

TWC/2022/0629

Site of 1-10 Glebe Flats, Glebe Street/1-32 Nelson Court/1-55 (odds) St John Street/1-18 York Flats, 2-28 (evens) & 34-88 (evens), High Street, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

Erection of 67no. affordable dwellings together with associated access, roads, parking, landscaping and public open space ****AMENDED PLANS SUBMITTED****

APPLICANT

The Wrekin Housing Group

RECEIVED

28/07/2022

PARISH

Wellington

WARD

Haygate

THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN REFERRED TO PLANNING COMMITTEE AS THE COUNCIL OWN PART OF THE SITE AND THE SCHEME IS A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

Online planning file: <https://secure.telford.gov.uk/planning/pa-applicationssummary.aspx?applicationnumber=TWC/2022/0629>

1.0 SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions and informatives.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The site subject to this application is located within Wellington, one of the Borough's Market Towns. The site is located on the junction of High Street and Glebe Street and is bound by a mix of hard and soft landscaping. 14no. blocks of flats currently feature on the site, however these are in the process of being demolished under a previously approved Prior Approval.

3.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for erection of 67no. affordable dwellings together with associated access, roads, parking, landscaping and public open space.

3.2 The dwellings will be 100% affordable and will consist of a mixture of one, two and three bedroomed properties. The dwellings will offer a mix of different accommodation types with bungalows, apartments and dwellings being proposed. The scheme will see a net-loss of dwellings on the site, with the existing blocks of flats providing over 100 units of accommodation. The dwellings will be constructed in a varying palette of materials, with the details to be agreed with the LPA via an appropriately worded condition. All dwellings are NDSS compliant.

4.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

4.1 TWC/2021/0815 – Application for prior notification of the proposed demolition of 14no. blocks of flats – Prior Approval Granted on 10/09/2021

5.0 RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS

5.1 National Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 Local Development Plan:

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (TWLP)

5.3 Wellington Conservation Area Management Plan

5.4 Homes for All SPD

6.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1 Local Member & Town/Parish Council Responses:

Comments received from statutory consultees can be viewed in full on the planning file, but key points have been summarised as follows:

6.1.1 Wellington Town Council – Support

Overall the Committee wished to raise no objection to the proposed development and fully welcomed the application which would ensure that this area was tidied up. The Committee wished to make the following comments that any existing trees that were the subject of a TPO should remain protected; the lack of solar panels on the roofs of the residential units; that the maximum green space should be maintained and that the Committee noted an apparent lack of rubbish bin storage and that these potentially would be left on the frontages of the development and become unsightly as a result.

6.2 Standard Consultation Responses

6.2.1 Affordable Housing: Comment:

The proposed development looks to provide 67 affordable dwellings and is located within the built up area of Telford. The proposal is considered to meet the minimum requirement for affordable housing and is in compliance with policies HO4, HO5 and HO6. However, justification is needed as to why First Homes are not being provided as part of the development, as well as further justification for not meeting accessibility standards set out within the Homes for All SPD.

6.2.2 Built Heritage Conservation – Comment:

Significant amendments have been made to improve the design, and there would be a general improvement to the street scene from the existing situation. However, there are still areas where the design in terms of massing and relationship to the road in 'character area 1' could better harmonise with the character and appearance of the conservation area, as set out in Local Plan Policies BE1 and BE5, and the guidance set out in the Wellington Conservation Area Management Plan.

6.2.3 Education – Comment

Confirmed that no educational contributions are required.

6.2.4 Ecology, Highways and Drainage: Support subject to conditions

6.2.5 Healthy Spaces: Comment

This size of development triggers a need for the provision of an onsite LEAP (younger children's play equipment), which has not been provided as part of the proposed scheme. If on-site provision is not possible, financial contributions towards enhancing/upgrading an offsite LEAP, in order to maximise the capacity and meet the needs of this development would be acceptable. This fee would be £650 per dwelling, given that partial provision is proposed on site. There is also a lack of sport and recreation provision as part of this proposal to meet the needs arising from the development. The applicant should look to meet these needs by improving and maximising the existing sport and recreation facilities nearby. This fee would be £650 per dwelling. There are also shared areas/public open space which require maintenance/management. As such, a long term Landscape Management Plan will need to be conditioned.

6.2.6 Shropshire Fire Service: Comment

Confirmed that a Swept Path Analysis will be required as part of any formal application. Consideration should be given to advice provided in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's "Fire Safety Guidance for Commercial and Domestic Planning Applications" document.

6.2.7 Cadent Gas – No objection

7.0 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC RESPONSE

7.1 Two letters which support the scheme subject to conditions have been received, which are available in full on the planning file, but key points have been summarised as follows:

- A parking court would not be used by owners/occupiers of the properties;
- The removal of driveways on the High Street will enable the existing repair garage on the opposite side of the road to continue to litter the street with cars during working hours;
- The number of apartments proposed seems high considering some of the reasons for pulling the existing ones down was lack of accessibility to the elderly, disabled and those managing pushchairs etc;
- Questioned whether it would be visually better for Plots 41 & 42 to be detached dwellings, as they are the identical house type as Plots 43 & 44 - which would then mirror the 4 period detached properties on the opposite side;
- The proposal will have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring properties during the construction phase due to dust and noise.

8.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 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:

- Principle of development
- Site layout, scale and design
- Impact on heritage assets
- Impact on residential amenity
- Other matters

8.2 Principle of development

8.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (TWLP) which was adopted in January 2018. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

8.2.2 Policy SP1 supports development within the urban boundary of Telford. The application site is located within the Telford urban boundary and within the sustainable Market Town of Wellington. The site would see the regeneration of a prominent parcel of land following the demolition of the existing blocks of flats, which are not considered to positively contribute to the streetscene due to their age and design. It is therefore considered that the principle of residential accommodation on the site has already been established and that the replacement of the existing flats would be acceptable in principle. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policies.

8.3 Site layout, scale and design

8.3.1 Policy BE1 of the TWLP outlines that developments should respect and respond positively to its context and should enhance the quality of the local built and natural environment.

8.3.2 The immediate area consists of a mix of building types. The proposed dwellings are a mix of bungalows, dwellings and apartments, which would be appropriate forms within this location. Each bungalow and dwelling has been provided with private secure amenity space. In respect of the proposed apartment blocks, there is one block which has not been provided with any amenity space. Whilst the provision of amenity space for these residents would be favourable, Officers acknowledge that this has not been achievable due to the requirement to provide a specific number of parking spaces for these residents. The blocks of flats which are currently on the site provide incredibly limited provision of amenity space, with the vast majority of apartments not having access to any. It is noted that the existing parcel of open space on the site will be retained and acknowledged that there are a number of parks and open space within the immediate area, with the closes being located 150m away from the site. The proposed provision is

considerably better than the existing provision of the site, and this is therefore considered to be acceptable on balance.

- 8.3.3 The layout of the site has had to address a number of significant constraints on and around the site including the topography, its location adjacent to the Wellington Conservation Area and relationships with existing residential properties. The three-storey apartment blocks have been located towards the Northern and Southern boundaries of the site, in order to respond to the existing Chad Valley apartment block, and the apartment blocks located on the junction of High Street and Glebe Street. The proposed houses, bungalows and apartments have been orientated to front the streetscene where possible, which conforms to the principle of good urban design by providing active frontages. Where the layout has not been able to achieve this, new dwellings have been positioned and designed in a manner to create a secure and safe environment for the future occupants.
- 8.3.4 A pedestrian link through from St Johns Street to Glebe Street has been incorporated into the plans at the request of the Local Highways Authority, in order to enhance pedestrian access to/from the site.
- 8.3.5 In terms of the NDSS, all units meet the internal floor space required under Policy HO4, with a number of dwellings exceeding these standards.
- 8.3.6 The Council's Affordable Housing Team have commented on the application and have questioned why 'First Homes' are not being provided on the site and why the standards outlined within the Homes For All SPD in relation to accessibility have not been met.
- 8.3.7 In respect of First Homes. The requirement would be for 25% of the homes obligated for affordable tenure to be provided as First Homes. This would equate to 4 units. The applicant, Wrekin Housing Group have outlined that they wish to retain all of the units for rental and that the provision of First Homes on this site would not therefore be practical. On balance, given that the scheme will provides 100% affordable rental housing in the form of replacement units following demolition of the existing properties, Officers consider this to be acceptable on balance.
- 8.3.8 In respect of the Homes for All SPD, this document sets out a basis for the provision of 17.65 category M4(2) units. The scheme makes an over provision, providing 19 dwellings which are constructed to M4(2) standards, which equates to 28% of the development. These consist of 10 bungalows and 9 ground-floor apartments. In respect of category M4(3) provision the document sets out a requirement for 2.6 units. The applicant has outlined that due to the additional spatial requirements involved with the provision of M4(3) units, it will not be possible to accommodate these without having to reduce the number of dwellings in the development, which would then make the scheme unviable. On this basis; with the slight over provision of M4(2) units; and with regard that the scheme provides 19 category M4(2) units in place of

a block of flats that failed to even meet part M4(1) on balance the scheme is considered acceptable.

8.3.9 In respect of the green credentials of the scheme, the Energy Statement confirms that solar panels are proposed for inclusion on a number of the dwellings however, it has not yet been confirmed on which properties as further consideration needs to be given to where they can be appropriately sited. Officers are satisfied that this can be conditioned, so that the details are submitted and approved by the LPA prior to occupation. The Energy Statement outlined that the dwellings will be built to meet current Building Control standards with a good thermal envelope to minimise heat loss, as well as efficient heating and lighting systems, which will drive energy efficiency within the buildings. This is in accordance with Policy ER1 objective of sustainable design and reducing energy use.

8.3.10 The scale of the properties proposed will consist of single-storey, two-storey and three-storey dwellings. This is consistent with properties within the immediate area and as such, officers are satisfied with the scale of the dwellings. In respect of design, the applicants have proposed dwellings which take design cues from properties within the immediate area, with features such as the inclusion of render and chimneys proposed. It is considered that the dwellings will respect the local built environment and as such, the designs proposed are considered to be acceptable.

8.4 Impact on heritage assets

8.4.1 The Northern half of the site is located immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the Wellington Conservation Area (WCA) which was extended southwards to include the surviving historic parts of the former Wellington High Street and additional 19th century industrial and suburban buildings on St John Street in March 2022. The site is immediately opposite buildings that both contribute to the streetscape and special architectural character and appearance of the WCA, and are identified as Buildings of Local Interest.

8.4.2 In light of the above, the Conservation Officer has been consulted on this application. Extensive amendments were initially requested from the Conservation Officer, which resulted in a number of amended plans being submitted for review.

8.4.3 As part of the amended plans, the applicant has addressed the Conservation Officers comments in relation to the colour of render and the use of plain clay tiles in Character Area 1, which is now considered to be acceptable. Furthermore, the elevations for Housetype 3B has been amended to omit the previously featured, wide recessed entrance and now has a standard central door way with straight arch over as per the windows. This is supported.

8.4.4 Concerns were raised in relation to the presence of fascia boards, given the close proximity to the Conservation Area. These have been retained on the amended plans. Whilst it is acknowledged that these are not established features of the Conservation Area, they have been used on newer buildings

around the site. Officers do not consider that their inclusion would have a significantly detrimental presence on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 8.4.5 The uniform mass and form in Character Area 1 was also raised as a concern by the Conservation Officer, where it was requested that the height of the buildings were amended in order to provide some variation and to mirror the mass of the buildings on High Street. The applicant has amended the proposed elevations to show a variation by 3 or 5 brick courses. Whilst this is considered to be a minimal amendment, there is some height variation proposed and given the overall enhancement that the removal of the blocks of flats would produce, Officers do not consider that the amended plans would have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 8.4.6 In respect of Character Area 1, the Conservation Officer objected to the inclusion of frontage gardens (enclosed with brick walls) and parking spaces on the west of High Street, which was considered to introduce a more suburban character and would fail to reinforce the building line of the historic street scene and hard-to-pavement characteristic. The Local Planning Authority has undertaken extensive conversations with the applicant to see whether parking courts could be provided within the site, in order to remove the need for parking to the front of these properties. However, supporting information has been provided which demonstrates that on existing sites owned by the applicant which feature parking courts, there have been extensive issues with anti-social behaviour and on-street parking, due to occupiers wanting to park their vehicles as close to the house as possible. As such, it is considered that adequate justification has been provided to demonstrate that parking to the front of the properties is, on balance, acceptable.
- 8.4.7 As a minor point, the Conservation Officer has also requested that vertical plank style doors to front elevations should be amended to panel style doors (4 or 6 panel). This request is noted, however, Officers consider this to be excessive and do not consider that the presence of vertical plank style door would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 8.4.8 Policy BE5 of the TWLP outlines that the Council will support development in conservation areas where it will preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Whilst the applicant has not facilitated all of the amendments required by the Conservation Officer, it is considered that the scheme would represent a significant visual improvement from the blocks of flats which are located on the site, and as such, would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The elements which remain on the amended plans, such as the fascia boards and parking to the front of the properties on the High Street are not considered to have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Officer and it is considered that any minimal harm caused by these elements,

will be outweighed by the benefits of the redevelopment of the site.

8.5 Impact on residential amenity

8.5.1 With regard to residential amenity, there are a number of existing residential properties which border the application site. When assessing the proposed site plan, Officers are satisfied that given the distance separations present (partly due to their being a road and two pavements in between the application site and the surrounding properties), the appropriate scale and design of the proposal and the boundary treatments proposed, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant harm to the amenities of the nearest residents. Concerns have been raised by a local resident in relation to noise and dust pollution during the construction phase. Officers have included a condition as part of this approval, which requires the submission of a Site Environmental Management Plan. This document will outline the proposed working hours, how mud on the road will be avoided/addressed and how noise and dust will be kept to a minimum. Officers are satisfied that this will address any concerns in relation to noise and dust.

8.6 Other Matters

8.6.1 Officers note that the proposal represents a major development, which would meet the trigger for financial contributions to be sought via a S106 Agreement. The Council's Education and Highways Teams have not requested any financial contributions. The Council's Healthy Spaces Officer has requested a sum of £1,300 per dwelling towards the enhancing/upgrading an offsite LEAP and existing sport and recreation facilities nearby. As per the NPPF, the LPA are only able to request financial contributions if they meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. They must be: (i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (ii) directly related to the development; and (iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. In this instance, the LPA must give consideration to the fact that the number of dwellings proposed represents a considerable net loss of dwellings on the site, with the existing blocks of flats providing over 100 units of accommodation. There are currently no play facilities currently provided on-site. Officers consider that the demand for play provision would be reduced due to the net loss of dwellings on the site and given the presence of play facilities already in existence in Wellington, it is not considered that this financial contribution meets the above tests in relation to it being reasonably related in kind to the development.

8.6.2 Drainage: The Council's Drainage Team have been consulted and have supported the scheme subject to conditions and informatives.

8.6.3 Ecology: The Council's Ecology Team have been consulted and have supported the scheme subject to conditions and informatives. The submitted Ecology Surveys confirm that the habitats present of site are in poor ecological condition, with no presence of Great Crested Newts, Reptiles or Bats being recorded. In regards to Biodiversity Net Gain with the intended enhancement, there will be a net gain of 86.64% habitat units and a 100% gain of hedgerow units. The LPA are satisfied with this and will include a

condition on the decision notice which secures this.

- 8.6.4 Highways: The Local Highways Authority have been consulted and have raised no objections subject to conditions and informatives. In order to avoid congestion in the surrounding area and to protect the amenities of the area, a Site Environmental Management Plan has been requested via condition. The scheme also benefits from close proximity to Wellington Centre, Bus Station and Train Station. Cycle storage is also being provided on the site. The proposal is therefore deemed to be compliant with policies C3 and C5.
- 8.6.5 Trees: In relation to the existing trees on the site, none are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and as the site is not located within the Conservation Area, permission would not be required for the removal of any trees on the site. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of this application. Twenty-two (22) trees will need to be removed in order to facilitate the development which are largely located within the development site and are not visible from the streetscene. These trees have been categorised as a mix of 'U', 'C' and 'B' quality and the three mature trees which are located on the Southern boundary of the site will be retained. The LPA consider these to positively contribute to the amenity of the area and welcome their retention. A Tree Protection Plan has been submitted as part of the AIA and a proposed landscaping scheme will be conditioned accordingly to ensure that replacement trees can be planted on the site, where it is deemed to be appropriate.
- 8.6.6 Consultation comments: In regards to the consultation comments received by neighbouring properties, Officers are satisfied that the majority of concerns raised have been addressed within this report. In relation to the concerns raised regarding a local business parking vehicles on the surrounding streets, this would be a matter for the Police/Parking Enforcement Team and would not be able to be addressed as part of the planning process. Concerns relating to the accessibility of the dwellings are noted, however, the applicant is keen to provide a variety of different housing types and is also proposing a number of bungalows on the site, which would cater for those who require living accommodation on one level. In relation to the concerns raised by Wellington Town Council in relation to bin storage, Officers highlight that each dwelling has an area of private amenity space provided, with the expectation being that bins would be stored within this location. In relation to the apartments proposed, allocated areas for bin storage have been identified on the site plan. In regards to the maximum retention of green spaces on the site, the vast majority of the existing site is covered by hard surfacing. However, there is a parcel of green, open space which is located on the Western boundary of the site. This is considered to be the piece of land which contributes most positively to the character and appearance of the area and is to be retained as part of this application.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable, given that the principle for residential development has already been established on the site. The dwellings are considered to be acceptable in regards to scale and design

and would enhance the character and appearance of the Wellington Conservation Area. The proposed works will not have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and there are no technical issues that would warrant the refusal of the application. Accordingly it is considered that the proposal represents a sustainable form of development which complies with the National Planning Policy Framework, together with relevant policies within the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan, subject to conditions and informatives.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that **Delegated Authority** be granted to the Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION** (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, legal agreement terms, or any later variations) subject to:

The following conditions and informatives:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. A04 | Time limit |
| 2. B011 | Samples of materials |
| 3. B021 | Details of windows and doors – conservation area |
| 4. B034 | Highway Details |
| 5. B061 | Brownfield Foul and Surface Water Drainage |
| 6. B076 | SUDS Management Plan |
| 7. B092 | External services |
| 8. B094 | Roof Details |
| 9. B119Custom | Rainwater Goods |
| 10. B121 | Landscaping Design |
| 11. B126 | Landscape Management Plan |
| 12. B145 | Lighting Plan |
| 13. B149Custom | Landscape and Environmental Management Plan |
| 14. B150 | Site Environmental Management Plan |
| 15. B159Custom | Details of solar panels |
| 16. C013 | Parking, Loading, Unloading and Turning |
| 17. C014 | Visibility Splays |
| 18. C38 | Development in accordance with deposited plans |
| 19. C091 | Works in accordance with Protected Species Survey |
| 20. C091 | Works in accordance with Arboricultural Impact Assessment |
| 21. D01 | Removal of Permitted Development Rights |
| 22. I11 | Highways |
| 23. I17B | Coal Authority Low Risk Area |
| 24. I23 | Bats |
| 25. I25m | Nesting Wild Birds |
| 26. I32 | Fire Authority |
| 27. I35Custom | Mud on Highway |
| 28. I38 | Cadent Gas |
| 29. I40 | Conditions |
| 30. I41 | Reasons for grant of approval |
| 31. RANPPF2 | Approval Following Amendments |

