

## **ITEM 2**

<b>Application Reference</b>	<b>DC/078325</b>
<b>Location:</b>	St Thomas Hospital Shaw Heath Cale Green Stockport SK3 8BL
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Redevelopment comprising demolition of buildings, repurposing of existing buildings, and erection of new buildings for a mix of uses comprising 68no. residential apartments and dwellings (Use Class C3) and 70no. bed care home (Use Class C2) with 372 sqm flexible commercial space (Use Class E); ancillary hard and soft landscaping, formation of a new vehicular access onto Hollands Mill Road and Royal George Street, vehicular and cycle parking, and associated works and infrastructure.
<b>Type Of Application:</b>	Full Application
<b>Registration Date:</b>	06.10.2020
<b>Expiry Date:</b>	01.05.2021
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Mark Jordan
<b>Applicant:</b>	Stockport Homes Group And Stockport Metropolitan Borough
<b>Agent:</b>	NJL Consulting

### **DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS**

Planning & Highways Regulations Committee – Departure to Development Plan

The views of the Stockport Central Area Committee are requested, in order that these can be reported to the Planning & Highways Regulations Committee.

### **DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT**

The proposals involves proposed selective total and partial demolition, together with new build construction and conversion / façade retention of a number of buildings, as part of the re-development of the former St Thomas's hospital site.

One of the aims of the proposed development is to regenerate this long term vacant site, which occupies a prominent and strategic location, into a new inter-generational community designed to contribute to the vibrancy of the local area and the wider aspirations for the surrounding town centre.

The scope of the application as submitted seeks full planning permission for the following summarised works:-

1) The creation of a total of 68 dwellings, all of which will meet Homes England's definition for affordable housing. The dwellings are designed to cover a broad demographic and will comprise apartments and mews style properties over 2, 3 and 4 storeys. The proposed dwelling mix will predominantly be of 1, 2 and 3 bed properties, however two 5 bed multi-generational houses are also proposed. The dwellings will be created through a variety of new build, conversion and extension;

- 2) The new build construction of a 70 bed intermediate and dementia care unit (Use Class C2 care home) known as the Academy of Living Well. This element of the development is designed to provide locally based high impact services, with a focus on helping primarily older people and people in need to access step-up services, in order to limit hospital admission, respite and better manage long term health conditions, whilst also increasing social interactions within a wider community setting. The Academy of Living Well is proposed to be provided across two linked buildings ranging from 3 to 4 storeys in height and will be positioned within the north-eastern portion of the site;
- 3) The creation of 372 sq.m of flexible commercial (Use Class E – Commercial, Business and Service) floorspace at ground floor level within the proposed Academy of Living Well building;
- 4) The provision of enhanced pedestrian and cycle accessibility to / from and within the site;
- 5) High quality public realm, including the creation of a publically accessible central space within the site on arrival from Shaw Heath;
- 6) A comprehensive landscaping scheme including street trees and natural grasslands, together with the provision of private and semi-private gardens, as well as communal spaces;

All of the proposed dwellings would be constructed in accordance with the nationally described space standards.

Access arrangements will comprise new vehicular access provided onto Hollands Mill Road and Royal George Street. Hollands Mill Road will provide access to car parking areas associated with the development. Flint Street will provide access to a small parking and servicing area for residential purposes.

The Academy of Living Well, including the ground floor commercial floorspace, will have general access taken from an extension to Royal George Street, with new road space created for vehicle, pedestrian, cycle and servicing purposes.

In respect of parking provision the 68 dwellings will served by 32 parking spaces, including 7 disabled bays. These would be provided across various parking areas across the site.

The care home facility will benefit from 44 spaces, of which 7 are disabled bays, provided under a landscaped podium which sits between the two wings of the Academy of Living Well. A drop off zone for cars and ambulances will also be provided within the road space fronting the entrance to the Academy of Living Well.

An agreed number of the spaces provided will have ready to use electric vehicle charging facilities. Parking for mobility scooters and cycles is also proposed as part of the development.

The density of the proposed development is approximately 53 dwellings per hectare, excluding the proposed care facility and commercial floorspace.

The drawings attached to this planning report represent the best way for Members to appreciate and consider the physical impact of the proposal seeking full planning

permission, in terms of its layout, scale, appearance, means of access and landscaping.

In addition to the extensive number of detailed drawings, the proposal has also been accompanied by a large number of supporting reports which are listed below:-

- Design & Access Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Arboriculture Assessment
- Contaminated Land Assessment
- Crime Impact Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy
- Glint and Glare Study
- Energy Statement and Sustainability Checklist
- Heritage Statement
- Landscape Strategy
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Sustainability Checklist
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
- Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Viability Appraisal
- Ventilation and Extraction Statement
- Planning and Delivery Statement

Committee are advised that the current proposal forms the first of two linked applications relating to the re-development of the site. The other associated application seeks the necessary listed building consent to undertake some of the works currently proposed. A planning report for the listed building consent application is also on this agenda for consideration.

The proposed scheme now before Members has been the subject of extensive pre-application discussion with Council Officers and has been reviewed by an independent Places Matter Design Review Panel. Subsequently the proposal has been the subject of extensive community engagement prior to submission. Full details are set out within the documents submitted in support of the application.

## **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site includes an rectangular shaped piece of land covering approximately 1.30 hectares.

The north-eastern site boundary is defined by a pedestrian link forming part of Royal George Street, with the Stockport College campus buildings beyond. Flint Street forms the north-western site boundary, with a recently completed residential development immediately opposite, together with older dwellings and non-residential premises.

To the south west exists Shaw Heath, with low level flats directly opposite the site. Hollands Mill Road is included with the site and forms the south-eastern boundary, adjacent to which exists a dialysis centre and other commercial / light industrial uses.

The site currently comprises a number of vacant buildings of varying heights, all of which are associated with the former St Thomas's hospital that previously operated on the site. The hospital buildings ceased use in 2004 and have remained vacant since. A number of the buildings currently in situ are Grade II listed. In addition an electrical sub-station exists in the south-eastern corner of the site.

Ground levels are predominantly flat across the site.

The site location plan appended to this report gives an overview of the development site and its wider context within the Town Centre setting.

## **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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

### **Saved policies of the SUDP Review**

TCG1 - TOWN CENTRE/M60 GATEWAY  
TCG1.1 COMMUNITY AND CIVIC SPACE  
TCG1.2 - TOWN CENTRE/M60 GATEWAY TRANSPORT HUB  
TCG1.3 - PARKING IN THE TOWN CENTRE  
TCG1.4 - SUSTAINABLE ACCESS IN THE TOWN CENTRE  
TCG3 – TOWN CENTRE MIXED USE AREAS  
TCG3.4 – ST THOMAS'S HOSPITAL  
HC1.3 – SPECIAL CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS  
HC1.4 – NEW USES FOR BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS  
CTF1.1 – DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES  
EP1.7 - DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK  
EP1.9 – SAFEGUARDING OF AERODROMES AND AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES  
EP1.10 – AIRCRAFT NOISE  
E1.2 - LOCATION OF NEW BUSINESS PREMISES AND OFFICES  
CDH1.3 – CARE AND NURSING HOMES  
PSD2.6 – LOCAL SHOPS  
L1.1 – LAND FOR ACTIVE RECREATION  
L1.2 – CHILDREN'S PLAY  
MW1.5 – CONTROL OF WASTE FROM DEVELOPMENT

### **LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies**

CS1 - OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT -  
ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
SD1- CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES  
SD3 - DELIVERING THE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES PLANS - NEW  
DEVELOPMENT

SD6 - ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE  
 CS2 – HOUSING PROVISION  
 CS3 – MIX OF HOUSING  
 CS4 – DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING  
 H-1 – DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
 H-2 – HOUSING PHASING  
 H-3 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
 CS5 - ACCESS TO SERVICES  
 CS6 - SAFEGUARDING AND STRENGTHENING THE SERVICE CENTRE HIERARCHY  
 AS-1 - THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF STOCKPORTS SERVICE CENTRES  
 AS-2 – IMPROVING INDOOR SPORTS, COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION FACILITIES AND THEIR ACCESSIBILITY  
 AS-3 - MAIN TOWN CENTRE USES, HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS AND PRISON DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EXISTING CENTRES  
 CS7 - ACCOMMODATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
 AED1 - EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND M60 GATEWAY  
 AED-5 - EDUCATION, SKILLS AND TRAINING PROVISION  
 AED-6 - EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE PROTECTED EMPLOYMENT AREAS  
 CS8 SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT  
 SIE-1 QUALITY PLACES  
 SIE-2 – PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT  
 SIE-3 PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT  
 CS9 TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT  
 CS10 AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK  
 T-1 TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT  
 T-2 PARKING AND DEVELOPMENT  
 T-3 SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK  
 CS11 - STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE  
 TC1 - STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE

### **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.

- Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments Supplementary Planning Document (2019)
- The Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document
- Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document
- Town Centre Housing Supplementary Planning Document
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance and Explanatory Note

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

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

The NPPF representing the governments up-to-date planning policy which should be taken into account in dealing with applications focuses on achieving a lasting housing reform, facilitating the delivery of a greater number of homes, ensuring that we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment. If decision takers choose not to follow the NPPF, then clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*For decision-taking this means:*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Para. 57 *“Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.”*

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

Para. 62 *“Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required, and expect it to be met on-site unless: a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.”*

Para. 64 *“Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Exemptions to this 10% requirement should also be made where the site or proposed development:*

- a) provides solely for Build to Rent homes;*
- b) provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly or students);*
- c) is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or*
- d) is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry-level exception site or a rural exception site.”*

Para. 85 *“Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should...recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.”*

Para. 92 *“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”*

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

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

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

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- b) local market conditions and viability;*
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”*

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

- a) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at*



examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;

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

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

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

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

Para.153 states "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 192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Para 193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

*Para 194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

*Para 195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

*Para 196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

*Para 197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

*Para 198. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.*

*Para 199. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets. 64 Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.*

*Para 200. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*

*Para 201. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*

*Para 202. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the dis-benefits of departing from those policies.*

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

## **Planning Practice Guidance**

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

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

The site is subject to an extensive planning history, of which the following applications are considered to be relevant:-

DC/78326 – Listed Building Consent for redevelopment comprising demolition of buildings, repurposing of existing buildings, and erection of new buildings for a mix of uses comprising 68no. residential apartments and dwellings (Use Class C3) and 70no. bed care home (Use Class C2) with 372 sq.m flexible commercial space (Use Class E); ancillary hard and soft landscaping, formation of a new vehicular access onto Hollands Mill Road and Royal George Street, vehicular and cycle parking, and associated works and infrastructure. Currently un-determined.

DC/068030 - Lawful Development Certificate. Repair work to Grade II Listed Building. Granted 24/01/18.

DC/067150 - Non Material Amendment to DC/060491. Granted 19/10/17.

DC/064072 Demolition of vacant hospital buildings – Listed building consent. Granted 02/02/2017.

DC/060491 - Demolition of vacant hospital buildings and construction of 59 dwellings. Granted 20/01/2017.

DC/042329 - The demolition of all curtilage listed buildings to make way for the erection of a new community hospital. Granted 16/12/09;

DC/042328 - Erection of a new community hospital (Class D1) with ancillary uses including a community cafe, pharmacy and community facilities with access, parking and associated works. Granted 16/12/09;

DC/040626 - Proposed Community Hospital. EIA not required 24/10/08;

## **NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS**

The application has been advertised in the press. The public were also notified of the application by way of 206 neighbour letters and multiple site notices posted around the edges of the application site. The consultation period has now expired.

Three representations, including one from Stockport Heritage Trust, have been received supporting the proposed development on the following summarised grounds:

- (1) No problem with the plans. Are the bollards between Flint Street & Simpson Street to remain in place?;
- (2) Not a good idea for either road to be used for extra traffic /short cut particularly with lots of children in the area;
- (3) Fully support the re-development of St Thomas's Hospital site;
- (4) Only query is related to access to/from Flint Street if it could be made wider with keep clear signage on the road for access in & out of the estate;
- (5) The local church has services or when the attached social club is used Flint Street is inaccessible so please can this be looked at alongside parking issues on estate during & after development;
- (6) What environmental protections are available to residents of Flint Street, Simson Street & St George street?;
- (7) While it is true that there is general support for the scheme to refurbish and develop the site as a whole for housing and social welfare uses, there are a few reservations and suggestions that would benefit the Council's deliberations;
- (8) The proposal to retain and reuse the main facades and chimney stacks of Building 1 (Union Offices) while constructing new accommodation behind the mass brick walls with stone and terracotta dressings. It is understood this technical and economic response to the building since it is in such a bad condition. The Trust is enthusiastic about the proposal to repair and reuse Buildings 2 (Boys Workshops), 3 (Grade II Listed Administration Building), 5 (Grade II Listed Workhouse), 6 (Grade II Listed Dining Hall). And it regrets but understands the plans to demolish the derelict Buildings 4 (Girls Workshops), 7 (Original Infirmary) and 8 (New Infirmary).
- (9) Building 1 (Union Offices). The Trust recommends that Council conditions are placed on the planning permission, requiring the developer to safeguard the preservation of the retained facades during demolition works, for example, by the erection of suitable window opening bracing and exterior wall and chimney stack shoring: this to prevent accidental collapse when the stiffening afforded to the masonry structure by the plate membranes in floor construction are removed. The Trust welcomes the proposed retention of all five (5) chimney

stacks that contribute greatly to the building's skyline silhouette. However, the stacks on the flank NW and SE elevations do not show on the architects plans in the graphic fashion depicting the main façade stacks. Please check that the structure below roof plane is retained for both chimneys. The proposal to retain and repair existing window and door joinery is appreciated. The Trust recommends that your Council impose a Listed Building Consent (LBC) condition requiring the developer to employ techniques defined in Ridout B (2019) "Timber Decay in Buildings: a Conservation Approach to Treatment" Liverpool University Press. At an early consultation, members of the Trust heard the project's lead architect explain his design philosophy to harmonize and unify new construction throughout the site by use of zinc coated metal strip roofing. Given the relative inflexibility of the system to achieve tight corner turns, the proposal to clad the complex roof profiles at the Union Building with all the gables, dormers, vents and chimney stack terminations, the Trust would rather have seen a return to the original Rosemary tile roof covering. In addition, the main façade's new roof dormers as now designed look poorly proportioned with respect to the historic detailing and fenestration on the main elevation below. They look fat and unwieldy. Either the set-back dormer window glazing should be narrower and subsidiary to the main openings below (according to the Classical grammar of historic design), or the new dormers should sit on the façade wall;

- (10) Building 3, Administration Building. SHT appreciates the retention, rehabilitation and repair of the Grade II Listed Building. It understands the need to demolish the corridor ceilings to create a lightwell and smoke collection point in case of fire. However, the plans show no details of the automatic opening (smoke) vents, marked "AOV" on the drawings. The Trust assumes that they are identical in format to those drawn on the plans for Building 5. The Trust cannot see from their description whether they are "conservation" type AOVs? Such low-profile lites are manufactured by the Conservation Roof-light Company and Velux for use in a heritage context.
- (11) Building 5, The Workhouse. The Trust is pleased to see the Workhouse retained and repaired as part of this overall scheme. The drawings, however, fail to describe or explain the intended restoration of clocks and chimes at this building (albeit with new automated equipment), and the salvage, conservation and display of the historic clock and winding mechanism in the lobby - as promised in the early consultation meetings. The Trust would like to see this intention solidified by LBC condition in the consent documents. The Trust has viewed the window cross section details in the planning documents. Given the housing use of the building, and the amount of thermal insulation being proposed for the basement floors and ceilings, the Trust is mystified as to why no mention is made by the developer of the use of window weather-stripping and/or secondary glazing to improve noise and thermal characteristics at the perimeter walls? The Trust recommends that Historic England's free website published documents on the subject are drawn to the architect's attention and details negotiated with the borough's Conservation Officer.
- (12) Building 6, Dining Hall. No objections are raised generally to the partial demolition, repair and rehabilitation of this Grade II Listed Building along the lines described in the plans. However, the proposal to install chrome-coated metal chimney flues is an incongruous architectural conceit unworthy of the scheme. The Trust insists that terracotta flue terminals should be made a condition of LBC to restore the values and significance of the building.

- (13) Buildings 4, 7 and 8. The Trust raises no objections to the total demolition of these unlisted buildings within the curtilage of the historic site, due to their advanced state of deterioration. However, the Trust suggests that the Council make it a condition of LBC that all three buildings are thoroughly surveyed and copies of the drawings deposited with Stockport Local History Archives and with the regional Historic Environment Record.
- (14) The Trust considers some of the graphics and computer-generated imagery (CGI) in the planning applications to be poor and misleading. Notably, the colours for reclaimed brickwork in the Design and Access Statement on materials (page 66) are no match for the colours of extant brickwork shown, nor does the mortar look appropriate (i.e., cement flush, instead of lime profiled).
- (15) Comments on the Proposed New Build Designs: the Trust has a few minor comments on the designs for the new buildings on site. Blocks 1-3 are of appropriate scale, massing and materials to complement the historic environment;
- (16) The Academy of Living Well is of a different order of magnitude and specialized design warranting a more ambitious architectural format. It forms a better foil to and barrier in front of the larger buildings to NE.
- (17) The newly proposed Entrance Gateway from Shaw Heath into the site, as currently depicted in the plans, is both crude and pedestrian. The Trust recommends that the architects be required to look at entrances to Victorian and Edwardian hospital campuses and find an architectural idiom for robust, modulated gateposts and lamp standard illumination that would better suit the historic environment.

Three representations have been received objecting to the proposed development on the following summarised grounds:

- (1) The main concern with the amended drawings is the increased encroachment of the new Hollands Mill Road towards the rear access of nearby premises with the addition of footpaths;
- (2) There have been access rights over the existing track/road via the former Hollands Mill road for over 150 years;
- (3) The design of the new Hollands Mill road does not allow any provision for access from/to nearby premises;
- (4) Query as to whether the application has been lawfully made through completion of the correct Notice and associated publicity;
- (5) The proposals alterations to Hollands Mill Road do not identify each of the established vehicular access points;
- (6) The access to the larger Mercedes compound has not been abandoned and its reuse would not entail works requiring planning permission;
- (7) There is no evidence that the presence of either vehicular access has been taken into account in the design or in the submitted Road Safety Audit;

- (8) All highway works to Hollands Mill Road required to create a road suitable for adoption including dropped kerbs and splays should be included within the site edged in red;
- (9) It would be futile to grant planning permission for a road layout which cannot readily be implemented. This objection could be withdrawn if acceptable access arrangements are agreed;
- (10) Strong concern that the development may cause disruption and issues with access for vehicles to the car park entrance, which is located on Hollands Mill Rd;
- (11) Nearby buildings provide life saving treatment for patients on renal dialysis due to kidney failure and it is imperative their treatment is provided as efficiently as possible. This includes the arrival and exit from the unit;
- (12) The news of an upcoming development which will be in process for a substantial amount of time has drawn a lot of concern with patients and staff;
- (13) Interested parties should be informed of the precautions / plans in place to ensure the development is not going to affect the access to the units car park, resulting in disruption and emotional distress of our patients / and or Staff who attend the Unit Mon-Sat between the hours of 6.45am and 6.30 pm;
- (14) There is a need to be able to ensure the units staff and patients, that there will be no disruption or cause for distress. Confirmation would be appreciated that the work being carried out will not affect the entrance / exit to the unit for the duration of the development

One representation has been received expressing neutral comments in connection with the proposed development. These comments are summarised below:

- (1) Is the facade of the current building being restored?
- (2) How can the submitted documents be viewed?

## **CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

**Conservation & Heritage Officer:** St Thomas Hospital is a complex of Grade II listed buildings originally constructed in 1841 to house the Stockport Union Workhouse.

The surviving buildings represent a good example of a workhouse built following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. The principal ranges are relatively intact and their architecture and plan form expresses the draconian intentions of the Act, with late 19th and early 20th alterations made as the function of the site evolved. The principal elevations contribute positively to the street scene. The former Stockport Union Workhouse was constructed in 1841 to designs by local architect Henry Bowman, to provide separate accommodation and yards for 540 men, women, boys and girls, with workrooms, school rooms and dormitories. The complex comprises the 2-storey administration range, the central 4-storey accommodation range, 2-storey former kitchen and service range linked to rear 2-storey former infirmary

range, perimeter 2-storey ranges or boundary walls, and 2-storey early 20th century Union Offices.

The current proposals have been subject to extensive pre-application discussion. It is acknowledged that the condition of two former hospital structures towards the rear (eastern) end of the site (indicated on the submitted plans as Buildings 7 and 8) has deteriorated to such an extent that repair and refurbishment is not a technically feasible proposition. Two further structures involve demolition works. For Building 1, which features external walls of robust Edwardian construction and provide a distinctive frontage to the site at the junction of Shaw Heath and Flint Street, it has been agreed that façade retention is the most appropriate solution, with the introduction of new internal floors enabling the building to provide residential accommodation over 3 levels, including a new roof but retaining the existing tall brick chimneys. The severe deterioration of the structure behind the façade is the result of a combination of neglect, vandalism and weather ingress and this has made it unsafe to enter. Building 4 is also visible from the site frontage but is of modest design and does not form part of the original workhouse complex. Its condition is poor, its architectural quality is very modest and its form means that it is not readily suitable for residential conversion. An important remaining element of the site is the network of boundary walls, originally provided to strictly control access into and out from the site via Shaw Heath. A significant proportion of these walls has survived, including railings to the Shaw Heath frontage, but it is acknowledged that the nature of the proposed use will inevitably require a degree of amendment to provide enhanced permeability for future occupiers and the public, as well as allowing for appropriate servicing arrangements for the site as a whole.

The cumulative impact of the harm to the heritage asset resulting from the demolition and alterations summarised above must be balanced against the benefits of finding a new viable use that will provide for the future preservation of the remaining historic buildings. This has required careful consideration of their potential for sympathetic conversion to a new use, taking opportunities to enhance and restore their architectural interest wherever possible and ensuring that new build elements respect the historic layout of the site, taking into account massing, form and materials. Subject to the points set out below, it is considered that this has been achieved and will result in establishing a sustainable future for this important historic site, one that has been at severe risk of loss and decay for an extended period.

Whilst the current proposals consist of a combination of two different uses (residential for the historic buildings and a new care facility at the rear of the site accessed from Royal George Street), the design of the proposals provides for visual continuity, cohesion and a degree of social integration. Overall pedestrian permeability will be improved in and around the site and this will enable better public access to enjoy the architectural and historic interest of the retained buildings. The wider public and regeneration benefits of the scheme are acknowledged and provide sufficient justification for a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the site for the purposes of satisfying local and national planning policies, notably paras 193-196 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Outstanding matters relating to external materials, rooflight details, façade & chimney retention methodology; window/door design ; stonework restoration; external plant equipment, internal decorative plasterwork/joinery specification, exhibition space arrangements, phasing/contractual arrangements, clock restoration, chimney/flue, boundary walls / railings, hard and soft landscaping, cycle and refuse storage are capable of being dealt with via appropriate planning conditions.



**Highway Engineer:** The application for redevelopment of the site is for the demolition of buildings, repurposing of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings for a mix of uses. The new buildings comprise 68 residential apartments and dwellings and a 70 bed intermediate and dementia care facility/Academy of Living Well with 372 sqm flexible commercial space at ground floor level. Ancillary hard and soft landscaping is proposed alongside the formation of a new vehicular access onto Hollands Mill Road and Royal George Street, vehicular and cycle parking and associated works and infrastructure. The submission is accompanied by a comprehensive package of drawings and documents including a transport assessment.

The road adjacent to the site which is known as Hollands Mill Road will be upgraded to a standard suitable for adoption and this will provide access to car parking areas associated with the development. Access to adjoining land uses will be respected and clearly retained with improved drainage, carriageway and footway infrastructure provided.

Flint Street will provide access to a small parking area for residential purposes and a servicing area primarily for refuse collection and household deliveries. The Care facility and commercial interests will have general access from and extension to Royal George Street, with new road space created for vehicle, pedestrian, cycle and servicing purposes. This road space will also facilitate access to the care home's podium parking area.

My review of the application necessitates consideration of the accessibility of the site; vehicle parking provision and consequent effects; traffic generation and consequent highway impact; access arrangements; servicing and delivery arrangements and cycle/mobility scooter parking.

#### Site Accessibility

The location of the site close to the Town Centre shows an abundance of services and amenities within close proximity. Residents and visitors will enjoy convenient access to retail opportunities, employment, leisure facilities, educational establishments, health centres and various other services and amenities. Staff will enjoy opportunity for workplace travel by sustainable modes.

There is potential for access on foot or cycle and the convenience of a Town Centre location should contribute towards reduced car travel dependence and sustainable travel modes being chosen.

The site is located close to a number of bus stops on Shaw Heath, Greek Street and the A6 Wellington Road South. These stops provide access to a high number of bus services that offer frequent travel to and from a number of origins and destinations. The majority of stops are good quality with shelters, seating, accessible kerbs and timetabling. There is no reason or logic to conclude anything other than the site is accessible to bus travel, as is reasonably the case for development within a Town Centre location. A bus stop on the site frontage to Shaw Heath is impacted by the proposal and is the subject of continued review which I shall comment on later.

Furthermore the site is only a few minutes walking distance from Stockport Rail Station where frequent rail services are available to a vast number of destinations locally, regional and national. Again there is no reason to question the accessibility of the site in relation to potential for staff, residents and visitors to travel by rail.

The location of the development within the Town Centre affords the convenience of access to services, amenities and public transport that residents and staff can reasonably expect to enjoy and the potential for sustainable travel choices being made is realistically high. This location is considered appropriate and has potential for a care home/employment facility and intensive residential development when having regard to site accessibility. There is however the need to ensure that infrastructure is suitable for the movement of vulnerable road users and the development should afford suitable measures and address any evident short comings.

I note that the submitted layout incorporates linkages through the site for pedestrian and cycle movement and this is welcomed. I am also minded that redevelopment such as this which is focused on encouraging sustainable travel choices being made should ensure that appropriate opportunities to promote such transport modes has been taken up (NPPF para 108). The surrounding highway network is in need of improvement for cycle movement, both in terms of facilities to encourage choice and measures to make safer the movement of cyclists and reduce the risk of conflict with other highway users. There is a clear opportunity to provide dedicated cycle facilities to Royal George Street on the site frontage which would improve north south connectivity. Suitable cycle friendly crossing facilities are also lacking on Greek Street, a controlled crossing would enable proper connectivity across the Town and linkage between the site and the Town Centre, rail station, services and amenities. The existing deficiencies in the network need addressing and I consider it is essential that this development respects the opportunity and provides meaningful interventions and measures.

The adjacent Royal George Village redevelopment will enable improvement on Royal George Street for cyclists and is contributing towards a scheme to provide a controlled crossing on Greek Street. I consider it is entirely reasonable and necessary that this proposal gives similar due consideration towards means of addressing these deficiencies. This development proposal has evolved to have high dependence on sustainable travel modes both for care home staff and residents and their visitors. As such there is considerable weight on the side of needing to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to encourage travel mode choice and provide for safer and more convenient routes.

Some works are capable of delivery by the development, those which are on the site frontage and within the application site. A S106 (or perhaps S111) Agreement would be the approach for a contribution towards the Greek Street crossing need, the same approach as for the Royal George Village scheme. I consider that to satisfy NPPF Para 108 and ensure that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable travel has been taken up, a financial contribution of £60,000 should be made in this case. The applicant's agreement on the making of a financial contribution is necessary.

#### Parking provision

The Council has adopted car parking standards which should be given due consideration and every endeavour should be made to ensure adherence within new development or where appropriate that provision is made off site. General car parking provision is based on maximum standards which allows flexibility and the determinant factors will include the accessibility of a site, the availability for parking on street and the assurance that measures and regulation is in place to deter highway parking that causes operational and safety concerns. The provision of disabled person bays, electric vehicle bays and cycle parking is minimum standard based and should be respected.

The Care home element of the development is proposed to have a parking area accessed from the northern end of Royal George Street, located under a landscaped podium which sits between the two wings of the Academy of Living Well. The area will be laid out with 44 car parking spaces, which includes 7 disabled bays. I understand that six of these spaces will be available for exclusive use by residents living within the residential development. These spaces will be allocated and can be accessed on foot via a secure gate within the boundary to Flint Street. The balance of 38 spaces will be for staff working within the Academy and any visitor needs. Furthermore a drop off zone for cars and ambulances will be provided within the road space fronting the entrance to the Academy of Living Well.

Having regard to the Council's adopted car parking standards the number of beds proposed at the care home suggests a demand equating to a parking requirement for 18 spaces. It is submitted that this use will be more intensive than a traditional care home so to evidence a demand that is realistic for the specialised use and bespoke nature of the proposed development the submission includes a first principles approach to trip generation and subsequent assessment of parking demand and provision.

The exercise shows that 40 full time equivalent staff will be employed at the care home although not all would be on site at any one time due to the shift nature of the service. Comparison with other similar services such as those at Marbury House and Meadway Court suggests that staff car ownership and usage for workplace travel is not particularly high, circa 60%. Such a ratio has to be considered realistic and appropriate for a site in a location extremely close to the Town Centre where staff have convenient access to public transport and better opportunity to walk and cycle. This suggests that the realistic and likely demand for work place parking will be for about 24 spaces, a figure higher than the Council's standards would ordinarily permit but realistic of demand and avoidance of overspill parking concerns. I reaffirm this by advising that modal survey data for this locality shows that employment related trips on foot, cycle and by bus equates to 50%. It is not unreasonable to expect a specialised care use with shift working arrangements to be slightly higher than 50% car reliance so the assessment based on 60% being the likely demand is considered robust and acceptable.

There will also clearly be a demand for spaces for visitors, other health care professionals and external consultants. The remaining balance of 14 spaces should prove sufficient to meet this additional demand and again I see reason and logic to consider this provision and availability of spaces to be more realistic and representative for a bespoke care facility in meeting actual demand and avoiding overspill parking issues.

The ground floor flexible use that is proposed will also have a demand for parking space although given the scale and nature of the use it is not unreasonable to accept such in a Town Centre location without parking provision. Whilst I can clearly accept retail, office and restaurant type uses I do have some concern with a potential health centre use as there will be a demand that should reasonably be met on site for parking. The applicant has advised that this type of unit would only ever be likely to operate as a complimentary health use such as a satellite to an established GP surgery in the local area rather than as a practice in its own right. As such the likely maximum number of consultation rooms taking up whatever proportion of the floorspace would realistically only be 4 or 5. It has been discussed and agreed that should a health centre type use utilise any part of the floor space there will be the ability to make shared use of some of the care homes parking bays, in particular the disabled bays and a couple of general bays. This is considered a reasonable

approach and is a practice that can reasonably be controlled via a parking management plan which can be secured under conditional control. A condition will also be necessary to control the number of consultation rooms in the event that a medical use occupies the floorspace.

I note that a total of 7 bays within the parking area will be for disabled persons, this level of provision is acceptable having regard to the Council's standards for a care home and shared usage with a potential health use. I therefore see no reason to express concern with the level of parking proposed to serve the care facility and flexible commercial space, it would be difficult to argue that the proposal would give rise to unacceptable pressure on other public parking or kerbside parking areas close to the site.

There is a requirement for facilities for the charging of electric vehicles to be provided within the parking area and current requirements are for a minimum of 6% of parking spaces within this form of development to have EV charge facilities. I require at least two general spaces and one disabled space to have charge facilities provided, this is a matter that can be covered by conditional control. Motorcycle parking is also identified in the podium parking area, this is necessary and satisfies the Council's parking standards.

The residential aspect of the development is focused on and orientated towards being low car travel dependant, not car free but providing a number of bays that is suggested will satisfy the likely minimum operational needs of residents in this environment. A total of 68 residential units are proposed with them having access to 32 parking bays, including 7 disabled bays. Various parking areas are proposed, there would be two areas off Hollands Mill road providing 15 general bays and 6 disabled bays and an area off Flint Street with 4 general bays and one disabled bay. In addition there is access to 6 spaces within the care home parking area. In total this represents just under 50% ratio to the number of residential units proposed.

In terms of general parking provision to serve the residential element the appropriateness and acceptability of the level of parking proposed needs to be considered against the consequence of overspill parking, the availability of spaces off site to meet any additional demand, the assurance that measures and regulation is in place to deter highway parking that causes operational and safety concerns, the accessibility of the site and the realism of delivering such a form of development in a Town Centre location. Council Policy for general parking provision is based upon maximum standards which gives some flexibility in interpretation and provision, as long as whatever level of provision occurs doesn't give rise to an adverse and unacceptable effects on highway operation and safety.

The submission includes a review of public parking availability within close proximity of the site. It is accepted and highly likely that a development with a lesser provision of off street parking will generate a demand for some parking off site, whether this be residents or visitors. It is therefore essential that overspill parking does not occur indiscriminately or adversely affects highway operation and safety so an evaluation of space availability off site assists with this assessment.

The submission has access to and includes the parking survey which was agreed and scoped for the adjacent Royal George Village development. This was carried out in line with the Council's recommended practice and undertaken across three days, including a weekend and evening reviews.

In terms of short stay parking the study area has 92 spaces and the surveys show spare capacity varying between 16 and 58 spaces, with daytimes clearly busier compared to a Sunday evening 1800-2100 period. The review of long stay parking identified 427 spaces within the area and show spare capacity varying between 114 and 266 spaces, the lowest evident occupancy of spaces being the Sunday evening period.

In summary the survey data shows 212 spaces available on weekday evenings and 236 on the Sunday evening, demonstrating that there is spare parking capacity available during the periods when the peak demand for residential development will arise. During the daytime there was more availability of long stay parking than short stay parking, although there is still a good level of provision for short stay parkers as they have the option of using either short stay or long stay parking areas. I am satisfied from this data that there is sufficient spare capacity within the locality for both this site and the adjacent Royal George Village redevelopment and that overspill parking should not prove problematic.

It is also accepted that the locality of the site is heavily controlled as a parking zone by the Council. Traffic Regulation Orders are generally well respected and there is no particular evidence that indiscriminate parking occurs or operational and safety concerns arise from kerbside parking. The zone is well managed by the Council. There is a need to review and regularise TRO's on Hollands Mill Road, Flint Street and the extension to Royal George Street fronting the site and the applicant will need to cover the cost for this. The preferred approach would be securing a commuted sum payment under the terms of a S106 Agreement (or S111 Agreement) with the sum being one of £10,000, unless it is felt that this matter is capable of conditional control.

It is fair and reasonable to acknowledge that low level parking availability within a residential development close to the Town Centre will have a strong influence on the travel mode choice that residents would make. Limiting the availability of general parking spaces on site is a measure that should discourage a car travel dependant lifestyle and encourage residents to make more sustainable and active travel choices. I feel this is an appropriate and reasonable presumption and approach for a site that is well served by public transport and where residents would have easy and convenient access to alternative travel modes without the need for car travel reliance.

Furthermore, modal survey data for this locality shows that employment related trips on foot, cycle and by bus are considerably higher than for Stockport as a whole and are as to be expected within a Town Centre location. Sustainable travel modes equate for 50% of employment related trips undertaken within this locality and there is no logic or reason to consider that the proposed development would give rise to a residential modal choice that would be any different. There is also strong evidence that trips to other services and amenities within the Town Centre location can and will be undertaken in a sustainable manner, again demonstrating that the accessibility of a site can influence modal choice and discourage a reliance on car travel.

Furthermore I consider that residents in the development will have made a lifestyle choice that has less reliance on car travel and is influenced heavily by the lack of bespoke car parking.

The provision of 7 disabled parking bays for the residential element satisfies the Council's standards and the bays have been appropriately located around the

parking areas. The Council seeks provision of facilities for the charging of electric vehicles within all new developments. For town centre residential development sites where the level of parking is less than 1 space per dwelling, the number of electric charging points to be provided should be based on the number of dwellings with charging points provided for at least 13% of residential units for developments likely to be first occupied during 2022. This leads to a need for a minimum of 9 spaces to have EV charge facilities, appropriately dispersed around the sites residential parking areas and with a proportion of the disabled spaces having access to EV charge facilities. This is a matter capable of conditional control.

In summary, the provision of disabled spaces and parking for low emission/electric vehicles satisfies minimum requirements and the accessibility needs for those with mobility issues. This weighs heavily in favour of the scheme and the factor of lesser parking provision should also influence the marketability of the site. The applicant is clearly confident that a development with a high dependence on sustainable travel choices whilst satisfying minimum parking expectations is appropriate in this location and would prove successful and I see no reason or justification to question this judgement. I can only focus on the impacts off site, which in this case leads me to conclude that I am satisfied that there is potential off site for overspill parking and highway operational and safety issues are unlikely to arise as a consequence.

There is an expectation that a robust travel plan will be completed for the development, either site wide or separate plans for the care home and residential elements. Again this is a matter for conditional control and a plan will assist reducing car dependence, promoting sustainable travel choices and the implementation of effective measures to bring about modal shift with the use of incentives. Other factors should include the provision of onsite and offsite infrastructure along with a clear monitoring regime with agreed targets. In addition a critical part of this will be ensuring the development has access to a car club, for example Enterprise which operates in Stockport. Car clubs provide an alternative to owning a car for residents and the developer should actively buy in to this to ensure that additional car travel needs are covered for residents.

#### Traffic generation and highway impact

The scope of the traffic impact assessment was agreed with the Council pre submission. To establish the existing peak hour traffic flows and demand on the local highway network, 2020 base traffic flows were obtained from the TA submitted as part of the Royal George Village application. This was critical as surveys are representative of pre pandemic conditions. A future assessment year of 2031 has been adopted, traffic figures growth to give 2031 base traffic flows and the development traffic flows associated with the Royal George Village development have been taken into account in the submitted assessment.

The trip rates utilised for the care home, flexible commercial uses and residential elements utilised are reasonable and accepted and these should prove representative of a town centre location development and provide a robust assessment.

The assessment is in the form of a model built to demonstrate traffic conditions in 2031 in the 'with' and 'without' development scenarios. The modelling shows that traffic generated by the development is very low and would only have a minimal impact on the Greek Street / Royal George Street junction. The predicted increases in delay are negligible in both the opening and future year scenarios and there is sufficient spare capacity within the junction to safely accommodate development traffic.

No specific modelling work has been undertaken for the Hollands Mill Road junction with Shaw Heath or the Flint Street junction with Shaw Heath. The quantum of development proposed through both of these junctions is not significant in terms of the likely number of daily trips and potential impact and there is no reason or justification to require a full modelling exercise. The Hollands Mill Road junction is suitably designed with a right turn facility which assists capacity and avoiding delay on Shaw Heath and the likely increase in usage of Flint Street is minimal/negligible. I therefore see no reason to raise concern with the traffic generated towards the Shaw Heath side of the development and its consequent impact on highway operation and safety.

In summary, the development which is focusing towards a less car travel dominated environment and living lifestyle is not predicted to give rise to a level of vehicle movement that would cause highway operational concern or risk to safety. There is no reason to require mitigation on capacity grounds and I conclude that opposition on traffic grounds cannot be reasoned or justified.

#### Cycle parking

Council Policy requires cycle parking to be provided within new development with minimum standards of provision necessary to ensure compliance. The care home/Academy of Living Well has an area for 24 cycles identified in the podium parking area and this will prove adequate in terms of numbers to ensure compliance with standards. The details of the cycle parking in terms of securing arrangements for cycles will need consideration and this is a matter capable of conditional control. The area would be suitable to meet the demands of the care home and the commercial interests.

There is also the need for mobility scooter parking facilities to be provided for the care home. Although this is referenced in the submission provision is not apparent on the submitted drawings. A facility capable of housing 7 mobility scooters needs identifying in the submission.

Residential cycle parking standards require provision of one covered and secure parking facility for each dwelling and apartment. At this stage I am not satisfied that adequate provision will be made for residential purposes noting that only 30 cycle parking spots have been identified on the submitted drawings. A cycle store between buildings 5 and 6 is shown for 20 cycles and an area between buildings 1 and 2 shows potential for 10 cycles, although only 7 are shown on the drawing. To ensure Policy compliance it is essential that covered and secure parking for 68 cycles is provided across the residential part of the site and appropriate areas and provision should be identified within the submission. At this stage I am not satisfied that the proposal satisfies Policy in this respect and this should be addressed.

Furthermore there is a need for some short stay parking facilities to be provided ideally to the frontage of the commercial units, this is a matter that is capable of conditional control.

#### Access arrangements, servicing and deliveries

Hollands Mill Road will be upgraded to a standard suitable for adoption, it being the intention that the road space will be publically managed and maintained upon completion of the upgrading works. The road provides vehicular access to two residential parking areas, the arrangements identified on the drawings are acceptable and standard compliant. Conditional control can cover the details for dropped crossing formation and visibility splays. The access arrangements to

existing users of the access road will be incorporated into the upgrade works with suitable facilities for vehicle and pedestrian movement provided.

It may be the case that this link will be utilised for construction purposes so conditional control will be necessary to safely manage the construction process and ensure that access requirements for existing users are retained and suitably and safely managed. The upgraded roadspace will need completion prior to first occupancy or use of the road by new development traffic, this is a matter for conditional control alongside finalisation of full engineering drawings and construction process. Traffic Regulation Orders will need review and regularisation along this link, the cost of this should be covered by the applicant under an appropriate legal agreement. I have highlighted this earlier in comments.

A small residential parking area is proposed off Flint Street. Footway extension and improvements will be provided with dropped crossing formation and visibility splay provision. The detail of these works is a matter capable of conditional control. A servicing area for refuse and home delivery type vehicles is proposed off Flint Street primarily for the benefit of residential interests. Tracking should be provided to demonstrate that typical service and delivery vehicles and an 11.1m refuse and recycling sized vehicle can safely use the space, accepting that this will involve a short reverse manoeuvre into or from the service area. Such an arrangement is acceptable, the details of formation are a matter for conditional control. I do not see any reason why this area would need to be public space/highway so its control and use will be a matter for the estate management.

To the front of the Academy, Royal George Street will be extended to provide pedestrian and cycle access across the full frontage of the site and a standing area for delivery and ambulance traffic serving the Academy and commercial interests. The extended road space and continuous link will be constructed as public highway and will provide a high quality space with considerable sustainable travel and environmental benefits. The detail for construction of the space is a matter capable of conditional control and a traffic regulation order will be necessary to control and manage the use of the space. The cost of a TRO should be covered by the applicant, a matter for a legal agreement as highlighted earlier.

This (green corridor) link will continue in a southerly direction and connect with existing road space that accesses to the rear of the College. The link will be for pedestrian and cycle usage only. A small parking and ambulance/drop off area is proposed within the confines of the site and pedestrian and cycle linkage will be available through to Hollands Mill Road. The details of formation of this area is again a matter for conditional control.

The podium parking area will be accessed from the extended roadspace to the end of Royal George Street. The entrance design is acceptable incorporating adequate road space and pedestrian facilities. This entrance will enable delivery vehicles to manoeuvre and then stand forward of the building whilst servicing is undertaken.

The Academy/care home's servicing demands are not intensive and it has been advised that the likely maximum size of vehicle would be a refuse type, which can turn and stand forward of the building. The commercial interests will have servicing needs however the overall scale of the ground floor use is unlikely to see vehicles any larger than a large rigid or refuse size, which can utilise the podium parking area entrance for manoeuvring. There is a risk where multiple uses are concerned that more than one servicing type vehicle would arrive at site at any one time. Coordination is necessary to remove or reduce the risk of conflicting arrivals and this



is a matter that can reasonably be controlled and managed via a service management plan. I will therefore require a condition to control servicing management.

#### Refuse and recycling

It is essential that adequate provision is made for receptacles to serve the overall development. This will future proof the site and avoid the need for residents to acquire additional receptacles and then these being left within road space or parking areas and potentially inhibiting site safety and the operation of road space.

I raise some doubt whether adequate provision has been identified for the residential element of the proposal. Whilst the individual dwellings are relatively straight forward to provide for there is doubt that adequate provision will be made within the communal areas. No communal storage for food waste has been identified, although individual caddies are proposed there is a need for communal receptacles for emptying and collection purposes.

Some minor changes and increase provision is considered necessary.

For buildings 1 and 2, residual waste (black) should be based on 140L per household and this requires two 1280L Eurobins.

Paper, card and cartons (blue) should be based on 90L per household and requiring a 1280L Eurobin and a 770L bin

For food a 360L bin is required.

Mixed recycling (brown) as identified is acceptable.

For building 3, residual waste (black) should be based on 140L per household and this requires a 770L bin.

Paper, card and cartons (blue) should be based on 90L per household and requiring a 770L bin

For food a 360L bin is required.

Mixed recycling as identified is acceptable.

For buildings 5 and 6, residual waste (black) should be based on 140L per household and this requires three 1280L Eurobins and a 770L bin.

Paper, card and cartons (blue) should be based on 90L per household and requiring two 1280L Eurobins and a 360L bin

For food a 360L bin is required.

Mixed recycling as identified is acceptable.

Consideration should also be given to garden/landscaping waste and how this will be dealt with. Whilst I suspect a management company will look after the communal areas this should be clarified. Individual dwellings will be likely to require a green/garden waste receptacle.

#### Shaw Heath Bus stop

The submission includes relocation of a bus stop on the site frontage to Shaw Heath with the stop to be relocated to a location adjacent to the junction with Hollands Mill Road. I have expressed concerns with this proposal for reason of a stopped bus being likely to inhibit the free and safe operation of the junction. I have however been open to continued discussion and am seeking the views of Network Management, TfGM and the Police. I will advise upon receipt of feedback from others and a judgement on the proposal can then be made.

#### Conclusion

I am satisfied that due and proper consideration has been given to the proposal and am supportive of this form of development within this location. There is no reason or justification to express concerns on the grounds of traffic generation, highway impact and overall parking provision however there are number of matters that need further consideration, clarity and action before any decision should be made.

I summarise matters outstanding as follows:

- Review of cycle parking for the dwellings and apartments with increased provision necessary.
- Mobility scooter parking/storage area for the care home.
- Increased provision of receptacles for refuse and recycling for the dwellings and apartments.
- Bus stop relocation and whether this is acceptable
- Formal agreement of S106/S111 financial contribution of £60,000 towards a controlled crossing upgrade on Greek Street/sustainable access measures;
- Formal agreement of S106/S111 commuted sum payment to cover the costs of TRO review, amendment and introduction.

Following the receipt of additional information, an updated response has been provided raising no objections in respect of cycle parking, provision for mobility scooters and waste / refuse facilities. In addition matters of principle in respect of S106 contributions have been established.

**Planning Policy (Housing):** No objection. The scheme is reliant on Home England funding which will deliver all 68 units at shared ownership or social rent as per the requirements of that funding. As such the scheme is considered to be compliant with Core Strategy Policy H3.

**Planning Policy (Sustainability):** The energy statement for this application is fully compliant with Core Strategy Policy SD3. The energy statement highlights some excellent approaches to ensuring that carbon emissions will be reduced on this development to a high standard – these include:

- Use of Breeam Excellent on the Academy element which will result in a minimum 80% reduction in carbon emissions from these buildings
- Combined Heat & Power mini district heating scheme for the academy will ensure top efficiency where gas is being used and could be retrofitted with carbon neutral fuels in the future (e.g. hydrogen)
- Use of PassivHaus design principles on the domestic element – this will seek to reduce carbon emissions as much as possible and will exceed Stockport Core Strategy's minimum carbon reduction requirement of 40% over 2006 Part L (equivalent to a 13% improvement over current Part L)
- Ground Source Heat Pumps to provide heating and hot water site wide
- Consideration of solar PV where required to achieve PassivHaus standard requirements.

The proposed approach for this development will minimise the need for expensive retrofit of buildings and energy systems in the coming years as Greater Manchester moves to Zero Carbon by 2038.

**Planning Policy: (Open Space & Commercial):** Policy TCG3.4 St Thomas's Hospital applies – In this area the Council will permit a hotel, offices and residential development or a combination of those uses. New development must have a high

quality of design with appropriate landscaping and be sympathetic to listed buildings in the area.

### *Policy Principle*

The proposal is for 68 dwellings, where there are 33 one-bed, 25 two-bed, 8 three-bed and 2 five-bed units. Collectively this represents a population capacity of 185 persons, and using the spreadsheet calculator and accounting for the 50% reduction for children's play under the Town Centre Housing SPD this would require an off-site contribution of £221,722.50.

It has been demonstrated by the applicant with a Viability Assessment that the scheme cannot be viable if it is to provide off-site contributions towards open space. It is recognised that the benefits of restoring the historic buildings on-site, redeveloping a key brownfield site in the town centre and delivering new housing are key benefits that outweigh the obligation in this case.

In addition to the above benefits, the scheme provides 5,038 square metres of on-site provision including 2,081 square metres of semi-private and communal areas, 615 sqm of private garden space for residents and 2,342 sqm of public realm.

As reflected in Policy SIE-2, the Fields in Trust Standard requires 2.4 hectares per 1000 population, split down into 1.7 ha. per 1,000 population for formal recreation and 0.7 ha. per 1,000 population for children's play. When factoring in the 50% reduction in the Town Centre Housing SPD, this would give a new standard of 2.05 ha. per 1,000 population. The population capacity of 185 persons for the development means that any on-site provision would need to equate to 0.379 hectares or 3,793 square metres.

The Planning Statement notes that 615 sqm of the 5,038 sqm of on-site provision is 'private garden space'. As this space is strictly for residents of private properties and not for communal use for a wide range of residents or general public use, it is judged that this should be discounted from the on-site provision total. Even with this taken away, the total would be 4,423 sqm and would exceed the 3,793 square metres required by the FIT standard and Policy SIE-2.

It is judged that Policy SIE-2 and the SPD are met. It is noted that much of the on-site provision will be publically accessible.

### *Town Centre & Retail*

#### Relevant policies

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Para 85 requires that policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play by taking a 'positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation'. To support this, policies should define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and the range of uses permitted.
- Para 86 sets out the parameters for a sequential test for applications that are main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Furthermore, it states that main town centre uses should be located in town centres then edge-of-centre and then out-of-centre.

- Para 87 notes that applicants and LPAs should ‘demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored’.
- Para 89 sets out that an impact assessment is only required when assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan and where the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold. If this is not set then the default threshold is 2500 sqm of gross floorspace.
- In the glossary, the following are of relevance:
  - Town centre – ‘...including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area...’
  - Primary shopping area – ‘the defined area where retail development is concentrated’.
  - Main town centre uses – ‘Retail development...; leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses...’

#### Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- The application of the sequential test will need to be proportionate and appropriate for the given proposal and should consider suitability of more central sites to accommodate the proposal and whether there is scope for flexibility in format and scale (Paragraph 011). Market and locational requirements should also be taken into account (Paragraph 012).

#### Unitary Development Plan

- Policy TCG3 Town Centre Mixed Use Areas – The ‘Town Centre’ incorporates a number of adjoining mixed use areas covered by Part 2 policies TCG3.1 to 3.7. Retail development must meet the need and sequential tests outlined in Chapter 3 ‘Pattern of Shopping Development’.
- Policy TCG3.4 St Thomas’s Hospital – In this area the Council will permit a hotel, offices and residential development or a combination of those uses. New development must have a high quality of design with appropriate landscaping and be sympathetic to listed buildings in the area. In this area, retail development will not be permitted unless it is ancillary to other appropriate uses or is small-scale development which accord with Policy PSD2.6.

#### Core Strategy

- Core Policy CS6 Safeguarding and Strengthening the Service Centre Hierarchy – Additional main town centre uses with a focus on A1 use will be provided within the identified centres of the hierarchy which includes ‘Stockport Town Centre’ at the top. The Core Retail Area of the town centre is sequentially preferable for the purpose of A1 use.
- DM Policy AS-3 Main Town Centre Uses, Hot Food Take Aways and Prison Development Outside Existing Centres – Impact assessments are required for planning applications for A1 use exceeding 200 sqm net floorspace at out-of-centre

locations in relation to the District and Local Centres (no threshold given for Town Centres).

#### Principle and consideration of issues

A commercial unit is proposed within the Academy of Living Well for 375 sqm under Class E.

In terms of the adopted UDP, the site falls within the TCG3.4 St Thomas's Hospital area which is beyond the Central Shopping Area but within the Town Centre. This is the starting point for assessing the application although the NPPF is more up-to-date and as such carries more weight.

Under national planning policies, the proposed use is a main town centre use. It is within the town centre boundary in the UDP. As such it is in the Town Centre and no sequential test is required, thereby meeting Paragraph 86 of national policy.

In terms of size, 375 sqm would not trigger the requirement for an impact assessment. Policy AS-3 does not include a threshold for sites in the Town Centre and therefore the NPPF default threshold of 2,500sqm is used. As such, Paragraph 89 of national policy is also judged to be met.

#### **Strategic Housing:**

##### Housing Need:

There is significant housing need in Stockport. The GM SHMA report considers future housing need based on the standard methodology and this has been incorporated into the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (January 2019). The minimum local housing need figure for Stockport borough is 14,520 up to 2037 or 764 each year.

##### Affordable Housing,

The latest Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for Stockport, published in 2019 found that there is a significant net shortfall of affordable housing across the borough of 549 per annum.

Although the HNA also shows there is currently a negative need for affordable housing in the Town Centre, this is skewed by the fact that there is a large social housing estate (Mottram Estate) within the Town Centre boundary and relatively little market housing in the Town Centre at present. This will, however, change as the council's regeneration strategies, such as the Covent Garden Master Plan and MDC begin to bring forward other forms of housing tenures across the Town Centre.

The proposal is for all residential units to be provided as affordable in accordance with and utilising Home England Affordable Housing Grant as a mix of shared ownership and social rented units. This is significantly in excess of the policy requirement for this site and will help to address the backlog of affordable housing need within the Borough

##### Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021

The current Housing Strategy includes the following aims and objectives:

- To improve the offer of the town centre as a business, retail and cultural destination, and as a place to live;
- To work with partners to bring forward development sites in the Town Centre;
- To develop new appropriate market housing to support economic growth and regeneration initiative's

#### Conclusions:

The proposal will contribute to much need housing supply in the borough and includes affordable housing significantly in excess of policy requirements. It will, therefore, also assist in meeting affordable housing need. The proposed tenure mix includes shared ownership in line with the findings of the HNA and will therefore contribute towards the economic regeneration of the town centre subsequently meeting the aims and objectives of the Housing Strategy.

The innovative care home model supports the Council's wider work related to the needs of our ageing population with an emphasis on promoting choice and independence.

Give the above, I fully support this proposal.

**Environmental Health (Air):** I have looked at the air quality assessment submitted with this application and am happy with its conclusions and therefore have no objections.

There are however mitigation measures specified within the report and these should be implemented by the developer.

**Director of Public Health:** Stockport Sustainability Checklist – the submission of the Sustainability Checklist is welcome and the Gold Score is the first such score on the checklist in its history of operation. The main score of 50 points and the gold score of 32 reflects an exemplar project that is leading design through embedding sustainability. This will ensure a truly sustainable development that delivers social, environmental and economic benefits to the area. The proposed layout and low carbon energy solutions together with sustainable transport infrastructure, native planting ensuring biodiversity net gain, affordable housing, social care education and skills improvement as well as age friendly design commitments will be vital to ensuring the development is, indeed, a sustainable development. The Checklist includes potential for the development to go further with some items marked as 'to be confirmed'. This site sets the standard for the Town Centre West development area. The commitment to PassivHaus and BREEAM design principles will result in housing and buildings that are affordable to run, providing comfortable and healthy places to live, work and rest. The proposed approach for this development will minimise the need for expensive retrofit of buildings and energy systems in the coming years as Greater Manchester moves to Zero Carbon by 2038.

**Social Care / Ageing Well:** from the public health perspective the proposed development delivers many social benefits especially in terms of the proposed Academy of Living Well alongside affordable housing, including specific facility to encourage independent living for older people that will enable them to flourish. The Academy as a Centre of Excellence will ensure the skills of people in Stockport and wider areas enhance delivery of social care going forward. The proposal promises to further Stockport's reputation as an age friendly city through provision of homes and education in care that support this aim. Indeed the provision of homes designed to the Lifetime Homes standard will ensure that homes are suitable for all ages including older people and wheelchair users. The only issue that may need to be further considered is the provision of age appropriate seating in outdoor areas to

ensure rest points for older pedestrians throughout the site. The importance of this is highlighted in Stockport Council's adopted Ageing Well Strategy which takes account of the World Health Organisation guidance on appropriate place making for older people. Older people and parents with very young children need sufficient rest points on pedestrian routes from homes to nearby services and facilities to ensure independent access.

**Active Travel:** the promotion of active travel and public transport is key to maintaining physical and mental health through fostering activity, social interaction and engagement, managing healthy weight, reducing emissions from vehicles and enabling social interaction. Accessible paths through the site are welcomed as this can help to ensure pedestrians can navigate the site fully, encouraging natural surveillance from pedestrian and cycling through traffic. Proposed cycle route linkages will facilitate cyclists avoiding main vehicular routes and encourage safe cycling for all ages. A clear delineation for pedestrians and cyclists would help to facilitate uptake of both travel options by offering clear and safe through routes for both groups. The proposed cycle parking for residents, academy users and visitors will facilitate choice of this travel option, promoting physical activity as part of daily travel choices. Achieving healthy weight reduces risks of other lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, coronary heart disease and stroke. Reducing risks of such diseases also reduces pressures on current and future public sector health budgets (Stockport's JSNA). Core Policy CS9 TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT (see Page 129) Core Policy CS10 AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK (p130) Development Management Policy T-1 Transport and Development (P 134)

**Green Infrastructure (GI):** the scheme is in an urbanised location and it should be noted that the proposed GI offers multifaceted health benefits ranging from addressing flood risk to tackling stress and its exacerbating effect on health through provision of views of greenery and wildlife. Appropriate delivery of green infrastructure is extremely welcome in public health terms and could help to manage high summer temperatures and extreme rainfall events in the area, reducing stress and thereby maintaining immunity. Native planting proposed as part of the net gain in biodiversity will also contribute to managing air quality whilst enabling new natural capital in an area of the Borough that has a deficit, further enhancing access for and to nature on the development. Enabling people to get next to nature is important in terms of lifting the human spirit, which also assists with reducing the health impacts of stress, including on people with long term physical and/or mental health conditions. The summertime comfort and well-being of the urban population has become increasingly compromised. The urban environment stores and traps heat even in more rural locations such as this. The majority of heat-related fatalities during the summer of 2003 were in urban areas and were predominantly older more vulnerable members of society (Designing urban spaces and buildings to improve sustainability and quality of life in a warmer world). Development Management Policy SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change (Page 54) Core Policy CS8 SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT (Page 102)

**Affordable Housing:** the proposed affordable housing delivery is welcome in public health terms. It is important to note that a lack of affordable housing can be argued to contribute to widening health inequalities, with additional pressure on the Council's public health and related budgets. Evidence is available to show that affordable housing benefits health in a variety of ways including reducing the stress of unaffordable homes, enabling better food budgets for more nutritious food, access to better quality homes that do not impact negatively on health (including management of chronic illnesses), support for domestic violence survivors to establish a safe

home and mental health benefits of a less stressful inexpensive home (The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health). Development Management Policy H-3 Affordable Housing (Page 69) Core Policy CS2 Housing Provision (page 59).

**Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS):** Previous archaeological work on the site has included building recording supported by a watching brief. I am satisfied that the proposed development does not threaten the known or suspected built or below ground archaeological heritage interest. On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant.

**Nature Development Officer:** The site is located off Shaw Heath and to the southeast of Flint Street in Stockport. The application is for redevelopment comprising demolition of buildings, repurposing of existing buildings, and erection of new buildings for a mix of uses comprising 68no. residential apartments and dwellings (Use Class C3) and 70no. bed care home (Use Class C2) with 372 sqm flexible commercial space (Use Class E); ancillary hard and soft landscaping, formation of a new vehicular access onto Hollands Mill Road and Royal George Street, vehicular and cycle parking, and associated works and infrastructure.

Legislative and Policy Framework

Nature Conservation Designations

The site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise.

Legally Protected Species

An ecological assessment survey has been carried out and submitted with the application. An extended phase 1 habitat survey was carried out in July 2019 to map the habitats on site and assess the potential for protected species to be present (TEP, 2019). The survey followed best practice survey guidelines and was carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. Habitats on site comprise buildings and hard standing with areas of bare ground/short ephemeral vegetation, grassland, introduced shrub and scrub and scattered trees. A biodiversity net gain assessment has been submitted with the application using the DEFRA Metric 2.0 to demonstrate habitat losses and gains (Urban Green, 2020). It is summarised that the site would achieve an increase of 0.11 habitat (area) units, which is +3.55% and 0.02 habitat (linear) units, which is +45.32%. This is welcome within the proposals.

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

Under the Regulations it is an offence to:

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

An external inspection survey for bats was carried out to search for signs of bat presence and assess the potential of the buildings to support roosting bats. Eight buildings are present on site and are either proposed for demolition (1, 7, 8 and partially 2 and 4) or renovation (3, 5 and 6 and partially 2 and 4). Due to the derelict nature of the buildings, internal access was only possible in buildings 3 (partial) and



5 but this is not considered to be a significant limitation in the overall assessment as nocturnal bat survey work was also carried out. No evidence of roosting bats was observed during the inspection survey but numerous potential roosting features were observed.

Previous bat survey work carried out at the site in 2016 and 2017 identified pipistrelle bat roosts (used by low numbers of non-breeding bats) in buildings 1, 4 and 5). Update nocturnal bat activity surveys were carried out in July, August and September 2019. Single common pipistrelle bats were recorded to emerge from buildings 1, 3 and 5 (from two locations in building 5). The roosts are assessed as being day roosts (used by single or low numbers of non-breeding bats). Low levels of foraging activity from common and soprano pipistrelles along with noctule bat was also recorded during the surveys. Foraging and commuting habitat within the site is however considered to be of low value to bats.

Trees on site including trees along the southeast and northeast site boundaries were assessed for potential bat roosting features and were found to offer negligible bat roosting potential.

The buildings, trees and vegetation on site offer potential nesting habitat for breeding birds. Pigeons were recorded nesting within the buildings. The nests of all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended).

Cinnabar moth caterpillars were observed on site during the phase 1 habitat survey. This species is listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, as a species of Principal Importance.

No other evidence of or significant potential for any other protected species was recorded.

#### Invasive Species

No non-native species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded on site.

#### LDF Core Strategy

Core Policy CS8 Safeguarding and Improving the Environment

Green Infrastructure

3.286

#### Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

3.296

#### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY SIE-3

##### A) Protecting the Natural Environment

Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

3.345, 3.346, 3.347, 3.361, 3.362, 3.363, 3.364, 3.366, 3.367 and 3.369

#### Recommendations:

Buildings 1, 3 and 5 were found to support common pipistrelle bat roosts in 2019. Roosts were also recorded in buildings 1, 4 and 5 during surveys carried out in 2016 and 2017. Survey results indicate that the roosts are day roosts: used by low numbers of non-breeding bats.

The proposed development would result in the destruction of bat roosts with the potential to kill or injure bats/ and damage their habitat without appropriate mitigation

and compensation measures. As a result a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) or a Mitigation Class Licence (formally known as a LICL) will be required from Natural England. The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats.

When determining the application, it is advised that the Council has regard to the 3 Habitats Regulation derogation tests: -

- Imperative reasons of Over-riding Public Importance (IROPI)
- No satisfactory alternative solution
- Maintenance of the favourable conservation status (FCS) of the species

The need for consideration of the three tests has been demonstrated by a number of judicial reviews, including R (on the application of Simon Woolley) v Cheshire East Borough Council, June 2009) and Morge (FC) (Appellant) v Hampshire County Council (2011).

The first two tests are outside my area for comment. In terms of the favourable conservation status test it is proposed in the ecological assessment (TEP, 2019) that bat boxes will be provided on site as mitigation. Bat roosts should be retained where possible (e.g. in buildings 3 and 5 which are to be restored). This is in accordance with Natural England Standing Advice and these measures would be appropriate to satisfy the FCS test along with sensitive working measures (such as soft strip and supervision of works by a licenced ecologist). Detailed bat mitigation measures should be detailed within a Bat Mitigation Strategy to be submitted to the LPA for review. This can be conditioned as part of any planning consent granted.

In relation to the bat licence, the following condition can be used: the works hereby approved shall not commence until the local planning authority has been provided with either: -

- a) A licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 authorizing the specified activity/development to go ahead; or
- b) A statement in writing from the relevant licensing body to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/developments will require a licence.

Any proposed lighting should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance (following the principles outlined in Bat Conservation Trust guidance: [http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats\\_and\\_lighting.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html)). It is particularly important that the proposed bat boxes are sited in unlit areas.

In relation to breeding birds, building and vegetation works should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season where possible (which is March-August inclusive). Where works are required within this period, a pre-works survey will be required to ensure no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. This is detailed in section 5.6 of the ecological assessment (TEP, 2019) and should be conditioned as part of any planning permission granted.

It is also recommended that nesting boxes are provided on/integrated within the restored and new buildings to mitigate for the loss of nesting habitat resulting from demolition and restoration of the existing buildings. This can be secured by condition if necessary.

Ecological conditions can change over time. If the proposed works have not commenced by June 2021 (i.e. within two years of the 2019 surveys) it is

recommended that an update ecology survey is carried out in advance of works to ensure the baseline and assessment of impacts in respect of bats and other ecological receptors remains current. This can be secured by condition as part of any planning consent granted.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part the development in line with local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been submitted with the application and uses the DEFRA metric 2.0. It is summarised that there will be a gain of 0.11 habitat (area) units, which is +3.55% and 0.02 habitat (linear) units, which is +45.32%. This is welcome within the proposals.

The proposed landscape strategy includes tree planting, creation of wildflower areas, and shrub planting. The Landscape plans submitted as part of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment include provision of artificial turf. This is not something that I would support as it has no ecological value. This should be replaced with species rich grassland. If sown on to a thin soil substrate the grasses will not grow too vigorously and this will reduce the maintenance required. Landscape planting across the site includes a mix of species to provide a year-round nectar/berry resource for invertebrates and birds. The proposed wildflower seed mixes (Emorsgate EM3 and EM1F) do not however include ragwort or groundsel which are food plants of the cinnabar moth caterpillar. This species was recorded on site and is a Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act. The proposed seed mix should therefore be amended to include appropriate plant species to support cinnabar caterpillars.

Details regarding the future long-term sympathetic management of habitat areas (including grassland areas) will also need to be provided and this can be detailed in a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). This is referred to in section 6 of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Urban Green, 2020) and should be secured by condition.

**Contaminated Land Officer:** I have reviewed the following reports;

- E3p Phase 1 dated July 2020
- E3p Phase 2 dated July 2020

The reports recommend that remediation is undertaken for soil however no gas measures are required. As such could I please request the following conditions for the decision notice;

- CTM2 (Remediation Strategy)
- CTM3 (Validation report)

**Waste Management:** The 'SMBC Recycling Planning' should be read to ensure that the site plan/usage meets with our waste storage and access requirements.

If applicable: Please also ensure that sufficient storage room is allocated for the number of waste bin(s) (capacity) required.

If opting for steel bin containers, there needs to be sufficient access, width of entrance, turning circle enough for a heavy goods sized vehicle, in order that residents have the use of the Council's waste collection services.

**Arboricultural Officer:** The proposed development is not within or affected by a Conservation Area.

## Legally Protected Trees

There is no legally protected tree within this site or affected by this development.

## Invasive Species

Please refer to Nature Development Officer comments

## Stockport's Core Strategy DPD

### CS – 8 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

#### SIE-1 Development Management

#### SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment 3.345/3.346/3.347

#### Stockport's Unitary Development Plan (Retained Policy)

#### NE1.1 SITES OF SPECIAL NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

#### NE1.2 SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

#### NE3.1 PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF GREEN CHAINS

## Recommendations:

The proposed development will potentially have a negative impact on trees located off site in third party ownership apparently, which needs to be confirmed and owners approval received as we are unable to agree to this proposal, whilst on site there is no trees of any merit so this is acceptable. The sites front and rear boundary has a poor level of vegetation and virtually no trees and as such there cannot be any loss of trees on site as this will have a negative impact on amenity and biodiversity without a landscaping plan enhancing the site.

The proposed development would potentially have a negative impact on the existing tree's, however the trees located on the former hospital grounds are either poor specimen trees or self-seeded young trees as the proposal is to clear the site for construction works as they would otherwise be in close proximity of existing trees on site.

The main concern for this site is the proposed construction traffic and material storage in proximity to the trees on the neighbouring sites which will have a negative impact on the trees root systems if they intend to retain them or confirm owners approval if they intend to remove them, therefore an exclusion zone through protective fencing will be required for the neighbours trees if retained to the local area as the trees are an integral part of the tree scape for the residential estate and therefore cannot be lost.

The trees offer a high level of biodiversity/habitat benefit and as such they need retaining as the loss would be unacceptable as this would be further increasing urban sprawl of Stockport Central area.

In principle the scheme will have a negative impact on the trees in the area, but due to the low amenity levels of these trees it is acceptable as long as the landscaping plan is conditioned with any opportunity to increase the tree cover in the site along the south eastern boundary on the grass verge and along the house fronts on the Royal George Street as well as the requirement for the submission of protective fencing plan and an advisory restricting all access to the neighbouring sites trees. This should have been submitted as part of the planning application and therefore can be conditioned and submitted later then this will resolve any tree related issues.

Finally the tree species on the Public Open Space needs to be confirmed so comments can be made on the suitability of the species.

The following conditions are required if the scheme is approved;

**Condition Tree 1**

No existing tree within the site shall be cut down, topped, lopped, uprooted, wilfully damaged or wilfully 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.

**Lead Local Flood Authority:** The recommendation is to approve the application on the basis of the documents and plans submitted below. Conditions are proposed to:

A Maintenance Regime to be submitted for the soakaways.

The scheme shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the plans and documents.

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Scott Hughes Ref: 3535-SHD-OO-ZZ-RP-C-0001. Dated 15.09.20

**Environment Team (Noise):**

**NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (NIA)**

In support of the application, the applicant has submitted an acoustic report: ADT, 3020/ENIA 3 September 2020.

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic response: vehicles, aircraft and fixed plant have all significantly reduced. The NIA author acknowledges, that as a consequence, it has become impossible to undertake representative external noise level measurements - in order to design a suitable noise insulation scheme - to achieve compliance with the internal noise design criteria.

Only a snap-shot noise survey has been undertaken. Instead, to account the Covid-19 impact upon the background noise level decrease - the baseline noise measurements for this development have been obtained from road and air traffic noise contours. Also reference to the planning assessment of the development to the north of the site at Flint Street: DC/060491: Demolition of existing hospital

buildings, construction of 59 new residential dwellings. DC/064720, discharge of condition 9 NIA – of approved application DC/060491. Hepworth Acoustics, NIA, Report No P15-401-R01v1 October 2015. Baseline noise measurements for this development were obtained during noise monitoring exercise completed in October 2015.

Noise levels at Location 2 (on the eastern boundary of the site) were dominated by road traffic on nearby local roads and overhead aircraft. The measured LAeq, 15mins noise levels were between 43 – 60 dB in the daytime and 38 – 58 dB at night. The noise levels on the eastern boundary of the site are generally low. There was no noise from the nearby commercial premises during the survey.

These results correspond to EH desk-based acoustic assessment at this location.

Under the circumstances, this creative acoustic interpretation and application is accepted.

The impact of transportation and commercial noise on the proposed development has been assessed in accordance with BS8233:2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings and BS4142:2014 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound

#### INDOOR NOISE CRITERIA

The report outlines noise mitigation measures, for compliance with the BS 8233:2014 indoor ambient noise criteria. This requires acoustic glazing to the most exposed areas such as the Shaw Heath frontage of Block 1, and suitable insulation of roofs against aircraft noise. All dwellings are to be ventilated using MVHR units

Maximum rating levels as defined in BS 4142:2014 have been proposed for new fixed plant installations, designed to result in a low impact on the closest noise sensitive properties.

#### NOISE LEVELS IN GARDENS

Acoustic screening is not required.

#### OFFICER ASSESSMENT

The reports methodology, conclusion and recommendations are accepted.

#### RECOMMENDATION

In accordance with the acoustic report, the following conditions are necessary in order for this application to be approved:

- The mitigation recommended in the acoustic report ADT, 3020/ENIA 3 September 2020 shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of each dwelling.
- The agreed mitigation scheme shall be maintained for the purpose originally intended throughout the use of the development.

Reason: In accordance with paragraph 180a) of the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019: mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life

## VENTILATION AND EXTRACTION SYSTEM

Document, v1.0, 25.08.10

### New Build Housing

Whole house Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) system will be provided to each housing unit.

### Refurbished Buildings No.1, 2, 3, 5 and 6

Whole house Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) system will be provided to each apartment.

## COMMERCIAL KITCHEN EXTRACTION SYSTEM

The Academy of Wellbeing, 70 residents/covers. The Ventilation and Extraction System document, v1.0, 25.08.10 states for the Academy of Wellbeing building, Commercial Kitchen Ventilation: A kitchen ventilation system shall be provided. For this purpose the following is recommended.

### RECOMMENDATION

A site specific commercial kitchen 'schematic diagram', detailing measures to control noise and the discharge of odours arising from the handling, preparation and cooking of food; shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

Any works necessary to control noise and odour arising from the commercial kitchen use, shall be detailed on the scheme drawings: the type and location of filters, extract rate, residence time, extraction system, location of external duct work including the discharge point / termination height and any cowl, noise levels together with any mitigation required.

Mitigation to control noise and the discharge of odours arising from food handling, preparation and cooking; may include: filtration, odour abatement, acoustic silencing and regular maintenance of the system.

The odour and/or noise mitigation scheme, shall be installed and commissioned to the satisfaction of the LPA and agreed in writing.

The filtration and extraction system installed in pursuance with the above shall be:

- installed
- fully implemented
- operated and maintained in accordance with the approved details and the manufactures recommended service/ maintenance intervals and retained thereafter.

The commercial kitchen cooking processes shall cease to operate, if at any time, the filtration or extraction equipment ceases to function to the satisfaction of the LPA.

See Appendix 2: Information Required to Support Planning Applications for Commercial Kitchens. EMAQ, Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems, Update to the 2004 report prepared by NETCEN for Defra, 5-9-18

Reason: To protect from undue noise and disturbance (including fumes, odours and vibration) that would cause demonstrable harm to residential amenity and to preserve the quality of the local environment.

Reason: In accordance with paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019 – to ensure that residential amenity is not significantly impacted due to the proposed use.

## CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prior to the commencement of the development, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted for assessment by the LPA:

The CEMP shall address the environmental impact in respect of air quality and noise on existing residents during the demolition and construction phase. There shall be no burning of materials on site during construction and the CEMP shall be implemented throughout the demolition and construction phase of the development.

The CEMP shall show mitigation measures in respect of:

- **Noise Mitigation Measures**

Noise and disturbance during the construction phase including piling techniques, vibration and noise limits, monitoring methodology, screening, a detailed specification of plant and equipment to be used and construction traffic route. Comply with BS5228:2009 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites – Part 1: Noise and Part 2: Vibration

- **Dust Management**

For the prevention of dust emissions beyond the site boundary, a scheme detailing all dust suppression measures and the methods to monitor emissions of dust arising from the development. The demolition / construction phase shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme, with the approved dust suppression measures being maintained in a fully functional condition for the duration of the demolition / construction phase.

### Pile Foundation Method Statement

Should piling be required as part of the development, the applicant shall submit a method statement, to be approved by the LPA. The piling work shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved method statement. The method statement shall include the following details:

1. Details of the method of piling
2. Days / hours of work
3. Duration of the pile driving operations (expected starting date and completion date)
4. Prior notification to the occupiers of potentially affected properties
5. Details of the responsible person (e.g. site manager / office) who could be contacted in the event of complaint

Reason: In accordance with paragraphs 170 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

In addition to the above informatives are suggested covering the hours of operation on construction and demolition sites and site specific dust management plans.

**Adult Social Care:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Landscape Team:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Growth Team / Town Centre:** No objection.

**Historic England:** On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist



conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant. It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals.

**Care Commissioning Group:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**The Coal Authority:** No observations or comments to make.

**Environment Agency:** No objection in principle to the proposed development, but would wish to make the following comments.

Environment Agency position

The proposed development site appears to have been the subject of past industrial activity, which poses a risk of pollution to controlled waters. We have not undertaken a detailed review of the risk posed to controlled waters from land contamination and would therefore advise that you refer to our published Guiding Principles for Land Contamination which outlines the approach we would wish to see adopted to managing risks to the water environment from this site.

We also recommend that you consult with your Environmental Health / Environmental Protection Department for further advice on generic aspects of land contamination management. Where planning controls are considered necessary we would recommend that you seek to integrate any requirements for human health protection with those for protection of the water environment. This approach is supported by Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Manchester Airport Group:** The Safeguarding Authority for Manchester Airport has assessed this proposal and its potential to conflict aerodrome Safeguarding criteria.

We have no aerodrome safeguarding objections to the proposal subject to the following Conditions:

During demolition & construction: • Robust measures must be taken to control dust and smoke clouds. Reason: Flight safety – dust and smoke are hazardous to aircraft engines; dust and smoke clouds can present a visual hazard to pilots and air traffic controllers.

• During construction, robust measures to be taken to prevent birds being attracted to the site. No pools of water should occur and prevent scavenging of any detritus. Reason: Flight safety – Birdstrike risk avoidance; to prevent any increase in the number of hazardous birds in the vicinity of Manchester Airport (MAN) that would increase the risk of a Birdstrike to aircraft using MAN.

• All exterior lighting to be capped at the horizontal with no upward light spill. Reason: Flight safety - to prevent distraction to pilots using MAN.

Advisory: The applicant's attention is drawn to the new procedures for crane and tall equipment notifications, please see:

<https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP1096%20E2.1%20September%202020%20FINAL.pdf> It is important that any conditions or advice in this response are applied to a planning approval. Where a Planning Authority proposes to grant permission against the advice of Manchester Airport, or not attach conditions which Manchester Airport has advised, it shall notify Manchester Airport, and the Civil Aviation Authority

as specified in the Town & Country Planning (Safeguarded Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosive Storage Areas) Direction 2002.

**GM Chief Fire Officer:** The above proposal should meet the requirements for Fire Service access.

The Fire Service requires vehicular access for a fire appliance to within 45m of all points within the dwellings.

The access road should be a minimum width of 4.5m and capable of carrying 12.5 tonnes. Additionally if the access road is more than 20m long a turning circle, hammerhead, or other turning point for fire appliances will be required. The maximum length of any cul-de-sac network should be 250 m.

There should be a suitable fire hydrant within 165m of the furthest dwelling.

The Fire Service strongly supports the installation of domestic sprinkler systems as a positive measure to protect persons. At a small cost occupants' can be given the reassurance of a high level of protection. All developers should positively consider the viability of installing domestic sprinkler systems. The access requirements for a dwelling fitted with an approved sprinkler system can deviate from the required standard detailed above, further consultation will be required.

**Design for Security (GMP):** Having looked at the documents submitted, we would recommend that a condition to reflect the physical security specifications set out in section three of the Crime Impact Statement should be added, if the application is to be approved.

#### **United Utilities:**

##### Drainage

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.

##### Condition 1

Following our review of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, we can confirm the proposals are acceptable in principle to United Utilities and therefore should planning permission be granted we request the following condition is attached to any subsequent Decision Notice:

The drainage for the development hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with principles set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Ref No. 3535-SHD-00-ZZ-RP-C-0001, Dated 15th September 2020) which was prepared by Scott Hughes Design. No surface water will be permitted to drain directly or indirectly into the public sewer. Any variation to the discharge of foul shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to prevent an undue increase in surface water run-off and to reduce the risk of flooding.

Please note, United Utilities are not responsible for advising on rates of discharge to the local watercourse system. This is a matter for discussion with the Lead Local Flood Authority and / or the Environment Agency (if the watercourse is classified as main river).

If the applicant intends to offer wastewater assets forward for adoption by United Utilities, the proposed detailed design will be subject to a technical appraisal by an Adoptions Engineer as we need to be sure that the proposal meets the requirements of Sewers for Adoption and United Utilities' Asset Standards. The detailed layout should be prepared with consideration of what is necessary to secure a development to an adoptable standard. This is important as drainage design can be a key determining factor of site levels and layout. The proposed design should give consideration to long term operability and give United Utilities a cost effective proposal for the life of the assets. Therefore, should this application be approved and the applicant wishes to progress a Section 104 agreement, we strongly recommend that no construction commences until the detailed drainage design, submitted as part of the Section 104 agreement, has been assessed and accepted in writing by United Utilities. Any works carried out prior to the technical assessment being approved is done entirely at the developers own risk and could be subject to change.

#### Management and Maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems

Without effective management and maintenance, sustainable drainage systems can fail or become ineffective. As a provider of wastewater services, we believe we have a duty to advise the Local Planning Authority of this potential risk to ensure the longevity of the surface water drainage system and the service it provides to people. We also wish to minimise the risk of a sustainable drainage system having a detrimental impact on the public sewer network should the two systems interact. We therefore recommend the Local Planning Authority include a condition in their Decision Notice regarding a management and maintenance regime for any sustainable drainage system that is included as part of the proposed development.

For schemes of 10 or more units and other major development, we recommend the Local Planning Authority consults with the Lead Local Flood Authority regarding the exact wording of any condition. You may find the below a useful example:

Prior to occupation of the development a sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development shall be submitted to the local planning authority and agreed in writing. The sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan shall include as a minimum:

a. Arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or, management and maintenance by a resident's management company; and b. Arrangements for inspection and ongoing maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

The development shall subsequently be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To ensure that management arrangements are in place for the sustainable drainage system in order to manage the risk of flooding and pollution during the lifetime of the development.

Please note United Utilities cannot provide comment on the management and maintenance of an asset that is owned by a third party management and maintenance company. We would not be involved in the discharge of the management and maintenance condition in these circumstances.

## Water Supply

We can readily supply water for domestic purposes, but for larger quantities for example, commercial/industrial we will need further information.

Although water supply in the area is compliant with current regulatory standards, we recommend the applicant provides water storage of 24 hours capacity to guarantee an adequate and constant supply.

The applicant must undertake a complete soil survey, as and when land proposals have progressed to a scheme design i.e. development, and results submitted along with an application for water. This will aid in our design of future pipework and materials to eliminate the risk of contamination to the local water supply.

If the applicant intends to obtain a water supply from United Utilities for the proposed development, we strongly recommend they engage with us at the earliest opportunity. If reinforcement of the water network is required to meet the demand, this could be a significant project and the design and construction period should be accounted for.

Please note, all internal pipework must comply with current Water Supply (water fittings) Regulations 1999.

**United Utilities' Property, Assets and Infrastructure** A water main crosses the site. As we need unrestricted access for operating and maintaining it, we will not permit development over or in close proximity to the main. We require an access strip as detailed in our 'Standard Conditions for Works Adjacent to Pipelines', a copy of which is enclosed.

The applicant must comply with our 'Standard Conditions' document. This should be taken into account in the final site layout, or a diversion may be necessary. Unless there is specific provision within the title of the property or an associated easement, any necessary disconnection or diversion required as a result of any development will be at the applicant's expense. If considering a water mains diversion, the applicant should contact United Utilities at their earliest opportunity as they may find that the cost of mains diversion is prohibitive in the context of their development scheme.

The Water Industry Act 1991 affords United Utilities specific rights in relation to the maintenance, repair, access and protection of our water infrastructure; ☐ Sections 158 & 159, outlines the right to inspect, maintain, adjust, repair or alter our mains. This includes carrying out any works incidental to any of those purposes. Service pipes are not our property and we have no record of them. ☐ Under Section 174 of the Act it is an offence to intentionally or negligently interfere with any resource main or water main that causes damage to or has an effect on its use or operation.

It is in accordance with this statutory provision that we provide standard conditions to assist developers when working in close proximity to our water mains.

Both during and post construction, there should be no additional load bearing capacity on the main without prior agreement from United Utilities. This would include earth movement and the transport and position of construction equipment and vehicles.

Where United Utilities' assets exist, the level of cover to the water mains and public sewers must not be compromised either during or after construction.

It is the applicant's responsibility to investigate the possibility of any United Utilities' assets potentially impacted by their proposals and to demonstrate the exact relationship between any United Utilities' assets and the proposed development.

Due to the public sewer transfer in 2011, not all sewers are currently shown on the statutory sewer records and we do not always show private pipes on our plans. If a sewer is discovered during construction; please contact a Building Control Body to discuss the matter further.

Should this planning application be approved the applicant should contact United Utilities regarding a potential water supply or connection to public sewers

**Disability Stockport:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Civil Aviation Authority:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**British Pipeline:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Cadent Gas:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**The Victorian Society:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Ancient Monuments Society:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**The Georgian Group:** No response received, therefore no objection.

**The Twentieth Century Society:** No response received, therefore no objection.

## **ANALYSIS**

This application seeks the comprehensive regeneration of the site of the former St Thomas' Hospital and proposes the delivery of a high quality mixed use multi-generational residential, care / community facility and commercial based development, which will ensure the retention of and bringing back into active use key listed buildings that are currently in poor condition.

As detailed in the description of development the application comprises a number of component parts.

In the consideration of this application a number of matters should be considered in assessing the merits of the proposal, addressing the impacts of the proposed

development, as well as looking at the overall planning balance of the proposal with regards to harm and public benefits.

The following matters require consideration as part of the assessment of this application:-

### Principle of Development

The site occupies a key position in terms of being a prominent gateway site to the wider town centre. The site's value in respect of prominence and development potential has been long acknowledged by the Council, with the potential for significant development opportunity.

The proposal would enable the regeneration of a highly accessible and prominent site, which does not currently fulfil its potential, in delivering a high quality mixed use development with multi-generational dwellings, a 70 bed intermediate and dementia care unit, public realm enhancements and commercial uses which will be complementary to the town centre.

The site is located within the boundary of Greater Manchester's Mayoral Development Corporation which is part of the next stage in the Council's ambitious regeneration plans for the town, which will see the creation of in the region of 3000 new homes over a 15 year period in the heart of the town.

From a general overview the proposed development aligns with the long term regenerative aspirations of the Council and would reflect the general economic and housing delivery thrust of the National Planning Policy Framework. This advises that planning authorities should amongst other things be supportive of development which leads to economic growth in the interests of stimulating employment and the economy, as part of delivering sustainable development.

The principle of residential development, including the care facility, on a previously developed site in a highly accessible and sustainable Town Centre location is welcomed, particularly in the context of the current significant undersupply of housing in the Borough (most recently assessed as equating to 2.6 year supply set against a minimum requirement of 5 years). Given the highly sustainable location of the site, close to high frequency bus routes along the A6, Greek Street and Shaw Heath, together with the close proximity to Stockport Railway Station, it is precisely the type of location where the delivery of a such a form of development should be encouraged, subject of course to other considerations such as visual impact and level of amenity afforded to existing and future residents.

The 'tilted balance' in favour of residential development created by Paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged in this case. This positive position is supported by UDP Policy TCG3.4 which advocates the provision of a combination of uses including residential, offices and ancillary retail (related to appropriate uses), with an emphasis on high quality design.

Similarly, Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS4 seek to promote and focus the provision of housing in the town centre and on brownfield sites whilst the Council's Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (August 2019) emphasises the importance of maximising the potential of Town Centre Living to ensure housing needs are met in the Borough that will in turn help reduce development pressure on the Greater Manchester Green Belt. Furthermore, NPPF Paragraph

85 requires local planning authorities to recognise that residential development often plays an important role in regenerating and ensuring the vitality of town centres.

Core Strategy Policy CS4 echoes the above by highlighting the supporting role new housing development in the Town Centre will play in creating a critical mass of activity to support the local economy and improve the vibrancy and overall vitality of viability of the Town Centre. This will also in turn help to regenerate, conserve and enhance heritage assets.

The density of the proposed development is approximately 53 dwellings per hectare, excluding the proposed care facility and commercial floorspace.

It is also considered that the current use of the site represents a more inefficient use of previously developed land in such a sustainable and accessible location at a time of significant housing undersupply, contrary to paragraphs 122 and 123 of the NPPF and the strategic objectives of the development plan.

The new purpose built care facility, known as the Academy of Living Well, will reflect the principles set out in Saved UDP Review policies CTF1.1 and CDH1.3, as well as Core Strategy policy CS2, in providing transitional care needs in a location closer to the community. These services will include step up / step down, discharge to assess, rehabilitation and respite care in the heart of Stockport town centre. Being designed around a series of 5 households of between 11 -14 people with each household served by 14 en-suite care rooms. Patients will engage with and be active participants in their own communal care and recovery. The overriding aim of the proposed Academy of Living Well is to provide high quality services to Stockport residents who need (1) support to prevent hospital admission; (2) respite for family carers, and (3) intensive therapy to medically fit patients to leave hospital in a timely fashion.

Whilst the proposal seeks maximum flexibility in the breakdown of the commercial units falling with Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service), which will be ancillary to the appropriate residential and Academy of Living Well, it must be acknowledged that this is in compliance with adopted planning policy and the NPPF. Suitable conditions can be applied limiting the maximum size of any individual unit, in order to safeguard the vitality and viability of the core retail area of the Town Centre and Edgeley District Centre.

There are no matters or considerations relating to this application which would detrimentally impact on the vitality or viability of the town centre or Edgeley District Centre, and as such, the scheme is compliant with local and national planning policy in this regard

It is acknowledged that the proposed development will result in the loss / conversion of a number of buildings and structures associated with the former hospital site, the heritage implications of which are considered later in this report. Notwithstanding this, the impact of the removal of buildings linked to community health care provision needs to be considered. In this respect it is important to note that all of the buildings are redundant and in a state of disrepair, having ceased to operate fully as an NHS facility in circa 2004.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed uses of the site are entirely appropriate under current local planning policy and national planning

guidance and could deliver significant regenerative benefits for the town as a whole

### **Affordable Housing**

Core Strategy policy H-3 indicates that the proportion of affordable housing sought in new housing developments varies across the borough to take account of property prices and economic viability. The percentage requirement across the borough ranges from an upper end of 40 % to a lower end of between 5-15% affordable provision. In this case, as the freehold of the site was acquired by the Council in 2019, the policy advises that 40% provision should be made on Council sites.

In this instance the current proposal, which is reliant on Home England funding proposes that all of the 68 dwellings be delivered at shared ownership or social rent, as per the requirements of that funding. As such the scheme is considered to be compliant with the principles of Core Strategy Policy H3.

An appropriate legal agreement will be entered into by the applicant and other interested parties, so as to ensure the deliverability of the affordable housing offer and its tenure.

### **Highway Matters**

The detailed response of the Councils Highway Engineer is included within the Consultees section of this report and should be cross-referenced as part of the analysis of this application.

Following detailed discussions, the Highway Engineer is supportive of the comprehensive regeneration of the site, which is in a highly accessible location, with the proposed end uses considered to be acceptable in this location.

A variety of technical documents and drawings have been submitted in support of the application, including a Transport Assessment.

Further detailed discussions have subsequently taken place between the applicant and the Council's Highway Engineer and remain on-going in connection with matters relating to commuted sum contributions. An update is expected to be provided as to Members when considering the application.

### **Sustainable transport**

The site's sustainable location, within comfortable walking distance of public transport infrastructure, jobs, services, leisure activities justifies the proposed level of car provision within the development. The scheme's contribution to improving pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site to the surrounding network is a benefit that weighs in favour of the proposal. This is considered a necessary requirement to promote sustainable transport modes particularly in view of future residents' reliance on walking and cycling. Sustainable transport choices would be further promoted by way of a travel plan and other recommended conditions.



## **Highway safety**

Notwithstanding the comments of interested 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, the Council's Highway Engineer has robustly assessed the proposed access / egress arrangements. Specifically Hollands Mill Road will be upgraded to a standard suitable for adoption. Access to adjoining land uses will be respected and clearly retained with improved drainage, carriageway and footway infrastructure provided. In light of the above the Council's Highway Engineer raises no highway safety concerns, subject to the imposition of recommended conditions.

## **Traffic generation**

A Transport Assessment has been submitted in support of the application that finds that the development would not have a material impact on the local highway network. The Council's Highway Engineer agrees with that conclusion. No conflict with local or national planning policies therefore arises.

## **Parking provision & servicing**

Within the site there would be parking provision for the 68 dwellings in the form of 32 parking spaces, including 7 disabled bays. These would be provided across various parking areas across the site.

The care home facility will benefit from 44 spaces, of which 7 are disabled bays, provided under a landscaped podium which sits between the two wings of the Academy of Living Well. A drop off zone for cars and ambulances will also be provided within the road space fronting the entrance to the Academy of Living Well, whilst appropriate levels of parking for the commercial units have also been accepted.

An agreed number of the provided spaces will have ready to use electric vehicle charging facilities. An acceptable level of parking for mobility scooters and cycles is also proposed as part of the development.

The proposed level of car parking provision is considered to be justified in this location, having regard to the advice of the Council's Highway Engineer following careful review of submitted parking surveys.

In order to ensure servicing is managed in the operational phase, appropriate conditions are considered necessary in this regard.

In the absence of any objections from Council's Highway Engineer and subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, no conflict with local or national planning policies would arise.

## **Heritage & Archaeology**

The proposed scheme represents the redevelopment of a large site that includes a number of significant heritage assets. This will therefore place constraints on the development, which should seek to preserve or better reveal the significance of these assets.

The site includes the former St Thomas Hospital complex, which comprises Grade II listed buildings originally constructed in 1841 to house the Stockport Union Workhouse.

The surviving buildings on site represent a good example of a workhouse built following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. The principal ranges are relatively intact and their architecture and plan form expresses the draconian intentions of the Act, with late 19th and early 20th alterations made as the function of the site evolved. The principal elevations contribute positively to the street scene. The former Stockport Union Workhouse was constructed in 1841 to designs by local architect Henry Bowman, to provide separate accommodation and yards for 540 men, women, boys and girls, with workrooms, school rooms and dormitories. The complex comprises the 2-storey administration range, the central 4-storey accommodation range, 2-storey former kitchen and service range linked to rear 2-storey former infirmary range, perimeter 2-storey ranges or boundary walls, and 2-storey early 20th century Union Offices.

The current proposals have been subject to extensive pre-application discussion. It is acknowledged that the condition of two former hospital structures towards the rear (eastern) end of the site (indicated on the submitted plans as Buildings 7 and 8) has deteriorated to such an extent that repair and refurbishment is not a technically feasible proposition. Two further structures involve demolition works. For Building 1, which features external walls of robust Edwardian construction and provide a distinctive frontage to the site at the junction of Shaw Heath and Flint Street, it has been agreed that façade retention is the most appropriate solution, with the introduction of new internal floors enabling the building to provide residential accommodation over 3 levels, including a new roof but retaining the existing tall brick chimneys. The severe deterioration of the structure behind the façade is the result of a combination of neglect, vandalism and weather ingress and this has made it unsafe to enter. Building 4 is also visible from the site frontage but is of modest design and does not form part of the original workhouse complex. Its condition is poor, its architectural quality is very modest and its form means that it is not readily suitable for residential conversion. An important remaining element of the site is the network of boundary walls, originally provided to strictly control access into and out from the site via Shaw Heath. A significant proportion of these walls has survived, including railings to the Shaw Heath frontage, but it is acknowledged that the nature of the proposed use will inevitably require a degree of amendment to provide enhanced permeability for future occupiers and the public, as well as allowing for appropriate servicing arrangements for the site as a whole.

The cumulative impact of the harm to the heritage asset resulting from the demolition and alterations summarised above must be balanced against the benefits of finding a new viable use that will provide for the future preservation of the remaining historic buildings. This has required careful consideration of their potential for sympathetic conversion to a new use, taking opportunities to enhance and restore their architectural interest wherever possible and ensuring that new build elements respect the historic layout of the site, taking into account massing, form and materials. It is considered that this has been achieved and will result in establishing a sustainable future for this important historic site, one that has been at severe risk of loss and decay for an extended period.

Matters relating to external materials, rooflight details, façade & chimney retention methodology; window/door design ; stonework restoration; external plant equipment, internal decorative plasterwork/joinery specification, exhibition space arrangements, phasing/contractual arrangements, clock restoration, chimney/flue, boundary walls / railings, hard and soft landscaping, cycle and

refuse storage are all capable of being dealt with via appropriate planning conditions.

National policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is articulated in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. These policies state that assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (para.184) and that when considering the impact of a proposed development, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (para.193).

These national policies are supported in local planning policy, with Core Strategy Policies CS8 and SIE-3 and Saved UDP Policies HC1.3 and HC1.4 being of particular relevance to the assessment of this application.

The wider public and regeneration benefits of the scheme are acknowledged and provide sufficient justification for a comprehensive approach to the re-development of the site for the purposes of satisfying local and national planning policies, notably paras 193-196 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

To conclude, in the absence of any objections from either Historic England or the Council's Conservation Officer, the current proposal is considered to be acceptable and would comply with both national and local planning policy.

In respect of archaeological matters both GMAAS and the Council's Heritage Conservation Officer support the proposal, noting an understanding exists of the historical interest and archaeological potential of the site. In light of the above and in the absence of any objections from GMAAS, the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of archaeological matters.

### **Design, Scale & Appearance**

An assessment of the scale and design of the proposed development has been set out earlier in this planning report under various headings, including the heritage section, given that these material considerations are intrinsically linked. Notwithstanding this, further consideration is required

It should be acknowledged that the layout of the development and the proposed approach to massing has been carefully considered, particularly in respect of the impact on designated heritage assets.

Members will also be advised that the application is accompanied by supporting documents which explain the evolution of the scheme and the decisions made during design development, informed by both pre-application discussion with Officers and an assessment by an independent Places Matter Design Review, in accordance with best practice and the advice contained within paragraph 129 of the NPPF. In summary the overall quality of the proposed design of the development is considered to be good and is therefore supported in planning policy terms.

Whilst the current proposals consist of a combination of two different uses (residential for the historic buildings and a new care facility at the rear of the site accessed from Royal George Street), the design of the proposals provides for visual continuity, cohesion and a degree of social integration. Moreover the design and mass of the new build properties are considered to sit comfortably within the historic fabric of the site.

The proposed palette of materials and elevational detailing for both the new residential dwellings and the Academy of Living Well, will provide a contemporary approach when considered against the historic buildings, which is felt to be acceptable in the context of the setting of the heritage assets.

Sensitive siting of parking areas within the development has sought to retain a sense of openness around the listed buildings.

Proposed boundary treatments and entrance features will offer a sense of arrival to the development, with specific reference to the site's heritage.

Pedestrian permeability will be improved in and around the site and this will enable better public access to enjoy the architectural and historic interest of the retained buildings.

To conclude, the proposed scale, design and appearance of the proposed development are felt to represent a considered response to its wider context.

### **Residential Amenity**

Core strategy policies H-1, SIE-1 and the NPPF require developments to provide a good standard of residential amenity for existing and future residents.

The nearest existing residents to the proposed development are occupants of the recently completed dwellings off Flint Street and Royal George Street and the older low level flats on the opposite side of Shaw Heath. Due regard has also been given to the potential impact resulting from re-development of the nearby Stockport College campus site.

Given the position, orientation and distance between the proposed buildings and these sensitive receptors no undue adverse impacts on residential amenity in terms of an undue detrimental loss of privacy, sense of enclosure, overshadowing and noise disturbance would arise. Rather, it is considered that the proposed redevelopment will improve existing residents' outlook and provide them with enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections.

A noise assessment has been submitted in support of the application, which proposes appropriate mitigation measures in relation to the design of the development and associated plant equipment. The Council's Environmental health Officer is supportive of the proposal in this respect subject to appropriate conditions.

The construction phase of the development does have the potential to generate adverse environmental effects if not properly controlled and therefore a condition is recommended requiring a construction management plan to be submitted, approved and implemented in full before development commences in accordance with the advice received from consultees.

Future residents of the proposed development would benefit from satisfactory standards of amenity for the reasons outlined above. The proposed dwellings comply with the governments nationally described space standards and benefit from various forms of amenity space either through private / semi-private or communal outdoor amenity space and public realm, which is proposed as part of the external layout of the development.

Overall, it is considered that an adequate standard of amenity would be provided for both existing and future residents.

## **Landscaping**

With regard to the public realm enhancements, the layout has been derived from a design approach seeking to provide safe, attractive, multi-functional and enjoyable areas of high quality public realm, which also offer opportunities to improve pedestrian access and connectivity within and through the site to the wider surroundings.

Soft and hard landscaping is to be provided throughout the proposed development, forming areas of private garden space, semi-private / communal areas, together with significant areas of public realm. These include, but are not limited to, a central feature entrance space, southern gardens, northern yards, and an enhanced pedestrian route along Royal George Street, together with a podium garden for the Academy of Living Well. These proposed works are set out in more detail within the plans appended to this planning report.

In support of the application an Arboricultural Assessment has been submitted detailing the extent and condition of a small cluster of trees that would be adversely affected by the development. In addition a landscaping strategy accompanies the submission, detailing extensive new tree planting as part of the proposed scheme.

The comments of the Council's Arboricultural Officers are set earlier in this planning report. In summary these do not raise any fundamental objections to the proposed development, having regard to the extensive planting being proposed and the wider landscaping scheme, subject to appropriate conditions.

## **Flood Risk & Drainage**

In respect of drainage and flood risk, the comments of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and United Utilities are noted.

The application site is identified on the Environment Agency's Flood Map as falling within Flood Zone 1, which means there is a low probability of flooding. The NPPF, Core Strategy Policies SIE-3 and Saved UDP Review Policy EP1.7 deal with flood risk and seek to ensure that developments are not at risk of flooding and will not increase the risk of flooding.

A detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy have been submitted in support of the application. The proposed drainage solution is capable of being controlled by appropriate planning conditions to secure compliance (where achievable) with the aims of Policy SD-6. Such conditions will also encompass the recommendations of United Utilities.

On this basis there are currently no reasons to resist the proposal from a flood risk and drainage perspective.

## **Contaminated Land**

In respect of ground contamination, Policy SIE-3 seeks to protect development from matters relating to contaminated land. Technical Contaminated Land

Reports have been submitted in support of the application to assess the risk of potential contamination at the site and impact on the proposed development.

After due consideration the Council's Environmental Health (Contaminated Land) officer has raised no objections to the proposal subject to appropriate conditions. On this basis the proposal is considered to comply with Policy SIE-3.

### **Recreational Open Space**

Core Strategy Policy SIE 2 relates to the provision of both formal and informal recreational play space as part of a development.

As there is limited space on the application site to accommodate formal recreation or children's play facilities, Core Strategy SIE-2 and the 2019 Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD requires the payment of commuted sums to fund and maintain off-site provision. The proposed development generates a total off site commuted sum requirement of £221,722.50.

In this case the applicant has sought to demonstrate that financial viability prohibits the payment of any such commuted sums and has submitted a viability assessment to support their position. In response, the Council has commissioned a suitably qualified expert to critically review the viability assessment.

After careful analysis, it has been concluded that the scheme is unable to provide any S106 contributions in connection with recreational open space. However, if necessary, a clawback mechanism should be referenced in any legal agreement to address future viability as part of an on-going review process.

Notwithstanding the above, existing public greenspace within reasonable walking distance of the site includes Shaw Heath Recreation Ground.

### **Air & Noise Pollution**

In respect of air quality, the comments of the Council's Environmental Health Officer are noted. In this respect the applicant has submitted a detailed air quality assessment, which identifies potential impacts and mitigation measures as part of both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. In light of the above and in the absence of any objections from the Council's Environmental Health Officer, the proposal is considered to be policy compliant, subject to appropriate conditions.

In terms of noise impacts, the main considerations are in providing an acceptable level of attenuation particularly for noise sensitive users from the commercial elements and surrounding road network. Having regard to the noise assessment submitted in support of the application and in the absence of any objections from the Council's Environmental Health Officer (Noise), the current application is considered to be acceptable, subject to appropriate conditions.

### **Sustainability & Energy**

Delivering sustainable development is the primary aim of NPPF. Sustainability and energy efficiency is also key theme of the adopted Core Strategy which

seeks to ensure that new development is designed in way to reduce Co2 emissions and minimise climate change.

The application has been supported by an Energy Statement and Sustainability Checklist which consider the opportunities for the development to deliver the desired energy savings and Co2 reduction across the proposed development.

The comments of the Council's Director of Public Health are contained within the Consultees section of this report. The response is acknowledged and it is noted that they welcome the general approach towards the sustainable principles of the development.

In this respect the development has been designed to exceed Part L of the Building Regulations by 13% in accordance with Core Strategy Policy SD-3.

In light of the above the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of relevant energy and climate change Core Strategy Policies.

### **Ecological Interests**

The application has been accompanied by an Ecological Assessment which identifies that bat roosts are present within a number of the buildings. As such potential exists for an adverse impact on protected species.

In determining the application the Council has had regard to the 3 relevant Habitats Regulation derogation tests: -

- Imperative reasons of over-riding public importance – some of the existing complex of listed buildings on the site is in a poor condition, which without appropriate works could result in long term harm to the heritage assets and the wider townscape The longstanding vacancy of the site has the potential to result in anti-social behaviour.
- No satisfactory alternative solution – due to the poor structural condition of a number of the buildings on site, it would not be viable to retain these as existing, as part of the re-development of the site, thereby threatening the ability to safeguard and enhance the remaining heritage assets. It should be acknowledged that a number of previous consents have been granted for the re-development of the site.
- Maintenance of the favourable conservation status of the species - bat boxes will be provided on site as mitigation, with bat roosts retained where possible. These matters are to be conditioned as part of any planning consent.

Noting the above and in the absence of any objections having been raised to the proposal by the Council's Nature Development Officer, subject to the use of appropriate planning conditions, the development is considered to comply with relevant plan policies and the NPPF.

### **Other Matters**

The applicant has submitted a Crime Impact Statement, which is supportive of the proposals. It is noted that no fundamental objections have been received from Greater Manchester Police's Design for Security team. The proposed

development is therefore considered to strike the right balance between security, design quality and accessibility as highlighted by Core Strategy Policy SIE-1.

In terms of waste management, the waste storage and collection proposals are considered to be fit for purpose.

The positive comments of the Council's Public Health officer are noted, particularly in respect of affordable housing provision, active travel promotion, ageing well and biodiversity enhancements. Overall, the proposed development is considered to have a positive impact on public health and therefore is supported by local and national planning policy.

### **Summary and Planning Balance**

In conclusion, the scheme as proposed would deliver substantial regenerative benefits to a prominent site within the town centre. The re-development of the site would be the next step in delivering a high quality community led development in the town centre, whilst enabling the retention and re-use of designated heritage assets.

Whilst areas of concern have been identified within this planning report, particularly in respect of the absence of provision of recreational space contributions, it is Officers clear belief that the many benefits of the proposed development far outweigh the non-payment of these financial contributions for viability reasons.

The scheme now before Members has been subject to extensive discussions, which ultimately has resulted in a development which demonstrates a clear and convincing justification for the development in accordance with the NPPF. The scheme is considered to present significant regeneration benefits which have been discussed at length within this report of the scheme. These include, but are not limited to:-

- 1) The delivery of a high quality inter-generational community development, comprising affordable dwellings, which would deliver a significant number of residential units during a period of housing under supply;
- 2) The safeguarding and enhancement of significant heritage assets;
- 3) The provision of significantly enhanced and integrated health and social care facilities;
- 4) An improved commercial offer in a Town Centre location
- 5) The provision of areas of public realm designed to a high quality;

The proposal will offer further scope for attracting inward investment and job creation into this part of Stockport. The site is also in a highly accessible location with good transport links and the proposal has potential to deliver an energy efficient development.

After careful consideration, and having regard to all material considerations and comments it is the opinion of Officers that any harm caused by the proposal, is on balance outweighed by the clear and substantial regenerative benefits of the re-development of this site.



Furthermore, the proposed development pre-dominantly reflects the key principles of the NPPF in helping to deliver sustainable development, together with the need to deliver a sufficient supply of homes, building a strong and competitive economy and promoting healthy and safe communities.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Grant, subject to completion of an appropriate legal agreement.