

Application No: 12/2038N
Location: Santune House, ROPE LANE, SHAVINGTON, CW2 5DT
Proposal: Demolition of former nursing home and erection of 7 terraced dwellings, 4 residential apartments and 1 detached dwelling with access and parking
Applicant: Santune House Developments
Expiry Date: 27-Aug-2012

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES:

- Main Issues;
- Principle of Development;
- Design Standards;
- Private Amenity Space/Density;
- Amenity Considerations;
- Existing Employment Sites;
- Drainage;
- Waste Management;
- Over Development and Loss of Building;
- Landscape; and
- Highways

REFERRAL

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

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The site lies wholly within the settlement zone line for Shavington and is not allocated in the Local Plan. The site was formerly a nursing home called Santune House and was owned and operated by Cheshire East Council. However, the building has been vacant for some considerable time and has been prone to vandalism and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

The site is rectangular in shape (roughly) and measures 70m wide by 51m deep. The boundaries to the site are demarcated by mature hedgerow which is punctuated at sporadic intervals with trees of varying species and heights and a wire mesh fence. Located to the north, west and south of the application site are residential properties of varying sizes and types and to the east is Rope Lane, with other residential properties beyond it.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This is a full application for the erection of 7no. terraced properties, 4 no. residential apartments and 1 detached dwelling with associated access and car parking areas at the former Santune Nursing Home, Rope Lane, Shavington.

RELEVANT HISTORY

7/04607 – 40 Bed Elderly Persons Home and 2 Staff Houses – Approved – 15th December 1978

P95/0726 – Day Care Centre and Conversion of Bungalows to Offices – Approved – 15th November 1995

P00/1047 – Ground Floor Extension – Approved – 7th February 2001

POLICIES

National Policy

The application should be determined in accordance with national guidance set out in:

National Planning Policy Framework

Local Policy

The principle issue surrounding the determination of this application is whether the development is in accordance with the following policies within the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011:

BE.1	(Amenity)
BE.2	(Design Standards)
BE.3	(Access and Parking)
BE.4	(Drainage Utilities and Resources)
BE.5	(Infrastructure)
NE.5	(Nature Conservation and Habitats)
RES.2	(Unallocated Housing Sites)
RES.3	(Housing Densities)
RES.4	(Housing in Villages with Settlement Boundaries)
TRAN.5	(Provision for Cyclists)
TRAN.9	(Car Parking Standards)
E.7	(Existing Employment Sites)

CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

United Utilities: No objection

Environmental Health: No objection subject to the following being conditioned – hours of operation, pile foundations, method statement, no external lighting.

Contaminated Land: No objection subject to a condition relating to site investigation and risk assessment.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

No comments at the time of writing this report

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection received from the occupier of 12 Rope Lane, Shavington. The salient points raised by the objector are:

- The site has some history of blocked sewers affecting no's 12 to 28 Rope Lane;
- The green barrier of shrubs around the site should be retained, along with the trees which are the subject of TPO's and as many other trees as possible.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement

A Design and Access statement has been submitted to accompany the application. This is available on the application file and provides an understanding of the proposal and why it is required.

Tree Survey

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Main Issues

The main issues in the consideration of this application are the suitability of the site, in principle, for residential development having regard to matters of planning policy, housing land supply, loss of employment, affordable housing, amenity, ecology, design landscape, layout drainage and flooding, infrastructure, highway safety and traffic generation.

Principal of Development

The recently published National Planning Policy Framework replaces PPS3 and one of its core principles is that planning should:

“proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made to objectively identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth.” (Paragraph 17)

In addition it states that local authorities should:

“identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.” (Paragraph 47)

The site lies wholly within the settlement boundary of Shavington where, in principle, residential development is considered to be acceptable. National Planning Policy Framework advocates that most additional housing development should be concentrated in urban areas and that the Planning Authority should facilitate for the efficient use of brownfield land to minimise the amount of greenfield land being taken for new development. The site is not regarded as greenfield and the principle of residential development is accepted.

Additionally, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing as required by the NPPF and as such the increase in the amount of dwellings is considered to be acceptable. Given these factors, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design Standards

Guidance advocated within NPPF supports a mix of housing within areas. Policy BE.2 (Design Standards) is broadly in accordance with this guidance but places greater emphasis on the impact to the streetscene and encouraging development which respects the character, pattern and form of development within the area.

As a matter of fact, the NPPF states *‘Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions’* (paragraph 64)

However, the NPPF clearly states that *‘Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness’* (paragraph 60).

The design of new development should be of a high standard and wherever possible the built environment and surroundings should be enhanced. It is important that the relationship with the existing street scene is considered and improved, and not harmed by new development. (SPD – Development on Backland and Gardens: paragraph 3.5)

The collection of dwellings around the application site have been constructed over approximately the last 120 years and provide a eclectic mix of architectural styles, forms and differing scales of dwellings. The application site is a rectangular (roughly) parcel of land located adjacent to Rope Lane. The former nursing home is 2.5 storey high and the proposed dwelling houses are of a similar height and as such it will not appear overly conspicuous or incongruous.

The application proposes a mixture of terraced properties, detached dwellinghouses and apartments. According to the submitted plans, there will be 7no. terraced properties, 1no. detached dwellinghouse and 4no. apartments. Typically the terraced properties and the apartment block will measure approximately 5.5m high to the eaves and 9.6m high to the ridge and the footprint of the property is shaped like a letter 'L'. The building will measure approximately 46.4m long by 17.2m deep (at the widest points).

According to the submitted plans and the Design and Access statement the building will be constructed out of facing brick, under a concrete tile roof and the first floor will incorporate a render finish, which will be conditioned, in the event that planning permission is approved. In addition to the above, the properties will incorporate a string course at first floor level separating the facing brick from the render finish, sill and lintel details, projecting porches and dormer windows, in order to make the dwellings appear less stolid and uniform. It is considered that the proposed mixture of house types would not be at odds with the pattern and design of development in the surrounding area.

The proposed terraced properties and apartment block will be constructed on a similar footprint to the nursing, albeit slightly larger. Overall, it is considered that the scale, proportions and detailing on the proposed dwellings are similar to those within the surroundings mimicking their context without creating a pastiche form of development. The dwellings are well set back from the road frontage and it respects the surroundings, providing a sympathetic and unobtrusive infill development.

Internally the terraced properties will comprise kitchen, hall, dining area, cloak room and lounge at ground floor level. The first floor accommodation will comprise 2no. bedrooms storage cupboard and bathroom and there will be an additional bedroom with en-suite at the second floor.

There are 4no. self contained apartments which are spread over three levels. The proposed apartment is located immediately to the southeast of the terraced and forms the short leg of the letter 'L'. The ground floor apartments will comprise a lounge, kitchen, bathroom and 2 no. bedrooms. There will be 2 no. duplex apartments spread over the first and second floors. The first floor accommodation will comprise kitchen, lounge, bathroom and bedroom. The second floor will comprise 2 no. bedrooms with a bathroom.

According to the submitted plans the footprint of the proposed dwellinghouses is roughly rectangular in shape and measures approximately 9.8m wide by 11.2m deep (at the widest points) and is 5m high to the eaves and 7.8m high to the apex of the pitched roof. The detached property will be located to the south of the terraced properties and apartment. According to the submitted plans there is a an area of car parking to the front of the property and the existing vehicular access will be retained, which will serve the proposed detached dwelling. Located to the rear of the property is the private garden area, which will serve this property. . It is considered prudent to attach a condition relating to the removal of Permitted Development rights, in the event that planning permission is approved due to the limited size of the plot. Overall, it is considered that a simple rectilinear footprint of the proposed dwellinghouse with private amenity space located to the rear is in keeping with the character and appearance of the streetscene.

The proposed dwellinghouses will be constructed out of facing brick under a tile roof, which will be secured by condition, if planning permission is to be approved. The properties will incorporate a pitched roof design, which is in keeping with other properties in the immediate locality. The property is very simple in design terms with the front door centrally located and is flanked by a garage door on one side and a large picture window on the opposing side. Located at first floor level are slightly smaller apertures. Additionally, there is a simple mono pitch canopy and a projecting gable element (rendered). It is considered that the style, design and proportions of the fenestration are in keeping with the streetscene and do not appear out of character or appearance with other properties in the locality. Located on the rear elevation of the building is a set of French doors with windows of various sizes. On the side elevation facing the terraced properties is a chimney, which helps to give the property a vertical emphasis and on the opposing side elevation are two small apertures at ground floor level and a personnel door. In addition to the above there is a string course.

Overall, it is considered the proposal would not detract from the identifiable character of the locality and its sense of place. Furthermore, due to the nature of the plot, nature and sale of the existing built form and the intervening road and the boundary treatment, the application site will not be read as an isolated or divorced plot and the proposal is in accordance with policy BE.2 (Design Standards).

Private Amenity Space/Density

The Supplementary Planning Document 'Development on Backland and Gardens' states at paragraph 3.35 'dwellinghouses should have adequate open space provided; as a general indication/guideline this should be no less than 50m² per dwelling. The 50m² garden area excludes any parking provision which may have been made for the dwelling. The amount of garden area provided should be proportional with the size of the dwelling proposed. There should be sufficient open space provided to enable general activities such as drying of washing, storage of dustbins, play space for small children and sitting outside to take place in a private area'.

It is considered that the proposed layout would not represent an over-intensive development of the site in relation to the prevailing pattern and scale of the residential development and due to the amount of provision of external amenity space for the potential occupiers of the site. The amount of private amenity would be in excess of 50m² and would be commensurate with other properties in the immediate locality. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal will not be out of keeping. However, it is considered prudent to attach conditions relating to boundary treatment and landscaping, in order to help assimilate the proposal into the local environment.

Amenity Considerations

Policy BE.1 (Amenity) states that development will be permitted provided that the development is compatible with surrounding land uses, does not prejudice the amenity of future or neighbouring occupiers, does not prejudice the safe movement of traffic and does not cause an increase in air, noise, water pollution which might have an adverse impact on the use of land for other purposes.

It is considered that the redevelopment of the site for housing within an existing residential area is considered to be compatible with the surrounding land uses. The proposals are also unlikely to result in noise, air or water pollution. A principle consideration in determining this application is its effect upon the amenity of adjacent occupants. This primarily includes the bungalows to the north and west of the site, the semi detached properties, located directly opposite the application and the residential dwellings to the south. The general thrust of Policy BE.1 requires that development does not have a prejudicial impact on the amenity of occupiers in an adjacent property.

The neighbouring properties which are located directly opposite the application site comprise 2-storey semi-detached properties (the front elevation of these properties fronts the application site). It is noted that these properties are slightly offset. All of these properties are constructed out of facing brick under a concrete/slate roof. According to the Council's SPD – Development on Backland and Gardens states as a general indication, there should ideally be a distance of 21m between principal elevations and 13.5m between a principal elevation and a side elevation. According to the submitted plans there is a distance of approximately 30m separating the application site from the semi detached properties on the opposite side of Rope Lane. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant detrimental effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of these properties and the proposal accords with policy BE.1 (Amenity).

Located to the rear of the application site is a relatively large detached dwellinghouse, which is located within a substantial residential curtilage. According to the submitted plans the side elevation of the detached property is set approximately located 7.5m tapering down to 6m off the common boundary. The property to the south of the application site is at a slight angle. It is considered given the separation distances, boundary treatment and the orientation and juxtaposition of the dwellinghouses will help to mitigate any negative externalities caused by the proposed development.

It is considered that the proposal will have a negligible impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of no's 9 and 11 Burlea Drive, which are located to the west and north west of the application site. Both of these properties are detached bungalows located in large curtilages. According to the submitted plans the gable of the proposed terraced properties are located approximately 7.5m tapering down to 4m off the common boundary. Both of these properties are at a slight angle in relation to the gable of the terraced property. It is considered given that there was a building of similar height and proportions and given the orientation of the properties, the proposal will not result in overbearing impact or cause any significant overshadowing. Furthermore, a condition relating to boundary treatment will be attached to decision, which will help to mitigate any negative externalities associated with the proposal.

According to the submitted plans there are no apertures located in the gable of the terraced property facing no. 11 Burlea Drive and consequently there will be loss of privacy. According to the submitted plans there is an area of car parking located to the front of the terraced properties and there is a distance in excess of 10m separating the boundary of no. 9 Burlea Drive from the front elevation of the terraced property. It is considered that this separation and the proposed boundary treatment is sufficient to alleviate any potential loss of privacy.

The proposed development will have a marginal impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the bungalows located to the north of the application site. The case officer noted

that these properties are located at a 90 degree angle in relation to the proposed terraced properties. There is a distance of approximately 13.5m separating the front elevation of the terraced property from the common boundary. Furthermore, the proposed building is of a similar height and footprint to the existing nursing home and there were windows in this elevation overlooking these properties. In any event it is considered given the separation distances, boundary treatment and location and orientation of the properties the proposal will not cause any overlooking or loss of privacy issues. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant detrimental effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties and the proposal accords with policy BE.1 (Amenity).

Existing Employment Sites

The proposed development would result in the loss of a small scale employment site within the Borough. The building was last used as a nursing home, and policy E.7 states that development which causes the loss of an existing employment site will be permitted provided that:

- it can be demonstrated that the present use harms the character or amenities of the surrounding environment or
- the site is not capable of satisfactory use for employment and overriding local benefits would come from the proposed development or
- it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on the supply of employment land

The applicant has stated that the building has remained vacant for some considerable time and has been prone to vandalism, which detracts from the area. Furthermore, the building was marketed for commercial use, but no interest has been shown. The applicant also stresses that the building cannot meet the modern day requirements of a nursing home, without major redevelopment. It is accepted given the location of the building and the surrounding land uses, would preclude a number of commercial enterprises. Overall, it is accepted that the site is located within a sustainable location for residential development and would constitute an efficient use of land, the loss of this small employment site is considered to be acceptable and in line with the requirements of policy.

Drainage

Development on sites such as this generally reduces the permeability of at least part of the site and changes the site's response to rainfall. Advice advocated within the NPPF states that in order to satisfactorily manage flood risk in new development, appropriate surface water drainage arrangements are required. The guidance also states that surface water arising from a developed site should, as far as possible, be managed in a sustainable manner to mimic the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development. It is possible to condition the submission of a satisfactory drainage scheme in order to ensure that any surface water runoff generated by the development is sufficiently discharged. This will probably require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) which include source control measures, infiltration devices as well as filter strips and swales which mimic natural drainage patterns. Concerns have been raised that if the proposal was to be approved, it will exacerbate flooding in the immediate area and the case officer considers it prudent to attach a condition relating to drainage, if planning permission is to be approved. Furthermore,

colleagues in United Utilities have been consulted and raised no objection. Overall, it is considered that the application is in accordance with policy BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources).

Waste Management

All of the proposed terraced properties and the detached dwellinghouses will have the ability/facility to store the requisite number of storage bins within rear garden areas for general refuse and recycling receptacles. According to the submitted plans the bin storage area for the apartment blocks will be east of the application site, adjacent to Rope Lane.

On bin collection day the receptacles can easily be moved to the public footpaths in close proximity of individual properties ready for collection and then returned to the rear gardens/bin storage area once emptied again. This will ensure that bins or other such containers are not visible on any day other than on collection day.

Over Development and Loss of Buildings

It is not considered that objection on the grounds of over development can be sustained. The proposed density is acceptable having regard to the existing character of the area and fully accords with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. Similarly, it is not considered that the loss the former nursing home on the site would harm the character of Shavington. The nursing home is relatively modern constructed in the 1970's and does not benefit from statutory protection. Furthermore, the building is in a very poor state of repair and could in effect be demolished without the need for planning permission.

Landscape

Policy NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats) states that the LPA will protect, conserve and enhance the natural conservation resource. The policy goes on to stipulate in the justification 'Landscape features can be important individually, as well as helping to enrich the character of the landscape. These features should be conserved wherever possible'.

The site of the proposed development is a former nursing home with associated car parking and amenity space. There are large areas of shrub planting and a number of trees in the vicinity including two trees on the Rope Lane frontage protected by the Shavington Villa, Rope Lane Shavington TPO 2008.

The submission indicates the proposed development would require the removal of areas of shrub vegetation together with four unprotected trees; two early mature Pine trees on the Rope Lane frontage, a Sycamore tree on the southern boundary and a Sycamore on the western boundary. The trees are not exceptional although they contribute to the wider tree cover in the area.

The Landscape Officer has some concerns that to the north of the site, a drain run, an access and parking area appear very close to a mature Ash tree. The tree is shown for retention however, it is not clear for the plans how this can be achieved and further details are required, which will be included in the Members update report.

Highways

No response has been received from the Highways Engineers at the time of writing this report. The response from the Highway Engineer will be included in the Members updates.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed residential development is an appropriate form of development. The proposed dwellinghouses would be sympathetic to the surrounding area and would not be harmful to the amenities of neighbouring properties and has provided satisfactory parking provision Therefore the proposed development complies with Policies BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards), BE.3 (Access and Parking), TRAN.9 (Car Parking Standards), NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats) and RES.4 (Houses in Villages with Settlement Boundaries) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Time Limit
2. Plan References
3. Materials to be submitted and agreed in writing
4. Surfacing Materials to be submitted and agreed in writing
5. Details of Boundary Treatment
6. Details of Landscaping to be submitted and agreed in writing
7. Landscaping to be implemented
8. Remove PD Rights
9. Tree Protection Measures
10. Doors/windows set behind a 55mm Reveal
11. Car Parking Spaces
12. Arboriculture Method Statement
13. Drainage
14. Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday	08:00 to 18:00 Hours
Saturday	09:00 to 14:00 Hours
Sundays and Bank Holidays	Nil

15. No External Lighting
16. Construction Method Statement
17. Pile Foundations

Monday to Friday	09:00 to 17:00 Hours
Saturday	09:00 to 13:00 Hours
Sundays and Bank Holidays	Nil

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