

Application No: 19/0032M

Location: Land West Of, MANCHESTER ROAD, KNUTSFORD

Proposal: Outline planning application with means of access to be determined (all other matters reserved for subsequent approval) for the erection of up to 60 dwellings (Class C3); up to 7.5 hectare business park (Class B1); landscaping and open space; a new roundabout on Manchester Road, new internal highways, car parking and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists incorporating Public Right of Way (FP2); sustainable drainage measures; and all ancillary enabling works.

Applicant: Mr Steve Melligan, The Crown Estate

Expiry Date: 02-Apr-2019

SUMMARY

Knutsford is one of the Key Service Centres and growth areas of the Borough where national and local plan policies support sustainable development. The proposal seeks up to 60 dwellings on part of a site allocated for around 75 dwellings and up to 7.5 hectares of a B1 business park under Policy LPS 36(b) within the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS). Through the adoption of the CELPS, the site has been removed from the Green Belt and the principle of developing the site for housing is acceptable. This proposal would bring economic and social benefits through the delivery of around 60 houses in a sustainable location and providing significant employment opportunities. Cheshire East is able to demonstrate a 7.2 year supply of housing, however, this proposal will make a valuable contribution in maintaining this position.

The proposal provides the required amount of affordable housing and the impact on local infrastructure including education and healthcare provision would be mitigated by financial contributions. The development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network subject to financial contributions to deliver improvements to a number of junctions in the centre of Knutsford.

It is considered that the proposals are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable and accord with the development plan and the framework. The site is sustainably located within the town and the proposals represent an efficient use of the land. The trees on and around the site and local ecology are not harmed although some matters must be dealt with by way of conditions at this stage.

As the application is in outline many matters are left unresolved at this stage and will be fully addressed as part of any future reserved matters application.

On this basis, the proposal is for sustainable development which would bring environmental, economic and social benefits and is therefore considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant policies of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, the saved policies of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and advice contained within the NPPF. In accordance with Sec.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 11 of the Framework, the proposals should therefore be approved without delay.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to Section 106 Agreement and the conditions listed below.

PROPOSAL

The application is for outline planning application with means of access to be determined (all other matters reserved for subsequent approval) for the erection of up to 60 dwellings (Class C3); up to 7.5 hectare business park (Class B1); landscaping and open space; a new roundabout on Manchester Road, new internal highways, car parking and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists incorporating Public Right of Way (FP2); sustainable drainage measures; and all ancillary enabling works.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site consists of agricultural land to the north of the existing residential properties on Freshfields and Tabley Close. A car showroom is located at the northern end of the site, Manchester Road forms the eastern boundary whilst agricultural land forms the western boundary. Green Lane also forms part of the north western boundary.

The site is generally level and enclosed on the most part by hedgerows. Some ponds and mature trees are located within the site.

RELEVANT HISTORY

None relevant to the consideration of this application.

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

National Policy

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

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy

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

MP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

PG1 Overall Development Strategy

PG2 Settlement Hierarchy

PG7 Spatial Distribution of Development

EG1 Economic Prosperity

EG3 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites

SD1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

SD2 Sustainable Development Principles

SE1 Design

SE2 Efficient use of land

SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

SE 4 The Landscape

SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

SE 6 Green Infrastructure

SE 7 The Historic Environment

SE9 Energy Efficient Development

SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management

CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport

CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments

SC 1 Leisure and Recreation

SC 2 Outdoor Sports Facilities

SC 3 Health and Well Being

SC 4 Residential Mix

SC 5 Affordable Homes

IN 1 Infrastructure

IN 2 Developer Contributions

Directly relevant to this site is the following allocation;

Site LPS 36 (b) Land East of Manchester Road

The application site is the entirety of this allocation.

It should be noted that the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy was formally adopted on 27th July 2017. There are however policies within the legacy local plans that still apply and have not yet been replaced. These policies are set out below.

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan

- NE3 – Protection of Local Landscapes
- NE11 – Protection and enhancement of nature conservation interests
- NE17 – Nature Conservation in Major Developments
- RT5 – Open Space Standards
- DC3 – Amenity
- DC6 – Circulation and Access
- DC8 – Landscaping
- DC9 – Tree Protection
- DC14 - Noise
- DC15 – Provision of Facilities
- DC17 – Water Resources
- DC35 – Materials and Finishes
- DC36 – Road Layouts and Circulation
- DC37 – Landscaping
- DC38 – Space Light and Privacy
- DC40 – Children’s Play Provision and Amenity Space
- DC41 – Infill Housing Development

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan is a ‘made’ neighbourhood plan and therefore full weight can be given to its policies.

The relevant policies are;

- C1 – Cultural and Community Places
- ER1 – Employment Development
- E3 – Habitat Protection and Biodiversity
- E5 – Pollution
- HW1 – Health and Wellbeing
- HW2 – Community Health
- HE1 – Landmarks, Views, Vistas and Gateways
- HE2 - Heritage Assets
- H1 – Housing Mix
- SL1 – Open Space in New Developments
- T1 – Walking in Knutsford
- T2 – Cycling in Knutsford

T4 - Parking

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Cheshire Archaeology Planning Service – No objection. Agree with the recommendation in the report for no further archaeological work is required.

NHS CCG – No objection. This is conditionally on a financial contribution being agreed for the provision of GP services in the town.

Natural England – No objection.

United Utilities – No objection. Conditions have been recommended relating to surface water drainage. This issue is discussed later in the report.

Environmental Health – No objection. Conditions have been requested relating to noise, air quality electric vehicle charging points and contamination. These will be included on the decision notice. These matters are discussed in more detail later in the report. Issues are raised in relation to aircraft noise which are also addressed later in the report.

Head of Strategic Infrastructure – No objection subject to conditions and financial contributions. Highway matters are addressed later in the report.

Housing Strategy – No objection. The development triggers an affordable housing requirement.

Flood Risk – No objection in principle. Conditions are requested restricting the surface water run off and the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment.

Education – No objection. This is based upon the applicant committing to pay a financial contribution for the provision of additional school places generated by the development. This is addressed in detail later in this report.

ANSA (Greenspaces and CEC Leisure) – No objection subject to onsite provision of Public Open Space (POS) and a Local Area of Play (LEAP) standard play area. The location of the LEAP needs further consideration. There is a requirement to provide a financial contribution of £1,000 per open market family dwelling or £500 per 1 / 2 bed apartment towards Recreation and Outdoor Sport (ROS) and £10,400 towards Indoor Sport, but this will depend on the final housing numbers. • The commercial development is required to provide ROS facilities via an offsite com sum at a rate of £300 per 30sqm of floorspace and a final contribution of £562.50 per family home and £281.25 per apartment for allotment improvements.

Public Rights of Way Officer – The public right of way across the site is shown incorrectly on the indicative masterplan. This issue will be addressed as part of any reserved matters application.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Knutsford Town Council - The Council considers that this application is premature pending the agreement of the applicant and the land owner of planned development to the land on the East Side of Manchester Road regarding the proposed shared access arrangements and would suggest that written assurances are obtained from the parties in this regard prior to the application being decided.

Officers should carefully check the drainage plan for the site given the soakaway solution proposed appears to be contrary to the flood risk assessment. If the Primary Authority decided to approve the application in any event, the Council would request the following conditions be added to any permission granted:

- The commercial premises should not be higher than two stories in accordance with the CELPS LPS 36 Site Specific requirements and reflect the local materials palette in accordance with the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan (KNP) Design Guide
- The residential properties of up to 2.5 stories are contained along the central boulevard of the site and not on the site edges given the edge of green belt location;
- The existing ponds should be retained and made a feature of the site landscaping as should the trees and hedgerow surrounding the site where possible to soften the transition between the buildings on site and the adjacent open space in accordance with the CELPS LPS 36 Site Specific requirements and the KNP Design Guide 4.5;
- The provision of a full Green Travel Plan for the Employment site given both the recognised increase on the AQMA site on Manchester Road, to help reduced likely traffic congestion and insufficient parking provision for the commercial premises.
- A requirement for s106 contributions to ensure a bus stop and layby close to the entrance of the site including a realtime travel information display. Funds should also be obtained to provide an improved bus service either by diverting and increasing the frequency of existing routes or towards the provision of a town wide service to link new developments with the Town Centre and amenities and enable access to the site for employees.
- The provision of an updated Ecology Survey given the current provided version is outdated and there is evidence of a badger sett on the site.
- To ensure a minimum distance of 20m between the residential and commercial premises on the both the site and with respect to residential properties surrounding the site.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Representations have been received from 5 individual properties, from a representative of the Knutsford Community groups and from the resident leading on Sport and Leisure matters for the neighbourhood plan matters. The points raised are summarised as follows;

- No access, including cycle or pedestrian access should be provided through Freshfields.
- Increase in traffic along Manchester Road
- The submitted ecology surveys are 5 years old and therefore cannot be relied upon to support the application.

- Badgers have been seen on site and no badger survey has been submitted.
- The office buildings will cause overlooking and overshadowing of neighbouring properties.
- Conditions relating to landscaping, buffer zones, building heights, lighting and construction method statements should be included on the decision notice.
- Construction of a roundabout to access the site will create more traffic congestions.
- The public right of way should be retained.
- A green buffer between existing properties & new properties is not included in the outline plans with regard to Freshfields despite this being agreed at the initial consultation stage
- Lack of school places to accommodate children from the development.
- Loss of green space.
- The reduced number of house compared to the policy is supported.
- The development should be restricted to two-storey heights.
- Inadequate play and open space provision.
- Contributions should be higher than those requested.

APPRAISAL

Key Issues

- Principle of development
- Sustainability
- Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
- Education
- Open Space and Recreation
- Health Provision
- Residential Amenity / Noise
- Impact on Local Highway Network / Access
- Design and Layout
- Ecology
- Trees
- Air Quality
- Flood Risk
- Economic Sustainability
- Section 106 agreement
- CIL
- Representations

- Conclusions
- Recommendation

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Knutsford is identified as one of the Key Service Centres in Cheshire East where CELPS Policy PG 2 seeks to direct 'development of a scale, location and nature that recognises and reinforces the distinctiveness of each individual town' to the centres in order to 'maintain their vitality and viability', recognising their roles as distinct settlements in the borough. Development will maximise the use of existing infrastructure and resources to allow jobs, homes and other facilities to be located close to each other and accessible by public transport.

The application site is allocated as a Strategic Site for housing under Policy LPS 36(B) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPs). When the Council adopted the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy on 27th July 2017, the site was removed from the Green Belt.

Site LPS 36 states that the development around North West Knutsford will be achieved over the Local Plan Strategy period through:

- 1. Phased provision of around 500 new homes and 7.5 hectares of high quality Class B1 business park development within the following sites:
LPS 36(A) Land North of Northwich Road (175 dwellings);
LPS 36(B) Land West of Manchester Road (75 dwellings and the development of a new 7.5 hectare high quality Class B1 business park; and
LPS 36(C) Land East of Manchester Road 250 dwellings;*

It is anticipated that separate planning applications will deliver each of the above sites, and with each site having independent access, this is acceptable. Collectively the sites will deliver, as appropriate, the following provisions (2-6) and each planning application will be assessed against the relevant site specific criteria (a-u) as they may apply to that application site.

- 2. Appropriate retail provision to meet local needs;*
- 3. Appropriate:
 - i. contributions towards educational facilities; and*
 - ii. Provision of open space, and provision of / contributions toward sports and leisure facilities;**
- 4. Incorporation of green infrastructure where required, including:
 - i. Allotments; and*
 - ii. Community orchard or community gardens; and**
- 5. Pedestrian and cycle links to new and existing residential areas, shops, schools and health facilities;*
- 6. The existing sports grounds situated between Mereheath Lane and Manchester Road to the south of LPS 36(C) are removed from the Green Belt. These are identified as protected open space within LPS 36 as shown on Figure 15.43 and will be retained in their entirety as such, and enhanced if possible. The existing allotment gardens to the east of Mereheath Lane remain in the Green Belt as protected open space.*

Additionally a number of site specific principles of development for the sites around North West Knutsford are listed with the relevant ones to this site being;

- a. *Protection and enhancement of the setting of Tatton Park.*
- b. *The sites will deliver housing which will contribute to the local character of Knutsford through the use of appropriate density, architecture, style, form and materials and reference to CEC most up to date Design Guidance.*
- c. *A mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to comply with Policy SC 4.*
- d. *Proposals will be expected to be of a high quality design that respects the setting of nearby designated heritage assets, parkland and the character of the surrounding area.*
- e. *Proposals will be expected to include a Landscape Character Assessment to guide the scale and massing of new development.*
- f. *Provide a comprehensive landscaping scheme which retains existing mature trees and hedgerows where possible, or provide appropriate mitigation.*
- h. *Provision of additional community facilities.*
- i. *Contributions to health infrastructure.*
- j. *Improve the connectivity and accessibility into and out of the sites to the town centre and wider local area with the provision of, or contribution to, cycle paths and pedestrian linkages.*
- k. *Creation of a network of green infrastructure and accommodation of SuDS requirements.*
- l. *Provision of high quality landscaping to enhance ecological features.*
- m. *Provision of new woodland belts within the sites and to create site boundaries.*
- n. *Contribute to road infrastructure in the area including roundabout improvements at the junction of A50/Northwich Road and Canute Place and Improvement to the A50 Corridor.*
- o. *An archaeological pre-determination evaluation will be required for these sites in addition to a desk based archaeological assessment.*
- p. *Any development that would prejudice the future comprehensive development of the adjacent safeguarded land will not be permitted (site references LPS 39 / LPS 40).*
- q. *The Local Plan Strategy site is expected to provide affordable housing in line with the policy requirements set out in Policy SC 5 'Affordable Homes'.*
- r. *A minimum of a Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment for contaminated land should be carried out to demonstrate that the sites are, or could be made, suitable for use should they be found to be contaminated. Further work, including a site investigation, may be required at a pre-planning stage, depending on the nature of the sites.*
- s. *The sites will be developed only where it can be demonstrated that there is no adverse impact on the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar, Rostherne Mere Ramsar and Tatton Mere SSSI particularly in relation to changes in water levels and quality and recreational pressures. This should include a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the direct and indirect impacts of the development on the features of special interest. Where impacts cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation measures will be required to ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of the sites.*
- t. *The development of the new business park within Site LPS 36(B) should:*
 - *Be planned in a comprehensive way, with the adjacent housing development site;*
 - *Incorporate a high quality of architecture and materials reflective of the site's importance, being a gateway location to the town;*
 - *Include a high quality landscaped belt to the northern, western and eastern boundaries of the site to soften the transition between the buildings on the site and adjacent open*

- countryside (to be carried out as part of any first phase of development), and incorporate high quality landscaping throughout the site;*
- *Provide for pedestrian and cyclist links with the adjacent housing development site;*
 - and*
 - *Be limited to buildings that are no more than two storeys in height.*

Sec.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications and appeals must be determined "in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

HOUSING

The application currently proposes up to 60 residential units on site. The allocation is for 75 dwellings following an increase of dwellings on the policy requirement as part of the development on Northwich Road. The level of residential development is therefore in line with the requirements of LPS36.

B1 USES

Part of LPS 36(B) the provision of 7.5 hectare B1 business park is allowed for as part of this site. This is in line with what is proposed as part of this application.

Policy ER1 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan states 'Planning applications for employment uses for knowledge-based industries, offices, and high tech and small-scale manufacturing will be supported as part of the strategic sites or on previously developed sites.'

This element of the proposal is therefore considered to comply with LPS 36 of the CELPS and Policy ER1 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

CONCLUSION

It is considered the range and level of development is acceptable in principle and in compliance with the requirements of LPS36 in delivering residential and B1 uses. The proposed uses are also considered to comply with the policies referred to in the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

As per para 11 of the Framework and CELPS Policy MP 1, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) and compliance with the Development Plan in accordance with Sec.38 (6).

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy forms part of the statutory development plan.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is the test that legislation prescribes should be employed on planning decision

making. The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' at paragraph 11 of the NPPF means: "approving development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan without delay"

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy is a recently adopted plan. Upon adoption, the Examining Inspector concluded that the Local Plan would produce a five year supply of housing land, stating that "I am satisfied that CEC has undertaken a robust, comprehensive and proportionate assessment of the delivery of its housing land supply, which confirms a future 5-year supply of around 5.3 years".

The Council can now demonstrate a 7.2 year supply of land for housing, but it is important to note that this proposal would deliver 60 dwellings on an allocated site within the adopted Local Plan within one of the Key Service Centres in the Borough. The Council needs to keep the supply rolling and proposals that bring forward the Council's strategic vision through the development of the allocated sites such as this one will assist in relieving pressure on other edge of settlement sites and the Green Belt / countryside. As such, this is a benefit of the scheme.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Cheshire East Local Plan (CELP) and the Councils Interim Planning Statement: Affordable Housing (IPS) states in Settlements with a population of 3,000 or more that we will negotiate for the provision of an appropriate element of the total dwelling provision to be for affordable housing on all unidentified 'windfall' sites of 15 dwellings or more or larger than 0.4 hectares in size. The desired target percentage for affordable housing for all allocated sites will be a minimum of 30%, in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment carried out in 2013. This percentage relates to the provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. Normally the Council would expect a ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing.

This is a proposed development of up to 60 dwellings therefore in order to meet the Council's Policy on Affordable Housing there is a requirement for 18 dwellings to be provided as affordable dwellings. Based on 60 units 12 of the proposed units should be provided as Affordable rent and 6 units as Intermediate tenure. The exact location and tenure split will be finalised at Reserved Matters.

The SHMA 2013 shows the majority of the demand in Knutsford is for 8 x 1 bed, 34 x 2 bed, and 49 x 4 bedroom dwellings. The current demand on Cheshire Homechoice in Knutsford is for 134x 1 bedroom, 89x 2 bedroom, 30x 3 bedroom, 17x 4 bedroom and 15x 5 bedroom dwellings. Therefore a mix of 1/2/3/4/5 on this site would be acceptable, with preference towards the smaller units.

The current number of those on the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list with Knutsford as their first choice is 277. This can be broken down to 125x 1 bedroom, 91x 2 bedroom, 31x 3 bedroom and 30x 4+ bedroom dwellings. On this site therefore, a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings with a provision of older person's dwellings would be acceptable.

The Cheshire East Plan (CELP) and the Councils Interim Planning Statement: Affordable Housing (IPS) requires that the affordable units should be tenure blind and pepper potted

within the development, the external design, comprising elevation, detail and materials should be compatible with the open market homes on the development thus achieving full visual integration and also that the affordable housing should be provided no later than occupation of 50% of the open market dwellings.

The affordable housing is secured by way of a S106 agreement, which: -

- requires them to transfer any rented affordable units to a Registered Provider
- provide details of when the affordable housing is required
- includes provisions that require the affordable homes to be let or sold to people who are in housing need and have a local connection. The local connection criteria used in the agreement should match the Councils allocations policy.
- includes the requirement for an affordable housing scheme to be submitted prior to commencement of the development that includes full details of the affordable housing on site.

Given the above the proposal complies with the requirements of CELPS Policy SC5 and Policy H1 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

EDUCATION PROVISION

The development of 60 dwellings is expected to generate:

10 primary children (60 x 0.19) – 1 SEN

9 secondary children (60 x 0.15)

1 SEN children (60 x 0.51 x 0.023%)

The development is expected to impact on both primary school and secondary school places in the immediate locality. Contributions which have been negotiated on other developments are factored into the forecasts both in terms of the increased pupil numbers and the increased capacity at primary schools in the area as a result of agreed financial contributions. The analysis undertaken has identified that a shortfall of school places still remains.

Special Education provision within Cheshire East Council currently has a shortage of places available with at present over 47% of pupils educated outside of the Borough. The Service acknowledges that this is an existing concern, however the 1 child expected from the application will exacerbate the shortfall. The 1 SEN child, who are thought to be of mainstream education age, have been removed from the calculations above to avoid double counting.

To alleviate forecast pressures, the following contributions would be required:

$1 \times £50,000 \times 0.91 = £45,500$ (SEN)

Total education contribution: £45,500

The contribution has been agreed by the applicant and is subject to change when the final form of development is known and will be delivered through the s106 agreement.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

POS; children's play space and amenity Green Space

In line with LPS36 and SE6 the development will be required to provide POS at a rate of 40sqm per family (2 bed +) dwelling. The children's play space and formal amenity greenspace will need to be provided within the development parcels, throughout the development to ensure good accessibility, with a central larger facility creating a focus for community activity and cohesion. Provision of children's play and formal amenity provision within the protected open spaces will not be acceptable

Allotments/community gardens

The com sum will be calculated at a rate of £562.50 per family dwelling or £281.25 per apartment. This sum will go towards addition and/or improvements and enhancements at the three town centre allotment sites in Knutsford.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure will be provided throughout the site in line with LPS36 and SE6. All GI requirements will be met on site and are detailed in LPS36 and LPS36(B).

ROS; recreation and outdoor sports

In terms of ROS provision in lieu of the onsite provision of 1.63ha per 1000 population, of which 1.2ha is for pitch sports (including supporting infrastructure) and 0.43ha is for courts, greens and other outdoor sporting facilities, a com sum of £1,000 per family dwelling or £500 per 2+ bed space apartment will be required. The commercial development is required to provide ROS facilities via an offsite com sum at a rate of £300 per 30sqm of floorspace. The commuted sums for ROS will be used for additions, improvements and enhancements at Egerton Youth Club Sports pitches and Knutsford Sports Club tennis and cricket facilities

Indoor Recreation

Policies SC1 and SC2 of the Local Plan Strategy provide a clear development plan policy basis to require developments to provide or contribute towards both outdoor and indoor recreation

The Indoor Built Facility Strategy has identified that any existing shortfalls for Knutsford should look to focus on improvement of provision in the town as set out in the Indoor Built Facility Strategy. Whilst new developments should not be required to address an existing shortfall of provision, they should ensure that this situation is not worsened by ensuring that it fully addresses its own impact in terms of the additional demand for indoor leisure provision that it directly gives rise to. Furthermore, whilst the strategy acknowledges that the increased demand may not be sufficient to require substantial indoor facility investment through capital build there is currently a need to improve the quality and number of health and fitness stations at Knutsford Leisure Centre to accommodate localised demand for indoor physical activity. Equally and subject to agreement this contribution could also be considered to be allocated to the sporting provision adjacent to the site which it could be considered will be utilised by the residents of the new development.

The requirement is calculated as follows;

- 60 houses at 1.61 people per residence = a population increase of 97

- The annual Sport England Active People Survey Results for 2016 showed 42.7% participation rate for Cheshire East. = 42 additional “active population” due to the new development in Knutsford
- Based on an industry average of 25 users per piece of health & fitness equipment this equates to an additional 1.6 stations. Requirement for – 1.6 running machines (£6,500 per treadmill). Total £10,400

The applicant has accepted the need for this contribution although the level of contribution may change based on the number of houses eventually approved on site. The contribution will be delivered through the s106 agreement but the overall level of contribution may change depending on the number of dwellings that come forward as part of the reserved matters application.

The proposal therefore complies with policies LPS 36, SC1 and SC2 of the CELPS and Policies SL1, SL2 and SL3 of the Knutsford neighbourhood Plan.

ACCESS TO HEALTH FACILITIES

Eastern Cheshire has the fastest growing over 65 and over 85 populations in the North West with more than one in five people being over 65 which will become nearer to one in four people by 2021. The number of very elderly people is growing even more rapidly, with a higher estimated average annual growth rate when compared to England (2.7% vs. 2.3%). The overall population is forecast to grow by 28,000 (14%) by 2035.

There are three NHS GP practices within Knutsford, these being Annandale Medical Centre, Manchester Road Medical Centre and Toft Road Surgery. Space utilisation analysis across all three Knutsford GP practices has demonstrated that with regards to adequately providing primary care services to the existing patient population the three GP practices currently have a significant shortfall. Additional growth in patient numbers will add further pressures to the three GP practices, with an increase in clinical and non-clinical staff required in order to meet these future patient needs. Such an increase in clinical and non-clinical staffing numbers requires expansion and development of the three GP practices.

The geography of the GP services within Knutsford does support full colocation within one primary care hub site and the CCG is supportive of a single primary care site in Knutsford. The CCG and Knutsford GP practices have submitted a bid, as part of the NHS Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (ETTF), for the part funding of a new Health and Wellbeing Centre build project in Knutsford. The focus of the bid is for the three GP practices to come together into one purpose built building, along with other health, wellbeing and community services also being delivered out of the building. This project remains supported by the CCG; however there is a risk around scheme affordability. A number of sites for delivery of this project have been identified, but no one site has yet been fully agreed by the stakeholders.

If a central Health and Wellbeing Centre in Knutsford is not achievable, the CCG would look for a two site solution, with two of the existing GP practices moving into a shared primary care build and the third GP practice potentially moved to a new GP practice build if required.

It is suggested that the Section 106 funding for the planning application under consideration is based on a calculation consisting of occupancy x number of units in the development x £360. This is based on guidance provided to other CCG areas by NHS Property Services.

Size of Unit	Occupancy Assumptions Based on Size of Unit	Health Need/Sum Requested per unit
1 bed unit	1.4 persons	£504 per 1 bed unit
2 bed unit	2.0 persons	£720 per 2 bed unit
3 bed unit	2.8 persons	£1008 per 3 bed unit
4 bed unit	3.5 persons	£1260 per 4 bed unit
5 bed unit	4.8 persons	£1728 per 5 bed unit

The applicant has agreed to a financial contribution in respect of this issue and this will be based on the number and size of dwellings that come forward as part of the reserved matters application. It may be the case the contribution is reviewed in the future should the CCG agree with the applicant about on-site provision.

The application therefore complies with the requirements of LPS36 and SC3 of the CELPS and Policies C1 and HW2 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

In order for the proposals to be acceptable, it is important that they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of existing residents. Local Plan policies DC3, DC38 and H13 seek to ensure that new development does not significantly injure the amenities of adjoining or nearby residential property.

Many of the issues relating to overlooking, impact on privacy, and overshadowing will be addressed as part of any reserved matters application. Highway matters are addressed separately in this report.

The only adjoining residential properties to the site are along the southern boundary whilst a property on Moss lane is located close to the north-western boundary of the site. Any reserved matters application will have to consider the relationship between the proposed development and the existing properties and LPS 36 restricts all buildings on the site to being two-storey in height.

The residential site is impacted by varying degrees of transportation noise: road traffic noise from the A50 and noise from aircraft departing / arriving Manchester International Airport and may also be impacted by noise arising from proposed B1 uses.

It is possible for the internal noise climate of the proposed residential development to be acoustically designed and mitigated to at least BS8223. Details of how the dwellings will be insulated from external noise will be addressed through a condition on the decision notice.

The exact details of the mitigation scheme will depend on the final layout and other circumstances, and at this time it is not possible to determine the nature of the acoustic

scheme. It is for the applicant to ensure that any acoustic mitigation scheme meets the acoustic BS8233 and WHO internal acoustic design criteria, and is also acceptable in terms of other planning considerations. These details will have to accompany any reserved matters application.

The sound level within a residential building is not the only consideration: most residents will also expect a reasonable degree of peaceful enjoyment of their gardens and adjacent amenity areas.

The current 2017 noise contours have been obtained from Manchester International Airport. The residential portion of the development site is within the following aircraft noise contours:

- 54 – 60 dB LAeq (16 hour daytime, 07:00-23:00)
- With more than a third of the proposed residential development within the 57-60 dB LAeq (16 hour daytime, 07:00-23:00)
- 48-51 dB LAeq (8 hour night-time, 23:00 – 07:00)

Aircraft noise is predominantly low frequency, travelling further and spreading wider than high frequency noise and creating difficulties insulating properties against its intrusion.

Outdoor living environments cannot achieve a satisfactory noise level and shall exceed BS8233: 2014, WHO guidelines for Community Noise and the Aviation Policy Framework:

- BS8233:2014 16hr, LAeq:
 - Desirable external noise level does not exceed 50 dB,
 - Upper guideline value of 55 dB would be acceptable in noisier environments.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO), 1999 Guideline value for community noise for outdoor living areas (a health based guideline).

To protect the majority of people from being seriously annoyed during the daytime, it is recommended that the sound pressure level on balconies, terraces, and outdoor living areas should not exceed 55 dB LAeq for a steady continuous noise. To protect the majority of people from being moderately annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor noise level should not exceed 50 dB LAeq.

BS8233 recognizes that these guideline values are not achievable in all circumstances, where development might be desirable in higher noise areas such as:

- city centres or
- urban areas adjoining the strategic transport network,

It is unlikely that any development on the site would be able to meet the recommended noise levels for the external garden areas within the development it has to be balanced against the benefits of the proposal. Steps can be taken to minimise the impact by orientating the dwellings in such a way to screen the rear gardens from the source of the noise. Such measures shall be included in the revised noise impact assessment that will require submission as part of any reserved matters application.

This does weigh against the proposal and will have to be balanced against the benefits of the development.

A condition will be included on the decision notice requiring a noise impact assessment to be submitted demonstrating the B1 uses will not have a detrimental impact in respect of noise on the neighbouring residential properties.

It is inevitable that some disturbance will occur as part of the construction process. However this will be for a temporary period only and separate legislation is in place to ensure this does not occur and informatives will be included on the decision notice providing advice on construction times.

The proposal complies with Policies DC3 and DC14 of the Macclesfield Local Plan.

Social Sustainability Conclusion

The proposals for the residential development will make an affordable housing contribution through the provision of up to 18 units of the correct tenure. The scheme does make a valuable contribution towards affordable housing which will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

The proposed development will make a full education contribution, health contribution and will make a contribution towards open space, indoor recreation and outdoor sport. The affordable housing provision will meet the requirements

Overall the provision of a reasonable mix of housing for the community as part of a large strategic allocation along with on site affordable housing and education and open space and outdoor recreation contributions which can be provided by the development are considered to be socially sustainable.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

IMPACT ON HIGHWAY NETWORK/ACCESS

Access

A new three arm roundabout is proposed to provide the main access to site and this includes a realignment of a section of Manchester Road. There is potential to provide a fourth arm to the roundabout to serve land to the east side of Manchester Road. The internal road layout provides access to both the residential development and also the business park but also a future highway link to safeguarded land to the west of the site.

The current speed limit on Manchester Road is de-restricted (60mph) it is proposed as part of the access works to reduce the speed limit to 40mph in advance of the location of the new roundabout.

The access to the site is therefore considered to be acceptable and will not be detrimental to the safe operation of Manchester Road.

Development Impact

The traffic generation from the proposed B1 employment and residential has been derived from TRICS trip rates in both the AM and PM peak hours, this results in a trip generation of

approximately 300 trips in both the morning and evening peaks. The assessments have been based on surveyed traffic flows in 2018 to which growth has been added to provide a future assessment year of 2023.

The trip distribution and assignment of the development traffic has been determined using the 2011 Census data, the B1 trips being a 50/50 split north and south and the residential being biased towards the north 62% and 38% to the south. There are two other committed developments that have been included in the assessments and these are the Northwich Road and Bluebell village.

The applicant has undertaken capacity assessments at a number of junctions, the proposed roundabout access, the A50 Toft Rd/A537 Adams Hill and the A537/Hollow Lane junction. Canute Place roundabout was not included in the assessments as the development traffic from this application was included in the Northwich Road scheme of improvement that was secured for this junction.

The results of the capacity tests show that the proposed roundabout access would be able to accommodate the development and also the Bluebell development should a connection to the roundabout be required. The results of the applicant's capacity tests indicate both the Adam Hill and Hollow Lane junctions operate above capacity in 2023. The operation in regards to capacity of these particular junctions have previously been considered by CEC and other applicants that have all confirmed that capacity problems exist and improvements are required.

Accessibility

The site is located on the north western side of Knutsford, there are footways present on both sides of Manchester Road that link the site to the town centre. The sections of footway beyond the end of the existing residential area on Manchester Road are very narrow on both sides of the road varying between 0.8m and 1.2m these widths are not an acceptable standard to serve the residential and commercial development proposed and there are no existing cycle paths to the site. There is currently a limited bus service that operates on Manchester Road, the existing bus stops are located some 150 south of the site.

Highway Conclusions

The provision of new roundabout on Manchester Road to provide the single point of access to the site is consistent with the access strategy for the site, the spine road would also provide a possible linkage to safeguarded land to the west of the site. The design of the roundabout is considered an acceptable design subject to safety audit and would be delivered by condition. The current speed limit is de-restricted and it intended that the speed limit is reduced to 40mph on the site frontage.

It is important that the site is accessible by sustainable modes, the existing pedestrian and cycle linkages are poor and require improvement as part of this development. The footway to the east side of Manchester Road includes a verge and a 3m footway/cycleway should be provided to link to the existing footpath at residential properties on the east side of Manchester Road.

Improvements that can accommodate the development traffic at the Canute Place junction has been secured from the Crown development on Northwich Road although a condition will

be required to provide these improvements should the Northwich Road scheme not come forward.

Knutsford has existing congestion problems at a number of locations and as there are other planning applications that have planning approval the cumulative impact of these developments need to be considered at these locations. This application assessed the impact at two locations the Toft Road/A537 junction and also the A537/Hollow Lane junction, it was confirmed that these junctions would operate over capacity with this development in place. Further capacity problems occur at the King Edward Rd/Bexton Rd junction where a section of the carriageway narrows into one lane before widening back to two lanes.

There are highway improvements proposed for the Adams Hill and Hollow Lane junctions and some funding has already been secured from development towards these schemes. It is also proposed to widen the A50 along King Edward Road to remove the single lane and provide two lanes in each direction. These schemes form part of the Councils Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) schemes and it is important that these schemes are delivered as part of the planned development coming forward in and around Knutsford, as this development will increase traffic flows at these key locations and have a detrimental affect on congestion levels a contribution of £869,000 from this development is sought towards the highway improvements at these locations.

However, the applicant has indicated that the application has only limited impact on the A50 King Edward Street and has already provided substantial infrastructure improvements, such as the new roundabout scheme at Canute Place and also the roundabout on Manchester Road that is capable of serving both north west Knutsford sites. In regard to the Adams Hill and Toft Road improvements, it is accepted that the development does have an impact and has offered a contribution of £300,000 towards these two schemes.

Further clarification on the final amount will be provided in an update report but the provision of the IDP schemes are an integral part of providing the infrastructure necessary to support the local plan allocations. It is therefore likely that full highway contribution is required from the application.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Policies SE1 and SD2 seek to ensure that new development respects the character of the area and is of an appropriate design. This is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF and is supported through the Cheshire East Design Guide. Policies D1, D2, D3 and D4 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan also provide further criteria in which new development must adhere to.

Issues of layout, scale and appearance are matters that are reserved for future approval. The site is a key gateway site for Knutsford and the design expectations for the site are high. This is not a site that will be capable of accommodating standard house type layouts. A bespoke solution will be required to meet the high expectations and requirements of CEC and to create a unique sense of place.

As part of the conditions on this outline permission a design code will require agreement before submission of any reserved matters application seeking detailed approval of the layout, scale and appearance of the site.

ECOLOGY

The application is accompanied by a comprehensive ecological assessment with subsequent addendums that address the following issues;

Tatton Meres SSSI Impact Zone

The proposed development is located just over 1km of Tatton Mere and The Mere at Mere SSSI which form part of the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar.

I note from their consultation comments that Natural England advise that the proposed development is not likely to have an adverse impact upon the features for which the site was designated.

Under the Habitat Regulations the Council is required to undertake an 'Assessment of Likely Significant effects'. The applicant has provided a shadow assessment of this kind. The assessment concludes that the proposed development is not likely to have a significant effect upon the features for which the statutory site was designated. Consequently, a more detailed Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Bats

Two trees have been identified on site as having bat roost potential. Only one of these trees has been subject to a detailed bat survey as the applicant's ecological consultant anticipated that the second tree would be likely to be retained as part of the proposed development.

A minor bat roost of a less common bat species was recorded at the tree subject to a detailed survey. The applicant's consultant has now advised that this tree could be retained as part of the proposed development. The proposed development of this site is unlikely to have a significant direct impact upon roosting bats. A condition will be attached which secures the retention of any trees on site with potential to support roosting bats.

Badgers

An updated badger survey has been undertaken which has identified a main badger sett. The existing sett would mostly be lost under the illustrative layout plan. The applicant's ecological consultant has proposed the closure of the sett under the terms of a Natural England license and the creation of an artificial sett to compensate for the loss of the existing sett.

As the sett is located on the boundary of the application, it is feasible for the sett to be retained as part of the development of the site. The precise impacts of the development upon badgers would depend upon the level of badger activity and the detailed layout proposed at the reserved matters stage. A condition will be attached which requires any reserved matters application to be supported by an updated badger survey and mitigation strategy.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

Amphibian surveys undertaken in 2014 recorded the presence of a single great crested newt on site. Further surveys in 2014 did not record evidence of great crested newts on site, but did record their presence at a pond some distance from the application site.

There was no evidence of great crested newts breeding on site but this cannot be entirely ruled out. In the absence of mitigation the proposed development would result in the loss of mainly low value terrestrial habitat and potentially the loss of ponds used by this species together with higher quality habitat in the immediate vicinity of the ponds. The development of the site would also pose the risk of killing or injuring any animals on site during the construction process.

It should be noted that since a European Protected Species has been recorded on site and is likely to be adversely affected the proposed development the planning authority must have regard to whether Natural England would be likely to subsequently grant the applicant a European Protected species license under the Habitat Regulations. A license under the Habitats Regulations can only be granted when:

- the development is of overriding public interest,
- there are no suitable alternatives and
- the favourable conservation status of the species will be maintained.

The applicant has proposed two options order to address the impacts of the proposed development upon great crested newts. These are:

Option 1

To enter the development into Natural England's soon to be launched Strategic Site Based Licencing Scheme. This scheme requires the developer to make a financial contribution towards the cost of off-site habitat creation that would be delivered by Natural England and partner organisations prior to the loss of habitat on the development site occurring. The off-site habitat would then be subject to long term monitoring and management.

Option 2

The applicant has identified an off-site location within their ownership, where three replacement ponds would be constructed to provide suitable replacement habitat for great crested newts. The risk of newts being harmed during the construction phase would be mitigated through the removal and exclusion of newts from the footprint of the proposed development using standard best practice methodologies.

Both of these options would be acceptable to maintain the favourable conservation status of great crested newts. Natural England's Strategic Site Based Licencing scheme is anticipated to launch in spring this year.

A condition will be attached which requires the submission of an updated great crested newt mitigation strategy in support of any future reserved matters application. The submitted strategy should be informed by the proposals submitted in support of the outline application, but would confirm which of the two options the applicant intends to implement.

Ponds

Two ponds are present on site. Ponds are a priority habitat and hence a material consideration. The illustrative layout would result in the loss of both existing ponds. Two replacement ponds are shown on the illustrative layout plan.

It is preferable the development proposals for this site should seek to retain and enhance the existing ponds. The ponds have been recorded as supporting a number of invertebrate species, common toad and water shrew (which is an uncommon species) in Cheshire. The retention and enhancement of the existing ponds would reduce the impacts of the proposals on these species. If the existing ponds are unavoidable lost at the reserved matters stage the provision of two replacement ponds would be adequate compensation for those lost. These ponds should however be specifically for wildlife and not form part of the sites SUDS scheme. Loss of the ponds may however result in the loss of the water shrew population on site.

Hedgerows

Hedgerows are a priority habitat and hence a material consideration. The application will result in the loss of approximately 390m of existing hedgerow from adjacent to the A50. This is a significant loss of priority habitat. The site specific policy for this site in the Cheshire East Local Plan requires hedgerows to be retained if possible or development proposals to include appropriate mitigation.

The realigned road and site access shall be designed to minimise the loss of existing hedgerow. Compensatory hedgerow planting must be proposed to compensate for any hedgerow habitat unavoidable lost. To account for the time taken for newly created habitats to mature a greater length of new hedgerow should be provided in relation to that lost. The replacement planting will be agreed through a condition on the decision notice.

Breeding birds

A number of species of breeding birds were recorded during the surveys undertaken to inform the submitted ecological assessment. This includes a small number of birds that are considered to be a priority for conservation. The site is however unlikely to be of significant value for breeding birds. Recent changes in the agricultural practices being undertaken on site may have reduced the suitability of the site for ground nesting bird species.

The retention of existing hedgerows and the provision of replacement hedgerow planting would reduce the impacts of the proposed development upon nesting birds.

Ecological enhancement

Local Plan Policy SE 3(5) requires all developments to aim to positively contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. This planning application provides an opportunity to incorporate features to increase the biodiversity value of the final development in accordance with his policy.

A condition will be attached which requires the submission of an ecological enhancement strategy.

Habitat Regulations

The UK implemented the EC Directive in the Conservation (natural habitats etc) regulations which contain two layers of protection:

- A licensing system administered by Natural England which repeats the above tests
- A requirement on local planning authorities to have regard to the directives requirements.

The Habitat Regulations 2017 require local authorities to have regard to three tests when considering applications that affect a European Protected Species. In broad terms the tests are that:

- The proposed development is in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment
- There is no satisfactory alternative
- There is no detriment to the maintenance of the species population at favourable conservation status in its natural range.

Current case law instructs that if it is considered clear or very likely that the requirements of the directive cannot be met because there is a satisfactory alternative, or because there are no conceivable “other imperative reasons of overriding public interest”, then planning permission should be refused. Conversely, if it seems that the requirements are likely to be met, and then there would be no impediment to planning permission being granted. If it is unclear whether the requirements would be met or not, a balanced view taking into account the particular circumstances of the application should be taken.

Test 1: Overriding Public Interest

The impacts of the development on the GCN population been considered acceptable. The development would provide social and economic benefits in the form of employment and economic development. Given these benefits the development proposal contributes to meeting an imperative public interest, and that the interest is sufficient to override the protection of, and any potential impact on great crested newts, setting aside any mitigation that can be secured.

Test 2: No satisfactory alternative

The site is allocated in the local plan for residential development and therefore has been assessed as being the most appropriate place for this form of development. As such it is considered that there would be no satisfactory alternative.

Test 3: “the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”.

The current proposals would result in the retention of the existing pond and the applicant’s ecological consultant has recommended that an area of retained habitat be enhanced in order to compensate for that lost.

Subject to conditions and submission of additional details as part of any reserved matters application the proposal complies with Policy NE11 of the Macclesfield Local Plan, SE3 and SE5 of the CELPS and Policy E3 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

IMPACT ON TREES/HEDGEROWS

Policy SE 5 of the Cheshire East Local Plan seeks to ensure the sustainable management of trees, woodland and hedgerows within new development. Development proposals that result in the loss of trees that provide a significant contribution to the amenity, biodiversity, landscape or historic character, of the surrounding area, will not normally be permitted, except

where there are clear overriding reasons for allowing the development and there are no suitable alternatives.

The application is supported by a Tree Survey and Impact Assessment Report (Keen Consultants Report Number 9279-KC-XX-YTREE dated November 2018) which includes a Tree Survey Schedule. The Impact Assessment provides a basic assessment of the quality of trees and potential direct and indirect tree losses based upon the submitted indicative masterplan.

Some trees on site are subject to a Tree Protection Order and these trees are located to the rear of the car showroom.

The tree survey has identified 30 individual trees within or immediately adjacent to the application site. The Assessment makes reference to potential conflicts with Root Protection Areas (RPA) of trees and the potential impacts of shading and social proximity associated with retained trees.

Policy SE 5 refers to the retention, sustainable management and successful integration of trees within the design of any development. BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations para 5.3 advises that the default position should be that structures are located outside the root protection area of retained trees and impacts of shading on plots and the relationship of buildings to retained trees should be taken into consideration at the design stage.

It will be expected that the layout and design of any future reserved matters application shall seek to further offset the building line to address the issue of shading impacts from trees.

The indicative access point is proposed through the established hedgerow on the Manchester Road frontage. Where proposed development is likely to result in the loss of existing agricultural hedgerows which are more than 30 years old, it is considered that they should be assessed against the criteria in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 in order to ascertain if they qualify as 'Important'. The Regulations require assessment on various criteria including ecological and historic value. Should any hedgerows be found to be 'Important' under any of the criteria in the Regulations, this would be a significant material consideration in the determination of the application. Hedgerows are also a habitat subject of a Biodiversity Action Plan.

A condition will be included on the decision notice requiring a further arboricultural report to be submitted to support any subsequent reserved matters application.

LANDSCAPE

CELPS Policy SE4 seeks to ensure that developments recognise the high quality of the landscape in Cheshire East and ensure this is maintained and enhanced.

It is noted that all boundary trees and hedgerow are to be retained where possible and supplemented by planting younger specimens to ensure continuity of this landscape character.

element. Any loss of hedgerow along the Manchester Road frontage will have to be mitigated against within the development.

The effects on views and visual amenity will need to be assessed once designs for the scale, mass and composition of buildings have been proposed.

It is considered the proposal complies with Policy SE4 subject to securing the landscaped buffer to the north of the site. Other landscape matters will be addressed as part of any reserved matters application.

AIR QUALITY

Policy SE 12 of the 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 181 of the NPPF and the Government's Air Quality Strategy.

When assessing the impact of a development on Local Air Quality, regard is had to 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 January 2017).

Air quality impacts have been considered within the air quality assessment submitted in support of the application. The report considers whether the development will result in increased exposure to airborne pollutants, particularly as a result of additional traffic and changes to traffic flows. The assessment uses ADMS Roads to model NO₂ and PM₁₀ impacts from additional traffic associated with this development and the cumulative impact of committed development within the area.

A number of modelled scenarios have been considered within the assessment. These were:

- 2017 baseline – model verification
- 2028 – proposed opening year 'do-nothing'
- 2028 – proposed opening year 'do-something'

This initial assessment was based on an earlier scheme than that submitted now. The scheme has since decreased in size and, therefore, the results and conclusions of the assessment can be seen as a worst case scenario. An additional document was also submitted by BWB Consulting Ltd. to further reinforce this point. The assessments concluded that the impact of this development will be negligible for the two monitored pollutants, with only one of the seven receptors chosen seeing a slight adverse impact whilst the rest are negligible. However, one of the receptors are located within two of the nearby AQMAs and it is this department's opinion that any increase in concentrations within an AQMA, no matter how small, is considered significant as it is directly converse to our local air quality management objectives, the NPPF and the Council's Air Quality Action Plan. Also there is a need for the Local Planning Authority to consider the cumulative impact of a large number of developments in a particular area. In particular, the impact of transport related emissions on Local Air Quality. Taking into account the uncertainties with modelling, the impacts of the development could be worse than predicted.

The proposed development is considered significant in that it is highly likely to change traffic patterns and congestion in the area. Knutsford and Mere both have an Air Quality Management Areas, and as such the cumulative impact of developments in the area is likely to make the situation worse, unless managed.

Poor air quality is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the public and also has a negative impact on the quality of life for sensitive individuals. It is therefore considered appropriate that mitigation should be sought in the form of direct measures to reduce the adverse air quality impact.

A condition requiring the provision of electric vehicle charging points will be included on the decision notice. A Travel Plan Framework has been submitted with the application and full details of the Travel Plan will require submission as part of a condition. Finally a condition for the provision of cycling and pedestrian route will require submission as part of any reserved matters application.

To conclude it is therefore considered the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area and considered acceptable. The proposal complies with CELPS Policy SE12 and policy H5 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.

FLOOD RISK

CELPS Policy SE13 seeks new developments to integrate measure for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk.

The site is classified as Very Low Risk (former EA Flood Zone 1), which is land that has a less than 0.1% chance of flooding (less than 1:1000). The Council's Flood Risk Team has considered the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and further submitted information and has raised no objections to the proposals. Conditions have been requested that requires the submission of a detailed strategy for surface water drainage, the development be carried out in accordance with the flood risk assessment and details of levels. These will be included on the decision notice.

The current proposals are acceptable in principle in terms of flood risk. However, during reserved matters stage additional information will need to be submitted.

Subject to conditions requiring details of the surface water scheme in line with the above requirements to be submitted at reserved matters stage the proposal complies with Policy SE13.

Environmental sustainability conclusions

It is considered that the proposed development is environmentally sustainable. The proposed design of the site is acceptable, there are conditions required in respect environmental matters raised above.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The proposed development will provide employment in the short term during the clearance and construction of the development in the area. As well as providing employment in the commercial elements in the development.

The addition of up to 60 units and significant B1 uses within the town will undoubtedly boost the economy in the local area through the increased use of shops and services making them more sustainable, which is especially important in Knutsford Town Centre to be sustainable into the future. Additional population can create more demand for local services, increasing the likelihood that they will be retained into the future and improvements and investment made.

Economic sustainability conclusions

The proposals will result in additional employment in the short term through the construction of the site along with an economic boost locally through the increase in population to this area of the town. It is considered that the proposals will make efficient use of the site which is part of a wider strategic allocation.

SECTION 106

A section 106 agreement will accompany the application and is required to secure the following:

- Provision of 30% affordable units of which 65% will be for affordable rent and 35% will be as intermediate tenure.
- Educational contribution towards SEN provision. This equate to £45,500 based upon a 60 dwelling scheme.
- Contribution towards ROS £1,000 per open market house and £500 per open market apartment
- Contribution towards health provision as stated earlier in the report.
- Management Plan for the on-site public open space and LEAP
- Contribution for monitoring of Travel Plan £5,000
- Indoor recreation provision of £10,400
- Commuted sum for allotments of £562.50 per family home and £281.25 per apartment.
- Contribution for highway improvements of £869,000.

CIL REGULATIONS

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010, it is necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following:

- a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- b) Directly related to the development; and
- c) Fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

It is considered that the contributions required as part of the application are justified meet the Council's requirement for policy compliance. All elements are necessary, directly relate to the development and are fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of development.

The non-financial requirements ensure that the development will be delivered in full. On this basis the S106 the scheme is compliant with the CIL Regulations 2010.

COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS

The majority of the points of objection have been addressed in the main body of the report or are issues that will be considered as part of the future reserved matters application.

- No access, including cycle or pedestrian access should be provided through Freshfields.

Whilst no for approval at this time it would be of benefit to existing and proposed residents if pedestrian / cycle access was available. It would ensure good connectivity and give easy access for existing residents to benefit from the play area and open space to be provided on site.

- Conditions relating to landscaping, buffer zones, building heights, lighting and construction method statements should be included on the decision notice.

Some of these issues will be dealt with through conditions and some are requirements of LPS36 so will have to be adhered to.

- The public right of way should be retained.

This will be retained and details of how the public right of way will be dealt with will have to be addressed as part of any reserved matters application.

- Contributions should be higher than those requested.

The contributions are calculated by the relevant officers / organisations to ensure they are reflective of the impact of the development. A consistent approach is taken across all allocated sites in the local plan.

CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

The site forms the whole of allocated site LPS36(B). The proposed development accords with the Local Plan policy relating to its allocation by providing housing and B1 employment provision. Shortfalls in health and education provision are mitigated through financial contributions to improve existing facilities. The applicant is providing further financial contributions in order to make the development acceptable and is providing the full amount of affordable housing on site which is essential in order to make developments sustainable in the future.

It is considered that the proposals are environmental, socially and economically sustainable and accord with the development plan and the framework. The site is sustainably located within the town and the proposals represent an efficient use of the land.

The improvements to various junctions in the town centre will be delivered through conditions on the decision notice and carried out by the developer through an s278 agreement and by financial contributions.

Cheshire East is currently able to demonstrate a 7.2 year supply of housing however this proposal will make a valuable contribution in maintaining this position.

Whilst the fact that external noise impact on the residential development caused by aircraft noise weighs against the proposal the provision of housing and employment uses along with highway and ecological benefits means that the benefits of the scheme outweigh this harm.

It is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and accords with the development plan policies mentioned in the policies section of this report and national planning policy and guidance. Therefore for the reasons mentioned above the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the completion of the s106 agreement making provision for;

S106	Amount	Triggers
Affordable Housing	30% (65% Affordable Rent / 35% Intermediate)	In accordance with phasing plan. No more than 80% open market occupied prior to affordable provision in each phase.
Education	£182,000 SEN	On first occupation
Health	£60,480 to additional GP provision in Knutsford. (amount based on occupancy)	On first occupation
Indoor Recreation	£10,400 – Knutsford Leisure Centre	On first occupation
Recreation Open Space	(£1000 per market dwelling and £500 per 1 / 2 bed market apartment). Plus additional contribution depending on the nature of the commercial floorspace brought forward.	On first occupation
Public Open Space	Management Company for future maintenance	On first occupation
Allotments	Commuted sum for allotments of £562.50 per family home and £281.25 per apartment.	On first occupation
Highway Improvements	£869,00 toward highway improvements to the Adams Hill and Hollow Lane junctions, and to widen the A50 along King Edward Road to remove the single lane and provide two lanes	On first occupation

	in each direction.	
Travel Plan Monitoring	£5000	On first occupation.

And the following conditions:

1. Standard contaminated land condition
2. Importation of soil
3. Unexpected contamination
4. Time period to implement permission.
5. Approve reserved matters details
6. Plans
7. details of surface water drainage in accordance with the submitted FRA.
8. Submission and implementation of Travel Plan
9. submit arboricultural impact assessment
10. levels
11. submission of design code
12. Construction environment management plan
13. Ecological enhancement strategy
14. Landscape and habitat management plan
15. boundary details
16. Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points
17. Noise Impact Assessment,
18. implement landscaping scheme
19. numbers
20. details of materials
21. details of play area
22. retention of hedgerows
23. broadband
24. Details and implementation of cycle way and footpath
25. Submission of a verification report
26. Details of diversions or protection of the PROW
27. Updated badger survey and mitigation as part of RM application.
28. Retention of trees that support roosting bats

29. Updated newt survey and mitigation as part of RM application.
30. Details of replacement ponds
31. Implement the approved access before site is first occupied.
32. Implement Great Crested Newt mitigation
33. No tree removal during the bird nesting season
34. Improvements at Canoute Place implement before occupation of 1000m² of commercial floorspace.

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Board's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions / informatives / planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Development Management delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Board's decision.

