

ITEM

Application Reference	DC/081449
Location:	22 Cromwell Road Bramhall Stockport SK7 1DA
PROPOSAL:	Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of two new-build, semi-detached dwellings.
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	24.06.2021
Expiry Date:	20210819
Case Officer:	Jane Chase
Applicant:	JML Developments
Agent:	CW Planning Solutions Ltd

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Area Committee - 4 or more objections. Called up by Cllr Bagnall

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes the demolition of the bungalow on the site and the erection of a pair of (2 no.) 4 bedroom semi detached houses. The houses would be of a traditional design with projecting square bays with hipped roofs over to the front elevation at ground and first floor level. A pitched roof is proposed over the main dwelling with gable ends to the side elevations. To the rear each house would have a single storey projection with a lantern to the flat roof. Each house would comprise 3 floors of accommodation with that at second floor level being within the roofspace and served by rooflights to the front and rear elevation.

The houses would be in a staggered position relative to the neighbouring properties, 5.2m to 6m from the front boundary of the site. Together they would measure 13m wide, 5.5m to eaves and 9m to the ridge. At ground floor level they would measure 14.3m deep (from the front of the bay) to 13.4m deep (from the main front elevation). At first floor each house would measure 9.3m deep (from the front of the bay) to 8.4m deep (to the main front elevation).

To the south (right), the development would be positioned 1.9m off the boundary with 12 Cromwell Road, 4.2m from the side elevation of this neighbouring house. At the rear the proposed development at ground floor level would project 3.2m beyond the single storey rear extension to 12 Cromwell Road; at first floor level it would project 3.7m beyond the first floor rear elevation of this neighbouring house.

To the north (left), the development would be positioned 2.8m off the boundary with 23 Cromwell Road, 4.1m from the side elevation of this neighbouring bungalow. At the rear, the proposed development at ground floor level would project 3.3m beyond the rear elevation of the side extension to this neighbouring bungalow with the proposed first floor rear elevation being positioned 1.2m behind the rear elevation of the side extension. The proposed house would not project beyond the rear elevation

of the rear extension to this neighbouring bungalow being positioned 1m behind it at ground floor level and 5.5m behind it at first floor level.

The front garden to each house would be laid out behind a dwarf wall to provide 2 parking spaces side by side with the remainder of the front garden soft landscaped. Pedestrian access is proposed to each rear garden via a pathway down the side of each house where refuse storage is also proposed behind a gate.

The application is supported by a Planning Statement together with a Protected Species Survey and Energy Statement.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located on the east side of Cromwell Road accommodating a detached bungalow clad in buff coloured stone with a pitched roof over. The bungalow is L shaped in its footprint with a projecting gable to the front, adjacent to 12 Cromwell Road. To the left hand side of the bungalow adjacent to 24 Cromwell Road is a flat roofed garage. The front garden is mainly hardsurfaced and provides off street parking for at least 2 cars with dual access onto Cromwell Road.



Immediately to the south of the application site is a 2 storey semi detached house which like its neighbours to the south, is positioned forward of the application property behind a small front garden. To the side of this house adjacent to the boundary with the application site is a driveway beyond which is a gate to the rear garden. In the rear garden also adjacent to the application site is flat roofed outbuilding used for purposes ancillary to the main house. This house has been extended by way of a single storey rear extension which projects to a point just beyond the front elevation of the outbuilding.

Immediately to the north of the application site is a detached hipped roof bungalow L shaped in its footprint with a projecting hipped roof to the front. The main front elevation sits forward of the existing bungalow on the application site however the hipped roof projection lies flush with the projecting gable to the application property. This neighbouring property has been extended towards the application site by way of a single storey extension flat roofed side extension behind the garage and a single storey flat roofed extension to the rear.

Elsewhere the character of Cromwell Road is mixed with generally 2 storey houses south of the application site and single storey bungalows to the north. Other than the semi detached houses to the south of the application site, most properties have off street parking for at least 2 cars within front gardens with varying degrees of hard/soft landscaping.



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.

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

L1.1 Land for Active Recreation

L1.2 Children’s Play

MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

SD-3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – New Development

SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

CS4 Distribution of Housing

H1 Design of Housing

H2 Housing Phasing
CS8 Safeguarding & 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 & Development
T-1 Transport & Development
T-2 Parking in Developments
T-3 Safety & 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
Open Space Provision and Commuted Sum Payments
Transport in Residential Areas

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 20th July 2021 replaced the previous NPPF (originally issued 2012, revised 2018 and 2019). 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 – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the

right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

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.119 *“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.”*

Para.120 *“Planning decisions should..... give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.”*

Para.124 *“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.125 *“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 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.126 *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable 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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.”*

Para.130 *“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 users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

Para.134 “Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”

Para.157 “In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption”.

Para.219 “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

DC/072662; Type: FUL; Address: 22 Cromwell Road, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 1DA, ; Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a pair of 3 bed semi detached houses with attached garages. Application withdrawn May 2019

DC/078876; Type: FUL; Address: 22 Cromwell Road, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 1DA; Proposal: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of two new-build, semi-detached dwellings. Application refused on the following grounds:

- The proposed development by reason of its size, siting and design will result in a visually obtrusive form of development that would cause harm to the street scene,

contrary to policies H1, CS8 and SIE-1 of the Core Strategy together with advice contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

- The proposed development by reason of its height, form and rearward projection at upper level would result in a visually obtrusive and overbearing form of development causing harm to the amenities afforded from the rear gardens of 12 and 24 Cromwell Road. The proposal is thereby contrary to policies H1 and SIE-1 of the Core Strategy together with advice contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

- The applicant has failed to make provision for recreation and amenity open space for the proposed development in accordance with the requirements of Saved Policy L1.2 'Children's Play' of the Stockport UDP Review and policy SIE-2 'Provision of Recreation & Amenity Space in New Developments' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD and the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance "Recreational Open Space Provision and Commuted Sum Payments".

An appeal has been lodged against the refusal of this application and at the time of writing this report remains in progress.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The occupiers of neighbouring properties have been notified in writing of the receipt of this application. At the time of writing this report 6 letters have been received objecting on the following grounds:-

- Overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties on account of the 3 storey nature of the development.

- Loss of light and overshadowing to neighbouring gardens and properties.

- The design and scale of the proposed development is not in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Cromwell Road and the surrounding streets were developed as a bungalow estate to provide single storey living. If this application is granted, it will surely lead to further instances of developers purchasing these dwellings with the aim of demolition.

- Bramhall is home to a large elderly population and there is a real need for single storey dwellings in the village. The area already risks becoming unrecognisable due to the scale of similar developments taking place which are impacting the traditional character of the locality.

- This is the third time planning approval has been sought to turn the current property into a pair of three storey semi-detached houses. On each of the two previous occasions approval has not been forthcoming due to the scale of development proposed. The revisions do little to alter the nature of the proposal, there has been a token reduction in depth of the property with just an 80cm reduction over a 9m total depth. The ridgeline of the proposed development remains the same. This change in no way addresses the residents' concerns about the negative impact on the street scene and our visual amenity. The only other proposed change to the application is to change second floor dormer windows to rooflights. Again this has little or no positive impact on the issues raised below, we will continue to be overlooked by four separate bedrooms where currently no such overlook exists. In fact, the new plans have added office spaces into the second floor, meaning there are an additional two habitable rooms overlooking our garden.

- The proposal fails to accord with the SPD in that it would have a negative impact on street proportions and would lead to a loss of a sense of spaciousness, alter building lines and due to the plot depth and width would create an imbalance from the current status.

- The proposal would reduce the feeling of openness and light, and would impose a sense of inappropriate scale, height and mass at the location. Contemporary design does not necessarily mean taller building or higher density.
- The SPD requires that the Context Appraisal must incorporate an analysis of views to, from and through the site. There is no Design Access Statement within the application documents.
- On the subject of infill development the SPD recognizes that these can have a significant impact on an established street and neighbours, and in this case such impact is considered unacceptable. The proposed development would have a negative impact in relation to amenity and character, proportions, views, cramming effects and maintenance of appropriate scale and mass.
- Although the design proposals show off road parking, it is likely that increasing the number of dwellings from a single bungalow to two four-bedroom houses would create additional demand for on street parking in an area which already suffers from a lack of this resource.
- Additional traffic impacting on congestion.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Highway Engineer – The site is in an accessible location where residents would enjoy opportunity to access public transport, services and amenities and is therefore considered acceptable in principle for residential development.

I have no concerns from a traffic generation perspective with the proposal and my only criticism is that the two access points need designing to incorporate pedestrian visibility splays measuring 1m by 1m on either side of each access point. A revised drawing would be preferable although this is probably a matter capable of conditional control.

Conditions should be imposed to secure visibility splays, the construction and retention of the driveways and parking areas in accordance with the approved details, electric vehicle charging points and covered/secured cycle storage.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit – A bat survey has been undertaken and submitted as part of the application to demolish the property at Cromwell Road (Dunelm Ecology). The survey was undertaken in May 2019 and appears to have been carried out by an experienced ecologist following best practice guidelines. The survey is over 24 months old, however the applicant has provided photographic evidence that the condition of the building has not changed materially since the assessment was undertaken, so this, coupled with the lack of potential for protected species to be present, mean I am willing to accept this report.

The building on the site was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats and an internal and external inspections to look for evidence of bats was undertaken. No evidence of bats was found and the building was judged to have negligible potential for roosting bats. No further survey work in respect of bats is therefore required.

Buildings have the potential to support nesting birds, and the nests of all wild birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware of the legal protection that all active bird nests receive. Work (building demolition) should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season (March - August inclusive) unless it can otherwise be demonstrated that no active bird nests are present.

An informative is recommended to make the applicant aware of the laws which are in place to protect wildlife, such as roosting bats. Should they find or suspect any such species on the site during the development, work should cease and the LPA should be contacted for further advice.

There is the potential for the scheme to provide enhancements for biodiversity, and the ecology report provides an example of how this can be achieved (integrated bat boxes, section 4.1.2) which should be accommodated into the scheme where possible. In addition the use of locally native or wildlife friendly species within the landscape scheme should also be encouraged.

United Utilities - In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way.

We would be grateful if the applicant can submit a plan outlining the proposed levels (including finished floor levels and ground levels) shown in metres above Ordnance Datum. We would also ask that the applicant provides an indicative foul & surface water drainage strategy. We request that this information is submitted for our review and comment prior to the determination of this application. On receipt of this information we will be able to provide further comment.

Conditions should be imposed to secure a surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions. The surface water drainage scheme must be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards. In the event of surface water draining to the public surface water sewer, the pass forward flow rate to the public sewer must be restricted to 5 l/s. No surface water will be permitted to drain directly or indirectly into the combined sewer. The development permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved drainage scheme.

ANALYSIS

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 includes those specifically relating to the protection of heritage assets and the Green Belt) 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 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 any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

This assessment is set out below.

Housing Delivery

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that a wide range of homes are provided to meet the needs of existing and future Stockport households. The focus will be on providing housing through the effective and efficient use of land within accessible urban areas.

In terms of housing need, the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition, include a buffer of 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply. In response to this it should be noted that the Council is in a continued position of housing undersupply and only has a 2.6 year supply vs the 5 year supply plus 20% as required by the NPPF. Whilst this application proposing only 1 additional dwelling will have a limited impact in terms of addressing this undersupply, collectively such applications do assist.

Having regard to this continued undersupply, not only is the titled balance in favour of residential development as set out in para 11 of the NPPF invoked but to help reduce pressure for development in the Green Belt, it is also important that the development potential of sites within accessible urban and suburban locations are explored.

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 and Large Local Centres; and other accessible locations). This policy confirms that the focus is on making effective use of land within accessible urban locations with the priority for development being previously developed land in urban areas.

The accessibility of a site is scored using a model having regard to the location of that site in relation to public transport, town centres, places of employment and other services. 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 score has been reduced to zero.

Being within an accessible suburban location close to the District Centre, the residential development of this site accords with policy CS4 of the Core Strategy DPD.

Core Strategy policy CS3 confirms that developments in accessible suburban locations may be expected to provide the full range of houses from terraced properties to large detached and should contain fewer flats. Within District

Centres housing densities of 70 dwellings per hectare (dph) is commonplace. Moving away from these central locations densities should gradually decrease first around to 50 dph then to around 40dph as the proportion of housing increases. Development in accessible urban locations should achieve a density of 30 dph.

The NPPF at para 124 confirms that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account several factors including the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens) and the importance of securing well designed and attractive places. Para 125 confirms that where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing need it is especially important that policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.

The density of the proposed development equates to 27 dwellings per hectare which sits below that suggested as appropriate in policy CS3 for this location close to the District Centre. Notwithstanding this, the consideration of density is not simply the application of a numerical figure and regard also has to be paid to the impact of the development upon the character of the area, amenities of existing and future occupiers together conditions of highway safety. Subject to a satisfactory assessment in this respect (set out below), the density may be considered acceptable and in generally in compliance with policy CS3.

Objections regarding the loss of bungalow accommodation is noted however the Council has no policy within the Development Plan that seeks to protect specific dwelling types. As such there are no grounds on which planning permission could be refused because of the impact arising from the loss of this type of housing stock.

Impact on the Character of the Area and Residential Amenity

Policy H1 of the Core Strategy confirms that development should be of a high quality, respond to the character of the area within which they are located and provide for good standards of amenity. This is reinforced in Core Strategy policy CS8 which welcomes development that is designed and landscaped to a high standard and which makes a positive contribution to a sustainable, attractive, safe and accessible built and natural environment. Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy also confirms that development which is designed 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 regard should be paid to the use of materials appropriate to the location and the site's context in relation to surrounding buildings (particularly with regard to height, density and massing of buildings).

The NPPF at Chapter 12 sets out the Government's most up to date position on planning policy and confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment.

It is noted that objectors comment that there is no Design & Access Statement included with this application and that no context appraisal has been undertaken. The legislative position is that Design and Access Statements are required only in relation to applications seeking major development (10 dwellings or more etc), listed building consents and applications in Conservation Areas. Members are therefore advised that such a Statement whilst welcome, is not legally required for an application of this minor nature. Notwithstanding that the application does

include a Planning Statement. Again, given the minor nature of the proposal, there is no requirement for such a document however an assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon the character of the area is contained within that document.

The character of Cromwell Road is mixed. Properties up to and including 12 Cromwell Road (which is immediately to the south of the application site) generally comprise 2 storey detached and semi detached houses with pitched roofs above. Two of these properties including that directly opposite the application site (21 Cromwell Road) are however of a chalet bungalow style with the first floor accommodation in the roofspace and served by dormer windows to the front elevations. Properties to the north of and including the application site entirely comprise small scale bungalows with hipped roofs (although the application property has a pitched roof). Whilst some of these have first floor accommodation in the roof space served by dormers and/or rooflights, the character of this development to the north of the site is predominantly single storey.

Properties regardless of their size are generally of a traditional design, true to the time of their construction, with most dating from the early to mid 20th century. Materials generally comprise red brick with limited instances of render and red/brown roof tiles. The application property being clad in a buff stone is at odds with this character. The houses on the east side of Cromwell Road to the south of the application site are positioned behind small front gardens and sit forward of the application property and other properties on this side of the road. Elsewhere, including the application property and those to the north of it, houses are positioned further back from the street frontage behind larger front gardens with varying degrees of forecourt parking. Other than the 6 houses immediately to the south of the application site, most properties have off street parking for 2 cars and some more.

Consistent with the consideration of the previous applications, the proposal in terms of the architectural approach is deemed appropriate for this locality where there is no homogenous design. Whilst not identical, the traditional design of the proposed development with the projecting bays, style and size of fenestration and roof form will echo the design of the semi detached houses to the south of the site at 2-12 Cromwell Road. The layout of the front garden affords for meaningful areas of soft landscaping to be provided in between the two driveways. Noting the prevalence of forecourt parking to front gardens on Cromwell Road, that proposed would be reflective of the locality. Subject to the submission and approval of appropriate materials, hard and soft landscaping, all of which could be secured by condition in the event that planning permission is approved, it is considered that the architectural approach and layout of the front garden is in keeping with the character of the area.

Submitted with the application is a streetscene elevation which shows the existing and proposed development on the site in the context of that to either side. The height of the proposed development is such that it will be below that of 12 Cromwell Road to the south and above that of 24 Cromwell Road to the north. The ridge of 12 Cromwell Road already rises 4.8m above that of the existing bungalow on the application site. In comparison, the ridge height of the proposed development will be 3.8m above that of the bungalow at 24 Cromwell Road to the north. As such the differential in height between the proposed house and the existing bungalow to the north is not considered unacceptable in itself subject to the siting of the development relative to these neighbouring properties and the

front boundary of the site also being acceptable. This analysis is consistent with the consideration of the previous applications.

The proposed dwellings would be positioned further away from side boundaries with the neighbouring properties than is currently the case with the existing bungalow. In respect of the front boundary the proposed development would be positioned behind the front elevation of 12 Cromwell Road and forward of the main front elevation to 24 Cromwell Road (nearly level the front projection to this neighbouring bungalow). Submitted with this application is an existing and proposed streetscene as viewed from the north looking towards Moss Lane. This drawing has not been submitted with previous proposals and is very useful in that it shows the existing side elevations of 12, 22 and 24 Cromwell Road relative to the front boundary overlaid on each other and then the side elevation of the proposed development overlaid with that to 12 and 24 Cromwell Road, again relative to the front boundary.

When viewing the site from the north looking towards Moss Lane, whilst the first floor flank elevation and gable end of the roof above will be visible over 24 Cromwell Road, the depth of the proposed development at first floor level (8.4m) has been reduced by between 1.3m and 2.3m from that proposed by the 2 previous applications (9.7m proposed by DC078876 and 10.7m proposed by DC072662). Added to that the eaves height of 5.5m is now lower than previously proposed (6.2m to eaves proposed by DC072662) and the roofs to the projecting bays on the front elevations are now hipped and to a lower height (7.3m vs 8.2m as proposed by DC078876). Rear dormer windows originally proposed by DC078876 are also replaced with rooflights. Whilst the objectors comment that the revisions presented by this current application are minor in their nature, it is considered that collectively they assist in reducing the bulk and impact of the proposed development at first floor and roof level.

As such, noting the presence that the side elevation of 12 Cromwell Road already has in the vista viewed from the north, forward of and above the height of 22 and 24 Cromwell Road, it is now considered that the projection of the development forward of, above and to the rear of the ridgeline of 24 Cromwell Road as proposed by this amended scheme will not result in a form of development that is unduly obtrusive in the streetscene.

Approaching the site from the south (Moss Lane) the houses will sit behind the terrace comprising 2 to 12 Cromwell Road and will be of a lower height. As such and consistent with the consideration of the previous applications, there are no concerns with the impact of the development in this vista.

Neighbours have objected on the grounds the proposed development will reduce the sense of spaciousness, alter building lines and would create an imbalance due to the depth and width of the proposal. In this regard, the proposed houses would be positioned further away from the side boundaries of the site than that existing, would respect the building line afforded by the position of the bungalows to the north of the site and would be positioned behind the front elevation of the houses to the south. Single storey bungalows aside, the development in terms of its width, depth and height is consistent with other development in the area. Any such the only impact on spaciousness that could be attributed to the proposed development is that resulting from the increased height of development on the site. Given that the house opposite the application site and all the houses to the south on both sides of Cromwell Road are 2 storey dwellings (and in respect of 2-12 Cromwell Road certainly, of a greater height than that proposed) it is not

considered that the extension northwards of this 2 storey built form by one property will cause such harm to the spaciousness of the area as to justify the refusal of planning permission.

For the above reasons it is considered that the amendments presented by this application address the concerns raised with the previous proposals in terms of the impact of the development upon the character of the area and in particular, the streetscene as viewed from the north looking south. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with policies H1, CS8 and SIE-1 of the Core Strategy together with advice contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Policy SIE1 of the CS DPD confirms that specific account should be had to the provision, maintenance and enhancement (where suitable) of satisfactory levels of access, privacy and amenity for future, existing and neighbouring users and residents. Core Strategy policy H1 confirms that development should provide for good standards of amenity.

Guidance contained within the Council's SPD Design of Residential Development is also relevant to the consideration of this application. The SPD confirms that the design and layout of a development should minimise overlooking and should not impose any unacceptable loss of privacy on the occupiers of existing dwellings. Clearly in a suburban location such as this, there will already be a degree of mutual overlooking so it would be unrealistic to expect a development to have no impact in this respect. The aim of the SPD is to ensure that overlooking is kept to a minimum and that which does occur is not unacceptable or out of keeping with the character of the area. To this aim, the SPD sets out suggested interface distances between habitable room windows in existing and proposed development.

The refusal of the previous application on this site (DC078876), which is now the subject of an appeal, centred around the impact of the development when viewed from the gardens of 12 and 24 Cromwell Road rather than on the amenities afforded from inside these houses. In this respect the current application has reduced the rearward projection of the proposed development at first floor level and as a result, the ridgeline to the proposed houses is now proposed as being closer to the frontage onto Cromwell Road.

At present the outlook to the application site from the rear garden of 12 Cromwell Road is quite open on account of the low height of the existing bungalow on the site. The proposed development would be positioned 1.1m further from the boundary with 12 Cromwell Road than that existing. The proposed ridgeline would now be positioned 0.8m closer to the frontage with Cromwell Road behind the first floor rear elevation of 12 Cromwell Road rather than being level with it as previously proposed by DC078876. The proposed first floor rear elevation would now also project to a point 3.7m beyond the first floor rear elevation of 12 Cromwell Road rather than 5m as previously proposed by DC078876. At ground floor level, the proposed single storey rear projection would extend 3.2m beyond the rear elevation of the single storey rear extension to 12 Cromwell Road but not beyond the rear elevation of the outbuilding in this adjacent garden.

Noting the siting of the development off the boundary and the position of the ridgeline behind the rear elevation of 12 Cromwell Road closer to the frontage, it is considered that the 3.7m projection of the proposed development at 1st floor level will not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenities afforded from that

neighbouring property. The projection of the development at first floor level does not interest a 45 degree angle taken from the closest habitable room in the rear elevation of 12 Cromwell Road being 2.3m short of it. As with the previous application, DC078876, this indicates that the proposed development would not appear visually obtrusive when viewed from inside these rear facing rooms. When viewed from the rear garden, the reduced projection at first floor will not extend as far as the rear elevation of the ground floor extension to 12 Cromwell Road, stopping 1.4m short of it. Noting also the presence of an outbuilding within the garden of 12 Cromwell Road on the boundary with the application site, it is considered that the development at upper floor level will not appear visually obtrusive or unneighbourly when viewed from the adjacent rear garden.

Views of the projection of the proposed development at ground floor level will be screened to an extent by the outbuilding in the rear garden of 12 Cromwell Road positioned on the boundary with the application site. As with the consideration of DC078876, it is considered that there will be no adverse impact arising in this respect.

In terms of overlooking, side facing openings comprise a small kitchen window and utility room door to the ground floor. To the rear elevation views from the bi-fold doors to the kitchen/diner will be obscured by boundary treatments and the presence of the outbuilding in the adjacent rear garden. To upper floor level bedroom windows are proposed with roof lights to the bedroom in the roof space. Given the height and angle of vision afforded from the roof lights, it is unlikely that any overlooking to the garden of 12 Cromwell Road will occur and that from the first floor windows will not be out of keeping with the degree of mutual overlooking that already occurs in this suburban location.

Being sited to the north of 12 Cromwell Road, it is not considered that any impact in relation to the reduction of light levels (if there are indeed any) would cause such harm as to justify the refusal of planning permission.

Like that from 12 Cromwell Road, the present outlook from the rear garden area of 24 Cromwell Road to the application site is also quite open on account of the low height of the existing bungalow on the site. The proposed development would be positioned 2m further from the boundary with 24 Cromwell Road than that existing. The proposed ridgeline would now be positioned 0.8m closer to the frontage with Cromwell Road well behind the rear elevation of 24 Cromwell Road. As a result of the reduction to the rearward projection of the proposed development at first floor level, that proposed at first floor level would now be positioned 5.6m behind the main rear elevation of 24 Cromwell Road and 1.2m behind the rear elevation of the side extension to this neighbouring bungalow. At ground floor level the single storey projection would not extend as far as the rear extension to 24 Cromwell Road and would only project 3.4m beyond the rear elevation of the side extension to this neighbouring bungalow.

Whilst the development will be clearly visible from the rear garden of this neighbouring bungalow, given the reduction in the rearward projection at first floor level and the resulting repositioning of the ridgeline closer to the frontage to Cromwell Road, it is not considered that it will appear visually obtrusive or unneighbourly when viewed from the adjacent rear garden. Being of a single storey nature, sited off the boundary and extending no further than the rear extension to 24 Cromwell Road, it is not considered that the proposed single

storey rear projection of the development would have an adverse impact upon the amenities afforded from this rear garden area.

In terms of overlooking, side facing openings comprise a small kitchen window and utility room door to the ground floor. To the rear elevation views from the bi-fold doors to the kitchen will be obscured by boundary treatments. To upper floor level bedroom windows are proposed with roof lights to the bedroom in the roof space. Given the height and angle of vision afforded from the roof lights, it is unlikely that any overlooking to the garden of 24 Cromwell Road will occur and that from the first floor windows will not be out of keeping with the degree of mutual overlooking that already occurs in this suburban location.

Whilst being sited to the south of 24 Cromwell Road, noting the lack of projection beyond this neighbouring property, it is not considered that any impact in relation to the reduction of light levels would cause such harm as to justify the refusal of planning permission.

To the rear of the site are the rear gardens of houses on Ack Lane East. The proposed development would be positioned circa 20.6m from the boundary with these adjacent gardens at ground floor level, 25.4m at first floor level and a similar distance again to the facing rear elevations of these houses. Notwithstanding the increased height and rearward projection of the proposed development beyond that existing on the site, this siting significantly exceeds the 28m separation between rear elevations as set out in the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development'. On this basis, it is not considered that there will be an adverse impact upon the amenities afforded by the occupiers of these neighbouring properties.

For the above reasons it is considered that revised development proposed will not result in a visually obtrusive or overbearing form of development and as such there will not be an unacceptable impact upon the amenities afforded from the neighbouring residential properties. The proposal is thereby compliant with policies H1 and SIE-1 of the Core Strategy together with advice contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

In terms of the amenities of the future occupiers of the site and in particular in relation to amenity space provision, the Council's SPD advises that whatever the size or location of a dwelling there will always be a requirement for some form of private amenity space ranging from balconies, roof gardens and communal private space associated with flats. Private amenity space should be usable, accessible and reasonably free from overlooking, allow for adequate daylight and sunlight and have regard to the size of the dwelling and the character of the area. Unusable spaces such as narrow strips of ground adjacent to roads and parking, steeply sloping areas or those in excessive shade should be avoided. For houses with 4 beds or more the SPD advises that 100m² of amenity space should be provided for each dwelling. Each house would have a rear garden circa 170m² in area. Given that the rear gardens are laid out in a manner that will allow for meaningful use, it is considered that the future occupiers of the proposed development will benefit from an acceptable level of amenity. On this basis the proposal is compliant with policies H1 and SIE1 of the CS DPD and guidance within the SPD.

Parking and Highway Safety

Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy DPD requires development to be sited in locations accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The Council will support development that reduces the need to travel by car. This position is followed through in policy T1. Policy T2 requires parking in accordance with the maximum standards and policy T3 confirms that development which will have an adverse impact on highway safety and/or the capacity of the highway network will only be permitted if mitigation measures are proposed to address such impacts. Developments shall be of a safe and practical design.

In response to this policy position Members are advised that the refusal of the most recent application on this site (which also proposed 2 dwellings) did not relate to parking or highway safety issues. As with the existing dwelling, that now proposed is considered to be in an accessible location. The dwellings will benefit from access that is safe and practical to use and the provision of off street parking for 2 cars per dwelling accords with the Council's maximum parking standards. Objections regarding overspill parking are noted however given the compliance with the parking standards, any such overspill would not be to a level that could justify the refusal of planning permission.

Objections regarding the impact on traffic congestion are noted however any additional traffic generated by the proposed development will be negligible in terms of existing traffic flows in the locality. As such, objections in this regard could not be sustained.

Conditions can be imposed to secure any additional details required such as the provision/retention of visibility splays, surfacing and drainage of the parking, cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points.

On this basis the proposal is considered compliant with policies CS9, T1, T2 and T3.

Other Matters

Saved UDP Review policies L1.1 and L1.2 together with Core Strategy policy SIE2 confirm that there is an undersupply of formal recreation and children's play facilities in the Borough. As such applications for residential development (including those for replacement dwellings where there is an increase in the number of bedrooms) are expected to make a contribution towards that undersupply. For minor developments this is usually by way of a commuted sum payment calculated in accordance with a formula set out in the SPD 'Open Space and Commuted Sum Payments' which is then secured by a S106 attached to the grant of planning permission.

Commuted sums in relation to children's play are only sought on sites that are within the catchment area of existing facilities (to ensure a direct relationship between the new development and future investment of the contributions). As this site is not within the catchment area of any children's play facilities the sum sought would relate to the provision/enhancement of formal recreation only. This will be secured by way of a S106.

Policy SD3 requires development to demonstrate how it will assist in reducing carbon emissions through its construction and occupation through the submission and approval of an energy statement. The energy statement submitted with this application relates to house extensions rather than new

dwellings and therefore the proposal in this respect does not accord with CS policy SD3. Notwithstanding that and noting that applications of this small scale are noted required to include an energy statement at this stage, this matter can be addressed by the imposition of a condition should planning permission be approved.

The application site is not identified on the UDP Proposals Map as being in an area liable to flood and the Environment Agency identify the site as being within Flood Zone 1. Having regard to the location/size of the site and scale of the proposed development there is no requirement for the application to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Notwithstanding this, policy SD6 requires all development to be designed in such a way as to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change. In this respect development is required to incorporate sustainable drainage systems so as to manage run off water from the site.

It is noted that United Utilities have asked for a plan outlining the proposed levels (including finished floor levels and ground levels) shown in metres above Ordnance Datum together with an indicative foul & surface water drainage strategy prior to the determination of this application. Members are advised that given the small scale of the proposed development, compliance with this policy is not required to be demonstrated at this stage, In the event however that planning permission is approved, a condition would be imposed to secure the submission and approval of a SUDS compliant drainage scheme for the site. On this basis the proposed development is considered compliant with policy SD6 of the Core Strategy.

Policies NE1.2 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance of the UDP Review and SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment of the Core Strategy along with policy ENV4 of the WNP and para's 170 and 175 of the NPPF seek to ensure that proposed development does not adversely affect protected species and secures enhancements for biodiversity.

Submitted with the application is a protected species survey which has been considered by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. Members are advised that as no evidence of bats was found and the building was judged to have negligible potential for roosting bats, no further survey work in respect of bats is therefore required. Conditions can be imposed to secure enhancements to biodiversity as can informatives as requested by GMEU in the event that planning permission is approved. On this basis the proposal accords with policies NE1.2, SIE3 and the NPPF.

Conclusions

The delivery of residential development on this site accords with policies CS2, CS4 and H-2 of the Core Strategy.

The development is considered to be of a size, siting and design that will be in keeping with the character of the locality and will not harm the amenities of the existing neighbouring occupiers. The proposal is therefore compliant with policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy DPD together with advice contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

The development secures parking in accordance with the Council's maximum standards and will not give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety. As such

the proposal accords with policies CS9, T1, T2 and T3 together with advice contained within the NPPF.

Subject to the imposition of conditions the proposed development will cause no harm to ecology. In this respect the proposal is compliant with saved UDP Review policy NE1.2 together with policy SIE3 of the CS DPD and advice contained in the NPPF.

Matters relating to drainage and sustainable design can be secured by condition thus ensuring compliance with CS policies SD3 and SD6.

Compliance with policies L1.1, L1,2 and SIE2 in relation to formal recreation can be secured by way of a S106 agreement.

Having regard to the tilted balance in favour of the residential development of this site as set out at para 11 of the NPPF, Members are advised that there would be no adverse impacts arising from the grant of planning permission that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole. As such in accordance with para 11 of the NPPF it is recommended that the application should be approved subject to a S196 and conditions referenced in this report together with others considered reasonable and necessary.

RECOMMENDATION Grant subject to conditions and S106 agreement