

Application No: 16/4729N

Location: Land adjacent to Yew Tree Farm, Close Lane, Alsager

Proposal: Reserved Matters Application for the erection of 40 dwellings comprising of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom homes, open space and associated works

Applicant: Mr Sutton

Expiry Date: 19-Jan-2017

SUMMARY

The principle of development has already been established in the approval of the associated outline permission. Numerous conditions concerning flood risk, ecology, land contamination, noise, bin storage, car charging for each plot, construction and environmental management were imposed upon the outline permission and are retained.

Following revisions the design, mix and layout of the scheme is considered to be acceptable and appropriate to the character and appearance of the phase 1 development, with sufficient landscaping and open space provided as part of the proposal.

The development will not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity, it would provide benefits in terms of much needed affordable housing provision and would help in the Councils delivery of 5 year housing land supply.

Mitigation for education impacts was dealt with as part of the Outline approval, which sits in tandem with any reserved matters. The impact upon infrastructure would be neutral as it is mitigated.

In terms of the POS provision this is considered to be acceptable. A NEAP is provided on phase 1

Details of the proposed landscaping are considered to be acceptable.

With regard to ecological impacts, the development would have a neutral impact subject to mitigation.

The drainage/flood risk implications for this proposed development are considered to be acceptable. The Diversion of the PROW within the site is considered acceptable

The development would not have any significant impact upon the trees on this site.

The proposed access point via the existing Phase 1 development was determined to be acceptable at outline stage and the traffic impact as part of this development has already been

accepted. The internal design of the highway layout/parking provision is considered to be acceptable.

The development of the site would provide a number of economic benefits in the residential use of the site.

It is considered that the planning balance weighs in favour of this development.

APPROVE subject to conditions

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located to the west of Alsager, adjoining the existing settlement boundary of Alsager. The site however is located in the Haslington ward and is covered by the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Local Plan, the boundary of Alsager being Close Lane. However, it is considered that the site is most closely related to the Alsager settlement and that possible residents of the site would utilise services and facilities within the Alsager area.

The application site is a linear strip of grassland. Existing farm buildings lie towards the northern portion of the site.

Public Footpath No 48 Haslington runs through the centre of the site and links with Public Footpath No 19 Haslington which runs outside the site along the northern boundary.

Hedgerows run along the eastern and southern boundaries whilst the western boundary is open. Close Lane runs to the north of the site.

A recently approved scheme for 74 no. dwellings under outline application 13/1305N (allowed on appeal) and reserved matters application 14/4144C lies directly east of the site, and this site is currently under construction.

The eastern side of Close Lane features mixed 1960's onwards bungalow and housing development of Alsager.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The application seeks reserved matters approval for 40 no. dwellings, following approval of outline application 15/3651N.

30% of the dwellings are proposed to meet affordable housing criteria in accordance with policy requirements.

Access into the site would be via the existing phase 1 development. Public open space would be provided. The children's play area (NEAP) is within phase 1.

RELEVANT HISTORY

On this site

15/3651N–Outline application for residential development and access, all other matters reserved. - Allowed on appeal 6 June 2016 subject to S106 Agreement

On the adjoining site –

13/1305N – Outline planning application for a mixed residential scheme to provide affordable, open market and over 55s sheltered accommodation, open space and new access off Close Lane. Approved on appeal 29th July 2014 Subject to S106. This scheme indicated 76 family sized dwellings and 56 units for the over 55's and is being developed presently by Stewart Milne Homes This known as Phase 1

14/5114C - Reserved Matters (of 13/1305N) for 74 dwellings and associated works granted with conditions 09-Jul-2015 – This is being developed by Stewart Milne homes as phase 1

16/3310N – Variation of condition 14 (footpath link) on application 13/1305N – to be determined - Approved

16/2532N - Variation of condition 19 (renewable energy) on application 13/1305N – Approved

15/5654n Variation of Condition 27 (over 55's) on application 13/1305N – Refused 8 August 2016 – Currently under appeal – this is known as phase 1B

16/2740N - Full Planning Application for the proposal of 21 dwellings (Phase 2), a mixed residential scheme to provide affordable and open market dwellings on land to the west of Close Lane, Alsager – Withdrawn by the Applicant 20th September 2016 – this is on Phase 1B

16/4792N - Outline planning application for residential development and access, all other matters reserved – refused 1/2/2017

POLICIES

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Of particular relevance are paragraphs:

14. Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

50. Wide choice of quality homes

56-68. Requiring good design

Borough of Crewe & Nantwich Local Plan 2011

The Development Plan for this area is the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, which identifies that the site is within the Open Countryside.

The relevant Saved Policies are:

NE.2 (Open countryside)

NE.5 (Nature Conservation and Habitats)

NE.9 (Protected Species)
NE.20 (Flood Prevention)
NE.21 (Land Fill Sites)
BE.1 (Amenity)
BE.2 (Design Standards)
BE.3 (Access and Parking)
BE.4 (Drainage, Utilities and Resources)
RES.5 (Housing in the Open Countryside)
RT.6 (Recreational Uses on the Open Countryside)
TRAN.3 (Pedestrians)
TRAN.5 (Cycling)

The saved Local Plan policies are consistent with the NPPF and should be given full weight.

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version (CELP)

The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy

Policy MP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy PG 2 – Settlement Hierarchy
Policy PG 5 - Open Countryside
Policy SD 1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
Policy SD 2 - Sustainable Development Principles
Policy IN 2 – Developer Contributions
Policy SC4 – Residential Mix
Policy SC5 – Affordable Homes
Policy SE 1 – Design
Policy SE2 – Efficient Use of Land
Policy SE3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy SE4 – The Landscape
Policy SE5 – Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
Policy CO4 – Travel Plans and Travel Assessments

CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

Environmental Health: Note that conditions are imposed on the outline concerning noise and contamination which run with the land. No objection subject to conditions concerning updates to the Phase II Contaminated Land Survey submitted with the application

Strategic Housing Manager: No objection, the proposal provides for a mix of 1, 2, 3 bedroom units.

CEC Flood Risk Manager: No objections

United Utilities: No objection subject to the imposition of a drainage condition.

Highway Authority: No objection subject to conditions.

PROW Unit: No objection to the diversion proposed to the PROW. A Diversion Order will be required

Alsager Parish Council: Question pedestrian and road linkages through the site with the Phase 1 development in the interests of highway safety

Haslington Parish Council: No comments received.

Other Representations:

Two individual representations have been received making the following points:

Principle of development

- Cheshire east has failed to listed to residents
- Resident on phase 1 considers that they have been misled by the developer, expected to be adjoining a green field not a development

Highway Safety

- Close Lane is inadequate for additional traffic
- Increase in traffic – particularly at junction to Crewe Road
- Increase in danger to pedestrians

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Main Issues

The main issues in the consideration of this application are the design and layout of the scheme, residential amenity, access and car parking, trees, ecology and affordable housing.

Principle of Development

The principle of development has already been established following approval of outline application 15/3651N. The outline application granted approval for a maximum of 40 no. dwellings on the site with all matters reserved apart from access. This reserved matters application seeks approval of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 40 no. dwellings. It is these matters which must now be considered.

This application does not offer the opportunity to revisit matters concerning the principle of the developing the site for residential purposes.

Housing Mix

Policy SC4 of the submission version of the Local Plan requires that developments provide an appropriate mix of housing. In this case the development would provide the following mix:

This proposal provides for the following mix:

- 2 x one bed flats (2 storey) – all affordable
- 7 x two bed semi/ terraced units - 4 affordable

6 x three bed semi detached units – all affordable
5 x three bed detached units
14 x four bed detached units
6 x five bed detached units

This residential mix is acceptable. The scheme has been revised to increase the numbers of smaller family homes and 1 bedroomed affordable units as part of the scheme. The mix of sizes, both for market sale and affordable units are considered acceptable.

Character and Appearance

Layout

The proposal is a continuation of the existing phase 1 development of the Stewart Milne site on Close Lane. Existing hedgerows and trees along the southern boundary would be retained, helping to act as a green buffer and softening the impact of the development on the scene.

Properties sited in the south western portion of the site would front the POS promoting natural surveillance of this area.

Parking provision would be achieved via private driveways located to the front and side of the properties as well as via integral and detached garages, helping to avoid the development from appearing heavily car dominated.

Haslington Footpath No. 48 is diverted around the northern boundary of the site. This would maintain connectivity for proposed residents to the Public Rights of Way network for leisure walking.

The reserved matters has provided bin storage and electric vehicle charging points for each dwelling/flat. The bin storage is located to the rear garden of each plot. Electric charging is located either within garages or within a wall close to a driveway for each plot.

Scale

The scale of development follows the indicative plans submitted at outline stage. It is of a similar scale as the phase 1 development. Sufficient garden sizes and off street parking is provided for each plot. The amenity green space to the south western boundary of the site links into the approved POS and NEAP.

Two-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced properties with garages are considered to be appropriate in the context of the existing two storey dwellings on phase 1.

Overall, the scale is in keeping and fits in relation to the size of the site and Phase 1 with sufficient on-site parking provision, private amenity space and public open space provided.

Appearance

The properties to the existing Phase 1 development adjoin this site. Features such as gabled roofs, dormers, porches and integral garages are considered to be appropriate in the context of existing surrounding properties.

The use of hard landscaping features such as block paving leading to private driveways and pathways leading to properties would help to clearly distinguish between the private and public spaces within the site as well as adding visual interest to the scheme.

The palette of materials will be an important consideration in this case. Bricks and concrete roof tiles of somewhat strident hues have been utilised on phase 1. These tones are not particularly in keeping with the semi rural location and should not be taken as a starting point for the materials palette on this site. However, subject to the use of complimentary and appropriate brick, render and roof tile hues, the appearance of the development will be satisfactory. This can be controlled by condition.

Landscaping

This has been amended during the application. The retention of existing trees along the north and south west boundaries of the site would provide a buffer between the adjacent fields and the PROW to be diverted.

Varying surface materials would help to distinguish between private and public space as well as creating visual interest throughout the scheme.

The Applicant has advised that the landscaping will follow the Phase 1 development adjacent. Tree planting and soft landscaping areas would be used throughout the scheme, particularly along front boundaries of properties which would help to soften frontages and break up hard landscaping areas.

Overall, subject to conditions, the scheme would sit comfortably within the site and the proposed design and layout is considered to be appropriate to the character and appearance of the locality, according with Policy BE.2 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

Residential Amenity

Principal windows on corner plots would create active frontages whilst providing natural surveillance over the access roads.

Adequate amenity space would be provided with each plot, accommodating all of the basic amenities required, as set out in the Extensions and Householder SPD.

Plot side and rear boundaries would be separated by 1.8m timber fencing, providing adequate screening between each plot and creating defensible boundaries.

Conditions to secure noise mitigation as set out within the submitted Noise Report would be attached to any grant of permission.

Adequate separation distances would be provided to the existing and approved residential development.

In the absence of any objection from the Council's Environmental Protection Unit, the proposed development would accord with Policy BE.1 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

Access and Car Parking

The access details and traffic impact issues have been discussed within the outline application. However, the submitted road layout is a standard format with a 5.5m carriageway with a footway on each side of the road. There are formal turning heads provided for refuse vehicles at the end of each cul-de-sac. The road widths proposed is suitable to serve the 40 dwellings and there are no objections on the design element of the road layout.

There is a mix of 1,2 bed, 3 bed and 4 bed units on the site. Car parking provision would be 200% for the 2 and 3 bed units, the 4 bed units would have 3 or more car parking spaces. This level of car parking would conform with current CEC standards and is acceptable. One space is provided for the 1 bed units.

Overall, the proposed scheme meets current highway standards and the Highway Authority raise no objections subject to conditions regarding the provision of a Construction Management Plan, provision of wheel wash and the proposed footway link to be constructed prior to occupation.

Inclusion of the public footpath within the public open space of the site is considered to be appropriate.

The proposal would accord with Policies BE.3 and TRAN.9 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

Public Rights of Way

The Definitive Public Rights of Way Map shows the location of Public Footpath Haslington No. 48. The path runs within the western portion of the POS and drops down to run outside the western boundary of the application site. The PROW would be subject to a Diversion Order. The Diversion Order would have to be made before any works detailed within this application were implemented. The PROW officer has advised that the proposals are acceptable and that she is anticipating the Diversion application prior to the determination of this application.

Affordable Housing

This is a proposed development of 40 dwellings therefore in order to meet the Council's Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 12 dwellings to be provided as affordable dwellings. 8 dwellings are provided as Affordable rent and 4 dwellings as Intermediate tenure.

The SHMA 2013 evidenced a requirement for 54 new affordable units per annum in the Alsager area. There is a need for 38 x two bedroom, 15 x three bedroom, 2 x four bedroom dwellings for General Needs and 5 x one bedroom dwellings for older persons per year.

There are 249 applicants on the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list who have selected Alsager as their first choice for rehousing. They require 95 x one bedroom, 91 x two bedroom, 49 x three bedroom and 14 x four bedroom dwellings.

The rental mix as revised following discussion with the housing officer is 2 x one bed, 4 x two bed and 2 x three bed. The Strategic Housing manager is satisfied that this is an adequate reflection of local housing need.

The units are sufficiently pepper-potted and are tenure blind. This is acceptable and complies with the S106 Agreement attached to the outline permission.

Trees

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of current best practice BS5837:2012. The impact Assessment was produced to support the outline application and its associated indicative layout and is not reflective of the layout (revised) submitted as part of this application.

The assessment has taken into consideration 14 individual trees, 2 have been identified as high value (Cat A) and 5 moderate value (Cat B) trees with the rest categorised as low value or unclassified; with the site characterised by individual trees set within hedgerows

The application identifies the loss of a single tree T6 to facilitate development; this is a moderate value specimen Category B which was omitted from the recently served Moss End Farm TPO on the site' the trees removal is not contested

The previously identified TPO protects three trees which are a material consideration in respect of this application and plots 15, 24, and 25. The property footprint associated with plot 15 stands on the RPA of T7 (TPO T1) whilst this allows construction to proceed without any direct impact, tree protection details will have to be modified to accommodate implementation erection of scaffolding, this can be addressed by ground protection. T7 stands to the south and west of the proposed property, and will restrict light attenuation to both the rear habitable rooms and parts of the garden, a limited amount of judicious pruning will be required, but this can be managed, the tree is defensible under the TPO.

The TPO under G1 protects both T2 and T3 which are associated with plot 24 and 25. There are no direct construction implications in terms of dwellings with both property footprints located outside the identified RPA's, but two parking bays are located within the RPA of T2. Construction can be managed under a 'no dig' method statement which can be addressed by condition, this accords with the requirements of current best practice BS5837:2012. Both trees will again restrict light to the adjacent properties but this can be managed by sympathetic pruning; the trees are again defensible

The proposed PROW diversion which extends down the western boundary of the site extends through the RPA of the three identified protected trees. Ground levels can accommodate a 'no dig' implementation but a detailed construction method statement will be required.

Overall, subject to tree protection conditions, the proposal will safeguard trees on site.

Ecology

Conditions were attached to the outline consent at this site in respect of the safeguarding of reptiles and nesting birds. These need not be repeated.

Ditch

A ditch is present to the south of the application site. The ditch has been assessed as having low potential to support water vole a legally protected species. No survey for this species has however been undertaken. The ditch could however also provide habitat for grass snake a protected species known to occur in this locality.

The submitted layout plan shows a 5m buffer being provided adjacent to this ditch. The ecologist advises that this is acceptable to safeguard the ditch habitats. A condition would be required to ensure that no development including the storage of materials takes place within this buffer and that the proposals for the fencing-off of this 5m buffer during the construction phase are submitted prior to commencement.

Flood Risk and Drainage

A condition is imposed upon the outline permission that requires compliance with the Flood Risk Assessment. A consultation response has been received from United Utilities who have raised no objection to the development subject to the imposition of a planning condition (it should be noted that this condition is attached to the outline consent so there is no need to attach the condition to the reserved matters application).

As such the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of the drainage/flood risk implications.

Planning Balance

The principle of development has already been established.

Social Sustainability

The development, subject to conditions, will not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity of future or existing residents it would provide benefits in terms of much needed affordable housing provision and would help in the Councils delivery of 5 year housing land supply.

The impact upon education infrastructure has already been assessed at outline stage when the Unilateral Undertaken was accepted by the Planning Inspector. The impact would be mitigated and would thus be neutral.

In terms of the POS and children's play provision this is considered to be acceptable. The social housing is provided in accordance with the IPS and is acceptable

Environmental Sustainability

The layout of this residential development site, previously allowed on appeal is considered to be acceptable.

With regard to ecological impacts, the development would have a neutral impact subject to conditions.

The drainage/flood risk implications for this proposed development are considered to be acceptable.

The development would not have any significant impact upon the trees on this site subject to conditions.

Economic Sustainability

The proposed access point is acceptable and the traffic impact as part of this development has already been accepted. The internal design of the highway layout/parking provision is considered to be acceptable.

The development of the site would provide a number of economic benefits in the residential use of the site and residential economic activity.

It is considered that the planning balance weighs in favour of this development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

1. Plans
2. Notwithstanding details forming part of application materials to be submitted and approved
3. Landscaping scheme submission
4. Landscaping scheme implementation
5. Submission of boundary treatments
6. Levels
7. 'No dig' hard surface construction for the pedestrian link footpath and car parking bays to be submitted and approved
8. Tree Pruning/Felling Specification
9. Tree Protection
10. No materials to be stored with 5m of ditch/ ditch to be fenced off during construction
- 11 Removal of permitted development rights – smaller plots
12. Boundary treatment to be as per plans
- 13 Removal of permitted development for boundary walls forward of building line

In order to give proper effect to the Board's/Committee's intentions and without changing the substance of the decision, authority is delegated to the Principal Planning Manager (Regulation), in consultation with the Chair (or in her absence the Vice Chair) of Southern Planning Committee, to correct any technical slip or omission in the wording of the resolution, between approval of the minutes and issue of the decision notice.

