

Application No: 17/1725N

Location: 331- 333, HUNGERFORD ROAD, CREWE, CW1 5EZ

Proposal: Proposed conversion of existing properties to form four self contained apartments

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Jim Morgan, Homeworld Property Management Ltd

Expiry Date: 05-Jul-2017

SUMMARY:

The site is within the Settlement Zone Line of Crewe, where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to be neutral in terms of its impact upon design and residential amenity satisfying the environmental sustainability role.

The proposal would provide positive benefits such as the economic sustainability roles by providing employment in the locality during construction and social role by providing housing in a sustainable location.

Whilst the proposal would not provide any additional car parking spaces and would not provide the recommended minimum size of garden area, car ownership levels for apartments are lower than that for houses and the site is sustainably located in close proximity to the town centre which offers transport links and access to parks and green spaces.

Therefore on balance the proposal is considered to be acceptable as the benefits outweigh the dis-benefits.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to conditions

REASON FOR CALL IN

The application has been called in to Committee by Councillor Brookfield. The reasons are as follows:

The application appears to be for conversion of two terraced houses into 4 apartments/residential units each comprising 2 bedrooms (8 bedrooms in total) and yet there are only two vehicle spaces provided. Whilst the properties are extensive and the

accommodation provided appears to be adequate the concerns that a MINIMUM of 4 vehicles may need parking spaces. I have not been to the rear of the property but would imagine that access is limited for vehicles as it is in most cases for terraced houses in Crewe.

Hungerford Road is a very busy thoroughfare with significant on-street parking - with residents parking permits in place in areas too. As such the off-street parking would be essential.

I would also have concerns that the storage area for the 'wheelie bins' (as stated on the application) is inadequate. There will be a minimum 8 no. bins (2 bins per property) to be stored in the space indicated.

PROPOSAL

Proposed conversion of x2 existing properties to form four self contained apartments.

No external alterations are proposed.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located east of the Crewe Town Centre Boundary and within the Crewe Settlement Boundary. The property is an end and mid terraced two-storey unit. At the rear is a small courtyard area.

The locality consists of predominantly residential properties.

RELEVANT HISTORY

No relevant planning history.

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

National Policy:

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Of particular relevance are paragraphs 14 and 19.

Development Plan:

The Development Plan for this area is the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design Standards

BE.3 – Access and Parking

BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources

RES.1 – Housing Allocations

TRAN9 – Parking Standards

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

SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles
SE 1 Design
SE 2 Efficient Use of Land
SE 9 Energy Efficient Development
SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability
EG1 Economic Prosperity

CONSULTATIONS:

Crewe Town Council: Objection - the proposal does not provide sufficient off-street parking provision. The proposal is for four 2 bed apartments. The Cheshire East Parking Standard requires 2 spaces for each apartment, a total of 8 spaces. This compares to a requirement for 4 spaces in total for the two existing 3 bedroom houses. The application proposes only 2 spaces, although doubt has been raised about the ability to access these spaces satisfactorily. Parking restrictions apply on Hungerford Road, so there is no available on-street parking. The increased occupation density resulting from this proposal will create road safety issues as a result of inadequate parking provision.

Highways: No objection

Environmental Protection: No comments received at the time of writing the report

Housing Standards & Adaptations: No objection

ANSA: No objection

REPRESENTATIONS:

None received at the time of writing the report

APPRAISAL

The key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are set out below.

Principle of Development

The site lies in the Settlement Zone Line as designated in the adopted Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan First Review 2005, where there is the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The issue in question is whether this proposal represents sustainable development and whether there are other material considerations associated with this proposal, which are a sufficient material consideration to outweigh the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

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”

There are, however, three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

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

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;

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; and

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

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Crewe Town Centre

The proposal site is situated outside of the Town Centre Boundary as per the Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. As a result it is not considered that the loss of the existing retail use and replacement with housing would pose any threat to the overall vitality/viability of the town centre.

It could be argued that the replacement x8 bedrooms would in fact have a positive effect on the town centre given the spending power of the future occupants.

Highways

The proposal is to convert 2 houses to 4 apartments, with access and parking remaining the same.

Whilst car parking provision is not being increased, car ownership levels for apartments are generally lower than that for houses. The proposal is also sustainably located and within walking distance of the centre of Crewe, the railway station, and local retail units.

As a result it is not considered that the proposal would cause any harm significant harm to the existing highway network.

Design

No external alterations are proposed therefore it is not considered that the proposal would cause any visual harm to the overall character/appearance of the area.

Amenity

Residential properties surround the application property therefore the proposed use is a complimentary use and is not expected to cause any significant harm to living conditions of existing properties.

The proposal does not provide the recommended minimum garden area of 50sqm. The total area provided would be just 72sqm. However the property does seek to provide some limited private amenity space to the rear which would allow an outside seating area and an area to hand out washing etc. The location of the site also gives easy access to indoor and outdoor recreation facilities with the nearest park being located 500m to the south west of the site. Therefore it is considered that future occupants will be able to enjoy amenity space either on site or in the parks locally. Any shortfall in the garden area would have to be weighed in the overall planning balance against the benefits of the scheme.

There is space available for cycle, refuse and domestic storage within the rear garden area and each unit would have x2 bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, living and dining room. It is therefore considered that the proposed change of use is acceptable in terms of the impact to the surrounding residential properties and would provide suitable living conditions for future occupants.

Bin storage/waste collection

ANSA have been consulted and have advised that the bin storage area is sufficient to accommodate the number of bins required which would allow bins to be stored in a dedicated area at the end of the rear garden area and would be wheeled out to the alley way between Nos 345 & 347 Hungerford Road on bin collection day.

Housing standards

The Housing Standards and Adaptions Team have been consulted and have confirmed that as these are self contained flats they have no objections as room size requirements only relate to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The proposal would create economic benefits from the spending power of the future occupants.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The proposal would create additional residential accommodation in an accessible location close to the town centre.

Conclusion

The site is within the Settlement Zone Line of Crewe, where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to be neutral in terms of its impact upon design and residential amenity satisfying the environmental sustainability role.

The proposal would provide positive benefits such as the economic sustainability roles by providing employment in the locality and social role by providing housing in a sustainable location.

Whilst the proposal would not provide any additional car parking spaces and would not provide the recommended minimum size of garden area, car ownership levels for apartments are lower than that for houses and the site is sustainably located in close proximity to the town centre which offers transport links and access to parks and green spaces.

Therefore on balance the proposal is considered to be acceptable as the benefits outweigh the dis-benefits.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions:

- 1. 3 years commencement**
- 2. Compliance with approved plans**
- 3. Materials as specified**
- 4. Refuse to be provided as shown**
- 5. Cycle storage area to be provided**

In order to give proper effect to the Committee's intentions and without changing the substance of the decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation), in consultation with the Chair (or in his 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.

