and discharge off-site at the greenfield rate. It is proposed that attenuation basins in the eastern section of the scheme will discharge into tributaries of Englesea Brook and to a tributary of Basford Brook for the western part of the scheme. In addition, the southern parts of the site are proposed to discharge to an existing surface water drainage to the west of the site also connect to the Basford East surface water network.

It is further stated that the drainage strategy seeks to re-establish and work with the natural drainage patterns across the site that have in places been impacted by infilling of ditches and construction of the railway line and B5472, minimising flood risk.

At this stage, whilst the overall principles of the drainage strategy have been accepted, detailed issues are required to be addressed in respect of the final design of elements of the drainage system including the provision of SuDs features.

Following clarification of technical aspects of the operation of the drainage system, including surface water discharge routes beyond the site boundary to Englesea Brook and also options from the western parcel (W2) toward tributaries of the Basford Brook, the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) now raise no objections to the application subject to conditions. In addition, the Environment Agency have also been formally consulted and have no objection subject to conditions being attached.

These planning conditions require the development to be in accordance with an updated Flood Risk Assessment including a detailed Drainage Strategy; approval of the overall detailed strategy design limiting the surface water runoff and the need for proposals to incorporate SuD's in accordance with the adopted SPD.

Importantly, the Landscape and Design sections also highlight the design implications of the drainage strategy, and in particular the need to deliver of high-quality SuDS.

In addition, United Utilities raises no objections to the application, subject to conditions being attached requiring that as part of any reserved matters application the submission of a phasing plan. In terms of the timing/delivery of the development, a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy for the entire site, and a detailed Foul and Surface Water Drainage Scheme for each phase of the development.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

LPS 8 requires that the development of this site should provide green infrastructure and accommodate open space provision, including children's equipped play space/multi-use games and other recreational facilities

In addition, Policy SE6 of the CELPS sets out the open space requirements for housing development which are (per dwelling):

- Children's play space - 20sqm
- Amenity Green Space - 20sqm
- Allotments - 5sqm
- Green Infrastructure connectivity 20sqm

An Indicative Open Space Strategy plan has been provided which indicates the provision of allotments, orchards, one NEAP, three LEAPs, one LAP which are well positioned throughout the development.

Policy LPS 8 also requires provision of a MUGA and teen facilities, However given the restrictions of woodland areas, the proximity of future properties and mitigation measures set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment, the Leisure Officer accepts that such elements would need careful consideration and design to sympathetically take into account of the constraints of the site. A green gym is also required which could be easily accommodated throughout the development at the Reserved Matters Stage.

In terms of the typology requirements set out under Policy SE.6, the Leisure Officer considers that the indicative open space strategy does accord with the minimum provision for informal amenity space which be used for recreation or kickabout/play space. Given the location of the development parcels which has been determined by the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), green amenity space is consequently in the main linear in character, and also contains woodland or SuDS. However, these deficiencies need to be balanced against the significant overall provision of green infrastructure (GI) within the site including an overall areas of 14.6 ha which will be available for use as Public Open Space.

The Indicative Open Space Strategy plan shows a range of elements that are to be included within the GI, although details are limited at this outline stage. The detailed layout of the scheme will however provide details of the delivery of GI requirements, SuDS and amenity/childrens play space and also how these elements will co-exist.

In addition, the provision of way finders, art trail alongside interactive way finders and interpretation/information boards bringing in the local heritage will help to bind the split sites together giving the development a unique sense of place will be required to be incorporated into the detailed design of the scheme at the Reserved Matters Stage.

A condition is recommended requiring a detailed Strategic Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy to be submitted with a Reserved Matters application. Furthermore the SuDS/surface water drainage scheme will need be considered alongside the strategy to reduce its potential impact on the provision of amenity open space.

A condition is also recommended to require the submission and approval of management plan for all areas of POS and landscaping. The provision of a management company to maintain all on site open space will be secured through the S106 Agreement.

Outdoor Sport

Policies SC1 and SC2 of the Local Plan Strategy provide a clear development plan policy basis to require developments to provide or contribute towards both outdoor and indoor recreation. In particular, Policy SC2 of the CELPS requires major residential developments to contribute, through land assembly and / or financial contributions, to new or improved sports facilities where development will increase demand and / or there is a recognised shortage in the locality that would be exacerbated by the increase in demand arising from the development.

Policy LPS 8 also includes a requirement for the provision of sports pitches as part of the scheme. However, as the application site boundary does not include the 'protected open space' areas of the allocation (LPS 8), and in view of constraints including the sensitivity of heritage assets and extensive mitigation planting, off-site sports facilities / pitches is considered appropriate. In addition, Sport England considers that the development, "would create a need for a contribution to sports facilities. Such a contribution should be secured by a Section 106 Agreement and invested in improving sports facilities within the sports catchment of the proposal".

A Sports Needs Assessment (SNA) was submitted in line with the emerging Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy which requires all developments over 300 dwellings to produce an assessment using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator.

The SNA that identifies the requirement for sporting provision that arises from the new development. This has been undertaken in consultation with CEC, Sport England and relevant national governing bodies for sports. It has also drawn on the Council's newly adopted Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy. The SNA is considered acceptable and identifies off-site financial contributions (total £862,301) for the funding of new and improved facilities for football, rugby, hockey and cricket in the Crewe area.

Indoor Sports Facilities

The development will increase the need for local indoor leisure provision and as such a financial contribution should be sought towards Crewe Lifestyle and Shavington Leisure Centre being the nearest provision.

The Indoor Built Facility Strategy has identified that for Crewe there should be a focus on improvement of provision as set out in the Strategy. Whilst new developments should not be required to address an existing shortfall of provision, they should ensure that this situation is not worsened by ensuring that it fully addresses its own impact in terms of the additional demand for indoor leisure provision that it directly gives rise to.

Based on the size of the proposed development and participation rates for Cheshire East a contribution of £183,000 has been calculated to be necessary to and ensure health and fitness provision will meet increased demand for indoor physical activity.

For the above reasons the proposal is considered to comply with the open space and sport and recreation requirements of LPS 6 and policies SC2 and SE6 of the CELPS.

Public Rights of Way

The development would directly affect Public Footpaths Nos. 10 & 16 Weston as recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement, the legal record of Public Rights of Way.

It is proposed to seek closure of the existing level crossings (FP10/Stowford 2 and FP16/Stowford 1) with associated footpath diversions to provide enhanced and safe routes. This is also addressed Network Rail's safety concerns regarding increased use of the existing level crossings.

FP10 is proposed to be diverted to the east over the existing Main Road rail bridge and supported by the improved signal-controlled pedestrian and cycle facilities.

It is further proposed that FP16 be diverted via new route within Duchy Land from the junction of South Cheshire Way and FP15 at Jack Lane(east) running north parallel to the B5472, utilising the existing rail bridge before turning east through development parcel E to rejoin its original route to Old Park Road.

Although the Council's Public Rights of Way Team have not raised objections in principle to the proposal, detailed issues relating to the provision of the alternative and diverted routes as well as and their specification/design will need to be addressed as part of the layout/design of the Growth Village scheme at the reserved matters stage. Furthermore, the PROW team advise that the submission and approval of a Public Path Order application is required to secure the diverted routes.

The PROW Team recommends a condition be attached requiring the submission of a Public Rights of Way scheme of management. This requires details of the design of PROW within the development, proposals for the diversion or extinguishment of any Public Right of Way and any proposals for the temporary closure of any Public Rights of Way, along with alternative route provision.

Amenity

SADPD Policy HOU 12 (Amenity) states that new development should not be permitted if it is deemed to cause unacceptable harm upon neighbouring amenity such as from loss of privacy, overbearing impact, or noise and disturbance.

The nearest residential properties to the site are Holly Hedge Farm set in large curtilage off Main Road south of the railway bridge, and dwellings of Stowford hamlet on the western side of the Growth Village development.

Given the location of residential parcels and the provision of significant areas of intervening planting//landscaping as shown on the parameters plans, the required separation distances as set out under SADPD Policy HOU13 (Residential Standards) will be achieved between the development and existing properties. As a result, the amenities of existing residents will not be detrimentally impacted in terms of overbearing impact loss of outlook or privacy.

Concerns have been raised by the occupants of Holly Hedge Farm in respect of increased traffic along Main Road and the position of the site access to parcel W2. However, the package of highway improvements to be delivered on the wider road as set out in highway section of this report, including the improvement of the Weston Road/University Way Roundabout, is expected to discourage the use of Main Road through Weston Village. In addition, this will also help minimise the level of queuing on the southern approach to the new traffic signals on the railway bridge. Whilst a site access from Main Road is located opposite Holly Hedge Farm, this will only serve parcel W2 which is a relatively small, lower density area of the growth village scheme. Therefore, the resulting impact of vehicular movements along Main Road, or from use of the access to Parcel WS would not result in any greater appreciable impact on the amenities of Holly Hedge Farm or other properties in the locality in terms of noise, disturbance or visual intrusion. However, the detailed relationship of the development with existing properties will be assessed at the reserved stage.

Odour Assessment

Commercial properties at Crewe Hall Enterprise Park are located in close proximity to the northern boundary of the application site. As a result the Environmental Health considered there is potential for odours to be caused to future residents of the development from cooking odours emanating from nearby industrial premises.

An Odour Assessment has however been submitted in support of the application (ref 4299r1 dated 15/01/2). The Environmental Health Officer accepts its findings and conclusion that the effect of odour from existing sources is minimal and they do not cause a significant loss of amenity to occupiers of properties within the locality. Therefore, there is no reasonable basis for any odour mitigation or abatement methods to be required.

The potential impact from odour from premises at Crewe Hall Enterprises Park will not therefore be harmful to the residential amenity within the proposed Growth Village development.

Air Quality

CELPS Policy SE12 states that the Council will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality. This is in accordance with paragraph 181 of the NPPF and the Government's Air Quality Strategy.

Air quality impacts have been considered within the Air Quality Assessment submitted in support of the application prepared by Wood Group UK Ltd, dated March 2022 and incorporated within the Environmental Statement (ES).

The report considers whether the development will result in increased exposure to airborne pollutants, particularly as a result of additional traffic and changes to traffic flows. The assessment uses ADMS Roads to model NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} impacts from additional traffic associated with this development and the cumulative impact of committed development within the area.

A number of modelled scenarios have been considered within the assessment. These were:

- 2018 Baseline year for model verification;
- 2021 Baseline year for reference;
- Do Minimum 2030 (without South Cheshire Growth Village Development); and

- Do Something 2030 (with South Cheshire Growth Village Development).

The assessment concludes that the impact of the future development on the chosen receptors will be *negligible* with regards to all the modelled pollutants. However, the proposed development is considered significant in that it is highly likely to change traffic patterns and congestion in the area.

A development of this scale and duration would be expected to have an adequate demolition, construction and track-out dust control plan implemented to protect sensitive receptors from impacts during this stage of the proposal and this is mentioned within the assessment as a form of mitigation. A condition is recommended requiring the submission and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which will include measures to mitigate environmental impacts during the course of the development.

Environmental Health recommend conditions are imposed to secure the provision of satisfactory Electric Vehicle Infrastructure within the development and the provision of ultra-low emission boilers to ensure that local air quality is not adversely impacted for existing and future residents.

Noise

The applicant has submitted an acoustic report which considers the impact of the impact of the noise from road / rail traffic and industrial noise on the proposed development in accordance with S8233:2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings and BS4142:2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound. This is an agreed methodology for assessing noise sources of this nature.

The assessment demonstrates that only a small number of dwellings within the scheme are likely to require specific mitigation measures, such as appropriate glazing, ventilation and boundary treatments to ensure that future occupants of the properties are not adversely affected by noise from road/ rail traffic and Industrial Noise. It also advises that good design at the reserved matters stage can also help to mitigate any noise impact, such as appropriate building orientation to screen rear garden and amenity space.

The Environmental Health Officer has accepted the acoustic reports methodology, conclusion, and recommendations.

A condition is recommended to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the proposed mitigation and recommendations of the acoustic report. The proposals accord with Policy SE12 of the CELPS as satisfactory mitigation measures can be achieved to minimise and mitigate the effects of noise.

The impact of the development upon during the construction phase in terms of noise, as well as dust are temporary manifestation of the development process, and as such will be temporary in nature. In this regard and it is considered that a Construction environmental management plan (CEMP) can ensure that any such impacts upon existing development are minimised. The submission and implementation of a CEMP can be secured by condition.

Subject to the conditions referred to above, the proposal will comply with policy SE12 of the CELPS.

Education

The development of 650 dwellings at South Cheshire Growth Village (LPS 8) is expected to generate:

121 - Primary children (650 x 0.19) (- 3 SEN)

96 - Secondary children (650 x 0.15) (- 2 SEN)

8 - SEN children (650 x 0.51 x 0.023%)

Primary contributions have been negotiated on other housing developments located within adjacent Local Plan allocation LPS2 (Basford East) to contribute to the new Basford East Primary School. As such, an apportioned amount is being requested from the developer of the Growth Village, based on up-to-date costings and the number of children (121) expected to come from the development.

The Education Team have updated its consultation response during the course of the application. This addressed an error in calculating the primary contribution in not providing an apportioned cost of the new school and incorrectly used the normal method of calculating places.

The contribution (primary) set out below is an apportioned amount towards the provision of a 1 FE primary school, with the necessary infrastructure to support an additional 1 FE. A feasibility (Stage 0) exercise was undertaken which provided a high-level estimate, and this indicated the construction of the school will cost upwards of £8,570,900.00. This figure and the number of children coming from the development has determined the primary contribution which has been updated during the course of the application.

$£8,570,900.00 / 210$ (number of pupils in the primary setting) \times 121 (number of children expected to come from the 22/1447N development) = £4,938,470.95

The development is expected to impact on secondary school places in the locality. Contributions which have been negotiated on other developments are factored into the forecasts both in terms of the increased pupil numbers and the increased capacity at secondary schools in the area as a result of agreed financial contributions. The analysis undertaken has identified that a shortfall of secondary school places still remains.

Special Education provision within Cheshire East Council currently has a shortage of places available with at present over 47% of pupils educated outside of the Borough. The Education Team acknowledges that this is an existing concern, and 8 children are expected from the development exacerbating the shortfall.

Therefore, to alleviate forecast pressures, the following contributions would be required:

121 x £40,813.81 = £4,938,471.01 (Primary)

96 x £17,959.00 x 0.91 = £1,568,898.24 (Secondary)

8 x £50,000 x 0.91 = £364,000 (SEN)

Total education contribution: £6,871,369.25

Without a secured contribution of £6,871,369.25 Children’s Services would object to this application.

Healthcare provision

The NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) advise that GP practices are operating close to capacity and have sought a financial contribution to mitigate the impact of the development which would result in an additional 2,000-3,000 patients. It is advised that the GP Practices within the area, have completed utilisation studies on their existing premises, and across the Practices there was an average utilisation rate of 98%. The GP Practices are currently unable to hire into both clinical and administrative roles and struggle to provide enough clinical sessions per week due directly to the constraints of the existing premises.

The CCG therefore objects to the application, unless a financial contribution is secured by a Section 106 Agreement towards improvements to the Primary Care Network’s that cover the area of Crewe. In particular improvements have been identified as being required to the following GP Practices;

- Eagle Bridge Health and Wellbeing Centre, - Conversion of vacant third floor space into clinical and administrative rooms. This is expected to develop an additional 15 consulting room alongside treatment rooms and smaller consultation rooms.
- Rope Green Medical Centre - This is a relative new building, but internally its configuration is not ideal with significant opportunities for redevelopment/reconfiguration of rooms internally to allow for additional clinical rooms to be created.
- Hungerford Road - This is significantly overstretched in terms of capacity and should patient flow be significant, the GP Practice would require extension.

A financial contribution is therefore sought as part of this application, which is based on a calculation consisting of occupancy x number of units in the development x £360. This is based on guidance provided to other CCG areas by NHS Property Services.

Size of Unit	Occupancy Assumptions Based on Size of Unit	Health Need/Sum Requested per unit
1 bed unit	1.4 persons	£504 per 1 bed unit
2 bed unit	2.0 persons	£720 per 2 bed unit
3 bed unit	2.8 persons	£1,008 per 3 bed unit
4 bed unit	3.5 persons	£1,260 per 4 bed unit
5 bed unit	4.8 persons	£1,728 per 5 bed unit

The healthcare contribution will be calculated once the housing mix determined at the Reserved Matters stage. The payment of this contribution will be secured through a S106 Agreement.

Affordable Housing

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and the Council’s Housing Supplementary Planning Document states that, the desired target percentage for affordable housing for all allocated sites will be a minimum of 30%, in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment carried out in 2013. This percentage relates to the

provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. Normally the Council would expect a ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing.

This is a proposed development of up to 650 dwellings within allocation LPS 8 and to meet the Council’s Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 195 dwellings to be provided as affordable homes.

The CELPS states in Policy SC5 justification paragraph 12.44, ‘The Housing Development Study shows that there is the objectively-assessed need for affordable housing for a minimum of 7,100 dwellings over the plan period, which equates to an average of 355 dwellings per year.’ This is for the whole borough of Cheshire East.

In addition, the current number of those on the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list with Crewe and Weston as their first choice is 2347. This can be broken down as below;

	How many bedrooms do you require?						
First Choice	1	2	3	4	5	5+	Grand Total
Crewe	1088	634	388	124	88		2322
Weston - Crewe	13	7	5				25

There is also still a need for Intermediate units that will cater for those 1st time buyers, those making a new household and families who cannot buy on the open market.

The development aims to provide 30 % affordable housing in a ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing in accordance with Policy SC5. (affordable homes). On this basis, 127 units should be provided as affordable/social rent and 68 units as intermediate tenure.

The detailed affordable housing mix will be agreed at the Reserved Matters stage and take account of then latest information on identified need information. The Council’s Housing Officer does not object to the application.

SECTION 106 AGREEMENT

Education (primary/secondary/SEN) provision - £6,871,369.25 to alleviate the forecast pressures relating to this site. The triggers for payment are; 50% payable prior to commencement of a dwelling on site and the final 50% prior to the occupation of the 325th dwelling (or 50% percentile dwelling).

Village Centre - to be provided and ready for use prior to the occupation of the 200th dwelling on site.

Affordable Housing - 30% policy compliant provision. Not more than of 50% of open market dwellings (sale/rent) of a phase shall be occupied until all affordable units within that phase have been completed and made ready for immediate occupation and use.

Highways - The traffic impact of the scheme is required to be mitigated through contributions to off-site highway improvements as follows;

- £1.083 towards bus services: 50% to be paid on occupation of the 150th Dwelling; 50% on occupation of the 325 Dwelling.
- £150,000 towards Average Speed Cameras or other traffic control measures on the B5472 or other traffic management measures or travel plan incentives required in the vicinity of the site. This contribution will be payable prior to occupation of 325th unit or delivery of the Main Road / B5472 junction alterations.
- £2.45m towards the B5472 / A500 'Meremoor Moss' roundabout scheme or broader highway improvements on the A500 corridor. Payments of 1.45M prior to occupation of 350 units and of £1M prior to occupation of 500 units.
- £1.4M towards improvements at the University Way/Weston Road Roundabout. To be Payable prior to occupation of the 150th dwelling unless this has been delivered earlier by the developer under the S278 trigger

Healthcare - To meet the need of resident resulting from this large development, improvements are required to the infrastructure of local GP Practices. The contribution will be calculated using the agreed NHS formula once the housing mix is determined at the Reserved Matters stage. Triggers for payments are as follows;

- 33% paid at occupation of 100 dwellings
- 33% paid at occupation of 50% percentile dwelling
- Remainder at occupation of 75% percentile dwelling

Outdoor sports- – In accordance with the submitted Sports Needs Assessment (SNA) relating to the proposed development, a contribution of £862,301 is required. 50% to be paid at occupation of 100 dwellings and the remainder paid at occupation of 325th dwelling (50% percentile dwelling)

Indoor and outdoor sports facilities - £183,000 to be paid on first occupation

Provision and future management of Green Infrastructure and open space - Provision of all areas of heritage mitigation planting /landscaping, POS/incidental open space, children's play, allotments/orchards and ecological areas - to be delivered in accordance with the phasing plan. In addition, arrangements for the transfer of these area to a management company for their future maintenance are required prior to the occupation of the development.

CIL REGULATIONS

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010, it is necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following:

- a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- a) Directly related to the development; and
- c) Fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

It is considered that the contributions required as part of the application are justified meet the Council's requirement for policy compliance. As set out above, all elements are necessary,

directly relate to the development and are fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of development.

On this basis the scheme is compliant with the CIL Regulations 2010

CONCLUSIONS

The principle of residential development on the site has been established through its allocation within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) under Policy LPS 8 (South Cheshire Growth Village).

This outline application proposes the creation of the South Cheshire Growth Village to deliver a sustainable settlement of up to 650 dwellings. It is proposed that a distinctive and high quality housing scheme in the form of an “estate“village is sited within an attractive parkland setting in line with the requirements of local plan allocation Policy LPS 8.

Policy LPS 8 emphasises the need to incorporate green infrastructure with specific landscape mitigation and parkland restoration in accordance with the Heritage Impact Assessment (CEC 2016) to minimise the visual impact of the development on heritage assets. Whilst the scheme would lead to some harm to heritage assets, proposed mitigation and design coding already provided demonstrates that the framework for the development accords with the Heritage Impact Assessment and requirements of Policy LPS8 to offset that harm. In particular elements of the landscape restoration also constitute public benefit.

Detailed assessments of the urban design and landscape/visual impact of the development have been made and although these matters will need to be considered in more detail, an acceptable framework is in place to further enhance the scheme at the reserved matters stage, including the requirement for detailed design coding which is subject to conditions. The outline proposals are therefore supported in design terms.

The impact on the wider highway network from the proposed development will be mitigated through financial contributions for improvements to Meremoor Moss roundabout (or within the A500 corridor) and alterations to the University Way/Weston Road roundabout.

A suite of indicative drawings and technical information has also been submitted of highway improvements to reduce the desirability of the new village as a through-route and reduce traffic speed. This has established the principles of a package of measures which ensure that an acceptable scheme is achievable in highway terms, although the detailed design of highway alterations will also need to take account urban design and place making objectives at the reserved matters stage.

A contribution to bus services will also be secured and the proposals will importantly ensure the provision of sustainable pedestrian/cycle link to connect through to the Basford East strategic allocation facilitated by the delivery of proposed Signals at Main Road / Weston Road. The Highway Officer have raised no objections subject to conditions and substantial Section 106 contributions.

Given the location of residential parcels and the provision of significant areas of intervening planting/landscaping the required separation distances will be achieved between the

development and existing properties. The amenities of existing residents will not be detrimentally impacted in terms of overbearing impact loss of outlook or privacy, nor as a result of noise/disturbance from road traffic movements.

No objections are raised in relation to flood risk/drainage, subject to conditions including the submission of the detailed drainage strategy and emphasis on making the most of Sustainable Urban Drainage in the detailed design for the scheme.

Ecological issues have been satisfactorily addressed particularly in respect to safeguarding habitat, protected species, the provision of on-site ecological mitigation areas and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain subject to a series of planning conditions being imposed. Tree and hedgerow losses have been accepted and would be mitigated in the proposed landscaping of the site and through off-site habitat creation to achieve biodiversity net gain.

Issues relating noise, air quality, contaminated land and public rights of way have been addressed and are subject to conditions where necessary.

To satisfactorily address the impact on local services/facilities, substantial contributions to education, healthcare provision and indoor/outdoor sport will be secured through a S106 agreement.

The delivery of this large and complex development will be required to be undertaken in accordance with a detailed Phasing Plan. This will ensure that amongst other requirements, the provision of green infrastructure, heritage mitigation/planting, pedestrian route to Basford East, open space, play facilities, wildlife mitigation and drainage /Suds are delivered at appropriate stages of the scheme.

On this basis, the proposal is for sustainable development which would bring environmental, economic and social benefits and is therefore considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant policies of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, the Site Allocations Development Policies Document and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Subject to the notification of the Secretary of State, the completion of Section 106 Agreement to secure;

S106	Amount	Trigger
Provision of all areas of heritage mitigation planting /landscaping, POS/incidental open space, Children’s play, allotments/ orchards and ecological areas to be delivered in accordance with phasing plan.		Prior to commencement of development
Education (primary/secondary/SEN)	£6,871,369	50% prior to Commencement

S106	Amount	Trigger
		of a dwelling, then 50% Prior to occupation of 325 th dwelling (or 50% percentile dwelling)
<p>Completion of mixed-use village centre of 1000sqm gross floorspace comprising;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 500sqm local needs retail (Use Class E) - 500sqm community facilities (Use (Use Class F2) <p>And Village Square</p>		Prior to occupation of 200 th dwelling
Affordable Housing	<p>30%</p> <p>(tenure split of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing).</p>	Not more than of 50% of open market dwellings (sale/rent) of a phase shall be occupied until all affordable units within that phase have been completed and made ready for immediate occupation and use.
Highway improvement works – B5472 / A500 ‘Meremoor Moss’ Roundabout scheme or broader highway improvements on the A500 corridor	£2,450,000	£1.45M prior to occupation of 350 units and £1M prior to occupation of 500 units.
Highway improvement works - University Way/ Weston Road Roundabout	£1,400.000	Upon occupation of the 150 th unit (Unless delivered earlier by developer under s278)
Highways – Bus Services	£1,083000	50% on occupation of the 150th Dwelling, then 50% on occupation of the 325th Dwelling.
Highways – Average Speed Cameras other traffic control measures on the B5472 or other traffic management measures or Travel Plan incentives	£150,000	prior to occupation of 325 properties or delivery of the Main Road / B5472 junction alterations.

S106	Amount	Trigger
Arrangements for transfer to management company of all areas of planting /landscaping, POS/incidental open space Childrens's play space, allotments/orchards and ecological areas		Prior to first occupation of the development
Contribution to outdoor sports facilities	£862,301	50% paid at occupation of 100 dwellings Remainder paid at occupation of 325 dwellings
NHS Healthcare	<u>NHS formula</u> £504 per 1 bed unit £720 per 2 bed unit £1,008 per 3 bed unit £1,260 per 4 bed unit £1,728 per 5 bed unit	- 33% paid at occupation of 100 dwellings - 33% paid at occupation of 50% percentile dwelling (325 dwellings) - Remainder at occupation of 75% percentile dwelling (487 dwellings)
Indoor Sport Contribution	£183,000	Prior to first occupation of the development

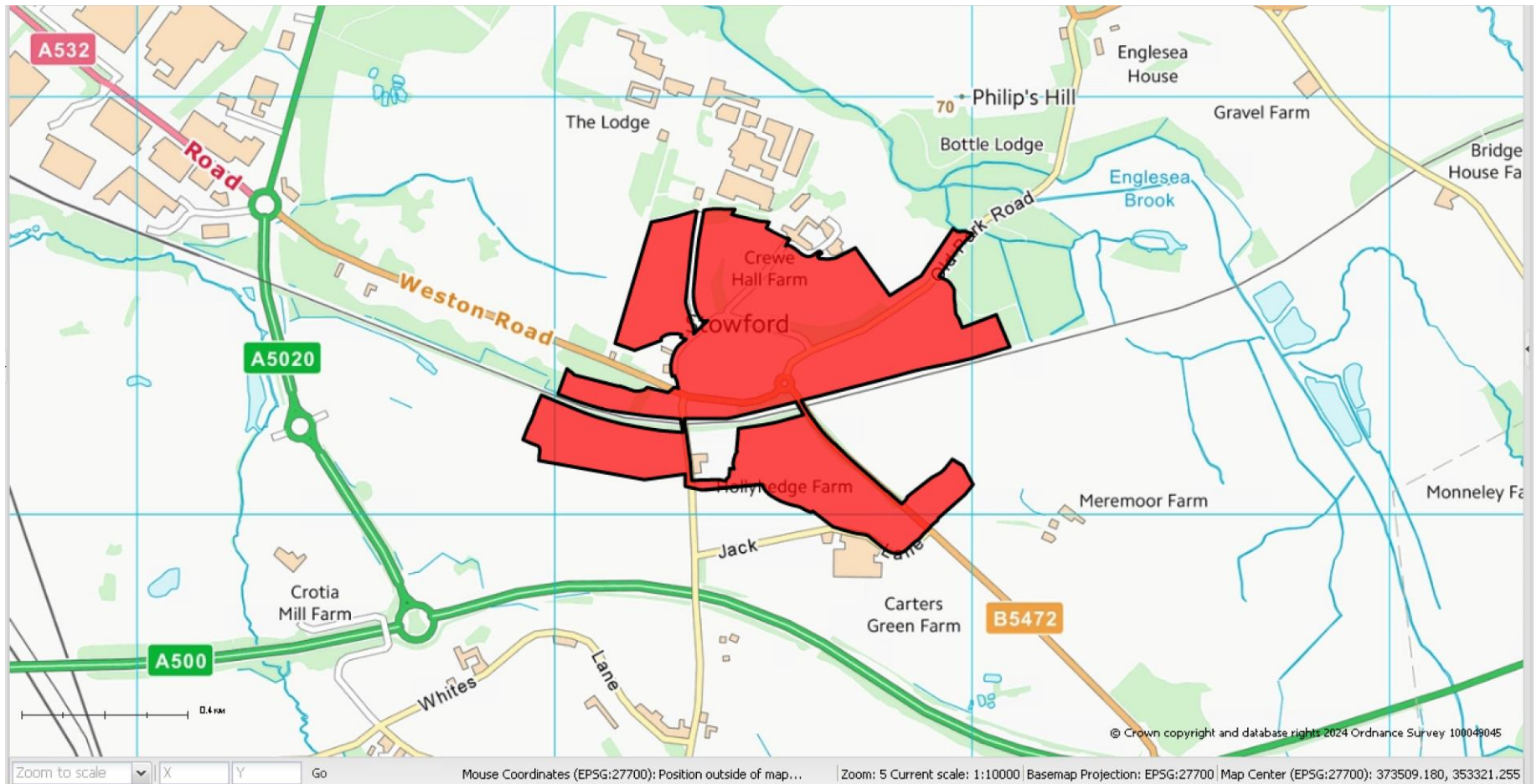
And the following conditions;

1. Time limit – approval of reserved matters (3 years)
2. Approval of reserved matters
3. Approved plans – Location and parameter plans
4. Development to comply with building Heights and housing density identified on Parameters Plans
5. Detailed Phasing Plan to be submitted with first reserved matters application
6. Submission of detailed Character Area Design Codes
7. All reserved matters applications to comply with the Design Coding.
8. Each reserved matters application to be supported by a Strategic Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy
9. Full details of landscape restoration and mitigation planting to be submitted as part of each reserved matters application
10. Implementation of approved landscaping scheme
11. Submission of Landscape Management Plan for all areas of POS and landscaping.
12. Submission of Public Art and Waymarking Strategy as part of Reserved Matters application
13. All Reserved matters applications to be supported by Arboricultural Impact Assessment
14. Submission Woodland Management Plan
15. Details of Boundary treatments submitted with all reserved matters applications
16. Details of levels to be submitted with all reserved matters applications

17. Measure to mitigate impact of lighting on heritage assets
18. Submission and approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation and a programme for post-excavation assessment
19. Requirement to provide for self-build opportunity on site.
20. Demonstrate compliance with Nationally Prescribed Space Standards, and accessibility and wheelchair housing standards.
21. The submitted Indicative highway drawings and technical information establish the principles for the measures of a Highway Traffic Management Scheme which shall support any Reserved Matters application
22. Provision of bus layby to be implemented before the occupation of 50 dwellings. 23. Detailed scheme of street lighting to be approved prior to delivery of any of the highway improvements.
23. Provision of Cycleway link to the Basford East site including the delivery of the Signals at Main Road/Weston Road prior to the occupation of any dwellings
24. Prior to the delivery of the Weston Road/ Main Road signals the approved improvement scheme to the Weston Road/University Way Roundabout Junction shall be completed and available for use.
25. Details for the provision of a 5 space parking 'drop off' facility prior to the occupation of any properties within development Parcel W2
26. Approval of Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for each phase
27. Submission of a comprehensive travel plan framework for the site prior to first occupation.
28. Submission of a Residential Travel Plan prior to the occupation of any phase
29. Submission of details of minimum parapet height on B5472 railway bridge prior to provision of cycleways.
30. Submission of a detailed scheme for the widening of Old Park Road to 6.0m
31. Submission of site wide green infrastructure strategy, including habitat creation method statement, 30-year monitoring & management plan and method statement for the control of non-native invasive plant species, to reflect habitat creation and enhancement targets in the submitted BNG metrics.
32. Retention of all existing ponds on site as part of the detailed design at reserved matters stage.
33. Details of the specification of proposed lighting (bat friendly).
34. Submission of updated great crested newt, otter, bat and badger survey/assessment and mitigation strategy to be submitted in support of any future reserved matters application.
35. Any reserved matters application for development parcels 'W1', 'W2' and 'S' to be supported by an updated reptile survey/assessment and mitigation and compensation strategy to include the provision of a 2m buffer adjacent to the railway corridor
36. Submission of ecological enhancement proposals (bat and bird boxes etc.) with each reserved matters application.
37. Safeguarding of nesting birds
38. Submission of a detailed drainage strategy which prevents the loss or degradation of restorable peat
39. Submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan to address impacts on bird species of Sandbach Flashes SSSI and their supporting habitat.
40. Scheme for the provision and management of an 8 metre wide undeveloped buffer zone alongside the main river

41. No development shall take place until a detailed drainage strategy and updated FRA for the site has been submitted and approved
42. Submission of details of proposed attenuation pond(s) and basins
43. CCTV survey of the existing drainage network.
44. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment and mitigation measures detailed
45. Submission of a detailed Foul and Surface Water Drainage Scheme for the entire site and for each phase of the development.
46. Opening hours for retail and community uses within local centre
47. Waste management strategy and bin storage arrangements
48. Details for the provision of cycle storage
49. Noise mitigation measures to be support any reserved matters application
50. Provision of Electric Vehicle infrastructure
51. Provision of Ultra Low Emission Boilers
52. Prior to commencement of development submission of Phase II ground investigation and risk assessment and remediation strategy if necessary.
53. Contaminated land - Verification report
54. Contaminated land – soil testing
55. Measures to deal with unexpected contamination
56. Submission of Public rights of way scheme of management
57. Removal of Permitted Development Rights
58. Establishment of Community Liaison Group

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.



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