

Planning Committee – 30th March 2023 – Update Sheet.

Application 07/2022/00928/FUL – Reynard Close, Longton

An application for erection of a residential development (34 dwellings with associated works) was brought before planning committee in March 2023 but was deferred to allow the applicant to consider changes to the proposal following a meeting with local residents. Time constraints were such that it was not possible for the meeting to take place before the agenda for this meeting was published, but a meeting did take place at the earliest opportunity - 23rd March. This update sheet details that meeting, and addresses some of the concerns raised by Members in committee.

Background

Following member questions regarding the community consultation process the applicant confirmed to Members in committee details of the robust - but not mandatory - pre application engagement exercise undertaken. Nevertheless, there remained some confusion about the process and Members voted to defer to allow the applicant and residents to have a face-to-face meeting.

During the committee debate, Members also raised concerns related to the schemes density and questioned the highways impact assessment and the conclusion reached by LCC Highways Officers.

From the outset it has been made clear that there are no planning reasons to revise the application proposal which is policy compliant in all respects. The applicant was also equally clear that significant changes would not be made as a result of the residents meeting, and agreed to meet to explain the situation and dispel any miscommunication, but on the basis that the application was heard at the next available meeting with the outcome of the resident meeting to be reported to Members in an update sheet.

The applicant has provided a letter to provide:

1. Clarity on the applicant's pre-application public consultation activity applicant;
2. A summary of the discussion and outcomes from the meeting with local residents;
3. Additional density analysis to demonstrate the appropriate scale of the proposal in the context of the settlement of Longton; and
4. Further explanation of the likely car trip generation and traffic impact.

Their letter in summary states:

1. Pre-Application Consultation Activity

Story Homes undertook appropriate public consultation as part of the design process and in preparation of the planning application. A schedule of the public consultation activities is provided below (Appendix 1) as supplement to the Statement of Community Involvement in the submitted Supporting Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement. Public consultation activity was in addition to a thorough review of the comments and background information submitted in relation to the previous application and schemes for the site by a different developer. This fed into the robust submission ensuring the key concerns of highways impact and density were fully justified and accorded with local and national planning policy.

2. Summary of the Meeting with Residents

Whilst we welcomed a meeting with residents to discuss their concerns in more detail, we did advise residents prior to the meeting that it was highly unlikely that any significant changes

would be made to the proposal. Nevertheless, we welcomed a meeting to be able to explain the proposal in more detail and to address concerns. As anticipated, concerns were focused on the density of the proposal and increase in traffic. We were able to explain how the proposal meets with planning policy relating to density, separation distances, parking and highways and explain that there was no planning justification for any revisions to the design. We were able to explain the distances between existing and proposed homes around a scale printed layout plan. We explained that in visual terms, there were 27 'blocks' of development so that visually the density appeared less and in keeping with the character of the area. We explained that the affordable housing units were informed by the requirements of Registered Social Providers and that car parking for the 1 bed apartments was not only policy compliant, but also informed by need at other developments. Residents asked Story Homes to consider the boundary treatment between 1 and 2 Reynard Close and Plots 5 and 11, and also to the boundary treatment adjacent to 7 Auburn Avenue. We of course understand these concerns and would ask that Condition 32 is revised to require boundary treatment details to be submitted and agreed with the Council prior to installation to enable these detailed points to be considered further and allay resident concerns.

Officer Note: Should Members agree condition 32 could be amended from

Prior to commencement on site, temporary boundary treatments between existing properties and the construction site shall be erected in full.

REASON: To ensure the provision and retention of adequate screening in the interest of amenity of existing residents in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

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Prior to commencement on site, details of temporary boundary treatments between existing properties and the construction site shall be provided to, and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. Once agreed these shall be erected in full before first commencement on site including clearance or site set up.

REASON: To ensure the provision and retention of adequate screening in the interest of amenity of existing residents in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

3. Density

The proposal is a low-density scheme that is in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding area. To assist consideration of the scale in the context of the immediate and wider surroundings, we tabled four additional plans with residents, which are provided at Appendix 2 for your information. Plan 1 shows the proposal at a small scale on a black and white OS base block plan so the layout can be seen in the context of Longton. The proposal appears indistinguishable from the wider settlement. Plan 2 is the same plan but with the application red line boundary shown. Plan 3 shows the proposed layout at a larger scale in the context of the immediate setting also demonstrating how the proposed layout is in keeping with the layout, form, and scale of the surrounding residential area. Finally, a comparison exercise showing a proposed Story Homes housetype next to the originally proposed scheme and final approved scheme under application 07/2020/01063/FUL shows how the current proposal is of a reduced scale and more in keeping with the surrounding existing houses.

4. Highways

The Further Transport Explanatory Note at Appendix 3 provides a summary of how the traffic impact and trip generation figures have been arrived at to help explain the robust process and data behind the estimates. The proposal is a small scheme of 34 houses and, whilst it will

generate some additional car trips, the estimates cannot be considered to cause an adverse impact to warrant refusal of the planning application. Given the concerns raised by residents, Story Homes propose an additional measure to encourage sustainable travel choices and responsible parking by providing a 'Sustainable Travel Homeowner Pack' to each new household. The Packs would include details of public transport; walking and cycling infrastructure; a map of local, walkable facilities; details of School Lane parking pressures; and details of the voluntary one way traffic system on School Lane at school pick up/drop offs.

Summary

Following deferral of the planning application at Planning Committee on 9 March, we have met with residents and heard their concerns. As a result, we propose a revision to Condition 32 to enable revised/further details on the boundary treatment adjacent to No.s 1 and 2 Reynard Close and No. 7 Auburn Avenue to be submitted and agreed by the Council. We propose to provide new residents of the development with Sustainable Travel Homeowner Pack to encourage sustainable travel choices and responsible parking. We have provided some further density context plans to assist the consideration of the proposed density of the scheme and a Further Transport Explanatory Note.