

Application No: 22/2499N

Location: Land Off Minshull New Road and FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON

Proposal: Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale with respect to 304 dwellings on Parcels C, D, E, F and G - approved outline application 19/2178N.

Applicant: Vistry Partnership Ltd

Expiry Date: 25-Oct-2022

## **SUMMARY**

This application proposes the Reserved Matters for several Parcels of land, approved in outline and subject to a Section 106 legal agreement, under application reference 19/2178N. It is one of four separate applications being considered on this agenda.

These Parcels (C to G) make up the central part of the site, with Vistry Partnership being the applicant here. A number of changes have been made to the application since it was submitted, with the latest amendments being received at the time of writing this report.

Highways have raised no objections, subject to some points of detail being agreed by condition, and an informative. The PROW Team have no objections and the proposed footpath/cycleway provision is considered to be good.

The majority of the Ecology and Landscaping issues identified in this report have now been resolved, and although there are some outstanding matters to do with tree impacts, it is anticipated most of these can be addressed and Members will be updated on this matter.

Extensive discussions have been had regarding urban design and the Council's Urban Design Officer now feels the proposals have improved significantly and are therefore supported in design terms.

The Council's Flood Risk (LLFA) team have similarly been involved in detailed discussions with the applicant and detailed replies to matters raised have been submitted by the applicant. The LLFA's latest comments were awaited at the time of writing this report, but the main issues have now appear to have been addressed, and if necessary outstanding matters can be conditioned.

There are no objections on the grounds of affordable housing, public open space, residential standards, or environmental matters.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve with conditions

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

This application relates to a series of sites within the central area of this larger development site in Leighton West. All the sites are located in an area bounded by Minshull New Road to the East, Flowers Lane to the north, and to Middlewich Road and Leighton Hospital to the west. The site is broken down into the following parcels:

Parcel C & D: This site runs from the public footpath separating this site from development parcels to the south (considered under application 22/2476N) northwards along Minshull Road to Flowers Lane. The western site boundary would consist of an open area defined by the overhead power lines.

Parcel E: This is the western most site south of the hospital and wrapping around an existing farm complex which fronts Middlewich Road.

Parcel F: This parcel of land lies closest to the main entrance to Leighton Hospital, and would be sited adjacent to the commercial site which formed part of the overall outline approval. The site would have a frontage to the new road and back onto the open area referenced above.

Parcel G: This most northerly of these sites lies to the east of the hospital and has boundaries to Flowers Lane and a new road running south west.

There are hedgerows with some trees to the site boundaries, and some scattered trees with the sites themselves, however they are limited in number and the sites are generally open in character.

There are no conservation areas on or adjoining the site, and there are no listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.

As noted above Leighton footpath FP3 forms the southern boundary of Parcel C and Leighton footpath FP1 runs north of Parcel G, although neither cross the development areas of the sites.

All sites fall in Flood Zone 1 – Least risk of flooding.

## **PROPOSAL**

The application title reads:

“Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale with respect to 304 dwellings on Parcels C, D, E, F and G - approved outline application 19/2178N.”

Reserved Matters approval is sought for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout & Scale.

The site makes up the northern part of LPS4 - the southern part being applied for under reference 22/2476N also on this agenda).

The main elements of the proposed development consist of:

Vehicular access is proposed at various points along the new road being built as part of the North West Crewe Package referenced below. Pedestrian access is proposed at various points to the individual parcels.

304 Residential Units (Use Class C3) broken down as follows:

- 273 Private dwellings a mix of 2, 3, and 4 beds
- 31 Affordable dwellings a mix of 2 & 3 beds

Number of Beds	Number of Units	%
<b>Private Dwellings</b>		
<b>2</b>	46	17%
<b>3</b>	104	38%
<b>4</b>	123	45%
<b>Affordable Dwellings</b>		
<b>2</b>	21	68%
<b>3</b>	10	32%

*Table 3: Parcels C- G Schedule of Accommodation*

Finally, a series of play areas are proposed as part of these phases of the development, with a concentration in the proposed central linear open area which passes the sites, referenced above, which would form the main areas of open space etc applied for in application referenced 22/3228N also on this agenda.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was submitted with the outline application.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

Outline planning permission was granted under:

19/2178N Outline planning approval for the development of up to 850 residential units (Use Class C3), land reserved for new primary school, a local centre (Use Class A1-A4, AA, B1a, C3 and D1) and associated infrastructure and open space. Land off Minshull New Road and FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON APPROVED Nov 2021

In addition, planning approval was granted for a series of Highway works in the immediate vicinity:

18/6118N A proposed series of highway infrastructure measures and associated works, in the Leighton area of Crewe, and known as the North West Crewe Package - Land Between Flowers Lane Minshull New Road The A530 Middlewich Road And North Of, PYMS LANE, CREWE APPROVED March 2019

Finally, this is one of four reserved matters applications submitted for Leighton West. All are on this agenda. The others are:

22/2476N Reserved Matters application for approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following Outline approval 19/2178N for erection of 304 dwellings on Parcels A and B. Land Off Minshull New Road And, FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON

22/2500N Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale with respect to 200 dwellings on Parcel H. An Environmental Statement was submitted at the time of the outline application.. Land Off Minshull New Road And, FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON

22/3228N Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale with respect to green infrastructure and open space across the outline application area - approved outline application 19/2178N. Land Off Minshull New Road And, FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON

Other approvals under LPS 5, to the north include:

16/2373N Outline application for the construction of up to 400 dwellings with garaging; parking; public open space; landscaping; new vehicle and pedestrian accesses; highway works, foul and surface water drainage infrastructure and all ancillary works. - Land At, Flowers Lane, Leighton APPROVED January 2018.

20/3210N Reserved matters approval sought for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale. following outline permission for the construction of up to 400 dwellings with garaging; parking; public open space; landscaping; new vehicle and pedestrian accesses; highway works, foul and surface water drainage infrastructure and all ancillary works. Land At, FLOWERS LANE, LEIGHTON APPROVED July 2021

This development is now on site.

Finally, there are numerous approvals at Leighton Hospital, the most relevant recent approval being a car park on the north eastern side fronting Flowers Lane.

## **POLICIES**

### **Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (LPS) – 2010-2030**

PG1 – Development Strategy  
PG6 – Open Countryside  
SD1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East  
SD2 - Sustainable Development Principles  
IN1 – Infrastructure  
IN2 – Developer Contributions  
SC1 – Leisure and recreation  
Sc2 – Indoor and outdoor recreation  
SE 1 - Design  
SE 2 - Efficient Use of Land  
SE3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
SE 4 - The Landscape  
SE 5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland  
SE 6 - Green Infrastructure  
SE 13 - Flood Risk and Water Management  
CO1 – Sustainable Travel and Transportation

LPS4 – Leighton West

LPS5 – Leighton

## **Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) 2022**

GEN 1 - Design principles  
GEN 4 - Recovery of forward-funded infrastructure costs  
ENV 1 - Ecological network  
ENV 2 - Ecological implementation  
ENV 5 – Landscaping  
ENV 6 - Trees, hedgerows and woodland implementation  
ENV 7 - Climate change  
ENV 14 - Light pollution  
ENV 16 - Surface water management and flood risk  
HOU 1 - Housing mix  
HOU 8 - Space, accessibility and wheelchair housing standards  
HOU 13 - Residential standards  
HOU 14 - Housing density  
HOU 15 - Housing delivery  
INF 1 - Cycleways, bridleways and footpaths  
INF 3 - Highway safety and access  
INF 6 - Protection of existing and proposed infrastructure  
INF 9 – Utilities  
REC 3 - Open space implementation  
REC 5 - Community facilities

### **Neighbourhood Plans:**

Crewe has not made any progress towards making a Neighbourhood Plan, and Minshall Vernon is at Regulation 7 Stage: Designated Neighbourhood Area, but at this stage can be given very little weight.

### **Other Material Considerations**

The National Planning Policy Framework

### **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**United Utilities:** Whilst originally objecting to the application, they have now confirmed the applicant's more recent submissions have addressed their concerns and they raise no objections subject to informatives concerning asset protection.

**SP Energy Networks:** No objections are raised, but they remind the applicant of their health & safety responsibilities around the significant electricity infrastructure which passes through the site, and the safe working practices that should be employed.

**Cadent Gas** – No objections subject to informatives

**CEC Head of Strategic Infrastructure:** No objections subject to conditions and an informative.

**CEC Housing:** Whilst originally raising objections to the application, as there was uncertainty about the affordable numbers and mix, following the submission of additional supporting information Housing have now confirmed they have no objections to the application.

**CEC Public Rights of Way:** The PROW Team have confirmed no PROW is affected by the development.

**CEC Environmental Health:** No objections are made, subject to reminding the applicant of their responsibilities to discharge the conditions under the outline approval relating to amenity and air quality, and the contaminated land team recommends a further condition. Informatives are recommended.

**CEC Flood Risk Manager:** Extensive discussions have taken place and updated comments are awaited at the time of writing the report.

**ANSA:** Now that the range of facilities has been clarified across the site they raise no objections, however they recommend the detailed design of facilities is conditioned.

**Archaeology:** No objections are made but a condition is recommended as set out in the report below.

## **VIEWS OF THE TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS**

**Minshull Vernon and District Parish Council:** No comments received

**Crewe Town Council:** “The committee objects on the following grounds:

- I. That the site does not provide for adequate amenity and play facilities for the scale of development
- II. That the scale of the development will present an unsustainable burden on social infrastructure (e.g. schools, health)
- III. That net biodiversity gain has not been established or evidenced, which therefore does not meet Cheshire East Planning policy”

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

Four local residents have written in raising the following issues:

- All houses should be built to high environmental standards incorporating heat pumps solar panels etc.
- Homogeneity of design – what about opportunities for self build?
- Concern about traffic congestion issues in the area
- Need for community facilities and shops in the area

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

The site is allocated in Local Plan policy LPS 4 and has the benefit of outline planning permission as set out above. The outline set out the requirements for the site, and the Section 106 contributions/requirements. The policy reads:

## LPS 4 Leighton West, Crewe

Development at Leighton West will result in the creation of a new sustainable neighbourhood to support Leighton Hospital and provide a key site for the development of an automotive research, development and supply hub, in partnership with Bentley Motors which is located in very close proximity to the site. The development of Leighton West over the Local Plan Strategy period will be achieved through:

1. Contributions to health infrastructure and the provision of land adjacent to Leighton Hospital, for its future expansion, to ensure that the future health care needs of the area can be met;
2. The delivery of around 850 new homes (at a variety of densities). The design, density and scale of the development should reflect the fact that the site lies in a transitional location between the higher density urban area and the rural area. The surrounding development is predominantly suburban and the development of the site should reflect this. The development of the site will be masterplan-led, including a design code, which will consider its location, constraints and opportunities;
3. The inclusion of key worker housing, for the employees of Leighton Hospital;
4. The delivery of a new mixed-use local centre that will serve Leighton Hospital and nearby residents including:
  - i. Provision of retail appropriate to meet local needs;
  - ii. Community facilities;
  - iii. Public House;
  - iv. Children's day nursery;
  - v. A new primary school; and
  - vi. Leisure facilities;
5. Around 5 ha of additional employment land located at the southern end of the site including a science/energy park which could include advanced/automotive engineering and manufacturing;
6. The incorporation of green infrastructure, including:
  - i. Green corridor;
  - ii. Allotments;
  - iii. Open space including formal sports pitches, multi use games area, outdoor gym, equipped children's play space and facilities for teenagers;
7. A new bus interchange for the hospital and nearby residential areas;
8. On land to the north of Pym's Lane, there is potential for a science/energy park and delivery of a key site for the development of an automotive research, development and supply hub, working in partnership with Bentley Motors. This area also has the potential to include a geothermal plant and district heating hub;
9. The widening and/or realignment of Smithy Lane, to provide access to the site and improved access to Leighton Hospital for emergency vehicles and suitable footpath and cycle lanes;
10. A package of network improvements to provide improved access to Leighton Hospital and surrounding residential development including emergency vehicles and suitable footpath and cycle lanes; and
11. An improved 'emergency portal' for blue light vehicles being able to access the hospital's Accident and Emergency Department from Smithy Lane.

Outline approval has been granted for the principle of the development for which detailed consent under this reserved matters application are now sought. The application is considered to comply with the relevant elements of this policy.



## Highway Implications

This site forms part of the local plan allocation LPS4 and already has outline approval where access was determined including the wider highways impact and any mitigation required. This current proposal is the reserved matters for the several parcels of development to the east and south of the hospital.

The various parcels of land will be accessed off the new highway infrastructure approved in a previous application. The streets directly off the approved highway infrastructure will have adequate width to cater for the development traffic with street widths decreasing the further into the site they are but remaining within adoptable requirements.

Parcel F is adjacent to what will be the local centre which will contain some commercial units but details of this will be subject to a separate application. The carriageway serving this and the adjacent apartments and residential units is sufficient, and includes footways for pedestrian, including connections to the cycle network that will run through the site. There does not appear to be any cycle parking for the apartments, and this should be conditioned.

The largest parcel of land on this application is that which runs through what is currently Smithy Ln and south parallel to Minshull New Rd. The main road through this will include raised tables at various locations to assist in managing vehicle speeds. It will also include pedestrian connections to Minshull New Rd to the east and to the new local centre to the west.

Smithy Ln will become a cycle/pedestrian route for a large part of it as shown on the plans but there are a number of statutory undertakers that will need access onto here including emergency access at all times. The entrance to Smithy Ln has been designed to therefore allow access but is discouraged from general use, and in addition there will be a TRO installed allowing for access only.

Plot 16 has no turning area and a long reversing distances and this should be conditioned. A toucan crossing, across the new section of highway, from the new local center to the hospital is required and this can also be conditioned. A small number of property driveway lengths will need increased slightly to prevent parked cars overhanging the highway. This is a minor amendment and can be conditioned.

### **Public Rights of Way/Cycle routes:**

The PROW Team have confirmed that no PROW is affected by this application.

In terms of wider pedestrian/cycle access there are two main elements of provision. Firstly, there are the pedestrian/cycle routes which run alongside the new roads which make up the new highway network in the area and provide the primary access to all these parcels. These help link the sites north-south, to the hospital and beyond to Parcel H adjacent to the proposed school and associated open space facilities. Links to Crew Town are also improved.

Reenforcing these highway links are those now proposed through these applications including the main footpath/cycle ways following the green infrastructure corridor north south and linkages with individual parcels linking residents eastwards towards Crewe Town Centre and across the site itself.

The overall provision is considered to excellent and should encourage residents to walk and cycle. In line with policy objectives.



## **Landscape**

The Council's Landscape Architect makes the following observations:

Parcel C No objections.

Parcel D No objections but he would prefer the bulking out of the tree planting in the green space next to the junction to provide a small green space which is screened from the large road network.

Parcel E No objections but the officer finds the front entrances and footpath layouts to units 15-20 peculiar and in his view a touch poorly laid out with the front access to properties being through a small fenced ally. Likewise unit 1. Planting close to the roads should be bulked up and maybe the introduction of some earthwork bunding to help soften any carriageway noise.

Parcel F Some of the boundary planting could do with bulking up.

Parcel D No objections but the officer would prefer the bulking out of the tree planting in the green space next to the junction to provide a small green space which is screened from the large road network.

Parcel E No objections but the officer finds the front entrances and footpath layouts to units 15-20 peculiar and in his view a touch poorly laid out with the front access to properties being through a small fenced ally. Likewise unit 1. Planting close to the roads should be bulked up and maybe the introduction of some earthwork bunding to help soften any carriageway noise.

Parcel F Some of the boundary planting is a touch underwhelming and sparse, however the officer accepts that the wayleaves of the wires has an effect.

Parcel G No objections but the officer has concerns regarding the wider footpath network design and integration with surrounding parcels both proposed and future. Something that has been tabled with the applicant team in a recent meeting that is considered underwhelming and sparse, however it is accepted that the wayleaves of the wires has an effect.

Parcel G No objections but the officer has concerns regarding the wider footpath network design and integration with surrounding parcels both proposed and future. Something that has been tabled with the applicant.

Following this meeting, the applicant has looked at these comments and has submitted a Landscape Masterplan which clarifies a number of strategic issues, in particular the footpaths which the Landscape Architect was particularly concerned about. He now feels the general layout is acceptable and approach is acceptable, but that detailed landscaping should be conditioned.

## **Trees**

An amended Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and an updated Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) has been submitted further to the earlier forestry comments. Clarification has been provided regards several of the issues raised as requiring more detail and explanation.

It is understood that tree and hedgerow losses which have occurred since the preliminary survey was carried out at Outline have arisen because of Highway Infrastructure projects and the supporting plans are now annotated to confirm where this is believed to be the case.

The updated AIA and AMS has now been broken down by phase of development and makes provision to show all trees including those presently shown for removal shown by tree quality category colour with RPAs, so that impacts can be better understood. Some explanatory notes have been provided regards the pre agreed loss of TPO'd trees and those trees already removed for the highway's infrastructure projects.

The AIA indicates that of the trees surveyed across the wider site that 1 individual high quality A Category tree, 3 individual moderate quality B Category trees, 4 individual low-quality C Category trees and 1 poor quality U Category tree as well as a combined total of 112 linear metres from 2 hedgerows are proposed for removal to accommodate the proposals associated within Parcels C, D, E, F & G of the development. An updated AMS (Version 3) has also been provided.

The submitted Assessment of Important Hedgerows considers the whole of the site and has not been broken down to impacts on the submitted applications. Twelve hedgerows (H1-H12) have been identified as important in accordance with criteria 5a of the Hedgerow Regulations.

#### 5. The hedgerow:

a) is recorded in a document held at a Record Office as an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure Acts

Hedgerow 1 is also importance in accordance criteria 1.

1. Any hedgerow that marks the boundary or part of the boundary, of at least one historic parish or township; and for this purpose, "historic" means existing before 1850.

The assessment confirms that sections of hedgerow H2, H5, H6, H7 AND H8B0 are to be removed as part of proposed development for Northwest Crewe Package and includes the removal of sections for Highway works. Additional removal of H3 is required for a bus route and access. The overall development will arise in the partial loss of hedgerows which form a 19th Century field system but most of the hedgerows are shown for retention where possible and the report has concluded that the overall harm is; 'less than substantial'. Mitigation is proposed of 2,300m of new hedgerows. As hedgerows have been found to be 'Important' under the above referenced criteria of the Regulations, the loss of the hedgerows to accommodate the development is a material consideration in the determination of the application although it appears that sufficient compensatory planting is being offered across the whole development area.

Having appraised the amended detail and proposals identified it's no clearer as to what the rationale is behind the loss of moderate quality B Category trees; T129 in Parcel C. High quality A cat tree (T95) is shown for removal but given the proximity of new adopted highway it is accepted that's its retention is not feasible.

Initial observations are as follows; the relationship between high quality A Category tree (T90) and moderate quality B Cat tree (T91) in Parcel G and plots 16 and 20-22 could arise in shading and dominance issues to the dwellings which are sited approximately 12 metres from the trees.

Further detail should be provided as to why tree T129 could not be retained as it would be useful to understand why minor reconfiguration of footpaths and engineer designed solutions are not possible to

facilitate the retention of this tree. The updated AMS does show all trees according to their surveyed quality category and some projected RPAs although these are not present for trees shown for removal.

The AMS as submitted does include a tree protection plan, make provision for a methodology for working in relation to retained trees, and identifies areas where special measures would be implemented in respect of minor root pruning and construction of engineer designed surfaces. Notwithstanding this, considering the tree losses which have already been carried out because of the Highway improvements and further losses proposed arising from this layout, opportunities exist to retain further trees. Separation between trees T90 and 91 and the closest plot should be increased and minor amendments to the landscape layout considered in respect of pedestrian pathways and trees shown for removal to see if additional moderate quality trees such as T129 could be retained and to provide more confidence that the most significant trees on the site will have a sustainable relationship with residential property in the longer term.

The applicant has been looking at the impacts on trees identified above as part of the revised plans, as whilst the Council's Tree Officer has not formally objected to the application on the basis of tree impacts, at least some of these impacts would seem to be avoidable. At the time of writing this report the applicant was discussing amendments with the Council's Tree Officer which would allow for the retention/better protection of more trees, and Members will be updated on this matter in an Update Report.

## **Ecology**

A number of conditions were attached to the outline consent at this site.

Condition 9 Ecological Monitoring Strategy:

Monitoring proposals are required by this condition are included in the submitted Habitat Management Plan TEP Version 3.0 dated 10.4.24.

Condition 11 Detailed design of attenuation ponds:

No detailed designs of attenuation ponds have been submitted with this reserved matters application. The applicant has confirmed that no attenuation ponds are proposed under this reserved matters application.

Condition 12 Updated hedgerow impact assessment, mitigation and compensation strategy:

The submitted biodiversity assessment (January 2024) however advises that 2.6km of hedgerow would be lost across the entire outline site under the various reserved matters applications, with 2.17km of new hedgerow planting being provided. The originally submitted BNG metric concluded that the reserved matters applications would result in a net loss of 10.41% in respect of hedgerow biodiversity.

It was advised that the development proposals must ensure that the extent of hedgerow retained as part of the development is maximised and that any unavoidable losses of hedgerow are adequately compensated for by appropriate native species hedgerow planting. A greater length of replacement planting to that lost will be required to fully address the loss of biodiversity from hedgerow removal. Ornamental hedgerow planning is not acceptable as compensation for the loss of native species hedgerow.

Following the submission of further information to clarify the impacts of this development as opposed to losses for the road scheme – which appears to have caused the confusion, the Council's Ecologist comments:

“The proposed reserved matters application combined will result in the loss of 0.38km of hedgerow, including lengths of hedgerow considered to be ‘Important’ under the Hedgerow Regulation. The BNG metric has been undertaken on the basis of 2.17km of new hedgerow planting being provided on site. This is based on PGLA Landscape Masterplan Rev 11.

The proposed hedgerow planting would result in a net gain of hedgerows of 30.57%. Therefore, if the loss of the existing hedgerows is considered unavoidable sufficient planting would be provided to compensate for that lost. This would however be dependent upon the reserved matters application being brought forward in accordance with the landscape master plan.”

This masterplan would, should planning permission be granted, form one of the approved plans.

Condition 25 Updated badger and barn owl survey and mitigation strategy:

Acceptable updated barn owl and badger survey and mitigation strategy has been submitted as required by this condition.

Condition 26 Details of any proposed lighting. The lighting strategy should reflect the Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note:

The covering letter from the Agent refers to a lighting strategy being included in the submitted ‘Ecological Monitoring Strategy’ however an ‘Ecological Monitoring Strategy’ does not appear to have been submitted in support of this application. The applicant proposes that a detailed design for the lighting (in accordance with the strategy) be submitted under condition 22 prior to installation of the lighting.

Condition 27 25 year habitat management plan:

An acceptable Management plan has been submitted (Habitat Management Plan TEP Version 3.0 dated 10.4.24).

Condition 28 The first reserved matters application shall be supported by a strategy for the incorporation of features to enhance the biodiversity value of the proposed development:

A Biodiversity Impact Assessment (TEP June 2022) which covers the full extent of the outline planning consent subject to the various current reserved matters applications was previously submitted in support of this reserved matters application. A revised BNG metric dated 22/1/24 has also now been submitted. The metric includes measurements for the areas of various habitats to be provided on site. The area of species rich grassland provided on site is less than that required by condition 28 as is the extent of hedgerow planting. The area of cornfield annuals and wet grassland is however greater than required by condition 28.

The assessment concludes that the proposed development (based on all of the reserved matters applications) would deliver a net gain for area-based habitats of 12%, but originally a net loss of -10.41% of hedgerow biodiversity. This has subsequently been amended as discussed above.

Proposals for the provision of bird and bat boxes and gaps in garden fences have been submitted as required by this condition. It must however be ensured that bat/bird boxes are proposed to be attached to 30% of consented dwellings in accordance with the Cheshire East Design Guide.

Detailed method statements for the creation of species rich grassland and cornfield annual meadow habitats are outstanding. These must be submitted prior to the discharge of this condition.

### Bat survey

Two additional trees have been identified as requiring removal under this series of reserved matters application (T82 and T122). Application 22/3228n is supported by a letter from the applicant's ecological consultant advising that a bat survey/assessment of these trees is required. One of these trees however appears to fall within the boundary of 22/2499N. A further inspection of these trees has been undertaken and the trees have been found to be unsuitable for roosting bats. No further action in respect of roosting bats is therefore required.

### Additional conditions

If reserved matters consent is granted a condition would be required to safeguard nesting Birds.

Whilst ideally all matters would have been resolved now, outstanding matters relating to the discharge of conditions highlighted above, will be picked up in their subsequent discharge.

### **Urban design**

The development has been assessed as a whole (considering the four Reserved Matters (RM) applications collectively) using the Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) considerations. Performance is summarised in the table below. A more detailed commentary in relation to each of the considerations has also been provided, but not included within this report.

Integrating into the Neighbourhood				Distinctive Places				Streets for All			
1 Natural Connections	2 Walking, cycling public transport	3 Facilities and services	4 Homes for everyone	5 Making most of what's there	6 Memorable character	7 Well defined streets/spaces	8 Easy to find your way around	9 Healthy streets	10 Cycle and car parking	11 Green and blue infrastructure	12 Back of pavement, front of home
G	G	G	G	G	A	G	G	A	A	A	A

### **Summary/conclusions**

This is a large and complex scheme compounded by the submission of several separate ARM applications, prepared jointly by the two developers. Significant input has been necessary to improve the quality of the originally submitted proposals. Key aspects are:

- Securing a more responsive, forward-thinking approach to the design of the local centre and other parcels within proximity to Leighton Hospital.
- Ensuring the residential component of the local centre acts as a positive lead for the design and development of the future commercial area including securing detailed coding to help guide the design of the commercial area and associated public realm.
- Developing a character area approach for the remainder of the scheme to ensure a degree of continuity and consistency between developers but also some localised individuality (albeit this could have been taken a little further).
- Ensuring there is a clear street hierarchy, with tree lined avenues within the larger parcels and stronger, more formal gateways into smaller ones, with a supplementary hierarchy of streets and spaces, appropriately detailed and surfaced to suit their function.
- Ensuring appropriate levels of landscaping along the edges of development parcels.
- Inclusion of feature spaces within layouts to help reinforce the social function of streets, better handle concentrations of parking and to create points of incident and interest.
- Seeking to integrate existing landscape features within the layout whilst accepting the constraints imposed in certain locations and the need to connect to adjoining developments and the approved highway improvement scheme (Northwest Crewe package currently under construction).

- Ensuring the inclusion of blue infrastructure as a positive element of the place creation adhering to principles within the recently adopted SuDS Design Guide SPD, with a series of basins, swales and ditches for the outlying development areas and within the main central area of POS, and a more urban approach for the local centre, including living surfaces to buildings and structures, rain gardens and channels/rills within streets and spaces.
- Improved connectivity within the development and to the surrounding area with integrated public rights of way, combined footpath/cycleway routes and stronger interrelationship and connectivity to, within and along the central main POS area defined by the pylon route.
- Enhancements to the strategic approach to landscape design, including reflecting and building upon the character of the spaces, integrating existing landscape features, provision of varied play and leisure opportunity and inclusion of local food growing, including a central allotment area, orchard and on the doorstep, more informal, food growing within and adjacent to housing.

Whilst in certain respects the design response could have gone further/been more creative, the work invested has enhanced the scheme considerably from the initial submissions and will lead to a better quality and more cohesive development that responds more favourably to policy LPS4 (Parcels A-G) and LPS5 (Parcel H) of the CELPS, local design policy and guidance and the ambitions of the spatial design code submitted with 19/2178N. The proposals are therefore supported in design terms.

## **Residential standards**

As the proposed development of these parcels are well separated from adjacent housing areas on Minshull New Road, and to a farm complex to the west there are no issues with separation distances in this regard. Parcel F adjoins the hospital complex, but at this point there is an area of parking – separated by an established hedgerow so it is not considered there are any significant issues here.

Within the development parcels themselves the majority of the properties meet or exceed the required separation distances, and in the few cases where they don't the properties are slightly off set from one another or there are good urban design reasons for it.

## **Environmental Impacts**

Environmental Protection have confirmed they have no objections to the application with regards to general amenity (including noise) and air quality subject to satisfactory discharge of the relevant conditions on the outline and informatives. The contaminated land team comment that they have no objection to the application subject to the following comments with regard to contaminated land:

- RoC Consulting Phase 1 Desktop Study was submitted in support of the outline application.
- The report identifies a number of potential pollutant linkages that require further investigation. The report recommends that a Phase II investigation is conducted at the site.
- A rigorous monitoring-based ground gas risk assessment will be required to assess the potential impact of ground-gas migration from the landfills adjacent south.

As such, and in accordance with the NPPF, the Contaminated Team recommends that that conditions, reasons and notes be attached should planning permission be granted.



## **Flood Risk/Drainage**

Extensive discussions have taken place with the applicant's drainage engineers, with matters of relating to drainage calculations, finished floor levels, management arrangements and details of a pumping station being discussed. The applicant has submitted detailed replies to all matters raised, but at the time of writing this report the Flood Risk Manager's updated comments are awaited. It is considered that if there are any outstanding matters raised, they could be conditioned.

## **Public Open space**

The public open space provision was set out at the outline stage and captured by the Section 106 Agreement. Overall, the site includes the following facilities:

- Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Teen Shelter & Play
- Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP)
- An orchard
- Allotments
- Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP)
- Local Areas of Play (LAP) - 6 No.
- Areas of outdoor gym equipment
- Areas of incidental open space

Whilst many of these facilities are included with the common areas of green infrastructure which runs through the centre of the site, and along the northern boundary some are located within individual parcels where it was deemed preferable to give easier access for residents.

For parcels C, D, E, F & G no play area/facilities are proposed in these (relatively small) housing areas, however immediately adjacent in the area of green infrastructure that adjoin all the sites are the proposed allotments, orchard, areas of outdoor gym equipment, areas of incidental open space and 3 LPA's.

Due to the way the information was presented, ANSA where initially unclear what provision was being made, however following the submission of a Landscape Masterplan which sets it out more clearly they have confirmed they have no objections to the provision as submitted. There are however detailed design issues with the individual areas of provision, so ANSA have asked for the detailed design of each of the items listed above (incidental open space excluded) to be subject of a condition.

## **Affordable Housing**

The Section 106 Agreement attached to the outline approval for the site required 10% of the houses on site to be affordable – based on a viability appraisal which was independently assessed at the time. The policy compliant 35% Shared Ownership/65% Affordable Rent was also required.

Now that the applicant has clarified the provision, by the submission of updated Affordable Housing Statements for the different parcels which shows the number of units in each tenure, the number of beds and room sizes, and how they are laid out on site Housing have confirmed they are happy with the proposals. In these parcels 31 units are shown 10% of the 304 units proposed. All the properties meet the NDSS.



It is now considered that the affordable housing provision is acceptable.

## **Archaeology**

Commenting on the applications as a whole, the Archaeological Unit write that this application is for a significant development on the land off Minshull New Road and Flowers Lane, on the outskirts of Crewe. This substantial residential and landscaping development will have a dramatic impact on the landscape and any below ground remains which may be present.

After reviewing the extensive supporting documentation for this application, which included a Heritage Statement authored by Orion Heritage, and reviewing the historical information held on Cheshire Historic Environment Record. It has become clear that there are archaeological considerations which will need to be addressed for this development.

Previous consultations provided by APAS have offered some insight into the potential archaeological remains that this proposed development will impact. A previous officer offered advice relating to application 18/6118N in 2018 noting that there are two township boundaries within the proposed development area. Furthermore the previous officer noted that the presence of the WWII crash site within the proposed development area. Mark recommended archaeological mitigation to address the township boundaries.

Another officer offered comments in 2017 in relation to a pre application consultation, and identified the presence of tithe buildings within the East of the application area, relating to Finger Post Farm. The officer at the time recommended a programme of archaeological mitigation to address these tithe buildings.

The historical statement report supplied by Orion Archaeology indicates in section 10.79 that there are no substantial archaeological remains and therefore there “No archaeological mitigation is warranted” The report does note the presence of the WWII crash site, but neglects to mention the two township boundaries, the tithe buildings in association with Finger Post Farm, or the tithe buildings located to the West of the development area. Subsequently, there clearly is a requirement for archaeological mitigation in order to address and record these tithe buildings and township boundaries.

The area of the WWII crash site, “The Wellington X3547” was recorded as crashed within the study area on 20th of March 1943. Any work in the vicinity of the crash site will require a Ministry of Defence license. There has been a previous license issued for this site, relating to the construction of the spine road, however, this has since expired and the applicant will need to apply for a new license in relation to this current proposed development. It is advised that this could form part of the program of archaeological mitigation and the license obtained on behalf of the applicant by the contract archaeological unit.

Given the presence of the tithe buildings, township boundaries and the crash site, it is clear that despite the comments in 10.79 of the Heritage Statement, there is a requirement for archaeological mitigation for this proposed development. This mitigation should include the following:

- Formal section across the northern Township boundary,
- Strip and Map of the tithe buildings associated with Finger Post Farm
- Strip and Map of the tithe buildings located in the West of the development area
- A License obtained from the Ministry of Defence

These works can be undertaken by an archaeological contractor and may be secured by condition.

## **Other matters**

Crewe Town Council and residents have expressed concern about the lack of facilities in the area. Although this was addressed at the outline stage of the application(s) the local plan allocation (as set out above in the policy section), sets out what is required, namely a “new mixed-use local centre”. These reserved matters applications only seek permission for residential development – with associated POS/Landscaping etc, but clearly show the school site adjacent to parcel H on the most northerly site, and the local centre site adjacent to the southern side of the hospital adjacent to parcel F.

In addition, residents have expressed the need for strong environmental measures to be installed in new residences. Whilst this is understood, the environmental credentials of new build houses are controlled by current building regulations not planning.

Finally, one resident asked why self-build was not included in the proposals. Unfortunately, while the Council in principle supports an element of self-build homes, there is no requirement for all developments to contribute to this provision.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This application proposes the Reserved Matters for several Parcels of land, approved in outline and subject to a Section 106 legal agreement, under application reference 19/2178N. It is one of four separate applications being considered on this agenda.

These Parcels (C to G) make up the central part of the site, with Vistry Partnership being the applicant here. A number of changes have been made to the application since it was submitted, with the latest amendments being received at the time of writing this report.

Highways have raised no objections, subject to some points of detail being agreed by condition, and an informative. The PROW Team have no objections and the proposed footpath/cycleway provision is considered to be good.

The majority of the Ecology and Landscaping issues identified in this report have now been resolved, and although there are some outstanding matters to do with tree impacts, it is anticipated most of these can be addressed and Members will be updated on this matter.

Extensive discussions have been had regarding urban design and the Council’s Urban Design Officer now feels the proposals have improved significantly and are therefore supported in design terms.

The Council’s Flood Risk (LLFA) team have similarly been involved in detailed discussions with the applicant and detailed replies to matters raised have been submitted by the applicant. The LLFA’s latest comments were awaited at the time of writing this report, but the main issues have now appear to have been addressed, and if necessary outstanding matters can be conditioned.

There are no objections on the grounds of affordable housing, public open space, residential standards, or environmental matters.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Approve subject to the following conditions;**

1. Approved plans
2. Bird nesting
3. Submission of a Phase II ground investigation and risk assessment
4. Submission of a Verification Report
5. Soils testing
6. Unexpected contamination
7. Archaeological mitigation
8. Detailed design of the individual elements of the play areas/ /outdoor gyms, allotments and orchard to be agreed.
9. Detailed landscaping to be submitted and approved
10. A plan detailing covered cycle parking for the apartments should be submitted and approved.
11. A plan detailing turning area for plot 16 should be submitted and approved.
12. A plan detailing the Toucan crossing from the local centre to the hospital should be submitted and approved and provided prior to occupation.
13. A plan of the driveways of plots 47-50, 73-74 should be submitted and approved.

#### **Informatives;**

- SP Energy informatives
- Public Rights of Way
- Environment Protection Informatives
- Highways: The Smithy Ln TRO will be implemented by the applicant during the s38 technical approval stage.

**In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.**

