Frank Harrington Associates
CHARTERED SURVEYORS LAND & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS
RICS

Land at Crow Lane East, Newton-Le-Willows.
Additional comments arising out of meetings with St Helens Council.

Highways

Discussions and meetings have been held between Mike Taylor the Principal Transport Officer at St Helens Council (miketaylor@sthelens.gov.uk – 01744 676187) and Jason Linnane of JLP Design (jlpdesignuk@googlemail.com) on behalf of the Diocese.

Access

We enclose the Highway Design that has been approved in principal with Mike Taylor (e-mail dated 27 October 2011). It involves white lining to the carriageway, relocation of the speed warning sign and relocation of the pedestrian island.

The two access points of Birley Street are not considered appropriate for residential development. These two road stubs do not lie in the ownership of the Diocese and are not adopted by the Local Authority. The future of these two areas needs to be resolved but at this stage they are to be ignored as part of this bidding process.

Housing Layout

An initial housing layout was sent to Joanne Sheridan the Planning Officer (01744 676176 – joannesheridan@sthelen.gov.uk). This resulted in comments and the revised Housing Layout prepared by LMP Architectural Consultants Drawing No: 11/035/SK01 (Revision A dated 31/10/11) reflected the changes requested by the Planning Authority at that stage.
Following a further meeting additional comments were made. A further revision of the layout has **not** been undertaken but the following comments need to be considered.

a) The road pattern on the initial layout illustrated roads at 4.5m in width in parts but this was not deemed to be acceptable to St Helens and therefore the road network has to be 5.5m carriageway with 2m footways . This was revised on Rev A
b) The Planners preferred garages set behind building lines and did not wish to see garages too remote from the properties they serve.
c) They were not keen on large parking courts and if such courts are proposed they prefer that they should accommodate no more than 10 vehicles and would preferably be located on view rather than to the rear.
d) The Revision A design has sharp angular bends and junctions which they would wish to see replaced with standard curved radii (as they lead to problems with damaged curbing and drainage/street cleaning issues).
e) Adequate in-curtilage parking is required.
f) They are looking for attractive landscaping throughout the site incorporating trees so that the visual access from entering the site will have early maturity.
g) No traffic calming or speed tables are required within the site.

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h) End vantage points were highlighted. They wanted vistas of houses rather than garages.

Housing Layout Additional Comment:

The layout (RevA identifies an access through to the playing fields to the rear. This is required for grass maintenance purposes. The chosen Developer will be required to ensure that any final built development provides estate roads capable of accessing and servicing the playing fields to the rear, both in terms of design and capacity for residential development. We would stress that there are no plans to develop the land to the rear but the provision is to cover any future eventuality.

Public Open Space

POS does not need to be incorporated within the design although a financial contribution will be required for improvements to nearby facilities. The Authority provided the sum of £103,118 as the estimated financial contribution for POS offsite based on the initial layout of 63 dwellings (not Rev A which is for 69 units). The calculation was based on 40m2 per dwelling at £3.72 per m x 10 years + 10% management fee.

Affordable Housing

30% Affordable Housing is required on the site to meet the SPD. A mix of housing types is required.
They would prefer the Affordable units spread throughout the site however acknowledge the practical difficulties of this.
The Affordable Housing Units are suggested to be affordable Rent.
Affordable Housing would be secured by condition rather than through Section 106 Agreement.

Right of Access

The Council has a right of access, 15' in width, along the edge of the site from the stub road at 115 Birley Street across the rear of 115, 113 and part 111 Birley Street and into the playing fields owned by St Helens MBC. It is proposed that St Helens give up this right of access in return for an access from the estate road. The access is for the maintenance of the playing fields. Access will need to be maintained to the playing fields during the development process either through the existing right of access or some other agreed proposal.

Demolition

The buildings on site have been demolished and the foundations excavated.

Footbridge

The footbridge connects the site with Harrison Way. The ownership of the footbridge needs to be clarified but we understand that a commuted sum will be required to be paid to St Helens Council for its future on-going maintenance. We are informed that the developer of land on the Harrison Way side of Newton Brook has paid a commuted sum for a half share of the maintenance.

Green Linkage

The Planners would prefer pedestrian linkage through the site onto adjoining land in two places.
The first is a linkage going from estate road (to be constructed) to the south of the site and linking into Mesnes Park playing fields at plot 43 / 44. (on Rev A). This appears to be the only section of the brook which is culverted and therefore the access would need to be in this location.
The second access is to join up to the existing footbridge which leads to the old bus turning circle (when the school was in operation). These pedestrian access routes need to be 4m in width.
The planners also commented that some green bunding along the westerly boundary might be appropriate (ie between plots 41 & 49 on Rev A).

Newton Brook The watercourse adjacent to the site is a tributary of Newton Brook and is an "ordinary" watercourse therefore falling outside the land drainage bylaw control. The EA are advising that an appropriate easement should be incorporated to enable access should future maintenance work be required to the watercourse.

Flood Zone The flood maps show that the site is located in Flood Zone 1.

Section 106 It is anticipated that the Section 106 will only relate to the Public Open Space offsite contribution.

Bio diversity Dawn Hewitt (planning liaison officer) commented as follows:
"Due to fencing, there is currently no connectivity to the development site from the brook on the south side.
Whilst appropriately scaled easement is recommended along the southern slope, we also recommend sensitive and appropriate boundary treatment and connectivity with the brook. This riparian corridor is also a local wildlife site St Helens ref: 73 Mesnes Park and Stream. As such, there is potential health and wellbeing benefit to be had from opening up access to the corridor, enabling greater contact with this relatively short section of open watercourse of relatively high ecological value.
As water quality is increasing, there are now to be considered to be significant benefits to integrating natural green infrastructure and wildlife corridors into developments wherever possible"

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