Redevelopment of Chestnut and Hawkes Mill Nurseries, Browns Lane
Planning Statement

Introduction

1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by Marrons Planning on behalf of Bloor Homes Limited (“the Applicant”) and forms part of the planning application for the redevelopment of Chestnut and Hawkes Mill Nurseries, Browns Lane, Coventry. This previously developed site is allocated for residential development within the Coventry City Local Plan. The site adjoins existing residential areas to the north and east, with open countryside to the west and south. The character of the area is described in more detail within the Design and Access Statement.

2. The purpose of this Statement is to demonstrate the proposed development accords with relevant policies of the development plan for Coventry City Council, and with the policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) where relevant.

3. The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of all existing buildings and the erection of 81 dwellings, parking, landscaping, great crested newt habitat, sustainable drainage pond, and associated infrastructure as shown on the submitted plans and as described in the Design and Access Statement.

Planning History

4. There is no relevant planning history for the site.

Pre-Application Advice

5. The Applicant met with officers of the Planning and Highways Departments of the City Council in September 2017. Officers provided advice on the approach to assessing the effects of the development on highways, and the documentation required to be submitted with the application. Guidance was also given on the
key principles for the design and layout of the development which have been reflected within the application. In addition, the Applicant met with the Housing Officer of the City Council to agree the form and tenure of the proposed affordable housing, and also the Urban Design Officer of the City Council in February 2018 to discuss a draft layout and proposed elevations. The Officer was generally supportive of the proposed layout, and provided advice on the design detail of the highway, and the orientation of properties overlooking key junctions within the development. The application reflects the advice given. The Applicant also agreed the scope of the Transport Assessment with the City Council prior to its formulation.

6. The Applicant also met with Allesley Parish Council to discuss the draft layout, and engaged with the local Bablake ward members, Councillors Kershaw, Williams and Birdi. The Applicant also consulted local residents adjoining the site on the draft layout, and invited comments. The details of this consultation is set out within the Statement of Community Involvement.

Assessment of the Proposals Against the Development Plan,

7. Planning law, as contained in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework advises that the development plan remains the starting point for decision making.

8. The development plan for the purposes of this application consists of the Coventry City Council Local Plan which was adopted in December 2017.

9. The key policies relevant to the determination of this application are considered below.
10. The proposed development accords with Policy H2:17 which allocates the land for 80 dwellings. The number of dwellings is an indicative figure for the capacity of the site, and the City Council agreed through the Examination of the Local Plan that the figure was not a maximum threshold that could not be breached if appropriate (see Statement of Common Ground between the City Council and Bloor Homes Limited dated 04/0716). Further, although the application is for 81 dwellings, the proposed development will result in the demolition of two existing dwellings on Browns Lane to facilitate means of access and one existing dwelling within the Chestnut Nursery site. The net number of new dwellings is therefore 78 in accordance with the allocation.

11. The proposed mix of market housing accords with Policy H4 which requires proposals to include a mix of market housing which contributes towards a balance of house types and sizes across the city in accordance with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The proposed market mix is for 2 two-bed houses; 26 three-bed houses and 33 four-bed houses. The proposal contributes towards a mix of market housing, and in accordance with criteria 2. b) of Policy H4 has an emphasis towards larger homes.

12. The proposed market housing mix must also have regard to the indicative capacity of the allocation, the need to provide an appropriate density of development for this location, the need to have regard to the Council’s parking standards, and the need to provide a high quality design and layout that respects the amenity of neighbouring properties and the effects on the surrounding open countryside. The Applicant has sought to balance these competing objectives in designing the proposed development, and an alternative market housing mix would have a consequential impact on each of these elements.

13. The proposal accords with Policy H6 which requires 25% of all homes to be affordable, with 12.5% social/affordable rent and 12.5% intermediate provision. The proposal provides 20 affordable homes which are integrated within the development. The proposed mix for social/affordable rent is 2 one-bed units, 2 two-bed units, 4 three-bed units and 2 four-bed units. The proposed mix for
intermediate provision is 4 two-bed units and 6 three-bed units. The size, type and tenure has been agreed with the City Council’s Housing Officer.

14. The proposal accords with Policy H9 which requires residential development to make the most effective and efficient use of the land whilst ensuring compatibility with the quality, character and amenity of the surrounding area. It requires a minimum density of 30/35 dwellings per hectare (net) in this location. The proposal achieves a density of 36 dwellings per hectare (net) and accords with this policy.

Design

15. Policy DE1 requires all development to respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of the area. A number of key principles are identified which are discussed in more detail within the Design and Access Statement. The proposed development accords with the key principles as follows:

- The proposal is to demolish the existing low quality nursery structures (polytunnels and glasshouses) within the application site which will improve the appearance of the site;
- New dwellings are proposed to face the surrounding countryside to the west, with existing trees and vegetation on the western boundary protected and enhanced where necessary to provide a ‘soft’ edge to the development when viewed from public rights of way to the west;
- The surrounding residential area to the east consists of two storey semi-detached properties that back onto the application site, with varying garden lengths and outbuildings. In response, the proposal is for the majority of dwellings to have their rear gardens backing onto the boundary with the existing properties, providing a minimum 20m separation between existing and proposed dwellings;
- All dwellings are two storey of appropriate design and detailing to reflect the site’s location on the urban fringe;
- The majority of parking is proposed within the plot, and where this is not possible it is well related to the dwelling;
• The majority of the existing trees on the site are retained, and new planting is proposed to replace those that need to be removed and enhance the appearance of the development; and
• A number of public spaces are proposed to provide areas for recreation within the site, including retention and enhancement of the existing pond, areas for biodiversity enhancement, and surface water attenuation.

Heritage

16. Policy HE2 requires proposals to sustain and conserve archaeological remains of all periods. An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been undertaken of the application site. This concludes the land has a low potential for buried archaeological remains, and the Applicant would accept a condition of the planning permission to require a programme of archaeological work prior to commencement of development.

Accessibility

17. The proposed development integrates with the existing transport network and promotes access by a choice of modes of transport in accordance with Policies AC1 and AC4. The proposal incorporates safe vehicular access from Browns Lane and pedestrian/cycle access to Hawkes Mill Lane to provide circulation and integration with the existing residential area.

18. A Transport Assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken, and there are no predicted material impacts on the capacity and safety of the highway network in accordance with Policy AC2.

19. The proposed development does not generate significant additional traffic movements, and therefore a Travel Plan is not required in accordance with Policy AC3.

20. Car and Cycle Parking spaces are proposed having regard to the Parking Standards for New Developments. The total number of car parking spaces is set out within the Transport Assessment and is proposed to be marginally greater
than the number of spaces that the Parking Standards would require, although this does include a number of garages. The number of car parking spaces proposed per dwelling is based on the Applicant’s knowledge of the potential residents demand, the accessibility of the location, and the desire to avoid on-street parking. The Applicant has therefore not proposed any designated visitor parking spaces within the streets. Cycle parking spaces can be provided within the residential plots.

21. The proposed development has safe and convenient access to the existing bus network in accordance with Policy AC5.

Environmental Management

22. The proposed development makes provision for green infrastructure in accordance with Policy GE1. The proposal includes landscaping along the western boundary to provide a ‘soft’ edge to the development when viewed from the open countryside to the west. Improvements to the ecological value of the site are also proposed with the creation of a great crested newt habitat connected to the existing pond and the open countryside to the west. This will assist with species movement and create linkages to the open countryside for wildlife. The proposal also includes the creation of other areas of open space and landscaping that can enhance green infrastructure and provide a network of spaces for residents. Existing green infrastructure features, including the pond and retained mature trees, will be protected and managed.

23. The proposed development will lead to a net gain in biodiversity, protect and enhance biodiversity assets such as the pond, and preserve species which are legally protected in accordance with Policy GE3.

24. The proposal incorporates existing trees worthy of retention into the overall design of the scheme, and trees not to be retained are proposed to be replaced with new trees as part of the landscaping scheme in accordance with Policy GE4.

25. The proposed development has been designed as far as possible to be resilient to, and adapt to the future impacts of, climate change through the orientation of
dwellings to maximise passive solar gain, flood risk management on site, inclusion of green infrastructure and tree planting, inclusion of blue infrastructure and making space for water, and locating development in areas of low flood risk in accordance with Policy EM1.

26. The proposed development will comply with the Building Regulation Standards in relation to energy efficiency, water conservation, materials, and waste minimisation in accordance with Policy EM2.

27. A Phase One Desk Study has been prepared to assess the effects of the development on land contamination. This includes a coal mining report which confirms there are no coal mining precautions or associated investigation works required at the site, and therefore no land stability issues in accordance with Policy EM2. Recommendations are also proposed within the Phase Two Ground Investigation Report.

28. A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to assess the effects of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EM4. The proposed development incorporates a surface water drainage system as described within the Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with Policy EM5. Consultation has been held with Severn Trent Water to ensure that wastewater infrastructure will be in place in accordance with Policy EM6. The details are provided within the Flood Risk Assessment.

Connectivity

29. The proposed development will be served by broadband infrastructure in accordance with Policy C1.

Infrastructure and Draft Heads of Terms

30. The Applicant accepts that they will enter into an agreement(s) with the Council to provide (unless the matter can be dealt with by condition):
- 25% of the proposed new dwellings as affordable homes;
- details of the management of the maintenance of the proposed open space within the development;
• any necessary contributions towards the improvement of recreation facilities off site;
• subject to confirmation of need, any necessary financial contributions towards improvements to schools that serve the area in which the proposal is located; and,
• any other reasonable and directly related requirements as may be shown to be necessary based on detailed evidence of need provided by the Council.

31. This agreement is subject to any obligation being demonstrated to meet the tests as required within paragraphs 203-206 within the Framework, and taking into consideration the viability and costs associated with the development in accordance with paragraph 173 of the Framework.

32. In summary, therefore, the proposed development is in accordance with all of the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

**Material Considerations**

33. It is necessary also to consider whether there are any material considerations which indicate whether planning permission should be granted or refused. The consistency of the proposal with national planning policy is a material consideration.

34. The proposed development will generate employment through the construction phase, as well as increase the working population of the City, and increase demand for local services and facilities. The proposed development will make a positive contribution to the local economy.

35. Further, it will widen the choice of high quality homes in the City and contribute towards its 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, and affordable housing needs. The proposed development will make use of previously developed land, consistent with its allocation, and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Natural environment features worthy of retention will be conserved and enhanced.
36. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development is in entirely consistent with the policies of the Framework, and this is a significant material consideration that weighs in favour of granting planning permission.

**Conclusion**

37. In conclusion, the proposed development is in accordance with the relevant policies of weight within the Development Plan, and there are no material considerations which would indicate planning permission should be refused. The Council are therefore respectfully requested to grant planning permission.

Marrons Planning  
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