

<b>Planning Reference No:</b>	09/1442N
<b>Application Address:</b>	Land at Vernon Way, Crewe
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of Existing Retail Stores and Music Club and Erection of Retail Store with Associated Cafe, Servicing Arrangements, Plant and Car Parking; Upgrading of Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Arrangements to Site; Erection of Petrol Filling Station; Erection of Two Units (A1, A2, A3, A4) Use; Creation of Public Square Space; and Landscaping
<b>Applicant:</b>	Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd.
<b>Application Type:</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>Grid Reference:</b>	370700 355480
<b>Ward:</b>	Crewe East
<b>Earliest Determination Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2009
<b>Expiry Dated:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2009
<b>Date of Officer's Site Visit:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2009
<b>Date Report Prepared:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2009
<b>Constraints:</b>	Settlement Boundary Town Centre Boundary

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:**

- **APPROVE** subject to conditions

#### **MAIN ISSUES:**

- **Acceptability in Principle**
- **Siting and Layout**
- **Building Design**
- **Sustainability**
- **Landscape and Ecology**
- **Crime and Disorder**
- **Drainage and Flood Risk.**
- **Public Consultation**
- **Impact on neighbour amenity**
- **Highway Considerations**

## **1. REASON FOR REFERRAL**

The application has been referred to committee because it is a commercial building of over 1000 square metres in floor area.

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

The application site measures 2.17ha (5.4 acres) and lies within the defined Crewe Town Centre Boundary, which runs along Vernon Way and bounds the site to the south and east.

The site is relatively flat and comprises 2 no. retail units, 1 of which has recently become vacant following the closure of MFI and 1 that is currently trading as Dunelm. The units are c.9m high and are constructed of mixed brick / block/ cladding materials and are of low visual quality. The floorspace of these units is c.5,295sq.m (gross).

The existing units face east onto a large surface car park area. A service road runs along the northern side of the units to a service yard at the rear. An area of fenced hard standing that is becoming overgrown is also located to the south of the Dunelm unit. This was formerly a garden centre to the unit when it was occupied by B&Q.

The site also includes a two storey music club building at the end of High Street, to the rear of the two retail units, that is constructed of brick; a cleared area (formerly a garage) that is now becoming overgrown, located to the west of the retail units; and an electricity sub station to the south of the units.

The eastern and southern site boundaries are heavily treed which largely blocks views into the site. The northern boundary also includes some tree and shrub planting. Some self seeded shrubs and area of scrub land are now present on the cleared area.

### **3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposed development involves the demolition of all the buildings within the site and the erection of a new foodstore with car parking and petrol filling station (PFS) for Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd, together with 2 no. small units for occupation by A1 (retail) / A2 (financial and professional services) / A3 (restaurants / cafes) / A4 (drinking establishments) uses. A new public open space area will also be provided, at the end of High Street, adjacent to the new store.

The new store will be erected over two levels. The sales floorspace will be provided at first floor level above the car parking at ground level, which is assisted by the topography of the site.

The store will have a sales area of 5,574sq.m and gross floor space of 10,428sq.m. This will breakdown to comprise 3,716 sq.m of food sales and 1,858 of non food sales floorspace. A mezzanine level will accommodate a customer restaurant (263sq.m) and staff domestic areas.

445 car parking spaces, including 22 disabled and 18 parent and child spaces are to be provided beneath the store and are, therefore, screened from views by the store and boundary landscaping. 11 motorcycle spaces and 12 cycle parking spaces will also be provided. Access will be from the roundabouts on Vernon Way / High Street, and Lyon Street / Vernon Way, which will also provide the service access.

Unlike the existing retail units on the site, the new store will face towards the town centre, and will front on to a new area of public open space located at the end of High Street. This will include soft and hard landscaping and will be linked into the town centre via High Street and a new pedestrian ramp up to Forge Street.

Two small retail / food and drink units are proposed on the western side of the public space, opposite the proposed store. These units will face onto the public space and link into the end of High Street to provide active frontage and activity to these spaces. An area of external seating will also be provided to the front of these units for further activity.

#### **4. RELEVANT HISTORY**

7/8036	Retail building – approved on Appeal May 1982
P03/1292	Removal of Condition 3 of permission 7/8036 – Approved with conditions - October 2003.
P04/0426	Removal of condition 2 of permission P03.1292 to allow food sales. – Approved 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2004.
P09/0174	Removal of Condition 2 attached to permission P03/1292 to allow Food Sales –Approved 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2009

#### **5. POLICIES**

##### **North West of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2011**

Policy DP 5	Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility
Policy DP 7	Promote Environmental Quality
Policy DP 9	Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change
Policy RDF 1	Spatial Priorities
Policy W 1	Strengthening the Regional Economy
Policy W 5	Retail Development
Policy RT 1	Integrated Transport Networks
Policy RT 2	Managing Travel Demand
Policy RT 3	Public Transport Framework
Policy RT 9	Walking and Cycling
Policy EM9	Secondary and Recycled Agregates
Policy EM 11	Waste Management Principles
Policy EM 12	Locational Principles
Policy EM 15	A Framework For Sustainable Energy In The North West
Policy EM 16	Energy Conservation & Efficiency
Policy EM 17	Renewable Energy
Policy EM18	Decentralised Energy Supply
Policy MCR 4	South Cheshire

## **Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan**

Policy 11 (Development and Waste Recycling)

## **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)  
TRAN.1 (Public Transport)  
TRAN.3 (Pedestrians)  
TRAN.4 (Access for the Disabled)  
TRAN.5 (Provision for Cyclists)  
TRAN.6 (Cycle Routes)  
TRAN.9 (Car Parking Standards)  
S.10 (Major Shopping Proposals)  
S.12.2 (Mixed Use Regeneration Areas) Mill Street, Crewe  
E.7 (Existing Employment Sites)

### **National policy**

PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres  
PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk  
PPG 13: Transport  
Department for Transport – Manual for Streets  
Proposed Changes to PPS6: Planning for Town Centres – Consultation

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

### **Environment Agency**

No objection subject to conditions relating to the surface water regulation system; maximum discharge and surface water attenuation measures; a scheme for management of overland flow and informatics to be attached to the decision notice.

### **Highways Authority**

MVA Consultants have been commissioned to review the submitted Transport Assessment (MVA hold and operate the Crewe town centre traffic model). A number of issues were identified and discussions have taken place with the applicant in respect of the following.

- Trip rates were discussed and agreed.
- Cycle/Motorcycle parking – increased provision agreed.
- Pedestrian access – signal controlled pedestrian/cycle crossing to be provided west of Vernon Way/Mill St/High St roundabout.

- Modifications to both vehicular accesses to be considered. I have concerns regarding the design of the priority junctions that give priority to Sainsbury's traffic.
- Traffic impact – Savell Bird & Axon have undertaken further traffic modelling work following comments from MVA Consultants. All parties now accept the traffic modelling undertaken is accurate.
- Cycle facilities - Sainsbury's are considering our request for a financial contribute (or construction of) off-carriageway cycle facilities on Vernon Way.
- Further detail of the operation of the PFS and the store service bay will be provided by Savell Bird & Axon to support the submitted design proposals.
- Minor modifications to the car park layout will be undertaken to improve pedestrian access from Vernon Way to Forge Street. Pedestrian visibility will be improved at the pedestrian access onto Forge Street.

The Highway Authority expect the outstanding issues above to be resolved, in which case they will recommend that the application be approved subject to planning conditions and possibly a S106 Agreement.

## **7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL:**

N/A

## **8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:**

Letters of support have been received from the following addresses: 7 Springwell Close, Crewe; 16 Whirlow Road, Crewe; 10C Portland Grove, Haslington; 219 Bradfield Road, Crewe; 22 Ashmuir Close, Crewe; 10, Lewis Street, Crewe; making the following comments:-

- welcome and fully support the proposal
- Will be an asset to the declining shopping facilities in Crewe.
- Consider it to be an asset to the town and would bring more people into the area which can only improve trading figures I trust you will consider this planning application favourably.
- Besides being a wonderful supermarket, environmentally it is a good thing. Currently shoppers must drive to Sainsbury's in Nantwich as there is not a bus conveniently serves the store. Whereas the proposed site in Crewe is easily served by buses from all sides of Crewe.
- As well as creating new jobs it will smarten up the area into High Street, which has been an eyesore for quite some time, providing of course that an alternative site will be found for Dunelm Mill.
- It will be a huge boost to Crewe and good competition for Tesco, as well as it bringing new jobs to the area.
- I moved to Haslington some five years ago and the store I miss the most is Sainsbury. The quality of the food is second to none and the prices are keen. I really do hope that there will be no objections to Sainsbury's plans as the town will certainly benefit by such high class competition.
- the town desperately needs this store as the town is already run down and this development will go towards getting the town back on its feet again, I also urge you to bring forward and give the go ahead for other

proposed developments in the town, if you reject the Sainsbury application we might as well forget about Crewe and let it become more derelict than it already is.

A letter of representation has been received from the owner of 27 High Street, Crewe and formerly known as Kettells Hotel, currently operating as function rooms and a night club. The property is located on the northwest boundary of the above application site and shares a party wall with the existing cinema which is to be demolished as part of the enabling works for the supermarket, garage, retail units and open public space proposal.

In principle they support this development wholeheartedly as part of a much needed investment in the revitalization of Crewe Town Centre and hope that by refurbishing and restoring no. 27 High Street it will allow them to continue the regeneration initiative along High Street by integrating a neighbouring historic landmark building into the process. Reviewing the detail design of application no. 09/144 2N however, they do have a number of points as follows:

- 1. Relocation of Retail Units Planned to Abut no. 27 High Street** - A pedestrian right of way exists along the ground floor passageway between no. 27 and no. 25 is based on a historical requirement. It is not used as it is dark and unsupervised and only attracts undesirable activities and people depositing litter. They consider that this should be relocated and combined with the proposed newly formed public open space.

To assist in the natural policing of the public space the newly exposed southeast elevation of no. 27 should overlook the public space from all floors. As reflected in its physical condition the current nightclub is financially unsustainable for the building as a whole. It is therefore proposed to relocate the club to the basement area, provide bar / restaurant facilities on the ground floor and design high quality purpose built student residential accommodation on the upper floors. The mixed use approach will help bring life to the area, particularly the newly formed public open space around the clock and specifically compliment the regeneration of the area as well as complying with sound urban design principles generally. The form of the proposed retail units is not successful in leading one into the public space and would be better positioned as a landmark punctuating the end of the High Street.

Deliveries to the retail units in the current location are shown across the public space and do not account for the change in level between the Sainsbury's car park and the public space.

- 2. Right of Way to Rear of 27 High Street** - For over 80 years the owner of 27 High Street has had 'Right of Way' for delivery and collection of stock to the cellars at the back of the building, as well as, the refuse collection and in the case of emergency, fire tenders. Currently access is via the MFI car park.

3. **Fire Escapes from 27 High Street** - Fire Escape routes from No. 27 High Street High Street lead to rear of building. No provision has been allowed for such access on the propose plans as extensive planting is shown in this area.
4. **Party Wall Appearance** - Demolition of 'The M Club' will leave a potentially unsightly 'scar' on the party wall elevation where currently attached to our building and we want to clarify what the implications are to our building and who will pay for any damage, re-instatement work .
5. **Foul Drainage** - Foul drainage from a number of properties along High Street repeatedly causes problems of blockages and basement flooding. Although not directly a planning related matter they should like to highlight this as an issue that maybe dealt resolved in parallel with the development of the Sainsbury's Site should the application be successful.

## 9. **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

### **Transport Assessment – Savill Bird and Axon**

- Updated Statement Awaited at the time of report preparation.

### **Consultation Statement – Dialogue**

- The applicant has carried out a consultation exercise which has involved contacting local residents, key stakeholders, a press release and a public exhibition.
  - o Feedback received at the exhibition was largely positive with many people in favour of the proposals. Approximately 50 people attended the exhibition n over the course of the two days.
  - o A total of 239 feedback forms have been received so far, with 187 (77%) agreeing with the proposals
  - o Telephone correspondence has been received form a number of local residents.
  - o Reasons respondents support the proposal include:
  - o Many respondents commented that they currently travel to Sainsbury's in Nantwich and that the proposed new store in Crewe would reduce their time spent travelling.
  - o Competition - respondents have overwhelmingly welcomed the additional of a new foodstore in Crewe and the increased competition that it would bring.
  - o The positioning of the proposed store, fronting onto High Street along with the addition of two retail units and a public space and penetration link t o the town centre, was widely welcomed.
  - o Many attendees at the exhibition commented that they hoped that the development would spur on the regeneration of High Street and encourage other traders to move into some of the empty units in the area. Good public transport and pedestrian links to the site

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- A number of issues have arisen during the consultation process. These are:
  - Increased traffic. A number of local residents commented that Vernon Way and surrounding roads were already extremely busy and feared that the proposed store would exacerbate this problem. Sainsbury's consultants Savell Bird and Axon have reported that most trips to the new store would be drawn from existing supermarkets and other trips into the town centre. Therefore not vastly increasing traffic in the area.
  - Disability and access issues. A local disabled resident attended the exhibition enquiring about a range of issues regarding access to the store for disabled customers. These included enquiries about the grade of the slope from High Street to Forge Street, placement of the disabled parking spaces in the car park and the number of lifts from the car park to the store entrance. A response to the resident's queries was sent to him by letter in the week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009. The new store will be compliant with all access regulations, as well as the two non-Sainsbury's retail units and public space on High Street. Crewe Disability Resource exchange has also been contacted offering further information.
  - Dunelm Mill – several feedback forms were submitted with respondents say their support for the proposed Sainsbury's store would be dependent on finding a suitable site for Dunelm Mill in the town. Sainsbury's are continuing negotiations with Dunelm Mill to find a suitable site for relocation.

### **Sustainability Statement – Sainsbury's**

- Sainsbury's aim to demonstrate their continued commitment to building sustainability into each development they undertake. The report shows their commitment to carbon dioxide reduction at Crewe
- The Crewe development will include the generation of an element of the site energy requirement from on-site renewable energy sources. During the design phase the project team will determine the predicted annual energy profile for the development, taking into account all incorporated energy efficiency measures and calculate the equivalent energy value to be provided from renewable sources
- The selection of the renewable energy sources to be incorporated will be made through consideration of the available technologies and their sustainability for adoption on the Crewe site within reasonable cost limits.

### **Ecology Assessment – Landscape Science Consultancy**

- The aims of the ecological survey was to identify all relevant aspects of ecology on the site and assess their relative importance, as well as determining the likely scale and magnitude of ecological impact from the development proposals.
- The major habitat identified on the site is ornamental planting with scattered trees and is of negligible ecological value. Other habitat includes small areas of dense scrub, semi-improved grassland and tall ruderal vegetation.
- The loss of those areas, which will not be retained under the proposed development is considered to be a negligible adverse impact and could be



mitigated for by the incorporation of new native tree and shrub planting within the landscaping of the new development

- It has been identified that there is potential habitat for nesting birds on site. The potential of the music venue to support roosting bats could not be assessed adequately due to access and visibility restrictions. Recommendations have been made to ensure that these protected species are not impacted by the proposed developments.
- The pitched roof of the music venue on Vernon Way was found to support many potential roosting features for bats. However, no evidence of actual roosting bats was found. It has been considered that the ecological isolation of the music venue would be a limiting factor to the presence of roosting bats. In light of the evidence available and in order to confirm to best practice and the relevant legislation, it is considered that all potential roosting sites identified on the building should be stripped carefully by hand under supervision by a licensed bat worker during demolition.

### **Planning and Retail Statement – Turley Associates**

A Planning and Retail Statement has been provided which can be summarised as follows:

- The development is consistent with the key objectives of national and local planning policy to achieve sustainable mixed use development and to regenerate urban areas. In the context of retail development, this entails locating new shopping in the centre of the catchment that it seeks to serve, in areas that are easily accessible and well served by public transport.
- The proposed store and site development will result in significant design and townscape improvements to this part of Crewe town centre removing outmoded units and a large unattractive car park area. The proposal effectively integrates and links the site into areas to the north and west via use of topography and pedestrian routes to achieve positive urban design improvements.
- The public square will provide a meeting place and an improved physical and visual environment for pedestrians moving around the town centre via this area. It also provides a comprehensive remodelling of the end of High Street in visual and accessibility terms to attract people into High Street and this part of the town centre.
- The new food store will encourage linked trips to other shops / facilities in the centre thus further supporting the viability and vitality of the town centre
- Sainsbury's multi million pound investment in a modern store with associated public square and other facilities is a key regeneration scheme and commitment to the town. Creating c500 jobs in the store and other in the construction process it is also a clear boost to the local job market.
- The development here has clear and far reaching benefits for the site, town centre and area as a whole and deserves the fullest possible support.

### **Design and Access Statement – Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson**

- The scheme proposals follow a detailed analysis of the site and surroundings, the identification of key opportunities and constraints for the

redevelopment of the site, and details of the proposed scheme, which are supported by and follow key design principles

- The key elements of the scheme include:
  - The utilisation of the site's topography and landscaping by accommodating car parking at ground floor level, much of the parking is disguised by the mature trees along Vernon Way.
  - Creating a public square which forms part of the pedestrian route to and from the town centre. The design of this space has been developed during consultation with the Local Planning Authority.
  - Improved public realm and landscaping to enhance the site's setting
  - A high quality, contemporary buildings, simple in its articulation with glazed elements to add animation and which sits within its mixed surroundings, and adds a modern contrast to the traditional brick buildings within the vicinity. The design of the building has been developed during consultation with the Local Planning Authority.
  - Enhancing and contributing to an existing popular pedestrian route to Crewe town centre from the south.
  - Act as a catalyst for the regeneration of High Street and surrounding context.

### **Flood Risk Assessment – Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson**

- **Fluvial Flooding** - The Valley Brook is located close to the site to the south. This is a minor watercourse and flooding causes only very localized inundation immediately adjacent.
- **Pluvial (Development Runoff)** – The existing drainage systems will be replaced on site. Off-site drainage is provided by a network of sewers in the control of the Local Authority and United Utilities. Water is directed into this system and notwithstanding blockages should be taken away from the development.
- **Overland Flows** – unlikely to affect the site as the development is located in an area of high density development all having independent drainage systems that collect rainfall and direct it to the public sewer system. The site is bounded by roads on 3 sides which have independent drainage systems managed by the Local Authority which direct water away from the site.
- **Groundwater** – The site is currently hard surfaced and there is no contemporary evidence to suggest that groundwater levels are such that they would affect the proposed development. Surface water from the buildings and hard stand areas on site is currently positively connected by gutters and rainwater pipes and discharged into a system of pipes connected to the main sewerage system off site.
- **Probability of Flooding** - The site is within Zone 1 (low probability i.e.: flooding event of < 0.1%) of the EA indicative floodmap. Correct design, management and control of the surface water discharge from the site will ensure flooding due to surcharging of the proposed drainage solution does not occur.

## **Drainage Strategy – Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson**

- Impermeable areas of the proposed development will be similar to the existing development.
- Rainfall run off from the development will be managed in a similar manner to the previous development in that run-off will be positively collected and directed into an underground piped on-site drainage system which would then discharge to adopted sewers. Surface water from external paved areas will be tanked through petrol interceptors prior to discharging from site.
- Intrusive investigations of the site have indicated that the site is underlain with clay and therefore the use of soakaways is considered unlikely to be viable in this particular case.
- The development is subject to the effects of climate change within the lifetime of the building. This is not expected to go beyond 2085 and therefore a 20% increase in rainfall intensities and 20% increase in river flows are precautionary allowances in accordance with PPS25 table B.2.
- It is intended that this increase will be factored into the design for the surface water drainage for the development to allow for the effects of increased surface water run-off it is intended that some on-site attenuation will be incorporated prior to connection to the existing sewers.
- The design criteria for the storm drainage and attenuation will be as follows:
  - 30 year design storm – No flooding on site (below ground storage)
  - 100 year design storm (No flooding of the building (flooding contained on external site areas
  - Outfall from site restricted to flow calculated from existing impermeable drained surfaces based upon a rainfall intensity of 50mm/hr and using Modified Rational method.
  - Future rainfall design intensities increased by 20% to allow for climate change over the life of the building
- Foul water from the development will be managed in a similar manner to the previous development in that it will be positively collected and directed into an underground piped on-site drainage system which would then discharge to adopted sewers.
- Two existing sewers owned by United Utilities currently run across the site North to South. One is a surface water drain and the other is combined. To allow the development to proceed these sewers will be diverted with the agreement of United Utilities along the west elevation of the proposed store.

## **10. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of Development**

The site lies within the Crewe Town Centre Boundary where new retail development is considered to be acceptable in principle and it is not therefore necessary to consider the impact of the development on the vitality and viability of Crewe and Nantwich town centres. The main issues that need to be considered are details of siting and layout, building design, sustainability, landscape and ecology, crime and disorder, drainage and flood risk, public consultation, impact on neighbour amenity and highway considerations

## **Siting and Layout**

Given the very large scale of this development and the huge regeneration potential of this part of the town centre, it is critical that the proposed development integrates well with the existing urban form, is well linked to the town centre. It must also act as a catalyst for and not prejudice other regeneration opportunities in the immediate vicinity.

Early pre-application discussion with Planning Officers has ensured that the store is well orientated facing towards the town centre, unlike the existing retail units on site. There are good pedestrian linkages with the town centre via High Street and the new pedestrian link to Forge Street. The new store will increase footfall significantly along these routes as shoppers walk between it and the town centre and it is hoped that this will encourage other retailers to move into the vacant shops and have a revitalising effect on this run-down area. The new public space in front of the store will create a focal point at the end of High Street and will improve the quality of the public realm in this location.

The majority of the car-parking will be hidden from view underneath the store, although two rows of spaces and an access road are proposed between the building and the public space. Due to the difference in ground levels the car park and the public space will be separated by a retaining wall. There is some concern that this will divorce the building from the public space, reducing active frontage and creating a gulf filled by car parking. However, the applicant has argued that this gap is necessary due to the sewer easement and will enhance the space by creating a wider vista between the end of Mill Street and the church. Furthermore, given that the new store is such a large building, it is the applicant's view that it requires a substantial space in front of it to prevent it from appearing overdominant. They also believe that the car parking area will not be seen from the open space due to the parapet wall running alongside.

Concern has also been expressed in respect of the petrol filling station which occupies a prominent position on the roundabout at the junction of High Street and Vernon Way, in front of the store. Due to operational site constraints the applicant was adamant that this is the only suitable location in practical terms so it was initially suggested that the filling station should take the form of a piece of statement architecture. However, it is now considered that the existing mature landscaping to the Vernon Way boundary will largely conceal the building and therefore a low, simple, single storey brick structure is proposed, although some improvements have been secured to the design of the canopy. It is essential however, that the existing landscaping on the frontage is protected and retained and this issue is discussed in more detail below.

As initially submitted, two small retail / café units were proposed at the end of High Street. However, being single storey it was considered by Officers that they did not provide the strong "bookend" which was required to complete High Street or turn the corner into the public space. Negotiations have therefore taken place and amended plans have been submitted showing the number of units reduced to one, which has been moved into the centre of the public space, to form pavilion, leaving the existing four storey building at 27 High Street to act as the end-stop to the development on the north side of the road.

This modification has also adequately resolved a number of issues, which have been raised by the owner of 27 High Street in response to the consultation on the application. Although many of these such as issues regarding private rights of way were not planning matters, the urban design concerns expressed in the representations were issues which Officers had already raised with the applicant prior to the representation being received and eventually led to the amended plans being submitted.

## **Building Design**

Due to its very large scale and prominent location, the proposed building will have a significant visual impact on the immediate area and the character of the town centre as a whole.

The new store is essentially a rectangular, flat roofed structure, with a decked service yard to the rear, and projecting stair towers to the sides. It is to be finished in white metal cladding panels, and relies on an oversailing roof and metal louvers between the stair towers and the addition of a glazed atrium, (also with an oversailing roof and louvers), to the front of the building, facing the open space, to break down its massing and add visual interest.

Whilst it could be argued that architecturally, it is somewhat uninspiring, it does reflect the current Sainsbury's corporate image and general practice in supermarket design at the present time. Although it does little to enhance local distinctiveness, contemporary retail architecture of this type is to be expected in modern town and city centres and as further regeneration and redevelopment takes place within Crewe town centre, it will almost certainly appear less out of place. Furthermore, it could be argued that it will represent a considerable improvement over the buildings which it replaces, which are also predominantly flat roofed, metal clad, bulky goods retail units.

Officers had hoped that the building would include an architectural feature at the south west corner which would act as a focal point at the end of the High Street vista and would emphasise the entrance to the building making it more legible for the user. Sainsbury's have been reluctant to modify the design but it is hoped that the effect will be achieved by the proposed public space with the retail unit / café pavilion at its centre.

## **Sustainability**

Sainsbury's as a company are dedicated to reducing their carbon footprint and have pledged to investigate a number of sustainable construction techniques and energy saving / generating systems which can be incorporated into the building. A supplementary statement has been submitted which provides information on how this sustainable agenda will apply to the store proposal in Crewe.

Sainsbury's adopt a proactive strategy of understanding climate change and implementing programmes to reduce direct environmental impact. Sainsbury's goal is to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by: sourcing energy

responsibly, minimising energy demand, and promoting efficient consumption. Sainsbury's already purchase their electrical energy from suppliers that produce 10 per cent of electricity from renewable sources with an additional 40 per cent coming from Combined Heat and Power plants. This source of electrical supply will apply to the new store in Crewe. This sourcing of energy is in line with policy EM18 of North West England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) which outlines that, in advance of the setting of local targets for decentralised/renewable/low-carbon source energy supply that a least 10% of predicted energy requirements should be from such sources unless it is demonstrated not to be viable. It is also in line with policy EM17 that at least 10% of the electricity supplied within the Region should be from renewable sources.

Sainsbury's is committed to building stores that have a low impact on their environment and will do this through intelligent design, sustainable sourcing of materials, efficient use of energy and resources and site waste reduction programmes. The need to consider energy efficiency and to incorporate renewable technologies from the outset is understood by Sainsbury's development teams and the developers that Sainsbury's partners when bringing projects forward. Sainsbury's aim to minimise the impact on the environment of a new store both during construction and once completed, through intelligent design, sustainable sourcing of materials, and efficient use of energy and resources and site waste reduction programmes.

Sainsbury's aim for every new store is to achieve a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating and this will be met at Crewe. Additionally the proposed Crewe store, like all new Sainsbury's stores will include the following environmental/sustainable features; solatube daylighting, providing natural light to the sales floor areas; rainwater harvesting; low flush W.C's; waterless urinals; natural light with dimming; weir screens (refrigeration); night blinds (refrigeration); LED's in cold rooms (refrigeration); energy sub metering. These factors align with policy EM16 of RSS to minimise energy consumption, promote maximum efficiency and minimise waste (as is further considered below).

The proposal will involve the demolition of a number of existing buildings on site. Sainsbury's appointed contractors will employ a waste management plan to ensure that full regard is taken to reuse on site or appropriate disposal of demolition waste off site. This process is in line with policy EM11 of RSS for waste management principles.

Sainsbury's target is to achieve a 50% reduction in mains water use per square meter of sales floor by March 2012. This will include via measures such as rain water harvesting and toilet technologies. The incorporation of such measures is in line with policy EM5 of RSS which requires new developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and water conservation and efficiency measures.

It is recommended that conditions be added to any approval to ensure that the measures outlined above are incorporated into the final design of the building and to ensure compliance with RSS Policies DP 9 (Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change), EM 16 (Energy Conservation & Efficiency), EM 17 (Renewable Energy), EM18 (Decentralised Energy Supply) EM9 (Secondary

and Recycled Aggregates) and EM11 (Waste Management Principles) as well as the provisions of Policy 11 (Development and Waste Recycling) of the Waste Local Plan

### **Landscape and Ecology**

There is a significant amount of existing well-established landscaping around the site perimeter. It will be important to ensure that as much of this as possible is retained and integrated into the development to soften the impact of this large new building. The retention of the semi-mature trees along the Vernon Way frontage will be particularly important to screen the undercroft parking and un-slightly service area and rear elevation to the petrol station. Whilst the submitted plans show the majority of the trees to be retained, there is some concern about the proximity of development works, to the trees. In particular parking areas and access roads which appear to be under tree crowns, where roots and canopies are susceptible to damage. The Landscape Officer's views as to whether the proposal would pose an unacceptable threat to the trees or whether problems could be adequately mitigated through the use of special construction techniques were still awaited at the time of report preparation and will be reported to Members at the meeting.

An ecological survey has also been undertaken, which has concluded that there is likely to be limited impact on habitats as a result of this proposal. The existing buildings on site may have some potential for bat roosting and it is recommended that roosting sites identified should be stripped carefully by hand under supervision by a licensed bat worker during demolition. This can be secured by condition. The views of the Council's ecologist were awaited at the time of report preparation and his views and any further conditions which may be necessary will be reported to Members at the meeting.

### **Impact on neighbour amenity**

Given the town centre location and the nature of the surrounding land-uses, which are predominantly associated with commercial and retail activity, this is not considered to be a significant issue in this case.

### **Crime and Disorder**

It is important to ensure that large new retail developments and public spaces are designed in such a way as to minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. The views of the Police Architectural Liaison Officer were still awaited at the time of report preparation and will be reported to Members at the meeting.

Overall, however, the public areas within the development appear to benefit from good natural surveillance from the atrium and the café / retail unit. The relocation of this building to the middle of the public space has removed several concealed areas and has increased the opportunity for overlooking of the space from 27 High Street.

As with all large retail proposals involving substantial car parks there are concerns about car-related antisocial behaviour on the car park when the supermarket is closed. Such problems have been experienced at the other stores in the Borough and it is therefore suggested that conditions should be imposed requiring CCTV and speed humps to be installed within the car park areas.

### **Public Consultation**

In support of the application, the developer has submitted a Consultation Statement. The Borough Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which provides guidance on the production of Statements of Local Engagement states, at Paragraph 8.3, that such documents should show how applicants have involved the local community and where the proposals have been amended, as a consequence of involving the local community.

The Statement, submitted as part of this planning application, outlines the public consultation that has taken place and summarises the responses. The feedback which appears to have been received is overwhelmingly positive, and this conclusion is born out by the results of the consultation on the planning application. Consequently little modification to the scheme has been required. The main concerns appear to have been concerning the relocation of Dunelm, and Sainsbury's are continuing to work with the store to secure a new premises.

### **Drainage and Flood Risk.**

There is a need to ensure that the proposed development does not generate a risk of on-site flooding or exacerbate existing flooding problems elsewhere. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy have been produced which state that Sainsbury's will ensure that the rate of runoff of surface water from the site will be no worse than the original conditions before the development, taking into account predicted climate change impacts over the lifetime of the development. The Statements have been scrutinised by the Environment Agency and no concerns have been raised in respect of the methodology and conclusions. Consequently, they have no objection to the scheme subject to the imposition of the relevant conditions. United Utilities have also been consulted, although no response had been received at the time of report preparation. United Utilities support will be particularly important for this scheme as it involves the diversion of a public sewer.

### **Highway Considerations**

It is important to ensure that adequate parking and servicing facilities are available within the site and that a safe access can be achieved into and out of the site which does not result in an unacceptable level of congestion or queuing at any of the existing roundabouts. The impact of the additional traffic generated on the wider highway network must also be taken into account and the developer has submitted a Traffic Impact Assessment. The Highway Authority has raised some concerns regarding the detailed layout of the road network within the site and the service yard. They have also pointed out a number of issues in respect of the way in which the traffic impact has been assessed.



However, discussions have taken place between the applicant's consultants and the Highway Authority and Savell Bird & Axon have undertaken further traffic modelling work following comments from the Highway Authority's consultants. All parties now accept the traffic modelling undertaken is accurate. Negotiations have also taken place to resolve the other matters and a number of amendments to the scheme and mitigation measures have been agreed. These include increased cycle/motorcycle parking, an improved signal controlled pedestrian/cycle crossing to be provided west of Vernon Way/Mill St/High St roundabout, modifications to both vehicular accesses, minor modifications to the car park layout to improve pedestrian access from Vernon Way to Forge Street and improved visibility at the pedestrian access onto Forge Street. All of the above can be achieved through the submission of amended plans or conditions.

Sainsbury's are considering the Highway Authority request for a financial contribution (or construction of) off-carriageway cycle facilities on Vernon Way. If a financial contribution is agreed, it will need to be secured through a S106 agreement.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

The site lies within the Crewe Town Centre Boundary where new retail development is considered to be acceptable in principle. Early pre-application discussion has resulted in a scheme being submitted which has significant regeneration potential and is of a high quality in terms of urban design. Further, negotiations in respect of a number of matters of detail have resolved the outstanding issues in respect of the layout and design of the scheme.

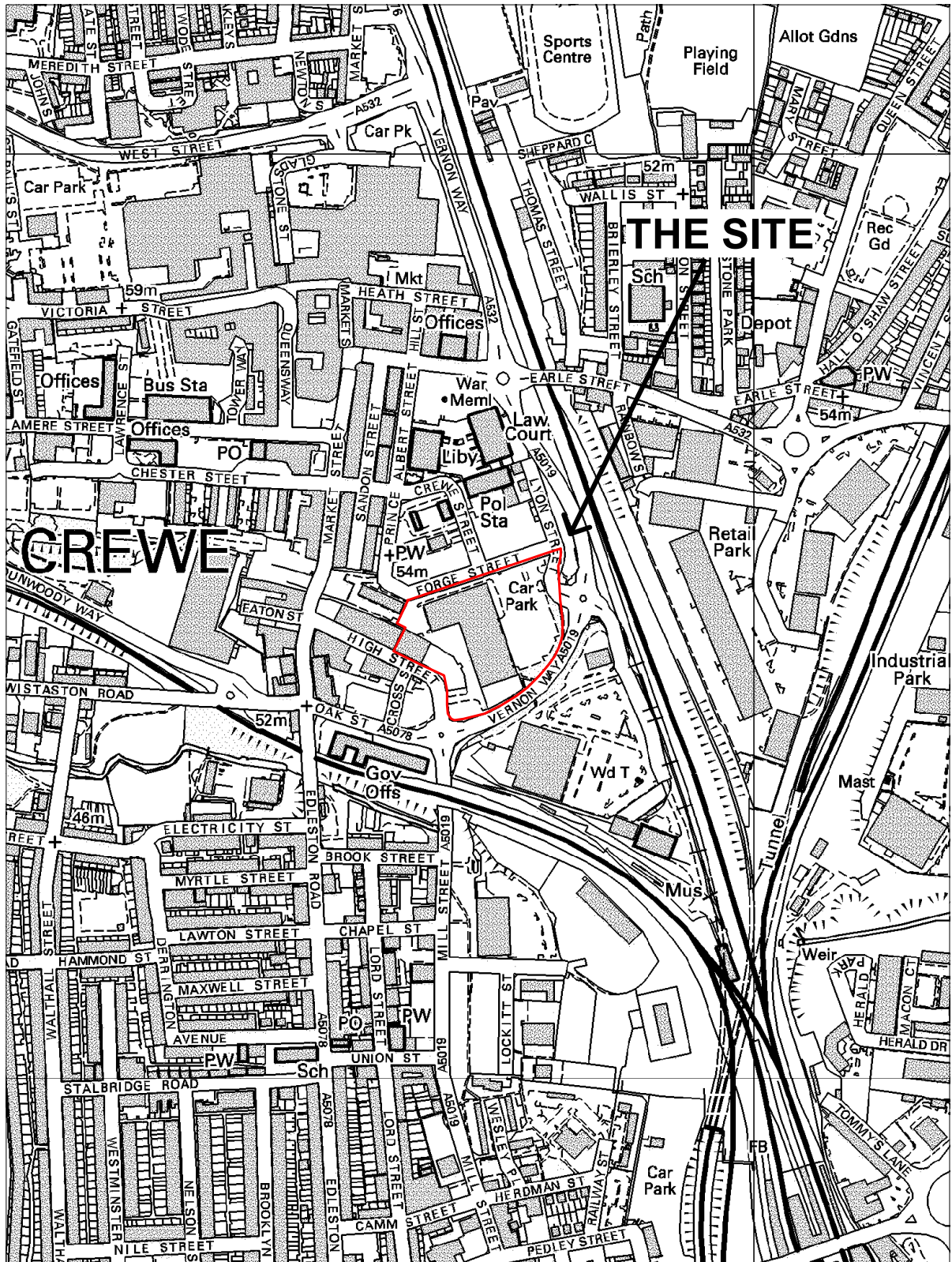
The proposal meets the necessary Local Plan requirements in respect of sustainability, crime and disorder, drainage and flood risk, public consultation and impact on neighbour amenity. The majority of the highway issues have also now been resolved, with the exception of the on-going discussions in respect of the provision of a cycle link along Vernon Way. The only other outstanding matter is that pertaining to the retention and protection of the trees on the Vernon Way boundary and it is hoped that updates can be provided to Members on both these matters at the meeting.

Having due regard to all other matters raised, it is considered that the proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan policies, as set out above and in the absence of any other material considerations, it is recommended for approval subject to conditions as set out below.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**APPROVE subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Standard**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Materials**
- 4. Landscape Scheme**
- 5. Implementation of Landscaping**
- 6. Tree protection measures**
- 7. No works within protected area**
- 8. Surface water regulation system**
- 9. Maximum discharge**
- 10. Surface water attenuation measures;**
- 11. Scheme for management of overland flow**
- 12. Construction of access**
- 13. Provision of parking**
- 14. Provision of cycle parking**
- 15. Pedestrian Crossing Improvements**
- 16. Incorporation of sustainable features**
- 17. CCTV and speed humps to car park**
- 18. All potential roosting sites identified to be stripped carefully by hand under supervision by a licensed bat worker during demolition.**
- 19. Scheme for making good side elevation of 27 High Street following demolition of the Music Club**



09/1442N - DEVELOPMENT SITE, VERNON WAY, CREWE, CHESHIRE  
N.G.R. - 370,670 - 355,490

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