

Strategic Planning Board

Updates

Date: Wednesday, 25th April, 2018
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

The information on the following pages was received following publication of the Board agenda.

Planning Updates (Pages 3 - 10)

Please contact Sarah Baxter on 01270 686462
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APPLICATION NO: 17/3853M

LOCATION: Land north of Northwich Road, Knutsford

PROPOSAL Outline planning application with means of access to be determined (all other matters reserved for subsequent approval) for the erection of up to 190 dwellings (Class C3); the provision of serviced land for allotments; a community orchard, a playing pitch, landscaping and open space; new internal highways, car and cycle parking; sustainable drainage measures including surface water retention ponds, provision of utilities infrastructure; earthworks and all ancillary enabling works

KEY ISSUES

Additional letters of representation received.

Three letters of representation from members of the public have been received following the publication of the report.

The issues raised include flooding, highways impact, education provision, impact on health service.

All of the issues are covered in the officer's report and have received no objections from the relevant technical bodies in relation to these issues.

Comments received from Friends of The Heath

Knutsford's Friends of The Heath (FoTH) suggest that a condition be attached to the planning application for this site to require that a generous space is included for local wildlife in order to provide a wildlife 'stepping stone' between Knutsford Heath and the open countryside.

Species decline is happening at an alarming rate and the loss of biodiversity is a threat to the bioservices we ultimately rely on for survival. A major cause of species decline is the loss and fragmentation of the habitats they need. New developments, like this one, provide an opportunity for making improvements to local wildlife habitats by creating new green spaces where local wildlife can live, feed and breed. Such spaces may be small but if they are connected they can provide a network through which animals can move.

This is critically important as it allows them to

1) move between the different types of habits required for different stages of their life cycles and 2) not become isolated populations with inbred gene-pools. In the case of LPS36A, lying on the north west edge of Knutsford between the Local Wildlife Site on Knutsford Heath and the open countryside, it is especially important to provide a route for wildlife to move between the

two. Housing development in north-west Knutsford, if unsympathetic to wildlife, risks increasing the isolation of The Heath and threatens its viability as a Local Wildlife Site.

We commend the Barton Willmore Illustrative Layout which shows the northern boundary to be green space. This lies in the path of a natural wildlife corridor which crosses the Warren Avenue allotments and continues along the wet hollow comprising a pond and ditch (identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, July 2017), along the hedge line, westwards towards Bluebell Wood. The corridor lies in the north-east corner of LPS36A and continues in the adjacent safeguarded land (LPS39). Thus, creating a wildlife zone within the northern boundary of LPS36A will provide the foundation for the development of the complete corridor should the safeguarded land be developed at a later time.

In conclusion, we suggest the development of LP36A is subject to the specific condition that it provides the foundation of a wildlife corridor along its northern boundary.

Comments received from Nether Ward Community Group

1. Acknowledgement

Knutsford's Nether Ward Community Group (NWCG) recognises that this revision is largely in accord with what Knutsford's aligned Community Groups have been advocating for this site. We acknowledge the engagement of The Crown Estate (Crown) and their agents Barton Willmore (BW) with the Community Groups and look forward to continue to work with them to achieve development which is in the best interests of Knutsford residents.

2. Housing Numbers and the Local Plan Strategy

2.1. Our objection to the original application for 260 houses on this site centred on the fact that the Local Plan Strategy (LPS) allocated 250 houses across two sites owned by Crown; LPS36A land north of Northwich Road (175 houses) and LPS36B land west on Manchester Road (75 houses). The objection raised issues including:

1. Increase in number of dwellings over that specified in the Local Plan (LP) adopted on 27th July 2017.
2. Over-application for this site sets a precedent for other LPS sites.
3. Increase in number of dwellings for this site compromises sustainability and therefore the soundness of the Local Plan.

2.2. NWCG has now received written assurances that the proposed increase in number of houses from 175 to 190 on LPS36A will be offset by a reduction on LPS36B. With the combined number of houses at 250 across both Crown sites, NWCG is satisfied that the objections with regard to departure from the Local Plan, precedent and sustainability have been answered.

2.3. We are advised that a letter from Crown to the Case Officer (dated 9th April 2018) will be added to this planning submission (reference 17/3853M) and will then become publically accessible. However, at the time of

submitting this response, it was not available on the Planning Portal at <http://planning.cheshireeast.gov.uk/applicationdetails.aspx?pr=17/3853M>

Therefore our copy of the letter is attached to this response as document “Knutsford - letter to CEC 09 04 2018”

3. The Revised Planning Application

NWCG would like to be in a position to support this revised application but that rests on the content of the Officers’ Report, which is not available at this time. Should the Officers’ Report address the following issues, then NWCG would support this application.

3.1. Flood risk to adjacent properties

3.1.1. As stated in our objection to the original application for 260 houses on this site, local residents have demonstrated a legitimate concern to the applicant that the Flood Risk Assessment attached to the application is incomplete and inaccurate. While not advocating refusal of the planning application purely on the basis of flooding to adjacent properties, NWCG would want to see a much more comprehensive and accurate evaluation before supporting development on this land. However, following meetings with the applicant, we have been advised that Crown will be following due process with regard to producing a detailed scheme should Outline Planning Permission be granted.

3.1.2. Therefore, if the Officers’ Report on this revised application is similar to that for the original application and includes conditions similar to conditions 5 & 6 of the earlier report, NWCG can support this application.

3.2. Building heights

3.2.1. The applicant has been involved with the production of the emerging Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and its associated Design Guide (DG) and so is conversant with the draft content. The DG recommends that 2.5-storey buildings should only be at the centre of a large development not on the periphery. For this site, there is currently a proposal for 2.5-storeys along Northwich Road.

3.2.2. This should be addressed by including a condition which refers to the emerging NP and DG and requires the issue to be dealt with at Reserved Matters.

3.3. Spine Road

3.3.1. The LPS includes a requirement for “Provision within LPS 36(A) and LPS 36(B) for a principal access road which, in the longer term, would connect Northwich Road to Manchester Road and ensure connectivity within the North West Knutsford sites.” Therefore, the spine road on this site should be of appropriate width to support potential use as a link road between Northwich Road and Manchester Road. Current indications are that the spine road will be wider than a purely local road, but not as wide as a principal access road.

3.3.2. This should be addressed by including a condition which requires the spine road to have a width appropriate to principal access road.

3.4. Spine Road – Building Heights

3.4.1. Further to comments above, new homes should be set back from the spine road and be of appropriate height on the basis that this road will become a future link (principal access) road.

3.4.2. This should be addressed by including a condition which requires the issue to be dealt with at Reserved Matters.

3.5. Canute Place roundabout

3.5.1. There is substantial anecdotal evidence that the opening of the new A556 road has caused significant changes in the traffic flow – particularly it has increased the use of Northwich Road as a connecting route to the new stretch of A556. There is continuing concern that the proposals for the Canute Place roundabout contained in the application may not be adequate.

3.5.2. It is insufficient and inadequate for Crown to fund an amount before CEC and Knutsford Town Council have agreed what needs to be done and decided on a scheme. It is essential that Crown's offer of full funding should meet whatever is required reasonably for the effective design and implementation of a scheme, including pedestrian road crossings and taking account of emerging Neighbourhood Plan requirements.

3.5.3. Therefore, it is proposed that the full cost of the works is met by Crown once a scheme is agreed by CEC as highways authority and that the works be completed before the first of the proposed new homes is occupied.

3.5.4. This should be addressed by including a condition which requires the issue to be dealt with at Reserved Matters.

3.6. Access Roundabout

3.6.1. As the roundabout forming the principal (only) access to the site is at the gateway to the town, it should be landscaped to a high standard with due regard to the distinctive character of Knutsford, its setting at the edge of the settlement and of Green Belt and that the design be agreed with Knutsford Town Council.

3.6.2. As this issue relates to "means of access", a suitably-worded condition should be imposed at this stage, rather than leave consideration to Reserved Matters.

In summary, were all these concerns addressed through conditions applied to the planning application we would be in a position to support the revised application.

Officer Comment on additional information received

All of the issues raised through neighbour representations are covered in the officer's report and have received no objections from the relevant technical bodies in relation to these issues.

With regard to the information received from amenity bodies, in relation to the wildlife corridor, the layout proposed largely takes account of this, however all relevant biodiversity related matters have been dealt with through comments received from the Council's ecologist and Natural England. Finer detail of the

scheme will be addressed through the reserved matters application. Therefore no amendments are proposed at this stage as a result of the comments.

Matters of flood risk have been addressed in the officer's report and the relevant technical bodies have commented on the application.

In relation to building heights and the spine road, the comments recommend conditions, however these matters will be addressed through the reserved matters which is secured by condition. In relation to Canute Place roundabout the design and delivery of this will be secured through the Section 106 agreement. The following condition is added to ensure that the access is constructed prior to occupation of the site.

Additional condition

- 1. Prior first to occupation of the site, access to be built in accordance with 3654-SK-010 Rev C.**

In addition, an informative will be added to the decision to ensure the applicant will need to enter into a 278 agreement.

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APPLICATION NO: 18/0228N

LOCATION: Bentley Motors Ltd, PYMS LANE, CREWE,
CHESHIRE, CW1 3PL

PROPOSAL: Construction of two 7,200sqm, 4 storey office blocks
and related external works

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Strategic Infrastructure (HSI – Highways):

Since publication of the Agenda, written comments have been received from the Head of Strategic Infrastructure (HSI). The HSI has confirmed that the application is acceptable in terms of highway safety, impact on the local highway network and parking provision. The HSI has recommended the imposition of conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan and an updated Travel Plan as well as an informative advising that the applicant will need to enter into a S278 Agreement for the provision of the site access works.

OFFICER COMMENT

The highways comments support the assessment made on page 68 of the Agenda Reports Pack. The updated Travel Plan will be secured under condition no. 22 on page 71 of the Agenda Reports Pack and an additional condition is recommended to secure the details of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, which is deemed reasonable, necessary and relevant to the proposed development.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve as per the recommendation on page 71 of the Agenda Reports Pack subject to an amendment to condition no. 22 and an additional condition requiring the submission, approval and implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan:

22. An updated Travel Plan shall be submitted within 6 months of the first occupation of the approved development and shall be implemented and maintained thereafter.

25. Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted, approved and implemented.

Informative: Applicant to enter into a S278 Agreement for the provision of the site access works.

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