

Application No: 11/4530N

Location: SHERBORNE ROAD, CRANBORNE ROAD, ROEDEAN WALK, ABBEY PLACE, CREWE, CHESHIRE CW1 4LA

Proposal: Residential Estate Improvement Works of 106 Houses, Including the Demolition (12 Houses), New Build (4 Houses), Remodelling of Existing Properties (90 Houses), New Access Roads, Traffic Calming and Other Environmental Works

Applicant: Mr N Powell Wulvern House

Expiry Date: 22-Mar-2012

#### **MAIN ISSUES**

- Design, layout and impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- Affordable Housing
- Open Space provision on the site
- Flood Risk
- Residential amenity in terms of the proposed and existing dwellings on and surrounding the site
- Highway/parking issues in terms of the alterations to the highway layout and parking provision on the estate
- Public footpath issues in terms of the public footpath which crosses the site

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve with conditions**

#### **REFERRAL**

The application is referred to the Southern Planning Committee as the application relates to a residential development of between 0.5ha and 4ha.

#### **1. SITE DESCRIPTION**

This application relates to the Sherborne Road Housing Estate which is located within the Crewe Settlement Boundary. The application site covers parts of Sherborne Road, Cranborne Road, Abbey Place and Roedean Walk. The area is characterised by 1970's two-storey terraced dwellings, cul-de-sacs, parking areas, grassed areas and footpaths. Many of the dwellings appear to be positioned tightly together with flat roofed porches to the front elevation and the dwellings often lack windows to the front elevation at ground

floor level overlooking the public areas. To the west of the site is a railway line and Public Footpath Crewe 23 crosses the southern section of the site. The site contains a number of trees the details of which have been assessed in an Arboricultural Impact Assessment. All dwellings within the site are owned by Wulvern Housing apart from 23 which are owner occupied.

## **2. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This application relates to phases 2 and 3 of a wider scheme by the applicant, Wulvern Housing. Phase 1 has been completed following the approval of planning application P08/0275. Phase 2 relates to the southern area of the site and includes properties on Cranborne Road, Roedean Walk and Sherborne Road, and Phase 3 is directly to the north of phase 1 and includes properties on Abbey Place and Sherborne Road. An application for phases 2 and 3 was approved under application P09/0003 and this application seeks approval for an alternative scheme.

This application proposes to demolish the following properties; 7, 17, 18, 19, & 20 Roedean Walk, 8 & 9 Cranborne Road and 27, 28, 50, 51 & 52 Abbey Place. A terrace of four new dwellings is proposed and these would front onto Cranborne Road.

The proposal would create a vehicular link from Cranborne Road to Sherborne Road. Four new home zone area which would be located at the following locations:

- east of 8-11 Roedean Walk,
- west of 8-12 Sherborne Road, north of 27-29 Abbey Place
- north of 29-35 Abbey Place.

The proposed development also includes alterations to 90 dwellings in the application site with the following external alterations to front elevations of the dwelling types;

- Dwelling type A – Sloping roof to porch, new glazed opening (storage room removed internally), porch to be rendered, new front door and a render panel to the front elevation
- Dwelling type B – Sloping roof to porch, new window to replace door (storage room converted to downstairs WC), porch to be rendered and a render panel to the front elevation
- Dwelling type C – Sloping roof to porch and porch to be rendered, store room removed and replaced with downstairs WC
- Dwelling type D - Sloping roof to porch, new glazed opening (storage room removed internally), porch to be rendered, new front door and a render panel to the front elevation. Three dwellings of this type (22, 23 and 24 Abbey Place) will have there front and rear elevations reversed.
- Dwelling type F - Sloping roof to porch, new window to front of porch and porch to be rendered
- Dwelling type (Bungalows) – New porch and elevational changes, No's 5 & 6 Roedean Walk to be converted into one larger property, No's 27, 28 & 29 Sherborne Road to be converted into two larger properties.

As well as the above changes some properties will also benefit from new windows and bay-windows to prominent side elevations to increase natural surveillance.

The development would also include new boundary treatment including the provision of small front gardens to some properties, the creation of car-parking spaces and the closing off or gating of some of the alleyways.

### **3. PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

P09/0042 - Remodelling of 5 Existing Properties at 5 & 15 Cranborne Road, 7 Sherborne Road, 5 & 29 Abbey Place – Approved 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009

P09/0003 - Residential Development and Improvement including Demolition (30 Houses), New Build (30 Houses), Remodelling of Existing (70 Houses), New Access Roads, Traffic Calming and Other Environmental Works – Approved 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009

P08/0275 - Residential Estate Improvement Works Including Demolition (13 Houses) New Build (9 Houses) Remodelling of Existing Properties (53 Houses) New Pocket Park Traffic Calming and Other Environmental Works – Approved 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2008

### **4. PLANNING POLICIES**

#### **Local Plan Policy**

RES.2 (Unallocated Housing Sites)  
RES.11 (Improvements and Alterations to Existing Dwellings)  
BE.1 (Amenity)  
BE.2 (Design Standards)  
BE.3 (Access and Parking)  
BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources)  
BE.5 (Infrastructure)  
NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats)  
NE.20 (Flood Prevention)

#### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

DP1 – Spatial Principles  
DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities  
L3 – Existing Housing Stock and Housing Renewal  
L5 – Affordable Housing  
EM18 – Decentralised Energy Supply

#### **National Policy**

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)  
PPS3 (Housing)  
PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk)

### **5. OBSERVATIONS OF CONSULTÉES**

**United Utilities:** No objection to the proposal provided that the following conditions are met:

- This site must be drained on a totally separate system.

- Several public sewers cross these sites and UU will not permit building over them. UU will require access strip width's of 6 metres, 3 metres either side of the centre line of the sewer which is in accordance with the minimum distances specified in the current issue of "Sewers for Adoption", for maintenance or replacement.
- Deep rooted shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of the public sewer and overflow systems.
- The level of cover to the water mains and sewers must not be compromised either during or after construction.

**Highways Authority:** The highways authority has no objections to these proposals, providing that all of the works affecting the highway are carried out under the relevant highways legal agreement.

**Environment Agency:** No comments received at the time of writing this report.

**CCC Public Rights of Way:** The most appropriate way forward for the obstructed public footpath is actually to extinguish it through the T&CPA process, as it has been replaced with adopted footways remote from road.

**Sustrans:** Would like to make the following comments;

- The traffic calming proposed is supported. Sustrans would like to see vehicular speeds limited to 20mph by design.
- The path connection from the open space to the south of Phase II into Cranborne Road is supported.
- Any road closures such as on Crossway, should allow for cyclists to pass through, using dropped kerbs.
- The design of smaller properties should include storage areas for residents' buggies/bicycles.
- For information Sustrans are proposing a pedestrian/cycle route is established from Remer Street/Cross Keys junction via Crossway and this site to Cranborne Road and the open space to the south

## 6. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection has been received from the occupants of 6 & 10 Stamp Avenue raising the following points;

- Loss of trees/hedgerow to the rear of properties along Stamp Avenue
- The trees/ hedgerow and ditch are within the ownership of the properties which front Stamp Avenue and not Wulvern Housing

## 7. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Design and Access Statement (Produced by Triangle Architects and dated November 2011)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Produced by TEP and dated December 2008)
- Ecological Assessment (Produced by TEP and dated June 2009)

These documents are available to view on the Councils website.

## **8. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of Development**

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Crewe where, in principle, new build residential development is considered acceptable. However, to fully accord with Policy RES.2 (Unallocated Housing Sites), the development must also be in keeping with the requirements of policies BE.1 – BE.5.

The site would have a housing density of 36 dwellings per hectare which is above the minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare set out in Policy RES.3 of the Local Plan and is therefore acceptable.

The remodelling of the existing properties is acceptable in principle and needs to be considered against Policy RES.11 (Improvements and Alterations to Existing Dwellings), the requirements of policies BE.1 – BE.5 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Extensions and Householder Development.

### **Amenity**

The existing estate is characterised by short separation distances between elevations and small rear garden areas.

The four new build dwellings would have greater separation distances to the existing dwellings than the dwellings which are to be demolished. As a result the relationship is considered to be acceptable.

The alterations to the external appearance are considered to have minimal impact upon neighbouring residential amenity through loss of privacy. The scheme is considered to raise numerous benefits in terms of the increased natural surveillance of the public realm.

All proposed dwellings would have their own amenity space with some having under 50sq.m which is considered to be acceptable in this instance given the quite dense character of the estate and due to the fact that areas of public open space are being created as part of the wider development of the estate.

### **Design**

The new dwellings are similar in scale and height to the existing properties on the estate. The proposed terrace blocks have projecting two-storey bays which give them a strong rhythm. At the end of each terrace is a taller dwelling which terminates the terrace and turns the corner with its large curved bay which also helps to increase the natural surveillance on the estate. The raised roofline of the taller dwellings acts as a local landmark amongst the surrounding two-storey dwellings and is considered to be acceptable.

It is proposed to use brickwork to the dwellings with some natural timber cladding to give the proposed dwellings a more modern appearance. A condition will be used to ensure that details of these are submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development.

The proposed alterations to the existing dwellings will help to increase surveillance and would also improve the appearance of the existing dwellings on the estate.

It is proposed that small front garden areas will be created and will be defined by low metal railings and gates to create a defensible space. The new gardens which will be created will mainly be paved, with some planting which will be chosen by the residents of the dwellings. The rear gardens are to have tall boundary treatments. Against highway boundaries this is proposed to be brick pillars with a low wall and fencing panels between.

Overall it is considered that the design and layout of the proposed development is acceptable.

### **Flood Prevention**

The application site is over 1 hectare and located within Flood Zone 1 and should ordinarily be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.

The Environment Agency raised no objection to the previous scheme and this view was based on the view that the development is unlikely to have any significant on flood risk/surface water drainage matters.

### **Footpaths**

Public Footpath Crewe Town No23 crosses the railway bridge and then the south-west corner of the application site. This footpath runs directly through a number of properties and their garden areas.

There is no record of a public footpath ever being diverted when these dwellings were built. However, all users of this public footpath are likely to follow Roedean Walk to the end of the footpath at Middlewich Street and would not travel through the existing dwellings and garden areas. As part of this application the applicant intends to address this issue by diverting the footpath along Cranborne Road and along the alleyway to Middlewich Street which is considered to be an appropriate solution to address this issue and this is accepted by the PROW Officer.

In terms of the closure of some of the alleyways within the application site it is considered that these are acceptable and would not dramatically affect pedestrian circulation on the site. The alley gating scheme will provide unlocked low public realm gates which will restrict motorcycles driving along pedestrian areas but a condition would be used to ensure that these are accessible for disabled people.

### **Highways**

In terms of the highway implications there would be no increase in the number of dwellings on the site which would result in no change in the number of vehicular movements from the site, whilst the traffic calming measures proposed are also considered to be acceptable. Parking provision will be increased on the site and has been designed to integrate into the design and move away from the existing large, unbroken and underused car parking areas.

The Highways Authority has raised no objection to the development and the highways/parking implications were considered to be acceptable. The Safety Audit, 278 Agreement and Traffic Regulation Orders will be dealt with separately.

### **Renewable Energy Provision**

Policy EM18 (Decentralised Energy Supply) of the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 requires that *'all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their renewable energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable'*.

The applicant has confirmed that all new build properties will achieve at least 10% of their energy requirements from renewable energy sources (solar thermal panels). This will be controlled through the imposition of a planning condition.

### **Trees**

There are 40 individual trees and 2 groups of trees on the site as identified by the Tree Survey. As part of this scheme 32 of the individual trees and one group of trees would be retained whilst two trees of moderate value, four trees of low value and the one group of trees of moderate value would be removed from the site. This is considered to be acceptable given the benefits to the estate which would arise from the scheme. Furthermore the proposed development would also include the provision of new tree planting throughout the application site.

A number of concerns have been raised by residents living on Stamp Avenue in relation to the hawthorn hedgerow which is located along this boundary. The parts of the hedgerow which are in the ownership of Wulvern Housing will be removed as part of the application and given that this hedgerow is not considered to be worthy of retention, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in landscape terms.

### **Other issues**

The proposals involve a number of alterations to properties under private ownership. It is a private matter between Wulvern Housing and the owners as to whether these works ever take place and the issues of ownership will not be considered as part of this application as the required ownership certificates have been signed and served as part of this application.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed development would bring numerous benefits to the estate, including improved layout and design, increased surveillance, increased parking provision, provision of public open space, traffic calming measures, improved landscaping and the closure of a number of unsecure alleyways which lack surveillance.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **APPROVE**

## **Conditions**

- 1. Standard time limit 3 years**
- 2. Materials to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 3. Surfacing materials to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 4. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 5. Landscape to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 6. Landscape to be completed in accordance with the approved details**
- 7. Drainage details to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 8. Tree protection in accordance with BS5837:2005**
- 9. Development to proceed in accordance with the approved plans**
- 10. A timetable for the demolition of existing buildings to be submitted and approved. All materials of demolition to be permanently removed from the site**
- 11. No development within 3 metres of the public sewer which crosses the site**
- 12. Details of gates to be submitted and approved in writing. Gates to be accessible by disabled people.**
- 13. 10% Renewable energy provision to be submitted and agreed in writing**

**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 and Housing is delegated authority to do so, provided that he does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.**



