

<b>Application Reference</b>	DC/077459
<b>Location:</b>	Belmont House 57 Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport SK8 1JE
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Partial demolition, refurbishment and conversion of currently vacant locally listed building, Belmont House, to 4no. residential apartments and 1no. residential townhouse. Plus erection of new build elements comprising: 7no. residential apartments, 3no. 3 storey residential townhouses and 2no. 2 storey residential townhouses, plus additional landscaping and amenity spaces. Total of 17no. new residential units.
<b>Type Of Application:</b>	Full Planning Application
<b>Registration Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
<b>Expiry Date:</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021 (extension of time agreed)
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Rebecca Whitney
<b>Applicant:</b>	Belmont Estates (Manchester) Ltd
<b>Agent:</b>	Hodder & Partners

### **DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS**

Four objections have been received, contrary to the Case Officer's recommendation of approval.

In addition, the application is considered to constitute a 'departure' from the development plan as the proposal would not include Developer Contributions toward affordable housing and open space. As a result, the application must be publicised by way of a site notice and a press notice in the Stockport Express. The application can therefore only be approved by the borough wide Planning and Highways Regulation Committee.

Should Cheadle Area Committee be minded to grant permission, under the Delegation Agreement the application should be referred to the Planning & Highways Regulations Committee.

PLEASE NOTE that as this conclusion was reached at a late stage in the assessment, the recommendation is to grant subject to no new substantive issues being raised as a result of this extended public notification period.

### **DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT**

The proposal comprises the partial demolition of Belmont House, and the refurbishment and conversion of the retained elements to create 4 no. apartments

and 1 no. townhouse. New build elements are proposed in the form of an apartment block of 7 units and 5 townhouses.

The schedule of accommodation proposed is as follows:

Within Belmont House:

- 3no. 2 bedroom apartments
- 1no. 3 bedroom apartment
- 1no. 2 storey, 3 bedroom townhouse

New build:

- 3no. 3 storey, 4 bedroom townhouses
- 2no. 2 storey, 3 bedroom townhouses
- 6no. 2 bedroom apartments
- 1no. 1 bedroom apartment

In addition to the residential development, the proposal includes the landscaping of the grounds of Belmont House to provide formal landscaping to the northern elevation, large private gardens, communal gardens and private parking for 24no cars.

Access is to be taken from the existing northern and southern vehicular access points from Schools Hill.

## **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

Belmont House is a former care home (Use Class C2) located within a Predominantly Residential Area. Belmont House is a locally listed building of architectural and historic interest and therefore represents a non-designated heritage asset for planning policy purposes. The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

The application submission describes the history of the site. Belmont House was originally built at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as a country house set within extensive grounds. It was converted to a children's' home in the 1920s, and to an elderly persons care home in 1983. The building has been vacant since 2017. Since this time, the building has been subject to misuse, vandalism and other damage.

The original house has had few major remodellings, with the works associated with nationally important architects, Richard Lane and Alfred Waterhouse. Further information is provided within the Heritage Statement.

The house is a 2-storey residence with a below-ground basement level. There is a change in levels across the site, which the Design and Access Statement describes as approximately 1.8m from the low point at the northern boundary to the southern boundary, following the topography of Schools Hill.

The site is partially covered by a Tree Preservation Order Area and has an individual tree with a Tree Preservation Order toward the south-east of the site. There are

other trees with Tree Preservation Orders close to the south-eastern corner of the site which may fall within, or be affected by development within, the application site.

Belmont House sits within a large plot (approximately 0.4ha) with much of the land retained as landscaped gardens, with areas to the north and west comprising hardstanding for car parking. The wider site is bound to the north and west by highway, the eastern boundary by residential development, to the south by a large commercial unit occupied by The Together Trust charity. A Strategic Recreation Route runs along Schools Hill to the western boundary of the site.

## **POLICY BACKGROUND**

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

### **The Statutory Development Plan includes:-**

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

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

EP1.7 – Development and Flood Risk

EP1.9 – Safeguarding of Aerodromes and Air Navigation Facilities

EP1.10 – Aircraft Noise

MW1.5 – Control of Waste from Development

L1.2 – Children's Play

L1.8 – Strategic Recreation Routes

L1.9 – Recreation Routes and New Development

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

CS1: OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

SD-1: Creating Sustainable Communities

SD-3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – New Development

SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

CS2: HOUSING PROVISION

CS3 MIX OF HOUSING

CS4 DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING

H-1: Design of Residential Development

H-2: Housing Phasing

H-3: Affordable Housing

## CS8: SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

SIE-1: Quality Places

SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

SIE-5: Aviation Facilities, Telecommunications and Other Broadcast Infrastructure

## CS9: TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

## CS10: AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK

T-1: Transport and Development

T-2: Parking in Developments

T-3: Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

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

The following are relevant to the determination of this application:

Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

Sustainable Transport SPD

Design of Residential Development SPD

Affordable Housing SPG

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

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 represents the Governments up-to-date planning policy position. In respect of decision-taking the revised NPPF constitutes a “material consideration”.

### **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.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

Reference: DC/001284; Type: FUL; Address: Woodlands Boys & Girls Welfare Society Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire; Proposal: Proposed sun room extension and additional car parking; Decision Date: 03-JUL-00; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/003560; Type: FUL; Address: Belmont Nursing Home 57 Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire SK8 1JE; Proposal: Alterations and two storey extensions to side and rear to provide 18 No. additional bed spaces and improved ancillary accomodation.; Decision Date: 07-JUN-01; Decision: WDN

Reference: DC/008172; Type: FUL; Address: BGWS Centre Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport; Proposal: Extension of car parking , new lighting column and CCTV camera and tower; Decision Date: 29-JUL-02; Decision: WDN

Reference: DC/051177; Type: DOC; Address: The Together Trust Centre 57A Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport SK8 1JE; Proposal: Discharge of conditions 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 ; Decision Date: 18-SEP-12; Decision: DOC

Reference: DC/008619; Type: FUL; Address: BGWS Centre Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport; Proposal: Resubmission of DC008172 for the extension to the existing car park, new lighting columns/ bollards and CCTV camera and tower.; Decision Date: 23-SEP-02; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/016176; Type: FUL; Address: Belmont House Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire; Proposal: Conversion of residential care home to 15no apartments with extensions and alterations; Decision Date: 14-OCT-04; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/019841; Type: FUL; Address: Belmont House Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire; Proposal: Two storey extension and alteration to roof to create 15 additional bedrooms/suites for residential care home.; Decision Date: 04-AUG-05; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/023711; Type: FUL; Address: The Together Trust Centre Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport Cheadle SK8 1JE; Proposal: Erection of temporary teaching unit; Decision Date: 12-SEP-06; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/039554; Type: TR; Address: The Together Trust Centre Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire SK8 1JE; Proposal: Retention of temporary teaching unit ; Decision Date: 29-JUL-08; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/050161; Type: FUL; Address: The Together Trust Centre 57A Schools Hill Cheadle Stockport SK8 1JE; Proposal: Erection of single storey building to provide new school hall, kitchen, parents room, reception and office, staff room, meeting room and head teachers office. Alterations to site layout to create access road to new building with drop-off. Extension of car parking and re-organisation of car parking in two positions within the site; Decision Date: 17-SEP-12; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/059047; Type: TWTT; Address: The Together Trust Centre 57A Schools Hill Cheadle SK8 1JE; Proposal: T1 Lime section fell to ground level, extensive decay identified at the base. TPO 246W. ; Decision Date: 17-AUG-15; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/069938; Type: TWTT; Address: The Together Trust Centre 57A Schools Hill Cheadle SK8 1JE; Proposal: Deadwooding and crown lifting to 3 meters of various trees and removal of one Oak Tree at the rear of side carpark to enable extending of car park. TPO: 135W \_ 141W; Decision Date: 08-AUG-18; Decision: GTD

Reference: DC/072267; Type: TWTT; Address: The Together Trust Centre 57A Schools Hill Cheadle SK8 1JE; Proposal: Lime and Horse Chestnut. Removal of 1 limb on Horse Chestnut and weight reduction on 2 Limes - TPO Number: 246W, 135W \_ 141W Oak Weight reduction to reduce the risk of failure - TPO Number: 141W Lime - Weight reduction if epicormic and lower limb - TPO Number: 141W; Decision Date: 21-MAR-19; Decision: GTD

### **NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS**

19 neighbouring properties were consulted by letter, a site notice was displayed and the application has been advertised in the local press.

4 objections have been received in relation to the current proposal for 8 dwellings, on grounds which can be summarised as follows:

- a. Contemporary design of the new build elements is not in keeping with Belmont House and would detract from its appearance.
- b. The apartment building would be set forward of the existing building line, resulting in visual impact.
- c. Overlooking of neighbouring properties.
- d. Overdevelopment of the site.
- e. Lack of parking.
- f. Traffic generation.
- g. Removal of trees which provide screening.
- h. Trees and planting to be removed should not be to the detriment of trees and planting outside of the boundary.
- i. Requests that the developer plants a hedge (5-6 feet) along the boundary with a neighbouring property in order to prevent overlooking.
- j. Security concerns as a result of opening up the boundaries, boundary treatments and replacement tree planting requested.
- k. The development includes habitable room windows which could prejudice future development on the neighbouring site.

It should be noted that a consultation period is currently live as a result of the proposal being considered a departure from the development plan. A site notice has been displayed at the site and a press notice has been published. As noted at the beginning of this report, the recommendation is to grant subject to no new substantive issues being raised as a result of this extended public notification period.

## **CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

### **SMBC Conservation Officer**

Belmont House is recognised as a locally listed building of architectural and historic interest and therefore represents a non-designated heritage asset for planning policy purposes in respect of the NPPF and Stockport Core Strategy. The list entry is available from this link:

<http://interactive.stockport.gov.uk/shed/Search/ViewDetails/379%20LocallyListed>

A detailed heritage appraisal has been undertaken in support of the application, and this provides a useful assessment of its historic and architectural value and wider significance. It is noted that the report concludes that the building is potentially of sufficient interest to meet the statutory criteria for listing within a national context, possessing a degree of significance beyond its local interest and value. Key elements of the house remain largely unaltered with internal decorative features that are of high significance; its design has strong associations with 2 leading C19th architects – Richard Lane and Alfred Waterhouse - and a similar house designed by Lane within Victoria Park, Manchester is statutorily listed.

Formerly in use as a care home, the physical fabric of the building has deteriorated since it was vacated, initially related to lead theft and associated water ingress but subsequently compounded by vandalism, fire and neglect. As a result it is acknowledged that the challenge of delivering conservation and restoration of the most important architectural elements of the building has substantially increased. To facilitate this aim, enabling development in the form of 3 new blocks within the grounds is proposed in conjunction with selective demolition and refurbishment of Belmont House to facilitate its conversion into 4 apartments and 1 townhouse. Whilst the encroachment of new 3 storey townhouses within the garden frontage will result in a degree of harm upon the setting of the original house and will involve the loss of trees, it is acknowledged that their siting has been selected to minimise their impact upon views of the house frontage and their unique contemporary design has potential to offer a striking visual counterbalance to the character of the historic building. It is also acknowledged that the partial demolition of Belmont House is restricted to areas of low significance, therefore resulting in minimal level of harm.

The design and siting of the remainder of the proposed new construction has evolved following pre-application discussion and it is considered that, providing care is taken with the selection of external materials and architectural details, these new blocks would not result in harm to the setting of the main house.

In determining planning applications involving non-designated heritage assets, NPPF Para 197 requires a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any direct or indirect harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Providing the submitted scheme is deliverable it is considered that the proposals represent an acceptable balance between heritage harm and heritage benefits. NPPF Para 198 states that '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.' It is clear that as the condition of the site deteriorates and the potential cost of repair increases, the

viability of the current scheme is likely to be challenging. Whilst planning conditions can be imposed in order to ensure that the external quality of the new buildings reflects the ambitious architectural quality of the submitted plans, it is recommended that a legal agreement is established in order to ensure delivery of the internal conservation and restoration of Belmont House. A detailed building record will need to be undertaken to inform the restoration of decorative plaster and timber fixtures and fittings that comprise the most important architectural elements of the building.

#### Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS)

The application is supported by a Heritage Statement prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture in July 2020. This is a comprehensive study of the historic development of the site and its architectural merits, ably supported by a historic map sequence, old and contemporary photographs. It provides an excellent understanding of the key phases of development from the original construction in the 1790s, including phased plans which also demonstrate the relative significance of component parts of the building complex. The study also paints a vivid picture of the various occupants of the house and their fortunes. The original grounds associated with the hall were severely denuded in the late 20th century and several buildings such as the stables and coach house have been demolished.

In terms of archaeological interest, there is a small chance that finds/features from prehistoric or Romano-British times might be encountered in the grounds during new development and landscaping works. A possible Roman glass vessel and beads have been recovered from a garden nearby on Schools Hill, along with a Roman ceramic pot from near Downs Bridge and there is potential for further evidence to be revealed. A growing body of evidence suggests a small-scale Roman settlement site in the Cheadle area; Schools Hill is the first high ground coming south from Cheadle and may have been a favourable site for Roman activity.

The later phases of Belmont House, to the south of the original façade, will be demolished. Demolition and stripping out of the early part of the house may reveal original fabric and features. A new development will be sited partly over the former stables and coach house and development ground works are likely to reveal foundations of these structure. GMAAS consider that it is appropriate to recommend that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken to record previously hidden fabric during stripping out and demolition, and during development ground works. This will complement the study undertaken for the Heritage Statement, maximising this unique opportunity to understand the early phases of Belmont House. The archaeologist will also be able to identify any pre-18th century finds or features. In order to identify costs and timetabling, the watching brief should be a maximum of 10 days on site for one archaeologist, with 5 days for writing up the results.

Given the fascinating heritage of this site, GMAAS also recommend that an information panel is installed at a publicly accessible point to provide the new and existing local community with a sense of place and history.

The archaeological works should be secured through a condition attached to planning consent, wording is recommended.



#### SMBC Viability Consultant

Agrees with the findings of the Viability Report, Affordable Housing Assessment and the Valuation; namely the scheme provides insufficient return to warrant further contributions. Specifically, the “Entire Scheme” produces the higher overall return, but this scheme is still unable to support additional Affordable Housing Contributions.

#### SMBC Highway Engineer

Is accepting that the site is in an accessible location where residents will have reasonable access to public transport, amenities and other services and as such the site is considered appropriate in principle for residential development.

The Highways Engineer has no concerns with this scale of development having regard to traffic generation and highway capacity.

In principle, the Highways Engineer is supportive of the proposal however they have a number of concerns with the detail and internal layout. These matters need addressing to ensure the development would be satisfactory having regard to the NPPF, Council Policy and design standards and that the impact of the development on the safety of the highway and residents/visitors would not be unacceptable.

#### *Northern side of the proposal*

This entrance on Schools Hill will primarily serve 7 residential units. The entrance width appears to scale at 5.8m pillar to pillar however this is impacted by the pedestrian walkway. The effective driveway width for vehicular passage and safe two way movement needs to be 5.5m minimum with a separate non conflicting pedestrian walkway facility.

The Highways Engineer am unclear on levels through the site entrance and driveway and remain to be satisfied that the entrance will not be too steep for pedestrian movement and vehicle access.

Vehicle tracking is necessary to show that that two way motor car passage will be possible in the entrance. The Highways Engineer is concerned that the irregular alignment within the site will not enable a motor car to be driven out of the site and properly align in the entrance whilst still allowing another motor car to turn in from the highway and safely passby.

The Highways Engineer will only support the installation of gates across the site entrance should they be set 7.5m back from the kerbline, to allow home delivery sized vehicles to stand clear of the carriageway.

Within the car park the Highways Engineer remains to be satisfied that there is sufficient space for a home delivery vehicle to safely manoeuvre. Whilst it is noted that tracking drawing for a 3.5T panel van has been submitted within the accompanying Transport Statement, this tracking does not respect landscaping that is proposed within the car park (or it could be said that the landscaping drawing does not respect the tracking needs). Nevertheless, tracking for a 3.5T panel van is not adequate or appropriate as the majority of home delivery sized vehicles are nearer 7m in length. This exercise needs reviewing using a 7m long wheel base vehicle, such as is typical for Tesco.

### *Southern side of the proposal*

The southerly means of access on Schools Hill appears to scale at 4.5m in width. This is unacceptable, a minimum width of 5.5m is required to enable safe two way vehicle passage and avoid the need for and likelihood that vehicles will reverse on or off the highway when meeting in the entrance. Whilst the Highways Engineer appreciates the walled frontage and issues that widening may create, they will not support an entrance that is restricted in width to serve up to 10 residential units. A separate pedestrian entrance is also required, consideration could perhaps be given to a pedestrian entrance central to the overall site.

Again the Highways Engineer will only accept a gated entrance if the gates are set 7m back from the kerbline.

Within the site there needs to be the ability for a 7m home delivery sized vehicle to manoeuvre. Tracking based upon a 3.5T panel van which has been provided is not appropriate or acceptable.

The Highways Engineer queries whether such a vehicle will be able to access the two town houses to rear/east of the site given the proposal for the new apartment building includes at first floor level a built projection across the site access road. The Highways Engineer has no clarity on the underside clearance to this build, there is insufficient details and there do not appear to any elevation drawings of this aspect within the submission.

The proposal for building over the access road also raises a concern about the ability for the fire authority to access the two town houses to the rear/east of the site. These dwellings will be remote from the likely standing point of a fire appliance and hose lengths will not be adequate to reach the houses. Developer thought/comment and perhaps Fire Authority comment is required.

The turning area forward of two townhouses to the rear of the site does not appear adequate for a home delivery sized vehicle to conveniently and safely manoeuvre, if indeed it can actually get to the houses dependant on the apartment underside clearance.

The parking bays to the east of 7 unit apartment building are not practical to conveniently and safely access and egress, noting the access road only appears to scale 3.5m in width. A depth of 6m is generally required forward of parking bays for practical and safe movement. The disabled bay within this parking area should be located closest to the apartment building and marked with 1200mm accessibility zones on either side of the bay.

### *Overall proposal*

Whilst in principle kerbside collection for refuse and recycling purposes is considered acceptable the arrangements proposed are inadequate and unacceptable. The apartment communal facility and the bin holding area (presumably intended for the individual dwellings) need to be directly accessible from the highway as collection operatives will not walk within private space and wheel bins over excessive distances. The apartment communal area needs to be capable of housing 2 x 1100L

Eurobins for paper, card and cartons; 2 x 1100L Eurobins for glass, cans and plastic bottles; 1 x 360L bin for food waste; 1 x 1100L Eurobin and 1 x 770L bin for residual waste and 2 x 1100L Eurobins and 1 x 770L bin for Garden Waste (unless garden maintenance/waste will be the responsibility of a management team). The bin holding area for the dwellings needs to be capable of housing up to 14 receptacles overnight pre collection.

In conclusion, the submission at this stage raises a number of concerns with respect to the internal site arrangements and these need addressing to ensure NPPF and Council Policy compliance.

In comments dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the Highways Engineer commented as follows: I write with updated comments on application DC/077459 and further to a letter from received from Curtins dated 12 January which provides a response and seeks to address the concerns raised in my emailed comments dated 27 November. First I make my apologies for my delay in providing further comments.

A revision to the northern access point as shown on drawing 215-LYR-XX-ZZ-DWG-L-1001 Rev1 shows provision of a gated pedestrian entrance. This gateway is not, however, segregated from the vehicle route as has previously been requested, requiring pedestrians to walk between the pillars and within vehicular space in order to access the personnel gate into the site. This is not segregation as it will require pedestrians, which could include children and those with mobility impairment to have to walk within a vehicular environment in close proximity to a busy traffic corridor, where turning and emerging vehicle drivers would not ordinarily expect a pedestrian to be walking and the risk of conflict is unnecessarily high.

The layout needs to ensure that pedestrians have direct and segregated connectivity between the site and the highway, a solution could be a gateway through the wall adjacent to the pillar on the southerly side of the access (as indicated below). An infill area of hardsurfacing forward of the pillar and gate and connecting to the footway is also necessary.

This would afford a safe means of access for pedestrian traffic and minimise the risk of conflict with vehicular traffic using the entrance. The Highways Engineer remains of the view that a private entrance to serve the development must, by virtue of the number of residential units served, be a minimum of 5.5m width for a distance of 10m for vehicular passage and it should have separate facilities for pedestrian movement. Without such an arrangement they would raise objection and contest that the access arrangement would be contrary to Policy T-3 "Safety and capacity on the highway network" of the Core Strategy DPD March 2011 and paragraphs 108 and 109 of the NPPF Feb 2019.

The Highways Engineer adds that residential development on the site will be likely to give rise to reasonable levels of movement by children perhaps walking to school etc. and movement by others with mobility difficulties and it is essential that design standard compliant and safe entrances arrangements are provided.

As commented previously any gates across the access should be set back 7.5m to allow a home delivery sized vehicle to stand clear of the carriageway whilst the gates are operated.

The revised drawing shows gates circa 6.5m setback which is unacceptable. Alternatively no gates should be erected across the access.

The southern access design also remains a concern and is unacceptable for the purposes of redevelopment of the site. The Highways Engineer remains of the view that a 5.5m width for a distance of 10m from the highway (back edge of footway) and a separate pedestrian entrance must be provided to ensure a compliant and suitably safe means of access is provided. The proposal (looking at the revised drawing) still shows a circa 4.5m wide entrance, no segregated pedestrian linkage and potentially inadequate visibility on the southerly side of the access presuming that the existing high boundary wall would be extended to adjoin this access.

The proposed layout is in effect worse than the existing entrance arrangement, the access presumably shown as being significantly narrowed to accommodate development on the southerly side of the access. The Highways Engineer maintains, as with the northerly entrance, that a private entrance to serve the development must, by virtue of the number of residential units served, be a minimum of 5.5m width for a distance of 10m for vehicular passage, that its design should ensure adequate pedestrian visibility to and for emerging traffic and that it should have separate facilities for pedestrian movement. Again, without amendment, the Highways Engineer would oppose the proposal on the grounds of unacceptable access arrangements.

The Highways Engineer notes and accept the amendments to access to and the parking area to the east of the apartment building however the disabled bay remains substandard, lacking 1200mm accessibility to both side of the space. As presented, a disabled passenger would have difficulty boarding and alighting a car parking forward in the bay.

The Highways Engineer is accepting of the response, comments and additional information with regards to predicted access gradients, home delivery vehicles manoeuvring within the site and refuse and recycling arrangements. Advice should be sought from the Fire Authority with regards to access and the relationship of standing areas to properties, although from the information provided the Highways Engineer errs on the side of accepting that the two dwellings to the rear can be accessed from the northerly access in the event of an emergency.

In summary, the revisions to the access arrangements are not considered acceptable and do not overcome my concerns with the layout and I have no option other than to recommend refusal of the proposed development in its current form.

#### Transport for Greater Manchester

The impact on the highway should be small. The Transport Statement does not seem to mention anything about cycle parking. Secure cycle parking should be provided for the apartments.

### SMBC Planning Policy (Energy)

The Sustainability Statement submitted for this application is a policy compliant document as an 'energy statement' for this application. It appropriately assesses low / zero carbon (LZC) technologies for the site providing sufficient evidence in terms of site constraints and costs to justify non-use of LZCs on this site.

In addition, the statement proposes achieving the Core Strategy Policy SD3 target for domestic sites of an equivalent minimum 13% reduction in carbon emissions over current Building Regulations Part L – indeed a 14% reduction is proposed from built fabric improvements alone.

This is most welcome given Stockport Council's Climate Emergency declaration and commitment to contributing to a Zero Carbon Greater Manchester by 2038.

### SMBC Arboriculture Officer

The proposed development site is located within the existing nursing home site predominantly on the existing car park and soft landscaped areas. The plot is comprised largely of formal gardens and informal grounds. The site is not within a Conservation Area, however there are legally protected trees within this site or affected by this development (Belmont Schools Hill No. 2 1983).

The proposed development footprints are shown or indicated at this time within the informal grounds of the existing car park area and on the informal garden area of the site and so it is shown the proposed new development works will potentially impact on the trees and hedges within the site as the development site is completely surrounded by protected trees throughout the site, unlike what is stated in the information supplied.

A full tree survey has been supplied as part of the planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing neighbouring trees and where applicable which trees will have a potential impact on the proposed development and it is acknowledged as a true representation of the trees on site.

The Arboriculture Impact Assessment has also shown where to increase the amenity levels of the site with replacement semi-mature trees. Specific consideration needs to be given to the potential benefit urban tree planting throughout the site to enhance the biodiversity, the amenity and the SUDs capacity.

A detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted but improvements need to be considered/drawn up as part of this planning application submission, which clearly shows enhancements of the site and surrounding environment to improve the local biodiversity and amenity of the area.

In principle the main works and design will possibly have a negative impact on the trees on the site and neighbouring properties on all the boundaries.

In its current format it could not be considered favourable with the proposal to remove so many high amenity trees potentially linked to the history of the site and so a submission of a revised layout plan with lesser impact on the trees or an improved landscaping plan as the current proposal is only offering 6 ornamental species trees

and 2 medium sized trees as part of their landscaping which clearly does not off-set the loss never mind enhances the site, which clearly has not acted upon the advice during pre-application comments.

Further review of the details submitted is required justifying tree loss/impact and some consideration given to the existing trees when designing the new buildings and site layout as well as improved landscaping design to include a detailed landscaping scheme that includes a greater number of new trees to improve the amenity and aesthetics of the site for users and local community making sure a percentage of these are native large species, as well as increased native hedges throughout the scheme and fruit trees at every opportunity.

Conditions are requested regarding the protection and retention of existing trees, and regarding new planting, are requested.

In correspondence dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021, and following the submission of an amended landscape and soft works proposal, it was confirmed that the proposed landscape scheme was improved and addresses the losses well. There will be a need to ensure that the planting is all of appropriate standard sizes, and these will be considered for a TPO once completed. On this basis, no objections are raised, subject to the conditions referenced above.

#### Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (bl-ecology reference 060\_20) and a Bat and Great Crested Newt Survey (bl-ecology reference 062/20) have been submitted in support of the application. The surveyors appear to be qualified and competent to undertake the surveys and followed best practice methodology. There are therefore no reasons to doubt the findings of the survey.

#### *Great Crested Newts and Ponds*

A small ornamental pond was found within the development site. A great crested newt eDNA sample was taken in June 2020, which returned a negative result, suggesting that great crested newts are not present in the pond. However it is likely that other amphibians are present in the pond and utilising the site.

A plant, suspected of being an invasive *Crassula* species, was also recorded within the pond and from the plans it appears that the pond would be lost should the proposals go ahead.

#### Recommendations:

A method statement for the drainage of the pond and clearance of the site should be submitted to the LPA for approval, which should detail how amphibians will be safely translocated from the pond and site (as per paragraph 4.6.2 of the Bat and Great Crested Newt Survey Report) and also detailing how the *Crassula* will be managed and disposed of.

Once approved in writing by the LPA, the method statement must be carried out in full.

GMEU would also recommend that a replacement pond is incorporated into the landscaping of the site to ensure there is no net loss of this habitat type as a result of the proposed development. It would ideally be designed to benefit biodiversity and include the use of native, non-invasive pond plants.

### *Bats*

The building on the site is proposed for partial demolition, refurbishment and conversion to accommodate the proposed scheme. This was daytime inspection to search for bats, evidence of bats and to assess the potential of the building to support bats. The building was judged to have moderate potential to support roosting bats. Two of the trees on the site were also identified as having moderate potential to support roosting bats (BT1 Proposed for removal and BT2 which will be retained). Two emergence survey were undertaken, one in July and one in August and no bats were seen emerging from the building.

#### Recommendation:

The building renovations and tree removal should be undertaken in line with the precautionary methodology identified in 4.6.1 of the Bat and Great Crested Newt Survey Report, which involve the removal of roof tiles, soffits, gutter boards and leadwork by hand, and the soft felling of BT1.

### *Nesting birds*

The building and vegetation on the building could potentially support nesting birds, and the active nests of all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended).

#### Recommendation:

An informative or condition should be used so that the applicant is aware of the legal protection that active bird nests receive. Work (building demolition, site and vegetation clearance) should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season (March - August inclusive) unless it can otherwise be demonstrated that no active nests are present.

### *Landscaping and Enhancement*

Development provides an opportunity to provide ecological enhancement within a site, and the planning process is encouraged to deliver such enhancements through both local and national planning policy.

#### Recommendation:

All retained trees should be protected during the works in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012, and the loss of all trees should be adequately compensated for in line with recommendations in the ecology report (2 for 1 replacement paragraph 4.1.2).

The measures suggested within the Ecological Appraisal should be incorporated into the development where possible. These the use of native shrub and tree planting, and the use of high diversity wildflower grassland mixes, and ensuring the development is hedgehog friendly. In addition to this there is potential to incorporate bat roost features into the proposed new houses, bird boxes into retained trees.

#### *Other considerations*

No evidence of any other protected species was found on the site, however there is potential for species such as hedgehogs to be encountered, and species such as bats are mobile in their habits.

Rhododendron was recorded on the site, which is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), making it an offence to plant or cause the spread of this species in the wild.

#### *Recommendation:*

An informative should be used so that the developer is aware of the legal protection that certain species receive. If at any time any protected species are found or are suspected of being present on the site and adversely affected by the development, work should cease immediately and an ecologist/LPA should be contacted.

Rhododendron should only be removed from site in line with the guidance provided in 4.1.4 of the ecology report.

#### Nature Development Officer

##### *Nature Conservation Designations*

The site itself has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. It is located approx. 30m (to the north) of an area of designated Green Chain. I do not however envisage any significant adverse impacts on the designated area as a result of the proposals, as no works will encroach into the Green Chain.

##### *Legally Protected Species*

Many buildings and trees have the potential to support roosting bats. The application site is located amid suitable bat foraging habitat, which increases the likelihood of bats being present within the application site and impacted by proposed works. All species of bats, and their roosts, are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The latter implements the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. Bats are included in Schedule 2 of the Regulations as 'European Protected Species of animals' (EPS).

Under the Regulations it is an offence to:

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



Buildings, trees and vegetation also have the potential to support nesting birds. The nests of all wild birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended).

Ecological survey work has been carried out and submitted with the application. All survey work has been carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (BL Ecology report dated July 2020) involved a Phase 1 Habitat survey to identify the habitats present on site and assess their potential to support protected species. An external inspection survey was carried out at the building on site to search for signs of bats. No evidence of bat presence was recorded during the inspection survey but the building was assessed as offering moderate bat roosting potential. Two dusk emergence surveys were carried out in July and August. No bats were observed emerging from the building during the surveys. Low levels of activity from common pipistrelle and noctule bats were recorded across the wider site. It should be noted that no internal access to the building was possible during the roost inspection survey due to Covid-19 restrictions. The report concludes however that given that both activity surveys were carried out under suitable conditions and at an optimal time of year, this survey limitation is not considered to significantly affect the ecological assessment.

Two trees (BT1 a beech, and BT2 an oak) were identified as offering bat roosting potential and will be impacted by the proposals. BT1 will be felled and works are anticipated in close proximity to BT2 meaning disturbance impacts are likely. No bats were observed to emerge from either of the trees during the two dusk activity surveys.

A small ornamental pond was identified within the site. Ponds and their surrounding terrestrial habitat have the potential to support amphibians such as great crested newt (GCN) and toad. GCN receive the same level of legal protection as bats (outlined above) whilst toads are a UKBAP species. An eDNA survey was carried out at the pond. The results were negative indicating that GCN are absent.

No evidence of, or significant potential for, any other protected species (such as badger) was recorded during the surveys.

#### *Invasive Species*

Rhododendron is present on site. Some species of Rhododendron (such as Rhododendron ponticum) are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, which makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow such species in the wild.

#### *Recommendations*

No evidence of roosting bats was observed during the surveys. Bats are highly mobile and can regularly switch roost sites. It is therefore recommended that the precautionary working measures detailed in section 4.6.1 of the Bat and GCN

Survey Report (August 2020) are implemented during works. To mitigate for the loss of potential roosting sites during renovation works it is advised that bat boxes are provided within the building (see below). An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity. In the event that evidence of roosting bats (or any other protected species) is discovered on site, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

The precautionary working measures detailed in section 4.6.2 of the Bat and GCN Survey Report (August 2020) should be followed to prevent harm to amphibians species which may be present.

Ecological conditions can change over time. Should works not have commenced within two years of the 2020 surveys, an update survey may be required to ensure that the ecological impact assessment is based on sufficiently up to date baseline data. This can be conditioned if necessary

It is recommended that a condition is attached to any planning consent to state that the spread of rhododendron on site will be avoided. Ideally future landscaping works should seek to remove this species and dispose of it in a suitable manner following best practice.

Landscape planting should comprise locally native species and wildlife-friendly species to benefit biodiversity. The proposed planting mix submitted includes a range of pollinator friendly species. A greater level of replacement planting is required to mitigate for the proposed tree loss.

Biodiversity enhancements should be incorporated into the scheme design in accordance with national and local planning policy. In addition to a sympathetic landscape design, this should include the provision of bat roosting and bird nesting facilities integrated the new buildings (minimum rate of one per dwelling) as well as integrated within the retained building and/or on mature retained trees. Details regarding the proposed number, type and location of proposed bat and bird boxes should be submitted to the LPA for review and this can be secured by condition.

Hedgerows should be planted (comprising locally native species) to demark plot boundaries instead of using fences/walls so as to increase habitat connectivity through the site. If the use of fences/walls is unavoidable, occasional gaps should be provided (130mm x 130mm) at the base to provide access for species such as hedgehog (a UKBAP species). The creation of a new wildlife pond within the scheme would also be a welcome inclusion within the landscape design.

No vegetation clearance/demolition works should take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation/buildings for active birds' nests immediately before vegetation clearance/demolition works commence and confirmed that no birds will be

harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site

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)). The external lighting plan submitted with the application shows that tree uplighters are proposed. This is not something that I would support as such lighting would be likely to disturb foraging bats and birds.

In correspondence dated 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 it was confirmed that the amended landscaping plan shows a greater number of trees than previously proposed and this is welcomed. The proposed species will also provide benefits to wildlife.

The external lighting plan submitted with the application shows that tree uplighters are proposed. This is not something that would be supported as such lighting would be likely to disturb foraging bats and birds. Lighting should be designed to follow BCT guidance: [http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats\\_and\\_lighting.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html)

SMBC Environmental Health Officer (Amenity)

No objection.

The application is supported by a noise report. The report stipulates plant noise limits, window and ventilation requirements for the development. Therefore recommended internal noise levels should be met.

SMBC Environmental Health Officer (Air Quality)

No objection.

Has assessed the application and the additional comments, and is in agreement that as the site is outside the AQMA and is unlikely to generate significant additional vehicle movements. An Air Quality Assessment is not required.

SMBC Environmental Health Officer (Contaminated Land)

Has read the LK group Phase 1 and all other documents submitted in support of this planning application. The Phase 1 report recommends a Phase 2 intrusive investigation to establish the nature of the shallow soils, The Officer is in agreement with this proposal and as such, conditions are requested in respect of land contamination investigation, remediation, and validation of the remediation undertaken.

SMBC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

The LLFA accepts the connection to a surface water sewer as being the most sustainable method to discharge from the site. We would however, advise that the applicant has failed to provide a comprehensive review of available SuDS to include within the development.

The applicant should also re-evaluate the areas for the proposed permeable paving. Please note that all areas of hardstanding should be of a permeable construction or drain to an alternative form of SuDS.

In correspondence dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021, it was confirmed that in light of recent correspondence:

- a. We accept that infiltration testing has shown that the use of soakaways is not feasible.
- b. In principle the 50% reduction in run-off rate to the public surface water sewer in Daylesford Crescent is acceptable to both the LLFA and United Utilities. Please submit a revised surface water drainage design for the proposed development.
- c. Please include an assessment and calculation for 1in 1yr, 30yr and 100yr + 40% climate change figure critical storm events showing flood exceedance routes.

#### United Utilities (UU)

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.

Conditions are requested to require the submission of a surface water drainage scheme, and to require that foul and surface water are drained on separate systems.

It was also commented that a public sewer crosses this site and that UU may not permit building over it. UU will require an access strip width of six metres, three metres either side of the centre line of the sewer which is in accordance with the minimum distances specified in the current issue of Part H of the Building Regulations, for maintenance or replacement. Therefore a modification of the site layout, or a diversion of the affected public sewer may be necessary. All costs associated with sewer diversions must be borne by the applicant. It was also commented that 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.

#### Manchester Airport Group

The Safeguarding Authority for Manchester Airport has assessed this proposal and its potential to conflict aerodrome Safeguarding criteria. It raises no aerodrome safeguarding objections to the proposal subject to conditions regarding dust during demolition and construction, birds, lighting, reflective materials and photovoltaics.

An informative is requested with regarding to cranes and tall equipment.

#### Director of Public Health

Stockport Sustainability Checklist – the submission of the Sustainability Checklist is welcome and there is a reasonable score and a stated intention to revisit sustainability at development stage. The maximising of efforts to ensure a sustainable development that delivers social, environmental and economic benefits

to the area is critical in terms of minimising the impacts of the development including on human health. The promised sustainable transport infrastructure, native planting and affordable housing will be vital to ensuring the delivery of sustainable development.

Core Policy CS1 OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE (p43)

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 through less congested roads. Accessible paths around the site are welcomed as this can help to ensure pedestrians can navigate the site fully encouraging natural surveillance from pedestrian and cycling traffic. The promised cycle parking will be critical in enabling active travel choices and increasing physical activity. 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 (p129)

Core Policy CS10 AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK (p130)

Development Management Policy T-1 Transport and Development (p134)

Ageing Well: Stockport Council has adopted an Ageing Well Strategy which takes account of the World Health Organisation guidance on appropriate place making for older people. The WHO design considerations are critical to ensuring that the needs of the growing ageing population of Stockport are addressed where practicable through new development. Appropriate volume and styles of seating should be considered to enable older and other vulnerable pedestrians to take rest stops when walking through the site and out to the wider area.

Green Infrastructure (GI): the scheme is in a relatively urbanised location and it should be noted that 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 would be welcome in public health terms and could help to manage urban temperatures and extreme rainfall events in the area, reducing stress and thereby maintaining immunity. Native planting would also contribute to managing air quality and enabling net gain in natural capital on a site that is close to green chain and a Landscape Character Area. 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 (p54)

## Core Policy CS8 SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT (p102)

**Affordable Housing:** 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 a more nutritious diet, 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 (p69)

Core Policy CS2 Housing Provision (p59)

### Greater Manchester Police (Design or Security)

Recommends that a condition to reflect the physical security specifications that are set out in section four of the submitted the Crime Impact Statement should be added, if the application for full permission is to be approved.

### Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

No comments received as of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### Environment Agency

No comments received as of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Principle of Development**

The site is located within a Predominantly Residential Area, and is currently vacant. The site was most recently in use as a residential care home, and has been vacant since 2017. Since this time, the building has seen deterioration and damage.

Paragraph 59 of the NPPF puts additional emphasis upon the government's objective to "significantly boost the supply of homes". Stockport is in a position of housing undersupply (2.6 years) against the minimum requirement of 5 years +20% buffer as set out in paragraph 73 of the NPPF.

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy places a focus on providing new housing through the effective and efficient use of land within accessible urban areas, and confirms a previously developed land target of at least 90%. The site is located approximately 1km from Cheadle District Centre, which offers easy access to services and facilities, and onward travel options via public transport. The site is also located adjacent to a Strategic Recreation Route. The proposal would also see the reuse of a locally listed building, with new build elements within the site. The proposal is considered to comply with the aims of Policy CS2.

Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy directs new residential development towards the more accessible parts of the Borough identifying 3 spatial priority areas (Central

Housing Area; Neighbourhood Priority Areas and the catchment areas of District/Large Local Centres; and other accessible locations). Policy H-2 confirms that when there is less than a 5 year deliverable supply of housing (as is currently the case) the required accessibility scores will be lowered to allow the deliverable supply to be topped up by other sites in accessible locations. This position has been regularly assessed to ensure that the score reflects the ability to 'top up' supply to a 5 year position. However, at present, the scale of shortfall is such that in order to genuinely reflect the current position in that regard the score has been reduced to zero. As such the application site is considered to be in an accessible location and accords with Policies CS4 and H-2 of the Core Strategy.

The principle of residential development could therefore be supported, subject to all other material planning considerations as assessed below.

#### Housing Density

The site area measures approximately 0.4ha. The proposed development would therefore result in a housing density of 43 dwellings per hectare (dph). The indicative standards set out in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy seek densities of 70dph in town centre locations, decreasing to 40-50dph outside of central locations, and a minimum of 30dph in suburban locations. Noting that the site would provide 11 apartments and 6 houses at 1-4 bedroom sizes, the proposed housing density is considered acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations as assessed elsewhere in this report.

#### Housing Mix

Core Strategy Policy H-3 requires new development to contribute to the creation of more mixed, balanced communities by providing affordable housing in areas with high property prices and by increasing owner occupation in areas of predominantly social rented housing. Housing mix should be informed by the latest Housing Needs Assessment, in order to most effectively meet demand. At this time, this is the 2019 assessment, available on the Council's website.

The 2019 Housing Needs Assessment states that "analysis concludes there is an ongoing need for all types and sizes of dwelling with strongest need for 3-bedroom and 4 or more bedroom houses. There is also a need for level-access accommodation (including flat/apartments and bungalows)."

The proposed housing mix includes units with between 1 and 4 bedrooms, provided as apartments and townhouses. The greatest number of units would be 2 bedroom apartments and of the apartments, 4 would be on the ground floor. The proposed housing mix is considered to be sufficiently diverse for a development of the proposed scale, in accordance with identified local need, pursuant to Policy H-3.

#### Impact on Heritage Assets

Belmont House is recognised as a locally listed building of architectural and historic interest and therefore represents a non-designated heritage asset for planning policy purposes.

In particular, Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that 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.

Core Strategy Policy SIE-3 (D) Paragraph 3.354 states that new uses will be permitted for statutorily or locally listed buildings if:

1. the use for which the building was designed is no longer viable in economic terms or cannot effectively be carried out without harming the architectural or historic interest of the building;
2. the proposed use would preserve the architectural or historic interest of the building, its fabric, interior and setting; and
3. the proposal would not detract from the amenities of the surrounding areas or cause traffic danger.

The building was designed for residential use, however the building has since been used as a children's home and as a residential care home for elderly people. As identified above, the principle of residential use in this location is broadly supported by virtue of the location of the site in a Predominantly Residential Area, and the former use as a residential care home. Further, it is noted that planning permission for residential use was granted in October 2004 (DC/016176) albeit this permission was not implemented. The proposal would see the original building restored for residential use, thereby preserving the architectural interest of the building.

It is noted that the proposed restoration of interior as well as external features weighs in favour of the proposal, and that as the building is locally listed, this is a matter to be controlled via a legal agreement rather than planning condition. The legal agreement should address phasing in order to ensure that Belmont House is protected from further deterioration and restored as soon as is practicable, and to require a scheme of repairs and restoration noting that the building has deteriorated since the submission of the planning application.

In relation to criterion 'C' of Policy SIE-3 (D), amenity and highway safety are assessed in full later in this report. For the purposes of assessment against Policy SIE-3, the proposed development is considered acceptable in relation to amenity and highway safety subject to conditions. On this basis, the change of use of Belmont House can be supported in principle, subject to all other material planning considerations.

### Works to Belmont House

#### *Internal Works*

The main alterations to the Ground level of Belmont House would be to remove the various rear extensions which have been added over time, which would see the building brought back to its earlier configuration and focus on the works of Lane and Waterhouse.



Internally the layout would be largely retained, with the exception of two new partition walls and doors to suit security requirements. All internal detailing will be retained and restored as far as possible, including the staircase and architrave detailing noted in the Heritage Report.

The proposed ground level would accommodate 2no. 2 bedroom apartments and the ground floor of the townhouse. The proposed first floor level would accommodate 2no. 2 bedroom apartments, 1no. 3 bedroom apartment, 1no. 2 bedroom apartment, and the first floor of the townhouse.

#### *External Works*

It is intended that the northern elevation of Belmont House would remain unchanged, with works only undertaken to restore elements where required.

A number of elements to the east elevation would be demolished, to include the billiard room and the semi circular glazed extension. These amendments are in line with the recommendations of the applicant's Heritage Consultant and would return the building to an earlier configuration, focusing on the works of Lane and Waterhouse.

In addition to the above, it is proposed that the door is replaced with a sash window to match the other existing windows to suit the layouts and following security advice from Greater Manchester Police. The materials and existing elements would be restored.

To the western elevation, the more recent lean to extensions and flue chimneys are proposed for demolition, whilst the main historic service quarters element is proposed to be retained and restored as a part of the proposed townhouse.

In addition to the above, replacement of fenestration with sash windows to match the existing is proposed in a number of areas and is best understood through reference to the submitted plans.

The submitted statements are clear that it is the intention not only to conserve the existing fabric, but also to ensure that the interventions of the conversion retain original fixtures and fittings.

#### Assessment

The Conservation Officer has assessed the proposal and their comments are provided in full in the "Consultee Comments" section above.

Formerly in use as a care home, the physical fabric of the building has deteriorated since it was vacated, initially related to lead theft and associated water ingress but subsequently compounded by vandalism, fire and neglect. As a result it is acknowledged that the challenge of delivering conservation and restoration of the most important architectural elements of the building has substantially increased. To facilitate this aim, enabling development in the form of 3 new blocks within the grounds is proposed in conjunction with selective demolition and refurbishment of Belmont House to facilitate its conversion into 4 apartments and 1 townhouse. Whilst the encroachment of new 3 storey townhouses within the garden frontage will result

in a degree of harm upon the setting of the original house and will involve the loss of trees, it is acknowledged that their siting has been selected to minimise their impact upon views of the house frontage and their unique contemporary design has potential to offer a striking visual counterbalance to the character of the historic building. It is also acknowledged that the partial demolition of Belmont House is restricted to areas of low significance, therefore resulting in a minimal level of harm.

The design and siting of the remainder of the proposed new construction has evolved following pre-application discussion and it is considered that, providing care is taken with the selection of external materials and architectural details, these new blocks would not result in harm to the setting of the main house.

In determining planning applications involving non-designated heritage assets, NPPF Paragraph 197 requires a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any direct or indirect harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The Conservation Officer concludes that, providing the submitted scheme is deliverable, it is considered that the proposals represent an acceptable balance between heritage harm and heritage benefits.

NPPF Paragraph 198 states that '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.' It is clear that as the condition of the site deteriorates and the potential cost of repair increases, the viability of the current scheme is likely to be challenging. Whilst planning conditions can be imposed in order to ensure that the external quality of the new buildings reflects the ambitious architectural quality of the submitted plans, it is recommended that a legal agreement is established in order to ensure delivery of the internal conservation and restoration of Belmont House. A detailed building record will need to be undertaken to inform the restoration of decorative plaster and timber fixtures and fittings that comprise the most important architectural elements of the building, and this can be required by condition.

Officers consider it reasonable to require that the works are controlled via a legal agreement in respect of phasing (i.e. to ensure that the repair works take place as early in the development process as is possible) and to require a detailed scheme of repairs and restoration to include a new schedule of internal works in light of the deterioration of the building since the submission of the planning application. This approach is supported by Core Strategy Policy SIE-3 (D) which requires the reuse of a locally listed building to preserve the architectural or historic interest of the building, including its fabric, interior and setting, noting that the works to the interior could not otherwise reasonably be controlled via planning condition.

Planning conditions should also be imposed to control methodology, details of materials, windows and doors, and architectural details, in accordance with Policy SIE-3.

## **Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area**

Core Strategy Policy CS8 and the NPPF welcome development that is designed and landscaped to a high standard and which makes a positive contribution to a sustainable, attractive, safe and accessible built and natural environment. This position is supported by Policy SIE-1 which advises that specific regard should be paid to the use of materials appropriate to the location and the site's context in relation to surrounding buildings (particularly with regard to height, density and massing of buildings).

The NPPF sets out the Government's most up to date position on planning policy and confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of a site to accommodate development, respond to local character and history, reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials whilst not preventing or discouraging innovative design and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is however proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

### **Layout**

Layout relates to the arrangement of built form within the site, and the relationship between new development and the existing buildings and spaces around the site.

The Design and Access Statement sets out the layouts considered design stage, and notes that the proposed layout would see the configuration of Belmont House return to the pre-1874 arrangement with the much-altered former billiard room and modern extensions to the south of the house demolished and the southern elevation restored.

In accordance with the guidance of Conservation specialists, the layout of the new build elements aims to ensure that Belmont House is the primary building on site, with the other elements appearing subservient to support this, as the original ancillary buildings would have been.

The layout and hard and soft landscaping has been designed to reinforce the focus on Belmont House, which is particularly evident when considering the approach to Belmont House from the northern site access. It is noted in the supporting documents, and also noted later in this report when assessing scale, that the buildings would follow the site topography to allow Belmont House to sit at the top of the hill, as historically planned, with the backdrop of the stable block.

The apartment building would be located on the site of the former stable block, creating a heritage link and restoring historic massing, whereas the proposed townhouses would be set back from the primary views of Belmont House.

The submitted plans show that there is ample opportunity for bin and cycle storage to be provided, and details of these should be required by condition.

Around the proposed dwellings, the grounds associated with the former care home are proposed to be subdivided to accommodate residential curtilages for the town houses and garden for future residents.

In relation to amenity space, the proposed townhouses would have private rear gardens, and the apartments within Belmont House would have a shared amenity space. Four of the seven apartments within the apartment block would have balconies, those without would be the ground floor apartments and the one bedroom unit. It is acknowledged that the specific site constraints affect the ability to easily provide outdoor amenity space through balconies or informal gardens, however it should also be noted that there is provision for formal gardens (with soft landscaping) and pedestrian routes around the site, addressing this shortfall in amenity space.

### Scale

Scale relates to how big buildings and spaces are (their height, width and length).

The overall height of Belmont House would be retained with the footprint restored to its earlier configuration. Belmont House has two storeys, but a greater overall height than this would indicate as a result of its floor to ceiling heights.

The two storey townhouses sit at the same site level as Belmont House and would therefore have a reduced massing to ensure they sit lower.

Only the apartment block and the three storey townhouses extend to three storey level, with the apartment block following the stable block footprint and massing, and the townhouses utilising the topography to keep the overall height below that of Belmont House.

The internal layouts are considered to be suitable having regard to the guidance set out within the Design of Residential Development SPD and the Nationally Described Space Standards.

### Appearance

Appearance addresses how buildings and space will look, including building materials and architectural details.

The apartment building would be three storey in height and would occupy the site of the historic stable block, in an 'L' shaped arrangement forming a gateway to the townhouses beyond.

3no. three storey, four bedroom townhouses flank the open aspect to the north of Belmont House, enclosing the retained car park to the east at the lowest part of the site. Two storey three bedroom semi-detached houses would be sited between the townhouse and Belmont House.

In terms of materials, it is proposed that the ground floors and boundary walls are faced with Cheshire brick with walls extending out into the landscape enclosing gardens. The Design and Access Statement states that the intention is that the ground floor walls are a human scale-defining component that unifies the proposals.

The Design and Access Statement goes on to state that the proposed new buildings seek to remain visually subservient to the retained part of Belmont House and achieve an acceptable relationship between the retained fabric and new buildings. The layout, scale, fenestration and detailing to the new elevations are significant in creating visual interest within the overall scheme. Officers are of the view that the visual contrast between the historic façade and contemporary new build elements would not harm the setting of the locally listed building and would instead contribute to the interest of the site by demarcating the historic and contemporary elements.

It is recommended that conditions are attached to any permission granted to require the submission of hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatments and materials samples, in order to ensure that the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area in accordance with Core Strategy Policies H-1, CS8, SIE-1 and SIE-3.

Therefore, subject to conditions to ensure that the development has high quality finishes, landscaping and boundary treatments, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable when considered against Policies H-1, CS8, SIE-1 and SIE-3 of the Core Strategy.

### **Impact Upon On Residential Amenity**

Development Management policy SIE-1 advises, “development that is designed and landscaped to the highest contemporary standard, paying high regard to the built and/or natural environment within which it is sited, will be given positive consideration. Specific account should be had of...” a number of factors including, “the site's context in relation to surrounding buildings and spaces (particularly with regard to the height, density and massing of buildings);” “Provision, maintenance and enhancement (where suitable) of satisfactory levels of access, privacy and amenity for future, existing and neighbouring users and residents; The potential for a mixture of compatible uses to attract people to live, work and play in the same area, facilitating and encouraging sustainable, balanced communities.”

Regard has also been paid to the Design of Residential Development SPD. This SPD provides guidance as regards the implementation of Core Strategy Policy H-1 regarding new housing design and standards.

The aim of the SPD, in respect of the section regarding ‘Space About Dwellings’ (pages 32-33) is to ensure that there is sufficient space around developments, that overlooking is kept to a minimum and that which does occur is not unacceptable or out of keeping with the character of the area. The SPD is, however, a guide, and it is acknowledged within the guidance (page 33) that

“rigid adherence to the standards can stifle creativity and result in uniformity of development. The Council therefore encourages imaginative design solutions and in doing so may accept the need for a flexible approach,” depending upon the context.

To this aim, regarding space and privacy within habitable rooms and garden areas, the SPD suggests that for 2 storey developments there should be a distance of 21m between habitable room windows on the public or street side of dwellings, 25m between habitable room windows on the private or rear side of dwellings, 12 metres between habitable room windows and a blank elevation, elevation with non-habitable rooms or with high level windows, and 6m between any proposed habitable room window and the development site boundary. For every floor of accommodation in excess of 2 storeys an additional 3m should be added to the above figures.

### Privacy

In terms of privacy both within habitable rooms and garden areas, the Council's SPD for residential development confirms that the design and layout of a development should minimise overlooking and should not impose any unacceptable loss of privacy on the occupiers of existing dwellings. In the case of a development such as this, it is clear that there will be some degree of mutual overlooking, and therefore, it would be unreasonable to expect a development to have no impact in this respect.

The site layout plan demonstrates the distances between existing properties and the proposed buildings and the site boundary.

Whilst not all buildings comply with the recommended separation distances, the site plans at ground floor, first floor and second floor levels show the interactions between the openings for each residential unit. It is the case that overlooking impacts would be minimal as a result of the angles of views and the placement of non-habitable rooms such as bathrooms.

Shared and private amenity spaces would be overlooked to some degree, however in the case of the formal grounds and shared spaces, this is considered to be a benefit in terms of security.

In addition to the above, a landscaping scheme and details of proposed boundary treatments should be required by a condition attached to any planning permission granted, which will assist in ensuring that any overlooking impacts are minimised. This is considered to address the concerns of neighbours regarding replacement planting in order to minimise overlooking.

The proposed development would be broadly compliant with the separation distances set out within the Design of Residential Development SPD and the overlooking impacts are not considered to be significant. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would accord with the NPPF and the Development Plan, including Core Strategy Policy SIE-1, regarding designing quality places.

### Overshadowing

Noting the proposed layout of the site and the layout of the neighbouring dwellings and gardens, and the level of overshadowing as existing as a result of the established tree planting, the proposed development is not considered to result in significant overshadowing such that this would warrant refusal of the application.

### Noise and Disturbance

The Environmental Health Officer for Amenity has assessed the proposal and their comments are provided in the "Consultee Comments" section above.

The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment which identifies traffic noise as the prominent noise source, as well as aircraft noise. The report demonstrates that with limits on plant noise, and mitigation by way of window and ventilation requirements, suitable noise levels can be met. A condition should be attached to any planning permission granted to require that the development is carried out in accordance with the Noise Impact Assessment.

The proposed residential development is not considered to result in a level of noise and disturbance beyond that which may be reasonably expected of a residential area. An informative should be attached to any permission granted with regard to working hours during development.

It is recommended that a condition is attached to any planning permission granted to require the submission of a lighting scheme in order to limit any undue disturbance to neighbouring residents and residents of the proposed development. This condition would also serve a purpose in relation to biodiversity impacts and aviation safety as addressed later in this report.

It is concluded that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact upon the residential amenities of the locality, subject to mitigation through conditions, in accordance with the NPPF and the development plan, including Core Strategy Policy SIE-3.

### **Highway Safety, Traffic Generation and Parking**

Core Strategy policy CS9 supported by Policy T-1 requires development to be in locations which are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Policy T-2 requires developments to provide car parking in accordance with the maximum standards and confirms that developers will need to demonstrate that developments will avoid resulting in inappropriate on street parking that causes harm to highway safety. Developments are expected to be of a safe and practical design (Policy T-3). The NPPF confirms at paragraph 109 that 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.

The Highways Engineer has assessed the proposal and their comments are provided above. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle, and in

relation to traffic generation and car parking, contrary to comments received from neighbours.

An objection is raised in terms of site access as a result of the need for pedestrians and vehicles to share the northern access as proposed. The Highways Engineer has commented that the layout needs to ensure that pedestrians have direct and segregated connectivity between the site and the highway, and that a solution could be a gateway through the wall adjacent to the pillar on the southerly side of the access.

The objection raised appears to have options for resolution through the opening up of the northern access. There is no objection to the principle of this in Conservation terms, and the Applicant is agreeable to this approach. It is recommended that the recommendation to grant planning permission is subject to the resolution of the objection raised by the Highways Engineer in respect of site access arrangements.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

Policy SD-6 requires development to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) so as to manage the run-off of water from the site. Development on previously developed (brownfield) land must reduce the rate of unattenuated run-off by a minimum of 50% if it is within an identified Critical Drainage Area (CDA). Until CDAs have been identified in detail the same reduction (a minimum of 50%) will be required of developments on brownfield sites in all areas; once detailed CDAs have been identified the minimum required reduction of run-off on brownfield sites outside of CDAs will be 30%. Development on greenfield (not previously developed) sites will be required, as a minimum, to ensure that the rate of run-off is not increased.

The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk). The LLFA requires the submission of a surface water drainage scheme in accordance with Policy SD-6, and has requested that further detail is provided prior to the determination of the application. Officers do not consider it reasonable to refuse the application or delay its determination on this basis, and instead consider this a matter capable of conditional control. Officers consider it to be reasonable and necessary to attach a condition to any planning permission granted to require the submission of a surface water drainage strategy prior to the commencement of development in order to address the requirements of the LLFA and United Utilities.

A condition should also be attached to any permission granted to require that foul and surface water are drained on separate systems, as requested by United Utilities.

### **Trees and Landscaping**

The Design and Access Statement states that the key driver for the landscaping is to reinstate the grounds and setting of Belmont House whilst creating a mix of private and communal external space.



The historic paths around the house would be reinstated whilst existing elements such as the grass bankings and stone steps are retained and incorporated into the design. These historic paths all lead to the main building entrances.

The historic garden walls would be extended and used to link the various elements of the site together, providing strong routes through the site and reinstating the feel of the formal grounds.

High quality materials are proposed for the hard landscaped areas, predominantly clay paving to match the surrounding vernacular with resin bound gravel to highlight the historic pathways. Details and samples of these would be required by condition.

The Design and Access Statement goes on to state that the north elevation and frontage to Belmont House has historically had a large, open arrivals area. This has been retained and enhanced, and will now provide a car parking space. The rear of Belmont House would be landscaped to provide communal amenity space.

The vehicular route running from north to south along the western elevation would be removed, thereby putting an emphasis on pedestrian traffic and taking vehicles away from the elevations of the existing building. This pedestrian emphasis is also achieved through shared surface finishes and boundary planting, details of which are to be secure via condition.

The Arboriculture Officer has assessed the proposal and their comments are provided in full in the "Consultee Comments" section above. It is noted that the site is not within a Conservation Area, however there are legally protected trees within this site or affected by this development.

The plans initially submitted showed that a large number of trees were to be removed, with insufficient replacement planting proposed. Following the submission of an amended landscape and soft works proposal, it was confirmed that the proposed landscape scheme was improved and addresses the losses well, and as a result the Arboriculture Officer removed their objection.

The Applicant has acknowledged the need to enhance the proposals for tree planting through revisions to the landscaping scheme. Conditions should be attached to any planning permission granted to require the protection and ongoing retention of existing trees, and requiring the submission and implementation of tree planting proposals, in order to ensure that the loss of trees within the site is appropriately mitigated.

### **Biodiversity**

The Nature Development Officer and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit have each assessed the proposal, and raise no objections subject to the imposition of conditions (as recommended in their comments, set out in full in the "Consultee Comments" section above).

Rhododendron is present on site. Some species of Rhododendron (such as Rhododendron ponticum) are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside

Act, which makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow such species in the wild. For this reason, a condition should be imposed to require that the spread of rhododendron on site will be avoided. Ideally future landscaping works should seek to remove this species and dispose of it in a suitable manner following best practice.

The Nature Development Officer recommends that boundary treatments are planted hedgerows rather than fences or walls. Whilst enhanced planting is to be encouraged on this site, walls as boundary treatments are beneficial in enhancing the character of the site, and therefore this recommendation is not to be carried forward in this instance.

Conditions to ensure habitat enhancement and protection of protected species can be imposed, pursuant to the development plan, particularly Saved UDP Policy NE1.2 and Core Strategy Policy SIE-3, and the NPPF. An informative should be attached to any planning permission to remind the developer of the need to stop works and report any evidence of bats if found during construction works.

### **Developer Contributions and Viability**

#### **Affordable Housing**

With regard to affordable housing, Core Strategy Policy H-3 requires a 30% affordable housing provision in the proposed location. Policy H-3 states that in most areas, 75% of the affordable housing provided should be intermediate housing for Stockport residents on average and below average incomes. The remaining 25% should be social rented housing. In areas with above average property prices, such as Cheadle, and a particular lack of social rented housing, the affordable housing tenure split sought will be 50% intermediate housing and 50% social rented housing.

The exact split, mix and tenure of affordable housing should be in accordance with the most recent Housing Needs Assessment, which at this time is the 2019 assessment, available on the Council's website.

The 2019 Housing Needs Assessment states that "regarding affordable need, there is an annual imbalance of 538. Analysis indicates that an appropriate dwelling profile is 23.8% one-bedroom, 37.9% two-bedroom, 27.3% three-bedroom, 8.2% four-bedrooms and 2.8% five or more-bedrooms. An appropriate affordable tenure split for Stockport would be around 68% intermediate tenure and 32% rented."

The application is supported by a Viability Report, Affordable Housing Assessment and Valuation which argue that the scheme provides insufficient return to warrant contributions. These documents have been reviewed by the Council's Viability Consultant who has agreed the findings, specifically noting that the "Entire Scheme" as opposed to just restoration produces the higher overall return, but this scheme is still unable to support additional Affordable Housing Contributions.

#### **Recreational Open Space Provision/Maintenance Contributions**

In accordance with saved UDP policy L1.2, Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-2, the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD and the NPPG, there is a requirement for the provision and maintenance of formal recreation and children's

play space and facilities within the Borough to meet the need of residents of the proposed development.

As with regards affordable housing contributions assessed above, the proposed viability proposals do not make provision for developer contributions to Open Space, and the supporting documents indicate that there is not scope for contributions to be paid, as this would render the proposal inviable.

#### Viability

The submitted information indicates that the scheme would not be viable should developer contributions be sought, and this finding has been agreed in the Council's review of this information. As a result, there would be a conflict with Core Strategy Policy H-3 in respect of affordable housing, and saved UDP policy L1.2, Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-2, the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD in respect of open space. As a result, the proposal is a departure from the Development Plan. In the conclusion of this report, the planning balance will be set out as to whether or not there are considered to be material circumstances which indicate that the application should be approved.

Should planning permission be granted, this should be subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 legal agreement to ensure that should the scheme become viable in the future, that developer contributions can be sought at that time.

#### Other Matters

##### Energy

The submitted Energy Statement is compliant with Core Strategy Policy SD-3. It is recommended that a condition is attached to any planning permission granted in order to ensure that the appropriate details of the percentage carbon savings are provided.

##### Land Contamination

The Environmental Health Officer for Contaminated Land has assessed the proposal and their comments are set out above. It is recommended that conditions are attached to any permission granted in respect of land contamination investigation, remediation, and validation of the remediation undertaken, pursuant to Core Strategy Policy SIE-3.

##### Aviation Safeguarding

The application is acceptable in terms of safeguarding aerodromes and aviation facilities, pursuant to Saved UDP Policy EP1.9 and Core Strategy Policy SIE-5. The Safeguarding Authority for Manchester Airport has assessed the proposal and its potential to conflict aerodrome Safeguarding criteria. It raises no aerodrome safeguarding objections to the proposal subject to conditions regarding dust during demolition, birds, lighting, reflective materials and photovoltaics.

##### Air Quality

The Environmental Health Officer for Air Quality has assess the proposal and raises no objections. The proposed development is not considered to result in significant adverse impacts in this regard.

### Security

It is noted that an objection raises concerns regarding site security as a result of the boundaries being opened up. Conditions to require boundary treatments and tree planting are requested.

In respect of security, Greater Manchester Police have assessed the proposal and recommend that a condition to reflect the physical security specifications that are set out in section four of the submitted the Crime Impact Statement should be attached to any planning permission granted. The conditions requested by the neighbour have been recommended earlier in this report in respect of landscaping and biodiversity benefits, but are also considered to address the concerns raised.

### Other Matters

It is noted that an objection raises concerns regarding the proposed habitable room windows, which the objector considers could prejudice development on the neighbouring site. This is not a material planning consideration.

It is noted that an objections have been received regarding the retention of trees, the planting of trees and the installation or planting of boundary treatments. These concerns are considered to be addressed via the conditions recommended in relation to each of these matters.

## **CONCLUSION**

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

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.” It is considered that the proposed scheme serves to balance the three overarching economic, social and environmental objectives of the planning system, to achieve a sustainable form of development.

The principle of residential development is supported in this location. The impacts of the proposal on the locally listed building are considered to be acceptable in light of the specific circumstances associated with this site and development. The layout, scale and appearance of the development is considered acceptable.

The assessment of the application indicates that the scheme will be associated with a series of positive planning and regeneration benefits including, amongst others:

- a. The reuse of a vacant building;
- b. The restoration of a locally listed building;
- c. Making an efficient use of previously developed land;
- d. The provision of residential development in a sustainable location.

Conversely, it is noted that on the grounds of viability, developer contributions would not be provided in relation to affordable housing and open space, resulting in a departure from the development plan. It is considered, however, that the

development would otherwise accord with the NPPF and the remaining relevant Development Plan policies, including Development Management Policies SIE-1 and SIE-3 regarding quality places, and the Council's SPD "The Design of Residential Development."

On balance, Officers consider that there is a material reason to grant planning permission subject to planning conditions, and a requirement for the applicant to enter into a Section 106 Agreement. The Section 106 Agreement would enable agreement to detailed phasing (i.e. to ensure that the repair and restoration works to Belmont House take place as early in the development process as is possible) and to require a detailed scheme of repairs and restoration to include a new schedule of internal works in light of the deterioration of the building since the submission of the planning application. The agreement would also ensure that, should the scheme become viable in the future, that developer contributions can be sought at that time.

A recommendation to grant would also be subject to the resolution of the objection raised by the Highways Engineer in respect of site access arrangements and no new substantive issues being raised by an extended public notification period explained at the beginning of the report.

#### Summary

In considering the planning merits against the NPPF, the proposal would, as a whole, represent a sustainable form of development; and therefore, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 would require that the application be granted subject to conditional control.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Grant subject to:

- a) conditions;
- b) the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to
  - i) secure a phasing strategy and scheme of repairs/restoration for Belmont House, and
  - ii) to ensure that should the scheme become viable in the future, that developer contributions can be sought at that time;
- c) the resolution of the objection raised by the Highways Engineer in respect of site access arrangements; and
- d) no new substantive issues being raised by an extended public notification period explained at the beginning of the report.

## **UPDATE FOLLOWING THE CHEADLE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING 22/06/21**

The case officer presented the application to members of the Committee. This included verbal updates in respect of the following:

- a. No new neighbour representations had been received at that time, however the consultation period remains live. This will be concluded prior to the determination of the application, and any comments received will be taken into consideration.
- b. The Highways Engineer has assessed an amended plan submitted by the applicant, and has removed their objection subject to conditions regarding details of formation of the accesses, drainage, surface materials, demarcation of vehicular and pedestrian routes, visibility splay requirements and the distribution of disabled parking bays. The proposal includes “no waiting at any time” restrictions and developer contributions would be required to cover the cost of this, to be secured via the legal agreement.
- c. Since the publication of the report to the Committee, the Council has received notification that Historic England has received an application for the Statutory listing of Belmont House. Officers have been in contact with Historic England and it is aware of the application being presented to the Area Committee and the Planning and Highways Committee. The application for listing does not impact upon the Council's ability to determine the application at hand.

Cllr Roberts requested clarity on what Members were being asked to do at that time. It was noted that some issues had not been fully resolved. The case officer responded that there were some issues outstanding at the point of the publication of the report, however the matters were capable of resolution. In respect of highway safety, the advice from Officers to the Applicant was very clear, and an amended plan had been submitted to this effect. This plan was under consideration at the time of the publication of the report. Officers did not consider it reasonable to delay the consideration of the application by the Committee for this reason, noting that the condition of the building continues to deteriorate over time.

The case officer explained the cause for the extended public consultation period as a result of the proposal being a departure from the development plan. This is because developer contributions would not be provided in respect of open space or affordable housing. This matter has arisen late in the application process as Officers could only be sure that contributions could not be secured following assessment of the proposal by the viability consultant. It was noted that neighbour comments had not been received to date in respect of affordable housing and open space contributions, or the viability of the proposal.

Cllr Charles-Jones noted that the Highways Engineer had commented that the disabled parking spaces remain substandard (in particular, lacking the required 1200mm clearance space), and asked whether this is a matter which has been resolved or is likely to be resolved. The case officer confirmed that the amendments submitted in response to the Highways Engineer's concerns were not limited to access arrangements. The amended plans show the required

1200mm clearance space and this has been agreed by the Highways Engineer. The case officer noted that concern remains that the disabled car parking spaces are not located where they would be of the most use, in particular it is noted that the electric vehicle charging bays are located closer to the building than the disabled bays. The plans do demonstrate that the required parking provision can be accommodated within the site, and relocation of bay to ensure a practical layout is a matter that can be dealt with via condition.

There was not a registered speaker in opposition of the application.

The Agent spoken in support of the application. It was requested that in referring the application to the Planning and Highways Committee, the need to expedite the legal agreement is given due emphasis.

Cllr Roberts asked the Agent about the deterioration of the building, raising concern that the site security has been poor, and the resulting impact on viability. The Agent responded, stating that vandalism had not been anticipated and that security was not as it could have been, however over time this has been improved. Once a contract is let, a presence on site will assist. The Agent commented on the viability of the proposal, and noted that this was an issue throughout and has not been altered following deterioration of the building.

Cllr Greenhalgh, Chair of the Committee, asked the Agent for consideration of the impacts on the three nearby local special needs schools and asked if this had been taken into account. The Agent commented that any contractor would be expected to sign up to the Considerate Contractors Scheme.

The Chair opened the debate. Cllr Holloway commented that Members are delighted that a scheme has been put forward that will maintain most of the locally listed building, in particular the frontage, and that the additional units are in keeping. Cllr Holloway was pleased that this proposal has been submitted, and grateful for the work of Officers in ensuring that it maintains a building that is an asset to the community. With conditions, Cllr Holloway considers it right that the Committee recommends to the Planning and Highways Committee that the application is approved.

Cllr Roberts noted the Agent's comments on site security and noted that in their experience, the Applicant has not done as much as they should have done. Cllr Roberts had visited the site and the gates were open, and the fence inside the site was also open and people could walk in. This was reported to the Agent and there was assurance that something would be done, but two weeks later, nothing had been done. Cllr Roberts requests an improvement, noting that this is not acceptable behaviour in light of complaints regarding anti-social behaviour. Cllr Roberts agreed with Cllr Holloway that this is a positive development. It was noted that more homes are required, and Cheadle and Gatley has a good record of supporting good development. It was noted that Barnes Hospital, another historic building, was saved through supporting development around it and which is now a very good development with over 150 dwellings. With the resolution of the outstanding matters discussed earlier, Cllr Roberts supports the proposal and requests improvements in the behaviour of the site owners.

The Chair spoke to reinforce that the site is in a sensitive location and the need to be a good neighbour. The case officer spoke to note that a condition would be imposed to require the submission of a Construction Management Plan in the interests of residential amenity of the adjoining occupiers, and there would be a need to control dust due to the proximity to the airport safeguarding area. Whilst it would not be reasonable to require engagement with schools, this condition may address the concerns raised.

The Chair proposed to refer the application to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with a recommendation to grant, and this was unanimously agreed by Members.



## **UPDATE TO THE PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS REGULATION COMMITTEE MEETING 08/07/21**

The Cheadle Area Committee recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to:

- a) conditions;
- b) the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to
  - i) secure a phasing strategy and scheme of repairs/restoration for Belmont House, and
  - iii) to ensure that should the scheme become viable in the future, that developer contributions can be sought at that time;
- c) the resolution of the objection raised by the Highways Engineer in respect of site access arrangements; and
- d) no new substantive issues being raised by an extended public notification period explained at the beginning of the report.

### **FURTHER CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

As noted in the case officer's verbal update to the Area Committee, the Agent has submitted amended drawings to address the objection from the Highways Engineer, to include the following:

- a. Gates removed from northern entrance, width of 5.77m.
- b. Pedestrian gate included to northern entrance.
- c. Walls widened to southern entrance to accommodate 5.5m wide vehicle entrance and additional 1.2m wide pedestrian entrance.
- d. Southern gate amended to sliding mechanism to improve access and accommodate levels, set back to allow 7.5m to carriageway.
- e. DDA space relocated to allow 1.2m to both sides.
- f. Cycle store relocated slightly to reinstate parking space.
- g. The existing wall to School's Hill was always intended to be lowered to allow for a visibility splay.

These drawings are included in the report pack as the proposed site plans showing the site layout at ground floor, first floor, second floor and roof level.

The Highways Engineer has assessed the amended drawings and has confirmed that they are accepting of the amendments to both access points that are now proposed. This has addressed the concerns previously expressed and the Highways Engineer is satisfied that conditional control can cover the details of formation, drainage, surface materials, demarcation of vehicular and pedestrian routes and visibility splay requirements.

Concerns remain with the distribution of disabled bays around the site and that these are not best placed in relation to building entrances or for ensuring safe access for

persons with limited mobility. It is recommended that the three disabled bays in the northern car park are swapped/handed with the two general/two EV bays opposite to minimise displacement from the built environment and also a ramp is provided from the car park to compliment the various stepped areas and afford safer and convenient access for all disabled bay users. Whilst it is appreciated that site levels are an influential factor in the site layout, disabled persons should have the shortest possible travel distance between entrances and the parking spaces and have suitably graded routes to avoid the use of steps. This matter could be dealt with under conditional control although if there is opportunity for a further revision such would be welcomed.

It is noted that developer contributions would be required toward the “no waiting at any time” restrictions shown within the submitted documentation. The contributions should be secured via the legal agreement.

### **FURTHER NEIGHBOUR RESPONSES**

No further neighbour representations have been received. The extended public consultation period will expire on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

### **REVISED RECOMMENDATION**

Grant subject to:

- a) conditions;
- b) the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to:
  - i) secure a phasing strategy and scheme of repairs/restoration for Belmont House;
  - ii) to ensure that should the scheme become viable in the future, that developer contributions can be sought at that time; and
  - iii) secure developer contributions toward the “no waiting at any time” restrictions proposed.
- c) no new substantive issues being raised by an extended public notification period explained at the beginning of the report.