

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD**

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**Date of Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> August 2009  
**Report of:** Head of Planning and Policy  
**Title:** Basford West Development Site

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### Planning Application References

Outline Planning Permission: P03/1071  
Reserved matters submissions: P08/1258 and 09/1480N

Development at Basford West, Crewe

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the principles of the outline permission for development at Basford West, to explain briefly the proposals which are the subject of two reserved matters applications submitted pursuant to the outline permission and identify the issues which arise from these applications. This report is presented to members in advance of reports on the submitted reserved matters applications to inform members of the planning history of the site. No recommendation is presented in relation to the determination of the applications.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 Members receive the report and note that a briefing session and site inspection will take place prior to the determination of the two reserved matters applications.

### **3. Policy Context**

3.1 Policy MCR4 (South Cheshire) of the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) supports the delivery of economic development at Basford. Policy E.3 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 allocates 55 hectares of land at Basford West for development of a regional warehouse and distribution park. The policy requires the provision of rail access, extensive landscaping and woodland planting. The policy also identifies a separate area at Basford East of 43 hectares for industrial and business development.

3.2 Separate Development Briefs were prepared for the Basford West and Basford East sites. The Development Briefs were adopted by the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council in April 2004.

#### **4. The Site**

4.1 The Basford West development site is located to the north of the A500 and south of Crewe. The area of the outline permission is bounded by Crewe Road, Shavington on west and north, the West Coast Main Line to the east and A500 to the south. The area was former agricultural land. Access will be obtained from the existing roundabout on the A500 to the south and from Crewe Road to the north, at a point south of the Gresty Brook and rail bridge.

#### **5. The Outline Permission**

5.1 Outline planning permission was issued on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008 for warehousing and distribution (B8), manufacturing (B2), and light industrial/ office development (B1), with the construction of access roads, footpaths, rail infrastructure, the importation of soil, heavy good vehicle and car parking, landscaping and habitat mitigation. The permission allows ten years for the submission of reserved matters applications and includes a large number of conditions which set the principles of how the site will be developed. The development is also subject to a number of requirements of a Section 106 agreement. These and the requirements of the planning conditions are explained briefly later in this report.

#### **6. The Development**

6.1 The outline application included the submission of access details for consideration at the outline stage. The permission granted includes the construction of a spine road which will link A500 south of the site with Crewe Road leading to Nantwich Road Crewe. It was envisaged that the application would be developed in three phases with phase one including land fronting the A500 and the construction of the spine road. Phase 3 would include the land adjacent to the railway and include the provision of the rail link and the remaining areas would form Phase 2. An illustrative layout was submitted with the outline application. The site is allocated as a regional warehouse development and the principles of the development recognise this. However limited amounts of land are also included for B1 office development and for general industrial development. Gateway features are proposed at certain points on the spine road. These take the form of office development on the west side of the spine road at the entrance to the development off A500. On the east side of the spine road at this point public art will be provided to complement the office development. Elsewhere along the spine road other public art or buildings will be used to form focal points.

6.2 To the north of the development site the existing line of Crewe Road will be truncated and traffic will then use the northern section of the new spine road when travelling between Crewe and Crewe Road, Shavington.

6.3 The outline application was submitted together with an Environmental Statement which has been used as the basis for consideration of works to mitigate the effects of the development. Landscaping and Ecological mitigation works are proposed principally on the southern site boundary and on land to the west of the development area i.e. land to the east of the houses in Crewe Road, Shavington. The planted bund along the southern site boundary includes the formation of ponds. The existing hedgerow on the western side of the development area will be retained and a further planted bund provided on the west side of the hedgerow, outside the development area but in the mitigation area. This western mitigation area extends to the rear of the houses in Crewe Road, Shavington and along the northern site boundary at the rear of Greenbank Farm. Later landscaping and ecological works associated with the third phase of the development will provide for habitat connections and planting around the margins of the eastern parts of the site, accepting the need to form rail connections.

6.4 The roundabout on A500 was constructed at the time that road was formed to serve the development. The Travel Plan for the development will control the flow of vehicles from the site and includes measures for monitoring and limiting traffic movements especially at peak periods. A rail link is to be provided to serve units on the eastern side of the development and in this area it will be necessary to raise levels up to 6m in order to lift the land to the level of the railway.

## **7. The Section 106 Agreement**

7.1 The Section 106 agreement includes requirements for landscape and ecological works, commuted payments for a number of highway matters to improve sustainable transport measures, as well requirements for improvements to A500 and junction 16 of M6, the submission of a Travel Plan and the formation of a rail link to the main line railway.

7.2 The landscape and ecological works require the submission of a maintenance scheme and a requirement to maintain habitats and planting for a period of 15 years, after which further proposals for future maintenance must be submitted and agreed. A commuted payment is also required for off-site landscape and ecological works in the area south of A500 and north of Shavington and Basford.

7.3 The S106 agreement requires a series of commuted payment towards the improvement of off-site pedestrian and cycle links to the development site. A financial contribution is required to the construction of the Crewe Green Link

Road South. The developer has agreed to complete highway improvements at Junction 16 of M6 to improve the flow of traffic at the junction and to create an additional lane on the east bound carriageway of A500 for the last 600m leading to the M6. A series of commuted payments for public transport improvements are to be made over a five year period. There are also requirements in relation to the setting up of structures and organisational procedures for overseeing the monitoring and implementation of the travel plan.

## **8. Conditions of the outline planning permission**

8.1 Conditions limit the development to 4,645 sq m of B1 (office and light industrial) development, 18,580 sq m of B2 (general industrial) development and 120,770 sq m of development for B8 (warehousing and distribution). Height restrictions are also imposed allowing development up to a maximum of 25m adjacent to the railway (subject to a limitation that only parts of the buildings will reach such heights), 12m on the west of the site and 18m elsewhere. Plans detailing the phasing, uses and general layout of the site are also subject to conditions which will control the form of the development and ensure that the larger units are not located on the western parts of the site which is the area closest to dwellings.

8.2 Conditions on the outline permission include measures for ecological mitigation landscaping, noise mitigation, a requirement for a construction management plan, archaeological investigation, the maintenance of the public right of way, (unless subject to closure or diversion) measures to prevent water pollution, the need to provide driver overnight facilities, and waste storage and recycling. As a regional warehouse development, working will take place on a 24 hour basis except for plot 7 which is closer to dwellings. Here hours of working will be restricted.

## **9. Development to Date**

9.1 Planning permission has been granted for the formation of Great Crested Newt ponds with habitat planting and this permission has been implemented and the newts translocated. (P06/1234)

9.2 A bat barn has been constructed under a further permission prior to the demolition of the farm house and farm outbuildings and Springbank Farm. (P08/0801)

9.3 Permission has been issued for an electrical substation. It is anticipated that construction will commence in the autumn. (P08/1054).

## **10. Reserved matters application for ground works for spine road, drainage, balancing ponds, plot formation, structural landscaping, public**

**art, with ecological assessment, lighting strategy, construction management plan and flood risk assessment. P08/1258**

10.1 This application is essentially one for ground works and re-contouring the site. The outline planning application was submitted prior to the current requirements relating to flood risk assessment and this reserved matters application therefore includes a flood risk assessment and scheme of drainage works for surface water regulation with the formation of a series of water storage ponds. The ponds are to be located on the east side of the spine road within a landscaped area. The application includes the formation of the ponds, landscaping of them, details of the formation and landscaping of the spine road and defines the line of the pedestrian and cycle links over adjoining land as required under the Section 106 agreement. In addition a tree survey and details of landscaping in the mitigation areas and along the southern boundary are also submitted.

10.2 The ground works include the formation of a platform for the first employment unit. This platform measures 370m x 220m and is set at the level of the ground towards the southern end of the platform. This will necessitate a land rise of up to 2m above the existing ground level at the northern end of the platform. The platform will provide the area for the warehouse, service areas, car and HGV parking. Similarly the spine road will be set at the existing ground level at the southern end. This will necessitate an increase in the level of the land by about 3m at the deepest point on the roundabout located part way along the spine road. The re-contouring of the land is design to ensure that the volume of cut is equal to the volume of fill required so that no bulk materials will need to be imported for phases 1 and 2.

10.3 A framework construction management plan and framework lighting strategy are required by condition of the outline permission and these documents are submitted. A Transport Statement and Habitat Management Plan are also submitted. These are requirements of the Section 106 agreement.

10.4 The application was submitted in November 2008 and since that time negotiations have taken place with a number of consultees regarding certain details of the submissions. These negotiations are now nearing completion.

10.5 A number of representations have also been submitted by local residents many of these raise issues relating to the principle of the development. Such matters do not fall to be considered under a reserved matters submission although it is noted that the local action group BEBWAG consider that the permission should be revoked.

10.6 The main issues which fall to be considered by the application can be summarised as follows:-

- Effectiveness of the surface water regulation scheme;
- Impact of the proposed footpath/ cycle pedestrian link at the rear of the Cheshire Cheese on amenities at nearby dwellings;
- Impact of the proposed footpath/ cycle link on ecological mitigation areas;
- The effectiveness of proposed landscaping measures particularly to screen views of the development from Shavington;
- The location and level of the large warehouse unit;
- Compliance with the Development Brief;
- Impact of traffic on A500;
- The need to ensure construction traffic does not pass through villages.

## **11. Reserved matters application for one building for use as storage and distribution warehouse or general industry with ancillary offices, security gatehouse and associated car parking and landscaping. (09/1480N)**

11.1 The application seeks permission for the construction of a regional warehouse/ general industrial unit comprising 38,122 sq m of warehouse/ distribution space, 1,951 sq m of office floor space and 525 sq m of operations office space. The proposal includes Heavy Good Vehicle parking with loading and unloading bays, and a security gatehouse and car parking for 250 vehicles. Access will be from the spine road and planting adjacent to the spine road and A500 will provide the setting for the development. The submission includes a Noise Assessment and Lighting Strategy for the proposed development. The ecological mitigation measures now in place provide the necessary mitigation for the development of this land subject to additional pond and habitat creation as part of the southern boundary scheme (adjacent to the A500) and the planting adjacent to the spine road. Flood risk and drainage works are the same as that proposed in the ground works application referred to above. A tree survey, construction management plan and travel plan are also submitted.

11.2 A number of representations also raise issues about the principle of the development which does not fall to be considered in this reserved matters submission. The main issues in relation to this application are:-

- Highway matters including access arrangements at the site entrance;
- The effectiveness of the Travel Plan;
- The design scale and appearance of the building and effectiveness of landscaping;
- Impact of the development on residential amenities;
- Pollution.

## **12. Conclusion**

12.1 Basford West is identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a gateway site to the North West and as a site for regional warehouse and distribution development in the Adopted Local Plan. An outline planning permission has been

granted subject to conditions and a number of requirements contained within a Section 106 agreement.

12.2 Two reserved matters applications have now been submitted following the grant of outline planning permission. It is therefore proposed that to allow members of the Strategic Board the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the principles of development at the site a short briefing session take place at a time and date to be arranged and this will be followed by a site inspection. The briefing session and site inspection will be scheduled to take place shortly before the Board meeting to consider the two reserved matters applications.

***For further information:***

***Portfolio holder:*** Jamie Macrae

***Officer:*** Rosamund Ellison, Principal Planning Officer, Crewe office.

***Tel No:*** 01270-537482

***Email:*** [ros.ellison@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:ros.ellison@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

