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Date: 17th December 2021

Application: SMD/2021/0780
Location: Land to the East of Froghall Road and North of Ayr Road and Cheltenham Avenue, Cheadle
Proposal: Reserved matters application (access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) for residential development comprising 135 dwellings with associated access, public open space and infrastructure

The proposal has been reviewed with particular reference to Police CPI's Secured by Design guidance and in accordance with the recognised principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

The following comments should be considered in the light of the following:

- Under the heading Promoting Safe and Healthy Communities, Para 92(b) of the NPPF 2021 states "Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion."
- Under the heading Achieving Well-Designed Places, Para 130(f) of the NPPF 2021 states "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe ... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."
- Under the heading Planning Should Address Crime Prevention, Design Para 10 of the NPPG states "Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development";
- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Design Consideration, Spatial Objective SO10 –"To deliver sustainable, inclusive, healthy and safe communities";
- The statutory obligation placed on local authorities to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The 2006 CABE document entitled 'Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them', which states "Statements should demonstrate how development can create accessible and safe environments, including addressing crime and disorder and fear of crime."

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1. In the main Staffordshire Police are supportive of the layout proposal, which exhibits some positive crime prevention and community safety attributes. The inclusion of a section within Chapter 4 of the Design and Access Statement detailing how crime prevention and community safety has been considered and adopted within the proposals is welcomed.
 2. Outward-facing blocks with active frontages and good use of dual-aspect corner plots should provide a high level of natural surveillance over the road network, much of the public space and between dwellings. Rear gardens will back onto one another to a very large extent in a mutually secure arrangement with reasonable boundary treatments generally provided. In curtilage parking is provided, much of which should be well overlooked.

3. The Crime Prevention section of the DAS identifies that one of the 'main principles that has been embraced and adopted by the proposed development' is 'Ensuring that homes are as secure as possible, with a particular focus on the design and specification of windows, doors, gates and rear fences'. The installation of widely-available, third party certified attack-resistant external doors and ground floor windows (plus garage doors) in line with the minimum recommended physical security standards and guidance contained within the Secured by Design Homes 2019 design guide (or any later published version) would undoubtedly enhance the burglary resistance of the properties. This would be a significant way in which the applicant could seek to design out criminal opportunity for the long term benefit of the future residents. The much less satisfactory alternative would be to rely upon products which have no such appropriate third party security certification and hence an unquantifiable and indemonstrable attack-resistance capability.
4. While there is much to commend about the proposals, there are a number of specific aspects where further thought and potentially some amendments could be in order, which could further reduce criminal or anti-social opportunity and provide a safer environment.

5. Generally the road network has been designed to reduce vehicle speeds within the development to aid safety generally and reduce the potential for nuisance to residents. However, the north-east facing development edge will contain a comparatively long straight section comprising alternate vehicle lanes/private drives and highway hammerheads (as seen opposite). Between this and the site boundary is a cycle/footpath looping near the outside of the site. The concern is whether this could result in some vehicles using this straight line rather than the regular road network as presumably intended. This could have safety implications for pedestrians/cyclists coming out of individual drives onto this route and pedestrians/cyclists cutting across this route from elsewhere in the development to access the looped footpath/cycle path.



6. The Crime Prevention section of the DAS states that the development will embrace the guiding principles of Secured by Design guidance, albeit it references New Homes 2014 rather than the current Homes 2019 design guide. One of the bullet-points states 'Restrict public access and opportunities for access to the rear of buildings'. It is noted that a number of rear access paths will be included to serve the rear access to mid-terrace dwellings. Unfortunately the Boundary Treatments drawing (see extract opposite) does not show these as gated meaning that anyone could access them potentially making the rear of the dwellings more vulnerable to burglary as well as increasing the opportunity for anti-social behaviour.



7. The Homes 2019 (Paragraph 13.2) states 'It is preferable that footpaths are not placed to the back of properties. If they are essential to give access to the rear of properties they must be gated. The gates must be placed at the entrance to the footpath, as near to the front building line as possible, so that attempts to climb them will be in full view of the street. Where possible the street lighting scheme should be designed to ensure that the gates are well illuminated. Gates must be capable of being locked (operable by key from both sides of the gate) ...' Consequently it is recommended that appropriate amendments are made to incorporate such gates, full recommendations about which can be found within Section 13 of the Homes 2019 design guide.

8. A footpath is indicated between the new school site, and plots 233/260. The side garden boundaries of those two plots bordering this footpath will comprise a 2m high acoustic fence. While there will be natural surveillance over the footpath area directly in front of each house, the acoustic fence section of footpath will not be well overlooked. Anything that could be done to improve this should be considered. Potentially this run of not well overlooked fencing could attract graffiti. Elsewhere within the development, planting has been used to help protect rear garden boundaries that will abut public space, which is another positive feature. There is a strong case to provide some defensive hedging on the outside of this acoustic fence as well. This could serve a number of purposes: improve security for the respective dwellings; substantially reduce opportunity for graffiti; push anyone likely to loiter/gather there out onto the path and potentially subject to greater view; soften the appearance of the fencing; and provide ecological benefits.



9. Secured by Design Homes 2019 guidance recommends "Where parking is designed to be adjacent to or between units [as will be the case in places here], a gable end window should be considered to allow residents an unrestricted view over their vehicles". There would be scope to make improvements within this development in this regard. For example, the side parking for plot 143 (circled) does not appear to be subject to such overlooking.



10. The footpath/cycle path that will loop around just inside the outer edge of the site will meet a lane at the northern edge of the site. It may be worth considering the likelihood of motorbikes using this access point, which could be a nuisance and pedestrian danger. If there is some likelihood then the incorporation of some form of appropriate barrier and robust adjacent boundary treatment might be worth considering.
11. Should this application ultimately meet with approval, it is requested that an informative note for the applicant is attached to the bottom of the decision notice directing them to advice on construction site security. Wording along the following lines would be ideal.

'For online advice on construction site security, the applicant's attention is directed to the following publications from recognised bodies:

- Construction Site Security – A Guide (British Security Industry Association)
- Construction Site Security Guide 2021 (Secured by Design)'

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.

David Elkington
Crime Prevention Design Advisor