

APPLICATION NO:	13/00039/FUL
LOCATION:	Redrow Site, Lunts Heath Road, Widnes
PROPOSAL:	Proposed residential development consisting of 92 no. dwellings as amendment to part of previous planning permission 11/00184/FUL (reducing total number of dwellings from 143 to 126).
WARD:	Farnworth
PARISH:	N/A
CASE OFFICER:	Glen Henry
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	Redrow Homes NW Ltd
DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:	
Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005)	Phase 3 Housing Allocation Ref:- 960 'Glebe Farm'.
DEPARTURE	Yes
REPRESENTATIONS:	3
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve subject to Conditions.
SITE MAP	

1. APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The Site and Surroundings

Site of approximately 6 Ha of former agricultural land forming part of an overall residential development site of approximately 7.62 Ha of former agricultural land which is bounded by Lunts Heath Road and Wilmere Lane to the south and west, Cranshaw Lane to the east and open farm land to the north. The site is identified as a Phase 3 housing allocation Ref: - 960 'Glebe Farm' within the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

1.2 Planning History

Planning Permission was previously approved (11/00184/FUL) for proposed residential development comprising of 143 no. new dwellings with associated garages, parking, hard and soft landscaping. Part of the development approved by that planning permission is currently under construction.

1.3 Background

This scheme proposes amendment to a scheme of residential development approved by planning permission 11/00184/FUL (reducing total number of dwellings from 143 to 126). The changes are reported to be a response to customer demand and to reflect the applicant's latest house types.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 Proposal Description

The scheme proposes residential development consisting of 92 no. dwellings, roads and ancillary development. The dwellings remain at 2 storeys but designed to provide an estate of relatively large 3, 4 and 5 bed detached dwellings.

2.2 Documentation

The planning application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement and addendum justification statement. The original application was also supported by Tree and Hedgerow Survey, Ecology Survey, Transport Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Assessment and Geoenvironmental Appraisal. Copies of these documents have been requested in support of the current application and update as required from the original submission to account for the revised scheme.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 to set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

Paragraph 196 states that the planning system is plan led. Applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per the requirements of legislation, but that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. Paragraph 197 states that in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 14 states that this presumption in favour of sustainable development means that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF; or specific policies within the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.

3.2 Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)

The site is identified as a Phase 3 housing allocation Ref:- 960 'Glebe Farm' within the Halton Unitary Development Plan. The following policies within the adopted Unitary Development Plan are considered to be of particular relevance;

- BE1 General Requirements for Development;
- BE2 Quality of Design;
- GE21 Species Protection;
- GE26 Protection of Hedgerows;
- PR14 Contaminated Land;
- TP1 Public Transport Provision as Part of New Development;
- TP4 New Public Transport Facilities;
- TP7 Pedestrian Provision as part of New Development;
- TP9 The Greenway Network;
- TP14 Transport Assessments;
- H1 Housing Land Allocations;
- H3 Provision of Recreational Greenspace;

3.3 Halton Core Strategy (2012)

Policy CS3: Housing Supply and Locational Priorities and CS12: Housing Mix are considered of particular particular relevance

3.4 Relevant SPDs and Other Considerations

Council's New Residential Supplementary Planning Guidance; draft Open Space Supplementary Planning Document and Landscape Character Assessment are also of relevance.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Environment Agency– No objection subject to conditions relating to submission and agreement of a scheme to limit surface water run-off and manage the risk of flooding from overland flow.

4.2 HBC Open Spaces – No objection in principle but that plots bordering open space may result in future conflicts.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

Three letters of representation have been received raising issues that the proposals conflict with proposals for residential development on an adjoining site (now approved under planning permission 13/00023/FUL), that the landscape drawings show no hedgerow/ planting re-instatement of hedgerows to Cranshaw Lane which will mean that the proposed pumping station will not be screened, that an adjoining property is incorrectly plotted, that proposed dwellings are closer to existing houses than previously approved resulting in loss of outlook, amenity and privacy.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Housing Land Supply

Core Strategy policy CS3 identifies a housing requirement of 500 units per annum (net gain) and a need to maintain a 5 year housing supply. In order to achieve this it is acknowledged that, for Widnes, “the existing Green Belt boundaries are tight to the built-up area and any further outward expansion will necessitate a review of the Green Belt to identify additional deliverable and developable land”. Any application to reduce housing numbers by 17 dwellings on a site inevitably adds pressure in this regard.

To ensure the efficient use of land, Policy CS8 seeks a minimum density on individual sites of 30 dwelling per hectare (dph). Policy CS12: Housing Mix makes provision that on sites of 10 or more dwellings such as this the mix of new property types should “contribute to addressing identified needs as quantified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment”. Within the justification to this policy it identifies an under provision of detached homes within the Borough to which this scheme would contribute.

The applicant has stated that the proposed amendments are due, in part, to market demand on the site for larger detached homes. They state that the nearby Redrow site at Barrows Green Lane has a resolution (12/00356/FUL) “to increase the number of dwellings on that site by 22, from 126 in the original permission to 148”. “Having regard to the increase in numbers at Barrow’s Green Lane and the reduction at Glebe farm, when considered together the 2 developments yield 274 new homes” 5 more than the current permissions would deliver.

Members should be aware that those previous planning permissions were granted prior to adoption of the Core Strategy and the current proposal will result in a density of 15.33 dph for the area subject of the current application. The resultant density of the overall combined schemes as a result of the density increase at Barrows Green Lane and the current application to reduce density at Lunts Heath Road, will be 22.1 dph. Total combined provision is therefore significantly below the 30 dph required by Core Strategy Policy CS3. Notwithstanding that, if the in-combination argument put forward by the applicant is accepted then the combined result of the amended schemes

would be a marginal increase in housing numbers and therefore density over the two sites.

6.2 Design Character and Amenity

The proposed dwellings are considered of similar character to those previously approved and constructed within the development. The properties continue to be 2 storey albeit now providing large detached houses across the scheme at relatively low density. The principle of lower density was accepted under the earlier extant planning permission and the existing prevailing character of the wider area is also of relatively low density detached properties.

It is considered that a good quality of design in keeping with earlier the earlier scheme. Based on amended plans received it is considered that previous aspirations to maintain landscape buffers to the adjoining green belt are considered to have been maintained in accordance with the Halton Landscape Character Assessment. It is considered that matters relating to open space provision have been addressed through earlier planning permissions and appropriate open space contributions will be secured through an amended legal agreement in accordance with the SPD for Open Space.

The scheme as submitted includes details of materials and boundary treatments. The details submitted are considered to reflect those approved through earlier phases and considered acceptable. Conditions are required to ensure the scheme is implemented as approved. Conditions relating to hours of construction, a Construction Environmental Management Plan and wheel wash facilities need to be included on any permission given to ensure that disturbance to existing local residents is kept to a minimum.

The scheme has been amended from that as originally submitted but is considered to require further amendment to provide appropriate screening to Cranshaw Lane and satisfactory levels of privacy and amenity for existing adjoining residents. Whilst amended plans and consultation responses are awaited it is considered that these matters can be adequately resolved.

6.3 Highways, Parking and Servicing

The scheme proposes to retain vehicular access to both Wilmere Lane and Lunts Heath Road with a cycle/ pedestrian link to Cranshaw Lane as per the original planning permission. It is not considered that the proposals will result in significant additional off site highway impact to warrant update to the original Transport Assessment. Amendments have however been requested to the internal layout and tracking to ensure that satisfactory highway access, parking and servicing is provided. Amended plans have been requested and consultation responses awaited however it is considered that these matters can be adequately resolved.

Off-site highway works and developer contributions towards local transport provision and Greenway improvements as previously agreed will also be secured through revised conditions and a legal agreement. It is considered

that all outstanding matters can be adequately secured by condition and/or through developer contribution as required.

6.4 Contamination

As per the earlier planning permission the Council's Environmental Health Officers have confirmed that, due to the sensitivity of the proposed use, detailed ground investigation should be provided. No objection is raised in principle however and it is considered that this can be adequately secured by condition.

6.5 Other Material Considerations

Issues relating to flooding, impact on trees, hedgerows and wildlife, affordable housing and other considerations were substantially addressed through the earlier scheme and included submission of relevant survey and mitigation information. Such reports have been updated as required in relation to the amended scheme. No objections are considered to have been raised to justify refusal of planning permission in these regards and it is considered that all outstanding matters can be adequately secured by appropriate planning conditions.

7. **CONCLUSIONS**

This scheme proposes amendment to a scheme of residential development approved by planning permission 11/00184/FUL (reducing total number of dwellings from 143 to 126). The change is reported to be, in part, a response to market demand on the site for larger detached houses. The site is partially constructed and the developer proposes changes to update house-types to their latest range and improve the saleability of remaining plots. The proposed dwellings are considered of similar character to those previously approved and within the wider area.

There are a number of detailed matters of detail that remain outstanding relating to internal highway and layout details. If members are willing to accept the applicant's justification with respect to housing density and numbers, it is requested that, in order to avoid unnecessary delay, authority is delegated to allow approval once these detailed matters are resolved.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Authority is delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair to approve the application subject to conditions, any such further conditions which arise as a result of amended plans and:-

- (a) The entering into a Legal Agreement including provision of a financial contribution towards off-site public open space, adoption of on-site open-space, public transport/ bus stops and Greenway improvements as required

- (b) That if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement is not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee to refuse the application.

9. CONDITIONS

Conditions relating to the following:

- 1) Condition specifying amended plans (BE1)
- 2) Requiring that no development shall begin until written details and agreement of construction vehicle access routes and construction car parking and management plan; (BE1)
- 3) Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2)
- 4) Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include tree and hedgerow planting. (BE2)
- 5) Boundary treatments including retaining walls to be submitted and approved in writing. (BE2)
- 6) Construction Management Plan including wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing. (BE1)
- 7) Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development. (BE1)
- 8) Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use. (BE1)
- 9) Submission and agreement of finished floor and site levels. (BE1)
- 10) Condition restricting permitted development rights relating to frontage boundary fences, (BE1)
- 11) Condition restricting permitted development rights relating to addition of windows/ dormers (BE1)
- 12) Condition restricting permitted development rights relating to extensions and outbuildings for specified plots (BE1)
- 13) Site investigation, including mitigation to be submitted and approved in writing. (PR14)
- 14) Submission and agreement of a scheme of biodiversity features including landscape planting, log piles, bat and bird boxes (BE1 and GE21)
- 15) Conditions relating to tree and hedgerow protection during construction including special/ construction working methods for driveways beneath trees (BE1)
- 16) Submission and agreement of detailed construction of surface water detention pond (BE1)
- 17) Survey for ground nesting birds to be submitted and approved; (BE1 and GE21)
- 18) Grampian conditions relating to off-site highway works to Lunts Heath Road entrance and to provide 3m wide cycle/ footway to site frontage with Wilmere Lane up to junction with Lunts Heath Road (TP6 and TP9)
- 19) Grampian conditions relating to off-site works Replacement highway tree planting (BE1)
- 20) Phasing of the greenway;

- 21) Submission and agreement of site and finished floor levels (BE1)
- 22) Requiring Submission, agreement and implementation of detailed method statement for removal or long term management/ eradication of Japanese knotweed (BE1)
- 23) Requiring the development be carried out in accordance with the approved FRA and appropriate mitigation measures (PR16)
- 24) Submission, agreement and implementation of a surface water regulation scheme (PR16)

10. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

As required by:

- Paragraph 186 – 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012; and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2012.

This statement confirms that the local planning authority has worked proactively with the applicant to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of Halton.