

APPLICATION NO: 16/5156C

LOCATION: LAND OFF BLACK FIRS LANE, SOMERFORD, CONGLETON, CHESHIRE

PROPOSAL: Residential Development for 170 houses & associated works

CONSULTATIONS:

Housing: Raise no objections to the application, but note that following discussions with the applicant who raised concerns about the wording referenced in the recommendation concerning Section 106 requirements:

“I have no objection to the references to Lifetime Homes and CSH Level 3 being removed from the report. Neither standard actually exist anymore, although they probably did when the Outline application was approved.”

Education: Under the representations section (P86) the figure of £300,901 is given as the required Education contribution. This was the original figure, and has since been amended, and should read £272,748 as set out in the Education section of the appraisal at P108, and the Recommendation on P112.

REPRESENTATIONS:

The resident at no. 12 Chelford Road has raised a number of concerns. Firstly the report, under the amenity section references properties 6, 8 & 10 Chelford Road. This is incorrect the three new properties with boundaries to the development are no. 6, 8 & 12 Chelford Road, the numbers not running in sequence. The resident also specifically raises the boundary issue, where a 1.8m high fence is proposed on-top of a retaining feature accommodating the level difference at this point, amounting to a height difference of some 3m. The resident also feels a wildlife corridor should be created along the site boundary to create a buffer between the new and existing houses.

KEY ISSUES

Amenity: It is accepted the house numbers quoted in the report are incorrect, they are new houses and not yet plotted on any map base. The reference to 8 & 10 Chelford Road should be to 6 & 8, and the reference to 6 should be no. 12 Chelford Road. The relationships and impacts however as set out remain unchanged.

Dealing with the specific issues. The fence has been discussed with the applicant and they have suggested lowering it to some 900mm with of course the level difference amounting to some 2.1m. This would lessen the visual impact from the side passageway of the house, but lead to some loss in privacy at this point.

The wildlife corridor again has been discussed with the applicant. They do not consider it appropriate or needed, and there is some sympathy for this view. Firstly it is not considered necessary for amenity reasons as, set out in the report the relationships are considered acceptable. Secondly for ecological reasons as it would only lead to the main road, not creating any corridor links off site as would normally be the intention of such links. Thirdly it runs along the south side of new properties and as such tall planting would not be appropriate leading to a low hedge type feature which would have less screening or ecological value. Finally it would be difficult to maintain and experience of such features is that they are likely to be absorbed into the adjoining gardens. A hedge along the boundary could be stipulated, and approved as part of the landscaping condition as this would reduce the visual impact of a 1.8m fence.

Urban Design: The applicant has looked at the proposed houses on the site frontage as discussed in the officer's report, and has amended the house types to introduce more of a mix of house types, roofs and materials. The proposals are considered an improvement, and whilst it will never replicate the variety of properties on Chelford Road and Blackfirs Lane it is considered acceptable.

Housing: Following receipt of housings comments, it is recommended that the 106 requirements set out in the report are amended in line with Housing's comments.

Trees: The Tree Officer has looked at the arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Report submitted and comments:

"The Assessment identifies the removal of four individual moderate (B) category trees, a moderate (B) category group, part of a moderate B category group and two Low (C) category groups to accommodate the proposed access and housing. This equates to approximately 161 trees, of which most comprise of a semi and early mature Birch copse many of which are in decline. An assessment of the site in 2014 resulted in a new Tree Preservation Order being made on woodland to the north of Holmes Chapel Road and a group of trees to the rear of 15-21 Black Firs Lane. The remaining trees, included those identified for removal in this application were evaluated at the time and were not considered to be of sufficient amenity value to warrant protection within the new TPO.

The design of the plots in terms of their relationship/social proximity to retained protected trees and woodland located immediately offsite is considered to be sustainable with no significant long term future conflicts anticipated.

Hedgerows along the eastern and western boundaries of the site have been identified as important under the Hedgerow Regulations and it is noted that sections of the eastern boundary hedgerow will require removal to accommodate proposed access into the site. It should be noted that sections

of this hedgerow were recently cut down in the proposed access positions (Enforcement Ref 17/00151E). The offence para 7 under the Hedgerow Regulations is for removal. As the hedgerows have been cut down and not removed, no offence has been therefore committed.”

A condition requiring the development to be carried out in strict accordance with the Impact Assessment and Protection Plan is recommended. This is picked up in Condition 6.

Landscape: The applicant has submitted an amended landscape plan, but with the Landscape Officer’s concerns regarding planting within the housing areas it is not recommended this is approved, and instead the detailed landscape plans should be subject to a condition. This is picked up in condition 4.

Public Open Space: The applicant has submitted a plan showing the extensive areas of Amenity Green space on the site. Whilst the comments of ANSA are awaited on this it needs to be highlighted that the application follows the outline approval in provision, and whilst there may be detailed issues with regards to the proposed LEAP this can be subject to 106 requirements as set out in the officers report.

Jodrell Bank: It should be noted that, should Members approve the application, the Council would have to notify Jodrell Bank of the intention to grant planning permission under the existing Jodrell Bank Direction for a period of 21 days prior to the issuing of a Decision Notice.

CONCLUSION:

There are no changes to the recommendation, however as noted above the decision should be Subject to a 21 day notification period to the University of Manchester (Jodrell Bank) of the intention to grant planning permission.

In addition it is recommended that the wording set out above under Housing is removed from the 106 Section. Finally Members may want to consider whether a boundary hedge should be provided adjoining no. 6, 8 and 12 Chelford Road.