

Application No: 18/0016N

Location: LAND EAST OF LIME TREE AVENUE, CREWE

Proposal: Proposed temporary permission (up to 18 months) for an alternative site compound for the Sydney Road Bridge replacement scheme, consisting of: 6 no. temporary cabins, wc block, parking area, service road, laydown area, top soil storage area and associated facilities, and temporary diversion of a Public Right of Way

Applicant: Mr Chris Hindle, Cheshire East Council

Expiry Date: 08-Mar-2018

SUMMARY

The existing Sydney Road Bridge is identified within the Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CEIDP). The CEIDP identifies that the developments around Crewe will exacerbate the delays currently caused at the Sydney Road Pinch Point. The CEIDP identifies that the construction of a new bridge to allow two way carriageway is classed as Priority 1 (the highest priority).

The replacement of the existing bridge will provide important highway benefits to Crewe and economic benefits outlined above. It should also be noted that the existing bridge is an aging structure which is classed as 'fair to poor condition'. The bridge currently requires regular maintenance work.

During the construction period and use of the compound for 18 months there would be some disruption to local residents in terms of noise, vibration, traffic diversions, diversion of the PROW, loss of the open space and through air quality but this would be controlled by condition and for a limited time only. Following the completion of the development there would be benefits in terms of improved traffic movement, improved pedestrian and cycle links and a slight reduction in predicted levels of NO₂.

In terms of noise there will be an increase in noise levels at the closest sensitive receptors for a temporary period of 18 months.

The landscape assessment identifies that the landscape impacts will be adverse and most apparent for residential receptors and those using nearby footpath. In this case the Councils Landscape Architect has raised no objection to this application.

The loss of open space on this site would be temporary and would be mitigated through the provision of replacement play facilities at the Lime Tree Avenue (Greendale Gardens) play area.

The development would have a neutral impact in terms of trees (subject to mitigation planting), ecology and flood risk/drainage.

In this case it is considered that the benefits of this scheme would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm and on this basis the proposal represents sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION
Approve with conditions

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for a temporary site compound for the construction of a replacement bridge on Sydney Road (approved as part of application 17/1980N).

The compound will be fenced with Heras fencing and the ground will be surfaced with a stone aggregate material. The site will include six single storey cabins situated at the southern end of the site and a laydown area will be located at the northern end of the site. A car-park for site workers would be sited within the centre of the site. The site would have two access points and would operate with 'in' and 'out' access points.

The development would result in the loss of one Lime Tree which would be replaced with 3 new trees to the rear of the site.

A temporary diversion will be put in place along the northern edge of the site for the Public Right of Way (Crewe FP26) which crosses the site.

The site compound would be for a temporary period of 18 months and would commence in April 2018 and throughout the construction of the replacement bridge. Once the replacement bridge is complete the site compound would be grass seeded and re-instated to its current use.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is an area of public open space which is located between Lime Tree Avenue and the Crewe-Manchester railway line. Lime Tree Avenue in this area is characterised by large Lime Tree's which are planted within the grass verge. There are also a number of trees within the site including two Lime Trees towards the boundary with the railway, one tree towards the centre of the site and a group of trees to the south of the site.

A PROW (Crewe FP26) runs along the boundary with the railway line.

The site is flat and is surrounded by residential properties which front Lime Tree Avenue and Greendale Gardens. To the south-west of the site is a pedestrian access which serves Sir William Stanier School.

RELEVANT HISTORY

The application site has no planning history. However the following applications are relevant to this application;

18/0445N - Railway Bridge, Sydney Road, Crewe - Variation of conditions 3, 4, 7, 15, 16 and 17 on application 17/1980N – Application undetermined.

17/1980N – Railway Bridge, Sydney Road, Crewe - Demolition of the existing Sydney Road Bridge and provision of a new wider road bridge that will allow for two way traffic movement and removal of the traffic lights, and the creation of new pedestrian footpaths. The scheme also includes the creation of a temporary site compound, temporary site access, provision of a temporary pedestrian and cycle bridge during the construction period and other ancillary works – Approved 7th July 2017

15/3119S - EIA Screening opinion proposed road bridge over Manchester - Crewe Road Coast Main Line – EIA Not Required

POLICIES

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version

PG2 – Settlement Hierarchy
PG7 – Spatial Distribution of Development
SD1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East
SD2 - Sustainable Development Principles
SE1 - Design
SE2 - Efficient Use of Land
SE3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
SE4 - The Landscape
SE5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
SE6 – Green Infrastructure
SE12 – Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability
SE13 - Flood Risk and Water Management
SC1 – Leisure and Recreation
IN1 – Infrastructure
CO1 – Sustainable Travel and Transport
CO2 – Enabling Business Growth Through Transport Infrastructure

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council Local Plan policy

BE.1 – Amenity
BE.3 – Access and Parking
BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources
BE.6 – Development on Potentially Contaminated Land
NE.5 – Nature Conservation and Habitats
NE.9 – Protected Species
NE.17 – Pollution Control
NE.20 – Flood Prevention
TRAN.3 – Pedestrians
TRAN.5 – Provision for Cyclists
RT.1 – Protection of Open Spaces with Recreational or Amenity Value
RT.9 – Footpaths and Bridleways

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework

Other Considerations

The EC Habitats Directive 1992
Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010
Circular 6/2005 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System
National Planning Practice Guidance
Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

CEC Head of Strategic Infrastructure: No objection.

Network Rail: No comments to make.

CEC Public Rights of Way: The proposed development would have a direct and significant effect on the Public Right of Way, which constitutes a material consideration.

The developer has stated the intention to submit an application for the temporary closure of part of the Public Footpath with a temporary diversion route to enable the same trajectory to be achieved by pedestrians. Pre-commencement and post-completion condition surveys of the surface of the Public Right of Way shall be undertaken by the developer, with the developer restoring any degradation identified.

An informative is suggested.

CEC Environmental Health: Suggest that the skips are relocated closer to the railway due to noise concerns. Condition suggested in relation to external lighting and an informative suggested relating to construction hours.

CEC Public Open Space: This development would result in the loss of an existing area of Public Open Space for a period of 18 months. To mitigate this loss it is suggested that improvements are made to replace the Council owned play area at Greendale Gardens (remove and replace the 2 bay swings along with surfacing).

Following the completion of the works the land should be reinstated to an acceptable standard.

VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Crewe Town Council: The Town Council would like to bring to the attention of the Southern Planning Committee the comments made by residents and the letter submitted by Cheshire East ward Councillor Suzanne Brookfield.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

One letter has been received from Cllr Brookfield which makes the following comments;

- There has been a request from some residents that a meeting is held for them to meet and pose questions to the contractors and it is requested that this is facilitated by Cheshire East and the contractors.
- As a resident I walk my dog regularly in this area – using the public footpath that connects Sydney Road. Please confirm this will still be available for use for pedestrians.
- Details of the working hours need to be set to ensure that residents in the nearby houses are not unnecessarily disturbed and it is requested that these restrictions are adhered to by the contractors. Within the ward recently there have been two cases where this has not been the case to the detriment of residents enjoyment of their homes.
- Lime Tree Avenue and Queen Street is already a busy thoroughfare and suffers both from congestion (at Queen Street/Spring Gardens end) and speeding (all the way through the Avenue) as evidenced by the siting of a regular police vehicle. What measures are being put in place to mitigate this? Will the Police van still be able to be present at time?

- The area suffers greatly from congestion towards Queen Street/Henry Street and again at Wheatley Road junction and this will increase greatly when the bridge is closed. Adding the contractor traffic to this will possibly make the area untenable and dangerous. What are the proposals to mitigate these very serious issues?
- There are two busy schools in the area – the increased traffic issues will be a concern.
- 13 spaces have been allocated for parking. Is this for contractors use? There are concerns that this is inadequate and due to the residential area and conditions should be put in place to prohibit contractors from parking on residential streets.
- As with other development sites the surrounding area has either suffered with increased mud on roads and footpaths (in inclement weather) or dust (in good weather). It is requested that the Contractors are obliged to clean/clear/sweep the streets affected daily.
- The condition of Lime Tree Avenue, Wheatley Road, Queen Street is at present poor and this will be exacerbated by the increased contractor traffic. There are concerns from a safety point of view.
- Please can residents have assurances about the air pollution in the area. I would request a condition is imposed on all contractor vehicles that engines are prohibited from “running” when the vehicles are stationary.

Seven letters of objection has been received which raises the following points;

- Noise pollution caused by HGV's and workmen
- Windows will have to be kept shut due to excessive noise
- Dust creation
- Increased vehicles will affect access to and from the driveways of nearby dwellings
- The removal of the Lime tree is not acceptable. The tree should be retained
- Damage to other trees along Lime Tree Avenue
- Why is the original compound location no longer available?
- Since the letter to households the time period for the compound from 13 months to 18 months
- The layout of the compound has changed since the Council first advised residents of the compound
- The original application stated zero parking spaces needed and yet now it appears that 13 spaces are needed. Why the change?
- As the applicant now requires 13 parking spaces, can this be taken as an admission that they expect a significant rise in traffic flow along Lime Tree Avenue and that they deem it unsafe to park on the road?
- There is no information in relation to the hours to be worked and the hours of use of the compound
- There is no information in relation to the type of vehicles which will use the compound. This could have a detrimental impact upon road safety and that of children attending Sir William Stanier School
- There is nothing within the application about the noise mitigation measures and this will impact upon residents who work from home
- What measures will be taken to keep the road clean from dust, mud and debris
- The use of HGVs on Wheatley Road will exacerbate the problems with the potholes and poor quality of this road
- What measures will be put in place to stop contractors parking on Lime Tree Avenue
- Discrepancies over the number of properties consulted on this application
- Currently two PCV vehicles park on Lime Tree Avenue, adjacent to the proposed compound, to collect school children and take them to their schools. This will clash with the 8.00am opening of the site and also lead to road safety issues for the children who have to cross the road at this point. Many of the children live in Greendale Gardens. Have the bus companies been contacted? Have the parents whose children will be affected been contacted? Have the schools involved been contacted?
- Why are skips needed at the compound on Lime Tree Avenue when it is an inappropriate distance from the site

- Local drivers will not use the diversion route. This will lead to increased traffic along Lime Tree Avenue and the associated pollution and reduction in road safety
- Loss of hard standing for the police camera van will take away the deterrent for motorists to speed and lead to a reduction in road safety
- The compound is opposite to the well used entrance to Sir William Stanier School and this is a safety issue
- The proposal to reseed the site is inadequate as the site is waterlogged and heavy rain will cause the seeds to rot or be washed away
- The use of lighting will lead to light pollution
- The proposed 8 per hour movements of HGVs to and from the compound via Wheatley Road and Lime Tree Avenue. This is a narrow stretch of road exacerbated by the resident's parking their vehicles on both sides of the roads. Also, there is a blind bend in the area of the junction of Plane Tree Avenue and the electricity sub-station adjacent to the compound. The additional traffic caused by the compound, particularly HGVs, will severely affect the road safety in this area
- There will be intolerable additional traffic using Wheatley Road throughout the day and particularly at peak times. This junction with Sydney Road and Lime Tree Avenue is already a cause of traffic delays and this proposal will make it much worse
- Health concerns caused to residents with asthma
- The use of diesel trucks and generators will add to the pollution issues in the area
- The footpath which crosses the site is well used by local school children/dog walkers
- Inconvenience to local home owners
- No traffic calming measures are proposed along Lime Tree Avenue
- Impact upon local wildlife and disturbance of rabbits on the site

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principal of Development

The proposed compound will serve the construction of a replacement railway bridge at Sydney Road. The approved scheme included a temporary compound on an area of land to the south of a Scottish Power electricity substation off Sydney Road. Following further discussions since the determination of application 17/1980N it has been established that Scottish Power require the land for several months of the replacement bridge construction works in order to carry out their own maintenance works on the adjacent substation. As a result an alternative temporary site compound for the Sydney Road Bridge construction had to be sought. Cheshire East has considered several sites and decided upon this plot of land which is subject to this planning application.

The existing Sydney Road Bridge is identified within the Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CEIDP). The CEIDP identifies that the developments around Crewe will exacerbate the delays currently caused at the Sydney Road Pinch Point. The CEIDP identifies that the construction of a new bridge to allow two way carriageway is classed as Priority 1 (the highest priority).

The Core Planning Principles of the NPPF identify that planning should;

'proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs'

The NPPF then goes on to state that Local Planning Authorities should;

‘identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement’

And that Local authorities should work with transport providers to;

‘develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development’

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy identifies that the Sydney Road Bridge is an important infrastructure requirement and the allocations LPS7 (Sydney Road, Crewe), LPS5 (Leighton, Crewe) and LPS11 (Broughton Road, Crewe) all seek to secure S106 contributions towards the Sydney Road Bridge or the Sydney Road Corridor.

Policy CO1 (Sustainable Travel and Transport) identifies that development should give priority to walking, cycling and public transport within its design and create safe and secure footways/cycleways and paths linking public transport and other services.

Policy CO2 states that the Council will support transport infrastructure including schemes outlined within the current Infrastructure Delivery Plan/Local Transport Plan and support the improvement of rail infrastructure.

In terms of the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan Policy TRAN.3 requires new development to make appropriate provision for pedestrians through a number of measures including *‘improving an existing footpaths’* and *‘creating pedestrian routes through housing and employment areas’*.

Commencement of Development

This compound will be needed in Phase 1 of the proposed works and this will commence in February/March 2018. This phase relates to the enabling works for the project and in summary this would consist of the following;

- Advanced de-vegetation works before the bird nesting season start (March 2018)
- Set up site compound Lime Tree Avenue (subject to planning permission – 18/0016N)
- Undertake piling for north west abutment
- Excavate and install ducting for Scottish Power
- Scottish Power install new 132Kv Cable and commission
- Move Overhead Line Equipment to temporary location and remove southern gantry
- Install modular units for new abutment
- Infill span
- Partially demobilise main site compound and make secure

A Scottish Power 132kV cable, which currently runs parallel to the railway from the electricity substation, through the Sydney Road bridge span to the Scottish Power pylon north of the has been damaged and jointed several times in the past. Due to the location and condition of this cable it is necessary to replace it with a modern cable in a new, secure duct route to allow for the new wider Sydney Road bridge.

To carry out these works, an outage of the cable is required, which is restricted to Spring/Summer and needs to be planned well in advance. Scottish Power have confirmed that the outage is scheduled to start May 2018 and finish in August 2018 to coincide with their transformer upgrade works. The Sydney

Road project has already had to be re-planned once due to the movement of this outage from 2017 to 2018.

In addition, a 'disruptive possession' (closures of the railway which lead to diversion or termination of planned passenger and freight services) has had to be negotiated with train and freight operators by Network Rail on behalf of Cheshire East Council for May 2018. This possession is to allow for modification to the Overhead Line Equipment and the removal of a gantry. In addition, this possession will be utilised to allow some piling works to take place. Similar to the Scottish Power outage, this possession has to be booked in advance and the train timetable has been amended to include for it.

The requirement for an outage and the associated disruptive possession of the railway means that these works need to be undertaken at specific times, which, due to the complexity involved, take months of negotiation with stakeholders to agree and would significantly delay the construction programme if they are missed.

Amenity

The proposed development would not raise any impacts upon adjoining residential properties in terms of loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact. The main amenity concerns relate to noise, air quality and light pollution. These issues are considered below.

Noise and vibration

The proposed development has the potential to residents being exposed to noise and vibration at various times. There are also concerns caused by the re-routing of traffic onto other roads causing a temporary increase in road traffic noise levels for residents along those routes.

When assessing any planning application the impacts of the scheme have to be assessed against the overall long term benefits of the scheme.

In this case a Noise Assessment and mitigation of the noise and vibration has been carried out in accordance with the methodology with BS5228 (British Standard: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites).

Construction of the proposed scheme would take place in three phases. The topsoil strip/removal of the tree and preparation of the hardstanding at the compound would occur in Phase One, the operation of the compound would occur between phases one and three while the decommissioning of the compound would occur towards the end of the third phase of construction.

The establishment and decommissioning of the proposed compound would take place between 0700-18:00 Monday to Friday and the use of the compound during the construction phase would take during weekday and weekend periods and would occur during daytime and some evening/night-time periods.

The submitted noise assessment includes a list of plant and equipment which is anticipated to use the compound together with the operating times. The noise report identifies the predicted noise levels resulting from the proposed compound at eight sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site (properties on Lime Tree Avenue, Greendale Gardens and Rochester Crescent).

During the topsoil stripping and removal of trees stage the noise level is predicted to be in excess of the existing daytime ambient noise levels. This activity is likely to be during a short duration but the noise levels are high and there is a potential for significant effects.

For the laying/preparation of hardstanding stage the noise level is predicted to be in excess of the existing daytime ambient noise levels. This activity is likely to be during a short duration (2-3 weeks which would take place in the weekday daytime period) but the noise levels are high and there is a potential for significant effects.

In terms of the activities at the site compound during the construction phase the noise report considers activity from the use of heavy vehicles and noise from a diesel generator. The assessment considers two positions for the generator the first being between the canteen and the W/C'S and the second position is to the north-west corner of the site approximately 12m from 243 Lime Tree Avenue. Noise levels are predicted to be as high as 64dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ for the facades of 158 and 168 Lime Tree Avenue for power generator position 1 and 65 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ for the façade of 178 Lime Tree Avenue for generator position 2. Based on the predicted noise levels the construction noise levels would be in excess of the existing night time ambient at several of the receiver points. Given the duration of construction works this development has the potential to result in significant adverse effects during night time activities.

The submitted noise report identifies the following noise mitigation measures that may be adopted to reduce the impact associated with the establishment, operation and decommissioning of the compound. These measures are as follows;

- Appropriate selection of plant and equipment, construction methods and programming
- Plant will be maintained and operated appropriately in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations. All vehicles, plant and equipment will be switched off when not in use
- Use of appropriate noise abatement hoardings and screen where appropriate. Given the proximity of 243 Lime Tree Avenue there will be consideration given to the installation of a temporary noise barrier in the order of 3m in height along this boundary
- Careful selection of routes and programming for the transport of construction materials
- Vehicle and machines used for the purposes of the works should be fitted with exhaust silencers
- The positioning of plant and machinery (including the generator) will be given careful consideration
- Mufflers used on pneumatic tools
- Where necessary the use of sound reducing enclosures
- Establish agreement with LA on appropriate controls for undertaking noisy works
- Programming works so that the requirement for working outside normal working hours is minimised
- Minimise the potential for higher vibration from the vibratory roller
- The use of low-vibratory or non-vibratory compaction techniques
- Endeavour to undertake construction works between the hours of 07:00-18:00 Monday-Friday; 07:00-13:00 on Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

The bridge crosses the West Coast Main Line (WCML) and due to this there will be a necessity for a great deal of the work to be undertaken during the night time and at weekends. Works over and on the WCML can only be undertaken during planned possessions (closures) of the line and this will mean that night-time and weekend working will be required at the construction compound.

There are also predicted impacts from ground borne vibration and the submitted report states that for the closest residential property (243 Lime Tree Avenue) it is likely that vibration levels will be intolerable for any more than a very brief exposure when operating using a normal setting. When altering to a low-vibration setting the resulting vibrations would be perceptible in a residential

environment and are likely to cause complaints. However the submitted report could be tolerated if prior warning and explanation is provided to affected residents.

In terms of property damage the predicted vibration levels would be below the threshold which damage is likely to occur using both the normal and low vibration operating levels.

In this case it should be noted that the noise and vibration impacts listed above would be similar to the significant impacts with respect to noise and vibration at a number of sensitive properties which were identified as part of application 17/1980N. It is considered therefore that for the duration of the scheme significant controls and mitigation will be required to minimise the disruption to residents.

Ultimately it is for the decision maker to make a decision on planning balance, taking account of many factors including noise.

Whilst it is accepted (if approved) that construction and demolition will inevitably take place overnight and at weekends it is considered that wherever possible the noisiest activities should take place during standard construction hours.

The following conditions would be needed to prevent any amenity impacts as part of this development;

- Compliance with the Construction Environment Management Plan submitted as part of application 18/0567D
- A scheme to facilitate a residents liaison group with local residents and Members (suggested as an informative as per application 17/1980N)
- At all times signage shall be displayed with contact numbers for reporting issues and problems associated with the construction works.

Air Quality

Policy SE12 of the emerging Local Plan states that the Council will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality. This is in accordance with paragraph 124 of the NPPF and the Government's Air Quality Strategy.

When assessing the impact of a development on Local Air Quality, regard is given to (amongst other things) the Council's Air Quality Strategy, the Air Quality Action Plan, Local Monitoring Data and the EPUK Guidance "Land Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality May 2015).

As part of this application the applicant has submitted a detailed assessment of the likely impact on air quality in the area has been submitted.

The earthworks activities likely to take place within the temporary site compound boundary include the removal of topsoil strip and laying of a crushed stone base. There will also be the installation of several Porta-cabin units and storage containers. Stockpiling of materials on site is unknown at this stage. It is expected that there will be movement of vehicles between the Sydney Road Bridge and the temporary site compound, which may result in some transfer of dirt / stones onto the local highway and this will be considered as part of trackout effects.

The report recommends mitigation measures for the inclusion within the CEMP. The submitted report states that it is not anticipated that there will be any residual impacts associated with the proposed site

compound assuming that the mitigation measures are included within the CEMP. This view is accepted by the Councils Environmental Health Officer.

Light Pollution

The proposal includes the provision of two lighting columns to serve the compound. In order to protect residential amenity a condition will be imposed to require that lighting details are submitted for approval prior to their installation.

Highway Implications

The existing bridge is located on the north east side of Crewe and carries Sydney Road over the four electrified lines of the Crewe to Manchester Rail line. Sydney Road is a part of the distributor road network within Crewe and forms a key strategic corridor linking the east and south-east parts of the town with areas to the north and north-west. The location is one of only four places within Crewe where it is possible to cross the West Coast Main Line (WCML). At present there is only a single carriageway across the bridge and flow is controlled by traffic signals; this causes congestion particularly at peak times. The new structure will increase the capacity of the road by allowing for two way flow across the bridge and as such remove a pinch point from Crewe road network.

The existing bridge also suffers from poor pedestrian/cycle facilities with only one footway on the northern side of the bridge. This requires those approaching the bridge from the south to cross Sydney Road in order to safely cross the bridge. This issue is further compounded by no pedestrian crossing facilities (dropped kerb, tactile paving etc) being in place.

The new bridge will be designed with footways on both sides improving access for pedestrians and reducing the need for pedestrians to cross the road to use the existing footway, thus reducing potential traffic / pedestrian conflicts. Also, by situating a footpath on both sides of the carriageway the replacement structure will provide a continuous link within the pedestrian network. The design of the replacement bridge will ensure a safe route for pedestrians; it will also provide a safer route for cyclists by providing a combined cycle/footpath across the railway line.

During the construction phase it is necessary to close Sydney Road Bridge to all vehicular traffic for a period of approximately 22 weeks. Options for potential diversionary routes are limited as Sydney Bridge is one of only four crossing points over the rail line within Crewe. As such, a diversion route has been proposed which involves utilising the A532 & B5076 which is deemed acceptable in principle as this route benefits from a higher or equivalent road classification than Sydney Road. However to enable this route to be fully utilised the existing 7.5 tonne weight restriction along Hungerford Road will need to be temporarily suspended by way of a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order. If this order wasn't forthcoming then an alternative diversion route utilising Crewe Road/Macon Way would need to be pursued.

This application for a temporary compound is proposed as part of the Sydney Road bridge replacement scheme, the compound is to be used by the contractors building the scheme. The application is for a temporary permission for 18 months, it has an 'in' and 'out' access to the compound to provide office facilities, contractor parking and storage areas. Clearly, a facility for staff is required close to bridge given the scale of the project and also to provide a facility that avoids parking on the public highway. As this is a temporary permission there are no objections raised by the Councils Strategic Highways Manager.

There will inevitably be some disruption on the local highway network during the construction period of the new bridge. However once complete the development will provide benefits to the flow of traffic along Sydney Road with the removal of the existing bottleneck. The development will also provide benefits in terms of improved pedestrian and cycle links across the railway. The highway benefits of this development weigh in favour of this proposed development.

Landscape

The application site covers an area of approximately 0.24 hectares and is a grassed open area located to the south of the Sydney Road Bridge on a small parcel of land located between Lime Tree Avenue and the West Coast main Line. Footpath 26 Crewe follows a route along the eastern boundary of the site.

As part of the submission a Non-Statutory Environmental Report has been submitted, this includes a table of the Assessment of Effects. This identifies the impacts during construction and at completion for a number of receptors, including the townscape character, Footpath 26 Crewe and residential properties nearby. The report assesses that during the construction phase there will be a slight adverse effect on the Town character, a very large adverse effect on Footpath 26 Crewe and large adverse effects for a number of properties located along Lime Tree Avenue and Greendale Gardens and lower levels of effects for other nearby properties. The report indicates that these effects will reduce to neutral at the time of opening.

The submitted assessment is accepted and there are no objections raised by the Councils Landscape Architect.

Trees

The Application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) which provides an assessment of the potential impact of the development on existing trees, anticipated tree losses and protection measures required for those trees identified for retention.

This submitted application shows that one tree would be required for removal as part of this application; a Grade B Lime Tree towards the centre of the site. In this cases of the tree is accepted given the wider benefits of delivering the Sydney Road Bridge scheme. To mitigate this loss three replacement trees would be planted.

Ecology

If planning consent is granted a condition could be imposed to safeguard nesting birds.

The letter of objection which makes reference to the impact upon wild rabbits is noted. However rabbits are not a protected species.

Public Open Space

The proposed development is identified as Public Open Space and is covered by Policy RT.1 (Protection of Open Spaces with Recreational or Amenity Value) of the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan.

If approved this development would result in the temporary loss of Public Open Space for a period of 18 months. In this case Policy RT.1 requires only allows the loss of open space in a number of exceptions.

In this case the loss would not be permanent and the use of the open space would return once the compound has been removed after 18 months. It could also be argued that the land in question is ancillary to the main area of public open space which is located to the opposite side of Lime Tree Avenue.

Policy RT.1 does allow for open space to be lost where it is replaced by open space of equivalent or greater quality in a suitable location prior to the commencement of development.

In this case there is an existing play area opposite the proposed compound known as Lime Tree Avenue (Greendale Gardens) and the swings on this site do not comply with BSEN1176. In order to mitigate for the temporary loss of the open space it is suggested that a condition is imposed to require the developer to remove and replace the 2 bay swing (4 swings in total – 2 cradle swings and 2 flat swings) along with any surfacing to BSEN1176 AND 1177 standards. Due to the timing implications as explained within the 'commencement of development' section of this report it is not possible to secure these details prior to the commencement of development and the scheme will be secured within 1 month of the works commencing and implemented within three months.

A pre-commencement survey of the site has been requested from the applicant and a pre-completion survey will be controlled through the imposition of a planning condition.

Flood Risk/Drainage

The site is located within Flood Zone 1. In this case this temporary compound would be finished with stone aggregate material and would retain its permeable finish, as a result the proposal would not have any significant flood risk/drainage.

Impact upon the Public Right of Way (PROW)

As noted above PROW (Crewe FP26) runs along the boundary with the railway line and extends from Sydney Road to the north and along the eastern boundary of this parcel of open space.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that *“planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”* (para 75). NPPF continues to state (para. 35) that *“Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to.....*

- give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;*
- create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians”.*

The proposed development would have a direct and significant effect on the Public Right of Way, which constitutes *“a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission and local planning authorities should ensure that the potential consequences are taken into account*

whenever such applications are considered” (Defra Rights of Way Circular (1/09), Guidance for Local Authorities, Version 2, October 2009, para 7.2).

The developer has stated that the intention is to submit an application for the temporary closure of part of the Public Footpath with a temporary diversion route to enable the same trajectory to be achieved by pedestrians. The diversion application shall include provision for proposals for the temporary closure of the Public Right of Way, along with alternative route provision of adequate width and the strimming of that route to keep it free from vegetation. Pre-commencement and post-completion condition surveys of the surface of the Public Right of Way shall be undertaken by the developer, with the developer restoring any degradation identified.

Economic Benefits

The background section to the CELPS states that;

‘This Plan is strongly underpinned by a need to improve transport connections across the Borough. New projects are planned in all towns as part of the Plan, to address congestion issues.’

The proposed compound would serve the construction of the replacement of the existing single carriageway structure acts a bottleneck within the highway network. Sydney Road acts as a main distributor route for traffic to the north of Crewe Town Centre and provides access from the South of Crewe to North West Crewe (which includes Leighton Hospital, Bentley Motors and future housing sites identified within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy).

Providing additional infrastructure capacity in the local highway network is required in order to help Crewe play a vital role in the economic growth of Cheshire East and the wider sub-region, and the Department for Transport identifies that the proposed development would have the benefit of: *‘removing a significant pinch point and unlocking capacity to support a number of allocated housing sites.’*

As well as being a bottleneck in the local highway network and constraining future growth aspirations for the area, Sydney Road Bridge is also an ageing structure that is in need of regular maintenance work. The existing bridge is owned by Network Rail and has sub-standard parapets, and also suffers from cracks that are caused by differential movement between the bridge supports. A recent structural survey showed the bridge to be in a *‘fair to poor condition’*.

As a result it is considered that there would be significant economic benefits arising from the replacement bridge which would be served by this temporary compound.

CONCLUSIONS

The existing Sydney Road Bridge is identified within the Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CEIDP). The CEIDP identifies that the developments around Crewe will exacerbate the delays currently caused at the Sydney Road Pinch Point. The CEIDP identifies that the construction of a new bridge to allow two way carriageway is classed as Priority 1 (the highest priority).

The replacement of the existing bridge will provide important highway benefits to Crewe and economic benefits outlined above. It should also be noted that the existing bridge is an aging structure which is classed as *‘fair to poor condition’*. The bridge currently requires regular maintenance work.

During the construction period and use of the compound for 18 months there would be some disruption to local residents in terms of noise, vibration, traffic diversions, diversion of the PROW, loss of the open space and through air quality but this would be controlled by condition and for a limited time only. Following the completion of the development there would be benefits in terms of improved traffic movement, improved pedestrian and cycle links and a slight reduction in predicted levels of NO₂.

In terms of noise there will be an increase in noise levels at the closest sensitive receptors for a temporary period of 18 months.

The landscape assessment identifies that the landscape impacts will be adverse and most apparent for residential receptors and those using nearby footpath. In this case the Councils Landscape Architect has raised no objection to this application.

The loss of open space on this site would be temporary and would be mitigated through the provision of replacement play facilities at the Lime Tree Avenue (Greendale Gardens) play area.

The development would have a neutral impact in terms of trees (subject to mitigation planting), ecology and flood risk/drainage.

In this case it is considered that the benefits of this scheme would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm and on this basis the proposal represents sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Development to proceed in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3. Within one month of the approved development commencing a scheme to remove and replace the 2 bay swing (4 swings in total – 2 cradle 2 flat) at the Council owned play area at Greendale Gardens shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The approved scheme shall include replacement swings (4 swings in total) and surfacing to BSEN 1176 & 1177 standards. The approved scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details within 3 months of works commencing unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.**
- 4. Within one month of the commencement of the development submission of a scheme of landscaping of replacement tree planting to be submitted**
- 5. Implementation of the scheme of replacement tree planting**
- 6. Nesting birds – timing of works**
- 7. Compliance with the Construction Environment Management Plan submitted as part of application 18/0567D**
- 8. At all times of construction there shall be a prominently displayed contact telephone numbers for the reporting of issues and problems**
- 9. Prior to the instillation of external lighting details are to be submitted for approval**
- 10. Pre-completion surveys of the PROW/POS shall be submitted to the LPA and approved in writing.**

Informatives;

- 1. Liaison committee to be set up with local residents and Members**
- 2. Standard Construction Hours informative**
- 3. PROW Informative**
- 4. Diversion of the PROW Informative**
- 5. Prior notification of local residents/ward members where noise generative activities will take place during standard construction hours**

In order to give proper effect to the Committee`s intent and without changing the substance of its decision, authority is delegated to the Head of Planning (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair (or in their absence the Vice Chair) to correct any technical slip or omission in the resolution, before issue of the decision notice

