

Application No: 13/2069N

Location: LAND TO THE EAST OF CREWE ROAD, SHAVINGTON CUM GRESTDY

Proposal: Outline planning application for the construction of up to 275 dwellings, including access, landscaping, recreation and amenity open space, associated infrastructure, the demolition of 28 Crewe Road and demolition of the single-storey extension to 56 Crewe Road. Permission is sought for means of access. Layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for subsequent approval.

Applicant: TAYLOR WIMPEY UK LTD and others

Expiry Date: 16-Aug-2013

UPDATE - 4th November 2013

ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Highways

The Strategic Highways Manager has elaborated on and clarified his previous response as follows:

Key Issues

The Strategic Highways recommendation of refusal is based upon the cumulative traffic impact affecting the Crewe Road/Gresty Road/ South Street (referred to as the corridor) and the A534 Nantwich Road. This is a result of the traffic predicted from other sites with planning consents and not yet built and the severe harm that would be caused by permitting any further development, including this application.

This severe harm relates to the:

- Levels of queues and delays on the corridor.
- Increased traffic seeking alternative routes through residential areas.
- Worsening traffic conditions at a major pinch point on the Crewe road network affecting access to Crewe Station, local bus networks, the town centre and its major centres of employment and its associated consequential effects.

There are other planning applications either at appeal or recently submitted that could also impact on the corridor, however these are not committed and are therefore do not form part of this consideration.

Existing Network Conditions

CEC traffic surveys in Sept 2013 have been undertaken on Crewe Road north of the junction with the A500 near to the junction with Hunter Avenue has found that the AM morning peak two way traffic flow on Crewe Road to be 1024 vehicles and the PM evening peak Crewe Road two way flow to be 1002 vehicles.

The existing signal junction of Nantwich Road/South Street/Mill Street operates significantly over capacity with long queues forming on Nantwich Road and northbound on the corridor. This is the major pinch point on the Crewe local road network where congestion occurs at any time throughout the day. The main reason for this is the impact of the access arrangements around Crewe Station on the operation of the highway network. This is also a reflection of the lack of road crossings over the historic rail network within Crewe. Additionally, the congestion results in a number of local residential roads to be used as rat run to avoid the queues and delays on the corridor.

A considerable amount of work over a number of years has been undertaken to reduce congestion. The A500 Bypass has been constructed, the Crewe Green Link Road scheme is being developed and plans have been drawn for a new access arrangement to the station. Additionally, work to link the traffic signals on Nantwich Road to improve vehicle throughput has been implemented UTMC However, despite the schemes that have been implemented so far, the congestion problems have not been resolved and will increase in the future through committed development.

Collectively the committed developments are conditioned to contribute to strategic road infrastructure, local bus services, walking and cycling improvements and a modest mitigation scheme affecting the Nantwich Road/ South Street/ Gresty Road junctions.

Assessment of Cumulative Traffic Impact on the Corridor

Development Site	Status	Description	AM Peak	PM Peak
			Two-Way	Two-Way
Basford 2008 (without rail)	Approved	B1,B2, B8 Employment	503	528
Gresty Green Road	Approved	51 Residential Units	48	51
Shavington Triangle	Approved	350 Residential Units	84	91
Rope Lane	Approved	80 Residential Units	19	15
Basford West 2013 (additional trips over 2008 approval)	Approved	370 Residential units	59	40
		Total	713	725

This information demonstrates the considerable cumulative traffic impact arising from committed development traffic. These sites will result in a 70% two way increases in the morning peak hour and a 72% two way increase in the evening peak.

This level of traffic increase will be detrimental to accessibility to the town centre, the rail station and the major employment areas and also worsen the performance of the local bus network across the town. This worsening of access will affect efforts to support economic growth and regeneration in Crewe. Substantial infrastructure investment is needed to achieve this and plans for Crewe Station and improving the strategic road network reflect this.

The most recent Basford West approval of August 2013 included a substantial residential element increasing flows toward the town centre in the morning peak and it is considered that with this approval the resulting cumulative traffic increase predicted for the corridor has reached a level beyond which the local road network will not be able to cope. As such, additional development related traffic can be deemed to be causing severe harm on the highway network.

The East Shavington application is predicted to add 83 two-way vehicles to the corridor in both the morning and evening peak and following the consideration set out above it is the cumulative traffic impact that leads us to the opinion that the site that will cause severe harm in terms of the 3 key issues.

Assessment of the proposed mitigation

The applicant has submitted a mitigation scheme in respect of the additional trips produced by the East Shavington development alone. The approach adopted by the applicant seeks to improve traffic flow across the Station Top on the A534, Nantwich Road. If achieved, this could then have a knock on benefit of improving the performance of flows on the corridor. This is considered to be a reasonable approach.

The mitigation scheme proposes the removal of the existing pedestrian crossing on the eastern side of the railway station on Nantwich Road and replacing this with an alternative crossing facility at the Weston Road roundabout.

The applicant has modelled the effects of the mitigation scheme in a local Vissim model and has indicated that there would be journey time savings on Nantwich Road and with this scheme in place, it would more than mitigate the East Shavington development impact.

Having reviewed the model and mitigation scheme, it is considered that the journey time savings predicted are not achievable by the implementation of the crossing relocation scheme. There are a number of concerns with the scheme, queue lengths have not been validated and the model shows much shorter queues than currently

observed on site. The circulatory traffic speeds on the roundabout are very high with a high degree of overtaking and weaving on the roundabout which isn't reflected within its current operation. There are also concerns over the layout of the crossing, particularly the very short merge immediately after the stop line, the narrowing of the footway in the roundabout exit and also that the crossing is not always assumed to be demanded that would result in pedestrians waiting for a long period of time on a traffic island.

Based on the significant work that has been undertaken assessing this part of the road network, It is considered that to accommodate further growth on the corridor and the cumulative traffic impact of currently approved developments, substantial measures are now required to ensure that this would be sustainable.

Conclusions

It is clear that there is a significant impact resulting from the committed development on the corridor and that the further development will only add to the congestion problems on the road network.

An assessment of the East Shavington planning application in regard to its cumulative traffic impact and the mitigation measures proposed has been undertaken and it is considered that this development would only increase congestion and delay further on the corridor and would cause severe harm in relation to the three key issues.

It is recommended that on balance the application is refused.

APPLICANTS REPRESENTATIONS

The applicant has provided the following additional information:

Taylor Wimpey has formed the basis of a collaborative working relationship with Shavington High School; this will be furthered through the proposed East Shavington development in providing deliverable opportunities to enable local young people to learn from and work with professional skilled trades, and gain access to the home building and construction industry.

As the first stage we recently put together a skills taster session on brick laying with the school. It was very well received by pupils and teachers alike.

Taylor Wimpey of course has a long established apprenticeship scheme, organised through our Cheshire based regional office. We believe it is important to continue this local provision of training and apprenticeship opportunities for new talent wishing to gain site based qualifications. Subject to the students passing the CITB assessments and gaining access to the scheme, apprenticeships typically last between 3 and 4 years and would commence alongside further education after high school. The majority of time

is spent working with the production teams on site, and trainees will be supported by a mentor while working with experienced trades people and personnel. Apprentices gain formal qualifications through day release programmes and typical apprenticeships include bricklaying and joinery.

We would like to secure the delivery of these training and apprenticeship opportunities should the East Shavington development be approved. As a consequence, we are aware that this is not a standard condition attached to planning permissions issued by Cheshire East. We would therefore like the Council to add a condition to the Committee Report and subsequent permission to secure these valuable youth training and apprenticeship opportunities.

We therefore suggest the following draft planning condition for your comments:

“Condition: A scheme to secure youth employment and training opportunities shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The employment scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details”.

Reason: To recruit local apprentices and facilitate access to training and experience opportunities in connection with Shavington High School”

This highlights our strong commitment to employing young people from the local area, whilst offering them a fantastic opportunity to build a career within their chosen industry.

OFFICER COMMENT

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states:

Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

Whilst the comments of the Strategic Highways Manager are noted, taking into account cumulative effects with other developments it remains the view of planning officers in this case that the highway concerns outlined are not “severe” within the terms of the NPPF and that, on balance, this concern would be insufficient to outweigh the benefits in terms of housing land supply which it has been demonstrated would be immediately deliverable. Consequently it is not considered that a highways reason for refusal would be sustainable at Appeal.

It is considered that the Applicant's proposed employment scheme would be a benefit of the scheme. It is noted that the definition of sustainable development within the NPPF includes the economic dimension. The NPPF is supportive of proposals which contribute to economic growth and employment generation and the proposed employment scheme would thus enhance the sustainability credentials of the site and can therefore be afforded some weight in the overall "planning balance". Although it is the view of Planning Officers that it should be afforded only limited weight, it is considered to be appropriate to include the applicant's suggested condition to ensure that if Members are minded, having considered carefully the "planning balance", to approve the scheme, this benefit is secured.

AMENDED RECOMMENDATION

As per the main report plus applicant's suggested additional condition relating to employment scheme.