

TWC/2015/0217

Site A, Pool Hill Road, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire

Erection of 14no. affordable dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping

APPLICANT

Bromford Group,

RECEIVED

16/03/2015

PARISH

Great Dawley

WARD

Dawley and Aqueduct

OFFICER Steven Drury

CLLR JANE PINTER HAS REQUESTED THAT THIS APPLICATION IS DETERMINED BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

1.0 PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application seeks full permission for the erection of 14 affordable dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping on land at Pool Hill Road, Horsehay, Telford. The application is a resubmission of TWC/2014/0930 which was withdrawn due to a requirement to carry out a Great Crested Newt survey.
- 1.2 The application is accompanied by Ecology Surveys, Ground Stability and Investigation Reports, Geotechnical Reports, Coal Mining Risk Assessment, Arboricultural Surveys and Design and Access Statement.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site is located in the Horsehay area and is approximately 3 miles south west of Telford Town Centre. The development site measures 0.38 hectares and forms part of a larger L shaped parcel of land. Although located within the Telford urban area, the site is semi-rural in character and occupies part of a green wedge between Dawley and Horsehay. The site is currently covered by grass with scattered groups of shrubs and is used for grazing by horses.
- 2.2 The site slopes downhill gradually from north west to south east and also falls away steeply to the rear of 32 Station Road. As a result, that part of the site has not been included with the scheme. The difference in levels from top to bottom of the site is 6.7 metres. Two mature trees are located along the north east boundary with No. 32 Station Road. A power line on telegraph poles also crosses the site from north west to south east and a number of small storage buildings are located in the south corner.
- 2.3 The site is bordered by Station Road to the north west and Pool Hill Road to the south west and the junction of the two roads is located to the west of the site. Residential properties are located along the opposite sides of both roads. Open fields and woodland extend beyond the site to the north and east. No. 32 Station Road shares a boundary to the north east and contains a double

garage and greenhouse located alongside the boundary which contains a wooden palisade fence. As a result of level changes, No. 32 is located at a lower level than the site and contains two windows which face south west and will look across the front of the development site.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 TWC/2014/0930 - Erection of 14no. affordable dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping – Withdrawn – 27th February 2014
- 3.2 TWC/2011/0185 - Extension of time period for implementation of extant Outline Planning Permission W2005/0934 for residential development – Granted 8th June 2006.
- 3.3 W2005/0934 - Residential Development (Outline) – Granted 16th June 2008 subject to the provision of £23,000 towards highways improvements and £500 per unit towards off site play facilities.
- 3.4 Section 7(1) consent no. 236 – Land at Horsehay/Doseley granted 1991. This site is one of four of these plots having approval along Pool Hill Road.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 National Guidance:
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 4.2 Wrekin Local Plan:
UD2: Design Criteria
H6: Windfall Sites in Telford and Newport
H23: Affordable Housing
OL6: Open Land
T22: Planning Obligations
- 4.3 Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy:
CS1: Homes
CS3: Telford
CS9: Accessibility and Social Inclusion
CS11: Open Space
CS12: Natural Environment
CS13: Environmental Resources
CS15 Urban Design

5.0 SUMMARISED CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Great Dawley Parish Council: No comment
- 5.2 **Standard consultation responses**
 - 5.2.1 Arboricultural: Support subject to conditions
No Alnus Glutinosa (Alder) on landscaping tree replacements.

5.2.2 Drainage: Comment

Discussions have taken place between Stuart & Harris and TWC drainage team relating to the drainage design on site. Require condition relating to scheme for foul and surface water drainage.

5.2.3 Highways: Support subject to conditions

Recognising the previous approvals on site, cannot make any objections to the principle of development on this site. Therefore, raise no objections subject to conditions relating to the provision of car parking, visibility splays and perimeter footways prior to occupation, together with the provision of a £23,000 contribution towards off-site highways improvements as per the outline application for the site granted in 2005.

5.2.4 Ecology: Support subject to conditions

Raise no objection subject to the addition of conditions regarding reptile method statement, artificial nesting/roosting boxes, landscaping design and an external lighting plan and informatives concerning nesting birds and trenches and pipework.

5.2.5 Shropshire Fire and Rescue: Comment

Request standard informative relating to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's "Fire Safety Guidance for Commercial and Domestic Planning Applications"

5.2.6 The Coal Authority: Comment

The application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area. Re-iterate comments in response to planning application TWC/2014/0930, confirming that the remedial measures as set out in the Ground Investigation Report are appropriate to address the mining legacy; and as such require a condition to ensure these works are undertaken.

5.3 **Local Groups Responses:**

5.3.1 Telford and Wrekin Local Access Forum: Object

A public right of way runs down the full length of Pool Hill Road of quite ancient origin. This is a Restricted Byway with the important fact that it gives rights to those on foot, riding horses and bicycles, and carriage drivers to use the full width of the highway – not just the pavement as such, raise concerns as to how a development is compatible with this. Suggest a diversion of the public right of way around the east of the site.

5.4 **Public Consultation Responses:**

5.4.1 Fourteen objections have been received from local residents which are available in full on the planning file but the key points have been summarised as follows: -

5.4.2 Highways:

- Both Pool Hill Road and Station Road are already congested
- Congestion will become even more intense

- Station Road already sees large volumes of traffic due to Lightmoor Estate
- Pool Hill Road narrows to single carriageway with no opportunity to widen it
- Do not need another 28 cars using roads on a daily basis
- Excessive speeding in area and along Station Road
- Absence of speed reducing measures
- Concerns regarding visibility at accesses onto Station Road
- Poor condition of Pool Hill Road – no passing places or footpath
- Pool Hill Road is regularly used as a shortcut and is a busy road

5.4.3 Infrastructure

- Can physical infrastructure such as public drainage and water systems support the development

5.4.4 Character:

- Horsehay has a semi-rural feel and over excessive development is ruining the character and nature of the village
- Horsehay is becoming overtaken by modern property development
- Loss of green space – a community asset
- Field is part of green space separating Horsehay from Dawley

5.4.5 Design:

- Density of development is too high
- Design is not visually suited to the area – does not reflect local character and heritage

5.4.6 Wildlife:

- Impact upon local wildlife
- Newts, Grass Snakes, originate in the field. Hedgehogs, Toads, Lizards, Bats and Adders also found in area. Also woodpeckers, sparrowhawks, pheasant & badgers.
- Should all be protected from future development

5.4.7 Other Issues:

- Soil Contamination - Risks to occupants should housing go ahead.
- Land is unstable – records may be incomplete regarding historic mining activity
- Drainage – increased surface runoff
- Lack of sustainability – no local bus services – reliance on car
- Impact of piling foundations upon adjacent properties
- Historic infilling of old mines on site with concrete has led to flooding of lower parts of Pool Hill Road. Preparation of site will make situation worse.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Having regard to the development plan policy and other material considerations including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:

- Principal of Development
- Site Layout and Design

- Impact upon Residential Amenity
- Highways Issues
- Land Stability and Coal mining
- Ecology
- Drainage
- Impacts Upon Local Infrastructure
- Other Issues

6.2 **Principal of Development**

- 6.2.1 The site benefits from and an existing permission under section 7(1) of the New Town Act, which remains an extant permission, having no time limits to commence development; this consent provided no affordable housing or contributions that support local infrastructure. As the historic consents no longer complied with national planning policy, in approximately 2002 the Homes and Communities Agency (English Partnerships as it was then known) agreed to resubmit outline consents for all section 7(1) developments, in order to ensure the necessary planning obligations were made. Subsequently an outline application for approximately 20 dwellings was submitted and granted consent for up to 15 units on the site under ref. W2005/0934 which was later renewed under TWC/2011/0185 but has now expired. It is therefore considered that a precedent has been set for the development of the site; however, any development will now need to accord with all relevant local and national policy.
- 6.2.2 At a national level the NPPF advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development. At a local level, the Core Strategy Policies CS1, CS3, CS5 and CS9 set out the requirements for new residential development which includes the provision of affordable homes, the locations supporting the needs of the communities and ensuring accessibility; further guidance is also contained within Wrekin Local Plan Policy H6..This site is situated within the urban area, and has no land allocation within the Local Plan that restricts any development. Furthermore it is accessible to a number of services, facilities and employment as required by Policy CS9.
- 6.2.3 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policies CS1, CS3 and CS9 and Saved Policy H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan and would also represent a sustainable location for development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The principal of residential development on the site is therefore considered acceptable.

6.3 **Site Layout and Design**

- 6.3.1 The proposed layout and design have been arrived at following a serious of discussions and amendments during the course of the previously withdrawn application ref. TWC/2014/0930. The scheme now proposes the erection of 14 affordable dwellings fronting onto Station Road and Pool Hill Road. The development of the additional part of the site to the rear of 32 Station Road

has now been omitted from the scheme due to difficulties and costs associated with that part of the site.

- 6.3.2 The proposal will consist of two storey, semi-detached properties of red brick construction with sections of off-white render within the front elevations. The dwellings will each contain self-contained driveways and parking for two vehicles accessed off the highway frontage. Self-contained garden areas will be provided to the front and rear of each property. A new pedestrian footpath will be provided along the entire Station Road and Pool Hill Road frontages.
- 6.3.3 The layout of the development, with properties facing but set slightly back from the highway follows the development pattern within the area. Whilst the density of the proposal is slightly higher than the surrounding area, this to a certain extent is dictated by the dwelling size and viability issues given that the development provides 100% affordable housing, however, the spacing and gardens provided for each dwelling and would not appear cramped or overdeveloped.
- 6.3.4 In terms of the design of the dwellings themselves, whilst fairly contemporary in design, it is considered that the proposed development will respect the context of the site and its surroundings given that existing properties along Pool Hill Road are largely of a modern appearance and of red brick construction. The use of two storey dwellings will ensure that the development respects the scale of properties within the surrounding area and does not have an overbearing impact upon those properties. The development will utilise a mixture of facing brick and off-white render which have been specified as part of a materials specification and will be controlled through a planning condition. Given the sloping nature of the site, the dwellings will be stepped down in height, to ensure a sympathetic appearance within the Pool Hill road street scene.
- 6.3.5 Given the above considerations, officers do consider that the proposal has been sympathetically designed and will respect the context of the site and its surroundings, in accordance with Saved Policy UD2 of the Wrekin Local Plan and CS15 of the Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy.

6.4 **Impact Upon Residential Amenity**

- 6.4.1 Whilst the comments and concerns raised by local residents are noted, officers consider that the scheme has been designed to minimise the potential impact upon the living conditions of neighbouring residents. An acceptable degree of spacing and separation is considered to have been provided to neighbouring properties. A separation distance of approximately 27 metres has been provided between frontages of proposed and existing properties along Pool Hill Road which is considered sufficient to ensure that a loss of privacy would not result. To the north east of the site, a distance of approximately 12.5 metres will be maintained between the sides of the dwelling in Plot 1 and at the adjacent property, No. 32 Station Road. Whilst ground levels in that corner of the site are slightly higher than at No. 32, such a separation is considered sufficient to ensure that the proposal will not have

an overbearing impact upon, nor would it result in an unacceptable loss of light at the neighbouring property. To the south east of the site, a separation distance of 19 metres will be maintained between the side of plot 14 and the front of Springfield Cottage which is also considered sufficient to avoid an overbearing impact or loss of light. Whilst that property has a number of windows which overlook the site, the loss of a view is not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken into account.

6.5 Highways Issues

- 6.5.1 The proposed access and parking arrangements have also been the subject of a number amendments following concerns raised by Highways officers as part of the withdrawn application TWC/2014/0930. As a result, the proposal now includes designated off street parking for all properties within the development. Driveways will each contain space for 2 vehicles and will be wide enough to comply with 'Lifetime homes' standards. Driveways along Pool Hill Road will be accessed directly from the highway, however, at the request of Highways officers, the properties in the north corner of the site will utilise a small access road, in order to allow vehicles to enter and egress Station Road in a forward gear. The proposal will also include the provision of a pedestrian footpath along the entire development frontage, in order to achieve safe pedestrian access to the site. The proposal is considered to contain sufficient off-street parking and access arrangements for a development of the size proposed and the local highways authority are satisfied with the proposal in this respect.
- 6.5.2 It is acknowledged that the proposal will generate additional vehicle movements within the area and a number of neighbour objections have been received in this respect. In addition, the Local Highways team have also raised concerns regarding the suitability of the local highways network to accommodate the development proposed. Of particular concern are three areas; a lack of street lighting and poor traffic management in Pool Hill Road and poor visibility at the junction of Pool Hill Road and Doseley Road to the south east of the site. Officers are concerned that the proposed development would result in a significant increase in the number of trips along Pool Hill Road at peak times as the catchment primary school for the area, Captain Webb Primary, is located in that direction and the proposal would therefore result in the intensification in use of a junction with extremely poor visibility. As a result, the Highways team have requested a financial contribution towards off-site highways improvements
- 6.5.3 Following negotiations with the developer who has raised concerns the viability of the scheme, it has been agreed that a financial contribution of £7,500 will be provided, which will go specifically towards the cost of junction improvements at the Pool Hill Road/Doseley Road junction.
- 6.5.4 Following agreement of the above, Highways officers are satisfied that the proposal can be accommodated without detriment to highway safety and includes a provision to allow highways improvements off site. No objection is therefore raised subject to conditions relating to car parking, provision of visibility splays and pedestrian footway. Having regard to the above, officers

consider the scheme complies with Saved Policy H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan with specific regard to the provision of adequate access and parking.

6.6 Land Stability and Coal Mining

- 6.6.1 The submitted report on Ground Investigation identifies that the application site is likely to have been subject to historic unrecorded underground coal mining at shallow depth. Based on the investigations carried out and information available, it is felt that the encountered shallow coal mine workings pose a significant risk to the development of the site and appropriate remediation measures are therefore required. The submitted report sets out mitigation measures including a programme of stabilisation works involving drilling and grouting.
- 6.6.2 The Coal Authority has considered the submitted report and is satisfied that the remedial measures proposed are appropriate to address the mining legacy issues present on the application site. Officers concur with the consultee comments and consider the site can be appropriately controlled subject to a condition requiring remediation works to be carried out prior to commencement of the development.
- 6.6.3 It is noted that concerns have been raised by a neighbouring resident regarding the potential impact the proposed remediation measures may have upon building foundations and property surrounding the site, however, this is not a material planning consideration and would be a civil matter between the developer and property owners surrounding the site.

6.7 Ecology Issues

- 6.7.1 The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment carried out in June 2014 by Middlemarch Environmental, together with a Great Crested Newt survey carried out in April 2015. Following anecdotal evidence of grass snakes eggs in a compost heap on the site, a reptile method statement has also been submitted with the application.
- 6.7.2 No Great Crested Newts were identified during any of the survey visits and the submitted reptile method statement, which will be followed during the works, will also ensure the protection of amphibian species on site.
- 6.7.3 The submitted reports have been assessed by the Councils Ecology team who are satisfied that the proposal can be carried out without harming local wildlife habitats or European Protected Species and raises no objection subject to the addition of conditions requiring development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Reptile method Statement, the erection of artificial nesting/roosting boxes, landscaping design and an external lighting plan.

6.8 **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 6.8.1 A drainage scheme has been submitted with the application which has been assessed by the Council's Drainage Engineers. Foul drainage will discharge to the mains sewer and surface water drainage will also discharge to the mains sewer via a sustainable drainage system which achieves required betterment rates.
- 6.8.2 The proposed scheme seeks to provide surface water attenuation within the curtilage of the proposed dwellings which is not the preferred approach of the Council, however, following discussions between the agent and the Council's Drainage Engineers, the surface water attenuation has now been split into two sections and located under parking areas. Given that responsibility for maintenance will remain with Bromford Housing and taking into account the applicant has made every effort to comply with this requirement and still deliver much needed social housing, in this instance officers are prepared to accept this arrangement.

6.9 **Impacts Upon Local Infrastructure**

- 6.9.1 As discussed in Section 6.5 of this report, it has been identified that the road network surrounding the site only has limited capacity to accommodate additional traffic movements generated by the proposed development. Accordingly, following a request from the Highways Authority, the developer has agreed to provide a financial contribution of £7,500 to be used specifically for junction improvements at the Doseley Road/Pool Hill Road junction. This offer falls short of the initial figure requested by the Highways team, however, has been negotiated down following the submission of a viability appraisal which confirmed that a larger contribution would compromise the viability of the scheme.
- 6.9.2 In this instance, the developer has demonstrated that abnormal costs involved with developing the site include decontamination, ground stabilisation works (drilling & grouting, retaining walls and extra over reinforced foundations) and diversion of overhead power lines which have significantly stretched the viability of the scheme. As a result, it was explained at the outset that no additional funds would be available for any further infrastructure contributions.
- 6.9.3 The following heads of terms are therefore proposed for a Section 106 agreement:
- (i) A contribution of £7,500 towards highways improvements (to be spent specifically on improvements to the junction of Pool Hill Road and Doseley Road)
- 6.9.4 Whilst there is a requirement to provide affordable housing as part of the development, the applicants do not wish to see this included within the S106 agreement as this can have financial implications towards grant funding. At the time of writing, officers are currently undertaking negotiations with the applicant to this extent and the committee will be updated accordingly prior to the Plans Board meeting. As an alternative, a condition could be attached to ensure the housing provided is retained as 'affordable'.

6.9.5 Contributions towards Open space and Education are not being sought in this instance due to the scheme being for 100% affordable housing. The developer has demonstrated that any further financial contributions would make the scheme unviable.

6.9.6 The heads of terms for this legal agreement are consistent with Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The provision of affordable housing is necessary and consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS1, Wrekin Local Plan Saved Policy H23 and the NPPF. The contributions towards highway improvements are necessary to improve the ability of Pool Hill Road to accommodate additional vehicle movements and to improve the junction with Doseley Road. The negotiation of these contributions is also consistent with Local Plan Policy T22.

6.10 **Other Matters**

6.10.1 **Landscaping and Public Open Space:** The application includes a comprehensive landscaping plan which has been assessed by the Councils Arboriculturalist and no objection is raised. The applicants have confirmed that there is no availability of funds to contribute towards the adoption of the public open space on site, therefore this will either be maintained by a management company or conveyed to individual properties but will not form part of the heads of terms or Section 106 agreement. A condition controlling the management of open space can be added to any planning approval.

6.10.2 **Waste Collection:** All new dwellings will have kerbside collection for both general waste and recycling with all areas being able to achieve refuse collections within 30 metres of the public highway. Space for recycling bins will be provided in property rear gardens and sited adjacent to access points for ease of movement onto kerbsides. All dwellings will have paths linking rear gardens to highway frontages.

6.10.3 All other objections raised in the consultation process have been considered but do not raise any issues that would warrant a review of the analysis of this proposal.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposed development will provide 14 affordable units on a sustainable site within the Telford urban area which has previously received outline permission for residential development. The proposed development has been sympathetically designed and will respect the context of the site and its surroundings in terms of scale, density, layout and appearance. The proposal will also safeguard the living conditions of existing neighbouring residents to the site.

7.2 The proposal includes satisfactory provisions in respect of access and off-street parking and includes a financial contribution towards off-site highway improvements considered necessary given the likely increase in traffic using

Pool Hill Road, particularly at key periods. The contribution will specifically allow improvements to be made to the Doseley Road/Pool Hill Road junction.

- 7.3 The proposal will not be harmful to any local wildlife habitats or protected species, will be landscaped sympathetically and open space management can be agreed through a condition. The development does not raise any concerns in respect of flood risk or drainage and includes appropriate remediation measures to ensure that land stability and coal mining legacy issues can be overcome.
- 7.4 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with Core Strategy Policies CS1, CS3, CS8, CS9, CS12, CS13, CS14, CS15, Saved Policies UD2, H6, H23 and HE3 of the Wrekin Local Plan together with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. The application is therefore recommended for approval under officer's delegated powers.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Based on the conclusions above, the recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the following:

- A.) The applicant/landowners entering into a Section 106 agreement with the Local Planning Authority (terms to be agreed by the Development Management Service Delivery Manager) relating to:
- (i) A contribution of £7,500 towards highways improvements (to be spent specifically on improvements to the junction of Pool Hill Road and Doseley Road)
- B.) The following conditions (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager):
- | | | |
|-----|-----------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | A04 | Commencement within 3 years |
| 2. | B150 | Site Environmental Management Plan |
| 3. | B cust | Drainage details |
| 4. | B076 | SUDS Management Plan |
| 5. | B126 | Landscape Management Plan |
| 6. | B120 | Details of means of enclosure |
| 7. | B049 cust | Footway provision |
| 8. | B149 cust | Bird and Bat Boxes |
| 9. | B149 cust | External Lighting details |
| 10. | C002 | Materials as submitted |
| 11. | C012 | Car Parking |
| 12. | C020 cust | Visibility Splays |
| 13. | C029 cust | Coal Mining Remediation |
| 14. | C089 cust | Landscaping in accordance |
| 15. | C109 cust | Reptile Method Statement |

- 16. C38 Development in accordance with approved plans
- 17. D cust Affordable Housing only

Informatives:

- I06 S106 Agreement
- I08 Highways Licence
- I35 Ecology – Nesting Wild Birds
- I35 Ecology – Trenches and pipes
- I40 Conditions
- I41 Reasons for Grant of Permission
- RANPPF1 Approval - NPPF