

STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD UPDATE – 6TH NOVEMBER 2013

APPLICATION NO: 13/0041C

PROPOSAL: Outline application for residential development, comprising 80 homes, including 24 affordable homes to include an area of public open space and children's play area

ADDRESS: LAND OFF MIDDLEWICH ROAD, HOLMES CHAPEL

APPLICANT: Persimmon Homes

Officer Comments

Highway Considerations

Local Ward Councillor, Cllr Gilbert, has raised 2 issues, i) relating to car sharing and ii) in respect of the nearby junction of Chester Road/Middlewich Road.

- i) Cllr Gilbert has stated that *“at present, the neighbouring housing development and particularly Bramhall Drive is plagued by car sharers who meet and leave one or more cars there. If this development goes ahead, the problem is likely to move to it as it is slightly closer to J18 of the M6. This will make life a misery for residents and I therefore propose that provision should be made within the development for a car sharers car park.”*

Whilst car-share parking can be an issue near all motorway junctions, it is not reasonable to expect a developer to mitigate against this problem when the development itself is not causing the issue to begin with. The Council could be petitioned in the future to introduce some parking restrictions within the site to prevent car-sharers parking there, but this would be a separate matter. As such, the requirement to provide parking would not meet the CIL or Conditions Circular 11/95 tests of being reasonable or relevant to the development to be permitted

- ii) *“The nearby junction of Chester Road/Middlewich Road is a problem, particularly at peak periods. Traffic travelling along Chester Road towards Middlewich Road has difficulty turning right and there is rarely enough room for traffic turning left to pass on the nearside of such vehicles. The traffic consequently backs up and Brookfield Drive has become a rat run to avoid this junction. This development will exacerbate the problem, particularly at peak periods, and parents are unlikely to walk their children to either of the primary schools in the Village from so far out. I therefore propose the provision of a roundabout at the junction of Chester Road/Middlewich Road. We imposed a similar requirement for the*

junction of Manor Lane/Station Road/Marsh Lane in connection with the development of the former Fisons site and this has delivered a great improvement.”

The existing capacity of this junction has been recognised. The Strategic Highways Manager has stated that alternative layouts such as traffic signals or a roundabout have been looked at, but the required land-take necessary to ensure HGVs could make all movements would require removal of trees or additional land outside of the applicant's control, besides being expensive.

The congestion problems are not perceived as meriting a change from existing. Even if the junction was improved, some local drivers may still prefer to use Brookfield Drive as it is shorter and probably still quicker. The Strategic Highways Manager has stated that such requirements would not be necessary and reasonable as a result of this proposed development and has concluded this junction would operate within capacity and would not give rise to or exacerbate traffic or highway safety problems.

Drainage & Flooding

The Environment Agency has confirmed that they have no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions that require the submission of a scheme to limit the surface water run-off generated by the proposed development and a scheme to manage the risk of flooding from overland flow. Members will note that these conditions have already been recommended at condition number 9 on Page 167 of the Agenda Reports Pack. Subject to these, the drainage and flooding considerations are acceptable.

Other Issues

Cllr Gilbert has also raised issues regarding the sustainability of the site and the distance to the village Centre. The Council's mapping system shows the nearest part of the site to be approximately 1000m metres away from the Village centre. Cllr Gilbert measures this to be approximately 0.9 miles which is less than 1500 metres. Taking the worst case scenario (i.e. 0.9 miles distance), this would still be siting the 1500 metres distance for most of the amenities and services advised within the former NWRDA Sustainability Toolkit. The site is considered to be reasonable well located in these terms.

The applicant, Persimmon Homes have written a letter confirming that they are eager to deliver this site for housing and that to demonstrate this, they would be prepared to accept a tighter time limit for submission of reserved matters and commencement. Consequently, if Members agree, condition numbers 1 and 2 on page 167 of the Agenda Reports Pack will be drafted so that the submission and commencement of development are secured within 3 years of approval of the outline application.

RECOMMENDATION

No change to recommendation.