Planning	Committee
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14th September 2023

Reference:	Area Team:	Case Officer:	Ward:
APP/22/02149	DM	Mr T Barton	Bidston and St James

Location:	Lock Up Garages (19) Edgemoor Close, Beechwood, CH43 9XH
Proposal:	Erection of 2 bungalows and associated hard and soft landscaping.
Applicant:	Mr Ian Welsh
Agent :	Mr Lee Whittingham LJ Architects Ltd

Qualifying PetitionYes. A petition with 88 signatures has
been submitted in objection to the
proposal to save the green space that is
used by locals all year round. The petition
was not however submitted within the
specified consultation period and so is not
the reason why this application is deferred
to planning committee.



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Development Plan designation:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History: No recent relevant planning history.

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

1. Ward Member Comments	Ward Councillor Elizabeth Grey has requested that the application be taken out of delegation on the grounds that the plans involve loss of amenity space that residents use now and have been using for years. It is acknowledged that this was previously developed land, but residents were under the impression that it couldn't be developed for housing due to underground utilities and so considered that it was safely secured as open space. This area suffers significant anti- social behaviour and gang crime. Residents do not allow children out to play if they cannot be seen from the window and this space is clearly visible from local houses. They will not allow children to play further away such that they will be trapped indoors.
2. Summary of	REPRESENTATIONS
Representations	A petition with 88 signatures has been submitted in objection to the proposal to save the green space that is used by locals all year round. United Utilities have commented on the application regarding drainage, water and wastewater services and their property,
	assets and infrastructure.

CONSULTATIONS

Highways Asset

No objection with condition and informative.

Condition:

Prior to the commencement of the development, a full scheme of works for the reinstatement to standard footway levels of any existing vehicle accesses from the highway that are rendered obsolete by the development shall be submitted and approved in writing by the LPA. The development shall not be occupied until the approved works have been completed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Informative:

"Consent under the Highways Act is required for the construction of a new or the amendment/removal of an existing vehicular access. Such works are undertaken at the developer's expense, including the relocation/replacement and/or removal of street furniture and vegetation as necessary. Submission of a S50 Highway Opening Notice is required prior to commencement of any works on the adopted highway. Please contact the Council Highway Management team area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk prior to the commencement of the works for the approval of the proposed details." Informative:

A pre-site inspection is required prior to the development works commencing with the LA- any damage to the existing highway

r S H	that occurs as a result of the development would require reinstatement, at the developer's expense, to the LA specifications and written approval. For further details contact Highways & Infrastructure, area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk
	Traffic and Transportation
ľ	No objection.The proposals are all contained within a private
	boundary and do not impact on the adopted highway
	to any great extent.The level of proposed on-site car parking is in
	 The level of proposed on-site call parking is in accordance with the SPD4 maximum standards. The proposals include new vehicle accesses on
	Fifth Avenue and footway reinstatements to the existing access on Edgemoor Close, this will require
	prior approval from Wirral Highways and appropriate traffic management agreed.
	 The loss of the garages is accepted as there remains satisfactory parking within the area in the
	 It's unlikely that the proposals for the two
	bungalows will generate a significant level of traffic and it is therefore considered to have no material impact on the highway, as such there are no
	objections to the proposals.The necessary changes to the Fifth Avenue
	footway to introduce the vehicle accesses and the reinstatement on Edgemoor Close will require the prior approval from Wirral Highways and the following informative is applicable.
	"Consent under the Highways Act is required for the construction of a new or the amendment/removal of an
	existing vehicular access. Such works are undertaken at the developer's expense, including the relocation/replacement and/or removal of street furniture and vegetation, as
	necessary. Submission of a S50 Highway Opening Notice is required prior to commencement of any works on the
	adopted highway. Please contact the Council Highway Management team area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk prior to the commencement of the works for the approval of the proposed details."
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3.1 Site and Surroundings The application relates to a grassed piece of land located on a corner plot between the vehicular highways of Fifth Avenue to the north and Edgemoor Close to the west. There is an electrical substation located to the east of the site. There are rows of two storey terraced houses to the south, east and west of the site. Opposite the site is a community centre. There is a footpath to the east and south of the site. The site originally consisted of nineteen lock up garages for

	the surrounding housing, before being demolished and
	converted into a grassed area at some point between 1997 and 2005.
3.2 Proposed Development	The application proposes the construction of two semi- detached bungalows (two bedrooms) with associated hard and soft landscaping. Hard landscaping includes: - - Installation of 1.8m high close boarded timber fencing to bound the proposed rear gardens of the bungalows. - Installation of 0.9m high timber picket style fencing to bound the front gardens of the site. - Installation of concrete paving to provide paths around the external walls of the bungalows. - Installation of permeable tarmac to form the vehicle accesses and an access and maintenance zone around the electricity substation. The redundant vehicle access to the west of the site on Edgemoor Close, redundant following the demolition of the former lock-up garages on the site, is proposed to be reinstated to adoptable standards. Dropped kerbs are proposed to the north of the site off Fifth Avenue to provide access to both the proposed bungalows and the electricity substation.
3.3 Development Plan	Under the provisions of Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the provisions of the NPPF (paragraph 2), applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted development plan (as is relevant to this proposal) is the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (2000) (hereafter referred to as the 'UDP') and the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton. Relevant policies of the UDP are: Policy HS4 - Criteria for New Housing Development This policy requires that the proposal in general terms must relate well to adjacent properties and not result in a detrimental change in the area or to the amenity of neighbouring properties. HS4 Criteria for New Housing Development Policy states that proposals for new housing development on allocated sites and within the Primarily Residential Areas shown on the Proposals Map will be permitted subject to the proposal fulfilling all the following criteria: (i) the proposal being of a scale which relates well to surrounding property, in particular with regard to existing densities and form of development;

(ii) the proposal not resulting in a detrimental change in the character of the area;

(iii) access and services being capable of satisfactory provision, particularly for off-street car parking areas and garages, and adequate vehicular access;

(iv) the provision of appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment which relates the proposed development to its surroundings, paying particular attention to the maintenance of existing natural features and vegetation in accordance with Policy GR5;

 (v) the appropriate provision of design features which contribute to a secure environment and reduce the likelihood of crime;

(vi) incorporating provision for accessible public open space and children's play areas in accordance with Policy GR6; and (vii) the provision of adequate individual private or communal garden space to each dwelling.

For all proposals whose main elevations are parallel, or nearly so, an adequate distance should be kept between habitable rooms in separate dwellings. In addition, where the gable end of one property fronts onto the rear elevation of another, then an adequate separation should be achieved.

GR5 Landscaping and New Development Policy

In order to secure the protection and enhancement of visual amenity the Local Planning Authority will require applicants to submit full landscaping proposals before full planning permission is granted. Proposals should:

(i) include a clear specification of landscaping proposals indicating the species mix, the location, height and density of new planting, as well as areas of new ground modelling or other land features proposed;

(ii) be appropriate in terms of the nature and location of the development proposed, the visual prominence of the site, the potential visual impact of the development and the character of the surrounding area;

(iii) provide for new planting and for the protection, replacement or enhancement of existing features such as ponds, trees, bushes, shrubs or hedges including, where relevant, appropriate boundary treatment and provision for the protection of wildlife; and

(iv) take full account of the effect of proposals on visibility at access points, the effect of local climatic influences and the potential for misuse or erosion which may affect the appropriateness of landscaping proposals.

	Layouts that would leave landscaped areas which are not easily supervised or which would prejudice the supervision of other sensitive areas of the site will be resisted.
	Planning permission will be subject to conditions relating to the protection of existing features specified for retention, the timing and aftercare of new planting including provision for the replacement of stolen, damaged, diseased or dead plants or trees throughout the period until newly planted stock is established and capable of normal unaided growth. <u>Policy TR9 – Requirements for Off Street Parking</u> This policy requires the assessment of off-street parking
	provision to be guided by a number of considerations, including the availability of alternative modes of transport, road safety and traffic management issues. SPD4 (Parking Standards) sets out maximum limits for vehicle parking spaces.
	Relevant policies of The Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton are:
	Policy WM8 Waste Preventing and Resource Management Requires development to incorporate measures for achieving efficient use of resources
	Policy WM9 Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New Development Requires development to provide measures for waste collection and recycling, including home composting.
3.4 Other Material	National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
Planning Considerations	National Planning Policy Guidance <u>Supplementary Planning Document 4 (SPD4) – Parking</u> Standards
	This document sets out maximum limits for vehicle parking spaces.
	The Emerging Local Plan Wirral Borough Council has submitted the Wirral Local Plan 2021-2037 for examination.
	On the 21 March 2022 full council approved publication of the Draft Local Plan Under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 before submission to the Secretary of State. The plan was published in May 2022 and representations were available to
	be submitted until 25 th July 2022. The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 26 th October 2022. The local plan and supporting evidence base can be viewed
	online at <u>www.wirral.gov.uk/lpexam</u> As the Wirral Local Plan has been submitted for examination it (and the supporting evidence base) is a material consideration and can be afforded weight in the decision-making process. In attaching weight to individual policies, paragraph 48 of the NPPF is relevant as it states:

	 "Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)"
	Within the emerging Local Plan the site is designated within the Birkenhead to Eastham Conurbation Primarily Residential Area and Transit Area Residential Density Zone, as well as within the Suburban Birkenhead Settlement Area 3. Applications for New House Building <u>Main policy:</u>
	Policy WS 3 Strategy for Housing includes design standards, density, mix and affordable housing <u>Other supporting policies:</u> Policy WP3 Suburban Birkenhead Policy WS 7 Principles of Design, includes Privacy and
	Amenity and Parking Policy WS 6 Placemaking for Wirral Policy WS 10 Infrastructure Delivery Policy WS 5.1 Green and Blue Infrastructure Networks Policy WS 5.2 Open space provision
	Policy WS 5.2 Open space provision Policy WS 5.3 Outdoor sports provision Policy WS 5.5 Mitigating recreational disturbance Policy WS 8 Strategy for Sustainable Construction Policy WD 1 Landscaping including trees
3.5 Assessment	The main issues pertinent in the assessment of the proposal are; - Principle of Development; - Design; - Highways; and - Amenity.
3.6 Principle of Development	The site is located within a Primarily Residential Area in both the Unitary Development Plan and the emerging local plan. The proposal is not designated as green, open, sport or

recreation space in either of the plans. Policy GR6 Greenspace Within New Family Housing Development would not apply in the case of this proposal because the proposal is for less than 35 houses. When excluding the access and maintenance zone for the

substation, the site available on site for housing provision is
approx. 516 square metres. Within the transit area residential
density zone (urban sites within 800m (10 min walk) of a
railway station or high frequency bus route) of the emerging
local plan, a minimum density of 60 dwellings per hectare is
required by policy WS 3.2 Housing Density which equates to a
minimum of one dwelling per 200 square metres as a
minimum. The proposal for the provision of 2 bungalows on
the site therefore complies with the minimum density of
housing required by policy WS 3.2.

Policy WS3.4 Housing Mix of the emerging local plan states that outside identified Regeneration Areas, a minimum of 70% of dwellings will be developed for larger dwelling or three or more bedrooms. It goes onto state that the following criterion will be taken into account when assessing whether sites are capable and suitable for accommodating larger dwellings: whether alternative provision would meet another aim of the Council, such as provision for elderly persons (including bungalows) and a proportion of the site can still be developed as family housing.

Two-bedroom bungalows are proposed, which could be used to the meet the housing needs of the older population. A proportion of the site would not still be developed as family housing. However, the proposal is acceptable in principle under the Unitary Development Plan and the principle of the development of the proposal does not benefit from a change in land designation under the emerging local plan. The proposal will provide the benefit of additional housing supply, including which could be used to meet the needs of the older population. Whilst the emerging Local Plan is afforded weight, compliance with this emerging Local Plan policy in this case is considered to be unreasonable to require, given compliance with the relevant policies contained in the UDP.

In this case therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle.

3.7 Design	The plans have been amended with the following to improve the design of the proposal relative to the original application: - - Reduce the height of the rear garden boundary fencing from 2.1m to 1.8m so that the height of the fencing will not appear
	visually overbearing. - The labelling of the materials of the walls has been amended from a red facing brick to an Old forge brick by Lagan. This brick is a mix of red and brown to better relate to the context of the site which is brown bricks to the houses to the south, east and west of the site and red brick of the community centre
	 building located opposite to the front of the proposed bungalows. Low level feature shrub planting is proposed to the boundary of the front of the site to improve the soft landscaping

proposed.

- Installation of 0.9m high timber picket fencing to the front gardens of the site to give more interest to the landscaping and be more in keeping with the boundary treatment of the surrounding housing as well as better definition between the public and private realm.

- Not by amendment request: after further correspondence between the applicant and the network operator of the substation, the access and maintenance zone surrounding the substation has been increased in size to include the south east corner of the site also.

The boundary treatments of 1.8m high timber fencing to the rear garden boundaries and 0.9m high picket fencing to the front garden boundaries will be in-keeping with the existing boundary treatments of the surrounding housing. The use of white upvc windows and doors, the brick choice, the use of concrete roof tiles and the use of a pitched roof will also relate the proposal to its context. To ensure the materials will be an appropriate finish, a condition is recommended for more specific brick and roof material details in the form of manufacturer's specifications.

Whilst the surrounding houses have dual pitched roofs, the proposed hipped roof will help to reduce the overall mass of the bungalows. The proposed bungalows will be read as a separate house type within the context whilst having cues to their context. Part of the community centre which faces the front of the proposal has a hipped roof and so this roof type is already present within the existing street scene.

The bungalows will not exceed the front building line of 22 Everleigh Close and will be well set back from the front building line of the electricity substation, helping to bridge the gap between the front building lines of 23 Edgemoor Close. Waste storage areas are appropriately proposed to be screened in the rear garden areas. There is sufficient space for both general and recyclable waste storage.

The area of the hardstanding will be partially enclosed by the proposed boundary fencing but I consider that there will still be sufficient natural surveillance of this area from the adopted footpaths, adopted vehicular highways and the first-floor windows of houses surrounding the site such that an insecure environment would not be formed as a result of the proposal. The main accesses to the proposed bungalows are appropriately sited to benefit from natural surveillance for the safety and security of future residents.

The network operator of the substation has stated that the amount of hard standing around the substation is the minimum required so that in the event of a substation failure a HIAB lorry can pull alongside to lift out and replace the transformer and switchgear within. The hard standing will have a functional appearance. However, it is considered that this is

outweighed by the benefit of this hardstanding in increasing the likelihood of better essential utility infrastructure provision in the case of a substation failure. The hardstanding will connect with the existing hardstanding of the footpaths to the east and south of the site and due its siting will not have an overly prominent impact on the street scene. The emerging local plan Policy WS 3.1 Housing Design Standards states that new build dwellings should be built to the standards of: - - higher water efficiency standards under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations. - Be 'zero carbon ready by design'. - Accessible and adaptable in line with Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. Whilst the emerging Local Plan can be afforded weight in the decision making process, the proposal complies with the policies of the Unitary Development Plan. The proposed development does not rely on a change in land designation under the emerging local plan to make it acceptable in principle. In this case the design of the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable without evidence of compliance with the above standards. Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in design

3.8 Highways The proposal to reinstate to adoptable standards a path to the redundant footway to the west of the site from the former use of the site as lock-up garages is positive in both visual and accessibility terms. One off-street vehicle parking space of satisfactory dimensions will be provided per bungalow, which does not exceed the maximum vehicle parking standards of SPD4. The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe impact on the road network. The proposal is acceptable with regards to highways and compliant with Policies HS4 and TR9 subject to the recommended conditions.

3.9 Living Conditions	The internal floorspaces proposed comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards, which is required by emerging local plan policy WS 3.1 Housing Design Standards. Satisfactory light, outlook and privacy will be provided to the bungalows and satisfactory private rear garden spaces will be provided. The proposed living conditions of the dwellings are acceptable and compliant with UDP policy HS4 and emerging local plan policy WS3.1.
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3.10 Amenity 1 Edgemoor Close to the south of the site has no windows to its side elevation. The proposed front facing windows will face the community centre on the opposite side of the road. To the

east of the site, there would be 20 metres between the rear elevations of 21 and 22 Everleigh Close and the side elevation of the proposed bungalows. To the west, there would be 16.5 metres distance between the front elevation of 23 Edgemoor Close and the side elevation of the proposal. These are satisfactory distances with regards to light and outlook. A condition is recommended for an obscure glazing condition to the side facing windows given that the distance between the side windows and the facing front elevation of 23 Edgemoor Close to the west and rear elevation of 21 and 22 Everleigh Close to the east is less than 21 metres. The proposed open plan living/kitchen/dining room of the bungalow would still have satisfactory access to outlook from the front and rear facing windows. Subject to the recommended conditions, the will detrimental proposal not have а impact on neighbouring residential amenity and the proposal is compliant with policy HS4.

3.11 Drainage United Utilities have not stated that their utilities are under or in close proximity to the site, but have stated that they will not allow building in close proximity to a water main, public sewar or wastewater pipe. The agent is aware of this as a copy of United Utilities letter has been forwarded onto them. The relationship between the proposed development on United Utilities assets, property and infrastructure is a matter between United Utilities and the developer. The plans were amended to state that the tarmac will be permeable to reduce surface water run-off. In this case, it would be unreasonable to require additional information on drainage systems as the proposal is relatively minor and not a major development. Wirral's Local Validation List only requires a drainage strategy and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems for major developments. The site is located within flood zone one (low probability of flooding) and is at very low risk from surface water flooding.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Summary of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act Decision (Planning 2004 require that the determination of planning applications Balance) must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Having regards to the individual merits of this application it is considered that the application is acceptable in planning terms having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-The proposal is acceptable in principle. The proposal is considered to be of a scale and design that is acceptable to the

Halton, SPD4, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommended	Conditional Approval
Decision:	

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 26th July 2023 and listed as follows: P359.2_202, P359.2_203G, P359.2_204, P359.2_205A, P359.2_206B, P359.2_207B and P359.2_208B.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development, a full scheme of works for the reinstatement to standard footway levels of any existing vehicle accesses from the highway that are rendered obsolete by the development shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved works have been completed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to accord with National Planning Policy Framework Chapter Promoting Sustainable Transport. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this is a PRE-COMMENCEMENT condition.

4. Before any construction commences, details of the brick and roof materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS4 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan. To ensure that the details are agreed in time to be incorporated into the development, this is a PRE-COMMENCEMENT condition.

5. Details of the species mix, height and density of new planting shown on the approved plan ref. P359.2_203G shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation of the proposed development. All planting, seeding and/or turfing comprised in the approved details and the approved landscaping of plan ref. P359.2_203G shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any shrubs or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of development die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To improve the appearance of the development and its contribution to biodiversity and the local environment and in accordance with Policy HS4 and GR5 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan.

6. The hard landscaping scheme hereby approved shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS4 and GR5 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

7. The development shall not be occupied until the parking has been provided in accordance with the approved plans and the areas shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of motor vehicles.

Reason: To provide on-site parking to ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the free flow of traffic or conditions of general safety along the highway in accordance with Policy HS4 and TR9 of the Wirral UDP.

8. The western and eastern side facing windows of the approved bungalows shall be obscure glazed and non-opening (with the exception of an opening light 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed) and thereafter be permanently retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of privacy of neighbouring dwellings and in accordance with Policy HS4 and NPPF paragraph 130.

9. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any subsequent Order or statutory provision revoking or re-enacting the provisions of that order) no window shall be installed to the side elevations of the approved bungalows where facing the eastern front elevations of houses on Edgemoor Close and the western rear elevations of houses on Everleigh Close unless it is obscure glazed and non-opening (with the exception of an opening light 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed) and thereafter be permanently retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of privacy of neighbouring dwellings and in accordance with Policy HS4 and NPPF paragraph 130.

Notes to Applicant:

1. Consent under the Highways Act is required for the construction of a new or the amendment/removal of an existing vehicular access. Such works are undertaken at the developer's expense, including the relocation/replacement and/or removal of street furniture and vegetation as necessary. Submission of a S50 Highway Opening Notice is required prior to commencement of any works on the adopted highway. Please contact the Council Highway Management team area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk prior to the commencement of the works for the approval of the proposed details.

2. A pre-site inspection is required prior to the development works commencing with the LA- any damage to the existing highway that occurs as a result of the development would require reinstatement, at the developer's expense, to the LA specifications and written approval. For further details contact Highways & Infrastructure, area manager via www.wirral.gov.uk

Last Comments By:	12-04-2023
Expiry Date:	15-09-2023