

BLUEBELL VILLAGE

*This Document Responds to the Key Questions
Arising from the Planning Application
Consultation for Bluebell Village*

February 2024


TATTON ESTATE

Bluebell Village Planning Application

- The Bluebell Village outline planning application (reference: 18/6372M) is for a residential-led sustainable development at land east of Manchester Road, North-West Knutsford.
- The site is an allocated development site (LPS36 C) in the adopted Local Plan. The suitability and sustainability of the site for development has been independently tested and confirmed by a Planning Inspector which resulted in the site being allocated in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (Adopted in July 2017).
- The planning application had a previous resolution to grant outline planning permission at the February 2019 strategic planning committee. All statutory consultees have been satisfied. There are no outstanding objections or technical matters preventing the application going to planning committee however in response to public comments at the November update meeting we are continuing to consult the local community to gather views about how the proposals could be delivered to maximise the benefits for the community.

“The Tatton Estate aims to seamlessly integrate our community, economy and environment to deliver sustainable developments”



Planning Application Process

What has happened to date?

The outline planning application received a resolution to grant at planning committee in February 2019. Since then:

- A new technical objection from Natural England has been resolved. The hydrological and hydro-chemistry impact on the surrounding Meres has been thoroughly investigated and deemed to be negligible.
- It has been agreed with Cheshire East Highways that a financial contribution towards off-site highway works will be provided.
- All statutory consultees objections including Sports England have been resolved and additional information requested on noise and ecology has been provided.

Next Steps:

Following this consultation event, we will consider the feedback and update the proposals as appropriate, working with the Local Planning Authority.

The indicative timetable for next key steps is as follows (subject to planning determination timescales):

Determination of the outline planning application: 2024

Consultation with local residents on design to inform future Reserved Matters: 2024/2025

Submission of Reserved Matters application for Access: end of 2024

Submission of Reserved Matters application for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale: 2025-2026

Start of construction: 2026-2027.

Questions about the Planning Process

1. Why is the planning application going back to committee?

Since the 2019 resolution to grant, there have been updates to planning policy (including the adoption of a new Part Two Local Plan and revised National Planning Policy Framework) which means the scheme needs to be taken back to planning committee.

2. Is the previous resolution to grant still relevant?

Yes, as it confirms that the proposals are acceptable. The proposed development is the same as what was approved at the February 2019 committee (with the exception of the red line change, as explained elsewhere).

3. Why is it relevant that the site is allocated?

It means that the principle of developing this site is acceptable, as assessed by Cheshire East, a Planning Inspector and following public consultation. The site has been identified as a development site needed in order to meet the Borough's strategic housing requirements as well as Knutsford's needs.

4. Is the site in the Green Belt?

No. None of the site is located within the Green Belt.

5. Why is the application outline with all matters reserved?

At the time the planning application was originally submitted, access to the Crown Estate site had not been approved therefore flexibility was required. The indicative, potential access options which are being shared as part of this consultation before Reserved matters submission identify several viable options for vehicular and pedestrian access to the scheme. The Estate are working with the Crown Estate to design an access that reduces the impact on the highway network during construction and once completed, this will be submitted as a reserved matters application.

As part of determining an outline application, the Council only need to determine whether the type and quantum of development is acceptable in planning and technical terms. Cheshire East have confirmed that it is acceptable for the application to progress in outline with all matters reserved.

6. What are reserved matters?

Reserved matters are details that are excluded from an outline planning application because the details will be determined by a future planning approval.

The 5 reserved matters are:

- Access: full details of exactly where and how people and vehicles will enter and exit the site.
- Layout: how the proposals will be set out. for example how many houses are to be delivered, the type of homes, the local centre etc.
- Scale: the size of the development, including each proposed building, including storey heights etc.
- Appearance: aspects of a building or place which affect the way it looks, including what materials will be used etc.
- Landscape: how the natural features of the land will be enhanced and protected including open space, planting and sustainable urban drainage.

7. Will the public get the chance to comment at reserved matters stage?

Yes. The Estate commit to completing consultation with the public prior to submission of reserved matters applications. In addition, reserved matters applications will be subject to a minimum 13-week determination period. Cheshire East Council will formally consult local residents as part of the application process.

Questions about housing need and affordable housing

1. Cheshire East have a 11.7 year housing land supply so why is there need for more housing?

The Cheshire East housing land supply assessment assumes the development will deliver 275 homes. The Bluebell housing numbers are already counted towards Cheshire East's housing land supply trajectory and evidence. So, these proposals of up to 250 new homes will actually provide less than what the Council are currently allowing for in their evidence base, not more

Cheshire East estimate that 39 dwellings per year will be developed on site from 2025/2026.

2. Why was the site allocated for housing?

The site was allocated to meet the identified housing need in Knutsford (950 dwellings).

3. Will the proposed development deliver affordable housing?

Yes – 30% of the homes will be delivered as affordable housing (this is policy compliant).



4. What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing does not relate to the sale price of homes, which is determined by the local property market. The term “affordable housing” is defined by the government in national planning policy and refers to specific tenures, these include Affordable/Social Rent, Intermediate (Shared Ownership) and Starter Homes. Cheshire East generally require a tenure split of 65% social and/or affordable rented and 35% intermediate tenure mix.

5. Why is a care home proposed and how does this impact the number of homes delivered?

















A Care Home is proposed to address the elderly accommodation needs of Cheshire East. Policy H1 of the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan also supports the provision of C2 nursing and care homes.

If delivered, the total number of homes delivered on the scheme will be 275, 50 for the care home and 225 homes.

Masterplan



KEY

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Existing vegetation
-  Existing water bodies (with potential scope to offer off-site SUDS and biodiversity enhancements)
-  Proposed vegetation to include woodland buffer planting and green infrastructure
-  Proposed Residential Zones (Mixed Residential Zone C2/ C3 Uses)
-  Proposed Local centre Zone - Circa 1Ha (Local Shops/Takeway/Medical-Dental Facility and residential + 1st floor offices above local centre shops)
-  Proposed Public Open Space within development
-  Existing Public Rights of Way
-  Proposed pedestrian and cycle links into and out of the site
-  General Location of Primary Access
-  Buffer planting along boundary with existing dwelling
-  Potential secondary/emergency access
-  Potential Toucan crossing
-  Potential on-site SUDS swale locations
-  Outward facing devopment
-  Existing hedgerows to be intergrated into new boundaries

Questions about the Proposed Development

1. What are the proposed uses?

Residential:

- Between 225-250 homes (C3).
- A 50 bedroom care home (C2).

If the care home is part of the final scheme, no more than 225 homes will be delivered.

Local Centre:

- A range of small commercial units will be provided for use as a convenience store, café, bakery, take-away, hairdressers, or pharmacy etc. (1,000 sq m).
- First floor offices or residential uses above the shops
- Scope for an on-site GP, dental facility or community building (if required) (800 sq m).

2. Why has the red line changed and now the site is smaller, has the density increased?

The red line was reduced to remove the area of protected open space which had no beneficial use to the scheme. Despite the reduction in the gross area (red line) the scheme still delivers a density below the Council’s minimum density requirement of at least 30 dwellings per HA as stated in Policy HOU14.

The development proposals are actually of a lower density at 24 dph if 250 dwellings are developed and 26 dph if 250 dwellings plus the 50 bed care home are delivered. Please see table below for density calculations.

3. Does the development provide enough public open space?

Yes. Planning Policy requires a scheme of 250 dwellings to deliver 15,000 sq m of open space. This proposal provides circa 34,000 sqm of open space on site and a further 49,000sqm offsite. The offsite public open space will be connected to the site with the creation of new footpaths.

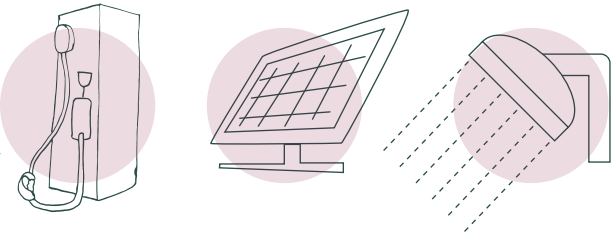
4. What about Biodiversity Net Gain?

The proposals will deliver significant Biodiversity Net Gain improvements, amounting to a 26% net gain against the national requirement of 10 %.

5. What is proposed in terms of sustainability?

The proposal will deliver:

- Electric vehicle charging points
- Energy efficient buildings
- Renewable sources of energy (solar panels and ground source heat pumps)
- Water management and grey water capture



The Estate are also exploring using some of the following frameworks to inform the detailed design:

- Building with Nature
- Building for a healthy life
- Future Homes Standard
- LETI – Climate Emergency Design Guide
- Passivhaus
- A Design Review Panel.

Bluebell Village Proposal (Density Table)	Site Area Ha	Potential Dwelling Capacity at 30 dph based on SADPD HOU14	Dwellings Per Ha / Proposed Density Based on Planning Application for 250 dwellings	Dwellings Per Ha / Proposed Density Based on Planning Application for 225 dwellings +50 unit retirement home
Revised Site Area (Allocation LPS36C)	14.5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Net Site Area (excluding Informal Open Space Designation)	12.7	381	20	22
Net Developable Area (excluding other open space areas on Landscape Framework Plan Revision Q)	116.	348	22	24
Net Residential Area (excluding IOS, other open space and Local Centre (circa 1ha)	10.6	318	24	26

What improvements to local services/infrastructure will the development provide?



Schools

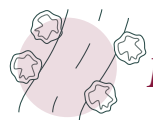
The Council have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity/available primary and secondary school places at the schools in Knutsford to accommodate the proposals.

A financial contribution of £136,500 will be provided towards Special Educational Needs.



Healthcare

A financial contribution of £410,000 will be provided towards new health facilities in Knutsford.



Roads

The 2018 traffic impact associated with the proposals was found to be acceptable by the Highways Authority. This assessment has recently been updated and found a 10% reduction in traffic volumes and 21% reduction in forecast trip generation due (due to changes in work patterns since the pandemic/shifts to online shopping etc).

The development will provide a significant contribution (£1.3 million) towards the Council's identified off-site highway works along King Edward Road. The Estate are also committed to including sustainable travel measures which will encourage active travel and facilitate a modal shift from cars to alternatives as part of the application – including footpath and cycle connections within the site along Manchester Road and Mereheath Lane.



Sport Pitches

A financial contribution will be provided towards improved outdoor and recreational space and improved indoor sporting facilities.



Allotments

A financial contribution will be provided for use at Mereheath Lane Allotments, which can be used to improve and enhance facilities.



What are the benefits of Bluebell Village for the local area?

Homes for all the community

The proposals will deliver a mix of market and affordable housing for a range of housing options including new family homes, starter homes, and homes for the elderly, providing homes for all age groups within the community. This includes of the option to provide a care home on site to meet elderly accommodation needs. Some bungalows can also be included as a housetype to meet elderly accommodation needs and those with reduced mobility.



Sustainable Local Centre

Place-making is at the heart of the development proposals. To complement the residential uses on site, a Local Centre will be provided to support active travel thriving businesses and create new jobs. The Local Centre will provide a focal point within the development, creating a sense of community, there are a range of potential uses which can be explored further with local businesses and the community.



Renewable Energy & Reducing the Carbon Footprint

Environmental sustainability will be embedded in the detailed design. The proposals will include the stated initiatives with the key aim of reducing carbon emissions both in construction and operation. In addition, the landscaping and drainage will be designed to improve climate resilience.



What are the benefits of Bluebell Village for the local area?

Valuing and enhancing the natural environment

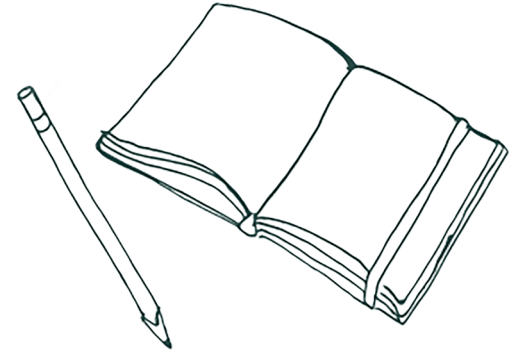
The development will plant over 50,000 sqm of new native woodland planting which will contribute to the creation of new habitats. Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDs) will also be provided in the form of ponds, swales and reed beds. This will deliver significant Biodiversity Net Gain improvements, amounting to around a 26% net gain, which is significantly above the national requirement of 10%. The proposals will also preserve or enhance existing trees, ponds and hedges on site.

“
A 26% biodiversity net gain in general habitat biodiversity
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High Quality Design

Design is fundamental to the delivery of beautiful and sustainable places. At the Reserved Matters stage, the proposals will be designed to respect and complement Knutsford's built heritage, with the use of high-quality materials and architectural features on this key gateway site into Knutsford.

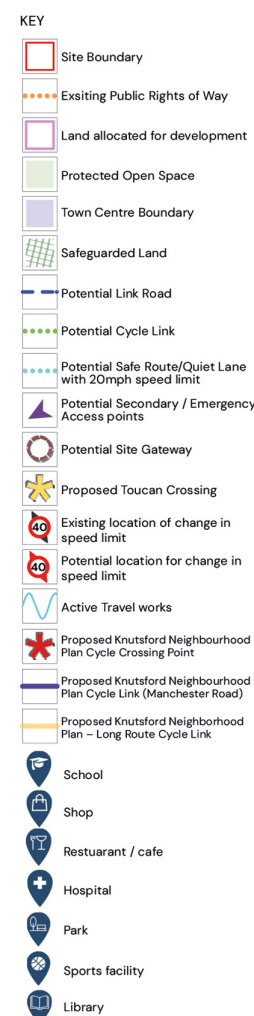


Further Information

Further information about the proposal is available via the website.
www.bluebellvillage.co.uk

The planning application is available via the Cheshire East Council Planning Portal here: <https://planning.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ApplicationSearch.aspx>

Application Reference: **18/3672M**





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