



# Keeping our communities safe and reassured



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**Application**  
**Reference: SMD/2017/0387**

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017

**Location: Land off Wardle Gardens, Leekbrook**  
**Proposal: Erection of 41 dwellings**

The following comments should be considered in the light of the National Planning Policy Framework aim to achieve places which promote *'safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion'*, National Planning Practice Guidance which states that *'Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development'* and the statutory obligation placed on local authorities to do all they can to prevent crime and disorder in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Staffordshire Police have no objection to the principle of housing being constructed on the application site. Certain elements of the layout design incorporate good crime prevention practice. These include:

- some outward facing blocks of houses, which will have rear gardens backing onto one another to provide mutual security;
- very good natural surveillance throughout the development, between houses, over the road network/public space and the site access points;
- fencing and gating located as close as possible to the front of the building line to deny unauthorised access to the rear gardens;
- dual aspect corner plots to facilitate natural surveillance;
- reasonable boundary treatments in general;
- in-curtilage parking and an absence of undesirable rear parking areas.

A negative aspect of the proposed layout is the fact that plots 8-22 will back onto the Severn Trent rough access road, which anyone can easily access by climbing a gate. This could potentially make these properties more vulnerable to burglary, theft etc. Consequently, it would be prudent for this boundary to be made more robust to compensate and reduce criminal opportunity. This could be done by installing higher fencing than would typically be proposed (normally 1.8m) and/or planting defensive hedging externally to the fence line, which over time could provide a supplementary barrier. Ideally a combination of the two would be installed since the latter would have very obvious aesthetic and environmental benefits compared to the bland fence-only option.

The north-east site boundary will abut a woodland area, which could make the properties whose side gardens border it more vulnerable. The woodland does appear quite dense in places, nevertheless it would be advisable to ensure these boundary treatments are sufficiently robust to deter intrusion from that direction.

Staffordshire Police recommend that a positive layout in terms of crime prevention should be coupled with robust physical security throughout the development in line with the best practice Secured by Design Homes 2016 guidance document. This promotes the installation of products (external house doorsets and ground floor/accessible windows among other things) independently certified to recommended minimum attack-resistant physical security standards. Laminated glazing should also be considered for the ground floor/accessible windows. The Homes 2016 document also provides useful guidance in relation to a variety of other layout and housing elements. Given that security is an important consideration for house buyers, installing certified attack-resistant products is strongly advised and would serve the occupants very well over the long term. Furthermore, complying with the Secured by Design guidance in relation to doors and windows would satisfy the requirements of Building Regulation Document Q (Security).

**Crime Prevention advice is given freely without the intention of creating a contract, and all comments and recommendations are site specific. Staffordshire Police and the Home Office do not accept any legal responsibility for the advice given.**

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