

ITEM 2

Application Reference	DC/076883
Location:	Cranford Golf Centre Harwood Road Heaton Mersey Stockport SK4 3AW
PROPOSAL:	Demolition of the existing Golf Centre buildings; Residential Development comprising 106 dwellings with associated Open Space including 1 No. LAP (Local Area for Play) and 1 No. LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) with access from Harwood Road
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	12.06.2020
Expiry Date:	20200911
Case Officer:	Jeni Regan
Applicant:	M20 (East Didsbury) Ltd.
Agent:	Ludlam Associates

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Planning and Highways Regulation Committee – Development is a Departure from the Development Plan. Application referred to Heaton and Reddish Area Committee for comment and recommendation only.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises The Cranford Golf Centre, which lies on the eastern side of Harwood Road approximately 0.4km from the junction with A5145 Didsbury Road. The existing Golf Driving Range was originally developed in the 1990's, but has been vacant and un-used since October 2014. The site consists of approximately 2.62 hectares of land that comprises a vacant golf driving range and the associated buildings in the western part of the site, together with the grassland of the driving range beyond in the eastern area of the site.

The site also includes a large area of hardstanding laid out for car parking, which was to serve the former driving range. The main vehicular access into the site is from Harwood Road, with vehicular access gates across the entrance but set back from the edge of the main highway.

Ground levels within the site are generally flat, but do rise by approximately 1-2m immediately around the edges of the site to the northern and eastern site boundaries. The site is generally long and rectangular in shape, with an extension towards the south at the western end of the site to incorporate the access point off Harwood Road.

The site is adjoined by Heaton Mersey Common (Local Nature Reserve) and the residential cul-de-sac of Rosgill Close to the north and St John's C of E Primary School to the east. The buildings, car park and sports fields of Heaton Mersey Sports

and Social Club then bound the site to the south with residential properties of varying scale, ages and design to the south and east.

The site is allocated as an area of Local Open Space as shown on the Proposals Map DPD. The edge of the Heaton Mersey Conservation Area starts close to the site beyond the site of St John's Primary School to the east and beyond the Keaton Mersey Sports and Social Club to the south. The Heaton Mersey Common Local Nature Reserve abuts the northern site boundary.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of all the existing structures on the site and the erection of a residential development comprising 106 residential dwellings in total, comprising 79 houses and 27 apartments, with associated access, parking, private amenity spaces and public open space. The proposed mix of accommodation would be as follows:

Apartments

- 12 no. 1 bedroom 2 person apartments
- 15 no. 2 bedroom 3 person apartments

Houses

- 20 no. 2 bedroom 4 person houses
- 52 no. 3 bedroom 5 person houses
- 4 no. 4 bedroom 6 person houses
- 3 no. 4 bedroom 7 person houses

There are 8 different house types being proposed across the site, which are a mixture of semi-detached and detached properties all of 2 storeys in height. There are then 2 different apartment types located in one 3 storey block located on the eastern edge of the development.

The proposals are for 101 of these residential units to be affordable housing in a mix of tenures, including affordable rent, social rent and shared ownership. 5 units would then be provided for outright sale.

The proposed development would be served by a single vehicular access point off Harwood Road. This is the existing main access into the site, which served the former Golf Centre to the southern end of the site. There is then one main route through the site towards the block of apartments and 10 houses at the eastern end of the site, with 5 branches off this main route to serve all the new properties proposed.

The materials of external construction for the proposed dwellinghouses and the apartments are specified as brickwork and render for the external walls, with feature banding, header and cill details and canopies over some of the front entrances. Grey tiles are proposed for the roof coverings.

Each of the proposed dwellinghouses would be served by two off-road parking spaces (some within a garage), cycle storage and bin storage areas. Boundary treatments around the properties will be a mix of brick walls, railings and timber fencing.

For the apartment building, each of the apartments would be served by one car parking space within a communal parking area either to the front or side of the

building. This area also includes additional spaces for visitors and 3 disabled parking spaces. Also surrounding the building is cycle storage for 30 bicycles within a secure enclosed store and 2 no. enclosed bin storage areas are also proposed.

The proposed development would also include a number of areas of public open space around the site. A Local Area of Play (LAP) is to be provided within the centre of the site and a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) would be provided to the eastern end of the site adjacent to the apartment building. Further areas of open space are then provided at the entrance of the site just off Harwood Road and around the LEAP along the eastern boundaries of the site. More details in relation to this will be provided later in the report.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting information :-

- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement;
- Statement of Community Involvement including Community Consultation Analysis Report;
- Affordable Housing Statement;
- Open Space Statement
- Transport Statement;
- Preliminary Tree Assessment;
- Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment;
- Landscape Strategy Document and Layout;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;
- Air Quality Assessment
- Energy Statement;
- Crime Impact Statement;
- Phase 1 and Phase 2 Site Investigation Reports for Contamination.

Details of the siting and design of the proposed development are appended to the report.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (“PCPA 2004”) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan includes-

- Policies set out in the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review adopted 31st May 2006 which have been saved by direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; &
- Policies set out in the Stockport Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted 17th March 2011.

The site is allocated as an area of Local Open Space as shown on the Proposals Map DPD. The edge of the Heaton Mersey Conservation Area starts close to the site beyond the site of St John’s Primary School to the east and beyond the Keaton Mersey Sports and Social Club to the south. The Heaton Mersey Common Local Nature Reserve abuts the northern site boundary. Therefore, the following policies are relevant in this case:

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

EP1.7 Development and Flood Risk
UOS1.3 Protection of Local Open Space
L1.1 Land for Active Recreation
L1.2 Children's Play
L1.9 Recreational Routes and New Development
MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

CS1 Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development – Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change
SD-3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – New Development
SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change
CS2 Housing Provision
CS3 Mix of Housing
CS4 Distribution of Housing
H-1 Design of Residential Development
H-2 Housing Phasing
H-3 Affordable Housing
CS8 Safeguarding and Improving the Environment
SIE-1 Quality Places
SIE-2 Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments
SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment
CS9 Transport and Development
T-1 Transport and Development
T-2 Parking in Development
T-3 Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan; nevertheless it does provide non-statutory Council approved guidance that is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

- Design of Residential Development
- Affordable Housing
- Open Space Provision and Commuted Sum Payments
- Transport & Planning in Residential Area
- Sustainable Design and Construction

National Planning Policy Framework

A Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 19th February 2019 replaced the previous NPPF (originally issued 2012 & revised 2018). The NPPF has not altered the fundamental legal requirement under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations (such as the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

The NPPF representing the governments up-to-date planning policy which should be taken into account in dealing with applications focuses on achieving a lasting housing reform, facilitating the delivery of a greater number of homes, ensuring that

we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment. If decision takers choose not to follow the NPPF, then clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed.

N.B. In respect of decision-taking the revised NPPF constitutes a “material consideration”.

Para.1 *“The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied”.*

Para.2 *“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.*

Para.7 *“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”.*

Para.8 *“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

- a) an economic objective*
- b) a social objective*
- c) an environmental objective”*

Para.11 *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.

Para.12 *“.....Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”.*

Para.38 *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way..... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

Para.47 *“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing”.*

Para.59 *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”*

Para.63 *“To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.”*

Para.97 *“Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by Equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.”*

Para.108 *“In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and*
- c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”*

Para.109 *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*

Para.110 *“Within this context, applications for development should:*

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency*

vehicles; and

e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.”

Para.117 *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”*

Para. 118 *“Planning policies and decisions should:*

a) *encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;*

b) *recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;*

c) *give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*

d) *promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure).”*

Para.122 *“Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:*

a) *the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*

b) *local market conditions and viability;*

c) *the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*

d) *the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*

e) *the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”*

Para.123 *“Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:*

a) *plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;*

b) *the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density*

range; and

c) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards)."

Para.124 "The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".

Para.127 "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."

Para.130 "Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development".

Para.213 "existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)".

Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place (launched in March 2014) and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is an extensive planning history on this site, however only some are relevant to this redevelopment proposal. Most of the history relates to the former school.

- Reference: J/34381; Type: XHS; Address: Land Off Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey.; Proposal: 18 flats.; Decision Date: 03-DEC-85; Decision: REF
- Reference: J/37970; Type: XHS; Address: Land Off Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey.; Proposal: 14 flats.; Decision Date: 15-JAN-87; Decision: REF
- Reference: J/39980; Type: XHS; Address: Land Off Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey.; Proposal: Erection of 14 flats.; Decision Date: 12-NOV-87; Decision: REF
- Reference: DC/006308; Type: FUL; Address: Cranford Golf Centre, Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 3AW; Proposal: Outline application for the erection of 12 no. dwellings; Decision Date: 06-FEB-02; Decision: WDN
- Reference: DC/017008; Type: OUT; Address: Land Adjacent To Cranford Golf Centre & Driving Range, Harwood Road, Stockport, Cheshire.; Proposal: Residential development of twelve properties including roadway and provision of new car park for the club; Decision Date: 02-NOV-04; Decision: WDN
- Reference: DC/048195; Type: OUT; Address: Land At Cranford Golf Centre, Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3AW; Proposal: Construction of 14 apartments, new internal access road, new/replacement car park for 42 cars and a local area for play (outline)., ; Decision Date: 17-JAN-12; Decision: REF
- Reference: DC/050842; Type: OUT; Address: Land At Cranford Golf Centre, Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3AW; Proposal: Outline planning permission for the construction of 9 dwellings, a new internal access road and a new replacement car park. All matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale)except access reserved for subsequent approval., ; Decision Date: 07-MAY-13; Decision: GTD
- Reference: DC/054205; Type: VC; Address: Land At Cranford Golf Centre, Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3AW; Proposal: Variation of Condition No.2 attached to planning permission ref no. DC/050842 to reduce the amount of affordable housing required as part of the development from (50% to 33%) 3 dwellings. , ; Decision Date: 25-JUL-14; Decision: GTD
- Reference: DC/062251; Type: OUT; Address: Cranford Golf Centre, Harwood Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3AW, ; Proposal: Outline planning application, with all matters reserved except for access, for the following:-(1) demolition of existing golf centre buildings; (2) provision of an Artificial Grass Pitch with maximum dimensions of 43m x 61m, enclosed by 4.5m high fencing and served by 6 floodlights to a maximum height of 10m; (3) the construction of a residential development comprising up to 75 two storey dwellings, with a maximum overall dwelling height of 8.6m (with no changes to existing ground levels), with access off Harwood Road;(4) internal alterations to an existing sports clubhouse, with no increase in the existing external footprint. Decision Date: 18-DEC-17; Decision: GTD

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Submitted with this application is a Statement of Community Involvement which details the public consultation that was carried out by Ludlam Associates as the agent for the application ahead of submitting a full application for residential development on land at the former Cranford Golf Centre site. This exercise is an important element of the planning process and the determination of this application. Early public engagement is not only encouraged by this Planning Authority but also by the Government noting that para 40 of the NPPF advises that LPA's should "encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and where relevant, with statutory and non statutory consultees before submitting their applications."

This report advises that:

"Clearly at this time of Coronavirus (Covid-19) Restrictions it is not possible to conduct an exercise involving a public meeting or exhibition, but other methods are available and there is no definitive procedure. After discussions with Emma Curle and Andy Kippax of Stockport MBC, the following method of consultation has taken place:

1. A letter, layout and illustrations have been forwarded to all Heatons South Ward Councillors (Copy attached at Appendix 1)

2. A letter and layout have been delivered by hand to over 250 local addresses advising of the forthcoming planning application. An email address for any initial comments has been provided. Any submissions will be recorded, addressed and reported to the Planning Department for consideration during the determination of the application (Copy attached at Appendix 2).

This consultation procedure is also used in 'normal circumstances', for example, a recent application for a similar proposal for 87 Affordable Housing units at land at Melford Road, Hazel Grove (Ref: DC070776) approved 14th June 2019, was subject to exactly the same consultation procedure. There was no public exhibition or meeting held. The proposals were amended at various times during the processing of the application in response to comments from local residents and councillors.

The applicants will continue to co-operate and assist any appropriate further community consultation as required."

To accompany this Statement, a 'Analysis of Responses Received' document has also been submitted to accompany the application. This outlines that:

"The Letter and Layout Plan were distributed to over 250 local addresses and posted to local Head Teachers on Monday 25th May 2020. In response to this, the following representations have been received to date (14th June 2020) via the dedicated email address provided. All have been acknowledged by an Automated Response and by individual email where necessary.

*15 Generally objecting
4 Supporting
2 Requesting information
7 Requested .pdf of Layout Plan (sent)."*

The main issues highlighted on the feedback forms were in relation to;

- Timing of the Consultation;
- Consultation Inadequate;
- Public meeting/Zoom Conference requested;
- Plan too small;
- Principle of residential development/Increase in number of dwellings;
- Highway/Traffic issues;
- Access via Rosgill Close unacceptable;
- Pressure on Local Services;
- Affordable Housing devalues properties;
- More private housing not Affordable Housing;
- No replacement sports facilities;
- Access to Common is a threat to Wildlife and Security;
- Disruption during Construction;
- Contaminated Land disturbance;
- Privacy – overlooking by flats;
- Welcome new housing/request information on availability to buy.

In response to the issues raised above, the submission states as follows:

Consultation Exercise

The proposals are the culmination of months/years of work to bring the application forward. The initial Pre- Application Consultation was submitted in April 2019 and it has taken the intervening period to prepare the scheme. Whilst there are some constraints on Public Consultation at the present time, this can still take place. The approach was agreed prior with Officers of Stockport MBC and Ward Councillors were informed in advance.

At the present time, a public meeting would be contrary to Government Guidelines. All public Council meetings are in abeyance. No publicly accessible venue to hold such an event i.e. local library availability. However, the applicant provide display material when and if a local library opens. In relation to the request for a zoom conference meeting, there are issues of: Participation/Access to technology/Management of agenda/Recording/Security.

Plan too Small

Agree difficult to read text, but plan is legible. The plan will be accessible on Council's website when application is registered. A .pdf copy of the Layout Plan was sent when requested.

Principle of Residential Development / Increase in number of dwellings

Already established by extant planning permission granted in 2017. National and Local Planning Policy to maximise density. Reduces pressure to release Green Belt land. In accordance with Policy.

Highways/Traffic Issues

Supported by Traffic count/Transport Assessment/Travel Plan. Agreed with Stockport MBC Highways Engineers. Alternative access at Berwick Avenue - Not an adopted highway. The junction of Harwood Road/Didsbury Road is within capacity, therefore no improvement required. Access via Rosgill Close unacceptable - remove if required by Stockport MBC.

Pressure on Local Services

Within capacity.

Affordable Housing devalues properties / More Private Housing

No evidence this occurs. Mixed communities important National and Local Policy objective. Massive unmet demand in area/Stockport MBC.

No replacement Sports Facilities

Not viable to provide. Not required by Sport England policy. Informal recreational space provided onsite for residents. Commuted Sum payment for Formal Open Space.

Access to Common is threat to wildlife and security

Included in Outline Approval at request of Stockport MBC. Increases public access to recreational facilities and local services. Contribution to improved footpath network. Agreed with GMPALU. Remove, if required by Stockport MBC.

Disruption during construction

Can be minimised by Construction Management Plan. Ongoing during construction.

Contaminated land disturbance

Will remove contamination. Strictly regularized by Conditions. Ongoing.

Privacy – Overlooking by flats

Privacy distances in accordance with Policy.

Welcome new housing

Request information on availability to buy. Demonstrates demand for new housing Register interest.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The owners/occupiers of 221 surrounding properties were originally notified in writing of the application on the 18th June 2020. This neighbour notification period expired on the 12th July 2020. The application was advertised by way of display of notice on site and in the press, the consultation periods for which expired on the 30th March 2020 and the 25th March 2020 respectively.

Following the submission of amended plans for the proposed development, a full re-notification was completed of all the original neighbours and any additional contributors on the 26th August 2020. This neighbour notification period expired on the 19th September 2020.

In response to both of these notification exercises, 72 objections have been received, 1 letter of support and 2 further representations containing queries. A summary of the comments made and the main points raised are provided below:

Support

I think this is a great development opportunity and would be very beneficial to the local community, businesses etc.

Objections

Principle / Overdevelopment

- Objection to the number of houses / overdevelopment.

- These planning applications for the number of dwellings continues to rise. We started at 14 flats, then 4 semis, then 82 dwellings of affordable housing (starting £270,000) with improvements to sports club and all weather floodlit soccer pitches. Now we are up to 106 dwellings and no improvements to sports club.
- The types of properties and quantities earmarked to be built will certainly devalue the existing properties. I realise this land has to be put to good use but, in my opinion, far fewer private houses would be more acceptable.
- The site is designated as Local Open Space in the approved Stockport 2006 UDP. Section 7.27 of the UDP states "For the avoidance of doubt, there will be a presumption against the loss of local open space". Stockport Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010 - stated the "Development would be contrary to current policy". The site has not been identified as suitable for development;
- This development, as proposed, has serious environmental & sustainability shortcomings. It proposes 106 homes being built on a small, environmentally sensitive site, with high provision for vehicle use (185 car parking spaces), served by one small road to an already congested main road with high, possibly illegal levels of pollution. This represents unsustainable, over development and is at odds with the NPPF where at the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Construction Impacts

- Impact of construction traffic on Harwood Road. Already lots of on street parking reducing the road space for construction traffic to get through - it's enough of a problem for normal vehicles as it is.
- The additional construction traffic will create additional noise and hazards for the elderly residents in the Irwell Valley Housing. Normally a quiet road. This disturbance/ danger will only continue with 106 houses - we should be looking after our elderly who deserve to live in a peaceful environment.

Traffic Increase

- Increase traffic (106 house equates to at least double the amount of cars), not just on this road but neighbouring Didsbury Road, which is already overpopulated.
- Believe that the proposed development, in its current form will cause a severe adverse cumulative impact on traffic conditions for Harwood Road and Didsbury Road which provide good reason to prevent or refuse this planning application on transport grounds as set out paragraph 109 in the National Policy Planning Framework.
- The testing and modelling used are not sufficiently robust to support the conclusions arrived at in the report with regard to transport impact.
- Objection relates to transport and in particular the effect that allowing between 200 and 250 cars to use the Didsbury Road/Harwood Road junction at peak times.

- The transport document which I have seen seeks to buttress the Highway Officer's conclusion by including the results of a traffic survey which took place on a day in February this year. I do not have the expertise to interpret it to know whether it supports the conclusions advanced. I do however have significant reservations about whether a one day sample is a proper basis for conclusions which will have long lasting effects and which once done cannot be undone.
- In the mornings traffic heading way from Stockport almost always forms a queue on Didsbury Road which goes much further back than Harwood Road and extends all the way to Kingsway. Some of this appears to be due to the effect of the park and ride which I accept is a good thing but has this consequence. It takes 5 to 10 minutes to get to Burnage Lane in these conditions and 10 to 20 minutes to get to Kingsway. In the evenings it can (regularly but not always) take half an hour to get from the Pyramid to Grundy Street a journey which should take under 10 minutes
- Another thing to consider is the regular visits to the Seymour Court sheltered housing units of ambulance and medical vehicles. This is often difficult due to, as mentioned above, the "single lane road", and may prove a risk if an ambulance or fire engine etc. is delayed.
- I would request that the planning Department consider how traffic problems affect existing residents, including some permanent phased traffic light system at the Harwood/Didsbury Road junction, and "Residential Parking Only" on Harwood Road.
- The survey was conducted on Wednesday 26th February. I would argue that data collected on one random day is not sufficiently conclusive 'base' to model around for these purposes. Traffic is highly variable. 26th Feb was the week after half term. Moreover, traffic is always lighter the week before and the week after school holidays. This survey is not representative, not allowing for the worst (or best) case.
- A single data point like this is not sufficient. More surveys need to be carried out, at different times of the year to gain a fuller picture of traffic conditions both for traffic flow and air pollution levels to get an accurate base for modelling.
- TRICS Trip Modelling - The report uses the TRICS database and its trip data to extrapolate and model the likely traffic impact of the development on the base situation (which as explained above is not sufficiently robust). To model accurately, a data set needs to be selected that stands as a reasonable proxy for the area being modelled. Analysis of the data set actually chosen (see below) shows it does not correlate well with Heaton Mersey. According to the ONS the Greater Manchester built up area is the second most populous conurbation in the UK after Greater London. The list selected includes small towns and semi-rural areas as can be seen by referencing the individual road/street selections with Google Earth. These areas have significantly different population and transport dynamics. Note that Greater London areas were specifically excluded from the data set. Heaton Mersey is situated in the Greater Manchester Conurbation, 2 miles from Stockport, 5 miles from the centre of Manchester city centre. Moreover, Heaton Mersey is 1.5 miles to the M60 motorway and 2 miles to the M56. No places in the list have similar

metropolitan locations or connections for motorways which will have a significant influence on the usefulness of the comparative trip data.

- I am very disappointed by the Travel Plan, which is highly tokenistic and, in reality, not likely to make any difference whatsoever to real life travel and or people's intentions. Notwithstanding that, it is completely undermined by the clear strategy to encourage car use by providing so much parking provision.
- General comment about the TP. It is not clear if the TP has been seen by the relevant council officers. There is no indication that officers responsible for walking and cycling have been able to comment on it. The only officer mentioned exclusively in the "SCP Technical Note - Response to 3rd Party Objections" is the Highway Officer.
- Too much emphasis is relied on TRICS, the approval of the previous planning application, or the pre-application advice given by the SMBC Highway Officer. There is no evidence that the consultant has visited the site to observe what happens in the real world situation or is prepared to implement simple modern monitoring equipment to obtain the actual as opposed to the modelled situation. Starting conditions are a vital component in any model and it is doubted that the long pinch point along Harwood Road is a factor contained within TRICS. It gives me no pleasure to attack the consultant but an over-reliance on modelling is concerning as I have experience on that approach in another field. Modelling has to be tempered with professional experience and judgement.
- Harwood Road is part of the proposed 'Heatons Cycle Link', a cycle path has been planned to lead directly on to Harwood Road. How would the safety of cyclists be secured with a significant increase of traffic on an already narrow road?

Open Space / Ecology / Footpath to Rosgill Close

- Loss of the Cranford golf facility was a blow to the area, this was a valuable facility for sport & recreation. UDP Review Policy L1.1 'Land for Active Recreation' relates to sports grounds and land last used for active recreation , the policy does not allow for its loss except where development would provide sufficient benefit to sport and recreation to outweigh the loss. The proposal in 2017 made significant provision for improvements in the neighbouring Heaton Mersey Sports Club creating for example, all weather floodlit football pitches for community use and improvements to the clubhouse. This application contains no such provisions and so the loss of the recreation facility is not mitigated in any way. This is another reason to refuse this application.
- The PA should include LAP and LEAP in a more accessible location on the site.
- Object to the location of the LEAP, if it is a requirement it should be located within the development not on the edge of a previous development that was built over 40 years ago. Residents of Harwood Rd. close to the entrance to the new development will have to endure nuisance of vehicles entering & leaving the development. Locating the LEAP at the entrance from Harwood Rd. will create more noise & disturbance to residents, it will also put young excitable children in danger at that location.

- Objection to the proposed footpath access onto Heaton Mersey Common. It is proposed that one of the footpaths links with the path on Rosgill Close. This is in fact private land (not council owned) and is the responsibility of Rosgill Close residents collectively to maintain (stated in the property deeds). It will increase foot and cycle traffic onto the path and garage forecourt area thus increasing the risk of maintenance and incurring cost. The proposed footpath will likely have an impact on both the privacy and security of the mentioned houses.
- Object to the loss of green space within the area. There is always an ongoing need for green space in the area. Saddened and dismayed to find that the developer appears to have reneged on the previous commitment to improve the facilities at the Sports Club and to add insult to injury they are seeking to increase the number of dwellings by 40% to 106.
- A quiet area to live near the common will be changed completely
- With the removal of the previously proposed replacement sports facilities, and increasing the amount of dwellings by over 40%, the proposals are a lot more concerning. It will put a lot more pressure on the surrounding area, in terms of the use of schools, GPs and many other facilities, without providing anything other than more dwellings.
- Concerned about the impact on Heaton Common. As I'm sure you are aware, this is a nature reserve which houses diverse wildlife, including birds such as the spotted woodpecker, herons, as well as pond life and bats. We feel that this huge increase in the local population, as well as the construction noise, will be harmful to these species.
- Swans, cygnets, ducks, ducklings and foxes use this corridor.
- A climate environmental and wildlife emergency was declared in 2019 and the impact of the pandemic lockdown demonstrated clearly how critical open green spaces, parks and LNR's are particularly in urban areas where people desperately needed to get outside and exercise while maintaining social distance.
- Cat and dog populations from residential areas cohabit badly with wildlife in an LNR. Domestic cats and dogs coexist poorly with natural wildlife dramatically impacting nesting bird populations. Foxes, voles, mice, birds, and honeybee populations can be affected by domestic pets, human activity and glyphosate. Cat faeces are particularly damaging to wildlife. Flora and fauna can die in the presence of cat faeces.

Air Pollution

- Big concern is the traffic and air pollution in the local area. According to Clean Air GM, there are parts (within 1km) of both Didsbury Rd and the Kingsway where the legal limit of nitrogen dioxide levels are already being exceeded. Greater Manchester Combined Authority's own study in 2018 included Didsbury Road as one of the 152 most polluted in the GM area (20 in Stockport) for Nitrogen Dioxide, 11 of which it concluded were likely to exceed the legal limit of 40 micrograms of nitrogen dioxide per cubic metre of air by the end of 2020. The plans submitted provide parking for another 185 vehicles. These would all need to travel down the very small Harwood road, and onto

the congested, over-polluted Didsbury Rd. This has not been addressed by the developer at all and is a significant oversight.

- We've all noticed the difference in air quality during lockdown with the lack of traffic. The frequent congestion, (as acknowledged by the SMBC in 2017) perhaps more even than the volume of cars, is one of the reasons that Didsbury road is listed as of the most polluted roads in Greater Manchester. The Institute for Public Policy Research North in 2018 declared an air pollution crisis in Greater Manchester saying, "The levels of air pollution in Greater Manchester are lethal and illegal". This is a proposal predicated on car use. It has provision for 185 parking spaces allowed for in the plans. This with all the visitors, delivery and service traffic will inevitably make the existing dire air quality situation worse.
- The IAQM states that air pollution is a material consideration for planning. In 2018 updates to the NPPF included "Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas". GMCA is trying to address this with the Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan 2016. The plan states the Greater Manchester councils will adopt as best practice the most recent development and planning control guidance published jointly by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) and Environmental Protection UK (EPUK). In the GMAQAP Document published online the words 'to reduce traffic' are highlighted in red boxes on most of the actions to improve the air quality!
- It is not clear if Didsbury Road is now in 2020 (pre lockdown) close to or maybe even exceeding the limits since measurements were taken in 2018. There is no data in the application regarding pollution levels or modelling of the impacts. Whether it is just perilously high or actually now illegal in either case, the extra traffic from this development will make it worse.
- Given the situation, it is clear that the proposal should be refused on air quality grounds. The council should not be put into a situation where its decisions may contribute to illegal levels of pollution being sanctioned.
- It should be noted in September last, in Court of Appeal a decision was upheld for a planning permission appeal refusal on air quality grounds for 330 homes in Kent, making it the first time a planning appeal has been refused due to concerns over air pollution and public health. "...In having this precedent tested in the High Court and subsequently in the Court of Appeal it has been shown that air-quality mitigation must now be taken into consideration in any planning application..."
- The full judgement is here

<https://cprekent.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Pond-Farm-Court-of-Appeal.pdf>

Residential Amenity (Overlooking)

- Our house backs immediately onto the Cranford Range Land and from the map it shows that a new build house will back onto us and next door appears to have a flat which would overlook several of the gardens.

Contaminated Site

- The survey reports referred to the golf Range land as 'contaminated'; and that there was a landfill site 50 years ago. This would have not decomposed properly in this time, the exact location is not verified whether this is the common or the building site? Is it a given that any contamination would be dealt with appropriately? The online environmental reports are many pages long and reported in 2012, 2014. Should it not be essential to update these in view of Health and Safety practices?
- Clearly the ground is in poor condition and generally unsuitable for building works as a former clay pit this is unsurprising and explains why it was granted original permission as a golf driving range.
- It will clearly need to be deeply excavated and one would have to be certain that no shortcuts were taken for the safety of future residents and their children in relation to the contaminated ground.
- This is clearly an unsuitable site for development and is far more suitable to be maintained as a green space in some form.
- The application provides 2 reports, Phase 1 Site Investigation Report and Phase 2 Site Investigation Report examining the geo-technical and contamination aspects. Parts of the site contain wastes, having previously been the site of clay extraction being back-filled with household wastes during the 1950s to 1970's. Surveys were carried out at the site in 2012 & 2013 with 5 sampling bore holes made. Some very dangerous carcinogens including PAHs & TPHs were detected in the test samples, some above allowable limits. The reports concluded that strategies could be applied to mitigate the risks. However, the development for which the reports were prepared were for a much smaller scheme of only 10 houses not occupying all of the site and not, I believe, directly on the landfill. This proposed development occupies all of the site, including the landfill parts.
- Disturbance to the ground will be on a much greater scale and I am concerned about the impacts of this for any new residents, existing residents and the wildlife on the common. This has not been addressed in the proposals and the information presented is insufficient. New investigations need to be carried out and submitted so that these aspects can be fully understood before any permissions are granted.
- There is a strong argument that waste & contaminants which are hazardous under modern EWC if disturbed, should be removed and dealt with appropriately at licenced hazardous waste facilities before the site is disturbed.

Drainage

- The LNR is on the site of former brickworks. Drainage is poor and you will be aware of national concern about the loss of green spaces and their impact on the surrounding surface water drainage particularly in relation to climate change and flash flooding.

- Currently, the grassed area of the former driving range has a beneficial or no impact on drainage at the Southern border of the LNR with re: surface water drainage.
- However the proposed 106 properties and in particular the properties at the Northern Edge would result in covering over the major percentage of the existing grassland of the site in surfaces with dramatically less surface water drainage capabilities than the grassland so moving forward this must negatively impact the Southern border of the LNR despite the statements purchased for the drainage survey.
- In this respect, the 16 properties at the Northern edge next to the LNR be removed from the plan.

Health Issues

- Such overdevelopment will have serious health implications especially for the elderly and young children nearby. Traffic leaving the development will be forced to queue whilst waiting to exit Harwood Road onto Didsbury road. This will be directly outside Seymour Court. In addition to the 200 vehicles leaving and returning to the development there will be additional visitor vehicles, servicing vehicles and delivery vehicles.
- Vehicles are a major pollution contributor to air pollution, producing significant amounts of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and other pollution. Test manipulation has compounded this problem. Young children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable. The granting of 106 dwellings with potential 200 vehicles is a massive over development and disproportionate to the general road access and egress available in the area.
- Epidemiological studies have shown that long-term exposure to air pollution (over years or lifetimes) reduces life expectancy, mainly due to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and lung cancer. Short-term exposure (over hours or days) to elevated levels of air pollution can also cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and mortality. (Public Health England).
- The planning committee has a duty of care to local residents and visiting children and will be held to account if such large number of dwellings are granted.

Other Miscellaneous

- Whilst we recognise the need for more affordable housing in all areas of the UK, we believe this is a drastically different proposal to the one previously outlined.
- The previous application for 75 properties and redeveloped sports facilities had merit but this latest application seems to have little regard for the environmental, mental and financial impact on local residents.
- I would also be concerned about the extra demand on the local schools with the addition of potentially 100 families. St John's Primary where my children went despite now being redeveloped is still a single form entry as I

understand it. I believe the other schools in the immediate area are generally over subscribed.

- Large volumes of uncollected waste create multiple health hazards.
- Urban development can magnify the risk of environmental hazards such as flash flooding.
- Pollution and physical barriers to root growth promote loss of urban tree cover. What is the trade-off?
- Animal populations are inhibited by toxic substances, vehicles, and the loss of habitat and food sources specially the nature around the area. What is the plan?

Submission During Pandemic

- Moving ahead with construction in the middle of a major pandemic (worst in recent times) does not seem appropriate and create confusion and lack of transparency as people is not able to gather and discuss the topic.
- Concerned this is being pushed through without a public meeting.
- The short notice of the planning application smacks of an attempt to squeeze it through under cover of the current pandemic situation with presumably many planning staff on furlough.
- There was no public meeting or exhibition for the development as recommended by NPPF for applications of this scale with the applicant claiming this was due to the global pandemic and lockdown.
- There appear to be a surge of unwelcome applications nationally and one can only sense that there must be an element of attempting to advantage from the national crisis. At the very least the perception about the timing of the application is poor amongst residents I have communicated with.

Additional Comments following Amended Plans

- Whilst the pathway leading to Rosgill Close has been amended and removed - thank you - I am still concerned about the overall impact this development will have on the local community.
- I personally think the amendment with the plans to include a lap and leap are just a sweetener to get plans through.
- I fear if this application is approved it will ultimately lead to the diminution of value of existing properties including my own.
- Residents have already opposed two previous proposals for the same reasons as highlighted here. Why would you expect this third attempt to be received favourably when it has the same issues and in some respects is worse than the previous two.
- Alternatives; The site clearly needs to be developed. The developers should consider alternatives such as: 1. A smaller development of 60 dwellings with

the same proportion of affordable units and privately owned units. 2. A gated retirement village designed for independent living, similar to Chapelwood in Wilmslow. A managed site with communal facilities.

- The letter from SMBC about the second round of consultation is dated 26th August and the consultation period ends 19th September. During that time the developer has uploaded a further six documents with the latest being on the 16th September. Is it not wrong to ask for comments when documents are still being provided by the developer.
- Disappointed that the developer has sought to respond to people's concerns about Harwood in points 7 -14 of their submission by suggesting that parking adds to road safety and acts as natural traffic calming. Using car parking spaces strategically placed along a road I believe has been used historically as a traffic calming measure. The reality is that the current parking is not strategically placed and vehicle progress is hindered along Harwood Road, with the occasional Mexican Standoff occurring. This will inevitably lead to an accident in the future and needs serious thought rather than a textbook answer.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

GMAAS (Archaeology)

Contrary to NPPF para 189, the application is not supported by an archaeological desk based assessment nor has the Historic Environment Record been consulted. Having noted that, it is clear from the historic mapping submitted within the ground investigation report that the site has seen significant clay extraction and landfill.

There is part of a former pottery works in the south-west of the proposal area, but the real archaeological interest is for a pottery and brick kiln complex that lay just outside the development boundary to the south west and is therefore not affected by the proposals.

The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record also records the discovery, in 1911, of a prehistoric axe hammer during excavation of one of the clay pits within the proposal site. However, given the extensive extraction and infill on the site, it is highly unlikely that any further prehistoric evidence will survive.

On balance therefore, GMAAS consider that there are limited archaeological interests for this scheme due to previous land use and that archaeological mitigation is not required in this instance.

Arboriculture

Original Comments 08.07.2020

The proposed development site is located within the existing grounds of the commercial/depot site predominantly on the former hard standing areas and formal grounds of the buildings. The plot is comprised largely of informal grounds and associated infrastructure.

Legislative and Policy Framework

Conservation Area Designations - The proposed development is located close to and affects the setting of a Conservation Area (Heaton Mersey).

Legally Protected Trees - There are legally protected trees close to the boundary of this site (Berwick Avenue, Heaton Mersey No. 3 2006).

Recommendations:

The proposed building footprints and associated infrastructure/play areas are shown or indicated at this time within the informal grounds/former hard standing areas of the existing site and it is assumed the proposed new developments will potentially will impact slightly on the trees but as the site currently has a very poor level of vegetation, the impact is lessened.

A full tree survey would have been advisable as part of the planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing trees if any are to be retained within the red edge and where applicable which trees could be retained to increase the amenity levels of the site with retained mature trees, but comments will be based on officer knowledge and the site overview report.

A detailed landscaping scheme will also need to be conditioned as part of any full planning application submitted which clearly shows detailed enhancements throughout the site as the current proposal is ok but needs species details and increased tree cover including fruit trees in all back gardens where an ornamental species isn't being proposed as well as some understorey planting along the Local Nature Reserve boundary to improve the amenity through native species planting.

Consideration will also need to be given to the level of planting within the proposed car park/play areas making sure adequate levels are detailed but using appropriate species and planting pits to guarantee success rates, improve SUDs potential through the tree pits and perpetuity tree cover for the surrounding environment to improve the local biodiversity and amenity of the area.

In principle the main works and design will have a minor negative impact on the trees on site and within neighbouring properties on the approach to the site.

Access proposals into the country park need to be reduced to one point, which goes directly into the site and not passing existing houses, which will also need to upgrade the route they are hoping to connect to and include restrictions to access gates/barriers.

In its current format it could be considered with the full details as requested above justifying the minimal tree loss/impact and some consideration given to the improvement of the landscaping design to include a detailed landscaping scheme that includes a greater number of new trees along the boundary of the site and improved specification for trees in the soft and hard landscaping areas and approach to the site to improve the amenity and aesthetics of the site for users and local community making sure a percentage of these are native large species, as well as increased native hedgerows and fruit trees at every opportunity.

The following conditions would be relevant to any planning application relating to the site;

1) No existing tree within the site shall be cut down, topped, lopped, uprooted, willfully damaged or willfully destroyed without the prior written approval of the local planning authority, with the exception of those indicated otherwise on the approved

plan. Any hedgerows, woody plants or shrubbery removed without such consent or dying or being severely damaged or being seriously diseased, within 5 years of the development commencing, shall be replaced within the next planting season with trees of such size and species as may be approved in writing by the local planning authority.

2) No development shall take place until all existing trees on the site except those shown to be removed on the approved plans, have been fenced off in accordance with BS 5837:2012 "Trees in relation to construction - Recommendations". The fencing shall be retained during the period of construction and no work, excavation; tipping or stacking of materials shall take place within any such fence during the construction period.

3) No development shall take place until details of all proposed tree planting, including the intended dates of planting, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All tree planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the development being brought into use.

Further Comments 17.09.2020

I am happy with the amended planting and access and would like to mirror the comments made by the Nature Development officer.

Environmental Health (Air Quality)

Original Comments 23.06.2020

As this site is adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), the application should be accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) to demonstrate the effect of the development on the AQMA.

This should show if :

- If it is likely to Cause a significant change in Light Duty Vehicle (LDV) traffic flows on local roads with relevant receptors (LDV = cars and small vans <3.5t gross vehicle weight).
- A change of LDV flows of: - more than 100 AADT within or adjacent to an AQMA is seen as significant.

The assessment must also assess the impacts of any demolition and of the construction phases on any existing receptors.

Further Comments following receipt of Air Quality Assessment

The methodology used to assess the air quality at the site is a nationally accepted methodology. The two sites used are the nearest sites to the application and thus are considered by Environmental Health as acceptable to use in this case. The Didsbury Road site is a roadside site, thus giving a worse case scenario and doesn't show any exceedances of the legal limits .

Therefore, on this basis, Environmental Health are satisfied with the methodology of the report and it's findings, subject to the mitigation measures outlined within the report being fully complied with.

Environmental Health (Contaminated Land)

Environmental Health have had meetings with the environmental consultants regarding the above mentioned proposed development. Whilst the site has been investigated, there is still further trial trenching in the east and north east of the site required to establish if the steep banked area requires remediation too.

In addition to this, there has been broad remediation measures proposed, these will need to be confirmed in a remediation strategy report. I have checked the portal and there doesn't appear to have been one submitted.

As such, the following conditions are requested to be included in any approval decision:

1) No development shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment into contamination at the site, in accordance with a scheme to be approved in writing by the local planning authority, has been carried out. The investigation and risk assessment shall include recommendations for remedial action and the development shall not be occupied until these recommendations have been implemented.

Reason - The report submitted with the application has identified potentially unacceptable risks from contamination and further investigation is required to ensure that these risks to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other off-site receptors in accordance with Policy SIE-3 "Protecting Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment", of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

2) No development shall take place until a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the specified use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme to be submitted shall specify but not be limited to :-the proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria (ii) all remedial works to be undertaken including the quantities of materials to be removed from and imported to the development site. (iii) the proposals for sourcing and testing all materials imported to the site including testing schedules, sampling frequencies and actual and allowable contaminant concentrations (as determined by appropriate risk assessment in accordance with the document "Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination" (CLR11)).

Reason - To ensure that any unacceptable risks from contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other off-site receptors in accordance with Policy SIE-3 "Protecting Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment", of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

3) The development shall not be occupied until the approved remediation scheme required to be submitted by Condition 14; has been carried out. Within ^NN; months of completion of remediation measures, a validation report assessing the effectiveness of the remediation carried shall be submitted to and approved in writing

by the local planning authority. The report shall specify any further remediation measures necessary and indicate how and when these measures will be undertaken.

Reason - To ensure that any unacceptable risks from contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy SIE-3 "Protecting Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment", of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

4) No development shall take place until (i) a method statement for the carrying out of an investigation and assessment of the potential for landfill gas being present on the land has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and (ii) the investigation and assessment has been carried out in accordance with the approved method statement and (iii) a written report of the investigation and a copy of the assessment has been submitted to the local planning authority. All precautionary and remedial measures (whether relating to excavation and other site works, building development and construction, gas control measures or otherwise) recommended or suggested by the report and assessment shall be taken or carried out in the course of the development unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason - The land may contain landfill gas and it may be necessary to undertake remedial measures in order to comply with Policy SIE-3 "Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment" of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD

5) No part of the development shall be occupied until all works necessary to prevent landfill gas migration into the development have been approved in writing by the local planning authority and carried out in full.

Reason - The adjoining land may contain landfill gas and it may be necessary to undertake remedial measures in order to comply with Policy SIE-3 "Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment" of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

Environmental Health (Noise)

Environmental Health do not object to the development in principle.

However, an Acoustic report would be needed to assess background noise levels to see if mitigation measures will be needed to enable the properties to meet recommended internal noise levels.

Therefore, the following conditions are requested to be included in any approval decision:

1) Prior to the commencement of the development a noise report shall be undertaken. The report shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The noise assessment shall consider noise generated from air and road traffic and any nearby fixed plant. The report shall be undertaken in line with BS8233-2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings' and should demonstrate how the

development will achieve the following maximum internal noise levels at the following times;

- living rooms 35dB LAeq between 07.00 hours and 23.00 hours
- Dining rooms 40dB LAeq between 07.00 hours and 23.00 hours
- Bedrooms 30 dB LAeq between 23.00 hours and 07.00 hours and 35dB LAeq between 07.00 hours and 23.00 hours
- Gardens 50-55dB LAeq

Should mitigation measures be required no development shall be brought into use until the approved noise mitigation measures for the development have been fully incorporated and kept thereafter.

2) Demolition/Construction management plan to be submitted inline with BS5228:2009 Condition Demolition/construction hours for site: 07.30-18.00 Monday-Friday 08.00-12.30 Saturday No noise working outside of the above hours to be audible beyond the boundary.

Conservation Team

This development is located outside of the Heaton Mersey Conservation Area and the site does not abut the boundary. The combination of nature and scale of the proposals as well as the topography of the site (there is a significant level change between the site and the nearby conservation area) mean that it will have no impact upon the special character and appearance or setting of this designated heritage asset. Therefore, there are no objections.

Drainage

Original Comments 23.06.2020

The LLFA has reviewed the documents submitted in support of the above named application and comment as follows:

- Can the applicants demonstrate that there is widespread contamination throughout the site? Infiltration cannot be discounted for the reasoning detailed within the report without evidence of this.
- We would request that the SuDS features be revisited. There appears to be a large area to the NE side of the site and one to the right when turning into the development. The inclusion of a pond would reduce the pipe sized required and provide a natural feature for selling purposes. There are also areas next to plots 14, 38, 46 and 52 where the drainage can be brought above ground to allow further attenuation in the form of a swale.
- The part of the site previously developed (West side) should be classified as brownfield and therefore would require a 50% reduction in surface water output. The remaining parts of the site can be considered greenfield and therefore discharge at greenfield rates.
- The exceedance flows appear to be quite large. How is the applicant proposing to allow plots 44, 45, 50, 51, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62 safe access and egress from their dwelling.
- Is the applicant proposing to offer the highway up for adoption?

Further comments 24.07.2020

The technical note and supporting evidence is acceptable to the LLFA.

Could the applicant please include permeable paving to all private areas and re-fresh the calculations to show this.

Once received, I will forward for a technical review.

Further Comments 07.09.2020

Following the latest submission for the above application, the LLFA recommends the following condition:

Condition

Notwithstanding the approved plans and prior to the commencement of any development, a detailed surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The scheme shall:

- (a) incorporate SuDS and be based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions;*
- (b) include an assessment and calculation for 1in 1yr, 30yr and 100yr + 40% climate change figure critical storm events;*
- (c) be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards; and*
- (d) shall include details of ongoing maintenance and management. The development shall be completed and maintained in full accordance with the approved details.*

Nature Development

Original Comments 15.07.2020

The site is located off Harwood Road in Heaton Mersey. The application involves demolition of the existing Golf Centre buildings; Residential Development comprising 106 dwellings with associated Open Space including one LAP and one LEAP with access from Harwood Road. The site is subject to previous planning consent DC062251, which I also commented on.

Legislative and Policy Framework

Nature Conservation Designations - The site itself has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. Heaton Mersey Common, which is designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is however located immediately to the north of the application site boundary.

Legally Protected Species - Ecological survey work has been carried out and submitted with the application. All survey work has been carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist and in accordance with best practice survey guidance.

An extended Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site has been undertaken which mapped the habitats present and identified their potential to support protected species. The survey was carried out in February 2020 and this survey updates those previously undertaken in February 2015 and August 2016 as part of the previous planning application. Semi-improved grassland is the dominant habitat types, with scattered trees and scrub also present.

Many buildings and trees offer the potential to support roosting bats. All species of bats and their roosts are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The latter implements the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. Bats are included in Schedule 2 of the Regulations as 'European Protected Species of animals' (EPS).

Under the Regulations it is an offence to:

- 1) Deliberately capture or kill a wild EPS
- 2) Deliberately disturb a wild EPS in such a way that significantly affects:
 - a) the ability of a significant group to survive, breed, rear or nurture young.
 - b) the local distribution of that species.
- 3) Damage or destroy a breeding place or resting site of such an animal.

An internal and external bat inspection survey of the buildings within the application area was carried out in. No evidence indicative of bat presence was recorded and the buildings are assessed as offering negligible bat roosting potential. This updates bat survey work carried out in April 2016. Whilst acknowledged that this survey data is now out of date, historical survey information can still have value as part of the current assessment. Limited roosting features were identified in 2016 and emergence surveys undertaken in May, June and August 2016 did not identify bats to be roosting within the buildings. Activity transect surveys were also carried out during May, August and September 2016 to assess levels of bat activity across the site for foraging/commuting bats. The survey found that common and soprano pipistrelle bats were using the site for foraging and commuting with the occasional noctule bat pass also recorded. No potential roosting features were observed within trees on site during the current or previous surveys but these habitat features offer suitable foraging and commuting habitat.

The buildings and trees/vegetation and habitats on site offer suitable nesting opportunities for breeding birds. All breeding birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

No waterbodies are present on site. Three ponds are located within 500m of the application site. Ponds and their surrounding terrestrial habitat have the potential to support amphibians such as great crested newts (GCN) and common toad. GCN have the same level of legal protection as bats (outlined above) whilst toads are listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act as a Species of Principle Importance. The nearest pond (approx. 120m away in Heaton Mersey Common and identified as pond 1A and 1B in 2016) was subject to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) survey to assess its suitability to support GCN and was scored as offering poor suitability. All ponds within 500m were subject to HSI assessment in 2016 and scored poor suitability. GCN survey work was undertaken in 2016 as part of the previous application. One of the ponds was scoped out from further survey; owing to its distance and relative isolation from the application site and due to the presence of dense fish populations which results in sub-optimal GCN habitat. The remaining two ponds (in Heaton Mersey Common) were subject to presence/absence surveys for GCN. No evidence of GCN was recorded during the surveys, however common toad (a UKBAP species) was recorded, along with a small population of common newt.

The proposed development site offers some suitable GCN terrestrial habitat, such as continuous scrub and introduced shrub and there is habitat connectivity between the pond and the application site. However, given the previously recorded absence during the 2016 surveys and the poor HSI score, plus that pond 1A and 1B within Heaton Mersey Common are relatively isolated within the pondscape, the risk of

GCN being present within the application area and impacted by the proposals is considered to be low.

Badgers and their setts are legally protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. A main badger sett is present 40m from the application site (to the southeast) and this is considered sufficiently far away that no significant disturbance impacts on the sett are anticipated as a result of the proposals. Within the application site itself mammal paths were recorded but no badger activity was identified. Two mammal holes were recorded under the foundations of the Driving Range and camera monitoring during April and May showed that foxes were using these holes. The application site offers suitable foraging habitat for badger and much of this would be lost under the proposals. This is not included within the ecology assessment submitted with the application, however it is considered that the open grassland area to the south of the proposed scheme, as well as Heaton Mersey Common to the north offer sufficient foraging resource for the social group. It is important however that habitat connectivity along the east boundary of the site is maintained.

Badger activity is known to lie south of the eastern boundary of the site by approximately 40m. Evidence of mammal activity is present on-site including mammal tracks and push-throughs under fences. Two mammal holes were found under the foundations of the Driving Range during this survey. Following the deployment of trail cameras, the holes have been found to be in use by Foxes only. Given the distance from the site to the nearest known Badger activity, no further Badger survey or mitigation is required. However, it is recommended that the driving range foundation slab is excavated with care so no mammals are trapped below ground

Invasive Species - Cotoneaster sp. and montbretia were recorded within the application area. Many species of Cotoneaster and montbretia are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to spread or otherwise cause to grow these species in the wild.

Recommendations:

No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the surveys. Bats can regularly switch roost sites however and can sometimes roost in unlikely places. An informative should be used to as part of any planning consent to state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity and in the event that roosting bats, or any other protected species is discovered on site during works, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist contacted for advice.

If the proposed works have not commenced by February 2022 (i.e. within two years of the 2020 surveys) it is recommended that an update ecology survey is carried out in advance of works to ensure the baseline and assessment of impacts in respect of bats and other ecological receptors remains current. This can be secured by condition as part of any planning consent granted.

In relation to breeding birds it is recommended that works are timed to avoid the bird nesting season where possible. If building demolition and vegetation clearance works need to take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive a competent ecologist must undertake a careful, detailed check of buildings/vegetation/trees for active birds' nests immediately before works commence and there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. This can be secured by condition.

No evidence of badgers was recorded within the application site, but badgers are known to be present within the local vicinity. Badgers are a highly mobile species and can rapidly build setts in new areas. It is therefore recommended that a condition is attached to any planning consent granted for a badger update survey to be completed prior to commencement of works should works not have commenced within 12 months of the 2020 survey. This is so that any change in badger activity since the 2020 survey can be recorded and mitigation measures amended as appropriate

Reasonable Avoidance Measures should also be implemented during works to protect badgers and other wildlife which may pass through the site: Ramps should be provided in excavations left open overnight to provide a means of escape and open pipework greater than 150 mm diameter be blanked off. Care must also be taken when infilling the fox den to prevent harming any wildlife. These measures can be detailed in a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) – further info below.

A condition should be attached to any planning permission granted, stating that the spread of cotoneaster and montbretia will be avoided. A method statement for the control and treatment of these invasive species will need to be submitted to and agreed by the council prior to any works commencing. This can form part of the CEMP (see below).

It is important that retained habitats (including the adjacent LNR) are adequately protected during the construction phase. The following condition should therefore be used: [BS42020: D.4.1] No development shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The CEMP shall include:

- a) risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities
- b) identification of 'biodiversity protection zones'
- c) measures and sensitive working practices to avoid or reduce impacts during construction
- d) location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity
- e) times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works
- f) responsible persons and lines of communication
- g) roles and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk or works (EcOW) where one is required
- h) use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs

and shall include details of measures to:

- Avoid the impact on nesting birds
- Avoid the spread and details of treatment (where appropriate) of invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA
- Avoid negative impact on sensitive ecological features during construction (such as the LNR, retained trees etc) and protect all retained features of biodiversity interest.
- RAMS to be adopted during works to minimise potential impacts to badgers and other wildlife

It is vital that lighting is sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife (e.g. foraging/commuting bats and badger) associated with light disturbance and ensuring the LNR is protected from light spill/remains an unlit zone is of particular importance. Careful landscape planting should also be used to ensure light is directed away from ecologically sensitive habitats (following the principles outlined in

Bat Conservation Trust guidance:

http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html).

As part of the final scheme it is advised the following condition is used [BS42020: D3.2]: Prior to occupation, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for areas to be lit shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and badgers and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

The ecology report refers to enhancing the biodiversity value of the site. It is recommended that the DEFRA metric 2.0 for Biodiversity Net Gain is used to inform development of the scheme to ensure that not only is appropriate mitigation achieved but also net gains for biodiversity are secured in accordance with national and local planning policy (NPPF and paragraph 3.345 of the LDF). It is crucial that habitat connectivity within and across the site is retained and improved. The planting strategy should create structural diversity and aim to utilise a range of native wildlife-friendly species which will produce nectar and berries. In particular buffer planting will be required along the north boundary of the application site where it borders the LNR and also retention and enhancement of the habitat corridor along the east boundary of the site will be required to ensure habitat connectivity is maintained for the local badger population. Notwithstanding this, where it is difficult to achieve compensatory habitats on site, off-site compensation, for example within the adjacent LNR, should be explored.

Proposed landscaping should comprise a mix of locally native species where possible, e.g through the creation of mixed species native hedgerows (i.e. substitute the proposed laurel hedging for a mix of holly and yew). Proposed tree cover should be increased. Additionally species for shrub planting should be carefully chosen to ensure successional flowering so that there is a year-round nectar and pollen resource. Details regarding the future management of habitat areas (including the proposed meadow area) will also need to be provided. Where possible hedgerows should be planted at plot boundaries instead of installing fencing. Where fencing must be used, occasional gaps (13cm x 13cm) should be provided at the base of close boarded fencing (minimum of one gap per elevation) to maintain habitat connectivity through the site for species such as hedgehog (see

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden/>)

The ecology report refers to the provision of bat and bird boxes on site. A bat box/tile or bird box to be provided at a minimum rate of one per residential dwelling would be appropriate. This can be easily achieved by providing integrated bat and bird roosting/nesting facilities into the new buildings (every dwelling does not necessarily need to have a bat/bird box, it may be more appropriate to have some dwellings without and some dwellings with more than one roost/nest feature and other boxes

sited on retained mature trees for example). The proposed number, locations and specifications of bat and bird boxes should be submitted to the LPA for review and this can be secured via condition.

The application site is located immediately adjacent to Heaton Mersey Common LNR. This site would likely be adversely impacted by the proposed scheme as a result of increased disturbance and recreational pressure. Proposals for the scheme involve provision of new pedestrian links between the proposed development area and the designated site. Further details on this, along with a detailed assessment of impacts on the LNR is required. I would encourage a financial contribution from the developer to not only maintain and improve the access to the LNR but also to contribute to the management of the habitats within the designated site so as to help offset any impacts associated with disturbance. This will help ensure the proposals do not contravene policy 3.368 of the LDF and NE1.1 of the retained UDP.

Further Comments 16.09.2020

The landscape plan has been amended and shows an increased level of tree planting in garden plots. This is welcome within the proposals. Also the plan now only shows one proposed access route into the LNR. This will help to minimise potential disturbance of the LNR through increased recreational pressure. Nonetheless, my comments issued on 13 July are still relevant – particularly in relation to the scheme design:

- It is advised that the DEFRA metric 2.0 for Biodiversity Net Gain is used to inform development of the scheme to ensure that not only is appropriate mitigation achieved but also net gains for biodiversity are secured (this may need to be off site where it is difficult to achieve appropriate compensation on site)
- Landscaping on site should seek to improve habitat connectivity: particularly along the north and east site boundaries. Hedgerows should be planted at plot boundaries instead of the proposed closeboard fencing. Where fencing must be used access gaps for hedgehogs and other wildlife must be provided.
- Locally native species should be used within the planting schedule wherever possible and details of proposed future management of habitat areas would be required
- Details regarding the assessment of impacts on the LNR is required. (e.g. associated with increased disturbance). A financial contribution is encouraged to not only maintain and improve the access to the LNR but also to contribute to the management of the habitats within the designated site so as to help offset potential impacts associated with disturbance.
- Bat and bird boxes to be provided on site at min rate of one per new dwelling - Sensitive lighting strategy will be required to minimise impacts to wildlife

Strategic Housing

The developer has recently been working closely with one of Stockport's Partner Registered Housing Providers, Great Places, to develop a proposal, in conjunction with Strategic Housing, that would see a balanced range of affordable housing options including shared ownership, social rent and affordable rent. The proportion of proposed affordable housing is significantly more than normal policy requirements, with only 5 units proposed for outright sale. This proposal supports the affordable housing needs of the Borough (Housing Needs Assessment 2019) and the objectives in the Housing Strategy 2016-21.

Highways

Original Comments 10.08.2020

The proposed development consists of 106 residential units comprising 79 dwellings and 27 flats on the former Cranford Golf Centre site located off Harwood Road in Heaton Mersey, Stockport. The submission is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, Road Safety Audit and Designers Response and I am minded that outline permission exists for 75 dwellings on the site.

The outline permission clearly carries significant weight and emphasises the appropriateness of this site for residential development. I am satisfied that the site is within an accessible location where residents would enjoy opportunity to access services, amenities and public transport on foot or cycle and as such the development would be unlikely to prove to be car travel dependant. There are nevertheless some infrastructure deficiencies within proximity of the site which need enhancement and improvement to make walking and cycling a more realistic travel prospect, in particular the footpath network to the North and East needs improvement to ensure the routes are of an appropriate quality and convenience for users and to afford good quality linkage with Education facilities and retail opportunities.

NPPF paragraphs 108 and 110 require development to ensure sustainable travel modes are prioritised and promoted and safe and suitable access is provided for all users. Furthermore, Council Core Strategy Policies CS9 and T-1 require development to be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and to reduce the need for car travel. Where deficiencies are identified, Policy requires development to provide or contribute towards infrastructure that will improve the accessibility, or make a site accessible. Ensuring permeability through the site and connectivity further afield is good practice to encourage walking and cycling as travel modes for residents and visitors. The necessary improvements cover approximately 700 metres of footpath network to the north and east of the site. The footpaths require widening to 3 metres where practical to enable the provision of a shared footway / cycleway, to be constructed using timber edging, geotextile membrane (where required), Mot & compacted gritstone surface and natural drainage via runoff. The estimated construction cost for the overall scheme has been provided to the applicant.

To ensure Policy compliance and provide a development with better quality accessibility options, enable sustainable transport choices to be made and discourage unnecessary car travel mode choices, the development should either deliver the improvement work with the detailed work to be the subject of a planning condition or alternatively provide the monetary sum under the terms of a S106 agreement.

With respect to traffic generation, assignment/distribution and highway impact I will not be concluding that the proposed development would give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe impact on the operation of the road network.

The Harwood Road junction with Didsbury Road is a priority controlled ghost island junction where the right turn lane provides a safe area for vehicles waiting to turn right into Harwood Road, helping to maintain the free flow of traffic on Didsbury Road.

Harwood Road, off which the development would be accessed, is 5.5m wide with lighting on both sides of the road for its entire length. The road is subject to a 'No

Waiting at Anytime' traffic regulation order along the entire length of the eastern carriageway between the golf centre access and Didsbury Road and on the western side of the Harwood Road from Didsbury Road for a distance of approximately 43m. Harwood Road itself is design standard compliant, has a good operational and safety record and has sufficient theoretical capacity to accommodate additional development traffic without unacceptable safety or operational concerns arising.

The supporting traffic modelling exercise demonstrates that the Harwood Road / A5145 Didsbury Road / Meltham Road junction is forecast to operate within its theoretical capacity with the proposed development in place in the future assessment year of 2025, without significant or unacceptable queuing occurring on any approach.

This opinion and conclusion is validated by past observations at the junction where typical peak hour operation and queuing was observed and the modelling was accepted as being accurate and robust in terms of vehicle queuing and delay. Whilst noting existing westbound queuing along Didsbury Road which does result in some delay for vehicles attempting to turn right out of Harwood Road it is accepted that the operational results for the "with development" scenario predicted by the modelling show the existing junction layout would continue to operate within capacity limits in the future year with development scenario. It is noted that the level of delay for vehicles attempting to exit Harwood Road would increase but this would not be to a level that can reasonably be demonstrated to be severe or indeed unacceptable or would justify mitigation or improvement to the form of the junction.

Whilst in principle I am supportive of this scale of residential development on the site, I have concern with the layout that is proposed for consideration.

NPPF paragraph 110 is clear that development should prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements within the scheme, create places that are safe, secure and attractive and respond to local design standards. Furthermore, Core Strategy DPD policy T-1 requires new residential development to be designed to take account of homezone principles with more people friendly streets and reduced vehicle speeds. The design of new residential development should accord with the principles of DfT Publication 'Manual for Streets' which aim to increase the quality of life through good design and creating more people-oriented streets. This requires the creation of streets rather than roads, with each street having various functions, i.e. place, movement, parking, access and utilities.

New development should discourage the building of streets that are primarily designed for motor traffic and that could be considered to be bland, unattractive and unwelcoming and potentially unsafe for vulnerable road users. A site layout should have a user hierarchy which puts pedestrians and cyclists at the top, encourages greater social interaction and provides a quality environment for users. The submitted layout is effectively and universally the use of formal carriageway and footway space and relatively long straight expanses of road space where excessive forward visibility would not assist restraining vehicle speeds. I consider it to be a bland and unattractive layout which does not prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists and it does not afford people orientated streets or streets with any purpose other than for movement. There is no sense of shared space or community creation with vehicles and vulnerable users separated and not encouraged to share space. Long and straight roads with no sense of enclosure as all dwellings are uniformly set back the same few metres from the road with frontage parking and no attractive views at the head of road spaces does not really respect the principles of a shared space community and is not really innovative design. There is also a

significant lack of permeability within the layout which is a simple cul-de-sac with no option but to undertake an excessive travel distance to negotiate a route through the site. Pedestrians and cyclists should be afforded alternative convenient and attractive routes for passage to minimise travel time and distance. I also question the areas of incidental green space and how these would be maintained?

The layout needs revision to integrate shared space into the design. I acknowledge that due to the scale of development effectively served from a single point of access there will need to be an initial spine road which is formal in design with dedicated carriageway and footway space, however there is considerable scope once within the confines of the site for a mix of road and street design. Without perhaps the opportunity of starting afresh with the site layout, I suggest some amendment and intervention to the existing layout which should be considered to evolve the layout to a more acceptable form.

The spine road serving plots 1-19 is uniform and straight with no interventions to better manage and restrain vehicle speeds. Ideally the road would be severed or inhibited with junction placement although measures to restrain vehicle speed could be considered. A raised table feature (surfaced in red Stone Mastic Asphalt) could be incorporated fronting plot 3 and a similar raised plateau provided at the junction surrounded by plots 9, 12, 13 and 14. Furthermore trees could be provided, where not affecting driveways, to break up the expanse of hard surfacing and create some horizontal deflection.

The road alignment fronting plots 30-33 could be broken with creation of a square or courtyard type area, different materials, shared space area, landscaped central area, adequate circulatory space and deflection between entry roads and the road on the easterly side being realigned alongside the boundary of plots 46 and 52 rather than closer to 33-37. Whilst this would remove the incidental green space it would enable the creation of larger plots opposite.

The road design should change to shared space at plots 52/64 with the remaining development served by a shared surface rather than formal carriageway and footway space. The applicant should note one of the benefits of shared surface is reduced land take for infrastructure purpose, the effective road/corridor width being 6.5m whereas carriageway and footway space requires 9.5m width.

It is also concerning that the site is impermeable for the movement of people, the layout offering no alternative but to follow the convoluted route of the road space. There is potential for a pedestrian/cycle link towards the southerly boundary of the site which will provide an alternative and more direct travel corridor to and from the residential units at the end of the development. A shared footpath/cycleway would be 3.5m in width and should be integrated into the layout to ensure it is open and overlooked rather than behind fencing in an oppressive corridor.

It is disappointing that although a shared surface arrangement was raised and requested during pre-application discussion, the submitted layout does not have regard to such. Without change to the layout I will not be in a position to advise that the layout complies with National and Local Planning Policy.

In addition to the above commentary I provide some additional thoughts and expressions of concern. Council Policy does not permit more than 5 individual dwellings to be served from a private drive type of arrangement so plots 73-79 and the apartment parking area needs review. It is probably a case of extending the

extent of road space which if formed as shared surface should be achievable without significantly affecting the layout.

Some parking areas/driveways scale substandard on the drawings. Driveways fronting plots 6-9, 39-41, 50, 52, 56, 57 and 74 appear short in length, requiring a minimum 5m depth. It may be a drawing print issue but need checking and clarifying that all driveways are minimum 5m depth and have a walkway at the head of spaces where access to doors is indicated.

I have no concern with 200% parking for dwellings adding that each dwelling requires a facility for the charging of an electric vehicle and a covered and secure cycle parking facility.

With respect to the apartments I am accepting of 33 parking spaces to serve 27 apartments although a minimum of 3 spaces need to be disabled compliant and three spaces require facilities for the charging of electric vehicles. Parking for 27 cycles is required, not 20 as indicated.

Finally, there does not appear to be sufficient receptacle provision for the apartments waste and recycling requirements. The apartments require, for paper, card and cartons 4 x 1100L Eurobins and 1 x 770L bin, for glass, cans and plastic bottles 4 x 1100L Eurobins and 1 x 770L bin, for food waste 1 x 770L bin, for residual waste 3 x 1100L Eurobins and 1 x 770L bin and for garden waste 6 x 1100L Eurobins. There is a need to ensure adequate receptacle provision otherwise there is an unacceptable risk that receptacles will be stored with parking areas and ancillary space and generally inhibiting the proper use of the site.

To summarise, whilst the principle of this development is considered acceptable the detail of the site layout needs review and considerable amendment in order for me to offer support.

Further comments 17.09.2020

I write with comments, following the receipt of revised drawings.

The proposed development consists of 106 residential units comprising 79 dwellings and 27 flats on the former Cranford Golf Centre site located off Harwood Road in Heaton Mersey, Stockport. The submission is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, additional technical note, Road Safety Audit and Designers Response and I am minded that outline permission exists for 75 dwellings on the site, which clearly carries significant weight and emphasises the appropriateness of this site for residential development.

In terms of accessibility, the nearest bus stops to the frontage of the site are 300m away on Didsbury Road, a short walk from the site. These stops provide access to frequent bus services, with four services each stopping between hourly and three times per hour. Metrolink is relatively close by, within a 750m walk and this provides services into Manchester every 12 minutes and East Didsbury Rail Station is approximately 1km away with opportunity for connectivity further afield.

Other services and amenities, that being shops, schools, leisure facilities, employment opportunities and health practices are all conveniently located within approximately 1km of the site and these can easily and conveniently accessed on foot or cycle. Furthermore, there is cycle infrastructure within highway space close to the site and national cycle network routes are within close proximity giving

opportunity for convenient travel by cycle. I have raised with the applicant the need for improvement to the walking and cycling network to the immediate North and East of the site to facilitate enhanced and good quality linkage to services and amenities and further encourage sustainable travel choices to be made. In this respect the applicant has agreed to a financial contribution towards the costs of widening and resurfacing footpaths that adjoin the site and enhance connectivity to the Mersey Road/Priestnall Road area. The sum would be secured under the terms of a S106 Agreement.

These factors have led me to conclude that the site is within an accessible location where residents would enjoy opportunity to access services, amenities and public transport on travel on foot or cycle and that the site is appropriate for this quantum of development. There is just reason to consider and accept that the development would be unlikely to prove to be wholly car travel dependant and that the proposal accords with NPPF and Local Plan policies.

With respect to traffic generation, assignment/distribution and highway impact, the accompanying Transport Assessment and a further technical note have appraised such. Traffic generation has been predicted utilising TRICS data in order to identify representative trip rates for the proposed development. I am satisfied that the data set utilised is representative of a site in a suburban location with good local public transport accessibility and this affords a robust base for predicting trips associate with the development. The consequent traffic generation has been assessed in terms of its impact on the Harwood Road junction with Didsbury Road, as requested with this being the nearest major junction to the site and likely to be subjected to the greatest impact.

Harwood Road, off which the development would be accessed, is 5.5m wide with lighting on both sides of the road for its entire length. The road is subject to a 'No Waiting at Anytime' traffic regulation order along the entire length of the eastern carriageway between the golf centre access and Didsbury Road and on the western side of the Harwood Road from Didsbury Road for a distance of approximately 43m. Harwood Road itself is design standard complaint, has a good operational and safety record and has sufficient theoretical capacity to accommodate additional development traffic without unacceptable safety or operational concerns arising.

The submission includes a parking survey undertaken along Harwood Road, which show that Traffic Regulation Orders are generally respected and that kerbside parking, where it is permitted, does not unacceptably impact on operation of the road. Whilst it is acknowledged that development will introduce additional trips along Harwood Road, the existence of TRO's safely manages the operation of the road space and whilst there may be further minor delay to vehicle passage whilst drivers may give way to opposing traffic, the periods of delay will not be excessive or severe or cause an unacceptable inconvenience. The road is relatively straight with good forward visibility for users and it has a good safety record and the volume of parking proposed within the site should not give rise to any overspill parking from the site. I am aware of concerns expressed that development traffic could introduce delay to emergency vehicle passage. When I note the presence of TRO's, that parking on Harwood Road should not be exacerbated and the reasonable expectation that drivers will give way to opposing emergency vehicles, I do not consider that development traffic will introduce unacceptable risk to the infrequent movement of emergency vehicles along Harwood Road.

As such I cannot see reason or justification to oppose the volume of development traffic that would be generated by virtue of its impact on Harwood Road.

The Harwood Road junction with Didsbury Road is a priority controlled ghost island junction where the right turn lane provides a safe area for vehicles waiting to turn right into Harwood Road, helping to maintain the free flow of traffic on Didsbury Road. The junction is protected with TRO's which ensure its general operation is not adversely affected by parked vehicles.

The supporting traffic modelling exercise demonstrates that the junction is forecast to operate within its theoretical capacity with the proposed development in place in the future assessment year of 2025, without significant or unacceptable queuing occurring on any approach. This opinion and conclusion is validated by past observations at the junction where typical peak hour operation and queuing was observed and the modelling has been accepted as being accurate and robust in terms of vehicle queuing and delay. Whilst I note that the existing westbound queuing along Didsbury Road can result in some delay for vehicles attempting to turn right out of Harwood Road it is accepted that the operational results for the "with development" scenario predicted by the modelling, show the existing junction layout would continue to operate within capacity limits in the future year with development scenario. I note and accept that the level of delay for vehicles attempting to exit Harwood Road would increase but this would not be to a level that can reasonably be demonstrated to be severe or indeed unacceptable or would justify mitigation or improvement to the form of the junction.

In conclusion, I cannot see reason or justification to oppose the development on the grounds of traffic generation or highway impact and this view is also informed by the fact that this proposal in effect represents an increase of 31 dwellings compared to the existing outline permission for the site, which also included small scale sports facilities and consequent traffic generation.

In terms of the internal site layout, there is a clear expectation within the NPPF and Local Planning Policies that development should be laid out to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements, create places that are safe, secure and attractive and respond to local design standards. Development should be designed to take account of homezone principles with more people friendly streets and reduced vehicle speeds and to accord with the principles of DfT Publication 'Manual for Streets'. In summary there should be the creation of streets rather than roads, with each street being people-oriented and having various functions, i.e. place, movement, parking, access and utilities.

I had concern with the initial site layout, feeling this did not respect these principles and following discussion with the applicant the road space has been subjected to some minor changes.

There is now a better mix of formal road space where it is necessary along the main spine and shared space for the remaining parts of the site. Measures are proposed along the main spine road to assist speed management, in the form of raised tables and junction plateaus and I am accepting that the extents of individual roads are not such that excessive speed is likely to occur. A shared footpath cycleway is proposed along the sites southerly boundary and this is welcomed as it provides a better environment for vulnerable road users and a shortened travel distance across the site. The link, whilst having a physical boundary on its northern side, is adjacent to the cricket ground with open fencing on the boundary which helps reduce any oppressive nature to the link. The site layout also will incorporate a link to land to the north where footpath improvements would be undertaken courtesy of the financial contribution secured under the S106.

Some minor amendments have been requested to the layout, matters of detail that do not materially affect the road space alignment or plot space. I anticipate a revised drawing will be forthcoming although these matters of detail could be dealt with under conditional control in absence of such.

I am supportive of the provision of 2 parking bays for each of the dwellings, the construction, surfacing and drainage of driveway areas is a matter for conditional control. Each dwelling will need providing with a facility for the charging of an electric vehicle and a covered and secure cycle parking facility, again these are both matters capable of conditional control.

With respect to the apartments, I am accepting of 33 parking spaces to serve 27 apartments. This provision includes 3 spaces that are disabled user compliant and furthermore, three of the spaces will need facilities for the charging of electric vehicles. I see no reason to express concern with this overall level of parking noting the site is accessible, parking demand for smaller apartment units is typically less than for dwellings and there is some kerbspace throughout the site where incidental parking can occur. The detail of construction, surfacing and drainage of the parking area is a matter for conditional control, as is electric vehicle charging facilities. A covered and secure facility or facilities for the parking of 27 cycles is required and I note that a location and indicative detail is shown on drawings. Whilst the location is fine the detail of the facility is not appropriate at this stage for long stay residential cycle parking, nevertheless this is a matter for conditional control.

Finally, with regards to refuse and recycling provision, I am satisfied that adequate provision will be made for the dwellings and apartments. A minor amendment to the apartment receptacle storage and access arrangements has been requested but this is a matter of detail and I conclude that that overall provision should not give rise to receptacles inhibiting perhaps the parking areas and collection will be able to be undertaken in an acceptable manner.

To summarise, I am accepting that a residential development in this location will not give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway operation and safety, it is appropriately located and of a design that generally respects design principles. Subject to securing the financial contribution under the terms of a S106 Agreement and necessary conditional control, Highways have no concerns with the application.

Planning Policy (Housing)

Looking at the proposals from a housing/affordable housing perspective, there do not appear to be any significant issues. The overall mix of house types is considered to be acceptable and the delivery of 101 out of 106 units as affordable is very much welcomed. Even allowing for the fact the Council would normally seek to secure affordable via shared ownership or social rent, it is not envisaged that the delivery of 20 affordable rent units as being an issue in this case. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

Planning Policy (Open Space)

Loss of the Local Open Space

The LOS to be lost is a disused former driving range. When this facility was open, the site was sealed off and open to members only and therefore not accessible to

the public and not of benefit to surrounding residents. The loss of the LOS in principle has also been agreed previously by the granting of the outline permission.

New open space provision

Policy SIE-2 of the Stockport Core Strategy requires development to take a positive role in providing recreation and amenity open space to meet the needs of its users/occupants. The policy states that large new residential developments are required to include provision for recreation and amenity open space on or readily accessible to the site and gives guidelines based on the expected number of occupants. Furthermore, it is then recognised that whilst as much as possible of the open space should be within or adjacent to the new development, the Council will permit some or all of the provision to be off-site or through contributions where there is no practical alternative or where it would be better to do so.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 'Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments' (adopted September 2019) provides greater clarity on the off-site requirements and states that open space contributions will be secured in the form of a Planning Obligation under a Section 106 agreement to be completed before planning permission is granted.

The commuted sum is split according to Annex 1 of the SPD and the costs per person calculated.

The Population capacity of the proposal = 372 people

Proposed On-site Provision as part of the development

Applicant has put forward following POS:

- 'LAP' of 0.04 ha. (400 sqm)
- 'LEAP'/trim trail of 0.04 ha. (400 sqm)

Total = 0.08 ha.

Additional POS:

North and south Parcels either side of trim trail = $0.144 + 0.038 = 0.182$

Large site at entrance = 0.048

Additional POS total = 0.23 ha.

Overall provision total = 0.31 ha.

Population from proposed LAP

0.04 HA. which is 400 sqm

LAP min size inc. buffer is 400 sqm serving 50 people

LAP therefore meets requirement, and serves **50 people**.

Population of proposed LEAP

0.04 Ha., which is 400 sqm

LEAP min size is 3600 sqm serving 510 people

$400/3600 = 0.11$ or 11%

For population, 11% - $0.11 \times 510 = 56.6$ (**60 people**).

Remove from population capacity

Take LAP and LEAP away from population capacity (372-110) = **262 people**

Account of the additional POS being provided on site

The FIT standard = 2.4 ha. per 1000 people. This is split into 0.7 ha. per 1000 for children's play and 1.7 ha. for formal recreational space.

Children's play

0.7 ha. standard/1000 people = 0.0007 ha. per person
Required children's play provision = 0.0007 x 372 = 0.2604 ha.

As shown above, the applicant has made overall provision for 0.31 ha.

Or, on basis of providing POS left over after LAP/LEAP capacity reduced...
Required leftover provision = 0.0007 X 262 = 0.1834 ha.

The applicant has made provision for 0.23 ha. beyond that provided in the LAP/LEAP.

As such, the applicant has met the required provision for children's play on-site based on the FIT standard. As such, no commuted sum for children's play is required.

Formal sport

Population capacity = 372

The formal sport element of the commuted sum is not subject to thresholds and will be allocated to the Council's Formal Sport Priority List. The list is compiled from evidence in the authority's Playing Pitch Strategy and Local Football Facilities Plan, and any such project is approved by Cabinet Member.

Sport England

Original Comments 19.06.2020

The application site is immediately adjacent to a site considered to constitute playing field, or land last used as playing field, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). As such Sport England is a statutory consultee as there is considered to be a prejudicial impact on the adjacent cricket ground.

Sport England has sought to consider the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (particularly paragraph 97) and against its own playing fields policy. Unfortunately, there is insufficient information to enable Sport England to adequately assess the proposal or to make a substantive response.

Please therefore could the following information be provided as soon as possible:

1. Needs Assessment to demonstrate the golf centre land is not required to meet a current or future golf need when assessed against paragraph 97(a) of the NPPF; or evidence that the golf centre land has been replaced in the locality to meet the requirements of paragraph 97(b) of the NPPF.

2. A Ballstrike Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy this cannot be conditioned as the required mitigation, usually by way of ballstop netting, is likely to be of a scale that requires planning permission in its own right. Any mitigation required should be shown on the proposed plans before the application is determined. The Mitigation Strategy should be accompanied by a Management and Maintenance Programme.

Comments from England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)

Sport England has consulted with the ECB and they have provided the following comments which I would be grateful if you would forward on to the applicant as it will assist when addressing point (2) above:

- ECB advise that any development within 80m of a cricket square can create a risk of ball strike, with consequential risk of harm to property and/or persons and hence a potential future liability for the site operator/owner, that in extremis could set at risk the continuance of cricket at the site.
- Development within this 80m strike zone is potentially prejudicial to the use of the playing field as detailed in Sport England's planning guidance
- This has been tested in case law, most notably and recently in R (East Meon Forge Association) vs South Hampshire District Council et al (2014).
- ECB recommends that a risk assessment is undertaken for ball strike and if required mitigation proposed prior to any development taking place. Currently, ECB only recognise Labosport UK Ltd as a qualified (research backed) and indemnified source of ball strike risk assessment.
- ECB objects to this planning application on the basis that the proposed development falls within this 80m strike zone (the boundary is approximately 45m) and prejudices the use of land being used as a playing field.
- We would expect to see a completed Labosport report with any required mitigation being approved including an ongoing Management and maintenance programme. Heaton Mersey Cricket Club are a very proactive cricket club with a number of teams and junior growth.

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document, which includes the type of information required in order for us to evaluate a planning application against our policy, can be viewed via the below link:

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-forsport#playing_fields_policy

(see Annex B)

Sport England's interim position on this proposal is to submit a holding objection. However, we will happily review our position following the receipt of all the further information requested above. As I am currently unable to make a substantive response, in accordance with the Order referred to above, the 21 days for formally responding to the consultation will not commence until I have received all the information requested above.

Further Comments 23.07.2020

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the additional information.

- Needs Assessment - the Open Space Revised Standards Paper referenced and replicated by the applicant is not a demand and supply analysis, it only presents sets out the supply side. Although the paper concludes there are no shortfalls, this is based on a drive time catchment and not on the numbers of players and capacity at each golf course. There is no indication what the capacity of the existing golf courses are and whether current and future demand can be accommodated by those courses. The Open Space Assessment Report does not conclude this site is specifically surplus to requirement it only refers to it being closed due to financial pressures. No assessment has been carried out that clearly shows the course is surplus to requirement or the land should be retained to meet current or future demand.

However, Sport England has consulted England Golf and they advise members from Cranford Golf Centre have been accommodated elsewhere. On balance it is considered this site broadly meets the surplus to requirement criteria but Sport England will not support any other planning applications for loss of Golf Courses using the Open Space Revised Standards Paper and Open Space Assessment Report to justify that loss.

- Ballstrike Risk Assessment – the ECB have been consulted and advise the Labosport Ballstrike Risk Assessment and mitigation previously submitted with the 2017 application is still valid and does not need to be amended. The applicant states:

“There is an existing 7.4m high ball-stop fence along this boundary which will be replaced in accordance with the recommendations above. This will be indicated as a notation on the submitted application drawings. The fence will be managed and maintained in accordance with an agreed programme which could be the subject of an appropriate condition.” P.8 Response to Consultation - Sport England

Based on the assessment above Sport England require:

- an amended plan showing the location of the existing 7.4m ballstop fence.
- Maintenance and Management Scheme for the ballstop fencing. The ECB advise this should be a pre commencement condition as the ballstop fencing is required to be managed and maintained during construction of the houses to protect those working on the development. ECB also advise that as it will be the presence of housing that will cause a ballstrike risk then the management and maintenance should be the responsibility of the developer. Sport England agree with that requirement.

Wording of condition:

Prior to commencement of the development, a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the ballstop fencing including management responsibilities during and after construction, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure that ballstop fencing is capable of being managed and maintained to protect the development workforce and residents of the development

and to accord with Development Plan Policy [insert relevant local plan policy] and paragraph 182 of the NPPF.

Pre commencement reason: to ensure the workforce of the development are protected from ball strike.

Conclusion: Sport England will be in a position to formally withdraw the objection once the amended plan is submitted, and written agreement from the applicant to the wording of the condition is obtained.

Further Comments following submission of Amended Plans 01.09.2020

The applicant has submitted an amended plan showing the position of the existing 7.5m ballstop fence (Amended Landscape Layout). The annotation confirms the ballstop fencing will be replaced as recommended by Labosport. However, the legend refers to the height TBC. The Labosport recommends the current height should be maintained, and written confirmation is required from the applicant that a 7.5m replacement ballstop fence will be erected. The information provided doesn't say when the replacement will be installed so for that reason I have amended the wording of the condition to ensure that is included.

For information the replacement fence should be installed prior to development commencing for the protection of the workers.

Subject to the following condition being attached to any planning approval, Sport England wish to withdraw the objection:

Prior to commencement of the development, a Management and Maintenance Scheme for the ballstop fencing to include a timetable for the replacement of the ballstop fence, management responsibilities during and after construction, a maintenance schedule and a mechanism for review shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure that ballstop fencing is capable of being managed and maintained to protect the development workforce and residents of the development and to accord with Development Plan Policy [insert relevant local plan policy] and paragraph 182 of the NPPF.

Pre commencement reason: to ensure the workforce of the development are protected from ball strike.

GMP (Design for Security)

Having looked at the documents submitted, GMP would recommend that a condition to reflect the physical security specifications set out in the Crime Impact Statement should be added, if the application is to be approved.

Environment Agency

The proposed development site appears to have been the subject of past industrial activity which poses a risk of pollution to controlled waters.

We have not undertaken a detailed review of the risk posed to controlled waters from land contamination and would therefore advise that you refer to our published Guiding Principles for Land Contamination which outlines the approach we would wish to see adopted to managing risks to the water environment from this site.

Where planning controls are considered necessary we would recommend that you seek to integrate any requirements for human health protection with those for protection of the water environment. This approach is supported by Paragraph 170 (e and f) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

ANALYSIS

In considering this application, it is acknowledged that the applicant has sought to engage with the Planning Authority, statutory consultees and the local community prior to the submission of this application. This engagement is a welcomed and important element of the planning process and one which is encouraged not only by this Authority but by the Government also. In this context, pre application discussions with the applicant have been continuing for some time with the proposals evolving and changing over that time period in response to the feedback given. The submission of this application is therefore the culmination of that process however during the consideration of this application, further amendments have also been discussed and agreed to ensure that the proposals comply with the Development Plan.

Members are advised that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para10). Para 11 of the NPPF reconfirms this position and advises that for decision making this means:-

- approving developments that accord with an up to date development plan or
- where the policies which are most important for the determination of the application are out of date (this includes for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing), granting planning permission unless:
 - the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of importance (that is those specifically relating to designated heritage assets (conservation areas and listed buildings)) provides a clear reason for refusing planning permission or
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

In this respect, given that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year deliverable supply of housing, the relevant elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 which seek to deliver housing supply that are considered to be out of date. That being the case, the tilted balance as referred to in para 11 of the NPPF directs that permission should be approved unless:

- there are compelling reasons in relation to the impact of the development upon the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings to refuse planning permission or
- the adverse impacts of approving planning permission (such as the loss of the community facility, local open space or sports pitch or impact on residential amenity, highway safety etc) would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The main issues for consideration are as follows:-

- Loss of the Local Open Space
- Principle of residential accommodation including affordable housing and density
- Impact on the character of the locality
- Impact on residential amenity
- Highway impacts
- Other matters such as ecology, trees, energy efficient design, contamination and drainage.

Having regard to this presumption in favour of residential development, Members are advised accordingly.

Principle of Residential Development and Loss of Local Open Space

Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy directs new residential development towards the more accessible parts of the Borough identifying 3 spatial priority areas (Central Housing Area; Neighbourhood Priority Areas and the catchment areas of District/Large Local Centres; and other accessible locations). As the application site is located within 400m of Heaton Mersey Large Local Centre, the site falls under this second category of spatial priority areas.

As referred to at the start of this analysis, the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing means that elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 are considered to be out of date. As such the tilted balance in favour of the residential redevelopment of the site as set out in para 11 of the NPPF is engaged.

The tilted balance as referred to in para 11 of the NPPF directs that permission should be approved unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Also in such circumstances, Policies CS4 and H2 of the Core Strategy will allow residential development on sites where it meets accessibility criteria and subject to a sequential approach when the site is deemed to be urban greenfield. In this case, the application site is made up of a mix of previously developed urban land (this includes the Golf Centre buildings and the car park and vehicular access areas) and urban greenfield land (the open land of the driving range). Policy CS4 states that:

The focus is on making effective use of land within accessible urban areas. The priority for development is therefore previously developed land within urban areas. Urban Greenfield and Green Belt development should accord with the following sequential approach:

- *firstly, the use of accessible urban sites that are not designated as open space, or considered to be areas of open space with amenity value;*
- *secondly, the use of private residential gardens in accessible urban locations where proposals respond to the character of the local area and*

maintain good standards of amenity and privacy for the occupants of existing housing, in accordance with Development Management Policy H-1 'Design of Residential Development';

- *thirdly, the use of accessible urban open space where it can be demonstrated that there is adequate provision of open space in the local area or the loss would be adequately replaced, in accordance with Core Policy CS8 'SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT';*

The accessibility score of the application is over 60 in this case and significantly above the minimum score of 34 required by policy H2. Notwithstanding this, Policy H-2 confirms that when there is less than a 5 year deliverable supply of housing (as is currently the case) the required accessibility scores will be lowered to allow the deliverable supply to be topped up by other sites in accessible locations. This position has been regularly assessed to ensure that the score reflects the ability to 'top up' supply to a 5 year position. However, the scale of shortfall is such that in order to genuinely reflect the current position in that regard, the accessibility score required has been reduced to zero.

The site would partly fall within the first category of CS4 as the Golf Centre Land is previously developed. The rest of the site would fall under urban greenfield and therefore, the third category above applies. It should be noted that the development of the site would meet local need by providing affordable housing and would support regeneration strategies in remediating any contamination.

The third stage category does allow for the use of accessible urban open space where it can be demonstrated that there is adequate provision of open space in the local area or the loss would be adequately replaced, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS8.

In addition to the above advice contained within paragraph 97 of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) indicates that:

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.'

The Local Open Space to be lost, comprising the Golf Driving Range, is classified as a private sports facility, it is currently disused and is currently providing no recreational benefit for the surrounding residents. As outlined within the Open Spaces Study submitted to accompany the application:

"The Open Space Study was reviewed in 2017 and was based on a definition of Open Space as "Land set out for the purpose of public recreation". This means Open Space must be a defined site with clearly identifiable boundaries freely accessible for members of the public to access and use, and meets one of the

open space typologies set out in the Study, which includes Outdoor Sport Facilities.

The application site is referred to in the section on Golf Courses as site “363 The Cranford Golf Centre and was identified in the previous 2005 Study. The driving range facility has since closed due to financial pressures”. The site was therefore excluded from the Category of Outdoor Sports Facilities in the Study and does not contribute to the total area of golf or other recreational provision or amenity greenspace.

Nevertheless, the Study concluded (Para. 14.5) that there was no shortfall in provision of golf courses in all areas across the Borough.

The results of the 2017 Study have been and will continue to be used in the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report as the basis for assessing the Change in amount of recreational and amenity open space and area of protected urban open space with the Target ‘no less’.

The fact is that whilst the site is allocated as Local Open Space on the UDP Proposals Map, it does not function as Open Space (as identified in the Study) nor does it contribute to the current provision for the measurement of Open Space for the purposes of the AMR. As stated elsewhere, it is not included in the Playing Pitch Strategy and Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) 2018/2018 as it is not, nor ever has been, a playing pitch or playing field as defined by Sport England.

Saved UDP Policy UOS1.3 states that: “7.19 - The function and quality of a piece of open land is of importance as well as the overall level of provision in an area”. The site has never been assessed as being of amenity value, as evidenced by the extant planning permission for residential development.”

Moreover, Committee will be aware that since the site became vacant in 2014, it has been the subject of anti-social behaviour which has adversely impacted on the amenity of local residents. In this respect since acquiring the site, the current owner (and applicant) has implemented a number of additional / improved security measures in conjunction with the Local Authority and Greater Manchester Police in an attempt to reduce the adverse impact of the premises on local residents.

In considering the proposed re-development of the designated Local Open Space against Core Strategy policies CS4 and CS8 and Saved UDP Review policy UOS1.3, material weight should be given to the previous outline planning permission DC/062251 granted for 75 dwellings across the entire site by Committee in December 2017. In other historic appeal decisions and subsequent planning applications, the principle of allowing development on the current application site was established for residential purposes. Although a previous appeal was ultimately dismissed on other grounds, the Planning Inspector at the time considered that the appeal scheme would result in the loss of a comparatively small part of the whole site and would not harm neither its recreational function nor its amenity value and concluded that the proposal to develop that piece of designated open space, was in accordance with saved policy UOS1.3 of the UDP Review and policy CS8 of the Core Strategy DPD.

Clearly, the development currently proposed would result in a reduction in the quantity of formal sports provision in the Heaton’s. However, in considering the

wider planning balance of the application, it should be highlighted that the proposal will be providing the following benefits in terms of open space provision / enhancements:-

- An on-site Local Area of Play within the centre of the development with play equipment for children up to the age of 6;
- An on-site Local Equipped Area of Play on the eastern boundary of the site containing a Trim Trail with associated climbing ropes, horizontal bars and balance blocks;
- 3 further areas of public open space within the development (more details below);
- New indicative cycle and pedestrian links to the wider cycle and nature trail networks;
- Capacity for comprehensive tree and shrub planting throughout the site;
- Contribution towards further off-site provision for formal sport and children's play.

Policy SIE-2 of the Stockport Core Strategy requires development to take a positive role in providing recreation and amenity open space to meet the needs of its users/occupants. The policy states that large new residential developments are required to include provision for recreation and amenity open space on or readily accessible to the site and gives guidelines based on the expected number of occupants. Furthermore, it is then recognised that whilst as much as possible of the open space should be within or adjacent to the new development, the Council will permit some or all of the provision to be off-site or through contributions where there is no practical alternative or where it would be better to do so.

As outlined above, the applicant has offered to provide a LAP, a LEAP and a total of 0.23 ha of public open space within the development in 3 separate areas. This includes one area at the entrance of the site that could be used by both existing and future residents, and then 2 further larger areas towards the eastern boundary of the site surrounding the LEAP trim trail. Therefore, to mitigate the loss of the existing LOS on the site and to ensure adequate provision of open space, play facilities and formal sport, the proposals include a mixture of the on-site provision outlined above and a commuted sum to contribute towards off site provision.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 'Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments' (adopted September 2019) provides greater clarity on the off-site requirements and states that open space contributions will be secured in the form of a Planning Obligation under a Section 106 agreement to be completed before planning permission is granted.

As outlined in the Policy comments in the consultations section above, the commuted sum is split according to Annex 1 of the SPD and the costs per person are calculated based on the predicted population capacity of the development. Based on the mix of housing proposed, the population capacity would be 372 and a total contribution of has been calculated and secured for children's play and for formal sport.

The proposed development includes the provision of a LAP, a LEAP and 3 additional areas of public open space with a total area of 0.31 hectares. Following further calculations and the use of the FIT standards, it is concluded that the applicant has met the required provision for children's play on-site based on the FIT standard. As such, no commuted sum for children's play is required.

The contribution for formal sport would still be required, as this is not being provided for at the site. Therefore, the commuted sum for formal sport would be based on the full population capacity of the site, which is 372. The formal sport element of the commuted sum, is not subject to thresholds and will be allocated to the Council's Formal Sport Priority List. This will be allocated to priority projects listed in the Formal Sports Priority List within the Heaton and Reddish area. The list is compiled from evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy and Local Football Facilities Plan, and any such project will be approved by Cabinet Member.

In considering whether the application complies with paragraph 97 of the NPPF, Core Policy CS 8 and UDP Review Policy L1.1, an assessment must be carried out as to whether the formal sports potential of the former golf range could be replaced by equivalent or better, quality, quantity, usefulness and attractiveness and if there are circumstances where it would result in meeting 'leisure needs' and 'improving participation in the use of recreation facilities'.

In this respect and as detailed previously in this report, the proposal comprises a package of enhanced formal sport and recreational facilities available both on and off site for the future residents and the wider community, as well as accessibility and ecological enhancements proposed in connection with the adjacent Heaton Mersey Common Local Nature Reserve.

These works are deemed to enhance the quantity (in terms of usability), quality, usefulness, public accessibility and attractiveness of an area of open space, thereby bring improvements to the community participation of an existing under-used recreational facility.

Having regard to the above and the wider 'planning balance', it is considered that subject to the proposed improvements on site and to further provision off-site being secured through an appropriate S106 Agreement, the loss of the redundant Local Open Space as a result of the proposed residential development is justifiable in planning terms. The application therefore complies with Core Strategy Policies CS4, H2, CS8 and Saved UDP Review policies UOS1.3 and L1.1.

Affordable Housing Provision

Paragraph 62 of NPPF requires that where a need for affordable housing has been identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required with an expectation that this should be provided on-site unless:

- (a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
- (b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

Paragraph 63 of NPPF states that in order to support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount. A footnote advises that this should be equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings and does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

Policy H-3 is concerned with provision of affordable housing. Paragraph 3.125 sets 50% affordable housing provision as an overall strategic target (i.e. to be met from contributions from both market housing sites and publicly funded development programmes).

A 40% affordable housing target is set for Council owned sites, or 'as high a level as is viable'. In earlier iterations of the Core Strategy, 50% affordable housing was proposed for Council owned sites but was reduced to 40% during the examination process as this was not considered to be viable as acknowledged in paragraph 33 of the Inspector's Report.

Paragraph 3.126 seeks provision of affordable housing in connection with all development proposals involving 15 or more market dwellings or on sites of 0.5 hectares or greater.

Variable targets for affordable housing provision are specified dependent upon the prevailing level of house prices within the identified sub-areas. Paragraph 3.127 states that 30% affordable housing provision will be sought in areas with 'above average' property prices, for example, those listed in paragraph 3.126 (which makes reference to 'The Heatons' (excluding Heaton Norris)) and those areas shown as 'hot' on the map which comprises figure 9. The application site is therefore located in an area where the default policy requirement is for 30% affordable housing. However, as the site is currently designated as urban open space Policy H3 requires that 50% of the dwellings should be affordable housing.

The extant outline planning permission (DC 062251) was granted with a S106 Agreement which specified 50% Affordable Housing, with the Tenure split as 50% Shared Ownership Dwellings and 50% Social Rented Dwellings. Since the approved development was for up to 75 dwellings, this would have been 37/38 affordable, of which 19 would have been for shared ownership and 19 for social rent.

Comparing this to the current proposals for this application, it is proposed for a total of 101 affordable units of accommodation to be delivered including the following tenures; Shared Ownership 54, Affordable Rent 20 and Social Rent 27. The remaining 5 dwellinghouses will then be provided for outright sale. It is considered that this affordable housing scheme addresses the provision of relevant affordable housing consideration in light of national and local policy. The affordable housing delivered shall meet the definition of affordable housing in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of the following information:

- i. the type, tenure, and location of the scheme for the provision of affordable housing
- ii. the arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing units to an affordable housing provider
- iii. the arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both the first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing units, and

iv. the occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of occupiers of the affordable housing units and the means by which such occupancy criteria shall be enforced.

In response to the above, the following information is provided within the application in relation to the affordable housing provision. The affordable housing scheme comprises a good tenure and unit mix, with a range of each house type being provided under each tenure. The accommodation is spread across the whole site and is therefore, acceptable from a location perspective. Provided that the tenure and unit mix may be varied from time to time throughout the lifetime of the development subject to the submission of a revised affordable housing scheme for provision of the affordable housing that is to be submitted for the prior written approval of the Council.

The affordable housing units will be developed on behalf of a Registered Provider, which is currently intended to be Great Places Housing Association. For the avoidance of doubt, this Statement and the planning permission are not restricted to one Registered Provider. The affordable housing is free to be developed, owned, and managed by any Registered Provider. Notwithstanding this, it is confirmed within the submitted Affordable Housing Statement that the Registered Provider will be registered with Homes England and a Partner Registered Provider with Stockport Housing Partnership.

The Affordable Housing Statement also confirms:

“Following handover of the completed affordable housing units a Registered Provider will, in respect of the affordable rent and social rent units, own these units and be responsible for their future lettings and maintenance. In terms of the shared ownership housing units these will be marketed for sale and will be part owned by a Registered Provider until the point at which any future occupier decides to ‘staircase’ out of the property and own it outright when the obligations cease absolutely.

i. In terms of affordability the following applies:

- The rent levels for the affordable rent units will be set at up to 80% of market rent. The ownership of the rent units by a Registered Provider will ensure that those units remain affordable for both first and subsequent occupier, unless disposed of under an obligation in respect of a Right to Buy or Right to Acquire and subject to the mortgagee exemptions detailed herein.*

- Shared ownership housing units will be disposed of to purchasers who meet the Homes England eligibility criteria as set out in the Capital Funding Guide. Purchasers will initially be able to purchase between 25% and 75% of the full market value of the shared ownership housing unit but with the ability to staircase up to 100%. A relevant Independent Financial Adviser will then use the approved Homes England Shared Ownership Affordability calculator to ascertain that any applicant is maximising their contribution and that any mortgage and rental costs are affordable and sustainable.*

- The Shared Ownership lease will give the buyer the right to buy the remaining share or additional shares in their home and therefore move from an initial share to full ownership in a number of stages as and when they can afford them. Once a Buyer staircase to 100% the affordable housing obligations cease absolutely.*

• The affordable housing provisions under this affordable housing statement shall not be binding on a mortgagee or chargee (or any receiver (including an administrative receiver)) appointed by such mortgagee or chargee or any other person appointed under any security documentation (whether relating to a Registered Provider or the lessee of any unit) to enable such mortgagee or chargee to realise its security or any administrator (howsoever appointed) including a housing administrator (each a “Receiver”) of the whole or any part of the affordable housing units or any persons or bodies deriving title through such mortgagee or chargee or Receiver PROVIDED THAT:

- such mortgagee or chargee or Receiver shall first give written notice to the Council of its intention to dispose of the affordable housing units and shall have used reasonable endeavours over a period of three months from the date of the written notice to complete a disposal of the affordable housing units to another Registered Provider or to the Council for a consideration not less than the amount due and outstanding under the terms of the relevant security documentation including all accrued principal monies, interest and costs and expenses; and*
- if such disposal has not completed within the three month period, the mortgagee, chargee or Receiver shall be entitled to dispose of the affordable housing units free from the affordable housing provisions contained in this affordable housing statement which provisions shall determine absolutely.*

ii. The occupancy criteria for each affordable tenure will be as follows:

• The properties will be allocated as per the Local Authority’s Allocations Policy and implemented as per the agreed approach between the Council and the Registered Provider. This is likely to focus on achieving a mix of residents in the scheme to create a balanced and sustainable community. The Council will have 50% nominations on first let and then 50% on relets.

• The shared ownership housing units will be disposed of to purchasers who meet the Homes England eligibility criteria as set out in the Capital Funding Guide. In line with the Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) prospectus; no nationally or locally defined prioritisation criteria will apply to the shared ownership housing units other than a prioritisation for current and former members of the British Armed Forces. Eligible purchasers will have a household income of less than £80,000 per annum and will not own another property.”

Therefore, based on the above affordable housing provision proposals that will be secured through the inclusion of either a condition or a legal agreement, the development is considered to comply with Policy H3 of the Core Strategy and Paragraphs 62 and 63 of the NPPF.

Density, Design, Siting and Impact on Visual Amenity

With regard to the density of the proposed development, policy CS3 of the Core Strategy confirms that for sites close to or within Town Centres/District Centres, housing densities of 70 dwellings per hectare (dph) and above are commonplace. Moving away from these central locations, densities should gradually decrease, first to around 50 dph then to around 40 dph, as the proportion of houses increases. Developments in accessible suburban locations may be expected to provide the full range of house types, from low-cost 2 bed

terraces to larger detached properties. However, they should still achieve a density of 30 dph.

Para 123 of the NPPF confirms that when there is a shortage of housing, decisions should avoid homes being built at low densities and LPA's should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in the Framework. The drive to secure the efficient use of urban land set out at para 122 of the NPPF however acknowledges that account must also be taken of the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character

The proposed development will achieve 40.5 dph which is in accordance with what the site is expected to deliver having regard to Core Strategy policy CS3. The NPPF through references in para's 122 and 123 acknowledges that regard must also be paid to other policies and the character of the area. Whilst meeting the density requirement for the site, areas of open space and landscaping are provided around and within the site to respect the overall character of the existing site and surrounding area. In addition, each dwelling is being provided with 2 parking spaces and ample private outdoor amenity spaces, and therefore, the density of the site is considered to be acceptable and appropriate in the context of local and national planning policies. Comments have been received from local residents about the development constituting over development of the site. However, on the basis of the above density levels, amenity space, car parking and open space provision on site, it is not considered that too much development has been provided at the development.

As required by Policy CS3, the development proposes a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties within an accessible suburban location, all of which address the guidance outlined within the Design of Residential Development SPD for the provision of private outdoor amenity spaces and in-curtilage parking requirements. It should also be noted that an increase in density would most likely result in a larger number of smaller dwellings including more apartments which in turn would result in smaller gardens and more car parking. There is concern that such a development would not reflect the character of this area. As such a balance has to be taken between these requirements.

Noting that there will be other opportunities on more suitable sites in the Borough to secure quality high density developments on urban brownfield land to claw back some of the dwellings not achieved on this site (which will be required to avoid further intrusion upon the Green Belt), it is considered that the density proposed on this particular site, having regard to the site and area constraints, is not unacceptable. On this basis, notwithstanding the conflict with Core Strategy policy CS3, the proposed development complies with Government advice contained within para's 63, 118, 122 and 123 of the NPPF.

Policy SIE-1 'Quality Places' states that development that is designed and landscaped to the highest contemporary standard, paying high regard to the built and/or natural environment within which it is sited, will be given positive consideration. Specific account should be had to the materials, site's characteristics, safety and security of users, provision and maintenance of access, privacy and amenity and landscaping.

The application site is bounded by a mix of residential properties of various styles and ages, new school buildings and the existing sports and social club. There is little by the way of a predominant architectural style in the immediate area, and

the mass and scale of the surroundings is predominantly 2 and 3 storeys. There are significant levels changes in the area, which affect the overall scale of some existing buildings, however the application site is located on a reasonably flat site and not in an elevated position.

The proposals include a variety of house types, eaves and roof heights, materials and design, to give visual interest and variation across the site. The properties have a more traditional design with numerous design features to elevate the architectural interest of the new properties. This includes a mix of materials, the use of header, cill and brick banding features along with entrance canopies and varying roof designs to provide interest. Traditional materials suitable to the surrounding area have also been selected.

The design of the apartment building has been amended since the original submission, in order to break down the overall bulk and mass of the three storey block with a long front and rear elevational profile. Additional design features, changes in profile and the use of different materials have been introduced to improve the overall appearance of this building. In addition, the circulation core on the western end of the building has also been re-designed to form an integral part of the design, with a pitched roof to mirror the main roof and greater articulation of the main entrance to improve its presence within the street scene.

The materials of external construction for the proposed dwellinghouses and the apartments are specified as brickwork and render for the external walls, with feature banding, header and cill details and canopies over some of the front entrances. Grey tiles are proposed for the roof coverings. The boundary treatments proposed are a mix of brick walls, metal railings and timber fencing, again to compliment and match the existing boundary treatments in this area.

Therefore, no concerns are raised to the general design and proposed use of traditional materials for the proposed development. Suitably worded planning conditions would be imposed to secure appropriate materials of external construction and boundary treatments.

All new developments should ensure that they respond to the surrounding context of the site and maximise frontages with the street scene and other important features of sites. The application site is fairly uniform in shape and size and has one main route running through the entire site, with numerous branches off this route to provide smaller streets / cul-de-sacs. Due to the existing site access, the development would have very minimal frontage and presence onto the existing street at Harwood Road. However, it is still considered that the proposed development responds positively to all of these road frontages by providing built form along the perimeter of the application site and strengthening the urban grain.

All of the family houses proposed have a street frontage, with a decent set back from the highway to provide a front garden and car parking, providing privacy within the property, yet still providing activity and surveillance over the street. All of the properties have in curtilage car parking spaces to either the front or side along with front boundary treatments and planting to soften the appearance on the street scene. The apartment building has communal car parking spaces immediately to the front and side of the properties which again is softened by landscaping. Therefore, the new buildings and their key architectural features along with the significant proposed landscaping dominate the street scene, with

car parking located to the front or side of the new dwellings and screened by good quality boundary treatments and planting.

To improve permeability and encourage the use of cycles and walking over the use of the private car, an additional pedestrian route has been included within the scheme along the southern boundary. The southern boundary of this new pedestrian walkway with the adjacent Sports and Social Club would be an open style low level mesh fence with the required ball strike fencing above. The new boundary treatments along the northern edge of this walkway (side of Plots 19, 45, 51 and 59) are a mixture of low level hedging and some taller timber fencing. The applicant has also confirmed that the walkway will be illuminated. Therefore, there are no security concerns in relation to the provision of this walkway, as the route will be open and lit to prevent any long dark sections where crime and anti-social behaviour could be a problem. The provision of this pedestrian route is welcomed, with significantly improve permeability and will encourage increased use of cycle and walking by the future residents of the development.

The public open spaces being provided around the site are overlooked by the habitable room windows on the front, side or rear of the houses and apartments improving the perceived security of these public spaces.

There are then well sized private gardens for the rear, which are considered to be adequate for the 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings and the apartments. It has been confirmed within the application that the requirements outlined within the Design for Residential Development SPD for amenity spaces have been achieved in most cases across the development. However, it is acknowledged that due to the shape of the site and in an attempt to meet the density requirements outlined above, some properties do sit below these guidance levels.

Such amenity space shortfalls are considered to be outweighed by the requirement for additional dwellings within the Borough and the current focus within Paragraphs 122 and 123 of the NPPF, which seek to maximise densities within residential developments where there is an identified housing need. As such, the NPPF desire to maximise densities within residential developments effectively supersedes private amenity space requirement guidance as recommended within the SPD, which Members will be aware has been reflected in recent appeal decisions.

Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged that the development includes good levels of public open space around the site that will supplement the private spaces provided for every dwelling. These include the LAP, LEAP and other areas of useable public open space and the future residents of these properties would have very easy access to these spaces.

Therefore, it is considered that the levels of amenity spaces being delivered across the development is acceptable and in line with the spirit of the guidance contained within the SPD. As such, the development is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

Therefore, overall, the siting and layout of the development maximises the relationship with the existing and new surrounding road network. The siting and layout provides a logical arrangement and is therefore considered to be in accordance with the development plan.

The scale of the proposed development is 2 storeys for the new dwellinghouses and 3 storeys for the apartment block. This is considered to be appropriate for this site and remains in keeping with the properties surrounding it. The taller three storey block is located in the area of the site furthest away from any existing residential properties and against the backdrop of the sloping bank that forms the boundary of the site in this area. The boundaries in this area of the site are heavily planted with tall mature trees and these will screen the taller building from the surrounding area and the adjacent Heaton Mersey Common. The creation of variations in height across the site will also provide some variation and interest architecturally rather than all the site being one consistent height.

The heights of the proposed dwellings are generally 5.4 metres to the eaves and approx. 8.7 metres to the ridge, with some small variations to this due to the differing roof designs. The apartment block would measure approx. 8.17 metres to the eaves and approx. 11.81 metres to the ridge. As such, no concerns are raised to the proposed scale and height of the proposed development in this particular location.

In view of the above, it is considered that the size, scale, height and design of the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the character of the street scene or the visual amenity of the area. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies H-1 and SIE-1 and the Design of Residential Development SPD.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy together with para 127 of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments provide for a good standard of amenity not only for existing but also future occupiers.

The Core Strategy policies are supported by the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development' which provides detailed guidance regarding the layout of development and its relationship with existing properties. Members are reminded that the SPD is not policy but is simply guidance to influence but not dictate development. There is acknowledgement within that document that rigid adherence with the guidance can stifle creativity and result in uniformity of development.

The closest relationship of the development to existing residential properties are along the western boundary where Plots 1 – 13 and Plots 20 - 25 of the development are adjacent to the existing properties at Nos. 56 – 74 Harwood Road and Nos. 93 – 107 Berwick Avenue.

These relationships can be seen on the site layout plan below:



Site Plan as Proposed

However, as can be seen on the site layout plan, in some of these instances, the relationship is where the side elevation of a new property is facing the adjacent existing properties and therefore the potential impact from overlooking from habitable room windows is significantly reduced. This is the relationship in the case of Plot 1 and No. 56 Harwood Road and Plot 10 and No. 74 Harwood Road. The side elevation of Plot 1 does not contain any clear glazed windows, with only a small opaque glazed en-suite bathroom window present in the first floor elevation of this property. The distance between the side elevation of Plot 1 and the existing side elevation of No. 56 Harwood Road is approx 5 metres.

There is a clear glazed window in the side elevation of Plot 10 at ground floor level only serving the kitchen, with a small opaquely glazed bathroom window in the first floor level above. However, the proposed boundary treatment along this boundary is a 2.1m high close boarded timber fence and there are large existing mature trees along this boundary. Therefore, any potential impact is further reduced by the presence of these mature trees and the site boundary to increase the level of screening around the site and between existing and new properties. The distance between the side elevation of Plot 10 and the existing rear elevation of No. 74 Harwood Road is approx 12 metres.

For Plot 3, the rear elevation of the new property would face the rear garden area of No. 56 Harwood Road. The distance from the rear elevation of this new property to the boundary line with this garden ranges between approx. 11.4 metres to approx. 12.3 metres. Therefore, all of the relationships outlined above meet the minimum space standards, as outlined in the Council's SPD in relation to the protection of amenity.

For Plots 4 to 9 which are adjacent to Nos. 60 to 70 Harwood Road, there are back to back relationships here, where the rear elevations of the new properties back onto the rear elevations of the existing properties along Harwood Road. The distances between the rear elevations of these and the rear elevations of the existing properties are as follows:

- Plot 4 to No. 60 – 27 metres
- Plot 5 to No. 62 – 26 metres
- Plot 6 to No. 64 – 24 metres
- Plot 7 to No. 66 – 24 metres
- Plot 8 to No. 68 – 23 metres
- Plot 9 to No. 70 – 23 metres

It is acknowledged that some of these distances do not fully meet the minimum space standards of 25 metres for this relationship, as outlined in the Council's SPD in relation to the protection of amenity. However, the distance remains only a small amount under the recommended guidance and as outlined above, the proposed boundary treatment along this boundary is a 2.1m high close boarded timber fence and there are large existing mature trees along this boundary that are to be retained. Therefore, any potential impact is further reduced by the presence of these mature trees and the site boundary to increase the level of screening around the site and between existing and new properties.

Finally, for completeness, the final distances between Plots 10 to 13 and Plots 20 to 25 range from approx. 25 metres up to 33.5 metres and therefore, all of these relationships meet the minimum space standards, as outlined in the Council's SPD in relation to the protection of amenity.

There is a band of woodland between the application site and the existing properties on Rosgill Close along the northern boundary. Therefore, there is both a substantial distance and a good amount of screening from the proposed development to these existing properties. Therefore, this relationship and distance is considered to be appropriate in this context.

In relation to the assessment of an overbearing impact / overshadowing impact on the existing residential properties around the site, the proposed new properties are only 2 storeys in height and are located at acceptable distances away from the site boundaries. Due to the positions and orientation of the new dwellings, it is not considered that there would be significant overshadowing created by the new buildings over the rear elevations or gardens of the existing dwellings that would warrant the refusal of the application. However, any potential overbearing impact will be softened and screened by the existing trees and planting along this boundary coupled with the new landscaping of tree planting proposed along the site boundaries. As outlined above, the taller 3 storey apartment building is located at the eastern end of the site, which is a significant distance away from any existing residential properties.

In terms of benefits to the existing residents and the levels of amenity they currently enjoy, it should be considered that the permanent extinguishment of the Golf Centre use, which generated significant levels of activity and vehicle movements in this residential area when in use, would benefit local residents. This would include a reduction in pedestrian and traffic at the times of the day when residents are likely to be at home i.e. evenings and weekends. The removal of unsightly buildings and hardstandings would also enhance the visual amenity of the area. These have become the focus of trespass, vandalism and antisocial behaviour since the previous use ceased and their removal will provide a permanent solution to these problems. Finally, local residents will benefit from the ability to use the Local Areas of Play, public open space and the footpath links to the surrounding area, which will be provided on the site.

On the basis of the above, it is noted that on the whole, the proposed development complies with and in most instances exceeds the space standards set out in the SPD. As such, it is concluded that the proposed development as a whole, will provide for a good standard of amenity and will not cause harm to either existing or future occupiers by reason of overshadowing, over-dominance, visual intrusion, loss of outlook, overlooking or loss of privacy.

Noting that there is a presumption in favour of residential development as engaged by para 11 of the NPPF it is not considered that the limited instances of failure to comply with this guidance as set out above significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development. That being the case the development accords with policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy together with para 127 of the NPPF.

Traffic Generation, Access, Highway Safety and Parking

It has been fully noted that the predominant concern of local residents for this proposed development is in relation to traffic and highway related concerns. However, the proposed development has been assessed in detail by the Council Highway Engineer and this assessment is detailed in full within the Consultee Responses section above.

The submission is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, additional technical note and a Road Safety Audit and Designers Response, all of which is required for submission with a major development of this size. In making the assessment of the proposed development, it has to be acknowledged that outline permission already exists for 75 dwellings on the site, which clearly carries significant weight and emphasises the appropriateness of this site for residential development.

The specific concerns raised by local residents, including the more technical highway related representation that was made, have been fully considered by Highways. It has been confirmed that whilst Highways completely understand residents' concerns and the reasoning and background provided, they cannot reasonably disagree with the commentary provided by and conclusion reached by the applicants transport consultant. Ultimately, it comes down to the difference between the consented 75 unit scheme and the proposed 106 units and there is no demonstrable or rather severe harm caused by additional development. Full details of all the matters considered are now provided in detail below.

In terms of accessibility, the nearest bus stops to the frontage of the site are 300m away on Didsbury Road, a short walk from the site. These stops provide access to frequent bus services, with four services each stopping between hourly and three times per hour. Metrolink is relatively close by, within a 750m walk and this provides services into Manchester every 12 minutes and East Didsbury Rail Station is approximately 1km away with opportunity for connectivity further afield.

Other services and amenities, that being shops, schools, leisure facilities, employment opportunities and health practices are all conveniently located within approximately 1km of the site and these can easily and conveniently accessed on foot or cycle. Furthermore, there is cycle infrastructure within highway space close to the site and national cycle network routes are within close proximity giving opportunity for convenient travel by cycle. The need for improvement to the walking and cycling network to the immediate North and East of the site to facilitate enhanced and good quality linkage to services and amenities and further encourage sustainable travel choices to be made has been raised with

the applicant . In this respect, the applicant has agreed to a financial contribution towards the costs of widening and resurfacing footpaths that adjoin the site and enhance connectivity to the Mersey Road/Priestnall Road area. The sum would be secured under the terms of a S106 Agreement.

Therefore, it is concluded that the site is within an accessible location where residents would enjoy opportunity to access services, amenities and public transport on travel on foot or cycle and that the site is appropriate for this quantum of development. On this basis, there is just reason to consider and accept that the development would be unlikely to prove to be wholly car travel dependant and that the proposal accords with NPPF and Local Plan policies.

With respect to traffic generation, assignment/distribution and highway impact, the accompanying Transport Assessment and a further technical note have appraised such. Traffic generation has been predicted utilising TRICS data in order to identify representative trip rates for the proposed development. Highways are satisfied that the data set utilised is representative of a site in a suburban location with good local public transport accessibility and this affords a robust base for predicting trips associate with the development. The consequent traffic generation has been assessed in terms of its impact on the Harwood Road junction with Didsbury Road, as requested with this being the nearest major junction to the site and likely to be subjected to the greatest impact.

Harwood Road, off which the development would be accessed, is 5.5m wide with lighting on both sides of the road for its entire length. The road is subject to a 'No Waiting at Anytime' traffic regulation order along the entire length of the eastern carriageway between the golf centre access and Didsbury Road and on the western side of the Harwood Road from Didsbury Road for a distance of approximately 43m. Harwood Road itself is design standard complaint, has a good operational and safety record and has sufficient theoretical capacity to accommodate additional development traffic without unacceptable safety or operational concerns arising.

The submission includes a parking survey undertaken along Harwood Road, which show that Traffic Regulation Orders are generally respected and that kerbside parking, where it is permitted, does not unacceptably impact on operation of the road. Whilst it is acknowledged that the development will introduce additional trips along Harwood Road, the existence of TRO's safely manages the operation of the road space and whilst there may be further minor delay to vehicle passage whilst drivers may give way to opposing traffic, the periods of delay will not be excessive or severe or cause an unacceptable inconvenience. The road is relatively straight with good forward visibility for users and it has a good safety record and the volume of parking proposed within the site should not give rise to any overspill parking from the site. Highways are aware of concerns expressed that development traffic could introduce delay to emergency vehicle passage. The presence of TRO's on Harwood Road, the fact that parking on Harwood Road should not be exacerbated by the development and the reasonable expectation that drivers will give way to opposing emergency vehicles, it is not considered that development traffic will introduce unacceptable risk to the infrequent movement of emergency vehicles along Harwood Road.

On this basis, Highways cannot see reason or justification to oppose the volume of development traffic that would be generated by virtue of its impact on Harwood Road.

The Harwood Road junction with Didsbury Road is a priority controlled ghost island junction where the right turn lane provides a safe area for vehicles waiting to turn right into Harwood Road, helping to maintain the free flow of traffic on Didsbury Road. The junction is protected with TRO's which ensure its general operation is not adversely affected by parked vehicles.

The supporting traffic modelling exercise demonstrates that the junction is forecast to operate within its theoretical capacity with the proposed development in place in the future assessment year of 2025, without significant or unacceptable queuing occurring on any approach. This opinion and conclusion is validated by past observations at the junction where typical peak hour operation and queuing was observed and the modelling has been accepted as being accurate and robust in terms of vehicle queuing and delay. Whilst it is acknowledged that the existing westbound queuing along Didsbury Road can result in some delay for vehicles attempting to turn right out of Harwood Road, it is accepted that the operational results for the "with development" scenario predicted by the modelling, show the existing junction layout would continue to operate within capacity limits in the future year with development scenario. It is noted and accepted that the level of delay for vehicles attempting to exit Harwood Road would increase, but this would not be to a level that can reasonably be demonstrated to be severe or indeed unacceptable or would justify mitigation or improvement to the form of the junction.

In conclusion, there is no significant reason or justification to oppose the development on the grounds of traffic generation or highway impact. This view is also informed by the previously consented outline permission at the site and the fact that this proposal represents an increase of 31 dwellings compared to the existing outline permission for the site, which also included small scale sports facilities and consequent traffic generation.

In terms of the internal site layout, there is a clear expectation within the NPPF and Local Planning Policies that development should be laid out to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements, create places that are safe, secure and attractive and respond to local design standards. Development should be designed to take account of homezone principles with more people friendly streets and reduced vehicle speeds and to accord with the principles of DfT Publication 'Manual for Streets'. In summary, there should be the creation of streets rather than roads, with each street being people-oriented and having various functions, i.e. place, movement, parking, access and utilities.

Following initial concerns raised by Highways, the original site layout has been subsequently amended, as it was considered that this layout did not respect these principles. Following discussion with the applicant, the road space has therefore, been subjected to some minor changes.

There is now a better mix of formal road space where it is necessary along the main spine and shared space for the remaining parts of the site. Measures are proposed along the main spine road to assist speed management, in the form of raised tables and junction plateaus and Highways are accepting that the extents of individual roads are not such that excessive speed is likely to occur. A shared footpath cycleway is proposed along the sites southerly boundary and this is welcomed as it provides a better environment for vulnerable road users and a shortened travel distance across the site. The link, whilst having a physical boundary on its northern side, is adjacent to the cricket ground with open fencing on the boundary, which helps reduce any oppressive nature to the link. The site

layout also will incorporate a link to land to the north where footpath improvements would be undertaken courtesy of the financial contribution secured under the S106.

Highways are supportive of the provision of 2 parking bays for each of the dwellings, the construction, surfacing and drainage of driveway areas is a matter for conditional control. Each dwelling will need a facility for the charging of an electric vehicle and a covered and secure cycle parking facility, again these are both matters capable of conditional control.

With respect to the apartments, Highways are accepting of 33 parking spaces to serve 27 apartments. This provision includes 3 spaces that are disabled user compliant and furthermore, three of the spaces will need facilities for the charging of electric vehicles. On this basis, there are no concerns with this overall level of parking noting the site is accessible, parking demand for smaller apartment units is typically less than for dwellings and there is some kerbspace throughout the site where incidental parking can occur. The detail of construction, surfacing and drainage of the parking area is a matter for conditional control, as is electric vehicle charging facilities. A covered and secure facility or facilities for the parking of 27 cycles is required and it is noted that a location and indicative detail is shown on drawings. Whilst the location is considered to be acceptable, the detail of the facility is not considered to be appropriate at this stage for long stay residential cycle parking. Therefore, the final details of the proposed enclosed and secure cycle stores are a matter for conditional control.

Finally, with regards to refuse and recycling provision, Highways are satisfied that adequate provision will be made for the dwellings and apartments. A minor amendment to the apartment receptacle storage and access arrangements had been requested, and this is now shown on the submitted drawings. It is therefore, concluded that that overall provision should not give rise to receptacles inhibiting perhaps the parking areas and collection will be able to be undertaken in an acceptable manner.

On the basis of all the above consideration, the Highways Engineer is accepting that a residential development in this location will not give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway operation and safety, it is appropriately located and of a design that generally respects design principles. Subject to securing the financial contribution under the terms of a S106 Agreement and necessary conditional control, Highways have no concerns with the application.

In conclusion, in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer and subject to the imposition of the conditions recommended by the Highway Engineer, it is considered that the proposed development could be accessed and serviced in a safe and practical manner, adequate car parking would be provided and the proposal should not have a material impact on the local highway network. As such, the proposal complies with Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6, SIE-1, CS9, T-1, T-2 and T-3 and the Sustainable Transport SPD.

Landscaping and Impact on Trees

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Arboricultural Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

Policies SIE-3 of the Core Strategy 'Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment' and Para's.170 and 175 of the NPPF seek to ensure that proposed development does not affect the natural landscape of the site. A Tree Survey has been carried out by Fairley Trees and Landscape to accompany the application. This report provides the following summary:

"Summary of Findings

Details of the individual trees and tree groups assessed can be found in this report, the appended tables and enclosed plans. A summary of the overall impact of the development is as follows:

- 1. One category "C" (G9) tree group to be removed to enable the development.*
- 2. A total number of 2 category "U" trees (T1 & T8) are to be removed irrespective of the development*
- 3. 8 individual trees and 14 tree groups are to be pruned or otherwise managed in order to be retained as part of the future development of the site.*

Visual Impact

Since only a few, relatively small trees are to be removed to enable the development, the visual impression of tree loss from outside the site will be minimal".

To accompany this report, a detailed Landscaping Masterplan has been submitted to accompany this planning application. The Landscape Masterplan has been amended following comments from the Arboricultural Officer and now shows comprehensive landscaping proposals for across the site with significant new tree planting particularly around the boundaries of the site. This includes the planting of landmark trees in key locations, species suitable for back gardens and further species for within front gardens and around areas of public open space. In addition to this, it is proposed for native shrub planting, bulb planting, ornamental planting, evergreen hedge mixes, grassed areas and a wildflower meadow and the protection and maintenance of existing trees, shrubs and understorey vegetation.

It was noted that access proposals into the country park needed to be reduced to one point. This has been confirmed and one access point is now being provided from the central area of the northern boundary. It was also stated that this would need to be of a certain specification including access gates/barriers. The final details of this connection including construction methods, surface materials and access barriers will be dealt with via an appropriately worded condition. This matter is also raised below in the ecological section of the report.

The Arboricultural Officer notes the submitted reports and landscape proposals and subject to the inclusion of appropriately worded conditions raises no concerns about the development.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Arboricultural Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to its impact on trees and to the provision of good quality landscaping across the site, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies SIE-1 and SIE-3.

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat and Daytime Bat Survey has been submitted in support of the application. The detailed comments received to the application

from the Council Nature Development Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

It is noted that the site itself has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. Heaton Mersey Common, which is designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is however located immediately to the north of the application site boundary. In terms of legally protected species, ecological survey work has been carried out and submitted with the application. It is confirmed that all survey work has been carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist and in accordance with best practice survey guidance.

An extended Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site has been undertaken which mapped the habitats present and identified their potential to support protected species. The survey was carried out in February 2020 and this survey updates those previously undertaken in February 2015 and August 2016 as part of the previous planning application. Semi-improved grassland is the dominant habitat types, with scattered trees and scrub also present.

No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the surveys. Bats can regularly switch roost sites however, and can sometimes roost in unlikely places. Therefore, an appropriately worded informative should be used to state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity and in the event that roosting bats, or any other protected species is discovered on site during works, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist contacted for advice.

It has also been recommended that if the proposed works have not commenced by February 2022 (i.e. within two years of the 2020 surveys) an updated ecology survey should be carried out in advance of works to ensure the baseline and assessment of impacts in respect of bats and other ecological receptors remains current. This again has been secured by an appropriately worded condition.

In relation to birds, a condition has been recommended to prevent any demolition or vegetation clearance during the bird breeding season, unless it can be demonstrated that no birds would be harmed and/or appropriate mitigation measures are in place to protect nesting birds. In relation to breeding birds it is recommended that works are timed to avoid the bird nesting season where possible.

No evidence of badgers was recorded within the application site, but badgers are known to be present within the local vicinity. Badgers are a highly mobile species and can rapidly build setts in new areas. It has therefore been recommended that a condition is attached to any planning consent granted for a badger update survey to be completed prior to commencement of works should works not have commenced within 12 months of the 2020 survey. This is so that any change in badger activity since the 2020 survey can be recorded and mitigation measures amended as appropriate.

Invasive species, in the form of Montbretia and wall Cotoneaster, were recorded within the application site. As such, a condition has been recommended to require the submission and approval of an invasive non-native species protocol, to detail the containment, control and removal of these invasive species on the site.

It is important that retained habitats (including the adjacent LNR) are adequately protected during the construction phase. Therefore, an appropriately worded condition has been included that requests the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prior to the commencement of any works at the site.

The application site is located immediately adjacent to Heaton Mersey Common LNR. This site would likely be adversely impacted by the proposed scheme as a result of increased disturbance and recreational pressure. Proposals for the scheme involve provision of new pedestrian links between the proposed development area and the designated site. Further details on this, along with a detailed assessment of impacts on the LNR is required and would be included within an appropriately worded condition. This would also include details of the management of the habitats within the designated site, so as to help offset any impacts associated with disturbance. This will help ensure the proposals do not contravene policy 3.368 of the LDF and NE1.1 of the retained UDP.

Further conditions are recommended by the Nature Development Officer to require the provision of biodiversity enhancements and locally native species within the proposed landscaping scheme; to require the provision of bird and bat boxes within the scheme; to require the provision of gaps within any proposed boundary treatment to maintain habitat connectivity; and to ensure that any proposed external lighting is sensitively designed to minimise adverse impacts on wildlife.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Council Nature Development Officer and subject to the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to its impact on protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3.

Land Contamination

Policy SIE-3 of the Core Strategy and Para's.178 to 180 of the NPPF seek to ensure that pollution arising from the development is managed and mitigated such that there is no harm to public health or controlled waters. A Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment and a Phase 2 by CSG Consulting have been submitted to accompany the application.

The Phase 2 report concludes that:

“A preliminary risk assessment was made and presented in TerraConsult Report No 1422/R01-3 of September 2012. This was based on the contaminant-pathway-receptor model as defined in Statutory Guidance to Part IIA of the Environment Protection Act, 1990, and in accordance with BS 10175: 2011 “Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice”. In order to make a more detailed assessment of the potential hazards, a Phase 2 intrusive investigation was carried out to develop a more comprehensive conceptual ground model of the site. It is this Phase 2 investigation that is summarised in this report. This report provides details of the characteristic ground conditions and elements of the surrounding environment and has assisted with identifying the potential contaminants of concern, the potential receptors of the contamination and the potential pathways between them.”

The risk assessments have concluded that no remediation measures are required to address risks to controlled waters, and that the majority of the existing Made Ground material does not pose a risk to human health if left in place below building footprints and areas of hard standing. Issues relating to the re-use of materials on site in soft landscape areas are discussed below together with the risk from ground gas and the requirements for water supply pipes.”

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Environment Team are contained within the consultee responses section above. There are ongoing discussions between the Council’s Environmental Health Officer and the applicant’s consultants to agree a strategy to deal with any contamination, and it has been agreed that this would be subject to appropriate conditions.

As expected, the Environment Team recommends the undertaking of the necessary reports for soil and gas. As such, it is recommended that conditions are imposed, which should be applied as a phased approach, to require the submission, approval and implementation of an investigation, risk assessment, remediation scheme and remedial action into potential land contamination and landfill gas at the site.

Subject to compliance with such conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would not be at risk from land contamination or landfill gas migration, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Drainage Engineer/Lead Local Flood Authority and United Utilities are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

Saved Policy EP1.7, Development and Flood Risk, controls development to require that any proposal is not at risk of flooding, does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, does not hinder access to watercourses, does not result in the loss of the flood plain or result in extensive culverting, affect existing flood defences, or significantly increase surface water runoff. This accords with Paragraph 163 of the NPPF, which relates to ensuring any planning application ensure vulnerable uses are located within the lowest areas of risk, and that proposals are flood resilient.

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Scott Hughes has been submitted to accompany this planning application. Whilst the application site is within Flood Zone 1, which is at a low risk of flooding, the application site is over 1ha and therefore requires the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment. This report concludes as follows:

“The site has been assessed against the NPPF ‘Sequential Test’. Taking into consideration that the application is for a residential development in Flood Zone 1, Tables 1, 2 & 3 of the NPPF Technical Guidance have been appraised to confirm that the development is ‘Appropriate’ and the ‘Exception Test’ is not required.

The site is predominantly at low risk of surface water flooding and there are no surface water flow routes through the site. There are small areas at high risk associated with topographical low points, the new surface water drainage infrastructure will ensure surface water ponding does not occur.

The site is largely underlain by made ground to depths of 8-10m. Superficial deposits on the site are considered to be largely absent. The site was previously a clay pit. The bedrock geology is comprised of the sandstones and are considered a principal aquifer. In places the superficial deposits bands are as narrow as 2m but are at depths of 10m following the infill of the site with refuse material. The superficial deposits beneath the made ground are acting as an aquitard and the EA require the clay to remain in place and not be punctured. The SFRA also states that there are relatively few reported incidents of groundwater flooding in the Borough. Therefore, the risk from groundwater flooding is considered to be low.

The United Utilities Sewer records have been reviewed and there are no public sewers crossing the development site. There are numerous public sewers in the surrounding roads and the presence of this extensive UU adopted drainage network ensures that the development footprint is protected from the impact of both upstream and downstream runoff.

The contaminated made ground and underlying aquitard mean infiltration is not a viable option and there are no watercourses in close proximity. Therefore, following the hierarchy of surface water drainage options, connections into the surrounding surface water sewers are the most sustainable.

There is no residual flood risk from the development site to the surrounding district due to the restriction of surface water runoff. Therefore, the development does not increase the risk of flooding to other adjacent neighbourhoods. Out of chamber or gully flooding for the extreme 100 year plus climate change event may occur within the main development site and is classed as exceedance flows. Flood water from this event will be where possible contained within the main development site and directed away from the properties to the external hard and soft landscaped areas.

Foul water generated by the development will be discharged into the combined sewer in Harwood Road. The foul discharge does not present an increased flood risk to the surrounding district”.

In raising no objections to the proposal, both the Drainage Engineer/Lead Local Flood Authority and United Utilities acknowledge that appropriate drainage of the development could be secured by conditional control. This would require foul and surface water to be drained on separate systems; the submission, approval and implementation of an appropriate surface water drainage system; and management and maintenance of such a drainage system at all times thereafter.

Subject to compliance with such conditions, it is considered that the proposed development could be drained in a sustainable and appropriate manner without the risk of flooding elsewhere, in accordance with saved UDP policy EP1.7 and Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6 and SIE-3.

Noise and Air Quality

Due to the location of the site, a fully detailed Noise Assessment has not been submitted to accompany the application at this stage. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Environmental Health Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

It has been confirmed that the EHO has no objections to the principle of a residential development on this site. However, an Acoustic report would be needed to assess background noise levels to see if mitigation measures will be needed to enable the properties to meet recommended internal noise levels. Therefore, a suitably worded condition has been recommended that requires the submission of a noise report prepared by a suitably qualified person to consider noise generated from air and road traffic and any nearby fixed plant on the future occupants of the development.

It is also recommended that a condition be included in relation to the construction phase of the development, and that a demolition/construction management plan be submitted in line with BS5228:2009 Condition Demolition/construction hours for site.

In relation to Air Quality, an Air Quality Assessment completed by E3P has been submitted to accompany the application. This report concludes that:

“The proposals have the potential to cause air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions during construction and road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the site during operation. As such, an Air Quality Assessment was required in order to determine baseline conditions and assess potential effects as a result of the scheme.

During the construction phase of the development there is the potential for air quality impacts as a result of fugitive dust emissions from the site. These were assessed in accordance with the IAQM methodology. Assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented, the residual significance of potential air quality impacts from dust generated by demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout activities was predicted to be not significant.

Potential impacts during the operational phase of the proposed development may occur due to road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the site. An assessment was therefore undertaken using detailed dispersion modelling to quantify NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations both with and without the proposals.

Review of the dispersion modelling results indicated that impacts on annual mean NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations as a result of traffic generated by the development were predicted to be negligible at all sensitive receptor locations. Following consideration of the relevant factors, air quality impacts as a result of the operation of the development were predicted to be not significant, in accordance with the IAQM guidance.

Based on the assessment results, air quality issues are not considered a constraint to planning consent for the development.”

The submitted assessment was considered by the EHO and it has been confirmed that they are happy with its findings and conclusions. The methodology used to assess the air quality at the site is a nationally accepted methodology. The two sites used are the nearest sites to the application and thus are considered by Environmental Health as acceptable to use in this case. The Didsbury Road site is a roadside site, and this would therefore, give a worse case scenario. It has been confirmed that these sites do not show any exceedances of the legal limits.

Therefore, on this basis, Environmental Health have confirmed they are satisfied with the methodology of the report and its findings, subject to the mitigation measures outlined within the report being fully complied with.

Designing out Crime

Policies H1 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para's 117 and 127 of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments create safe living conditions. The applicant is required to include a Crime Impact Statement (CIS) with the application. This report is compiled by GMP Design for Security who then offer their comments on the proposals in this respect once the application is submitted. A CIS has been completed for the proposed development and submitted to accompany this application.

In responding to the application, GMP advise that they have no objection to the application subject to compliance with the CIS. On this basis, the proposed development by reason of its design and layout will minimise the opportunity for criminal behaviour and as such accords with policies H1 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para's 117 and 127 of the NPPF.

Energy Efficiency

As the proposed development is for more than 10 residential units, it triggers the Council's carbon reduction targets, as defined by Core Strategy DPD policy SD-3. Therefore, an Energy Statement by Element Sustainability has been submitted in support of the application.

The Energy Statement submitted with the application confirms that:

“Policy regarding the energy performance of new developments in Stockport is guided, in part, by the Stockport MBC Core Strategy Development Management Policies. Specifically, Core Strategy Policy SD – 3 includes a target 13% CO2 reduction in regulated emissions reductions over and above the 2013 Target Emissions Rate (TER). Compliance with the key criteria of the Stockport MBC Core Strategy have been achieved by the proposed energy strategy, whilst taking the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency into consideration.

Priority is given to achieving the 13% target carbon emissions reductions by means of on-site measures through the application of the energy hierarchy. The scheme will incorporate:

- A significantly enhanced fabric and servicing specification for the new build houses and apartments;
- This will be allied to efficient heating system with sophisticated controls; and,
- The integration of a 13.9kWp photovoltaic array on the roof of the apartments in a south facing orientation.

These cumulative measures will reduce the on-site carbon dioxide emissions from the development by approximately 13.3% relative to the building regulation Part LA (2013) compliance standard, delivering a scheme that is inherently efficient and cost-effective during occupation.”

Other matters that have been explored include water management, site drainage, SuDs techniques, waste generated by construction and occupation, construction site management procedures to reduce any impact on the environment, the use of responsibly sourced materials, the impact of sound, proposed landscaping and

ecological enhancements, and the use of sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking and the provision of electric vehicle charging points.

Therefore, it is considered that all of the above addresses the requirements of Core Strategy policy SD3 together with para 153 of the NPPF. On this basis, and subject to the compliance with a condition to submit further information in relation to energy efficiency, the development is considered to be compliant with the requirements of Core Strategy DPD policy SD-3.

Other Matters Raised

Concerns have been raised by local residents about the way the Community Consultation exercise was completed and the submission of this application during a pandemic. Although the completion of a pre-application Community Consultation exercise is very much promoted and welcomed, there are no specific policies or guidance as to how this should be carried out. The LPA therefore, does not dictate how this should take place or who should be consulted. It is acknowledged that the consultation exercise completed was scaled back to just a leaflet drop and did not include a public exhibition event, which is the usual approach to such exercises. However, it must also be acknowledged that there were significant lockdown restrictions in place at the time, and it was not possible to hold these events or place presentation material in any public buildings for residents to view.

Concerns have also been raised about the submission of this application during a pandemic and the impact this has had on local resident's involvement in the application process. Whilst this concern is acknowledged, it must be noted that the LPA does not have the power to refuse to either register or determine an application due to this reason. Providing the application meets the local and national validation requirements, the LPA must register the application from the date of submission.

In this case, all of the required publicity and notification procedures were still completed (neighbour letters, press notice, site notice and statutory consultations) and all of the information submitted with the application was available on the Council's Public Access system for residents to view and consider. All of the representations made by local residents have been received and fully considered, and a subsequent re-notification exercise was completed following the submission of amended plans. Therefore, it is considered that despite the submission of this application during the pandemic, the correct procedures as outlined within the relevant legislation in relation have been appropriately followed and completed by the Local Planning Authority.

A number of comments have also been raised in relation to the potential impact of the proposed development on the existing value of the surrounding properties. Although the comments made are acknowledged, the LPA is only permitted to consider any application on the basis of local and national planning policies and refuse applications on material planning grounds. As the potential impact of a proposed development on the existing value of neighbouring properties is not a material planning consideration, it has not been possible for the Council to give this matter any material weight in this case.

Developer Contributions

As outlined in full detail in the report above, an appropriately worded condition will be attached to any approval relating to the delivery of affordable housing on the site in compliance with Core Strategy DPD policy H-3, the Provision of Affordable Housing SPG, and the NPPF.

A S106 legal agreement would then be used to secure a monetary contribution towards the provision and maintenance of formal recreation facilities within the area to mitigate the loss of the existing LOS to be lost and to meet the need of residents of the proposed development.

This legal agreement would also secure a monetary contribution towards the necessary improvements to approximately 700 metres of footpath network to the north and east of the site. The footpaths require widening to 3 metres where practical to enable the provision of a shared footway / cycleway, to be constructed using timber edging, geotextile membrane (where required), Mot & compacted gritstone surface and natural drainage via runoff. To ensure Policy compliance and provide a development with better quality accessibility options, enable sustainable transport choices to be made and discourage unnecessary car travel mode choices, the development should either deliver the improvement work under the terms of a S106 agreement.

CONCLUSION

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF establishes three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental and Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The proposed redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of allocated Local Open Space (LOS). The applicant has sought to justify the loss of the LOS through the limited value of the existing LOS due to the lack of access to the site, the provision of a LAP, LEAP and further public open space on site and the contribution towards off site play facilities and formal sport within the Heaton and Reddish area. The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant to policies UOS1.3 and L1.2 of the UDP Review.

The location of the site is within an existing residential area of Heaton Mersey and as referred to at the start of this analysis, the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing means that elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 are considered to be out of date. As such the tilted balance in favour of the residential redevelopment of the site as set out in para 11 of the NPPF is engaged. The application site comprises a part brownfield and part urban greenfield site in an accessible area. The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy in relation to the use of urban greenfield and brownfield land for housing and para 118 of the NPPF, which places substantial weight upon the use of brownfield land within settlements for homes and supporting opportunities to remediate derelict land.

It is considered that the siting, scale and design of the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area or the residential amenity of surrounding

properties. In the absence of objections from relevant consultees and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to the issues of traffic generation, parking and highway safety; impact on trees; impact on protected species and ecology; flood risk and drainage; land contamination; and energy efficiency.

In view of the above, notwithstanding the site allocation of part of the application site as Local Open Space and the fact that approval of the development would constitute a departure from the development plan, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development and is in accordance with local and national planning policies. On this basis, notwithstanding the objection raised to the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND S106 AGREEMENT

Should Members agree the recommendation, the application should be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee for determination as a departure from the Development Plan.