

Application No: 17/0388N

Location: Land adjacent to, 11 , Walthall Street, Crewe, CW2 7JZ

Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 on approved planning application 16/4784N, to facilitate the addition of two apartments to those already permitted, minor alterations, associated Parking, Bin Storage, Cycle Storage and Access Arrangements.

Applicant: D Fyles

Expiry Date: 25-Apr-2017

Summary

The site is within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and the principle of residential development is considered to be acceptable and the development would be appropriate in this location.

From an economic sustainability perspective, the scheme will assist in the local building business and bring economic benefits to Crewe from additional residential uses.

From an environmental and social perspective the proposal is considered to be acceptable in the impact upon local amenities, parking, highway safety, bin storage provision, and traffic generation terms. Nor would it have any impact upon archaeological interests and would be of an acceptable design that would have a minimal impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties or future residents.

The proposals are considered to be a sustainable form of development which would comply with the relevant local plan policies and would not compromise key sustainability principles as set out in national planning policy.

Therefore there is a presumption in favour of the development and accordingly it is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to Conditions

CALL IN

The application has been called in by Cllr Suzanne Brookfield on the following grounds:

"This area is already developed and has received considerable development recently - it is in my opinion an already congested area. The subject application is increasing a block of 12 apartments to 14 and there are existing apartment blocks to the side and rear surrounded by high density terraced housing - a number of which are likely to be unregistered HMOs.

The parking provision continues to be inadequate. The area suffers from a lack of parking provision due to the density of accommodation and adding extra pressure with more new development with insufficient parking is unacceptable."

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located to the western side of Walthall Street within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as defined by the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan. The site comprises a brownfield site behind that of existing apartment block approved under allocation no. 13/5139N to the west of Walthall Street and adjacent to the Valley Brook. The site is mainly hard standing with some vegetation on the southern boundary with the brook. Levels fall from north to south and from east to west with the main body of the site at a lower level than Walthall Street. The area contains a mixture of residential and commercial properties.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This planning application seeks to vary condition 2 on approved application 16/4784N which gave consent for 12 apartments in a three storey block. This application seeks to amend this approval to allow for 14 apartments.

A previous application for 14 apartments was refused in 2016 (16/2153N)

The proposals incorporate shared access, bin storage, parking and amenity with neighbouring apartment block.

The building would be of traditional construction with a brick and render finish with stone window headers and a pitched, tiled roof. Fourteen parking spaces are proposed within the site in addition to a secure cycle storage facility. There would be an outdoor sitting area and enclosed bin storage which would be shared with existing block of apartments.

RELEVANT HISTORY

16/4784N - Resubmission of proposed construction of apartments and associated parking, bin storage, cycle storage and access arrangements – Approved 22nd December 2016

16/2158N – Proposed construction of 14 apartments – Refused 30th September 2016 for the following reason:

"The proposals are of a layout and design which would represent an overdevelopment of the site, and fail to achieve a high standard of design or acceptable level of amenity for existing and future occupants of the scheme, including the provision of inadequate outdoor amenity space and habitable rooms within apartments within the roof space only served by roof lights. The proposals are therefore

in conflict with the provisions of Policies BE.1 and BE.2 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.”

13/5139N – Construction of 12no. Apartments approved 13 February 2014

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, 47-50 - Wide choice of quality homes and 56-68 - Requiring good design

Local Plan Policy

BE.1 – Amenity
BE.2 – Design Standards
BE.3 – Access and Parking
BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources
BE.5 – Infrastructure
BE.6 – Development on Potentially Contaminated Land
NE.5 – Nature Conservation
NE.17 – Pollution Control
NE.20 – Flood Prevention
RES.7 – Affordable Housing
RES.2 – Unallocated Housing Sites
RES.3 – Housing Densities
TRAN.9 – Car Parking Standards

Supplementary Planning Document – Development on Backland and Gardens

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy

MP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development,
PG1 - Overall Development Strategy,
PG5 - Open Countryside,
PG6 - Spatial Distribution of Development,
SD1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East,
SD2 - Sustainable Development Principles,
IN1 – Infrastructure,
IN2 - Developer contributions,
SC4 - Residential Mix,
SC5 - Affordable Homes,
SE1 – Design,
SE2 - Efficient use of land,
SE3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity,
SE4 - The Landscape,
SE5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland,
SE6 - Green Infrastructure,

SE9 - Energy Efficient Development,
SE12 - Pollution, Land contamination and land instability,
SE13 - Flood risk and water management,

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

United Utilities: None received at the time of report writing, however there were no objections to the previous applications.

Flood Risk Manager: None received at the time of report writing; however there were no objections to the previous applications.

Education: None received at the time of report writing; however there was no objection or requirement for a contribution on the previous applications.

Highways: No objection.

Environmental Health: No objection subject to conditions/informatives relating to piling, hours of construction, contaminated land and air quality.

Environment Agency: None received at the time of report writing; however there was no objection to the previous applications.

Crewe Town Council: None received at the time of report writing.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of report writing.

APPRAISAL

Sustainability

The National Planning Policy Framework definition of sustainable development is:

“Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves don’t mean worse lives for future generations. Development means growth. We must accommodate the new ways by which we will earn our living in a competitive world. We must house a rising population, which is living longer and wants to make new choices. We must respond to the changes that new technologies offer us. Our lives, and the places in which we live them, can be better, but they will certainly be worse if things stagnate. Sustainable development is about change for the better, and not only in our built environment”

The NPPF determines that sustainable development includes three dimensions:- economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to

support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;

These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent.

ENVIRONMENTAL ROLE

Principal of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 47 that there is a requirement to maintain a 5 year rolling supply of housing and states that Local Planning Authorities should:

“identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land”.

The NPPF states that, Local Planning Authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. This should take account of various factors including:

- housing need and demand,
- latest published household projections,
- evidence of the availability of suitable housing land,
- the Government's overall ambitions for affordability.

Policy change is constantly occurring with new advice, evidence and case law emerging all the time. However, the Council has a duty to consider applications on the basis of the information that is pertinent at any given time.

In this case the site is located within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and Policy RES.2 of the Adopted Local Plan allows for residential development on unallocated sites in Crewe.

The site is surrounded by residential and commercial properties and good access to services and facilities. Therefore it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable and the development would be appropriate in this location.

Design

The importance of securing high quality design is specified within the NPPF and paragraph 61 states that:

“Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”

The building would be four storeys in height with rooms in the roof space and would have a traditional brick and render finish, with a tiled roof. It is considered that the use of these materials and the set back location of the building off the main street frontage would mean that it would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and nearby developments.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policy BE.2 (Design) of the adopted local plan.

Trees and Landscape

The site comprises a brownfield site to the west of Walthall Street and adjacent to the tree lined Valley Brook. Recently constructed apartments stand to the east and there is ongoing building work to the north. The site is mainly hard standing with tree canopies dominating the southern section. The site and the Valley Brook boundary in particular is an area in need of enhancement. Levels fall from north to south.

No detailed landscape proposals are provided within the application.

Subject to the provision of adequate landscaping and boundary treatment, remedial works and tree protection measures there would not be any significant landscape concerns in respect of redevelopment of the site.

It is therefore considered that subject to the submission of a comprehensive landscape, boundary treatment, remediation scheme and tree protection measures that there would not be any significant landscape or trees impacts as a result of the proposals.

Highways Implications

The proposal is for 2 additional apartments within the approved scheme with 2 additional car parking spaces and cycle stands.

With additional parking being provided the highways impact of the proposal will be negligible.

No objection is raised by the head of Strategic Infrastructure, with the same highways conditions as with the previous application; that the parking spaces remain unallocated, and that they are marked out with white lining.

As such, subject to conditions requiring provision of the parking and cycle storage, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any adverse highways impacts and would provide adequate parking provision in accordance with Policies BE.3 and TRAN.9 of the adopted local plan.

Bin Storage

The proposals show the provision of an enclosed building, with provision for storage 'euro' (1100L) bins, which is proposed to be shared between the two blocks of flats. Consultation with the Council's Waste Services on the previous application for 14 apartments confirmed that the provision of bins for the site would be adequate and this application proposes the same level of provision. In addition, there is space for further provision within the building should there prove to be additional need in the future.

It is considered that the new bin storage building, to be shared by both blocks of apartments would be acceptable for the new block but will also help to resolve issues that have occurred at the existing block. Therefore the proposal will lead to improvements in these terms.

Ecology

The site lies adjacent to Valley Brook which runs along its southern boundary of the site in addition there are also trees and features with potential to support protected species.

Consultation with the Council's Ecologist confirms that the proposals would present only a small risk to protected species and raises no objection to the proposal.

It is therefore considered that the proposals would not result in any significant harm to protected species and would accord with Policy NE.5 (Nature Conservation) of the adopted local plan.

Flood Risk/Drainage

The site lies adjacent to Valley Brook which runs along its southern boundary.

Consultation with the Council's Flood Risk Manager confirms that no objections are raised flood risk grounds.

In addition consultation with the Environment Agency does not raise any objection in principle to the proposals but does identify that the Valley Brook is classified as a main river, as stated 'Under the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010, a permit may be required from the Environment Agency for any proposed works or structures in, under, over or within 8 metres of the top of the bank of the brook'.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals would not result in any significant impacts to drainage or flood risks and as such would accord with Policy BE.4 of the adopted local plan.

Environmental Role Conclusion

Subject to appropriate conditions the proposed development would not create any significant tree, design, land stability or highway safety issues. It is considered that the proposal's impact upon the streetscene and the amenity of neighbours in general would be acceptable. On this basis, the proposal can be considered to be environmentally sustainable.

ECONOMIC ROLE

It is accepted that the construction of 14 apartments would bring economic benefits to the closest shops in centre of Crewe both in the short term for the duration of the construction and the long term by bringing additional residential use in close proximity to Crewe town centre. The proposal would also potentially provide local employment opportunities in construction and the wider economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development would be economically sustainable.

SOCIAL ROLE

Concern has been previously raised about piecemeal development of this site and surrounding sites hindering the area and preventing planning gains normally seen within larger developments. Each application has to be treated on its own merits and there is no policy framework that allows for retrospective consideration of financial contribution requirement thresholds. It is also noted that the two other developments previously developed, have different applicants and landowners. Accordingly, this is reflected in the Housing, Education and Open Space assessments below.

Housing

The proposed development would provide open market housing within the established settlement boundary of Crewe which is a social benefit.

With regards the provision of affordable housing, the Interim Planning Statement: Affordable Housing states in section 3.2 that there is a requirement for affordable housing to be provided in settlements with a population of over 3,000 on any windfall sites with more than 15 dwellings or that exceed 0.4ha.

Consultation with the councils Housing Strategy raised no objection to the proposals and confirmed that as the proposal is for 14 apartments and the site is 0.13 hectares in size that there is no requirement for the provision of affordable housing

Education

The proposals are for apartment for 12 one bed units

Previous consultation with the Councils Education Department on the approved scheme, confirmed that they would not require a contribution for the proposals.

Open Space

On the previous applications the Councils Green Space Manager confirmed that they would not require a contribution for the proposals, due to the scale of development.

Amenity

There are residential properties to the east and north of the proposed building. Located to the north of the proposed building is a site with permission for a block of apartments which would have an elevated rear elevation facing the development with a separation of approximately 21m. Due to the set down in levels and location of facing windows is considered any loss of amenity in respect this development would be considered acceptable.

The property to the North West of the site (9 Walthall Street) would lie at right angles to the proposed apartments and as such would not be directly overlooked.

The property to the east is an apartment block with facing side elevation containing principal bedroom windows, approximately 14 metres from nearest elevation of the proposed. Whilst this is not within the recommended spacing standards for principal windows outlined within the Crewe and Nantwich SPD, it is considered that the windows would not oppose each other and as such create any direct views. On this basis it is considered that the impact upon residential amenity is acceptable in this case.

Members in refusing the previous scheme had concerns about the living conditions of occupiers of the 2 bed units within the roof space, especially being served by just rooflights. These units are now proposed to be served by dormer and casement windows as well as roof lights.

With regards the residential amenity of future residents, the proposals show the provision of a re-configured shared outdoor seating area giving more space for residents to address the previous concerns of Members. In addition the site is located nearby to public open space facilities in the form of 'Valley Park'.

Subject to conditions the proposals would not result any significant loss of residential amenity of neighbouring properties and would provide adequate amenity provision for future residents, and accords with Policy BE.1 (Amenity) of the Local Plan.

As such it is considered that the development would be socially sustainable.

PLANNING BALANCE

The site is within the Crewe Settlement Boundary and the principle of residential development is considered to be acceptable and the development would be appropriate in this location.

From an economic sustainability perspective, the scheme will assist in the local building business and bring economic benefits to Crewe town centre from additional residential uses.

From an environmental and social perspective the proposal is considered to be acceptable in the impact upon local amenities, parking, highway safety, bin storage provision, and traffic generation terms. Nor would it have any impact upon archaeological interests and would be of an acceptable design that would have a minimal impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties or future residents.

The proposals are considered to be a sustainable form of development which would comply with the relevant local plan policies and would not compromise key sustainability principles as set out in national planning policy.

Therefore there is a presumption in favour of the development and accordingly it is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

And the following conditions:

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Pile driving limited to 08:30 to 17:30 Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 13:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays**
- 4. Submission and approval of details of materials**
- 5. Landscaping details including boundary treatment of car parking area to be submitted and approved**
- 6. Implementation of landscaping**
- 7. Submission and implementation of tree protection measures**
- 8. Implementation of Gas Protection Measures**
- 9. Standard Contaminated Land Condition**
- 10. Parking to be provided prior to occupation**
- 11. Bins shall be only be stored within “Bin Store Area” except on collection day**
- 12. Parking spaces shall be provided prior to 1st occupation and retained thereafter**
- 13. Provision of an electric vehicle charging point**

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 Planning and Place Shaping Manager has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Southern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee’s decision.

