

Application No: 20/3762N

Location: LAND OFF SYDNEY ROAD, CREWE

Proposal: Residential development for 151 new build dwellings & associated works

Applicant: Andrew Taylor, David Wilson Homes/Duchy of Lancaster

Expiry Date: 16-Dec-2020

SUMMARY

The proposal seeks to provide 151 dwellings on a greenfield site off Sydney Road which is allocated under CELPS policy LPS 6 Crewe Green for around 150 dwellings. The principle of residential development on the site has been established. Although the north-western corner of the site is located within the strategic green gap, this will only accommodate POS and consequently maintain openness in accordance with the aims of CELPS Policy PG5.

The proposal provides the required amount of affordable housing with an appropriate mix of housing. The proposal achieves an appropriately designed residential development and its detailed design and layout accords with the overall principles for the development of the site and the CEC Design Guide. It achieves an acceptable relationship with the both character of the locality, without material harm to neighbouring residential amenity, and would provide sufficient amenity for the new occupants.

The proposals would not adversely affect the significance of heritage assets including the Crewe Green Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings nearby. Tree and hedgerow losses have been accepted and would be mitigated in the proposed landscaping of the site and through off-site habitat creation to achieve biodiversity net gain.

The proposed accessed arrangement for the development will not adversely affect highway safety or result in traffic management issues on the local highway network.

Appropriate public open space including a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) will be provided.

The impact on Air quality arising from the proposals and also the impact on the development from traffic noise can be satisfactorily mitigated.

To satisfactorily address the impact on local services/facilities, contributions to education, healthcare provision and indoor/outdoor sport will be secured through a S106 agreement.

On this basis, the proposal is for sustainable development which would bring environmental, economic and social benefits and is therefore considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant policies of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan, and advice contained within the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to s106 agreement and conditions

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application Site (4.52ha) is an undeveloped greenfield site approximately 1.45 km from Crewe Town Centre. The majority of the site is allocated for housing development under policy LPS 6 (Crewe Green) in the CELPS, which allows for the delivery of around 150 new homes. Part of the north-western corner of the site lies within the Crewe/Haslington Strategic Green Gap.

This triangular shaped site lies between Sydney Road to the West, the A534 Haslington Bypass to the east and the Crewe Green roundabout to the south.

The northern boundary is defined by an existing hedgerow beyond which lie open fields within the Strategic Green Gap. A private access road leading to Fields Farm extends along part of the northern boundary which is also a Public Right of Way (Haslington FP41).

To the south, the site fronts onto the Crewe Green Roundabout which was subject to an improvement scheme recently implemented by Cheshire East Council. Crewe Green Conservation Area lies to the south east of the site and is centred on the junction of Crewe Road with Narrow Lane. (B5077).

The front and rear elevations of existing residential properties located on the western side of Sydney Road face towards the western boundary of the site.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for the development of 151 new homes with associated access, public open space, and landscaping.

The development includes a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed houses and 1 and 2 bed apartments of a range of sizes and design. The maximum height of buildings will be three storeys with most properties being 2 storeys.

The southern corner of the site adjacent to Crewe Green Roundabout is characterised by a strong built edge comprising of three storey townhouses flanked by 3 storey apartment Buildings designed to create a strong gateway feature.

It is proposed that the site is served by a single point of vehicular access onto Sydney Road. Pedestrian/cycle connections onto Sydney Road are provided at two points along the western site boundary.

The main area of public open space serving the scheme occupies the north west corner of the site and will accommodate an equipped children's play area (NEAP). It is proposed that

pedestrian routes running through the open space connect with the existing Public Right of Way FP41 which runs along the private access road to Fields Farm adjacent to the northern site boundary.

Mature hedgerows and trees around the perimeter of the site will be retained. A landscaped buffer will be provided alongside the northern site boundary with land within the green gap to ensure retention of existing trees and hedgerows.

Revised plans and additional information have been received during the application process in response to issues raised by the Council. This has been predominantly in relation to design, but also in respect of ecology, highways, drainage and enhanced planting/landscaping. The amended scheme has also increased the overall number of units from a 148 to a total of 151.

RELEVANT HISTORY

17/3096N - Redevelopment and extension of Crewe Green Roundabout to provide additional traffic lanes and improvements to pedestrian and cyclist facilities, landscaping, and re-contouring of the roundabout, and ancillary works. Approved 5th October 2017.

POLICIES

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

LPS 6 Crewe Green
MP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
PG1 Overall Development Strategy
PG2 Settlement hierarchy
PG5 Strategic Green Gaps
PG6 Open Countryside
PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development
SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD2 Sustainable Development Principles
IN1 Infrastructure
IN2 Developer Contributions
SC1 Leisure and Recreation
SC2 Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities
SC3 Health and wellbeing
SC4 Residential Mix
SC5 Affordable Homes
SE1 Design
SE2 Efficient use of land
SE3 Biodiversity and geodiversity
SE4 The Landscape
SE5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
SE6 Green Infrastructure
SE7 Heritage Assets
SE9 Energy Efficient development
SE12 Pollution, land contamination and land stability
SE13 Flood risk and water management

CO1 Sustainable travel and transport
CO3 Digital connections
CO4 Travel plans and transport assessments

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy was formally adopted on 27th July 2017. There are however policies within the legacy Local Plan that still apply and have not yet been replaced. These policies are set out below.

Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan

BE.1 – Amenity
BE.3 – Access and Parking
BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources
BE.6 – Development on Potentially Contaminated Land
NE.5 – Nature Conservation and Habitats
NE.7 – Sites of National Importance for Nature Conservation
NE.8 – Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation
NE.9 – Protected Species
NE.11 – River and Canal Corridors
NE.17 – Pollution Control
NE.20 – Flood Prevention
NE.21 – New Development and Landfill Sites
TRAN.3 – Pedestrians
TRAN.5 – Provision for Cyclists
RT.9 – Footpaths and Bridleways

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework)
National Planning Practice Guidance
Cheshire East Design Guide

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

United Utilities - No objection subject to surface water drainage condition.

Natural England - No objection.

Housing - No objection.

Flood Risk Manager - No objection, subject to conditions requiring the development to accord with FRA and details of surface water drainage.

Environmental Health - No objection subject to conditions relating to noise mitigation, electric vehicle infrastructure, ultra-low emission boilers and contaminated land.

Education - No objection subject to a financial contribution towards local primary and secondary school and SEN places.

Public Rights of Way – No objection

Head of Strategic Infrastructure – No objection subject to conditions to secure the upgrading of the existing pedestrian crossing and associated pedestrian/cycleway improvements, and a financial contribution towards improvements to Crewe Green Roundabout.

Leisure - No objections subject to conditions and contributions to outdoor sport and financial contribution for health & fitness equipment at Crewe lifestyle Centre.

NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group - No objection subject to a financial contribution to fund improvements to GP practice infrastructure.

Cheshire Police (Designing Out Crime Officer) - Concerns raised due to potential for anti-social/criminal behaviour as canopy court entrances act as shelters and lack of surveillance of courtyard parking in the southern part of the development.

Cheshire Brine Subsidence Compensation Board - The area has previously been affected by brine subsidence and board recommends that precautions are incorporated within the construction design of the development. (An informative will be attached on the decision notice)

Crewe Town Council - Objects on the following grounds.

- positioning of the playground area is inadequate and not appropriate as too close to the road and far from the highest density of the proposed development.
- development will create unacceptable traffic congestion at an already highly congested point of the highways network
- Insufficient parking provision, which does not meet Cheshire East Local minimum requirements
- In sufficient provision of electric vehicle charge points
- Boundary treatments to allow access through for wildlife (e.g. hedgehogs)
- The communal residential waste bin storage areas are not readily or safely accessible for kerbside waste collection services

The following additional grounds of objection have been made to the application further to re-consultation on the amended proposals.

- Lack of time for consideration of the application (consultation period to below the requisite 21 days)
- The shared waste collection points are impractically far from residences and will lead to localised waste and anti-social issues.
- The play area is inadequate provision for the density of the proposals
- Associated traffic and congestion will adversely impact air quality
- The site does not meet the net gain biodiversity policies and wildlife planning Initiative should be considered and provision for wildlife nesting and habitats should be included (e.g. pollinator and nesting bird infrastructure, wildlife dormancy provision, native planting, fruit trees and shrubs)
- the proposals represent over development and the high density / affordable housing aspect of the proposals are concentrated in one area and should be spread through the development evenly

Crewe Green Parish: Comment as follows.

- Insufficient grounds not to support the application

Haslington Parish Council: Objects as follows.

- Whilst the application site relates to the Cheshire East Local Plan strategic site LPS6 for 150 houses, it is in a very prominent position adjacent to the Green Gap separating urban Crewe from rural Crewe Green and Haslington. Any development on the site needs to minimise the intrusion into the open countryside, but also needs to screen the potential residents from the high levels of noise and fumes associated with the very busy Crewe Green Roundabout and the Haslington Bypass.
- The current development plans do not adequately screen the development from the bypass, a two or three metre soil bund covered in dense shrubs and trees should be required alongside the bypass to create higher levels of amenity to residents than the current proposals, soundproofing of the buildings will not be enough, the gardens also need protection from the noise and fumes.
- The Parish Council notes the submission from the CCG relating to the overstretched local GP Surgeries, we would strongly request funding of £120,000 be allocated to the Haslington Surgery to address the identified shortfall in accommodation.
- To avoid the development becoming isolated from the adjacent community facilities it is essential that additional pedestrian and cycling provision is made, specifically light controlled crossings on Sydney Road, safe walking routes to schools must be provided.
- The height of all properties, including the apartments need to be restricted to 2 stories to reflect the character of residential property in the adjoining communities. 2.5 storey houses and 3 storey apartments are out of character given the developments location on the rural/residential fringe.
- parking provision appears to be below the minimum acceptable standard for developments in Cheshire East.
- Concern is expressed that the Police do not consider the development to be safe and fails to incorporate acceptable features to design out crime.
- The Parish Council would also like comments from the neighbouring landowner at Fields Farm to be taken into consideration, in particular the retention and protection of the existing boundary hedgerows and trees, new access from the development onto FP41 which is a driveway used by HGV's visiting the farm and the request to move the play area to the centre of the site.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Letters have been received from residents, interested parties and ward councillors.

Approximately 108 representation were received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Cheshire East already meets its housing supply requirements and development of site is not required.
- Development of Green Belt land contrary to local and national policy.
- Development breaches environmental policies of the National Policy Planning Framework 2019, in relation to traffic and congestion, air pollution risks and other wider environmental issues contrary to local plan

- Land was not originally a strategic allocation in the Cheshire East Local Plan but added after further consultation period.
- There are better sites elsewhere such as more suitable brown field sites more central to Crewe.
- Development required to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Environmental impact of development including increase in CO2 emissions will contribute to global warming.
- Erosion of the Green Gap and green space between Haslington and Sydney/Crewe.
- Loss of open countryside detrimental to the character of the surrounding settlements.
- Adverse visual impact.
- Loss of agricultural land.
- Hedgerows and existing trees should remain in place and be protected.
- Loss of hedgerow to facilitate link to public footpath (FP41).
- Damaging to local nature and loss of wildlife habitat.
- Loss of green space detrimental to health and well-being
- Reduction in quality of life.
- Intrusion within Conservation Area.
- Excessive residential development and infilling in the Sydney Road/Crewe Green area.
- Cumulative impact of ongoing and proposed developments along Sydney Road and existing infrastructure unable to cope following developments.
- Local services including Schools, childcare, hospitals, GP services and dentists already overstretched.
- Additional pressure on road infrastructure, especially Crewe Green roundabout.
- Crewe Green roundabout is already inadequate and hazardous in its current format and additional vehicles from the development will exacerbate problems.
- Detrimental to highway safety.
- Increase in traffic and congestion on Sydney Road which is a busy road and Crewe Green Roundabout at peak times.
- Increase in pollution and adverse impact on air quality from increased traffic
- Submitted Air Quality Assessment is inadequate.
- Inadequate provision for cycling and public transport.
- Shakespeare Drive will become even more of a rat run than currently.
- Increase in speeding traffic on Sydney Road.
- Difficult for pedestrians to safely cross Sydney Road.
- Increased difficulty in ability to safely access Sydney Road from the proposed development, Stephenson Drive, and other properties, particularly when turning right.
- Insufficient on-site car parking proposed resulting in on road parking
- Inadequate turning circles for emergency vehicles and for refuse collection
- No provision of visitor car parking.
- Overdevelopment of a small site. Development crammed and of excessive density.
- Lack of space to provide adequate public open space/greenspace and play space within development.
- Provision of mainly smaller properties out of character with the locality.
- Proposed 3 storey high homes will be an eye sore.
- Housing layout does not meet the required separation distances between dwellings set out by the Councils SPD.
- Inadequate mix of houses with no provision of Bungalows to meet community needs.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Unclear from layout plans which are the Open Market Houses / Affordable Houses.

- Conflict with affordable Housing Policy as can clearly differentiate between house types proposed for Open Market units and Affordable Homes.
- Play area is sited next to a busy road (Sydney Road) and should be located at the centre of the development.
- Proposed play area of insufficient size to serve a development of 148 dwellings.
- Lack of information as regards future management of public open spaces, which should not be by a management company funded by resident of the development.
- Access should not be provided from play area/POS to public footpath as this is also a private driveway serving Fields Farm used by HGVs and agricultural machinery.
- There should be a walkway /access from the site to the new pedestrian crossing on the A534.
- Adverse impacts from increased use of public footpath because of increased dog walking and anti- social behaviour.
- Development should include green measures such as solar panels, ground, or air source heat pumps.
- Lack of electric vehicle charging points.
- Development does not include measures to address impact of Covid 19
- Overlooking and loss of privacy.

Noise and disturbance from during construction and from new properties.

- Adverse impact of Maw Green Landfill on the local area due to odour/smell, HGV traffic and pollution.
- Exacerbate existing surface water drainage and flooding problems
- Increased strain on sewage and water services and exacerbate existing problem of low water pressure.
- Broadband coverage is weak.
- Disruption/ impact on highway network of construction work and all construction vehicles during the development should turn left out of the site.
- Noise and disturbance during construction and from new properties.
- Adverse impact from traffic noise and need for mitigation measures
- Reduction in house prices
- Inadequate consultation with failure to inform all effected residents of the proposed development and account not taken of the current exceptional conditions of the Covid 19 pandemic restricting the consultation process

16 further representations have been received from residents following the re-consultation exercise in respect of amended proposals undertaken on 24 May 2021. The grounds of objection of these representations reiterate those summarised above which were made to the original proposals.

A Letter of objection was received Cllr Hazel Faddes set out below;

This planning application has brought forward a lot of strong opinions from nearby residents who realise the daily issues of noise and speeding traffic around Crewe Green roundabout and its surrounding highways.

Cheshire Constabulary do not support the application and I feel their views on the designs possible flaws which could encourage ASB should be noted.

Although the road safety record for five years shows no fatalities, sadly since the report was written two deaths have occurred on the inlet roads to the roundabout. Speeding traffic, and a large number of vehicles make this area quite dangerous. Having a GP surgery, school and shopping facilities within walking distance is of little use if you are worried about walking there safely.

To access one of the bus routes into town one would also have to cross a busy road. While we are trying to encourage more to walk, cycle and use public transport, I feel people living on this proposed development site would tend to use a car for both long and short journeys. Both adding to the traffic congestion and high air pollution levels nearer to Crewe's town centre and hindering our bid to be carbon neutral friendly.

Even without this extra traffic the area suffers with the noise and pollution of a steady stream of traffic, to mitigate this noise I would have liked to see trees along the boundary, instead we read that a 1.8m high brick screening wall is proposed for the outer boundary of the site. Not as pleasing to the eye and certainly with none of the air purifying qualities of native trees.

I note in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment we have not received an updated ecological assessment, has this been delivered yet. I have concerns that the bat survey could still be ongoing and a report suggests that some of the established trees on site are conducive for bat colonies.

The hedgerow along the northern border of the site has been identified as meeting the criteria for important biodiversity and I hope as much of this hedgerow as possible could be retained. The application does state that a section of hedgerow on the site's western boundary will require removal for access.

It is a worrying fact that the report states there will be a high Biodiversity habitat loss of 49%, our planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment and provide net gain for diversity. This application does not adhere to that policy.

We read that there are 22 established trees on site 14 of high or medium value, certainly it would be hoped that any development would be finalised with as little loss of trees as possible and any new planting are of high quality species.

It is linkage will be a benefit stated that houses should not be built within a certain distance from the base of established trees, to offset any issues with roots damaging foundations and the lack of light from high species of trees, to my untrained eye some of the proposed houses are to be built very close to the original trees.

CTC state that the positioning of the playground is too close to the road. Although ANSA states that the main open space is far from ideal, it says it has the advantage that it is linked to PRow FP41 and both will benefit from the linkage. Whilst completely agreeing that the playground is too close to the road and the fact that the open space is far from ideal, I disagree with the latter part of ANSA's statement. I am extremely worried that the PRow, which is the driveway for the residents and workforce of Fields farm, carries heavy tractors and haulage vehicles from the farm to the road. For excited young children this entry from the play area onto the PRow could be dangerous as children do not always look before crossing and would not expect traffic to be on the footpath. There is also a danger that they could wander

along the path, which leads to the busy bypass, or cross onto the other PRow which passes a small lake, water always being a temptation to inquisitive children. The linkage access spot from the play park to PRow FP 41 is a short distance from the busy Sydney Road, a danger for those older children out on their own.

For these reasons I feel that the linkage between the play area and the PRow should be avoided, and indeed this makes the statement that the linkage will be a benefit to both obsolete. I feel the developers should consider a playground more in the centre of the development, in view of residents properties and not squashed into a poorly overlooked corner.

I am in favour of the widening of the existing footpath along Sydney Road to 3m wide, for shared pedestrian and cycle use.

I am also pleased that 10 one bedroom properties and 28 two bedroom houses are included in the plans, but worry that those older residents who may buy a property here at a younger age will one day be without the advantage of being able to drive a car and find themselves isolated here. There does not appear to be any consideration for disabled access to properties, I hope this can be addressed.

In all, I cannot give my support to this application and wish to raise my objections, which far outweigh any benefits I can find.

A Letter of objection has also been received from Cllr Suzanne Brookfield which is set out below;

- I consider this site to be over developed. The original plans for this site were fewer units.*
- I have concerns about the access and egress to the site from Sydney Road. Whilst the new Crewe Green roundabout works well in terms of congestion there have been concerns from nearby residents that vehicles leaving the roundabout can be travelling at speed and with an additional junction onto Sydney Road this is a worry.*
- The number of allocated parking spaces per dwelling is inadequate. There is little space for any on street parking if required. In current times there should also be a requirement for more electric car charging points.*
- I would like reassurance that the Public Right of Way is not fettered in any way and am looking into this more. As proposed, this may affect nearby properties.*
- As mentioned by other parties I would ask if there are sufficient medical provisions in the locality as nearby doctor practices/medical centres have in recent months removed patients due to over-subscription.*

In respect of the Re-consultation on the amended proposals Cllr Brookfield has further added the following grounds of objection;

- There has to be concern about the increase of 300 vehicles accessing the nearby highway network.*
- The amount of properties being constructed onto this site is in my opinion excessive, which will result in over development.*

- *The volume of development along this corridor has resulted in flooding in other locations in the ward and I would request further detail in order residents are assured there will not be issues in nearby locations.*
- *In similar developments concerns are always raised by new occupiers of the play areas. The location of the play park is in my opinion situated too far from the majority of the properties, which will from experience increase the likelihood of anti-social behaviour as seen on other new build estates in the locality. I would also raise questions about the ongoing maintenance of the play area and the suitability/adequacy of the proposed equipment.*
- *In respect of the communal waste collection points I consider these to be inadequate and would foresee there to be issues as the properties are occupied.*

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The application site is an allocated Strategic Site for housing in the CELPS. Site LPS 6 states that the development of land at Crewe Green over the Local Plan Strategy period will be achieved through:

1. *The delivery of around 150 homes;*
2. *The provision of land to Cheshire East Council that is necessary to facilitate the delivery of highway improvements at Crewe Green Roundabout. Such improvement to be completed before development of the new homes starts on site; and*
3. *The incorporation of green infrastructure, to include open space provision, including children's equipped play space/multi use games area.*

The proposal for 151 dwellings is considered to meet the definition of "around 150 new homes" and is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle. The delivery of the site for residential development will contribute towards the Council's housing land supply and assist in meeting the development requirements of Crewe and the wider Borough. The further requirements of policy LPS 6 are considered further below.

In addition, a small area of the north-western part of the site lies within the Strategic Green Gap between Crewe and Haslington where Policy PG5 aims to;

- Provide long-term protection against coalescence
- Protect the setting and separate identity of settlements; and
- Retain the existing settlement pattern by maintaining the openness of the land

However, this specific part of the site will not contain built form and only accommodate public open space/play equipment and therefore the proposal will accord with the aims of policy PG5. The openness of this small part of the green gap will essentially be retained with no adverse impact on the character of the open countryside.

An EIA Screening Opinion has determined that the proposals are not likely to have significant effects on the environment and consequently the application is not required to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (EIA).

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Housing

Affordable Housing

Policy SC5 of the CELPS states that “in developments of 15 or more dwellings (or 0.4 hectares) in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres at least 30% of all units are to be affordable.” As a full application for 151 dwellings, in order to meet the Council’s Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 45 dwellings to be provided as affordable units. 29 units should be provided as Affordable rent and 16 units as Intermediate tenure

The current number of those on the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list with Crewe as their first choice is 2021. This can be broken down as below:

	How many bedrooms do you require?						
First Choice	1	2	3	4	5	5+	Grand Total
Crewe	938	623	307	87	66	0	2021

The applicant’s Affordable Housing Statement explains that they are providing the full policy requirement in Affordable housing. The proposal will provide:

Affordable Rent

House Type	No. of bedrooms	Number of units
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P230-DG7	2	1
P231-DG7	2	1
SH72-DG7	2	1
SH73-DG7	2	1
SH 50 End (Gable)	2	2
SH 50 Mid	2	2
TARP	1	8
SH 52 Mid	3	1
SH 52 End (Hip)	3	2
SH75 -E-7	1	2
SH80 -E-7	2	2
BCRW56AP	2	6
		Total: 29

Shared Ownership:

House Type	No. of bedrooms	Number of units
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BCWL56PI	2	2
BCWL56PE	2	4
SH 54 End (Gable)	4	2
SH 55 End	3	1

SH 52 End (Hip)	3	3
SH 52 Mid	3	4
		Total: 16

The Housing Strategy and Needs Manager is satisfied that the submitted Affordable Housing Statement and the Affordable Housing Plan are meeting the identified housing need. 30% (45) Affordable Units are proposed and are to be split 65% Rented and 35% Intermediate in accordance with Policy SC 5 of the Cheshire East Local Plan. In addition, it is considered that the units are adequately pepper potted across the site.

The affordable housing provision will be secured as part of the S106 agreement.

Residential Mix

Policy SC4 of the CELPS states that new residential development should maintain, provide, or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types, and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced, and inclusive communities.

The proposed development comprises:

- 35 x 4 bed units
- 84 x 3 bed units
- 20 x 2 bed units
- 12 x 1 bed units

Taken together with the affordable provision outlined above, the proposed residential mix comprising of detached, semi-detached and apartment units ranging from 1-4-bedroom units is considered to meet the requirements of policy SC4 of the CELPS.

Education

One of the site-specific principles of LPS 6 in the CELPS is “contributions to education and health infrastructure”.

In the case of the original proposal for 148 dwellings (dwelling 2bed+), this is expected to generate:

- 27 primary children (146 x 0.19) 28 – 1 SEN child
- 21 secondary children (146 x 0.15) 22 – 1 SEN child
- 2 SEN children (146 x 0.51 x 0.023%)

CEC education have advised that to meet immediate and long term school capacity needs created by the development of allocated housing sites in the area of Crewe North, expansions have been undertaken at Monks Coppenhall and Hungerford Primary Academy, of an additional 210 places at each school. A further new primary school is proposed to meet the needs in Leighton and whilst part of Crewe North, this falls out of the 2-mile radius of this development.

Although the application site falls within Haslington Primary catchment it is closer in proximity to Hungerford Primary Academy. A financial contribution to primary school places is required

towards works forward funded by CEC for the strategic expansion of Hungerford Primary Academy, in anticipation of the development of LPS 6 and other allocated sites.

The development is expected to impact on primary school, secondary school, and SEN places in the locality. Contributions which have been negotiated on other developments are factored into the forecasts both in terms of the increased pupil numbers and the increased capacity at schools in the area. Notwithstanding that an additional 300 secondary school places being provided at Sandbach through expansion, the analyses and forecasting undertaken has identified that a shortfall of secondary school places will remain.

Special Education provision within Cheshire East Council currently has a shortage of places available with at present over 47% of pupils educated outside of the Borough. It is acknowledged that this is an existing concern, however the 2 children expected from the proposed development will exacerbate the shortfall.

To alleviate forecast pressures, the following contributions would be required:

$27 \times \pounds 11,919 \times 0.91 = \pounds 292,850$
 $21 \times \pounds 17,959 \times 0.91 = \pounds 343,196$
 $2 \times \pounds 50,000 \times 0.91 = \pounds 91,000$ (SEN)
Total education contribution: $\pounds 727,046$

Without a secured contribution of $\pounds 727,046$, Children's Services would raise an objection to this application. This position is on the grounds that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact upon local education provision as a direct cause from the development. Without mitigation, the proposal would not comply with LPS 6 in the CELPS.

Healthcare

The NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) advises that the development falls within the following practice boundaries: Millcroft and Earnswood Medical Centres, based in Eagle Bridge Health and Wellbeing Centre and Hungerford Medical Centre.

The NHS CCG's updated consultation response requests a financial contribution being secured to support the development of Hungerford, Millcroft and Earnswood Medical Centres, and their ability to continue to provide the expected level of Primary Care services in Crewe.

In particular improvements have been identified to include the following GP Practice infrastructure;

- Hungerford Medical Centre – internal reconfiguration and extension to maximise use of space, create additional clinical space to enable key services to continue to be delivered. Initial scoping has resulting in indicative costs of $\pounds 350,000$
- Eagle Bridge Health and Wellbeing Centre – conversion of vacant space on the third floor; as a supercentre of Crewe there continues to be mounting pressure on GP Practices to enhance the service offer and with the implementation of the Primary Care Network additional roles scheme; there needs to be a large scale investment to future proof the site. Indicative costings estimate the fit out costs to be $\pounds 650,000$.

Additional growth in patient numbers will add pressures to the GP practices, with an increase in clinical and non-clinical staff required in order to meet these future patient needs. As set out in the CCGs consultation response, Plans have been formulated across NHS Cheshire CCG GP Practices, including for those premises listed above, to identify appropriate provision of extra space to go some way to address capacity issues due to the increasing patient population.

A financial contribution is therefore sought as part of this application, which is based on a calculation consisting of occupancy x number of units in the development x £360. This is based on guidance provided to other CCG areas by NHS Property Services.

Size of Unit	Occupancy Assumptions Based on Size of Unit	Health Need/Sum Requested per unit
1 bed unit	1.4 persons	£504 per 1 bed unit
2 bed unit	2.0 persons	£720 per 2 bed unit
3 bed unit	2.8 persons	£1,008 per 3 bed unit
4 bed unit	3.5 persons	£1,260 per 4 bed unit
5 bed unit	4.8 persons	£1,728 per 5 bed unit

1 bed unit x 10 = £5,040
 2 bed unit x 22 = £15,840
 3 bed unit x 84 = £84,672
 4 bed unit x 35 = £44,100

Total: 151 units
Total: £149,652

As such the CCG requests a contribution to health infrastructure via Section 106 of £149,652. This would comply with policy LPS 6 of the CELPS.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

The local plan allocation (LPS 6) states that the development of this site should include, “the incorporation of green infrastructure, to include open space provision, including children’s equipped play space/multi-use games area”

Policy SE6 of the CELPS sets out the open space requirements for housing development which are (per dwelling):

- Children’s play space - 20sqm
- Amenity Green Space - 20sqm
- Allotments - 5sqm
- Green Infrastructure connectivity 20sqm

Based on 151 dwellings the minimum requirements consist of green infrastructure connectivity, 5m² (755m² total) growing space/community gardens/allotment and a 40m² (6,040m² total) combined amenity green space and children’s play space.

The layout provides areas of POS, with the largest area (4,400m² total) in the north west corner at the entrance to the site and a small area (700m²) in the centre identified as a pocket park. This falls slightly short of the minimum combined amenity green and children's play space.

The main open space is located within the widest part of the application site. It is located between the site access road and northern boundary and extends up to the western site boundary with of Sydney Road. As pointed out by the Leisure Officer, although a more central location for this POS and further away from the site access would be preferred, the site is significantly constrained due to its triangular shape which markedly narrows towards the south as well as the reduction in its size to facilitate the Crewe Green Roundabout improvement scheme. As a result, the delivery of around 150 dwellings within this allocated site would not be achievable, if a more centrally located public open space were to be provided.

Although the proposed position of the main area of POS does have the advantage in that it is adjacent to the PROW FP41 to which a link is proposed. Concerns raised by representations in respect to this link to the PROW are addressed in a later section of the report

The Leisure Officer has advised that the amendment to the layout at the entrance to the scheme including the omission of Plot 3 has ensured an improved relationship of dwellings with the main area of POS and increases natural surveillance of this area.

The Leisure Officer considers that the provision of a multi-use games area is not appropriate for this development. A higher quality play facility on this site consisting of a NEAP should be provided and be located within the main area of POS. This needs to comply with Fields in Trust standards for inclusivity and accessibility using resin bound paths. It should contain 12 items covering all age ranges and enjoy a 30m buffer from the nearest dwelling. Amenity space for informal games should also be catered for.

A play area is proposed to be located within the main POS, and the "pocket park" in the south of the site is proposed to include informal/natural play features to give it a suitable function.

A condition is however recommended requiring details of the design and specification of the play area to ensure the provision of an appropriate NEAP, and to finalise details of features to be provided within the Pocket Park. Details of hard and soft landscaping, including the specification of planting, will be secured by a condition requiring the submission and approval of the landscape scheme for the development.

The Leisure Officer has advised that to fulfil the requirement for growing space under Policy SE6, and in preference to an off-site financial contribution the main POS should incorporate an area for the provision of fruiting trees located near the pumping station. to fulfil the requirement for growing space by Policy SE6. This provision will be secured as part of the approved landscaping scheme for the development.

A condition is also recommended to require the submission and approval of management plan for all areas of POS and landscaping. The provision of a management company to maintain all on site open space will be secured through secured in the S106.

Policies SC1 and SC2 of the Local Plan Strategy provide a clear development plan policy basis to require developments to provide or contribute towards both outdoor and indoor recreation.

In particular Policy SC2 of the CELPS requires major residential developments to contribute, through land assembly and / or financial contributions, to new or improved sports facilities where development will increase demand and / or there is a recognised shortage in the locality that would be exacerbated by the increase in demand arising from the development.

Outdoor Sport

In terms of outdoor sports facilities Policies SE6 and SC2 require appropriate provision of sports facilities. The proposal will increase demand on existing facilities and as such a financial contribution towards off site provision will be required. The financial contribution is required at a rate of £1,000 per family (2+bed) dwelling and £500 per 2+ bed apartment. The funds would be used in line with the Council's adopted Playing Pitch Strategy and the FA's Local Football Facilities Plan.

Indoor Sports Facilities

The development will increase the need for local indoor leisure provision and as such a financial contribution should be sought towards Crewe Lifestyle Centre being the nearest provision.

The Indoor Built Facility Strategy has identified that for Crewe there should be a focus on improvement of provision as set out in the Strategy. Whilst new developments should not be required to address an existing shortfall of provision, they should ensure that this situation is not worsened by ensuring that it fully addresses its own impact in terms of the additional demand for indoor leisure provision that it directly gives rise to.

Based on the size of the proposed development and participation rates for Cheshire East Council a contribution of £26,650 has been calculated to be necessary to and ensure health and fitness provision will meet increased demand for indoor physical activity.

For the above reasons the proposal is considered to comply with the open space and sport and recreation requirements of LPS 6 and policies SC2 and SE6 of the CELPS.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Design, Character and Appearance

Policies SD2 and SE1 of the CELPS expect housing developments to achieve Building for Life 12 (BfL12) standard, and that development proposals consider the wider character of a place in addition to that of the site and its immediate context, to ensure that it reinforces the area in which it is located. These principles are also reflected in the CEC Design Guide. BfL12 uses a traffic light system, with the aim of eliminating reds, whilst maximising the number of greens. The Council's Design Officer has undertaken a BfL12 assessment of the application, which is reflected in the commentary below.

1 Connections (subject to satisfactorily addressing the landscaping on southern and northern boundaries via condition)

The existing pedestrian crossing point on Sydney Road which provides a connection to local facilities from the development is to be upgraded to a Toucan design and footway widened in proximity to serve pedestrians/cyclists. In addition, Haslington FP41 lies immediately to the north of the site, which connects with the wider footpath network and the scheme identifies a direct connection from the main area of public open space.

A written commitment has been provided by the applicant to strengthen the landscaping of the southern edge of the site with Crewe Green roundabout. This will include the retention of newly planted hedgerow, associated with the roundabout enlargement, additional wildflower and tree planting within the site and seeking agreement with the Highway authority to establish a naturalised verge between the footway and site boundary. There is also commitment to provide the northern landscape buffer, following similar principles to that adopted for phase 2 of the Shavington Triangle development (18/2492N) Consequently, whilst the landscape detail still remains to be finalised given the commitment on the part of the applicant, this can be secured by planning condition.

Given the above a green is considered appropriate.

2 Facilities and services – Crewe town centre is within 2km of the site, with the Grand Junction retail park 1.5km away. Employment opportunity exists close by at the Crewe Business Park and along University Way

Whilst no facilities are proposed on site, there are a range of services and amenities within a relatively short distance (10 mins walk time). However, the directness of connections is affected to a degree by the busy nature of Sydney Road and the environment that creates for pedestrians. A pedestrian crossing point will however be required to be upgraded to a Toucan crossing to improve this pedestrian connection. Play provision is provided in the North western corner of the site, with a smaller local space (pocket park) in the southern part of the site.

3 Public transport – The site is less than 2km away from Crewe railway station. There is also a principal bus route on Crewe Green Road, with bus stops nearby, some 200 metres from the site entrance. There are further bus stops on Sydney Road circa 500 metres from the site.

4 Meeting Local Housing requirements – A range of house types from single bed apartments to larger family dwellings is proposed. A range of affordable housing types/tenures is provided across the site and situated in relatively small groupings although the western part of the site has no affordable provision. Whilst bungalows are not proposed, there are apartments and cottage style ground floor apartments within the mix of house types.

Creating a place

5 Character

The layout provides a framework that creates a positive structure of streets and spaces and a distinct hierarchy of street type. It also provides a primarily outward looking development overlooking adjacent roads, public spaces, the countryside, and landscaped edges. Variation in density across the site helps to create areas of different character within the development with the highest density located at the southern end of the development with a greater proportion of apartments and townhouses and lower density across with a broader mix of house

types across the remainder of the development and particularly alongside the Sydney Road frontage. Therefore, the average density at approximately 33 units per hectare across this allocated gateway site is considered appropriate to the local context and character of the site.

An area of bespoke housing has been included on the frontage adjacent to the Sydney Road roundabout occupied by the tallest buildings on the site. The Design Officer considers that the siting, distinctive design approach and presence of these buildings is appropriate for this prominent part of the site. Amendments to the scheme has ensured that the more bespoke treatments for these buildings on the southern part of the site have been used more extensively, particularly to define key points in the site as focal points/areas.

The Design Officer has commented that although the amended scheme has included more tree planting, there are some areas where further tree planting could be achieved, with the right species selection and tree pit design. Ideally the entrance into the site off Sydney Road should still be strengthened with tree lining of the main POS and in front of plots 1 and 2 if they were set further back from the street. In addition, there are remain a few locations where additional landscaping alongside site boundaries could be provided.

The incorporation of the CEC Design Guide street materials is positive in helping better characterise the street hierarchy, including the sue of the gutter detail up to the raised table. Ideally a gutter detail should extend further into the site, but this requirement can be relaxed here on the basis more street greening is achieved across the site.

The southern square and associated parking courts has been further improved but more soft panting elements could still be introduced into the space and associated courts. The 'flats over garages' grouping at the south of the square has been enhanced, although the Design Officer considers that the parapet design should be amended to reflect that of the key southern frontage plots with a stepped gable parapet.

The Design Officer has advised that the car ports should not be open, and some form of gating that has a degree of transparency should be used. This will be secured through a planning condition.

Despite the enhancements included within amended scheme, this is still considered to merit an amber but could become green with the suggested changes above. Planning conditions are however considered appropriate to secure the necessary improvement to the landscaping scheme and planning, including further refinement of the landscaping in the southern square and to finalise street- scape materials.

6 Working with the site and its context (subject to satisfactorily addressing the landscaping on southern and northern boundaries via condition)

The landscape treatment of the southern and northern edges of the scheme are addressed in point 1 above.

Several trees within the heart of the site are being removed and ground levels altered in the southern part of the site, with the site being raised toward the southern site edge. However cross sections and indicated treatment of levels at the southern edge of the site provides reassurance in terms of landscaping and appearance of the development that will be secured

from the Crewe Green Roundabout. Finalised details of the landscape scheme, levels and retention structures will be secured through conditions.

Most existing hedgerows are retained and set within publicly accessible areas. In addition, existing hedgerows and associated trees along the northern site boundary are retained within a naturalised buffer area is shown on the landscape scheme. Details of planting of the buffer area will be finalised through a planning condition requiring the approval of the landscaping scheme for the development.

In addition to properties at the southern part of the site, the amended scheme has included an increase the use of feature glazing and Juliet balconies for house types elsewhere, but ideally there could have been a more considered approach to exploiting the passive opportunities of the site.

A green is awarded here.

7 Creating well defined streets and spaces

Streets are defined by perimeter blocks and improvements to the site layout have strengthened relationships between buildings and street edges. The scheme includes corner turning house types, with active secondary elevations. Spaces are generally overlooked by the fronts of properties, with the scheme being largely outward facing.

The omission of Plot 3 has achieved an improved relationship with the main areas of public open space in the north western part of the site. In addition, Plots 1 and 2 have also been re-configured to better terminate views up the western principal street.

Although the amended layout has included more tree planting there is still scope for a little more street greening, not least on the entrance street. As set out above, this will be achieved through a condition which will require details of the landscaping scheme to be submitted and finalised.

The comments from the Designing Out Crime Officer (Cheshire Police) in respect of making courtyards secure has not unfortunately led to them being gated. The applicant has commented that gating is ineffective and the square itself is well overlooked by the flats. The car ports below plots should however have some form of permeable screen designed into them to ensure their security and a condition is recommended to ensure that a scheme is submitted and approved to ensure that the southern courtyard /parking areas are adequately secured.

Despite the enhancements to the scheme, the Design Officer still considers this criterion to merit an amber but should become green with the suggested changes which will be secured through the recommended conditions.

8 Easy to find your way around

The scheme is very legible being modest in size. The open space and play at the site entrance, help to define the main gateway into the site and the southern pocket space will relate a further focus at the southern end of the site. The use of a more contemporary character range of buildings has been used to identify focal points within the layout further reinforcing the legibility of the development.

The landscaping and function of the southern green space itself has been enhanced, but the detail needs further refinement. Efforts have been made to improve the approach to the southern square/court landscaping which have improved the scheme, although there is still scope to achieve more greening.

The eastern primary street has been designed with more polite surfacing (block does not bitmap) which will help to make it feel more of a social space, but the landscape could be further enhanced. All of this is recommended to be secured through suitable conditions in respect of details of landscaping and surface treatment

9 Streets for all

Although improved, there is potential to further improve tree planting and greening of streets, as discussed in relation to several criteria above. Confirmation on the use of the gutter detail for the first part of the entrance street is positive. Despite the improvements to the southern square, there is still potential for further greening of it and the associated parking courts. This is recommended to be addressed by the planning condition requiring details of the landscaping scheme to be finalised.

10 Car parking

Amendments to the layout have reduced the visual impact of parking throughout the scheme. However, there remains a few locations where more than 4 frontage parking spaces are not broken up by landscaping (plots 52-55; 137-140,39-42 and 23-26), although all are surfaced in block rather than bitmac. Whilst localised, in a couple of locations, it is especially prominent and should really be addressed. The applicant has advised that these issues will be considered in advance of the Committee Meeting, and an update will be provided accordingly.

Furthermore, revisions have improved the dominance of parking within the southern square/courtyard, but the carports should have screens for security and landscape quality could be further enhanced, as set out above.

The Design Officer has advised that despite these enhancements, this is still considered to merit an amber but could become green with the suggested changes.

11 Public and private space (subject to satisfactorily addressing these issues via conditions)

Public open space, including play provision is provided in the NW corner of the site. Housing is now better designed to address this area, and the omission of plot 3 has increased open space and provided less rear garden against its edge. Plots 1 and 2 have also been re-configured to address townscape issues.

The pocket space in the south of the site is going to include informal/natural play features to give it a suitable function, but the detail needs to be finalised. Further street planting has been included but more could be achieved. As stated above this will be secured by a landscape condition

Landscape management of open spaces is confirmed as being in perpetuity by a management company with arrangements to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.

12 External storage and amenity space

Private garden spaces are now provided for FOGs. Juliet balconies rather than walk on have been provided for these plots. Whilst access to private space for these plots is not ideal, it is very localised. All other plots have direct access to outdoor private space.

A plan has now been provided showing bin and cycle storage areas and majority of gardens have sufficient space for external storage. Although the bin collection point adjacent to plot 3 needs review as it may be compromising potential for some greening of the southern square.

Conditions are recommended requiring full details to be submitted and approved of bin and cycle storage arrangements.

Summary

There have been numerous amendments to the proposal which have addressed issues that have been raised with the applicant during the application.

Significant improvements have been made to the layout and design of the scheme, resulting in most criteria achieving green in the assessment, albeit some areas have been identified where further improvement are could be secured. In comparison to the initially submitted scheme, a significant enhancement in design quality has been achieved, better reflecting the standards set out in the Design Guide.

Overall, the design of the scheme has therefore developed to a point where it is acceptable, when considered against the requirements of policies SD2 and SE1 of the CELPS, and the CEC Design Guide.

Trees and Landscape

Policy LPS6 provides the policy background for this location and states that any development should provide high quality design on this gateway to Crewe; that the development should have regard to the need to conserve the character and appearance of the conservation area (which is located to the south of the site), including its setting; that the site should incorporate green infrastructure and reflect the Green Infrastructure Plan for Crewe: that any development should include provision of planting buffering along the northern boundary, amongst other principles.

The site has a limited number of trees on the site. Several trees within site will require removal to accommodate the access/internal road infrastructure and dwellings, while existing trees and boundary hedges are being retained. Furthermore existing trees and the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site are important as they provide a buffer to the countryside beyond and protect views into the site from the public footpaths (FP41 to the north). A landscape buffer area is indicated to be provided along the northern site boundary to incorporate the existing hedgerow and trees and augmented with additional planting. This buffer area will remain outside domestic garden areas.

The Council's Landscape Officer recognises that as part of the amended scheme a number of high canopy trees are proposed along the northern boundary along together with a number of smaller sized specimens that may mature into high canopy trees. However, it is considered that there is still scope to increase the percentage and number of high canopy trees along the northern and western boundaries and across the site to establish a satisfactory landscape hierarchy across the site.

While there are trees within the remainder of the site these are made up of smaller species or columnar or fastigate species, many of which are located within the curtilages of dwellings. The location of tree planting is considered irregular and while a small number of trees are located along each route within the scheme these do not deliver sufficient visual impact as they are widely separated and of small stature and species. It is however accepted that this is mainly due to constraints of this site, but there are a number of locations that could accommodate larger tree species.

The applicant has agreed to strengthen the landscaping of the southern edge of the site with Crewe Green roundabout. This will include the retention of newly planted hedgerow associated with the roundabout enlargement, as well as additional wildflower and tree planting within the site and seeking agreement with the Highway authority to establish a naturalised verge between the footway and southern site boundary.

It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed to ensure that landscape scheme for the development secures additional boundary planting, along with tree planting within the site as also referred to by the Design officer's assessment of the scheme.

Therefore, on this basis no significant landscape impacts will result from the development, and subject to landscape conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with policy SE4 of the CELPS.

Heritage

Crewe Green Conservation Area lies to the south east of the application site which includes several listed buildings. A Heritage Statement has been submitted in support the application to address the impact of the scheme on heritage assets.

The significance of Crewe Green Conservation and listed buildings has the potential to be affected by the development. Although the application site falls outside of the Conservation Area boundary and is physically remote from it, it nevertheless provides a context for the proposed development.

However, The narrowest point between the Conservation Area boundary and the site southern boundary measures approximately 80 metres. The nearest building to the site within the Conservation Area (Rose Tree Cottage) is over 120 metres from the application site. In addition, there is limited intervisibility between the Conservation Area and the application site due to the physical separation and intervening vegetation which includes mature trees and high hedgerows along Crewe Road and in the front and rear gardens of properties. The clearest views of the application site are from the footpath at western end of the Conservation Area footpath close to Crewe Green Roundabout.

The Heritage Statement concludes that whilst the proposals will bring built development closer to the conservation area, restricted visual impact ensures that it would not harm the character and appearance or significance of the designated area. Crewe Green will continue to be separated from built development by open land and the sense of it being a separate hamlet will be sustained. In addition, listed buildings within the Conservation Area are sufficiently distanced from the proposed Development to ensure that the experience of them and the ability to appreciate their significance will be unaffected.

The Council's Conservation Officer concurs with the Heritage Statement assessment of the impact of the scheme on the significance and setting of the Crewe Green Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. It is therefore concluded that there will be no harm to designated heritage assets arising from the proposed development.

Ecology

There are various ecology matters to consider. These are broken down into the following subsections and assessed accordingly. Additional survey information and clarification in respect of ecological issues has been provided during the course of the application.

Designated Sites

The submitted ecological assessment does not anticipate the proposed development having any impacts upon designated sites.

The application site falls within Natural England's SSSI impact risk zones for residential developments of over 50 units. Natural England have been consulted on this application and has not raised any objections in respect of statutory designated sites.

Trees with bat roost potential

A number of trees on site were identified as having bat roost potential. Although the proposals will result in the removal some trees these were all found to be of low bat roost potential. The Council's Ecologist therefore advises that roosting bats are not reasonably likely to be directly affected by the proposed development. The submitted ecological assessment includes recommendations for precautionary measures for the felling of trees with low bat roost potential.

Lighting

Additional lighting associated with this proposed development could however have a localised adverse impact upon foraging and commuting bats. A condition is recommended requiring external lighting to Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note 08/18 (Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK) and to be agreed with the LPA.

Nesting Birds

A standard planning condition is recommended to protect nesting birds during the nesting season

Hedgerows

Hedgerows are a priority habitat and hence a material consideration. In addition, the species rich hedgerow along the northern hedgerow has been identified by the previously submitted ecological assessment as potentially being Important under the Hedgerow Regulations.

A revised plan has been submitted showing the extent of hedgerow removed. This includes the removal of a length of species rich hedgerow in the north of the site. The Council's Ecologist advises that the revised biodiversity metric (as discussed below) indicates the loss of 0.42 hedgerow units.

Where the loss of hedgerows is unavoidable, the applicant has indicated that compensatory hedgerow works would be provided at an off-site location as part of the proposed Biodiversity Net Gain works addressed below.

Amphibians, reptiles and badger

The Council's Ecologist has advised that these species groups are not reasonably likely to be affected by the proposed development. The submitted ecological assessment includes a suite of reasonable avoidance measures to minimise the risk to badgers during the construction phase.

Hedgehog

Hedgehogs are a priority species and hence a material consideration. This species is known to occur in the broad locality of the application site and so may possibly occur on the application site on at least a transitory basis. To minimise the impact on this species it is recommended a condition is imposed to secure the incorporation of features for hedgehogs. In addition, the reasonable avoidance measures proposed for badger would also assist in minimising the risk posed to hedgehog during site clearance and construction works.

Biodiversity net gain

Local Plan Policy SE 3(5) requires all developments to aim to positively contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. In order to assess the losses and gains for Biodiversity resulting from the proposed development of the site the applicant has undertaken and submitted an assessment using the Defra biodiversity 'metric'.

The submitted revised metric (As agreed with Cheshire Wildlife Trust) shows that the proposed development would result in a net loss of biodiversity amounting to -5.91 units (-56.78%).

The applicant has been in negotiations with Cheshire Wildlife Trust to deliver compensatory habitat creation works at an offsite location. The compensatory habitat creation provided by the Trust will be sufficient to deliver a notable net gain for biodiversity. An outline of the proposed offsite habitat creation works is required to be agreed with the Council's Ecologist.

A S106 agreement will secure the submission of detailed proposals for the habitat creation works, their delivery and long-term management.

Ecological enhancement

These proposals provide an opportunity to incorporate features to increase the diversity value of the final development in accordance with Local Plan Policy SE 3. A condition is recommended for the submission of an ecological enhancement strategy to include the provision of features for nesting birds including house sparrow and roosting bats, gaps in garden fences to facilitate the movement of hedgehogs and brash/deadwood piles.

Conditions

In summary, the Councils raises no objection to the development and the following conditions are recommended:

- Submission of bat friendly lighting scheme
- Safeguarding of nesting birds
- Development to proceed in accordance with measures to safeguard badgers, trees with bat roost potential as detailed in the submitted Ecological Assessment Version 2 prepared by TEP dated 13/11/2020.
- Submission of ecological enhancement strategy (bat and bird boxes etc).

A Planning S106 obligation is also required to secure off-site Biodiversity Net Gain works.

Amenity

Policy BE.1 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 Policy SE1 of the CELPS further states that development should ensure an appropriate level of privacy for new and existing residential properties.

The Crewe and Nantwich Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relating to new residential development states that to maintain an adequate standard of privacy and amenity between residential properties interface distances should be achieved of 21 metres between principal elevations, and 13.5 metres between a non-principal and principal elevations. However, the CEC Design Guide states that separation distances should be guide rather than a hard and fast rule. The Design Guide does however acknowledge that the distance between rear facing habitable room windows should not drop below 21m. 18m front to front will also provide a good level of privacy, but if this applied too rigidly it will lead to uniformity and limit the potential to create strong street scenes and variety, and so this distance could go down as low as 12m in some cases.

Interface distances of at least 37m will be achieved between elevations of existing residential properties which either front or back onto opposite side of Sydney Road with proposed units on the western and southern frontages of the development. In addition, Fields Farm is located about 100m to the north of the northern site boundary.

These relationships with the nearest existing dwellings are considered to result in acceptable standards of amenity for existing and proposed residents having regard to the distance guidelines set out above.

In consideration of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development, the layout adheres to, or closely adheres with, the recommended separation standards within CEC Design Guide to ensure the future occupiers of the proposed development are not detrimentally impacted in terms of loss of light, or privacy, or an overbearing impact from each other.

Noise

The applicant has submitted an acoustic report which considers the impact of noise on the development from nearby roads including the Haslington bypass (A534), the Crewe Green Roundabout and Sydney Road in accordance with BS8233:2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings Department of Transport (1988) Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN). This is an agreed methodology for assessing noise of this nature

The report also recommends noise mitigation measures designed to achieve BS8233: 2014 and WHO guidelines; to ensure that future occupants of the properties are not adversely affected by transportation noise sources. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has accepted the acoustic reports methodology, conclusion, and recommendations.

A condition is recommended to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the acoustic report which requires the provision of noise barriers as specified for a small number of plots, together with the specification of glazing and ventilation for dwellings as set out. The proposals accord with Policy SE12 of the CELPS as satisfactory mitigation measures can be achieved to minimise and mitigate the effects of traffic noise.

A number of representations raise concerns about the impact of the development upon during the construction phase in terms of noise, as well as dust etc. Impacts during the construction phase are a temporary manifestation of the development process, and as such will be temporary in nature. A residential development itself does not raise any significant concerns in this regard and it is considered that a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) can ensure that any such impacts upon existing development are minimised. The submission and implementation of a CEMP can be secured by condition.

Subject to the conditions referred to above, the proposal will comply with policy SE12 of the CELPS

Air Quality

CELPS Policy SE12 states that the Council will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality. This is in accordance with paragraph 181 of the NPPF and the Government's Air Quality Strategy.

When assessing the impact of a development on local air quality, it is necessary to have regard to (amongst other things) the Council's Air Quality Strategy, the Air Quality Action Plan, Local Monitoring Data and the EPUK Guidance "Land Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality May 2017).

Air quality impacts have been considered within the air quality assessment submitted in support of the application. The report considers whether the development will result in increased exposure to airborne pollutants, particularly as a result of additional traffic and changes to traffic flows. The assessment uses ADMS Roads to model NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} impacts from additional traffic associated with this development and the cumulative impact of committed development within the area.

A number of modelled scenarios have been considered within the assessment. These were:

- Scenario 1 – 2020 Baseline
- Scenario 2 – 2024 Baseline (with included committed developments)
- Scenario 3 – 2024 Baseline (with included committed developments) + Proposed Developments

The assessment concludes that the impact of the future development on the chosen receptors will be **negligible** with regards to NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations. None of the receptors are predicted to experience greater than a 1% increase relative to the AQAL. A sensitivity analysis has also been undertaken which makes the assumption that real world driving emissions will not reduce as much as predicted over the coming years. This can be taken as a “worst case scenario” assessment and the results of this also show that the impacts on the receptors are predicted to be **negligible**.

However, Crewe has three Air Quality Management Areas, and as such the cumulative impact of developments in the area is likely to make the situation worse, unless managed.

Poor air quality is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the public and also has a negative impact on the quality of life for sensitive individuals. It is therefore considered appropriate that mitigation should be sought in the form of direct measures to reduce the adverse air quality impact.

A development of this scale and duration would be expected to have an adequate demolition, construction and track out dust control plan implemented to protect sensitive receptors from impacts during this stage of the proposal and this is mentioned within the assessment as a form of mitigation.

Environmental Health recommend conditions are imposed to secure the provision of satisfactory Electric Vehicle Infrastructure within the development and the provision of ultra-low emission boilers to ensure that local air quality is not adversely impacted for existing and future residents.

Highways

Access

The proposed access serving the development from Sydney Road is a priority junction arrangement with a carriageway width of 5.5m. The Council’s Highway Officer advises that this is of an acceptable standard to serve 151 units. There is a 2.0m footway on the northern side of the access and a 3.0m ped/cycle path on the southern side that links with the existing facility at the pedestrian crossing.

The Highway Officer considers that the use of a priority junction to serve the development is a satisfactory junction arrangement and there is no requirement for a right turn lane to be provided. A capacity assessment of the junction has been undertaken in both 2021 and 2024 and it is shown to operate comfortably within capacity.

Development Impact

Policy LPS 6 requires that the improvements to Crewe Green roundabout (CGR) be completed prior to any work commencing on site. The Highway Officer advises that as part of the Council's design work for CGR the housing allocation for the site was included in committed developments to ensure that adequate capacity was provided in the roundabout design.

The improvement work at CGR has been completed and as such the Highway Officer has advised that the development can be satisfactorily accommodated. The site will generate only modest trip generation in the peak hour periods with 74 two-way am trips and 70 two-way pm trips, the distribution of these trips will be mainly south toward along Sydney Road to the CGR.

Design

A single point of access is acceptable to serve this level of development (151 units) and there is no requirement for a secondary access to be provided. The internal road layout has a looped main access road with the secondary roads connected in a similar nature. This design is promoted in regard to highway policy as it provides connectivity within the site.

The level of car parking provision for the units proposed is in accordance with CEC standards.

Accessibility

It is important that developments are readily accessible to non-car modes and measures are put in place to promote sustainable trips. It is proposed to provide a new 3m shared pedestrian/cycle track on the site frontage that links to the existing facilities at CGR, which is welcomed. However, the Highway Officer advises that the existing zebra crossing also needs to be upgraded to a Toucan Crossing to promote cycle trips to the site. It would also provide a safer pedestrian route for residents to access the public transport services that operate along the A534 Crewe Road.

Development Contribution

The Strategic Highway Manager has requested a financial contribution of £384,800 towards the Crewe Green Roundabout improvement scheme under the provisions of Policy LPS6. This is essentially on the basis that the Council has implemented and forward funded the CGR Improvement Scheme and the development of this site (LPS 6) has relied upon the capacity improvements at CGR being implemented to enable it to be acceptable in highway terms given the high levels of congestion previously.

However it is not considered that the requested contribution to the completed CGR scheme is justifiable and CIL compliant.

CELPS Policy LPS 6 states that the development of Crewe Green over the plan period will be achieved by...." the provision of land to [CEC] that is necessary to facilitate the delivery of highways improvements at Crewe Green Roundabout. Such improvements to be completed before development of the new homes starts on site". It was always envisaged that the land transfer would occur before the development, as reflected in the policy.

In addition, site specific principles of LPS 6 includes:

(b) “the development of this site will assist in the facilitation and delivery of highway improvements at Crewe Green roundabout”.

(h) “the development will be expected contributions to education provision and health infrastructure.

The supporting text of policy LPS 6 (at paragraph 15.106) states that “funding sources for improvements to the Crewe Green roundabout are a Local Growth Fund Grant and third-party developer contributions secured by the council”. In comparison, Policy LPS 7 (Sydney Road, Crewe) expressly references expected contributions to highway improvements at Crewe Green Roundabout.

As a result, Policy LPS 6 provides no justification for the requested contribution (£384,800). Paragraph 15.106 is supporting text, not policy and has to be read in context. The key context is the requirement for the provision of land, which has been provided to facilitate the CGR improvement. The land Transfer documents expressly acknowledge that CEC’s purchase of the land is for the purpose of completing the defined highways works and using it as a roundabout and associated highways land.

Summary

The proposed access is of a suitable design to serve the 151 units proposed and has been assessed regarding capacity to ensure that it can operate satisfactory. The proposed internal road layout conforms with CEC design standards and provides internal connectivity within the site.

The proposed accessibility improvements to provide a pedestrian/cycleway on the site frontage and the crossing upgrade to a Toucan on Sydney Road will and secured by conditions and be subject to a S278 Agreement

The proposal therefore raises no significant highway safety or traffic generation issues, in accordance with policy BE.3 of the CNRLP.

Public Rights of Way

It is proposed that pedestrian routes running through the open space connect with the existing Public Right of Way FP41 which runs along the private access road to Fields Farm adjacent to the northern site boundary.

No objections are raised by the Council’s Public Rights of Way Officer who and stresses the benefits of linking development to the footpath network. In particular attention is drawn to the National Planning Policy Framework (para 98) which states that “planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”

Concerns have been raised, including the proximity of the proposed NEAP to the connection to FP41 from the POS with the potential risk of young children wandering onto the PROW. However, the detailed design of the NEAP will incorporate perimeter fencing and gates.

It is not considered that the increased use of this public right of way would result in any unacceptable safety issues. Particularly as it is not uncommon for public footpaths to run along private tracks, such as in this case, which carries limited farm and domestic traffic associated with Fields Farm. Given the nature and low level of vehicular movements along the track, the Council's Highway officer has also advised that the footpath connection to the site and likely use of FP41 would not pose a highway safety problem.

There is also no evidence that the increased use of the FP41 by residents of the development, facilitated by the proposed link, would result in increased anti-social behaviour within the locality.

Flood Risk/ Drainage

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1, which is deemed to have a low probability of flooding. A site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) supports the application and The Council's Flood Risk Officer (LLFA) considers this satisfactorily demonstrates that the proposed development would not be subject to fluvial flooding, and would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

The Flood Risk Officer has raised no objection in principle to the proposed development and indicated drainage arrangements. It is however noted that an existing Land Drain within the site boundary and alterations to this existing culvert will be subject to a Land Drainage Consent application.

A condition is recommended requiring that full details of the surface water drainage scheme are submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development. Such details will need to include the specification, precise location and depth of the proposed attenuation tank located below the main area of public open space.

In summary, the Council's Flood Risk Team (LLFA) and United Utilities have not raised objections to the indicative drainage arrangements for the site, subject to a condition securing details of its detailed design. It is considered that the drainage system will satisfactorily address the development, without resulting in flooding within the locality or elsewhere because of surface water discharge.

The application proposals are therefore deemed to adhere with Policy SE13 of the CELPS.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

With regard to the economic role of sustainable development, the proposed development will help to maintain a flexible and responsive supply of land for housing as well as bringing direct and indirect economic benefits to the wider area including additional trade for local shops and businesses, jobs in construction and economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain.

OTHER MATTERS

Material planning considerations raised by representations have been considered by the relevant specialist officers of the Council, and in the preceding text. Other issues are addressed below.

COVID-19

Representations consider that the development should be designed to take account of issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, National planning policy has not been changed in the light of COVID19. The Government's focus has been to introduce greater planning flexibilities through changes to permitted development rules and the Use Classes Order so buildings and changes of use can take place without the need for a planning application. The Government has also made changes to enable planning decision making and consultation to continue. It is therefore considered that CELPS policies are generally well placed to respond to these challenges in terms of good placemaking and the need to create quality homes and neighbourhoods, amongst other things.

Consultation

Representations have raised concerns that inadequate consultation has been undertaken in respect of the application (20/3762N) and particularly during the pandemic. However, the planning application notification process is a statutory led process, with the requirements stated in the Development Management Procedure Order. The procedures governing the publicity of planning applications are also set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, and the Council has complied with these regulations and has exceeded them in this case

A further round of publicity concerning amendments to this planning application was undertaken prior to the Committee meeting for which there is no Statutory requirement and is therefore entirely at the Council's discretion. In view of the changes to the description of the development and also the additional information which had been submitted in support of the application, reasonable and proportionate neighbour re-notification and re-consultation of relevant consultees was undertaken.

S106 HEADS OF TERMS

Further to the comments above, a s106 agreement will be required to secure:

- 30% affordable housing
- Off-site habitat creation and contribution of £86,656
- Open space provision and management
- Education contributions of:
 - £292,850 (primary)
 - £343,196 (secondary)
 - £91,000 (SEN)
 - Total - £727,046
- Indoor sports contribution of £26,650
- Recreation and outdoor sport contribution
- Healthcare contribution of £149,652

CIL regulations

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 it is necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The provision of affordable housing, off-site ecological mitigation, indoor and outdoor sport (financial) mitigation, education (financial) and healthcare (financial) mitigation are all necessary, fair and reasonable to provide a sustainable form of development, to contribute towards sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and to comply with local and national planning policy.

The development would result in increased demand for primary school, secondary school and SEN places within the catchment area. In order to increase the capacity of the schools which would support the proposed development, a contribution towards primary, secondary and SEN school education is required based upon the number of units applied for. This is considered to be necessary and fair and reasonable in relation to the development.

All elements are necessary, directly relate to the development and are fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of the development

CONCLUSION

The principle of residential development on the site has been established through its allocation within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) under Policy LPS 6 (Crewe Green). Furthermore, the proposal for 151 dwellings is considered to meet the definition of “around 150 new homes” as set out under LPS 6. Although the north western corner of the site will be located within the Strategic Green Gap, this will only accommodate POS and consequently maintain its openness in accordance with the aims of CELPS Policy PG5.

The proposal provides the required amount of affordable housing with an appropriate mix of housing. The proposal achieves an appropriately designed residential development and its detailed design and layout accords with the overall principles for the development of the site and the CEC Design Guide. It achieves an acceptable relationship with the both character of the locality, without material harm to neighbouring residential amenity, and would provide sufficient amenity for the new occupants.

The proposals would not adversely affect the significance of heritage assets including the Crewe Green Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings nearby

The proposed accessed arrangement for the development will not adversely affect highway safety or result in traffic management issues on the local highway network.

Appropriate public open space including a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) will be provided.

Tree and hedgerow losses have been accepted and would be mitigated in the proposed landscaping of the site and through off-site habitat creation to achieve biodiversity net gain.

The impact on Air quality arising from the proposals and also the impact on the development from traffic noise can be satisfactorily mitigated

To satisfactorily address the impact on local services/facilities, contributions to education, healthcare provision and indoor/outdoor sport will be secured through a S106 agreement.

On this basis, the proposal is for sustainable development which would bring environmental, economic and social benefits and is therefore considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant policies of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan, and advice contained within the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE, Subject to conditions and the prior completion of a S106 Agreement to secure the following:

	Requirement	Triggers
Affordable Housing	30% of total dwellings to be provided (65% Affordable Rent / 35% Intermediate)	No more than 80% open market occupied prior to affordable provision within each phase. (dependent on agreement of Affordable Housing Statement)
Biodiversity Net Gain - Off site Ecological Mitigation	£86,656 toward off- site habitat creation in conjunction with Cheshire Wildlife Trust. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To offset the 5.91 habitat units: £76,698. - To offset the 0.42 hedgerow units: £9,758. 	Prior to commencement
Open Space	Management Scheme for POS and landscaped areas	Prior to occupation
Indoor Sport	£26,650 towards Crewe Lifestyle Centre	Prior to commencement

Recreation & Outdoor Sports Contribution	£1,000 per family (2+bed) dwelling and £500 per 2+ bed apartment.	Prior to commencement
Education	<p>Total - £727,046</p> <p>Primary £292,850 - towards the expansion at Hungerford Academy.</p> <p>Secondary £343,196 - towards mitigation measure as local schools are forecast to be cumulatively oversubscribed</p> <p>SEN £91,000 - Due to significant shortage of SEN placements across the Borough.</p>	<p>50% Prior to first occupation</p> <p>50% at occupation of 75th dwelling</p>
Healthcare	£149,652 towards development of Hungerford, Millcroft and Earnswood Medical Centres.	<p>50% Prior to first occupation</p> <p>50% at occupation of 75th dwelling</p>

1. Commencement of development (3 years)
2. Development in accordance with approved plans
3. Details of materials and finishes
4. Details of Surfacing materials
5. Details of Levels
6. Submission of Landscaping scheme
7. Implementation of landscaping scheme
8. Design detail, specification and implementation of NEAP and play area/features of Pocket Park
9. Details for the provision of growing space/community gardens
10. Submission of Landscape Management Plan
11. Details of Boundary treatment and retaining structures
12. Tree Protection
13. Details of lighting – minimise impact on bats
14. Safeguarding of nesting birds
15. Development in accordance with Ecological Assessment Version 2
- Submission of strategy to *secure* features to enhance biodiversity
16. Details of surface water drainage scheme to be submitted, approved and implemented
17. Development in accordance with Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)
18. Provision of Toucan crossing
19. Implementation improvements to cycleway/footways

- 20. Provision of Electric Vehicle infrastructure**
- 21. Provision of Ultra Low Emission Boilers**
- 22. Contaminated Land – Remedial scheme to be carried out in accordance with Enabling Works Remediation Strategy**
- 23. Contaminated land – works to stop if any unexpected contamination is discovered on site**
- 24. Contaminated land - imported soil**
- 25. Implementation of noise mitigation**
- 26. Submission, approval, and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**
- 27. Details of cycle storage**
- 28. Details of Bin Stores**
- 29. Detailed scheme to secure southern parking courts**
- 30. Removal of permitted development rights (Part 1 Classes A-E)**

In order to give proper effect to the Strategic Planning Board's intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the 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.

