

Marple Area Committee

11th November 2020

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Report of the Corporate Director for Place Management and Regeneration

ITEM 1

DC076025

SITE ADDRESS

Orlando House, 11 Compstall Road, Marple Bridge,
Stockport, SK6 5HH

PROPOSAL

Change of use of office building to provide 7 no. residential apartments (Use Class C3a), with associated elevational alterations to the exterior of the building, including insertion of windows, doors and rooflights, application of render and cedar cladding, re-roofing, with the construction of two dormer extensions to the rear roof plane, and formation of external roof terraces with balustrading, together with the formation of associated car parking and segregated refuse and recycling provision

INFORMATION

These applications need to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants [and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations] have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Article 8 and Protocol 1 Article 1 confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Unitary Development Plan, the Head of Development and Control has concluded that some rights conferred by these Articles on the applicant(s)/objectors/residents and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. He believes that any restriction on these rights posed by approval of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of approval and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

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ITEM 1

Application Reference	DC/076025
Location:	Orlando House 11 Compstall Road Marple Bridge Stockport SK6 5HH
PROPOSAL:	Change of use of office building to provide 7 no. residential apartments (Use Class C3a), with associated elevational alterations to the exterior of the building, including insertion of windows, doors and rooflights, application of render and cedar cladding, re-roofing, with the construction of two dormer extensions to the rear roof plane, and formation of external roof terraces with balustrading, together with the formation of associated car parking and segregated refuse and recycling provision
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	03/07/2020
Expiry Date:	28/08/2020
Case Officer:	Mark Burgess
Applicant:	Space Construction Ltd
Agent:	Mrs T Spencer

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Under the Councils adopted delegation agreement for planning applications, should Marple Area Committee be minded to grant planning permission, the application should be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee as a Departure from the Development Plan.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of Orlando House, 11 Compstall Road, Marple Bridge from office use to provide 7 no. residential apartments with associated external alterations, extensions, external roof terraces, car parking and refuse/recycling provision.

In detail, the proposal would comprise :-

- Basement Floor : Conversion of the basement floor of the building to form 1 no. two bedroomed (Flat 1) and 1 no. three bedroomed (Flat 2) apartments.
- Ground Floor : Conversion of the ground floor of the building to form 1 no. three bedroomed (Flat 3), 1 no. two bedroomed (Flat 4) and 1 no. three bedroomed (Flat 5) apartments. Flat 3 would be served by an external roof terrace to the Southern elevation.
- First Floor : Conversion of the first floor of the building to form 1 no. four bedroomed (Flat 6) apartment with an external roof terrace to the Northern elevation.

- Second Floor : Conversion of the second floor/roof space of the building to form 1 no. one bed roomed (Flat 7) apartment.

In terms of external alterations to accommodate the proposed residential use, new and replacement windows and doors are proposed to all elevations, roof lights to the front and rear elevations, dormer roof extensions to the rear elevation, external render and cladding to the rear and side elevations of the existing rear outrigger, re-roofing of the building and the formation of two enclosed external roof terrace areas. 14 parking spaces to serve the proposed development would be provided/retained to the front of the building and to the rear, along with a recycling/refuse storage area to the rear.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents :-

- Planning Statement.
- Design and Access Statement.
- Energy Statement.
- Drainage Statement.

The scheme has been amended since its original submission, in order to address concerns raised by relevant Consultees.

Details of the design and siting of the proposal are appended to the report.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located on the Western side of Compstall Road in Marple Bridge and comprises 'Orlando House', a two storey stone building with a gable tiled roof which is currently vacant and was previously used as offices. The building has a part two storey, part single storey outrigger to the rear elevation and an associated curtilage, including external car parking areas to the front and rear. Access to the site is taken from Compstall Road to the East. The building is located at the Northern end of a ribbon of predominantly mixed scale residential development.

The site is adjoined to the Northern side by 'The George' former Public House, for which planning permission was granted for the change of use to a residential dwellinghouse/dog grooming parlour/pet supplies shop in 2016. To the front (East) of the site is Compstall Road. Adjoining the site to the Southern side is a split-level residential dwellinghouse at Number 11A Compstall Road. Beyond the rear site access to the West are open fields in agricultural use by the adjacent Ernocroft Farm/Lower Ernocroft Farm.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications and appeals to be determined in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Statutory Development Plan for Stockport comprises :-

- Policies set out in the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (saved UDP) adopted on the 31st May 2006 which have been saved by direction

under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and

- Policies set out in the Stockport Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Core Strategy DPD) adopted on the 17th March 2011.

The application site is allocated within the Green Belt, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. The site is also located within the Compstall Conservation Area and the Etherow Parklands Landscape Character Area. The following policies are therefore relevant in consideration of the proposal :-

Saved UDP policies

- LCR1.1 : LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS
- LCR 1.1A : THE URBAN FRINGE INCLUDING THE RIVER VALLEYS
- HC1.3 : SPECIAL CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS
- HC1.4 : NEW USES FOR BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS
- EP1.7 : DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK
- GBA1.1 : EXTENT OF GREEN BELT
- GBA1.2 : CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT
- GBA1.6 : RE-USE OF BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT
- L1.1 : LAND FOR ACTIVE RECREATION
- L1.2 : CHILDRENS PLAY
- MW1.5 : CONTROL OF WASTE FROM DEVELOPMENT

Core Strategy DPD policies

- CS1 : OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGES
- SD-1 : CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
- SD-6 : ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS ON 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
- CS7 : ACCOMMODATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- AED-6 : EMPLOYMENT SITES OUTSIDE PROTECTED EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- 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 DEVELOPMENTS
- T-3 : SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents (SPG's and SPD's) do not form part of the Statutory Development Plan. Nevertheless, they do provide non-statutory Council approved guidance that is a material consideration when determining planning applications. Relevant SPG's and SPD's include :-

- DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SPD
- OPEN SPACE PROVISION AND COMMUTED PAYMENTS SPD
- PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPG
- TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS SPD
- SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SPD

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, initially published on 27th March 2012 and subsequently revised and published on 19th February 2019 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF will be a vital tool in 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.

In respect of decision-taking, the revised NPPF constitutes a 'material consideration'.

Paragraph 1 states '*The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied*'.

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

Paragraph 7 states '*The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*'.

Paragraph 8 states '*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*

Paragraph 11 states '*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’.

Paragraph 12 states ‘.....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’.

Paragraph 38 states ‘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’.

Paragraph 47 states ‘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’.

Paragraph 213 states ‘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)’.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

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

- DC068802 : Minor alterations to fenestration to front, right and left elevations, including replacement windows and doors : Granted – 23/04/18.
- DC068251 : Prior approval for change of use from Office (Class B1a) to Dwellinghouse (Class C3) to form No.9 one and No.2 two-bedroom apartments : Prior Approval Not Required – 27/02/18.
- DC065991 : Change of use of existing office building to residential use comprising 7 no. residential apartments (Revised description) : Prior Approval Not Required – 13/07/17.
- DC055275 : Change of use of existing office building to residential use comprising 7 no. residential apartments : Prior Approval Not Required – 04/06/14.
- J.51129 : 1 x non Illuminous Panel Sign 1 x Illuminated Box : Granted – 01/11/90.

- J.40851 : Proposed change of use of workshop and office to office suite : Granted – 14/01/88.
- J.29648 : Provide new sliding folding hardwood doors to ground floor level opening Existing building : Granted – 06/12/83.
- J.21614 : Sign fixed to gable of building : Granted – 06/01/81.
- J.19516 : Existing building (excepting ground floor store) to be upgraded to provide offices : Granted – 30/04/80.
- J.17907 : Proposed workshop extension : Granted – 10/01/80.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The owners/occupiers of surrounding properties were notified in writing of the application and the application was advertised by way of display of notices on site and in the press.

No letters of representation have been received to the application.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Conservation Officer

Comments of 18/08/20

This site is located within the Compstall Conservation Area and Orlando House is identified as a key historic building within the Compstall Conservation Area character appraisal, marking the southern boundary of the area along Compstall Road. The principle building is of a simple two storey construction with a symmetrical double pitched roof form, typical of historic buildings throughout the conservation area, and this form remains legible despite the addition of a modern 2 storey extension set at a reduced level at the rear. It is noted that a previous proposal for conversion to residential use was approved in 2018. The previous scheme was wholly contained within the existing building envelope. However, the current proposal includes the formation of an apartment at second floor level which would require the construction of three large dormer extensions within the rear roof plane and loss of a chimney, together with the insertion of 10 roof lights This would be particularly harmful to the special character of the conservation area and architectural and historic identity of the existing building and it is recommended that this unit is wholly removed from the current proposal.

The submitted plans do not provide full details of proposed external materials and architectural details such as windows and doors – it is essential that these are appropriate to the special character of the conservation area and should be specified on the proposed plans. It is recommended that the opportunity is taken to enhance the front elevation of the building and repair or restore original design features where appropriate.

Comments of 22/09/20, following submission of amended plans

I understand works have commenced under DC/065991, a change of use application involving no external alterations. The works specified in DC068802 represent an enhancement of the appearance of the existing building and whilst it is acknowledged that higher specification architectural features could be introduced, this should not be at the expense of further alterations that would result in a more harmful impact overall.

The impact of the proposed roof lights and dormers would have a particularly harmful impact upon the identity of the existing building and wider character and appearance of the conservation area. The simple pitched roof form of the existing building is an important part of its architectural and historic value and I would not support the conversion of the attic space if it would result in the degree of the alteration indicated on the proposed plans. The presence of the existing rear extension does not provide justification to compound or reinforce the level of harm through further harmful alterations. The alterations to the roof will be clearly visible from inside and outside the conservation area, in short and long distance views, both directly and indirectly, and impacting upon the front, rear and side elevations.

The submitted heritage statement (contained within the design and access statement) represents a cursory summary of the special interest of the Compstall conservation area, the contribution Orlando House makes to that special interest or the impact the alterations would have upon that special interest. No historic photographs have been sourced so restoration of 'original' features without evidence is potentially speculative. Nevertheless I would accept the retention of the large 'shopfront' opening on the front elevation and its re-glazing would be acceptable.

I recommend that amended plans are prepared with reference to the previously approved plan, omitting the dormers, reducing the total number of roof lights and restricting them to the rear elevation, together with clear annotation of the proposed external materials, design of windows and doors.

Comments of 16/10/20, following submission of further amended plans

I confirm the amendments to the front elevation would be acceptable from a conservation/design point of view. Whilst I can understand the desirability of the 2 large rear dormers it is important that their design is in keeping with the traditional design and proportions of the existing building – as shown their size and bulk is excessive and to be acceptable would need to be reduced. I suggest that they are amended so that the glazed element matches the size of the first floor windows on the front elevation. The method of opening could be either a pair of side opening casements or a single sliding sash.

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Having checked our records I am satisfied that the proposed development does not threaten the known or suspected archaeological heritage.

On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant.

Highway Engineer

Comments of 04/08/20

This application, seeking permission for the change of use of Orlando House on Compstall Road, Marple Bridge, from offices to 7 no. apartments, together with various amendments to the building and the formation of associated car parking and a bin store, follows on from a number of prior approval applications which sought permission for the change of use of the building to 7/9 apartments. The most recent application (DC/068251) was approved in April 2018. No highway objection was raised to that application, on the basis that it was considered that the proposal should not result in a material increase in vehicle movements on the local highway network, a level of car parking (14 spaces) was proposed to be provided that, it was considered, should meet demand and cycle store was proposed to be provided.

The scheme now proposed is similar, from a highways perspective, to the previously proposed schemes, with the site's car parking being retained for occupiers of the apartments, cycle stores being provided and no changes being proposed to the site's access arrangements. As the number of apartments is less (7 no.) than the previously approved scheme (9 no.), the proposal may generate slightly fewer vehicle movements than the previously approved scheme. 14 parking spaces should meet parking demand.

With respect to servicing, although the submitted plans show the provision of a bin storage area to the south of the site, this shows it containing just 14 bins (2 per dwelling). Stockport Council's Waste and Recycling service, however, uses a 4-bin system (including a food waste caddies for properties without gardens) and therefore the scheme needs to be reviewed to ensure that the bin area can accommodate the required number of bins. I would also recommend that the area is enclosed (with a fence) to ensure bins do not encroach on parking areas. In addition, the bin area is proposed to be located to the far south of the site, approx. 80m from Compstall Road. Although a swept-path tracking diagram has been submitted in support of the application which is intended to show service vehicles will be able to enter, turn within and exit the site, this is for a smaller vehicle than a refuse vehicle and examination of the access route through the site concludes that it would be very tight, if not impossible, for a refuse vehicle to perform such a manoeuvre. In addition, I would question whether refuse vehicle would indeed enter the site to collect waste and recycling and would, instead, collect waste and recycle from Compstall Road. As such, I would recommend that the Council's Waste Team are consulted on the application. If they confirm that refuse collection vehicles would not enter the site, a bin collection point towards the front of the site would need to be provided.

Finally, with respect to parking, I note that no disabled parking is proposed to be provided within the site (as required by Policy T1), parking space 4 would slightly stick out into the access drive, it is not clear exactly how the front car park would be laid out (the layout shown differs slightly from the current layout) and no provision appears to have been made for EV charging (having regard to Paragraphs 110, 170 and 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework and local policies SD-6 and SIE-3). Whilst the provision of EV charging points can be dealt with by condition, I consider the layout of the front car park needs to be reviewed and proposals to provide a space for disabled badge holders is tabled. One option may be to provide a space along the lines shown below.

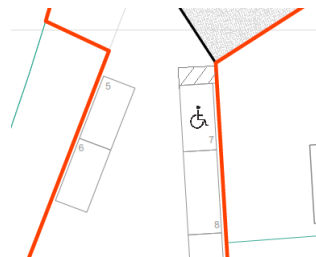


To conclude, whilst I have no objection to this application, in principle, I recommend that the application is deferred to enable the applicant to review / amend the front parking area and waste / refuse collection and for the Council's Waste and Recycling Team to be consulted on the scheme.

Further comments of 22/09/20, following submission of amended/additional information

I write with reference to the e-mail from the Agent of the 28th August 2020 in response to my comments of the 3rd August 2020, as well as others.

With respect to parking, one disabled parking space needs to be provided. As the building will not have a lift, realistically a disabled person with poor mobility is only likely to occupy an apartment in either the basement or ground floor. With parking provided level with both the basement and ground floor doors, I would accept a disabled space being provided in either of the parking areas. As the rear car park is slightly bigger and space 7 could be used by disabled persons without any modification (other than signage and the area to the north hatched so the rear of the car would be accessible), I would suggest the space is provided in the rear car park (as per below).



Regarding parking provision at the front, there are essentially 4 spaces provided at the front of the site at the moment. 3 at an angles with the road and 1 parallel with the road (space 4). It is assumed that the space parallel with the road (space 4) would be amended so it is also at an angle with the road by removing a tree but it is not exactly clear if this is indeed the case. It is suggested that this is clarified.



With respect to the provision of EV charging points, this can be dealt with by condition.

Regarding Waste and Recycling, as previously outlined, Stockport Council's Waste and Recycling service use a 4-bin system. For a development without gardens, each dwelling would require 2 no. 180l bins, a 140l bin and a 23l food waste caddy, as per the table below.

				
Paper, card and cartons	Glass, cans and plastic bottles	Garden waste	Residual domestic waste	Food waste
volume				
180 litres	180 litres	240 litres	140 litres	23 litres
dimensions				
Height 1100mm Width 480mm Depth 730mm Height lid open 1600mm	Height 1100mm Width 480mm Depth 730mm Height lid open 1600mm	Height 1100mm Width 580mm Depth 740mm Height lid open 1700mm	Height 1065mm Width 480mm Depth 560mm Height lid open 1450mm	Height 405mm Width 320mm Depth 400mm Height with handle extended 630mm
floor space				
Width 680mm Depth 930mm	Width 680mm Depth 930mm	Width 780mm Depth 940mm	Width 680mm Depth 760mm	Width 320mm Depth 400mm

If communal bins were to be provided, 3 no. 1280l bins and a 140l bin for food waste bin (or food caddies) would be required.

As previously outlined, although a swept-path tracking diagram was submitted in support of the application which was intended to show that service vehicles will be able to enter, turn within and exit the site, this is for a smaller vehicle than a refuse vehicle (it should be noted that refuse vehicles, at 11m long, are larger than many delivery vehicles) and examination of the access route through the site concludes that it would be very tight, if not impossible, for a refuse vehicle to perform such a manoeuvre. In addition, I would question whether refuse vehicles would indeed enter the site to collect waste and recycling and would, instead, collect waste and recycle from Compstall Road. As such, unless the Council's Waste Team confirm otherwise, I would conclude that refuse vehicles would service the site from Compstall Road. If this was the case, a suitable point for the collection of bins will need to be agreed and large communal bins will not be able to be used (as a result of the distance between the bin store and Compstall Road and the gradient involved). For information, a bin collection point is simply an area where residents will place their bins on bin day.

Further comments of 22/10/20, following submission of amended/additional information

I write with reference to the e-mail from the Agent of the 9th October 2020 in response to my comments of the 22nd September 2020, as well as others.

With respect to parking, I note that a disabled parking space has been provided in the rear car park in the position I recommended. As such, I consider the proposals for disabled parking acceptable.

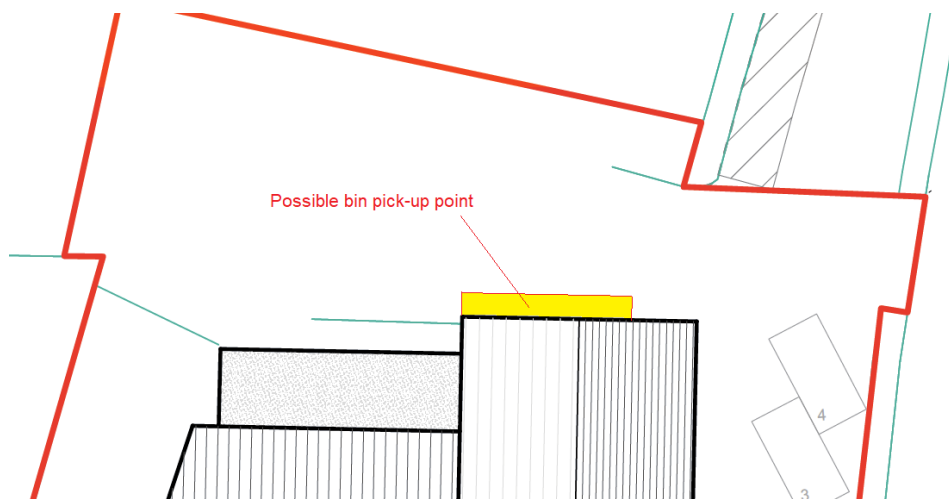
Regarding parking provision at the front, I previously outlined that there are essentially 4 spaces provided at the front of the site at the moment. 3 spaces at an angle with the road and 1 space is parallel with the road (space 4). As also previously outlined, it is assumed that the space parallel with the road (space 4) is proposed to be amended so it is also at an angle with the road by removing a tree but it is not exactly clear if this is indeed the case. It is also not clear whether the footway that abuts the building is to be retained. I therefore suggested that the layout of this front parking area is clarified. The applicant, however, has not yet provided any clarification and therefore I would recommend that such clarification is again requested.



Regarding Waste and Recycling, I note that the revised plan shows a bin store with 7 no. 360L general waste bins and 7 no. 360L recycling bins (14 in total). If 360L bins are used, 4 bins will be required for paper, card & cartons, 4 for glass, cans & plastic bottles, 3 for residual waste and 1 for food waste (12 in total). As such, although the plan does not show the correct mix or number of bins, it does show that the required number of bins can be accommodated. As such, I would consider the bin store acceptable.

Finally, it is noted that a revised swept-path tracking diagram has been submitted with the aim of demonstrating that an 11m long refuse vehicle would be able to turn into and out of the site access and turn in the access drive. Although I agree that this shows that such a manoeuvre is potentially possible, the manoeuvre would be very tight and would therefore not prove very practical. In addition, the refuse vehicle would only be able to travel to within 25-30m from the bin store. As such, I would question whether drivers of refuse vehicles would perform would wish to enter the site to attempt such a tight manoeuvre and whether refuse collection staff would wheel bins such a distance. I therefore envisage that refuse collection would need to take place from Compstall Road and a suitable point would need to be provided where residents would leave their bins on collection day. I would therefore recommend that the Council's Waste Team are asked to confirm whether their

refuse vehicles would likely enter the site and staff would wheel bins 25-30m. If not, a bin collection point will need to be provided close to Compstall Road for residents to leave their bins on collection day. One possible location for this is shown on the plan below.



Arboricultural Officer

The proposed development site is located within the existing grounds of the commercial 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.

The proposed development is within or affected by a conservation Area (Compstall).

There are no legally protected trees within this site or affected by this development.

The proposed conversion footprint and associated infrastructure is 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 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 the 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 the rear garden area and specimen trees in the front area in hard standing tree pits as well as native hedgerow 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 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 considered, which goes directly into the site, which will also need to upgrade the route they 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 :-

Condition Tree 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.

Condition Tree 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.

Condition Tree 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.

Nature Development Officer

Comments of 21/07/20

The site is located on Compstall Road in Marple Bridge. The application proposes change of use of office building to provide 7 no. residential apartments (Use Class C3a), with associated elevational alterations to the exterior of the

building, including insertion of windows, doors and rooflights, the removal of the chimney stack, application of render and cedar cladding, re-roofing, with the construction of three dormer extensions to the rear roof plane, and formation of external roof terraces with balustrading, together with the formation of associated car parking and segregated refuse and recycling provision

The site itself has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. Etherow Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Ernocroft Wood Site of Biological Importance (SBI) are located approximately 80m to the northeast of the application. Given the localised nature of the proposals, I would not envisage any significant adverse impacts on the designated areas as a result of the proposed works.

Many buildings have the potential to support roosting bats and the site is located near to good bat foraging habitat which increases the likelihood of bats being present. 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

Buildings and vegetation also offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. All breeding birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Records for badger exist in the vicinity of the application area. Badgers and their setts are legally protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Setting opportunities are likely to be limited within the application area itself as this is dominated by hard standing and buildings. The presence of badger within 30m of the application site (and therefore risk of disturbance) should be confirmed.

Ecological survey work is therefore recommended to ensure full assessment of impacts to inform determination of the application.

It is advised that this application is not determined in the absence of an ecology survey (including bats, breeding birds and badgers). This survey should be carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist, at an appropriate time of year and following best practice guidance. Depending on the findings of the initial survey further survey work may be required, and this will also need to be submitted prior to the determination of the application. Assessment of the impact of the proposed work on protected species and habitats and appropriate mitigation is also required. Once this information is available, I will be able to comment on the application further. The requirement for the survey information prior to determination of the application is in line with national and local planning policy and is reinforced by legal cases which emphasise the duty the local planning authority has to fully consider protected species when determining

planning applications.

Other comments relevant to the application are:

No building roof works or vegetation removal should be carried out during the bird nesting season (which is typically March – August inclusive) unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected within developments in accordance with local and national planning policy framework. Suitable measures include the provision of bat roosting and/or bird nesting facilities within the building. A range of different integrated boxes are available to match different property types. In addition, landscape planting should comprise native species beneficial to wildlife. Any proposed landscape plans should be submitted to the LPA for approval.

Any proposed lighting should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance (following principles outlined in Bat Conservation Trust guidance: <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2018/09/new-guidance-on-bats-and-lighting>).

Further comments of 13/09/20, following submission of additional information

If works to the roof have already taken place under a previous planning consent then I can confirm that no bat survey would be required as part of DC076025. The proposals are also assessed as being as low risk to other protected species such as badger.

I advise that as per the below email, any future works are undertaken with caution and should any evidence of roosting bats (or any other protected species) be discovered on site works must cease and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice

Biodiversity enhancements are expected within developments in accordance with local and national planning policy framework. Suitable measures include the provision of bat roosting and/or bird nesting facilities within the building. A range of different integrated boxes are available to match different property types. In addition, any landscape planting should comprise native species beneficial to wildlife. Any proposed landscape plans should be submitted to the LPA for approval.

Environment Team (Land Contamination)

Due to the nature of the proposed development – change of use, there will be minimal breaking of ground and any outside space will be mainly hardstanding, as such I have no comments to make.

Drainage Engineer

I have reviewed our records which show :-

- The site is located in flood zone 1
- The site has a low surface water risk
- The closest watercourse is located circa 90m away from the site

- The site to be probably compatible with infiltration SuDS
- A water table level between 3-5m
- There are no recorded historical flood events relevant to the development within the vicinity

The application should be supported by a drainage strategy/plan showing the applicants intentions.

All applications should drain surface water in-line with the drainage hierarchy, as outlined in Paragraph 80, (Reference ID: 7-080-20150323), of the National Planning Practice Guidance :-

“Generally, the aim should be to discharge surface run off as high up the following hierarchy of drainage options as reasonably practicable:

- Into the ground (infiltration);
- To a surface water body (watercourse);
- To a surface water sewer;
- To a combined sewer.”

We recommend applicants refer to and adopt the principles set out within C753 SuDS Manual ‘The SuDS approach to managing surface water runoff’.

We also recommend the applicants provide a comprehensive assessment of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to support the application.

ANALYSIS

Policy Principle – Green Belt

The site is allocated within the Greater Manchester Green Belt, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. The NPPF addresses the national approach to Green Belt policy under the heading entitled ‘Protecting Green Belt Land’ and takes as its fundamental starting point the importance of maintaining ‘openness’ on a ‘permanent basis’. Paragraph 133 of the NPPF confirms that ‘The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence’.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except in a number of limited circumstances. Due to the fact that the proposal does not comprise the construction of a new building, Paragraph 145 of the NPPF is not relevant in this particular case.

Paragraph 146 of the NPPF states that certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Such forms of development include, within Paragraph 146 (d) :-

The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.

Saved UDP policy GBA1.2 states that forms of development other than new buildings, including changes in the use of land, will not be permitted unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt and that proposals for the re-use of buildings will be assessed against the provisions of saved UDP policy GBA1.6. Additionally, saved UDP policy GBA1.5 specifies, amongst other categories, that within the Green Belt new residential development will be restricted to re-use of buildings, as provided for by saved UDP policy GBA1.6.

Saved UDP policy GBA1.6 confirms that the change of use or conversion of buildings of permanent and substantial construction will be permitted, provided that a number of criteria are satisfied, as outlined below :-

(i) Would be used for economic or other purposes other than wholly residential ones;

Whilst saved UDP policy is broadly consistent with the NPPF, criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6, which precludes conversion of buildings to wholly residential uses, is in direct conflict with Paragraph 146 (d) of the NPPF, which makes no distinction between types of uses.

In this context, Paragraph 213 of the NPPF requires weight to be afforded to Local Plan policy, according to its degree of consistency with the NPPF. On this basis, the discrepancy relating to criteria (i) of the saved UDP policy GBA1.6 is outdated following the introduction of the NPPF and accordingly should not be apportioned any weight.

In view of the above, in Green Belt policy terms, it is therefore left to be considered whether or not the conversion satisfies the remaining criteria (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6. Each of these will be assessed in turn :-

(ii) Would maintain openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt;

The proposed development would utilise the existing areas of curtilage to the East and South, which would be unchanged as part of the proposal. Private amenity space to serve the proposed apartments would be provided on existing flat roofed elements, within the footprint of the existing building. Proposed extensions, in the form of rear dormers would not increase the footprint of the existing building. As such, it is considered that the proposed development would maintain openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

(iii) Would safeguard or improve the appearance of the rural environment;

The proposal would comprise the re-use of a currently vacant building, resulting in a viable use for the building. In the absence of objections from the Conservation Officer, it is considered that the proposal would safeguard the appearance of the Etherow Parklands Landscape Character Area, along with the character of the Compstall Conservation Area within which the site is located.

All buildings should be structurally sound, well related to their surroundings and capable of :-

(iv) Accommodating the new use without the need for major rebuilding or extension;

- The existing building is considered to be structurally sound and could accommodate the proposed new use without the need for major rebuilding. External alterations would comprise alterations to existing openings, the provision of amenity space on existing flat roofed elements within the footprint of the existing building and small dormer roof extensions to the rear elevation. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed residential use could be accommodated within the existing building without the need for major rebuilding or extension.

(v) Being provided with an adequate curtilage without adverse impact on the Green Belt; and

- The site is served by an area of curtilage to the East and South, which would be unchanged as part of the proposal. Whilst it is acknowledged that external amenity space to serve the apartments is proposed, such amenity space would be provided on existing flat roofed elements within the footprint of the existing building. On this basis, the proposed development would be provided within an adequate curtilage without adverse impact on the Green Belt.

(vi) Being satisfactorily accessed and serviced without adverse impact on the Green Belt.

- The proposed development would utilise the same access, servicing and parking arrangements as was approved as part of previous Prior Approval applications in 2014 (DC055275 – 7 no. apartments), 2017 (DC065991 – 7 no. apartments) and 2018 (DC068251 – 9 no. apartments). On the basis of the submitted amended plans and in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer on access grounds, it is considered that the development could be satisfactorily accessed and serviced without adverse impact on the Green Belt.

In the case of buildings, which may be used by bats, barn owls or other protected species, satisfactory investigation must be carried out into the possible presence of such species and, where appropriate, measures must be implemented to ensure that legal obligations are met and that any damage to habitats is minimised.

- In the absence of objections from the Council Nature Development, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any harm to any protected species which may be present on the site.

In view of the above and in summary of Green Belt considerations, it is clear that the proposal complies with the requirements of criteria (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6. It is recognised that the proposal does not comply with the requirement of criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6, being for a wholly residential use. However, due to the fact that this criteria is in direct conflict and inconsistent with Paragraph 146 (d) of the NPPF, it is considered to be outdated and should not be apportioned any weight, in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 213 of the NPPF. On this basis, the proposal represents a Green Belt exception for the purposes of Paragraph 146 (d) of the NPPF, does not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is considered to be fully justified as a departure to the development plan.

In addition, Members are advised that the principle of the conversion of the existing building from office use to residential use has previously been considered acceptable as part of previous Prior Approval applications in 2014 (DC055275 – 7 no. apartments), 2017 (DC065991 – 7 no. apartments) and 2018 (DC068251 – 9 no. apartments). Appropriate weight should be apportioned to this genuine fall-back position in the consideration and subsequent determination of the application.

Policy Principle – Residential

Members are advised that the principle of the conversion of the existing building from office use to residential use has previously been considered acceptable as part of previous Prior Approval applications in 2014 (DC055275 – 7 no. apartments), 2017 (DC065991 – 7 no. apartments) and 2018 (DC068251 – 9 no. apartments).

Core Strategy DPD policy CS4 directs new housing towards three spatial priority areas (The Town Centre, District and Large Local Centres and, finally, other accessible locations), with Green Belt sites being last sequentially in terms of acceptable Urban Greenfield and Green Belt sites. Core Strategy DPD policy H-2 states that the delivery and supply of new housing will be monitored and managed to ensure that provision is in line with the local trajectory, the local previously developed land target is being applied and a continuous 5 year deliverable supply of housing is maintained and notes that the local previously developed land target is 90%.

The NPPF puts additional emphasis upon the government's objective to significantly boost the supply of housing, rather than simply having land allocated for housing development. Stockport is currently in a position of housing under-supply, with 2.8 years of supply against the minimum requirement of 5 years + 20%, as set out in paragraphs 47 of the NPPF. In situations of housing under-supply, Core Strategy DPD policy CS4 allows Core Strategy DPD policy H-2 to come into effect, bringing housing developments on sites which meet the Councils reduced accessibility criteria. Having regard to the continued position of housing under-supply within the Borough, the current minimum accessibility score is set at 'zero'.

In view of the above factors, the principle of conversion of the existing vacant building to residential use, in an accessible and sustainable location and comprising previously developed 'brownfield' land is considered acceptable at the current time of housing under-supply within the Borough. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies CS2, CS4 and H-2.

Policy Principle – Loss of Existing Office Use

The building comprises an existing office use. Core Strategy DPD policies CS7 and AED-6 effectively seek to retain such employment uses outside designated employment areas unless the loss of the employment use can be clearly justified.

In assessment of the proposal, it is noted that existing building has been vacant for a period of time and therefore is no longer considered to be viable as an employment use. Furthermore, the principle of the loss of the lawful office use and the principle of the conversion of the building to residential use has previously been considered acceptable as part of previous Prior Approval applications in 2014 (DC055275 – 7 no. apartments), 2017 (DC065991 – 7 no. apartments) and 2018 (DC068251 – 9 no. apartments).

In view of the above, the loss of the existing lawful employment use at the site is considered to be justified in this particular case, in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy DPD policies CS7 and AED-6.

Design, Siting and Impact on Heritage Asset

The site is located within the Compstall Conservation Area. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Conservation Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The key historic nature of the building within the Conservation Area is noted by the Conservation Officer and the revised scheme before Members has been developed following extensive negotiations between the applicant and the Conservation Officer. The amendments include the reduction in the number of roof lights to the front elevation; amendments to the front elevation of the building to retain its original appearance, to include the retention of the existing shop front; retention of the existing rear chimney stack; and the reduction in the number and size of the dormer roof extensions to the rear elevation. Matters of detail, including proposed external materials, architectural details such as external window and door frames and roof lights would be secured by the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions.

In the absence of objections from Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, the proposed development would not threaten any known or suspected archaeological heritage and there is no reason to impose any archaeological requirements as part of the proposal.

Whilst not all of the proposed apartments would be served by private or communal amenity space, in accordance guidance contained within the Design of Residential Development SPD, it is noted that such an arrangement is not an uncommon feature in the conversion of historic buildings to residential use. 'Flat 3' and 'Flat 6' would however be served by private external terrace areas which is considered to be a positive aspect of the scheme.

In view of the above, in its amended form, in the absence of objections from the Conservation Officer and subject to conditional control, it is considered that the proposed conversion and external alterations could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing harm to the character and appearance of the Compstall Conservation Area. The conversion of the existing vacant building and associated development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the Etherow Parklands Landscape Character Area and the general visual amenity of the area. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with saved UDP policies LCR1.1, LCR1.1A, HC1.3 and HC1.4, Core Strategy DPD policies H-1, CS8, SIE-1 and SIE-3 and the Design of Residential Development SPD.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The site is adjoined to the front (East) by Compstall Road and to the rear (West) by open fields. Adequate separation (minimum of 23.5 metres) would be retained to the property to the North of the site, comprising 'The George' former Public House, for which planning permission was granted for the change of use to a residential dwellinghouse/dog grooming parlour/pet supplies shop in 2016. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is adjoined to the South by a residential property at Number 11A Compstall Road, it is noted that no extensions are proposed adjacent to this property, upper floor windows in the Southern elevation of the existing building

would comprise non-habitable rooms (bathroom and en-suite) and the proposed external terrace area to serve 'Flat 3' would be provided with an appropriate privacy screen to the South elevation, in order to minimise overlooking to this property.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed residential use and external alterations could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the residential amenity of surrounding properties, by reason of overshadowing, over-dominance, loss of outlook, visual intrusion, overlooking or loss of privacy, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies H-1 and SIE-1 and the Design of Residential Development SPD.

Highways Considerations

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

The Highway Engineer notes that the current proposal follows on from previous Prior Approval applications at the site for the change of use of the building to 7/9 apartments and confirms that no objections were raised to these proposals on the basis that it was considered that the proposals should not result in a material increase in vehicle movements on the local highway network, an appropriate level of parking (14 spaces) would be provided which should meet demand and a cycle store would be provided.

The current proposal is similar from a highway perspective to the previously approved schemes, with the sites car parking being retained for occupiers of the apartments, cycle storage being provided and no changes being proposed to the sites access arrangements. As the proposed number of apartments (7 no.) is less than the previously approved Prior Approval scheme (DC068251 : 9 no.), the proposal may generate slightly fewer vehicle movements and should meet parking demand. The requirement for appropriate EV charging facilities would be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.

In its amended form and in order to address concerns raised by the Highway Engineer, a bin storage area with 7 no. 360L general waste bins and 7 no. 360L recycling bins (14 in total) would be provided to serve the proposed development. Whilst the submitted plan does not show the correct mix of number of bins, it does however show that the required number of bins can be accommodated on the site to serve the proposed development. As such, the Highway Engineer considers the size of the proposed bin store acceptable.

At the request of the Highway Engineers, swept-path tracking drawing have been submitted in support of the application, with the aim of demonstrating that an 11.0 metre long refuse vehicle would be able to turn into and out of the site access and turn in the access drive. Whilst the drawing shows that such a manoeuvre is potentially possible, the manoeuvre would be very tight and would therefore not prove very practical and the refuse vehicle would only be able to travel to within 25.0-30.0 metres from the bin store. As such, the Highway Engineer has raised questions as to whether or not drivers of refuse vehicles would wish to enter the site to attempt such a tight manoeuvre and whether refuse collection staff would wheel bins such a distance. It is therefore envisaged that refuse collection would need to take place from Compstall Road and a suitable point would need to be provided where residents would leave their bins on collection day. This matter is currently subject to discussions with the Council Waste Team and Members will updated verbally of any agreement following report preparation. Nevertheless, the Highway

Engineer has suggested a suitable bin collection point for residents to leave their bins on collection day adjacent to the North elevation of the building, close to Compstall Road.

With respect to detailed parking matters, in its amended form and as requested by the Highway Engineer, a disabled parking space would be provided within the rear car park, therefore the proposals for disabled parking are considered acceptable. In terms of the proposed parking area, at the request of the Highway Engineer, the applicant has confirmed that the parking spaces to the front would be realigned to provide a uniform parking area; all four spaces at 45 degrees are of a required length to be accessible in both a forward and reverse motion; the tree to the site frontage which is a self-seeded poor specimen would be removed; and the footway along the frontage of the building would be incorporated within the new hard surfacing to be provided to create the proposed new parking layout. As such and subject to the imposition of a condition to require the submission and approval of full details of the parking area, no objections are raised to the proposal from the Highway Engineer from a parking perspective.

In view of the above, in its amended form, in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable from a traffic generation, parking and highway safety perspective. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6, SIE-1, CS9, T-1, T-2 and T-3, the Sustainable Transport SPD and the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD.

Impact on Trees

Existing trees on site are afforded protection by virtue of the sites location within the Compstall Conservation Area. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Conservation Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

Whilst the Arboricultural Officer notes that no Tree Survey has been submitted in support of the application and the proposed development would potentially impact slightly on existing trees on the site, due to the fact that the site has a very poor level of vegetation, this impact is lessened. Conditions are recommended to ensure that no existing retained tree is worked to and to require the provision of tree protection measures to retained trees during construction. A further condition is recommended to require the provision of additional landscape planting within the site to provide visual amenity improvements.

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

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology

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 has no nature conservation designated, legal or otherwise, however Etherow Local Nature Reserve and Ernocroft Wood Site of Biological Importance are located approximately 80.0 metres to the North East of the site. Nevertheless, given the localised nature of the proposal, no significant adverse

impacts on these designated areas are envisaged by the Nature Development Officer.

In terms of potential impact on protected species, buildings have the potential to support roosting bats and the site is located near to good bat foraging habitat which increased the likelihood of bats being present. Buildings and vegetation offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. Records for badger also exist in the vicinity of the application site. Whilst the Nature Development Officer had originally requested the submission of Ecological Surveys, the applicant has confirmed that works to the roof of the building have already been undertaken as part of previous Prior Approvals for conversion of the building from office to residential. As such, the Nature Development Officer considers that no Ecological Survey is required with the application and the proposal is also assessed as being low risk to other protected species such as badger. It is however recommended that any further works are undertaken with caution and the applicant is advised of legislation in place in relation to protected species and procedures to follow should protected species be discovered on site by way of informative.

Conditions are recommended by the Nature Development Officer to ensure that no roof works or vegetation removal should be carried out in the bird nesting season, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority; to require the provision of biodiversity enhancements within the development; and to ensure that any external lighting proposed is sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Nature Development Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is deemed to have the lowest risk of flooding. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Drainage Engineer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

At the request of the Drainage Engineer, a Drainage Statement has been submitted in support of the application, which assesses the surface water drainage options for the proposed development against the SuDS hierarchy. The submitted Drainage Statement confirms the following :-

- The existing building on site connects to the combined surface water and foul drainage;
- The application site is completely covered in hardstanding (footprint of the building, car parking area to the front and hard-surfaced area to the rear of the building), therefore infiltration is not possible;
- Due to the location of the site 250.0 metres to the West of the nearest watercourse (the River Etherow), discharge to a water body/watercourse is not possible;
- The only option is to connect to a combined sewer. This has been approved by both the utility provider and Building Regulations.

In view of the above, due to the fact that the proposal would comprise the change of use of an existing building to residential use with no additional hardstanding or increased surface water-run off proposed, drainage of the site to a combined sewer is considered acceptable when assessed against the above SuDS hierarchy of drainage options. As such, it is considered that the proposed 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.

Land Contamination

No objections are raised to the proposal from the Council Environment Team, who notes that the proposed development would comprise a change of use, there would be minimal breaking of ground and any external space would be mainly hardstanding. As such, the proposal is not considered to be at risk from land contamination, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3.

Developer Contributions

With regard to affordable housing, notwithstanding the requirements of Core Strategy DPD policy H-3 and the Provision of Affordable Housing SPG, the NPPF states that the provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments (10 residential units or more). As such, on the basis of the proposal for 7 no. apartments, there is no requirement for affordable housing provision within the development.

In accordance with saved UDP policy L1.2, Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-2, the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD and the NPPG, there is a requirement to ensure the provision and maintenance of formal recreation and children's play space and facilities within the Borough to meet the needs of the residents of the development. On the basis of the population capacity of the proposed development (1 no. one bedroomed/three person unit; 2 no. two bedroomed/three person units; 3 no. three bedroomed/four person units; 1 no. four bedroomed/five person unit = 25), this would require a commuted sum payment of £37,400.00p, which would be secured by way of a Section 106 Agreement.

SUMMARY

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.

Members are advised that the principle of the conversion of the existing building from office use to residential use has previously been considered acceptable as part of Prior Approval applications in 2014 (DC055275 – 7 no. apartments), 2017 (DC065991 – 7 no. apartments) and 2018 (DC068251 – 9 no. apartments). Appropriate weight should be apportioned to this genuine fall-back position in the consideration and subsequent determination of the application, with regard to the loss of the existing, albeit vacant, lawful office use at the site and the principle of the proposed residential use. The principle of conversion of the existing vacant building to residential use, in an accessible and sustainable location and comprising previously developed 'brownfield' land is considered acceptable, particularly during the current period of housing under-supply within the Borough.

In its amended form, in the absence of objections from the Council Conservation Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposed use and external alterations are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the Compstall Conservation Area within which the site is located.

In its amended form, in the absence of objections from the Council Highway Engineer, the proposal is considered acceptable from a traffic generation, parking and highway safety perspective.

In the absence of objections from relevant consultees and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to the issues of impact on residential amenity; impact on trees; impact on protected species and ecology; flood risk and drainage; and land contamination.

The application site is located within the Green Belt and it is considered that the proposed conversion and associated external alterations could be undertaken without causing any adverse harm to the openness of the Green Belt, in accordance with the requirements of criteria (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6. It is recognised that the proposal does not comply with the requirement of criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6, being for a wholly residential use. However, due to the fact that this criteria is in direct conflict and inconsistent with Paragraph 146 (d) of the NPPF, it is considered to be outdated and should not be apportioned any weight, in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 213 of the NPPF. On this basis, the proposal represents a Green Belt exception for the purposes of Paragraph 146 (d) of the NPPF, does not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is considered to be fully justified as a departure to the development plan.

In view of the above, in considering the planning merits of the proposal against the requirements of the NPPF, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development. On this basis, the application is recommended for approval.

Given the conflict with criteria (i) of saved UDP policy GBA1.6, the proposal remains a Departure from the Development Plan. Accordingly, should Members of Marple Area Committee be minded to grant planning permission, the application will be required to be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee for determination as a Departure from the Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant.

Should Marple Area Committee be minded to agree the recommendation and grant planning permission, the application should be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee as a Departure from the Development Plan.

Should the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee agree the Officer recommendation and resolve to grant planning permission, the decision should be deferred and delegated to the Head of Planning, pending the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the relevant contribution towards open space.

