

Application No: 13/1267N

Location: LAND TO THE REAR OF REMER STREET, CREWE, CW1 4LT

Proposal: Development of 18 residential dwellings at land to rear of 110 Remer Street

Applicant: Frazer Lloyd-Jones, Thomas Jones & Sons Ltd

Expiry Date: 05-Jul-2013

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

**That authority be DELEGATED to the Planning and Place Shaping Manager in consultation with the Chairman to approve the application for the reasons set out in the report, subject to the receipt of a satisfactory ecological survey and a S106 Agreement and conditions**

#### **MAIN ISSUES**

**Impact of the development on:-**  
**Principal of the Development**  
**Affordable Housing**  
**Highway Implications**  
**Amenity**  
**Design**  
**Trees**  
**Landscape**  
**Ecology**

#### **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

This application is referred to the Southern Planning Committee as it relates to a small scale major development.

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is located to the northern side of Remer Street within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as defined by the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan. The site is an undeveloped site with hedgerows and trees to the boundaries of the site. The area is predominantly residential with residential properties to the south onto the Remer Street frontage. To the east of the site is Monks Coppenhall Primary School.

## **2. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This is a full planning application for the erection of 18 residential properties which would include a mix of semi-detached dwellings, 1 detached dwelling and 2 apartments. All properties would be two stories in height. One vehicular access point would be provided onto Remer Street.

## **3. RELEVANT HISTORY**

7/13704 - 2 no detached houses and bungalows – Approved 18<sup>th</sup> December 1986

## **4. POLICIES**

### **National Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework

### **Local Plan policy**

BE.1 – Amenity  
BE.2 – Design Standards  
BE.3 – Access and Parking  
BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources  
BE.5 – Infrastructure  
BE.6 – Development on Potentially Contaminated Land  
NE.5 – Nature Conservation and Habitats  
NE.9 – Protected Species  
NE.17 – Pollution Control  
NE.20 – Flood Prevention  
RES.7 – Affordable Housing  
RES.2 – Unallocated Housing Sites  
RES.3 – Housing Densities

### **Other Considerations**

The EC Habitats Directive 1992  
Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010  
Circular 6/2005 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System  
Interim Planning Statement Affordable Housing  
Interim Planning Statement Release of Housing Land  
SPD – Development on Gardens and Backland Development

## **5. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**United Utilities:** No objection, the site must be drained on a separate system with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer.

**Strategic Highways Manager:** The proposed site access is not well located, being virtually opposite that the Acer Avenue junction and close to the entrance off Remer Street to the primary school and children's centre. However, the site is effectively a small infill one with no practicable alternative entrance point other than Remer Street.

There is considerable traffic pressure on the Remer St area owing to various development proposals coming forward. For this location to be acceptable in highway terms, changes to signing and lining will be required, but these will need to be compatible with other measures needed along Remer Street.

Following discussion with the applicant, a contribution of £18,000 has been offered toward a study of traffic implications of developments on Remer St, with a view to identifying potential calming measures in the vicinity of the development and elsewhere and implementing measures at the site itself.

The internal road layout has been amended as shown on drawing 1847-110 revision F. This meets the requirements regarding parking and visibility.

Under these circumstances and subject to the S106 contribution referred to above there is no objection to the proposal.

**Environmental Health:** Conditions suggested in relation to construction hours, piling works, and external lighting. An informative is suggested in relation to contaminated land.

## **6. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

A letter of objection has been received from 1 local household raising the following points:

- Added traffic congestion to Remer Street which is an ambulance route
- Existing traffic problems on Remer Street
- Difficulties accessing properties during school drop-off and pick-up
- No need for more housing – there will already be 600 constructed to the rear of the site
- Impact upon local facilities – schools, hospitals, doctors, dentists
- Increased noise and building dust pollution
- Impact upon wildlife

## **7. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

To support this application the application includes the following documents;

- Ecology Scoping Survey (Produced by the Tryrer Partnership)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Method Statement (Produced by Coppice Landscapes)
- Design and Access Statement (Produced by Barrie Newcombe Associates)

These documents are available to view on the application file.

## **9. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 47 there is requirement to maintain a 5 year rolling supply of housing and states that Local Planning 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”.*

The NPPF states that, Local Planning Authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. This should take account of various factors including:

- housing need and demand,
- latest published household projections,
- evidence of the availability of suitable housing land,
- the Government’s overall ambitions for affordability.

The figures contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy proposed a dwelling requirement of 20,700 dwellings for Cheshire East as a whole, for the period 2003 to 2021, which equates to an average annual housing figure of 1,150 dwellings per annum. In February 2011 a full meeting of the Council resolved to maintain this housing requirement until such time that the new Local Plan was approved.

It is considered that the most up-to-date information about housing land supply in Cheshire East is contained within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which was adopted in March 2012.

The SHLAA has put forward a figure of 7.1 years housing land supply.

In this case the site is located within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and Policy RES.2 of the Adopted Local Plan allows for residential development on unallocated sites in Crewe.

The site is surrounded by residential properties and a school whilst the land directly to the north is subject to application 11/1643N which has a resolution to approve subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement from Strategic Planning Board (application 11/1643N relates to 650 dwellings, a Public House, shop, associated infrastructure and open space. on this site). Therefore it is considered that the principal of the development is acceptable and the development would be appropriate in this location.

### **Affordable Housing**

This application is for 18 dwellings in Crewe so the affordable housing requirement would be 30% as per the Council’s Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing (IPS). This equates to the 5 units of affordable housing that is in the application.

The sub-area of Crewe in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010 (SHMA) shows a requirement for 1280 new affordable units between 2009/10 – 2013/14, this equates to a net requirement for 256 new affordable units per year made up of 123 x 1bed, 20 x 2bed, 47 x 3bed, 40 x 4/5bed and 26 x 1/2 bed older persons units.

In addition to this information taken from the SHMA, Cheshire Homechoice is used as the choice based lettings method of allocating social and affordable rented accommodation across Cheshire East. There are currently 249 applicants who have selected Middlewich Street Estate 1 (which is the nearest re-housing area to the site) as their first choice, the number of bedrooms these applicants need are 40 x 1bed, 104 x 2bed, 80 x 3bed, 17 x 4bed and 2 x 5bed (6 applicants have not specified the number of bedrooms they require).

There has been delivery of approximately 280 affordable dwellings in Crewe since 2009/10 and there is further anticipated delivery, however even with the anticipated delivery there will still be a significant shortfall against the identified need in the SHMA for the period of 2009/10 – 2013/14. Therefore as there is affordable housing need in Crewe there is a requirement that 30% of the total units at this site are affordable, which equates to 5 dwellings. The IPS also states that the tenure split the Council would expect is 65% rented affordable units (either social rented dwellings let at target rents or affordable rented dwellings let at no more than 80% of market rents) and 35% intermediate affordable units. The affordable housing tenure split that is required has been established as a result of the findings of the SHMA. This would equate to 3 rented units and 2 intermediate units on this site.

The mix of properties is also considered to be acceptable as it will go towards meeting some of the identified need from the SHMA 2010 and it also ties-in with the type of property required by people currently on the housing register who require affordable housing for rent in the area.

### **Highways Implications**

The application site has limited frontage to Remer Street and the proposed access point is the only viable option to access the site. Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m in accordance with Manual for Streets can be achieved at the access point. The number of vehicular movements from the proposed development would be low and would not raise any significant concerns subject to a highways contribution of £18,000 which would be secured towards a traffic implication study of development on Remer Street with a view to identifying potential traffic calming measures in the vicinity of the development.

Adequate provision would be made for the parking of vehicles within the site.

The highways impact of the proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable.

### **Amenity**

The main properties affected would be those to the south of the site which front onto Remer Street. In terms of 114 and 116 Remer Street there would be a separation distance of 22 metres from front elevations of plots 1 and 2 and the principle windows on 114 and 116 Remer Street. This would comply with the separation distances contained within the Councils SPD on Development on Backland and Gardens.

There would be new boundary treatment and landscaping to either side of the access and this would provide a sufficient buffer to the occupants of 110 and 114 Remer Street which are located to either side of the proposed access.

To the rear of 100 and 102 Remer Street there would be a separation distance of over 25 metres between the rear elevation of these properties and the side elevation of Plot 18. This would also exceed the separation distances set out within the SPD.

All other separation distances exceed those contained within the SPD and it is considered that an adequate standard of amenity can be provided for the future occupants of the dwellings.

## **Design**

The importance of securing high quality design is specified within the NPPF and paragraph 61 states that:

*“Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”*

The proposed development relates to the provision of two-storey dwellings which would be arranged around a cul-de-sac. It is considered that the scale of the development would be acceptable and that it would not appear out of character in this location.

As part of the development a number of amendments have been secured to improve the design of the development. The amendments include:

- An alteration to the house type at plot 3 to provide a dual frontage
- Alterations to plots 5/6, 9/10 and 17/18 to provide variation to these prominent plots
- The provision of brick walls to the boundaries of plots 2, 4 and 17
- Alteration to the materials to include blue brick banding and grey tiles as per the existing dwellings which front Remer Street

The proposed dwellings would be two storeys with a pitched roof. The elevational treatment of the dwellings shows that they would have projecting gables, lintel and sill detailing, canopies above the front doors and roof finials. It is considered that the design is acceptable and would not appear out of character in this part of Crewe.

## **Trees**

The findings of the tree survey schedule indicate that one mature Oak tree located on the northern boundary merits a high (A) category, three hedgerows merit a moderate (B) category, one group and three hedgerows merit a low (C) category and four individual and one tree group merits a seriously defective (U) category.

The current proposal shows the retention of the Grade A Oak tree and an adjacent smaller Oak which the survey identifies as a seriously defective tree. In addition the moderate category hedgerows H7, H10 and H11 that define the northern, part southern and part western site boundaries respectively are to be retained.

With appropriate protection and management it would be possible to implement the development and retain most of the existing boundary hedgerows. Some gapping up of the northern boundary hedge would be desirable and will be controlled by condition.

The impact upon hedgerows and trees on the site is therefore considered to be acceptable.

## **Landscape**

The site is relatively well contained and has the capacity to accommodate a sensitively designed residential development without harm to the wider landscape character. The layout would provide some opportunities for planting to mitigate for any tree losses. In the event of approval landscape and boundary treatment conditions would be appropriate.

## **Ecology**

### Great Crested Newts

The ponds to the north of the site have all been surveyed in recent years in connection with a large development proposed to the north. A single Great Crested Newt was recorded at a pond just over 100m from the site and the Councils Ecologist is satisfied that the species is unlikely to be breeding at this pond, whilst the development is located in excess of 400m from the main breeding pond to the north.

This planning application is unlikely to have a significant impact upon Great Crested Newts.

### Reptiles

The site has been identified as offering potential habitat for reptiles. At least two reptile species are known to occur in the broad locality of this application site and a Reptile Survey has been requested.

A Reptile Survey takes a number of weeks to complete and is dependent on the weather conditions. In this case the Reptile Survey has commenced and just one Grass Snake has been discovered in the 4 visits made at the time of writing this report (7 visits are required). In this case it is considered the issue of the reptile surveys and mitigation could be delegated to the Planning and Place Shaping Manager.

### Grassland Habitat

The submitted Phase One Habitat Survey categorises the grassland habitats on site as being 'semi improved'. This habitat could potentially be a UK BAP priority and hence a material consideration. However, none of the plant species recorded on site is characteristic of this habitat type. Therefore the development of this site is considered to be acceptable.

### Hedgerow Habitat

Hedgerows are a Biodiversity Action plan priority species and a material consideration. One hedgerow recorded on site may be of particular value as it has been identified as being species rich. The proposed site plan indicates the retention of the existing hedgerows and the creation of

additional hedgerows around the site boundary. Further detailed proposals for the boundary treatment for the site should be secured by means of a condition if consent is granted.

## **10. CONCLUSIONS**

The site is within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and the principle of residential development is considered to be acceptable and in this case it is not considered that there are any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or there are any policies within the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted.

It is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of affordable housing provision and there is a need for this development.

The proposal would not raise any significant highway implications subject to a highways contribution of £18,000.

The scheme complies with the relevant local plan policies in terms of amenity and it is considered that the proposal is an acceptable design and layout.

It is suggested that the impact upon reptiles could be delegated to the Planning and Place Shaping Manager. There are no other ecological issues raised as part of this application.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with the relevant local plan policies and would not compromise key sustainability principles as set out in national planning policy. Therefore there is a presumption in favour of the development and accordingly it is recommended for approval.

## **LEVY (CIL) REGULATIONS**

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 it is now 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;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The development would result potential vehicle conflict with the junction of Acer Avenue and the nearby primary school. A contribution of £18,000 would help to identify potential traffic implications on Remer Street with a view to identifying traffic calming measures and implementing such measures. This is considered to be necessary and fair and reasonable in relation to the development.

On this basis, the S106 recommendation is compliant with the CIL Regulations 2010.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That authority be DELEGATED to the Planning and Place Shaping Manager in consultation with the Chairman to approve the application for the reasons set out in the report, subject**



to the receipt of a satisfactory ecological survey and the following S106 Agreement and conditions:

**S106 Agreement to secure the following:**

**1. A commuted payment of £18,000 towards a study of traffic implications of developments on Remer St, with a view to identifying potential calming measures in the vicinity of the development and elsewhere and implementing measures at the site itself.**

**And the following conditions:**

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Hours of construction limited to 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 14:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays**
- 4. Pile driving limited to 08:30 to 17:30 Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 13:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays**
- 5. No development shall take place until details of external lighting has be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**
- 6. Submission and approval of materials**
- 7. Landscaping details to be submitted and approved**
- 8. Implementation of landscaping**
- 9. Boundary Treatment details to be submitted and approved**
- 10. Obscure glazing to side elevation of plots 16 and 18**
- 11. A scheme of nesting bird mitigation measures to be incorporated into the development**
- 12. Dwellings to be retained as affordable housing**
- 13. Prior to the commencement of development details of existing and proposed levels are to be provided.**
- 14. Details of tree protection to be submitted and approved in writing**

(c) Crown copyright and database rights 2013. Ordnance Survey 100049045, 100049046.

