

SOUTHERN PLANNING COMMITTEE – 8th August 2018

UPDATE TO AGENDA

APPLICATION NO.

18/1250N

LOCATION

Land to the rear of Oakleaf Close, Shavington, Crewe, CW2 5SF

UPDATE PREPARED

3rd August 2018

The Agent has provided revised drawings showing 5 affordable dwellings and amended house types.

Affordable Housing

The policy is now being met with 5 Affordable Dwellings in terms of the fundamental provision provided on site i.e. 30% of 15 units. However no Affordable Housing Scheme has been submitted detailing the tenure split for the affordable dwellings. All the units offered are also 3 bedroom units which fails to deliver a scheme to meet local housing need. The Strategic Housing Manager requires at least one of the bungalows to be a 2 bed unit

As such the Strategic Housing objection remains.

Housing Mix

Paragraph 61 of the Framework states that ‘the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes’.

Policy SC 4 (Residential Mix) of the Local Plan requires that developments provide an appropriate mix of housing (however this does not specify a mix).

In terms of Open Market Houses (OMH) the proposed development includes 6 x 4 bed homes, 4 x 3 bed homes. The submission documents do not include any information demonstrating how the proposal will be capable of meeting, and adapting to, the long term needs of the borough’s older residents as required by Policy SC 4.

The affordable housing mix comprises 5 x 3 bed homes. It is considered that this mix is not sufficient to meet Policy SC 5. No 1 bed or 2 bed homes have

been proposed and the development would include large, 3 and 4 bed dwellings that are not considered suitable in terms of the housing mix.

Amenity

Policy BE.1 (Amenity) of the Local Plan advises that new development should not be permitted if it is deemed to have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity in terms of overlooking, visual intrusion or noise and disturbance. Furthermore, the level of private amenity space and the separation distances are a material consideration as detailed within the Supplementary Planning Document on Development on Backland and Gardens (The SPD).

The SPD states that there should ideally be a distance of 21m between principal elevations and 13.5 m between a principal elevation with windows to habitable rooms and blank elevation in order to maintain an adequate standard of privacy and amenity between residential properties. The SPD sets out that the dwelling should have no less than 50 m² of private amenity space.

It should also be noted that the recently adopted Cheshire East Design Guide SPD also includes reference to separation distances and states that separation distances should be seen as a guide rather than a hard and fast rule. Figure 11:13 of the Design Guide identifies the following separation distances;

21 metres for typical rear separation distance
18 metres for typical frontage separation distance
12 metres for reduced frontage separation distance (minimum)

In terms of the surrounding residential properties, the main properties affected are those to the east which front onto Chestnut Avenue and the dwellings at the end of Oakleaf Close.

At the nearest point the new dwellings (namely Plots 6 and 7) would face the rear of No. 16, 18 and 20, Chestnut Avenue with a separation distance of 32 m. The proposed site plan shows that the proposed dwellings to the south of the site would have a rear garden depth of between 4.9 – 12.0 metres. The separation distance exceeds the separation distance of 21 metres between principle elevation as set out in the SPD on Development on Backland and Gardens. The impact upon the properties which front Chestnut Avenue is therefore considered to be acceptable.

To the east the proposed access would pass between the recent development at Oakleaf Close. This relationship is considered to be acceptable and the scale of the development would not raise any significant noise and disturbance issues.

To the west of the application site is an area of land that has planning permission for residential development. At the time of the planning officer's

site visit this development had not been started. The approved site plan shows the nearest dwellings to be over 30 m from the rear elevations of the proposed dwellings.

The rear elevation of No. 4, Oakleaf Close would face the side elevation of Plot 6 with a separation distance of approximately 18 m.

The Environmental Health Officer has requested conditions in relation to dust control, piling, construction management plan, electric vehicle infrastructure, contaminated land, soil importation, travel pack provision, low emission boilers and informatives in relation to contaminated land and hours of operation.

As such it is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact upon adjacent residential amenity through loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact.

Design

The importance of securing high quality design is specified within the NPPF and paragraph 124 states that:

“The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”

It is noted that the Design Guide checklist has not been completed by the Agent. The planning officer requested this information and it has not been provided at the time of report writing.

Connections

Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones; whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?

The existing boundary to the north includes a drainage channel with some mature tree cover to the northern, western and southern boundaries. These features would be respected and would be retained as part of the proposed development which would sit comfortably within the site.

Facilities and services

Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?

Shavington provides a range of services and facilities to meet the needs of local people including those living in nearby settlements. Shavington is identified as a local service centre in the CELPS.

Public transport

Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?

There are bus stops close to the application site and footpath links along Crewe Road.

Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

5 affordable units (all 3 beds) have been provided but no details of the tenure split has been provided. 3 units should be Affordable/Social rent and 2 units as Intermediate tenure. Whilst this could be secure through a S106 Agreement, it does not address the need for a minimum of 1 no 2 bed bungalow, required to address the identified local housing need as identified in the SHLAA

The housing mix comprises only 3 and 4 bed homes. As such the affordable housing put forward fails to address identified needs. This is a reason for refusal

Character

Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?

The submission does not include an assessment against the Cheshire East Design Guide.

The proposed development would comprise house types including two-storey dwellings and bungalows. The dwellings within the vicinity of the site are a mix of designs including two-storey. The scale is considered to be acceptable on this site.

The surrounding dwellings have largely pitched roofs but there are some properties with hipped roofs located along Chestnut Avenue. The dwellings in the locality of the site include a number of design features such as projecting gables (with timber infill details), bay windows, window header and sill details (stone, brick, arched and flat-stopped), brick banding (red brick and decorative brick), ridge tile detailing, gable finials, dormer roofs and chimneys. The materials in the locality are largely red brick and rendered with slate and tiled roofs.

The proposed development would include projecting gables and bay windows (some with render infill), the dormer windows on house types 3 and 4 would be positioned to the front elevation would be of a small scale and would sit within the roof slope and there would also be window heads and cills to the windows on the site.

The application site is located on the fringe of Shavington and on the edge of the countryside with open pasture land to the north. The dwellings along the

northern boundary should reflect this and it is considered that the development should account for this relationship. The proposed site plan show gardens backing onto the open land to the north and this is a poor relationship. It is considered that the application site appears over engineered and that there is a lack of landscaping and green frontages with garaging and car parking dominating.

The design of the dwellings are considered to be of a standard and generic design that are not particularly engaging. For example, Plots 9 and 10 include large, blank gable elevations that are close to the pavement and which would be unattractive when viewed from Oakleaf Close.

It is considered that the design approach does not achieve a sense of place and that the proposed development would not enhance the quality, distinctiveness and character of this part of Shavington. In this respect it is considered that the proposal does not comply with the Residential Design Guide

Working with the site and its context

Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including watercourses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?

The features on site are the trees and hedgerows which are considered in other sections of this report. The majority of the trees would be retained to the boundaries of the site. The drainage channel would be retained to the north boundary on the site.

Creating well defined streets and spaces

Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?

The proposed development has active frontages facing inwards and the development will not be readily visible from Crewe Road or Chestnut Avenue. It is considered that this test has been met.

Car parking

Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?

The proposed car-parking would be located largely at the front of dwellings with the house types including an integral garage. It is considered that this dominates the street scene. Little effort has been made to integrate parking solutions away from street frontages.

Public and private spaces

Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?

The proposed development would not sit comfortably within the site. Numerous front gardens are dominated by large double garages.

External storage and amenity space

Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?

The submitted plan does not show this detail, however, it is considered that this could be controlled via condition should the application be approved.

Design Conclusion

On the basis of the above assessment it is considered that the proposed development represents an unacceptable design solution.

The reasons for refusal have therefore been updated as detailed below.

Ecology

Further Ecology information has been received on 6th August 2018 and a verbal update will be provide for Committee.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed development is unacceptable as the application site lies within the Open Countryside which should be protected for its own sake and where there is a presumption against inappropriate forms of new development. The proposal does not meet any of the exceptions contained with Policy PG 6 (Open Countryside). The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policy PG 6 (Open Countryside) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy and the guidance contained with the NPPF.

2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development would contribute to the erosion of the Green Gap between the built up areas of Shavington and Crewe which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. The development is therefore contrary to Policy PG5 (Strategic Green Gaps) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy and Policy NE4 (Green Gaps) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 and the guidance contained with the NPPF.

3. The Local Planning Authority considers that the layout and design of the proposed development, by virtue of the relationship with the edge of the countryside and its detailed design and layout, does not make a positive contribution to the surrounding area and fails to achieve a sense of place that would enhance the distinctiveness and character of the area. This is contrary to Policy SE 1 (Design) of the Cheshire East

Local Plan, the Cheshire East Residential Design Guide and the guidance contained with the NPPF.

4. The Local Planning Authority considers that whilst 30% affordable housing is proposed, all the affordable units are 3 bedroomed. This fails to address the identified local housing need for a range of housing sizes for affordable provision. In addition, no Affordable Housing Scheme has been provided and as a result it is considered that the proposal would fail to address identified local housing need and fails to create a sustainable, inclusive, mixed and balanced community, contrary to Policy SC 5 (Affordable Homes) of the Cheshire East Local Plan and the guidance contained with the NPPF.

6. The Local Planning Authority considers that insufficient information has been submitted to inform the impact of the proposed development on any protected species present (specifically the impact on Great Crested Newts, bats, water voles and bluebells) as well as the impact on grassland and hedgerow habitats. The development is therefore contrary to Policy SE 3 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, Policies NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats) and NE.9 (Protected Species) of the Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 and the guidance contained with the NPPF.

In order to give proper effect to the Board's/Committee's intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice.

Should the application be subject to an appeal, the following Heads of Terms should be secured as part of any S106 Agreement:

- 1. A scheme for the provision of 30% affordable housing – 65% to be provided as social rent/affordable rent with 35% intermediate tenure. The scheme shall include:**
 - The numbers, type, tenure and location on the site of the affordable housing provision**
 - The timing of the construction of the affordable housing and its phasing in relation to the occupancy of the market housing**
 - The arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing to an affordable housing provider or the management of the affordable housing if no Registered Social Landlord is involved**
 - The arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing; and**
 - The occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of occupiers of the affordable housing and the means by which such occupancy criteria shall be enforced.**
- 2. A contribution of £32,539.00 to Primary School Provision**
- 3. Open Space/wildflower garden to be maintained by a private management company**

