

Planning Reference No:	09/3602N
Application Address:	Land off Rose Terrace, Crewe, Cheshire
Proposal:	Twenty Six Extra Care Apartments
Applicant:	Wulvern Housing
Application Type:	Full
Grid Reference:	370080 356323
Ward:	Crewe East
Earliest Determination Date:	16th December 2009
Expiry Dated:	28th December 2009
Date of Officer's Site Visit:	4th December 2009
Constraints:	None applicable

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Approve with conditions

MAIN ISSUES: Impact of the proposal upon:

- Principle of extra care development and requirement for affordable housing
- Adjacent residential amenity through loss of privacy/over domination
- Appearance within the locality
- Access and car parking

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application would normally be referred to the Southern Planning Committee by virtue of its scale. However, due to the timing for the end of public consultation and the expiry date for the determination of the application, the scheme has been brought to the Strategic Planning Board to enable a decision to be issued to the applicants within the prescribed time period.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The site currently comprises a complex of 2 storey flats as well as grassed areas and footpaths. The site is part of a wider extra care and sheltered housing development programme by the applicant and this application comprises the final phase of the development. Vehicular access is provided from the south via Rose Terrace and there are a number of pedestrian routes through the site. The site has outline planning permission for 74 units of extra care accommodation together with detailed permissions for individual components of the overall scheme. The development is being constructed in five phases and some of these works have been completed and others are on-going.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises a two storey development including twenty six extra care apartments and one guest sleepover flat and features a U-shaped layout. The proposed building features a predominantly brick and render finish as well as a standing seam metal roof. The elevations also feature projecting two storey square bays. Parking is proposed in a communal area to the north as well as parallel to the southern edge of the building.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

P07/0854 – 12 Sheltered Housing Apartments. Approved with conditions 12th September 2007.

P07/1157 - Outline Application for 74 Extra Care Units in Two Storey Building. Refused due to absence of flood risk assessment 2nd November 2007.

P07/1654 - Outline Application for 74 Extra Care Units in a Two Storey Building. Approved with conditions 18th February 2008.

P08/1250 - Development of 48 Extra Care Apartments Comprising Refurbishment of Existing Building, Two Storey New Build and Construction of Third Storey onto Existing Building together with Parking Spaces and Landscaping. Approved with conditions 13th January 2009.

09/0780N – New Build Communal Block. Approved with conditions 4th August 2009.

5. POLICIES

The development plan includes the Northwest of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021, and the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 (LP).

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP.1 Spatial Principles

Local Plan Policy

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.9 (Car Parking Standards)

Other Material Considerations

PPS.1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)

PPG.13 (Transport)

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: Comments awaited at time of writing the report

Public Rights of Way: The development does not appear to affect a public right of way as shown on the definitive map

Environment Agency: No objections

Environmental Health (Contaminated Land): Part of site currently includes a builders yard and therefore potential for contamination to future sensitive end users. Request a condition is attached to require appropriate contaminated land study

United Utilities: No objection providing the site is drained on a separate system with only foul drainage connected to the foul sewer. Surface water should discharge to the surface water sewer with attenuation.

Public sewer runs along the road to the west of the site and we will require an access strip of at least 12 metres wide. There is also a public sewer to the south east which may require diverting or abandoning. Deep rooted shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of the public sewer or overflow system.

7. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received at time of writing report

8. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement: Submitted by Pozzoni Design Group.

The main points are:

- Site is located in an urban area within a residential neighbourhood
- Strong Victorian street patterns surround the development
- Surrounding buildings are traditional brick although there are areas of render
- Existing buildings create little sense of place and existing landscape does not clearly define the public and private realms
- Use of alternating brick and rendered facades enhance the building as a secondary point of entrance into the overall scheme
- High quality re-rendered planes define the building prominence and reinforce the urban edge to Rose Terrace, breaking down the scale of the building
- Domestic proportioned windows create a human scale
- Landscaping strategy is to use good quality hard landscaping material to define car parking courts with soft landscaping acting as a buffer zone
- Proposal is for communal facilities to support the extra care apartments
- Key design principles include reinforcing the urban edge relating to the strong existing street patterns, creation of distinct public and private realms, creation of a natural landscape enclosure and maintaining access from Rose Terrace and Stafford Street
- Layout naturally forms distinct zones with the public entrance and car park and protected gardens to the west
- Proposals define a strong urban edge responding to the terrace streets surrounding the site
- Overall scale is broken down into smaller elements to reflect a domestic scale

9. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Crewe and is within a predominantly residential area. Policy RES.2 (Unallocated Housing Sites) permits the development or redevelopment of unallocated or "windfall" sites for housing in order to help deliver the

Borough's housing provision. The justification for this policy explains, however that a balance must be struck between providing housing on unallocated sites and protecting the quality of the urban environment. It also explains that the council will seek to maintain green spaces within the built environment where they are useful and attractive.

In this instance the proposal would deliver twenty six extra care units and this is consistent with the outline application already approved for the wider site. Accordingly the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

Affordable Housing

Prior to PPS.3 (Housing) coming into force extra care developments were considered to be excluded from the housing survey figures and the affordable housing policy requirements as they provide accommodation for a specific community need. Extra care developments essentially provide varying levels of care for their occupants depending on their personal requirements and also provide a range of facilities that are available to the wider community. However, following PPS.3 coming into force it has been regarded that extra care developments can be included in the housing delivery figures and also therefore the affordable housing requirements. In the case of extra care developments provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) or Housing Associations (HA's) it is accepted that the accommodation will be provided solely to people in local need and therefore, subject to controlling conditions it is accepted that the accommodation does comply with the affordable housing requirements expressed through the housing needs survey. In this instance the applicant is an RSL and therefore it would be possible to control the provision of the accommodation by planning conditions.

Design

The applicant has designed the building to assimilate with the earlier phases of the Pickmere Court scheme. The proposal is two storey in height which will compliment the surrounding built form. The proposed building occupies a sizeable footprint and will adjoin with the first phase of the development which fronts onto Stafford Street to the west. However, as with the earlier phases the horizontal emphasis and massing of the building is broken down with the use of alternating brick and rendered sections. In addition the use of projecting two storey square bays, which are of a similar form to those already on the building further helps to break down the massing into smaller components and adds visual interest to the building.

The proposal also includes for landscaped areas as part of the overall scheme and will create a central courtyard which serves all phases of the development. The design and specification of these areas can be secured by a planning condition.

The surrounding development comprises a mixture of housing types and ages and there are also a variety of materials. However, it is considered that the design and external appearance of the proposed building will not appear alien against the existing built form.

Amenity

The proposed development is located predominantly along the footprint of the existing two storey flats which front onto Alban Street and Rose Terrace. The proposed development faces onto the flank elevation of the existing houses on Adelaide Street and accordingly will have no adverse impact upon the amenity of these dwellings. There are

three properties which front onto Alban Street although these are separated from the new development by the road and it is considered that there is a sufficient distance to ensure that the existing and future occupants will have sufficient privacy and amenity. However the western elevation of the scheme is proposed within 15m of the rear elevation of a group of existing flats on Stafford Street to the west and unlike those on Alban Street there is limited physical separation. The facing elevation of the development includes for a first floor kitchen window to one of the units. It is considered that this should be obscurely glazed up to head height to prevent undue loss of privacy to the existing flats. The kitchen window is not the only source of light to the room and accordingly this condition could be reasonably enforced.

In regard to the potential for noise disturbance to nearby residential properties the proposed development would be located a sufficient distance from the surrounding residential development and would not give rise to undue noise and disturbance.

As mentioned above the proposal is part of a larger extra care and sheltered housing development which is being constructed in phases. The complete site will have central communal gardens which will provide for sufficient levels of amenity for the future occupants.

Access and Parking

Vehicular access to the development is maintained predominantly via Rose Terrace and is within the ownership of the applicant. The access arrangements to the site as well as the levels of car parking have already been approved as part of the earlier applications for the extra care development and although the comments from the Highway Authority have yet to be received it is not considered that the proposal raises any adverse highway issues that could not be controlled via conditions. It is also worth noting that the proposal replaces an existing complex of flatted accommodation and extra care facilities are recognised to involve lower levels of car ownership than open market accommodation and accordingly generate less demand for car parking spaces. Equally the site is located within walking distance of public transport routes as well as shops and services on West Street to the north. The proposal is therefore considered to occupy a sustainable position and this further justifies reduced levels of car parking.

The earlier applications on this site for the extra care development have been subject to conditions requiring the diversion of public footpaths which intersect the site. Applications have been made to divert these rights of way and some are now in place. However, the current proposal does not affect any of the rights of way and therefore does not require any further diversions.

Other matters

The Environmental Health officer has requested a condition in regard to contaminated land as part of the application site red edge includes a former builders yard.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The principle of the proposed extra care facility is considered to represent an acceptable form of development and compatible with the surrounding residential land uses. The proposed siting of the development will not result in a loss of amenity to adjacent or future occupants and reflects the character and rhythm of the surrounding development. A

satisfactory level of car parking is proposed and the vehicular access arrangements are considered to be acceptable.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

- 1: Standard**
- 2: Materials**
- 3: Surfacing materials**
- 4: Car parking provision**
- 5: Landscape scheme**
- 6: Landscape implementation**
- 7: Drainage details**
- 8: Extra care only**
- 9: Bin storage**
- 10: Contaminated land survey**
- 11: Obscure glazing**
- 12: Approved plans**

Location Plan: Cheshire East Council Licence No. 100018515



