

Application No: 20/3612M

Location: FERNLEA, STANLEY ROAD, KNUTSFORD, CHESHIRE, WA16 0DJ

Proposal: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of one detached and a pair of semi-detached dwellings

Applicant: PHIL THEWLIS, PLT PROPERTIES LTD

Expiry Date: 06-Nov-2020

SUMMARY

The application site lies within a predominantly residential area of Knutsford. Within such locations, development is deemed to be acceptable in principle, subject to its adherence with all relevant policies of the development plan.

It is deemed that the revised design of the scheme compared to the previous scheme refused by committee responds well to its prominent location within the streetscene providing an attractive feature which also respects the character of Knutsford. The revisions to the scheme, most notably the reduction in the scale, mass and bulk of the development, are deemed to overcome the previous reasons for refusal.

The carefully considered positioning of obscure glazing and obscure green wall screens to ensure that the development would not significantly injure the amenities of the occupiers of nearby dwellings.

The development creates no concerns in relation to; highways, landscape, trees, ecology or flood risk, subject to conditions, where deemed necessary.

For the above reasons, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to conditions

REASON FOR REFERRAL:

This application has been called in to Northern Planning Committee by Councillor Abel, for the following reasons;

'The Proposal does not fit with Knutsford Neighbourhood plan.'

It is not in keeping with the area it is located

It is over development

*A very similar plan was rejected by planning relatively recently.
It reduces the number of Bungalows'*

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

This application relates to a residential plot comprising of a detached bungalow and detached garage and associated garden, located on a prominent corner location between Stanley Road and an access to Stanley Road Trading Estate within a predominantly residential part of Knutsford.

There are two Conservation Areas within close proximity of the site comprising of the Town Centre Conservation Area on the opposite side of the road to the east of Libris Place and St John's Conservation Area on the opposite side of St John's Road.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Full Planning permission is sought to demolish a detached bungalow and associated ancillary outbuilding and erect 3 dwellings.

The 3 dwellings would comprise of a pair of 3-storey, semi-detached, 3-bed properties and a single, detached 2-storey, 3-bed unit.

The application is a re-submission of planning application 19/2254M, which was refused by Cheshire East Council's Northern Planning Committee on the 17th June 2020, for the following reasons;

- 1. The proposed dwellings would result in an overdevelopment of the site by virtue of their scale and form and would be overbearing to, and out of character with, the adjoining single storey properties on St Johns Road. The development would therefore be contrary to policies SD2 and SE1 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy and policies D1, D2 and H2 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.*

This refusal has been appealed and the appeal process is ongoing.

This re-submission seeks to address the reasons for refusal by making a number of changes including;

- Re-designing the dwelling proposed on Plot 1. Main changes of the re-design compared to the refused scheme are;
- a small reduction in the amount of 2-storey development proposed. The refused scheme was all 2-storey, but included a taller, feature element on the corner between Stanley Road and St Johns Road. The revised scheme reduces the extent of this taller, feature element as well as removing a first-floor section on boundary with Tynedale
- a set-back of the development footprint by approximately 0.6 metres further away from the Stanley Road frontage, and;

- a set-forward of the development by between approximately 0.6 and 0.8 metres further towards the corner of Stanley Road and St John's Road
- Re-configuration of fenestration and associated obscure glazing, including provision of a 'green vertical wall' on side elevation of projecting window, facing Tynedale
- Re-designing the dwellings proposed on Plots 2 and 3 (pair of semi-detached). Main changes compared to the refused scheme include;
- Re-configuration of the footprint of the block (when read as a whole) so the built form it is pulled further away from the corner junction of Stanley Road and the road down to the Stanley Road Trading Estate by approximately 4.5 metres (in order to create a larger private garden space for plot 3). This has been achieved by making a small reduction in the amount of built form proposed, but also by moving the block further to the south-west towards the back garden of Tynedale (by approximately 1 metre) and further towards Stanley Road (by approximately 0.8 metres)
- Re-design of the appearance of the principal elevation so instead of previously including 3, slight forward projecting 3-storey, flat-roofed elements, now only includes 2 such projections
- Re-design of the appearance of the rear elevation so instead of previously including 3, slight forward projecting 3-storey, flat-roofed elements, now only includes 2 such projections. Also change in the balcony arrangement from previously including x2 second floor balconies to now including x2 first floor balconies on the rear elevation facing the trading estate road.
- Inclusion of an additional second floor balcony on principal/side elevation corner closest to the dwelling proposed on plot 1
- internally re-configured in an attempt to reduce the extent of required obscure glazing
- Re-configuration of fenestration and associated obscure glazing
- The suggested materials palette has changed so more brick has been included instead of stone

RELEVANT HISTORY

19/2254M - Construction of 3 dwellings following demolition – Refused 17th June 2020 – **Currently at appeal**

17/6144M - Construction of 3 detached dwellings following demolition of the existing dwelling – Withdrawn 10th September 2018

05/1118P - Retention of Amendments To Applications 04/2398p And 05/0378p Including Raising Height Of Garage To 5.6m, Alterations To Fenestration And Raising Of Boundary Wall To 2.1m – Approved 19th July 2005

05/0378P – New Boundary Wall – Approved 13th April 2005

04/2395P - Erection of Detached Garage And 2 Metre High Boundary Wall – Approved 18th November 2004

03/2099P - Demolition of Bungalow and Erection Of 1 Detached Dwelling And 4 Town Houses (Resubmission Of Application 03/0501p) – Refused 22nd October 2003 – Appeal Dismissed 26th August 2004

03/0501P - Demolition of Detached Bungalow and Erection Of 1 No Detached Dwelling And 4 No Terraced Dwellings – Refused 16th April 2003

01/2843P - Demolition of Existing Bungalow & Erection of New Dwellinghouse & 7 Flats In A Two/Three-Storey Block – Refused 23rd January 2002

01/2305P - Demolition of Existing Bungalow & Erection of New Dwellinghouse & 7 Flats In A Two/Three-Storey Block – Withdrawn 30th October 2001

72137P - Ground Floor Extensions and New Access – 3rd November 1992

ADOPTED PLANNING POLICIES

The aspects of the Cheshire East Council Development Plan that are relevant to the application proposals include; the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan, the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (MBLP). The relevant policies within that document are detailed below;

Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan (Made 14th March 2019)

C4 – Utilities, D1 – The Knutsford Design Guide, D2 – Local Distinctiveness, D3 – Landscape in New Development, D4 – Sustainable Residential Design, E5 – Pollution, HW1 – Health and Wellbeing, HE1 – Landmarks, Views, Vistas and Gateways, HE2 – Heritage Assets, HE3 – Conservation Areas, H1 – Housing mix, H2 – Previously Developed and Infill Development, T3 – Public Transport, T4 – Parking

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

MP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development, PG1 - Overall Development Strategy, PG2 – Settlement Hierarchy, PG7 - Spatial Distribution of Development, SD1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East, SD2 - Sustainable Development Principles, IN1 – Infrastructure, IN2 - Developer contributions, SC3 – Health and Wellbeing, SC4 - Residential Mix, SE1 – Design, SE2 - Efficient use of land, SE3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity, SE4 - The Landscape, SE5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland, SE6 - Green Infrastructure, SE7 – This Historic Environment, SE9 - Energy Efficient Development, SE12 - Pollution, Land contamination and

land instability, SE13 - Flood risk and water management and CO1 - Sustainable Travel and Transport

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (MBLP)

DC3 - Protection of the amenities of nearby residential properties, DC6 - Circulation and Access, DC8 – Landscaping, DC9 - Tree Protection, DC13 & DC14 – Noise, PDC38 - Guidelines for space, light and privacy for housing development

Other material planning policy considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Head of Strategic Infrastructure (HSI) – No objections, subject to an informative regarding entering into a S184 Agreement (related to new vehicle crossing over adopted footway/highway)

Environmental Protection (Cheshire East Council) – No objections, subject to the following condition/s; implementation of noise mitigation measures, provision of electric charging points, provision of low emission gas boilers, submission/approval of a soil verification report (if soil is imported onto site) and that works should stop should contamination be identified.

United Utilities – No objections, subject to a number of conditions including; that foul and surface water be drained on separate systems, the prior submission/approval of a surface water drainage scheme and the prior submission/approval of a sustainable management and maintenance plan of drainage measures.

Natural England – No objections

Network Rail – No objections, subject to informatives including; that noise and vibration mitigation measures be considered for future residents, that a BAPA (Basic Asset Protection Agreement) will need to be agreed between the developer and Network Rail due to proximity of site to railway and that any sub-station details need to be submitted to Network Rail.

Knutsford Town Council – Object to the proposed development for the following reasons;

- 'a) The amended proposal continues represent an overdevelopment of the site leading to unacceptable relationships within and adjoining the site*
- b) The materials palette chosen are not sympathetic to the character of the adjacent Conservation Areas.'*

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

Neighbour notification letters were sent to all adjacent properties. In response, comments were received from 3 interested parties, including the South Knutsford Residents Group. The main areas of concern raised included;

- Principle
 - SHLAA determined site was only suitable for 2 dwellings
 - Loss of single-storey dwelling/bungalow house type
 - Previous reasons for refusal and dismissed appeals all consistent in their reasons; harm to character and appearance of area, negative impact of neighbours, overdevelopment of site
 - Not noticeably changed from refused application
- Heritage and Design
 - Overdevelopment of site
 - Character comprises of bungalows & site falls within a group identified in the South West Residential Character Assessment in the KNP
 - Height, scale and form out of character and overbearing (detached 2-storey and semi-detached 3-storey)
 - Proposal would blur distinctiveness of 2 different sides of Stanley Road
 - Harm to 2 adjacent Conservation Areas
 - future pressures for other taller development
- Highway safety
 - Access/turning safety
 - lack of parking provision for visitors
 - on-street parking concerns
 - underground parking space sizes not to standard
- Amenity
 - Overlooking/loss of privacy for occupiers of No.1 St John's Road (Tynedale) and Libris place – infringement of separation standards for 3-storey development
 - Loss of light and overbearing impact upon Tynedale as development proposed now closer (800mm) than refused scheme
 - Insufficient garden sizes, garden size for plot 1 not appropriate for 3 bedroomed dwelling
 - amount of internal space per dwelling is small (space standards)
 - lack of required obscure glazing
- Drainage
 - Provision not clear, no drainage plan submitted or United Utilities comments
- Trees & Landscape

- Trees have been removed
 - Tree canopy is wrong compared to refused scheme
 - Lack of tree information contained within the application
 - Future pressures to fell existing trees / tree loss concerns
 - Common hedge between site and Tynedale will need to be cut-back (or thinned) to accommodate development which could impact its future health
- Procedural matters
 - no dimensions on drawings
 - no roof plan submitted
 - Stanley Road dimensions incorrect
 - distances shown incorrect (between plot 2 and Tynedale)
 - Have owners of commercial estate been notified?
 - Proposed solar panels are not shown on the plans
 - Window positions do not tie-up between floor plans and elevations
 - No detail of referred to source heat pumps
 - Errors within submitted Design and Access statement
 - No details submitted of water re-cycling
 - Levels details not shown e.g. site at higher position to highway to rear of site
 - Scale of drawings not acceptable/not to required scale for validation purposes
 - CGI of development from towncentre is misleading because incorrect (no reason given as to why)
 - Areas listed on plan are incorrect
 - Possible ownership issue with CEC – green slope to rear of site
 - not clear if DDA has been addressed
 - landscaping proposed outside of red edge

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Procedural matters

Various Officer site visits have been undertaken, with the most recent being on the 7th October 2020.

This application is considered in the context of the previously refused scheme (19/2254M), which was refused by Northern Planning Committee on the 17th June 2020 due to matters of design. This report considers whether this revised, re-submitted scheme overcomes the previous reasons for refusal.

Principle of Development

The application site is located within a predominantly residential part of Knutsford, where there is a general presumption in favour of development, just outside of the defined Town Centre as determined by the MBLP as well as being just outside the 'Central Zone' as defined by the Knutsford NP.

Policy PG2 of the CELPS identifies Knutsford as a Key Service Centre. Within such locations, development of a scale, location and nature that recognises and reinforces the distinctiveness of the town will be supported to maintain the vitality and viability.

Policy H1 of the Knutsford NP supports residential development on brownfield sites, (which the application site represents), which primarily seeks to deliver specific types of housing. This includes; 2/3 bedroom family housing and housing for older people.

The floor plans submitted with the application show that the proposals would each be 3-bed units. There is no reason why these units would not be suitable for the elderly, unless they have mobility issues. The policy also requires the applicant to demonstrate how they have delivered a mix of housing which responds to the site's specific location. In response, although all units are 3-bed units, all 3 dwellings would be suitable for young professionals, families or retired couples given the open plan layout and the site's sustainable location within walking distance to the local shops, restaurants, bars, parks, schools and very close to major transport links. These points are agreed with.

Policy H2 of the Knutsford NP states that new housing on previously developed land within the urban area should be approved, where such schemes are able to meet a number of design criteria including;

- Ensuring the proposed scheme has a plot ratio, density, scale and height which is commensurate with the surrounding townscape
- Preservation of vegetation (paraphrased)
- Provision of on-site parking (in accordance with Policy T4) including bin storage, which does not dominate the streetscene.

The previous reason scheme was refused partly as it was deemed contrary to this policy due to its design. In response, the applicant has sought to address the conflict with this policy by reducing the scale of the development. The main reductions in scale are a reduction in the footprint (and associated scale and bulk) of the semi-detached dwellings proposed on plots 2 and 3 and a reduction in the extent of taller, two-storey development proposed on plot 1. It is deemed that for these reasons, this revised proposal overcomes these concerns.

Although the proposal involves an increase in mass and scale of built form on the site compared to the existing situation as per the previous scheme, it is considered that this re-submission reduces the extent of this in a sensitive way, when compared to the refused scheme. For these reasons, it is deemed that the proposal meets the requirements of Policy H2 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan. The principle of development is considered to be acceptable.

Design

The application site is located in a prominent location and as such, it is deemed that design is a key element of the assessment, and relevant to the previous reason for refusal.

In addition to the above design policies within the Knutsford NP for new residential development such as that proposed, Policy SE1 (Design) of the CELPS advises that the proposal should achieve a high standard of design and; wherever possible, enhance the built

environment. It should also respect the pattern, character and form of the surroundings. Policy SD2 of the CELPS states that development should contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or re-enforcing local distinctiveness in terms of; height, scale, form, grouping, choice of materials, design features, massing and impact upon the streetscene. These policies are supplemented by the Cheshire East Design Guide SPD.

Policy D1 of the Knutsford NP states that new development of all types and scales should be of a high design quality and complement its surroundings. Design solutions must positively respond to localised conditions, landscape and built vernacular. All planning applications must demonstrate how schemes comply with the Design Guide or justify why they do not. Policy D2 of the Knutsford NP states that all development should respond to the local townscape character.

The previous application was refused because it was deemed contrary to all of the above design policies because of its; overdevelopment, scale, form and impact upon local character.

As part of the previous application, the Council's Urban Design Officer considered the proposals against the criteria of the Council's Cheshire East Design Guide SPD and concluded the scheme was acceptable in all respects, subject to a materials condition.

However, in order to try and overcome the Committee's previous concerns, the scale, mass and bulk of the development has been reduced, which in turn has resulted in more private garden space being provided, the development has been pulled further away from one of its more prominent positions within the streetscenes (on the corner between Stanley Road and the road down to the Trading Estate) and the proposed obscure glazing has been reconfigured.

Within the Knutsford Design Guide, there is a section that states that the development of gardens within the town shall only be supported in exceptional circumstances and should subsequently meet a set of design criteria. Whilst it is accepted that part of this development would be on garden land, the revised scheme would result in just approximately 9% more of the plot is being developed (footprint) compared to the existing built form that is to be demolished. In total, that would only account for 31% of the entire plot, with the remainder to be retained as garden land. Furthermore, this element of the Design Guide is only one part of many. The design of the scheme, in the round, is deemed to meet the vast majority of the requirements of the Knutsford Design Guide as well as the Cheshire East Design Guide. The scheme is considered to positively respond to the site's characteristics.

It is considered that these changes do address the reasons for refusal relating to; overdevelopment, scale, form and impact upon local character and would adhere with the relevant design policies of the Development Plan.

Heritage

The application site lies within relative close proximity to two Conservation Areas. These comprise of St John's Conservation Area, located approximately 8 metres to the west and the Town Centre Conservation Area, located approximately 11-12 metres to the north-east, both on the opposing sides of highways. There is also a Grade II listed building 27 metres to the

north-east within the Town Centre Conservation Area. As such, the impact of the proposed development upon the setting of these heritage assets is a consideration.

Policy SE7 of the CELPS states that development should seek to avoid harm to heritage assets including their setting, and make a positive contribution to the character of Cheshire East's historic and built environment. Policy HE1 of the Knutsford NP seeks to protect Landmarks, views, vistas and gateways. Policy HE2 seeks to conserve and protect heritage assets. Policy HE3 refers to Conservation Areas and the impact of development upon these.

The Council's Heritage Officer was involved in detailed discussions helping to arrive at the previous set of proposals determined as part of 19/2254M. In response to these, the Heritage Officer advised that although the proposal would be larger and more prominent adjacent to the Town Centre Conservation Area, it was her view that the proposal would relate in form and mass to the library/apartment development on the other side of Stanley Road. With carefully detailed elevations and complementary materials the Council's Heritage Officer advised that this could result in the creation of a gateway to St John's Conservation Area, creating a better form of urban design in an area which has little architectural or historic character currently. The Heritage Officer went on to state that she agreed with the Council's Urban Design Officer that this scheme is a good example of contemporary design.

Part of the concern of the Inspector back in 2004 was the impact of the dominance and visually intrusive nature of the development when viewed from the adjacent Conservation Areas. This was not a concern of the Council's Heritage Officer as part of the recently refused application. The 2004 scheme was more prominent and intrusive largely because of its position at the front of the site, whereas most of the development in this instance is pushed back towards the rear of the site.

On the above basis, the Council's Heritage Officer considered that the previously refused scheme (19/2254M) would improve the neutral impact of the existing bungalow on this unusual corner plot and would create a new positive character which would not harm the setting of the adjacent Conservation Areas. Given the reduced scale of development now proposed within the current application, and the absence of any heritage impact issues within the previous reason for refusal, there is no reason why similar conclusions cannot once again be drawn.

The proposals are therefore deemed to adhere with Policy SE7 of the CELPS and policies HE1 to HE3 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

Amenity

Policy DC3 of the MBLP states that development should not significantly injure the amenities of adjoining or nearby residential property or sensitive uses due to (amongst other considerations); loss of privacy, sunlight and daylight, an overbearing impact and environmental considerations.

Policy DC38 sets out separation standards as does the Cheshire East Design Guide. The separation standards within Policy DC38 of the MBLP state that for 3-storey properties, there should be a separation distance of 28 metres between habitable rooms and 16.5 metres where only one of the buildings impacted includes habitable rooms. However, the more up-to-

date Cheshire East Design Guide SPD refers to the standards within the emerging SADPD, which sets a minimum standard separation distance for 3-storey development of 20 metres (front-to-front) and also encourages the *'use innovative, design led approaches to ensure privacy without slavishly responding to the minimum distances approach'*

Policy SE1 of the CELPS states that development should ensure an appropriate level of privacy for new and existing residential properties.

The closest neighbouring dwellings to the proposed development would be the occupiers of Tynedale a bungalow on the adjoining plot to the south-west and the occupiers of Libris Place, a part two-storey apartment block (with an internal second floor mezzanine level) on the opposite side of Stanley Road.

Tynedale

Tynedale is a detached bungalow on St John's Road. Its side elevation would lie parallel and 4.5 metres away from the dwelling proposed on plot 1. There is a tall hedgerow between the sites at this juncture and within the relevant side elevation of Tynedale is a kitchen window (also served by another opening on the rear elevation), 2 doors and 2 roof lights.

Four openings are proposed on the proposed elevation closest to Tynedale (Plot 1). All four would be obscurely glazed as shown on updated plans received. As such, subject to the obscure glazing being conditioned, no privacy issues for this neighbour are considered to occur as a result of the proposals with regards to this elevation.

The occupiers of Tynedale have raised concerns about overlooking into their private amenity space from the openings within the flank and front elevation of plot 2. The flank elevation would be between 7.5 and 10 metres away from the rear portion of the garden of Tynedale.

To rectify this, the applicant has agreed to obscurely glaze all of the first and second floor windows on this elevation and this is shown on updated plans. Subject to these being conditioned accordingly, it is deemed that this is an effective solution. In addition, a privacy screen has been introduced to the balcony facing Tynedale on the front/flank corner at second floor level. This too, is deemed to represent an effective solution to overlooking to this side. It is considered that the other windows on the principal elevation of plot 2 are sufficiently offset or obscured from Tynedale so not to result in a loss of privacy. As such, no privacy concerns are deemed apparent upon the occupiers of Tynedale from the dwelling proposed on plot 2.

A daylight and sunlight report accompanies the application. It states that although 2 openings (a window and a glazed door) on Tynedale would be detrimentally impacted in terms of loss of light by the dwelling proposed on plot 1, which would serve a kitchen/diner, the room impacted benefits from light from another opening so any loss of light would be 'minor'. Given that none of the openings within the side elevation of Tynedale represent sole windows to principal habitable rooms, no significant concerns with regards to loss of light or visual intrusion are envisaged.

It should be noted that as part of the dismissed appeal for 4 townhouses on this site back in 2004, where a two-storey dwelling was proposed in a similar location than that currently proposed, the Inspector found no amenity issues in relation to Tynedale.

Libris Place

The principal elevations of the dwellings sought on plots 2 and 3 which form the proposed semi-detached units would be between 13.8 metres and 27.6 metres away from the principal elevation of Libris Place. This variation in distances is because these semi-detached units proposed would be erected at an angle to Libris Place opposite. The closest part of the dwelling proposed on plot 1, the corner of the detached unit, would be approximately 14.5 metres away from the principal elevation of Libris Place.

Privacy

No concerns are raised about the proposed ground-floor accommodation of any of the 3 dwellings sought upon the occupiers of Libris Place, as this accommodation would be predominantly screened by existing and/or proposed boundary treatment.

In consideration of the dwellings proposed on plots 2 and 3, at first-floor level, the layout proposed seeks the inclusion of 6 openings facing in the direction of Libris Place (although offset). Working from the closest to the furthest openings to Libris Place, these would comprise of; x2 obscurely glazed windows which would be between 16.3m and 17.8m from Libris Place and x4 clear windows between 20m and 26m from Libris Place. These clear windows are deemed sufficiently far enough away and sufficiently offset so not to result in privacy concerns.

At second floor, 8 openings are also proposed facing Stanley Road and subsequently Libris Place. Balconies with 1.7 metre-tall privacy green walls on their outside edges are proposed forward of 4 of the 8 openings.

Working from the closest to the furthest openings to Libris Place, these would comprise of; a screened balcony with bedroom window/door behind, x2 obscurely glazed windows to an ensuite and bathroom, x2 screened balconies with bedroom windows/doors behind, x2 clear windows to bedrooms located approximately 24m plus from Libris Place and a shower room window screened by a balcony screen. Due to the obscure glazing and privacy walls combined with the generous distance between the non screened/obscured openings and Libris Place, no loss of privacy concerns are noted to be created from this elevation.

For the above reasons, it is not deemed that the dwellings proposed on plots 2 and 3 would significantly injure the privacy of the occupiers of Libris Place.

In terms of the dwelling proposed on plot 1, at first-floor level, the layout proposed seeks the inclusion of 6 openings facing in the direction of Libris Place (although offset). Working from the closest to the furthest openings to Libris Place, at first-floor level, these would comprise of; an obscured bedroom window (with other clear element facing towards Booths Supermarket), an obscured window to a laundry room and a clear bedroom window. As the closest 2 windows would be obscurely glazed and the furthest away bedroom window would

be approximately 20 metres away from Libris Place, it is not considered that the dwelling proposed on Plot 1 would significantly injure the privacy of the occupiers of Libris Place.

Loss of privacy to the occupiers of Libris Place was a concern of the Inspector on the 2004 appeal. However, this proposal differs as previously explained as the application proposals are set-back within the site whereas this historical proposals were forward of the site, closer to Libris Place.

Light

The application units would be located to the south of Libris Place, therefore, there is a potential for the development to impact upon the light of the occupiers of this neighbouring block mostly in the winter months. In response to this concern, the applicant commissioned a daylight and sunlight survey. This concluded that none of the proposed development would breach the light standards as set out in the widely used BRE Report '*Site Layout Planning For Daylight and Sunlight – A guide to good practice*'. As such, there are no concerns regarding a loss of light as a result of the development upon Libris Place.

Loss of light was not a concern of the Inspector as part of the 2004 application which was closer to Libris Place than the current application proposals.

Visual obtrusion

Although 3-storeys in height, it is deemed that the flat-roofed nature of the building comprising of plots 2 and 3, with a maximum height of 8.7 metres, a typical height of a two-storey dwelling, in conjunction with the off-set relationship to Libris Place, ensures that the occupiers of Libris Place should not be detrimentally impacted in relation to visual obtrusion.

Again in 2004, the Inspector did not raise visual obtrusion as a concern.

Amenity of future occupiers

Each of the 3 dwellings shall be afforded a private amenity area (garden space), sufficient for them to undertake normal activities such as sitting outside, having a BBQ or hanging out washing. The garden size of plot 3 has been increased following concerns raised as part of the last submission, although not refused on these grounds.

In terms of loss of privacy, light or visual obtrusion, clearly plots 2 and 3 would not directly impact each other. The south-east elevation of plot 1 has the potential to result in a loss of privacy for the future occupiers of Plot 2, in terms of their private amenity space. However, as the openings proposed on Plot 1 on this elevation are at ground floor level only, which would be screened by boundary treatment, no such concerns are deemed apparent.

Environmental considerations

The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has reviewed the submission and advised that they have no objections, subject to the following condition/s; implementation of noise mitigation measures, provision of electric charging points, provision of low emission gas

boilers, submission/approval of a soil verification report (if soil is imported onto site) and that works should stop should contamination be identified.

As a result of the above reasons, subject to the suggested conditions (minus the gas boiler condition as it is not deemed to meet the conditions tests), it is considered that the application proposals would adhere with Policy DC3 and DC38 of the MBLP and the amenity aspects of Policy SE1 of the CELPS.

Highways

The application proposes to retain the existing access and create a new, second access 6 metres further to the west to serve the dwelling proposed on plot 1. Two off-street parking spaces are proposed for each of the 3 dwellings as well as turning space.

The Council's Head of Strategic Infrastructure (HSI), has reviewed the proposals and advised that there are no material highway implications associated with the above proposal as; the proposal for access to each of the dwellings is acceptable; and; there is sufficient space within each plot for off-street parking provision to be in accordance with CEC parking standards.

As such, no highways objections are raised subject to an informative regarding entering into a S184 Agreement for the new vehicular crossing. Subject to this condition and a condition to implement the access, the proposal is deemed to adhere with the requirements of Policy DC6 of the MBLP.

Landscape & Trees

The site falls within a predominantly residential area of Knutsford and relates to an existing residential plot. The existing site has a brick wall on the Stanley Road frontage and the rear, facing the access road down to the trading estate. The northern corner and along St John's Avenue is hedgerow.

The application seeks to retain the majority of this existing arrangement and replace to match where necessary. It is not considered that the proposal would result in any wider landscape considerations subject to a condition for the specific detail of the boundary treatment to be agreed.

In relation to trees, the Council's Tree Officer has advised that no objections are raised, subject to a number of conditions including; that the development proceed in accordance with the tree protection measures identified in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan report and Tree protection plan; that a detailed Method Statement for the demolition of the boundary wall and construction of plots 2 and 3 in relation to trees T9 and T10 be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development and; the submission/approval of a detailed service and foul and surface water drainage layout.

Subject to the conditions as suggested, the application is deemed to adhere with the relevant landscape and tree policies of the development plan.

The concerns raised about the health of the hedgerow on the common boundary between the application site and Tynedale are not material considerations, but a civil matter.

Ecology

The application site falls within Natural England's SSSI impact Zone (Tatton Meres). Natural England have reviewed the proposals and advised that they have no objection to the proposals as they do not consider they will have a significant adverse impact upon this statutory protected site.

The Council's Nature Conservation Officer has advised he has no objections to the proposed development, subject to a number of conditions including; a condition to protect nesting birds, the prior submission/approval of breeding bird and roosting bat features and that the landscaping scheme be updated so the existing hawthorn hedgerow be retained as part of the development.

Subject to these conditions, the proposal is deemed to adhere with Policy SE3 of the CELPS and the ecology policies of the development plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site does not fall within a Flood Risk Zone 2 or 3 and is not of a scale that triggers the requirement of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) or sequential test to accompany/be considered as part of the application. As such, no flood risk concerns are raised and as part of the recent previous application and the Council's Flood Risk Officer has raised no objections. There appears no reason to deviate from this conclusion once again.

In relation to drainage, United Utilities have been consulted and have advised that they have no objections, subject to a number of conditions including; that foul and surface water be drained on separate systems, the prior submission/approval of a surface water drainage scheme and the prior submission/approval of a sustainable management and maintenance plan of drainage measures.

Subject to the above recommended conditions, the application is deemed to adhere with Policy SE13 of the CELPS and the other drainage policies of the development plan.

Other matters

In response to the outstanding objections raised which have not been addressed above;

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

Reference is made to the Cheshire East Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The Cheshire East SHLAA, last produced in 2012, identified sites with the potential for housing, assessed their housing potential and assessed when they are likely to be developed. An objector has stated that when reviewed for the preparation of the SHLAA, the application site was found to be suitable for 2 dwellings and as such, an application for 3 suggests overdevelopment.

In response, paragraph 9 of the Cheshire East Council's SHLAA Summary states that *'The SHLAA does not determine whether any site is acceptable for future housing development; this will be determined through the Local Plan via the Cheshire East Core Strategy, Site Allocations DPDs and also through planning applications assessed against the adopted Development Plan.'*

As detailed within the above assessment, the application proposals for 3 dwellings as sought, is deemed to be acceptable and documents prepared in the formulation of the SHLAA has no bearing on these conclusions.

Procedural matters

There is no requirement for an application to include dimensions on drawings. This is because the plans should be to scale and dimensions can be taken accordingly.

Although no roof plan originally accompanied the application, this has now been submitted and is found to be acceptable.

There dimensions of Stanley Road shown on the submitted appear correct when checked against Council records, contrary to an objector's concerns.

Ownership matters are not a material planning consideration.

Further solar panel details have been provided during the scope of the application and as deemed to be acceptable as have the further details provided relating to the heat pump recovery system and water recycling details.

Landscaping was also originally proposed outside of site edged red. This has been revised to exclude this element.

Conclusions

The application site lies within a predominantly residential area of Knutsford. Within such locations, development is deemed to be acceptable in principle, subject to its adherence with all relevant policies of the development plan.

It is considered that the revised design of the scheme compared to the previous scheme refused by committee responds well to its prominent location within the streetscene providing an attractive feature which also respects the character of Knutsford. The revisions to the scheme, most notably the reduction in the scale, mass and bulk of the development sought are deemed to overcome the previous reasons for refusal.

The carefully considered positioning of obscure glazing and obscure green wall screens to ensure that the development would not significantly injure the amenities of the occupiers of nearby dwellings.

The development creates no concerns in relation to; highways, landscape, trees, ecology or flood risk, subject to conditions, where deemed necessary.

For the above reasons, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Time (3 years)**
- 2. In accordance with approved plans**
- 3. Submission/approval of facing and roofing materials**
- 4. Obscure glazing - Implementation**
- 5. Obscure balcony green wall screens – Implementation**
- 6. Noise mitigation - implementation**
- 7. Electric Vehicle Charging Points**
- 8. Soil verification**
- 9. Works to stop if contamination identified**
- 10. Implementation of access**
- 11. Submission/approval of updated Landscaping Scheme**
- 12. Landscape - implementation**
- 13. Submission/approval of boundary treatment**
- 14. Submission/approval of levels**
- 15. Trees protection – Implementation**
- 16. Submission/approval of Method Statement for the demolition of the boundary wall and construction of plots 2 and 3 in relation to trees T9 and T10**
- 17. Nesting birds**
- 18. Submission/approval of breeding bird and roosting bat features**
- 19. Foul and surface water be drained on separate systems**
- 20. Submission/approval of a foul and surface water drainage scheme**
- 21. Submission/approval of a sustainable management and maintenance plan of drainage measures**
- 22. Removal of PD Rights A-E**

In order to give proper effect to the Northern Committee's intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Acting Head of Planning 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.

