REPORT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

26/3618/OUT - LAND OFF BEGGARMANS LANE

Report Reference	PL-26-03
Meeting Date	9th November 2026
Agenda Item	4
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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

An outline planning application has been submitted for 'Land off Beggarmans Lane'. The application is for all matters reserved except for access, for residential development (Use Class C3) comprising up to 70 dwellings with associated landscaping, public open space, SuDS, and vehicular access off Beggarmans Lane.

A public pre-application consultation for the site was held between 2nd to the 13th February 2026.

1.2 OUTLINE APPLICATIONS

An outline planning application establishes the principle of a development while leaving some details to be determined later. It allows developers to assess the general acceptability of a project before committing to detailed designs. If approved, a subsequent "reserved matters" application must be submitted to address the remaining details

Reserved matters (those which can be withheld under outline planning permission) can include:

- **Appearance** - aspects of a building or place which affect the way it looks, including the exterior of the development
- **Means of access** - covers accessibility for all routes to and within the site, as well as the way they link up to other roads and pathways outside the site
- **Landscaping** - the improvement or protection of the amenities of the site and the area and the surrounding area, this could include planting trees or hedges as a screen
- **Layout** - includes buildings, routes and open spaces within the development and the way they are laid out in relations to buildings and spaces outside the development
- **Scale** - includes information on the size of the development, including the height, width and length of each proposed building

When making a submission it may be sensible to include relevant views even if the available information is very limited, as can happen at outline stage. Outline permission is for the principle of the development agreed for the site. When determining an outline application, the Cheshire East Council can impose conditions relating to the principle of the development and any of the "matters" not "reserved" for future determination, in this case the access arrangements. Conditions imposed at the reserved matters approval stage can only relate to the details of the development then submitted, not the principle.

2.0 APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

2.1 KNUTSFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

An appraisal of relevant Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan polices for the application has been included in the Annex.

The application documents can be viewed here: 26/3618/OUT

2.2 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

The application site falls within a parcel of land within the Green Belt and the proposal will be assessed for its appropriateness within the Green Belt.

The assessment of the contribution the site makes to the Green Belt will take into account the following purposes of Green Belt:

a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; and
d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

2.3 HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

A 5-year land supply is a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of housing against a housing requirement. Achieving a five-year housing land supply is a crucial part of the Local Plan. If a 5-year supply is not maintained, the Local Plan policies become less effective in guiding development. Under the NPPF, where the authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, there is a 'tilted balance' in favour of granting permission for sustainable development except where it affects assets/assets of particular importance (i.e. listed buildings) or the adverse impact of the development so demonstrably outweighs the benefit when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

The Housing Monitoring Update reviews the housing delivery and supply each year in Cheshire East and the latest, for 2024/25, provides this information at the base date of 31 March 2025, concluding that there is a 3.3 years supply of deliverable housing sites.

2.4 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

If approved, the developer will enter into an s106 agreement with Cheshire East Council to secure specific planning obligations. S106 agreements can only be made to secure planning gain that is specifically required due to the development.

In respect of the outline application, it is suggested that the committee considers seeking the following:

PROVISION OF LAND FOR ALLOTMENTS

There is a shortfall in allotment provision in Knutsford. Based on existing (local plan) housing growth, there is a shortfall of 20-50 plots, and waiting lists are currently c. 6 years.

To mitigate this, it is suggested that the council seeks an s106 requirement to provide and set out a new area for allotment gardens of c. 1,000 sqm of plots (providing 8 standard sized plots) including an area for parking and provision of water and fencing and that this site be transferred to the Town Council to manage alongside other sites within the town.

Alternatively, a commuted sum calculated in line with that secured for the site could be sought towards the improvement of existing allotment sites or provision of additional allotment sites within Knutsford.

CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ACTIVE TRAVEL IMPROVEMENTS

A crossing at Beggarmans Lane and Leycester Road

The Knutsford Cycle Plan identifies several components which should receive investment to contribute towards a cohesive Knutsford cycle network and identifies aspirational routes which link allocated housing and employment development into the wider cycle network.

It is suggested that the council requests that a contribution towards active travel for this development be included through the provision of:

A) s106 or s278 funding to upgrade the close proximity junctions of Beggarmans Lane and Leycester Road that meet Toft Road (A50) to make it easier and safer to for pedestrians and cyclists.
B) A contribution towards measures which support walking and cycling from the site to key infrastructure.

3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should determine a response to the outline planning application.

It should also consider requests for s106 contributions.

ANNEX: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY APPRAISALS

Ref	Policy	Notes
C4	Utilities	This policy requires proposals to demonstrate at the application stage a strategy for public utilities infrastructure. It is noted the application is accompanied by a proposal for a new substation to deal with the electricity capacity for the site. Members may wish to consider the feasibility of connecting to essential services like water, electricity, gas, and telecommunications, and potentially drainage.
D4	Sustainable Residential Design	The relevant part of this policy (for outline applications) requires that appropriate sustainable urban drainage solutions can be delivered. Members may wish to consider the indicative sustainable drainage measures.
E1	Connections to the Countryside	This policy favours applications which improve accessibility to the countryside and incorporate green links. Members may wish to consider active travel connections aligned with KNP policies T1 and T2 below.
E2	Green and Blue Corridors	The policy seeks to maintain/improve green and blue corridors through incorporation of appropriate landscaping. Whilst much of this relates to the detailed designs for a site, members may wish to consider the connectivity of the site to the surrounding areas.
E3	Habitat Protection and Biodiversity	This policy supports development which will not adversely affect wildlife habitat and favours the creation of new habitats. Members should review the ecological appraisal for the site to determine it is considered acceptable.
HW1	Health and Wellbeing	The policy seeks consideration for health and wellbeing along with encouraging healthier lifestyles. Members may wish to consider how the site connects to sustainable transport modes.
HE1	Landmarks, Views, Vistas and Gateways	The policy seeks to protect key landmarks, views, vistas, and gateways into the town. Members should consider if the development presents any impact to the southern gateway into Knutsford.
T1	Walking in Knutsford	The policy requires development to contribute to creating a network of safe and well-surfaced footpaths, and that new paths meet needs of a range of users. Developments of 50+ units must ensure continuous pedestrian routes are provided to local shops, services and facilities Members may wish to consider the connectivity of the site to the surrounding areas and existing active travel routes. It is noted the application proposes an enhanced active travel network of paths.

T2	Cycling in Knutsford	The policy requires development of this scale to contribute to enhancing the cycling network. Members may wish to consider the connectivity of the site to the surrounding areas and existing active travel routes
T3	Public Transport	The policy requires development to demonstrate how it can be accessed easily and safely by public transport through cycling and walking. It requires an application of this scale to connect to public transport Members should consider if the transport plan meets this requirement.