



20-3-2017

Richard Lomas
Planning Manager
The Coop Commercial and Investment Property

APPLICATION FOR HOUSING

STATION ROAD, CHIRK LANDSCAPE VISUALISATION STATEMENT MARCH 2017

The proposed development is located to the western edge of Chirk, north of Station Rd and between the Cadbury Factory to the west and the recreation ground to the east. The Chirk Conservation Area lies to the east of the proposal site and runs adjacent to the site boundary along the western edge of the recreation ground with a section of Station Rd running into the centre of the town also included within the designation.

Site Description

The proposal site itself is a triangular piece of rough grass land bounded to the south and east by mature trees and hedgerow. The western boundary is open and runs adjacent to a thin strip of similar rough grass land which contains the route of a public footpath. Beyond this to the west lies the grounds and buildings of the Cadbury Factory.

The boundary with Station Road is heavily treed with mature lime, sycamore and ash trees forming part of a wider avenue of trees which runs the length of Station road. These become more formal in arrangement and scale as they move towards and along the recreation area, but across the boundary with the site they are densely arranged with heavy understorey shrub cover and ivy growth. The appearance of these trees adds to the overall tree cover and tree lined appearance of the road route but they do not appear as part of a regular and formal avenue of trees which is more typical of the character east, from the recreation ground.

The boundary with the recreation ground is a large 3-4m high hedgerow with mature trees. This hedgerow runs the length of the site boundary and prevents all but very occasional glimpses into the recreation ground from the proposal site. Small gaps allow access between the site and recreation ground in a couple of places.

The Proposals

The proposals are for up to 24 residential units across the wider part of the proposal site with the narrow end of the triangular site set aside for recreational amenity use. Access is gained via a road off Station Road and two trees are proposed as removed to facilitate this (trees T5 and T6)



Details of the trees and the proposed removal and works to ensure the protection of the remaining trees are presented in the application tree survey. Both trees are lime trees and between B2 and C grade quality and condition.

Within the site the proposals include for new tree planting around the residential units and new planting of British native trees and hedgerow around grassland managed as a wildflower meadow. The number of trees proposed far exceeds the number of trees lost (2) through the proposed development.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The site is well contained to the boundary with Station Road and the recreation ground with very limited intervisibility. To the north distant views to more elevated landscape is possible but the factory complex effectively encloses the site to the immediate north and west.

The site is a small piece of open rough grassland which sits within a landscape that is characterised by existing residential development off Station Road and the industrial Cadbury factory site. The change to the broader landscape and setting of both the town and Conservation Area will be little changed by the addition of housing on the proposal site.

Views from the public footpath alongside the site will see a large change but this will be in part mitigated by the proposal for a native hedgerow along the boundary which over time will reduce views of the residential dwellings for this short stretch of path.

From Station Road concern has been raised regarding the impact of tree removal on the appearance of the street and the setting of the Conservation Area. To demonstrate the nature and level of impact that the proposals will generate, three photo montages have been prepared. These have been created by forming a CAD based model of the proposals and overlaying this on a 3D topographical base of the location. Camera positions in the model are used that correspond to the actual camera positions on the ground used to take the photographs in the photomontage illustrations. The resulting image is overlain on the existing photo view giving an accurate representation of how the view from both Station Road and the recreation ground will change.

Views from Station Road

Two views from Station Road have been taken: one east of the access road; and one west. The views are modelled with the buildings in place but do not take account of mitigation planting within the site. Over time this would be an additional factor reducing the impacts noted and helping to integrate the proposed housing into its setting.

View 1 is taken from east of the access road. The first set of photographs illustrates the existing view and a highlighted view showing the trees that are proposed as lost as part of the application. The second set of views shows the existing view alongside the montage of the proposed development.



The new housing will be visible through the boundary vegetation but the tree loss for the access is barely noticeable and the overall impression of a tree lined road remains. Views of the factory beyond are blocked by the proposed housing and the housing appears in the context of existing housing on the opposite side of the Road.

The change to the view is noticeable but the receptors will be limited to vehicular traffic east and west and restricted views from properties in the immediate vicinity. No loss of visual amenity is assessed as the trees along the roadside continue to offer a strong visual screen and boundary marker.

The situation is similar from the west where view 2 illustrates the same sequence of change. The loss of trees makes a small impact on the continuation of the line of trees but the visibility of proposed housing beyond this is minimal. The change to the view is small and no loss of visual amenity is assessed for the street or setting of the Conservation Area.

View from the recreation ground

View 3 illustrates the change as viewed from the Conservation Area from within the recreation ground. The retained existing hedgerow and tree boundary, even in winter, presents a significant visual screen and the change to the view is very small with a minimal amount of intervisibility.

Conclusion

The proposals are well contained within existing landscape features and only small visual change is expected other than from the adjacent footpath route. Here the proposals allow for new tree and hedgerow planting to reduce the impacts of the proposals on this short stretch of footpath.

The Visual study work demonstrates that the impacts on both local receptors and the Conservation Area is very small, with the tree loss proposed having only a very minor effect over the street scene. The setting of the Conservation Area will not be affected as the visual change as a result of the proposals is small and confined to a very local set of receptors.