

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

Approve subject to the completion of 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.

The application was deferred from the Southern Planning Committee meeting on 26th June 2013 for the following reason:

'Deferred for additional highway information/ clarify contribution. Also to provide updated ecological reports'

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 18th 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

Remer St is a busy distributor road used as an orbital route through north Crewe and also as a main access route to Leighton Hospital. It has predominantly residential frontage with numerous accesses and turning movements, as well as pedestrian movements across it to bus stops and premises.

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.

Following the deferral of the application at the Southern Planning Committee meeting on 26th June 2013 the Highways Officer has provided further information on how the contribution would be spent.

The development of 18 dwellings will generate only 12 vehicles per hour at peak highways times (this equates to only 1 additional vehicle per 5 minutes at the point of access). It is accepted that traffic flows on Remer Street will inevitably continue to rise with proposed residential development in the vicinity, with major sites in North Coppenhall and east of Sydney Road, as well as growing congestion in the centre of Crewe. However the level of increase associated with this development will only have a limited impact and the highways impact cannot be classed as severe (Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual impacts of development are severe).

In this case the access point for the application site is the only practicable option. To mitigate any possible adverse effects on road safety, some improvements through traffic-calming or signing are desirable. It is important therefore that any improvements proposed as part of this development should form part of any comprehensive improvement scheme for the Remer Street corridor and should take account of the anticipated and limited level of increase in traffic associated with this development proposal.

The applicant is aware of these issues and is prepared to contribute £18,000 as a S106 contribution to safety and calming measures at the site entrance, including a preparatory study to look at the full length of Remer St between Middlewich Street and Maw Green to be commissioned. Apart from this study, it is not expected that this developer contribution would cover much more than some TRO alterations and minor signing/markings measures in the vicinity of the new access.

It is considered that the contribution is of an appropriate scale for this small scale development, is relevant and necessary, and so meets the requirements for such S106 contributions.

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 Council's 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 has now been completed. In this case just one Grass Snake has been discovered in the 7 visits made to the site. The Councils Ecologist considers that the results of the survey are reasonable and robust. As a single grass snake was recorded on site it seems likely that the site supports small number of this species.

The proposed development will result in the loss of all available reptile habitat on the site and also possess the risk of killing or injuring any reptiles on site when the works are undertaken.

To mitigate the risk of animals being killed/injured the applicant's consultant has recommended supervised manipulation of the habitats on site to make them unsuitable for reptiles following completion of the works. Two potential strategies have been proposed as a means for compensating for the loss of terrestrial habitat these have been formulated having regard to planning permission being granted for 11/1643N (Land at Coppenhall East). The first strategy involves the translocation of any reptiles the ecological mitigation areas associated with 11/1643N.

This would be the preferred approach however it depends on 11/1643N being implemented prior to the implementation of the current proposals. If 11/1643N has not been implemented at the time of the commencement of the works covered by this current application any animals would instead be translocated to an offsite location which is within the ownership of the applicant. This offsite location would be enhanced for reptiles prior to the translocation of any captured reptiles.

In order to ensure that the Council has control over which strategy would be implemented it is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission requiring the applicant to submit a revised reptile mitigation strategy prior to the commencement of development.

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.

There are no other ecological issues are raised as part of this application. The impact upon reptiles can mitigated and any reptiles found on site would be relocated to an alternative suitable habitat.

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

APPROVE subject to a 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**
- 15. Reptile mitigation measures**

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