

Application Reference	DC/078180
Location:	Land At Wilmslow Road, Heald Green, Stockport
PROPOSAL:	Reserved matters planning application for appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access for the first phase of residential development (202 dwellings and open space) following hybrid approval ref: DC/060928 (EIA development - subsequent application)
Type Of Application:	Reserved Matters
Registration Date:	07.10.2020
Expiry Date:	27.01.2021 (extension agreed)
Case Officer:	Daniel Hewitt
Applicant:	Bloor Homes North West
Agent:	NJL Consulting

UPDATE TO THE REPORT FOLLOWING THE DECISION TO DEFER THE APPLICATION AT THE APRIL MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS REGULATION COMMITTEE

Following the decision of the committee to defer the application due to member's concerns about a number of issues, the applicant has made further revisions to the proposed plans. The revised plans are shown in the plans pack appended to this report and amendments made are described and assessed in turn below.

FURTHER CONSULTEE RESPONSES

SMBC Heritage Conservation

Having reviewed the plans it would appear that the changes pertinent to my comments of the 7th April are limited to the reduced number of shared driveways to the Wilmslow Road frontage down to one and reconfigured internal site layout to accommodate this change. This change has had the positive benefit of retaining a higher degree of the mature hedge boundary to Wilmslow Road, which addresses a primary point of concern with the previous plans that I raised in my previous comments.

It does not appear that the submitted revisions address any of the other concerns / comments raised in my previous consultation response (notably the design and materials of the new build houses). As such, all other aspects of my attached comments remain relevant in respect of the scheme and are therefore reiterated.

SMBC Highways Engineer

No objection to the latest revision (Bloor drg NW114-PD-001) which has reduced the number of shared private driveways onto Wilmslow Road down to one and reconfigured the internal site layout to accommodate this change subject to a number of minor amendments to the revised internal layout as follows:

- Re-design the road space between plots 16-21 and 112-116 to reduce its width; and
- tighten the radii alongside plot 68.

These are simple minor amendments that will slightly reduce the extent of hard surfacing and are currently being agreed with the applicant. These changes will not affect the spirit of the changes to reduce the driveways onto Wilmslow Road.

FURTHER PUBLIC RESPONSES

Prior to the receipt of revised plans a further public objection was received relating to the loss of hedgerow on Wilmslow Road and its impact on wildlife.

ANALYSIS

Removal of five of the six driveway accesses onto Wilmslow Road

In response to comments received from the committee in April, the applicant has revised the layout of the development to remove five of the six driveway accesses onto Wilmslow Road whilst ensuring the new homes on Wilmslow Road continue to front the site's primary frontage. The only remaining driveway access is at the south western corner of the site approximately 35 metres north of the Griffin Lodge access road. These changes have been achieved by opening up spaces between dwellings to enable the estate roads to connect to shared driveways serving the new homes that face Wilmslow Road. It was not possible to remove all of the additional driveways due to the limits on the number of dwellings (5) served by shared private driveways set out in highway design standards. It should be noted that shared private driveways would not be adopted by the Council as local highway authority. If these thresholds were exceeded then they would need to be built to adoptable standards that would significantly change the character of the accesses, increase the land take which in turn would erode the quality of the green buffer along Wilmslow Road.

Importantly, direct pedestrian and cycle connections onto Wilmslow Road are provided so as not to significantly inconvenience users and occupants of the development.

The changes enable a further 35 metres of existing hedgerow to be retained.

The Council's Highway Engineer raises no objection to the proposed amendments and the officer recommendation remains fundamentally unchanged.

Members' comments about the need for a 20mph speed limit across the estate are understood and would be implemented where necessary and appropriate as part of the Council's highway adoption process. It should however be noted that the relatively narrow, short length and winding nature of the secondary and tertiary estate roads will themselves manage speeds by design. As such, the imposition of legal speed limits, and all the statutory signage and street furniture that goes with them, may not be necessary or appropriate. This would be resolved fully at the time when the new roads are adopted by the Council under Section 38 of the Highways Act with members' views taken into full account as part of that statutory process.

Internal space standards

The applicant have revised their proposals to ensure that all new homes on the site now meet the nationally described space standards (NDSS). This change is very much welcomed.

The proposed mix of house types has been revised accordingly and are detailed in the revised plan pack appended to this report.

Design implications

The proposed changes to the layout of the development does alter the character and length of the internal estate roads that now connect with the driveways serving houses fronting Wilmslow Road. It is now considered necessary to require the proposed landscaping concept plan to be revisited to further soften the appearance of the newly created street-scenes with additional planting - noting that the minor amendments recommended by the Council's Highway Engineer provide additional opportunities to achieve this. It is also considered necessary to ensure that the side boundaries of plots adjacent to these new access routes are enclosed with high quality boundary treatments – either with brick walls or the proposed 1.8 metre high timber fencing soften by hedge planting. These detailed design changes would be secured by condition or resolved prior to any consent being granted (highway amendments, landscaping and boundary treatments).

Other matters

The amendments made to the scheme prior to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee meeting in April in respect of footpath surfacing bat and bird box provision remain (see below).

REVISED RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the satisfactory resolution of the highways, landscaping and detail design issues highlighted in this updated report with final decision-making deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

UPDATE TO REPORT FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS TO THE APPLICATION IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS MADE BY CHEADLE AREA COMMITTEE – APRIL 2021

Following the comments made by the Cheadle Area Committee, the applicant has made revisions to the scheme resulting in the submission of revised plans and written commitments and or agreements to address concerns raised. The amendments made are described and assessed in turn below.

Internal Space Standards

In response to concerns raised by Cheadle Area Committee, the applicant has substituted open market three bedroom house types to achieve compliance with the 2015 Nationally Described Space Standard ensuring all the proposed houses for sale on the open market achieve the standard for three bedroom, four person homes.

The changes are as follows:

- The Byron / Lyttleton now been replaced with Dunham / Lyford (3/3 houses – total 6)
- The Kilburn has now been replaced with Kane (24 houses)
- The Makenzie now replaced with Forbes (12 houses)

The location of the substituted houses are shown on the revised plans.

The size of the proposed affordable houses remain unchanged but they have been designed to the former Homes and Communities Agency (HQA) standards endorsed by the Council's current '*Affordable Housing Requirements in Stockport – Explanatory Note (January 2021)*' and are supported by the identified registered affordable housing provider, Mossacre St Vincent's, who would acquire and manage the affordable homes.

PROW surface treatments

In response to concerns raised by Cheadle Area Committee, the applicant has confirmed they are happy to revise the surface treatments of the public footpaths and PROW crossing the site to soften their visual appearance. Planning condition(s) are recommended accordingly. Discussions with the Council's Highway Engineer have confirmed that alternative options are available that would meet their requirements such as buff coloured bitmac, block paving or resin bound gravel. This would be secured by planning condition – a position now agreed with applicant.

Bat and/or bird box provision

In response to concerns raised by Cheadle Area Committee and the comments of the Council's ecologist, the applicant has confirmed that they are happy to increase bat and bird box provision to a ratio of 100% (or equivalent) from 30%. They have suggested a condition to secure such an outcome.

Access from Wilmslow Road

The six access driveways from Wilmslow Road, proposed in addition to the main vehicular access junction, were also raised as a concern by the Cheadle Area Committee.

Access was a reserved matter at the outline stage and condition 41 of the planning permission requires access to be provided in accordance with the details specified at outline stage i.e. the provision of a four arm signal controlled junction. The proposals achieve that and are supported by the Council's Highway Engineer. It is also important to note that the condition does not preclude the provision of the proposed additional shared driveway accesses. The Council's Highway Engineer's comments at the outline stage highlighted the potential for *"limited direct plot access on Wilmslow Road"*.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to further conditions

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Due to the scale of development proposed (over 100 new homes), this application must be determined by the borough wide Planning and Highways Regulation Committee. The application will first be referred to the Cheadle Area Committee for their recommendation and/or comments.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is the first phase of the housing development granted outline planning permission (with all matters reserved) by the Secretary of State for up to 325 new homes on 22 April 2020 (see below and attached decision letter).

This first phase includes 202 new houses located between Wilmslow Road to the west and Bruntwood Hall Brook that crosses the site north to south. This phase also includes the extension of the spine road to the east of the brook that would serve a later phase of development.

The proposed dwelling types are two storey houses (albeit that 27 have additional accommodation in the roof space lit by dormers and roof lights). The height of the proposed houses vary slightly by house type but are generally 4.7 – 5 metres to the eaves and 8 - 8.4 metres to ridge level. The houses with accommodation at roof level rise to approximately 5.7m to the eaves and 9.9 to the ridge.

The size of the proposed new homes are as follows:

- 26 two bedroom houses
- 79 three bedroom houses
- 97 four bedroom houses

The vast majority of the proposed new homes are detached or semi-detached houses; 21 are in short terraces not exceeding 4 houses.

57 of the proposed new homes would be affordable. In terms of tenure, 29 would be for social rent and 28 would be for shared ownership in accordance with the Section 106 legal agreement accompanying the planning permission. The applicant has collaborated with Mosscafe St Vincent's who would acquire and manage the proposed affordable homes. Mosscafe St Vincent's are a member of the Stockport Housing Partnership; their subsidiary Mossbank Homes operate from Bredbury and manage eight local estates including one in Heald Green.

The proposed mix of affordable homes is as follows:

- 12 two bedroom homes for social rent;
- 17 three bedroom homes for social rent;
- 14 two bedroom homes for shared ownership; and
- 14 three bedroom homes for shared ownership.

The affordable homes are spread across the development in small clusters as shown on the submitted plans.

All new homes would benefit from their private gardens as well as access to generous areas of public open greenspace including:

- an undeveloped community orchard and wildflower meadow to the south western corner of the site provided to offset the proposed development from the Grade II listed Griffin Farmhouse fronting Wilmslow Road and the neighbouring undesignated heritage asset Outwood House. The currently culverted watercourse would also run in open channel in this area.
- a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and Locally Area for Play (LAP) to the north eastern corner of the site that would become an integral part of an undeveloped 'green finger' running alongside Bruntwood Hall Brook.

The definitive public right of way (PROW) that crosses the site east to west (Cheadle and Gatley 96) would be retained but diverted to the south of the existing hedgerow that runs alongside it to improve its orientation. It would also be hard-surfaced. This would be complemented with a new connection that runs north south along the 'green finger' (also hard surfaced) in response to a recent PROW claim. Pedestrian and cycle routes would also be further improved by the addition of a segregated footpath and cycleway running east west alongside the main access road to Bruntwood Hall Brook and eventually beyond.

The primary vehicular access to the development would be from Wilmslow Road in accordance with the outline planning permission. A signal controlled, 'CYCLOPS' crossroad junction would be created to optimise facilities for pedestrian and cyclists. Secondary access roads would connect to the main spine road to provide direct access to the development parcels to the north and south. An additional six driveway accesses connecting directly to Wilmslow Road to serve the houses fronting Wilmslow Road are proposed ensuring the new houses face, rather than turn their back on this primary frontage. The proposed access arrangements necessitate the partial removal of the existing hedgerow fronting Wilmslow Road to ensure adequate visibility splays at the junction. This loss is however mitigated by replacement planting, albeit set back from the back of footpath. Further compensatory planting is provided across the application site.

The application is supported by the following documents:

- Application form
- Plans and drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Drainage Statements
- Ecological Summary Statement
- EIA Statement of Conformity
- Energy Statement and Sustainability Checklist
- Heritage Statement
- Planning Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Transport Technical Note
- Road Safety Audit
- Written response to RIBA Place Matter Design Review

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located entirely within Heald Green ward (Cheadle Area Committee area) and the Greater Manchester Green Belt. The site is located in a suburban area and benefits from a good range of services and facilities within

walking or cycling distance. The site is also accessible being relatively well served by public transport services.

The site comprises undeveloped open pasture and farmland and is bound by Wilmslow Road (B5358) to the west; houses on Syddall Avenue to the north; the Seashell Trust campus to the south and Bruntwood Hall Brook to the east with further open farmland beyond. The site's landscape features include hedgerows enclosing the fields and the green corridor of the brook.

Levels are relatively flat but the land slopes gently downwards to the east.

A definitive public right of way (Cheadle and Gatley 96) crosses the site in an east/west direction linking Wilmslow Road (B5358) to the west with the A34 and the wider footpath network to the east.

Finally, the application site includes land that affects the setting of a grade II listed farmhouse fronting Wilmslow Road called Griffin Farmhouse. It has the following list description:

“Farmhouse. Late C18. Brick with rendered front and c20 tile roof. 3-bay central-staircase plan with 2 storeys (plus attics) and small lean-to to left and rear. Central bay is slightly advanced and has a recessed porch with round arch, keystone and impost blocks. 2 ground floor and 3 first floor windows with stone sills and keystones. All have 20-pane sashes except for one which is 12-pane. Large gable stacks and gable attic lights.”

The development also affects the setting of the undesignated heritage asset Outwood House.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Development Plan includes-

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

Saved policies of the SUDP Review:

LCR1.1 Landscape Character Areas (Heald Green Fringe)
LCR1.1a The Urban Fringe including the River Valleys
EP1.7 Development and Flood Risk
EP1.10 Aircraft Noise
MW1.5 Control of Waste from 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-3: Affordable Housing

CS8: SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

SIE-1: Quality Places

SIE-2: Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments

SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

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 Documents and Guidance

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance (SPG) does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan; nevertheless, it does provide non-statutory Council approved policy and guidance that is a material consideration when determining planning applications. The following documents are considered relevant:

- Design of Residential Development SPD
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Transport in Residential Areas SPD
- Sustainable Transport SPD
- Open Space Provision and Commuted Sums SPD
- Affordable Housing SPG and Explanatory Note (January 2021)

National Planning Policy Framework

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For decision-taking this means:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Para. 91 *“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”

Para. 96 *“Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”*

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

a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and

c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”

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

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

a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and

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

Para. 112 “Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Para.128 “Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”

Para. 129 “Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community,

design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life⁴⁷. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.”

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

Para.153 states *“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:*

- a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and*
- b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption”.*

Para.170 *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

Para. 190 *“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when*

considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

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

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

Para 194. "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."*

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

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

Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 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.

PPG includes the National Design Guide (published 01 October 2019) which sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Planning Application No: DC/060928

Address: Seashell Trust, 160 Stanley Road, Heald Green, Stockport, SK8 6RF

Proposal: Hybrid application proposing the following:

Detailed Application for the erection of a new school (Use Class D1) with associated kitchen and dining facilities, swimming and hydrotherapy facilities (Use Class D2), infrastructure, drop-off parking, access, landscaping and ancillary works.

Outline Application (all matters reserved except access) for the demolition of the Chadderton building, Orchard / Wainwright / Hydrotherapy / Care block, Dockray building, part of existing college, 1 Scout Hut and 1 garage block, and erection of new campus facilities (Use Class D1/D2 - Reception, Family Assessment Units, Family Support Services, Administration / Training / Storage Facility, Sports Hall and Pavilion) with associated infrastructure, parking, landscaping and ancillary works.

Outline Application (all matters reserved) for the erection of up to 325 dwellings (Use Class C3) in northern fields with associated infrastructure, parking, access, landscaping and ancillary works.

Final decision: Recovered appeal - planning permission granted by the Secretary of State following public inquiry in May/June 2019 accompanied by Section 106 planning obligations covering affordable housing, open space provision and maintenance and off-site highway improvements

Decision date: 22/04/2020

Conditions relevant to housing element of the planning permission:

1. Approved plans
2. Construction Method Statements
3. Noise mitigation
- 4&5. Tree and hedge protection
6. Protected species licensing
7. Ecological mitigation
8. Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP)
9. Landscape and Ecological Management Plans (LEMP)
10. Lighting design for biodiversity
11. Lighting design – aviation safety
12. Crime Impact Statement recommendations
37. Reserved matters
38. Phasing
39. Reserved matters time limit
40. Landscape and visual impact mitigation measures
41. Access in accordance with details approved at outline stage
42. Off-site highway works
43. Archaeology
44. Ground gas mitigation
45. Foul and surface water drainage
46. Energy Statement – carbon reduction measures (details approved)
47. 325 dwelling limit

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The application has been publicised by way of site notices, notices in the Stockport Express and letters to individual neighbouring properties. Two rounds of notification have taken place following revisions to the proposals.

49 written representations from members of the public in support of the development have been received to date (as of 08/04/21) summarised as follows:

- More homes are needed in the area to support a growing population, particularly affordable new homes as the cost of housing in Greater Manchester and Cheshire has become very expensive.
- Existing residents objecting to the development should remember the house they live in was once a new development and housing needs to be made available for future generations who can contribute positively to the local community.
- The area needs more new homes with private gardens.
- The development will be available to local first time buyers who want to buy their own home whilst also staying local to family.
- More housing is needed in Heald Green as people have been forced to leave the area as local house prices are getting out of control preventing people from getting onto the housing ladder.
- It is hard to speak in favour of the proposals because local tensions are running so high - mainly from people who are comfortable in their properties that are gaining momentum on price.
- Local residents concerns need to be balanced against the need to make good quality housing stock accessible to younger generations.
- Bloor Homes are reputable house builder and have been successful elsewhere.
- The site is a good location for new housing as it is well connected to jobs at Manchester Airport and in Manchester City Centre.
- The development will help to keep young families in Heald Green and help stop them being 'priced out'.

19 objections have been received to date (as of 08/04/21) summarised as follows:

- Additional vehicle accesses onto Wilmslow Road unsafe and not proposed at outline stage (12 objections)
- Outline stage objections - traffic, loss of greenspace, no increase in services (9 objections)
- Loss of hedgerow (5 objections)
- Risk of overspill parking onto Wilmslow Road (5 objections)
- Flooding concerns (4 objections)
- Further Green Belt release from the Eden Point roundabout not addressed (2 objections)
- Stated distance to services is misleading - straight line used not actual routes (2 objections)
- Is the new junction safe for pedestrians
- Where is the traffic monitor hut to interrogate people about their journeys?
- Impact on house prices
- Need to ensure enough parking is provided to avoid obstructions
- Inadequate tree planting
- Inadequate useable green space - SUDS ponds not useable
- Affordable housing should be available to residents of Handforth
- Request that the pond at the north end of the site is retained
- New pedestrian crossing unnecessary
- Why phased delivery?
- Northern edge of the development should have a green border
- Depth of ponds a safety concern
- North/South public right of way requested

- Drainage concerns and impact of development on existing neighbouring properties, particularly along the northern boundaries of the site. Concerns raised about the effectiveness of the proposed solutions particularly in respect of suggested level changes and the use of stone margins.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

SMBC Strategic Housing

The applicant has confirmed they are working with Mosscares St Vincents (MSV) as the preferred Registered Provider to provide the required affordable housing on site. MSV are a longstanding Member of the Stockport Housing Partnership with over 1000 social housing units in the Borough and a strong positive working relationship with the Council. MSV are familiar with delivering SMBC affordable housing policy compliant schemes in Stockport and will ensure that these affordable units are sold/let in accordance with Council requirements.

SMBC Highway Engineer

This reserved matters application seeks detailed approval following the granting of outline permission for the site. The outline permission, which had all matters reserved for subsequent approval, established the principles of access for the site and the appropriateness and acceptability of the site in terms of accessibility for residential development. The matters of traffic generation, distribution and consequent highway impact were also discussed and accepted at outline stage.

The outline permission has two specific conditions imposed that need compliance with and discharging prior to works commencing on the site. These deal with the principles of accessing the site and the requisite off site accessibility improvements, that is pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to be provided along Wilmslow Road. On these basis' I have no need or intention to provide commentary on accessibility or traffic generation, distribution and consequent highway impact noting these matters have been determined and accepted with the granting of outline permission.

This application seeks reserved matters approval and detailed layout arrangements for the first phase of the overall development, that is 202 dwellings. The detail for the remaining part of the overall development, up to the 325 dwellings benchmark is expected to form part of another application at a later date.

The submitted layout proposes, as is required under the outline permission, a signal controlled junction which would be constructed to form a four arm junction with Wilmslow Road and Queensway. Following discussion the junction that is proposed is a 'CYCLOPS' design which stands Cycle Optimised Protected Signals. Such a design optimises facilities for vulnerable road users, maximising opportunities for safe cycling and walking whilst not affecting the overall performance of the junction for motorists. The principle feature of a CYCLOPS junction is an orbital cycle route to separate cyclists from motor traffic, reducing the possibility of collisions or conflicts. People on foot are also able to get exactly where they want to be in fewer stages and can benefit from more space to wait than with other junction designs. Such junctions are a key feature of the Greater Manchester Bee Network plan to deliver the UK's largest cycling and walking network.

The finite detail of the junction design is a matter for conditional control and discussion over the specifics is continuing. The works would be covered under a S278 Agreement and conditional control will require detailed drawings and a full engineering package to be prepared and approved. For information, detail under continued discussion includes specific lane widths, junction radii, Queensway tie in,

intervisibility zones, cycle track alignment, pedestrian crossing lines, advance cycle stop lines, the need or otherwise for central islands, the location of signal equipment and pedestrian indicators, tactile paving and road markings. Notwithstanding the need for finalising the detailed design, the submitted drawing does give comfort that there is sufficient highway land and development land that would be available and dedicated as highway to enable an acceptable form of junction to be delivered. I acknowledge that widening of the road space fronting the site to accommodate the junction will result in the loss of a mature hedgerow over a considerable distance and have sought to ensure that the submission includes a replacement planting scheme, with a new replacement hedgerow to be planted set back behind the widened road space and junction design. This respects the principles of accessing the site that was discussed and approved at outline stage with it being evident on the submission that carriageway widening would be required to facilitate a new junction

In summary I am accepting that conditional control can cover the detailed design of the junction with the design needing formal highway approval prior to any work on the junction and the built environment within close proximity of the junction commencing on site.

The site will primarily be served from the new junction which feeds into a spine road routing through the site and providing some direct access to plots and various lengths of estate road infrastructure. The spine road is designed with suitable width for general motor vehicle passage and vehicles to a size of a refuse wagon and buses. There is no real need or intention for articulated traffic to travel along this link and even should any future connection to the A34 be enabled then a suitable weight restriction would be imposed to manage usage. This road would be constructed to facilitate phase two of the overall development and delivered under the terms of a S38 road Adoption Agreement, with potential to extend should future need arise. This link will need a No Waiting at Any Time Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to prevent kerbside parking and ensure continued free passage for vehicles, this matter can be dealt with under the S38 Agreement mechanism for the road construction.

Six shared private drives are proposed direct from Wilmslow Road. These drives would each serve up to 5 dwellings and are designed to Council standards in terms of their width, entrance visibility and the ability for home delivery sized vehicles to enter the driveways, manoeuvre and join Wilmslow Road in a forward gear. The drives are located so not to compromise the operation and safety of the new signal controlled junction at the main site entrance. I acknowledge that the provision of these driveways will result in the loss of parts of the existing mature hedgerow however I have to review the layout as submitted and when I have regard to the fact that the driveways are design standard compliant and operationally would not give rise to unacceptable safety risk, I have no reason or justification to oppose such arrangements.

Within the site the road infrastructure comprises a mix of formal road space with dedicated carriageway and footway spaces, shared surface arrangements where all traffic and users share the space, shared private drives and individual driveways. The layout has been the subject of considerable discussion to ensure delivery of a layout that seeks to restrain vehicle speeds, provide a suitable and safe space for residents, ensure that motor vehicles will not dominate movement and provide a better quality and safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The road surfacing will be a mix of flexible material (asphalt/tarmac) and modular blocks and it is understood that the entire road infrastructure would be offered for adoption and constructed following the necessary process for adoptable highway. The design of the overall road layout is compliant with Council standards and acceptable to me. Shared private drives would serve no more than 5 individual dwellings and would

have sufficient space for home delivery sized vehicles to manoeuvre. I am satisfied that matters such as construction, crossing details and visibility splays are capable of conditional control.

The site layout incorporates a two way segregated cycle route on the East West axis running from Wilmslow Road at the main entrance to the sites easterly red line boundary. There is potential for extension to this link towards the A34 Bradshaw Hall roundabout junction and such would form part of the phase two development. This will compliment and tie in with the A34 MRN scheme being progressed by the Council, ensuring the development delivers good quality pedestrian and cycle connectivity between Wilmslow Road and the A34.

On the north south axis through the site a shared footpath cycleway is proposed and this will assist and provide a safer route for pedestrian and cyclist passage across the site. At the north western corner of the site there will be a shared footpath/cycleway from the end of road space within the development connecting to Wilmslow Road. To assist and enable safer crossing of Wilmslow Road and to tie in with off-site cycle infrastructure works required under the outline permission, the applicant is expected to provide a controlled crossing at this juncture. The specifics of this will be addressed via condition discharge for the outline permission.

The existing public right of way that runs along on the north side of a hedgerow that form the southerly boundary of the site will be diverted to the south side of the hedgerow and reconstructed with formal surfacing to a width of 3m. Where the PROW route crosses the new road infrastructure, dropped kerbs, signage and barriers to control access will be necessary. The detail of construction of the realigned PROW is a matter capable of conditional control and the applicant will also, aside from planning, need to secure the necessary diversion/modification/creation order from the Public Rights of Way Team before any works commence. I understand that discussion the PROW Team in this respect has been undertaken and agreement in principle has been reached. Improvement to this PROW will continue as part of the future phase of development, beyond this and for the final link up to the A34 a financial contribution secured at outline permission stage is available for improvement work.

There is potential for footpath connectivity from the north of the site heading towards Bradshaw Hall Lane. The layout does not prejudice any future connection opportunities should the third party land owners to the north of this site be in agreement, although as I understand it there are no definitive footpath rights in existence at this time.

The majority of individual dwellings will have at least two off street parking spaces, some also having garages. There are a few dwellings that each have one resident parking bay and access to shared visitor space, this is no cause for concern. The development's compliance with the Council's parking standards and Planning Policy means I have no reason or justification to express any concern with the level of parking that is proposed to serve the development. Detailed design will also ensure that TRO's will be introduced to prevent kerbside parking where highway operational and safety concerns could arise. Each individual dwelling will be provided with a charge facility for electric vehicles and a covered and secure cycle parking facility, again these are matters capable of conditional control.

It is understood from discussion with the applicant that a construction entrance would be created at the southerly end of the site close to Griffin Lane. This would necessitate closure or diversion of the existing public right of way for the period of construction and this matter is being discussed with the Public Right of Way Team.

The specifics of construction management, with a high emphasis on delivery strategies, contractor parking and wheel wash facilities are typically matters that will be addressed under conditional control.

In conclusion, the development adheres to the principles agreed and approved at outline stage and matters covered under conditional control on the outline permission will be resolved prior to any development commencing on site. The main site entrance, whilst needing some refinement in terms of detail, is generally acceptable and capable of delivery and the detail can be resolved under conditional control. The internal site layout is acceptable having regard to Council Policy and design standards and guidance and I support the application. I shall provide a list of conditions under separate cover.

SMBC Public Rights of Way Officer

My main comment is re the maintenance of the existing right of way (96 CG) from Wilmslow Rd to the A34, both during and post construction. This seems to be part of the plans, but the actual line appears to be slightly altered from the original. This is not a major issue but should be fully documented and receive specific scrutiny and approval during the planning process.

It should be noted that there is a claim for a Public Right of Way running approximately north south in the green area to the west of this phase of development.

SMBC Heritage Conservation

The originally proposed layout has been amended to increase the degree of openness to be retained close to the listed buildings at Griffin Farm, with the small paddock to the immediate north of the Griffin Farm site now proposed as an orchard and wildflower meadow. This parcel of land is referred to as a 'stand off' area by the applicant effectively providing a buffer between the new housing development and the designated heritage assets. The retention of this former 'paddock' as open space, planted to an orchard and wildflower meadow is welcomed, and constitutes an improvement over the previous layout, which showed only part of the paddock retained as open space with encroachment of housing development closer to the listed farmstead, and proposed to be partially occupied by a LAP which would be inconsistent with the rural character of the land.

Nevertheless I must express disappointment that mitigation measures have not been considered more broadly and that the rural character of the site and its relationship with the listed farmstead have not been used to influence the detailed design of the scheme. The Heritage Assessment suggests that 'the rural character of the area has been preserved through the provision of pedestrian routes which echo the historic land use of the area', however it is my view that rural character of the routes through the site should be enhanced by increased use of hedge boundaries in order to reinforce character and enhance the setting of the heritage assets. Further, I am disappointed that the scheme has not capitalised on the rural character of the area and the design references of the heritage assets in the immediate vicinity. As expressed in our previous discussions I strongly feel that the opportunity should have been taken to develop a housing scheme influenced by the rural character and design of the existing farmsteads (and their accompanying new build development) to the immediate south of the site at Griffin Farm and Outwood House. The setting of the heritages assets encompasses the whole of the associated farmland, and as such following the architectural principles of the farm buildings and the associated developments at Griffin Farm and Outwood House would be more far more appropriate and would reinforce local distinctiveness. The proposed use of materials

also raises concern in respect of the scattering of different materials / different brick blends / roofing materials across the site. This should be avoided and the use of materials should be very carefully reconsidered in order to achieve more unity in the appearance of the development. A limited palette of high quality natural / traditional materials would assist in providing a high quality development and setting for the heritage assets, particularly given that they will inevitably intrude on the quality of views of the listed buildings.

I am extremely disappointed to see that the continuous hedgerow boundary to Wilmslow Road, which is a key element of the character of the landscape, is to be lost / only partially retained, with a number of access points breaking its continuity. It is not clear what the impact of the breaking of the hedge to such a degree will be and whether any of it can be retained or if the proposed retained hedge will actually be newly planted? I understand that the loss of the continuous hedge has arisen because of required changes to highways layout. This natural feature makes an important contribution to the character of the site, the setting of the listed farmstead and views of the listed farmstead from Wilmslow Road and as such its loss results in harm impact. As such, if the hedge cannot be retained in its current continuous form, the planting scheme to the front of houses to Wilmslow Road to mitigate its loss will require very careful consideration to ensure that the qualities of the existing hedge (eg scale, species, and density) are replicated as far as possible.

I am also aware that revisions to the proposed materials of hard landscaping have also been made, resulting in less tarmacdam surfacing and an increase in the use of block paving. Nevertheless the careful consideration of these materials and how they blend with the natural spaces and the materials of construction of the housing development (in colour and texture) will be essential.

The existing public right of way that runs along on the north side of a hedgerow that form the southerly boundary of the site will be diverted to the south side of the hedgerow and reconstructed with formal surfacing to a width of 3m next to the retained open space close to the listed buildings. The materials of construction of this public right of way will require careful consideration in terms of appearance next to the informal meadow planting and the desirability to retain as much of the 'rural' character of the site as possible.

In conclusion, whilst the revised layout which retains the paddock area as open space with orchard and wildflower planting is positive and assists in providing a buffer between the Listed Griffin Farm and the proposed new development, it is my view that further consideration should be paid to the original rural character of the site, the setting of the listed building and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness, and as such a number of missed opportunities remain (as outlined above).

Summary / Conclusion

It is my opinion that the development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset and would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building by virtue of the impact on setting. It is my view that a number of opportunities exist to revise and refine the scheme to reduce its impact and create a high quality development that better reflects the rural origins of the site and reinforces local distinctiveness, which should be seized.

Given the statutory duty as regards listed buildings, set out in s66(1) of the 1990 Act, the Council must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of Griffin Farmhouse in carrying out the planning balance

exercise, even where the harm that would be caused has been assessed as "less than substantial".

The Council's Core Strategy policy SIE-3 and paragraph 194 of the NPPF both require that 'clear and convincing justification' is provided for any harm or loss caused to significance of heritage assets (noting that significance can be harmed or lost through development within the asset's setting).

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF requires that where development proposals will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

I must emphasise the need for the LPA to consider the above and apply all the relevant tests when determining this application, and to provide evidence of this consideration when producing the associated planning reports or reporting to area committee. To assist in this, heritage assets and the correct approach to them has recently been addressed by a number of recent Court of Appeal judgments, including *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants DC* [2014] EWCA Civ 137, and *(Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC* [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin).

SMBC Arboriculture

Initial comments

Back garden planting to every plot to include fruit tree varieties should be included as currently no back garden planting is shown.

Details on species list shows *prunus padus* for small garden tree planting, but this species is not appropriate so needs to be removed.

Large species specimens need to be planted all along the Wilmslow Road frontage and if possible larger than proposed to create the instant impact as well as better screening for the development including the evergreen native hedge as shown.

If the following changes are incorporated then it is acceptable.

Subsequent comments following Manchester Airport comments

Following a review of the landscaping concept plan and the airport comments I can confirm there is no pine proposed and limited oak planting in areas of existing larger trees.

In respect to the fruiting trees, this will conflict with the aim of making the new estate accessible to free fruit and carbon neutral fruit so this is a conflict which I feel we need to keep as much as possible or relocate in other areas of the site?

Detailed tree planting proposals are required including details of tree pits for trees in and around highways/hard surfaced areas. All opportunities for additional planting should be pursued. Conditions are recommended.

SMBC Drainage Engineer (Lead Local Flood Authority)

Awaiting final response following dialogue and submission of further details.

SMBC Contaminated Land

No objection given the conditions already attached to the existing hybrid planning permission.

Environment Agency

No objection in principle but make the following comments:

Biodiversity

The ecological enhancements that have been proposed (D&A, Sept 2020) will require a management plan to be in place. This will ensure the identified landscape concept proposals NW114-LS-001c will provide the maximum benefit to people and the environment over the long term.

In light of the above, the proposed development will only be acceptable if a planning condition requiring a long term landscape management scheme be included.

This approach is supported by paragraphs 170 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which recognise that the planning system should conserve and enhance the environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for, planning permission should be refused.

Condition

A landscape and ecological management plan, including long-term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas (except privately owned domestic gardens), shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The landscape and ecological management plan shall be carried out as approved and any subsequent variations shall be agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme shall include the following elements:

- details of maintenance regimes of various new green and blue infrastructure habitats created along riparian corridor*
- details of any new multifunctional SUDs wetlands created on site*
- details of new de-culverted sections of Bruntwood Hall Brook.*
- details of treatment of site boundaries and/or buffers around water bodies, and between SUDs wetlands and stream corridor.*
- details of management responsibilities*

Reason

To ensure the protection of wildlife and supporting habitat. Also, to secure opportunities for enhancing the site's nature conservation value in line with national planning policy and adopted policy SIE-3 of the Stockport Core Strategy.

Flood Risk

The watercourse flowing on the eastern site boundary is a designated "Main River" from National Grid Reference (NGR) SJ 85960 85382. Proposals upstream of this point should be discussed with Stockport Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Advice to the applicant

This development may require a permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 from the Environment Agency for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within 8m of Bruntwood Hall Brook, designated a 'Main River' from NGR SJ 85960 85382 onwards. This was formerly called a Flood Defence Consent. Some activities are also now excluded or exempt.

A permit is separate to and in addition to any planning permission granted. Further details and guidance are available on the GOV.UK website:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>.

The Environment Agency has discretionary powers to carry out maintenance works on the channels of "Main River" watercourses to remove blockages and ensure the free flow of water. Information on riparian landowner's rights and responsibilities can be found online.

Further comments 05/03/21

Based on our outgoing response we requested a landscape management plan, so as long as LEMP is conditioned this would suffice for this site.

We note the Airport has raised concerns about SUDs ponds, which is disappointing from an environmental side of things.

If as part of this constraint no permanent water feature can be constructed on site (as originally proposed), it would still be welcome from an environmental perspective if some form of ephemeral wetlands or swales or other above ground and multifunctional SUDs options ([SuDS Manual C753 Chapter List \(ciria.org\)](#)) be incorporated into the site surface water drainage design (rather than orthodox underground attenuation tanks or oversized drainage pipes), to provide some ecological and water quality benefits for any site drainage entering Bruntwood Hall Brook waterbody, ecological receptor, and wider failing WFD waterbody (Micker Brook (GB112069060940)).

SMBC Nature Development

Nature Conservation Designations

The site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise. It does however contain a number of habitats which are of local ecological importance for biodiversity such as hedgerows (Habitat of Principle Importance, LBAP), pond (LBAP), watercourse, mature trees as well as habitats which are valuable at a site level (improved grassland).

Legally Protected Species

A suite of ecology surveys have been previously carried out (in 2015 and 2016, together with updated site assessment in 2017 and 2018) and submitted with the previous hybrid application. Update surveys were also undertaken in 2020 as part of the current application.

All survey work has been carried out by suitably experienced ecologists and in accordance with best practice guidance. An updated Phase 1 Habitat survey and hedgerow survey was carried out in September 2020. Habitats on site include improved grassland with tall ruderal, hedgerows, trees, a pond and a watercourse.

The hedgerows on site qualify as UK Priority BAP habitat (80% or more cover of at least one woody UK native species) and Section 41 habitat of principal importance under the NERC Act 2006. Hedgerows H1, H2, H6 and H7 are located within the application area. H1 and H2 will be retained and H6 and H7 will be lost. The submitted landscape concept scheme shows on-site hedgerow planting to help offset this loss including enhancement and buffer planting along H1. The revised landscape plans show enhancement of H2 along the north edge of the site with buffer planting to help reinforce ecological connectivity and this is welcomed.

One pond is present on site and will be lost under the proposals. All ponds are a Greater Manchester BAP Habitat and can support diverse assemblages of invertebrates and amphibians (including great crested newt and common toad – a UKBAP species). A wetland area with two swales/SUDs is shown on the submitted landscape concept plan and it is indicated that these areas will be sympathetically landscaped to maximise benefits to biodiversity. Such areas, whilst not a replacement for open water/ponds, mimic bog habitats and thereby serve as transition habitats offering a valuable biodiversity resource for marginal aquatic species.

The grassland habitats on site would also be lost under the proposals. Although not a UKBAP or LBAP/priority habitat, these habitats are nonetheless a valuable resource for local wildlife, functioning as habitat corridors and foraging areas. Opportunities to compensate for this loss are limited within the site, but the proposed wildflower meadow areas will help to offset this loss. Furthermore, Green Infrastructure is key within the landscape concept design and will help to maintain habitat connectivity through the site – such as enhancement of the watercourse (including opening up of the currently culverted section).

Bats

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

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

The trees on the site were inspected for bat roost potential in January 2016 and potentially suitable roosting features were subject to climb and inspection surveys. An update ground-based assessment was carried out in 2018. No trees with bat roosting potential were identified within the current application site. An update bat tree roost assessment was carried out in 2020. The Ecological Summary states that a small number of mature trees along the watercourse were identified as offering bat roost potential however no mature trees will be lost under the proposals and so no impacts are anticipated.

Outside of the red line application area, a sycamore tree (T14) has been identified as offering low bat roosting potential. The assessment states that the tree will require removal for health and safety reasons and the recommended measures in relation to bats detailed in section 4.11 of the Ecology Summary are appropriate.

Bat activity transect surveys were undertaken in 2015 to establish how bats are using the landscape. Common and soprano pipistrelle bats were recorded using the site along with a *Myotis* species. Noctule bat activity was also recorded flying over the site. Bats were recorded foraging and commuting within the site, with high levels recorded around the brook and along hedgerow H7 and scattered trees. The Ecology Summary states that the site has remained unchanged since the 2015 transect surveys and so the bat species using the site and relative importance of

different foraging/commuting areas is unlikely to have changed in the intervening period.

Great Crested Newts

Great crested newts (GCN) and their habitats (terrestrial and aquatic) receive the same level of protection as bats (see above). A number of ponds are present within and adjacent to the site, with a medium sized population of GCN identified during surveys carried out in 2015. The Ecological Summary states that update surveys were carried out in 2019 and that the size of the GCN population was found to be low.

One GCN breeding pond (pond 6) will be lost as a result of the proposed development, along with the loss of low quality terrestrial habitat >50m from the ponds and within 50-250m, which equates to a High scale impact on the great crested newt population, without mitigation.

A great crested newt mitigation strategy (2017) was submitted as part of the hybrid scheme, however since the 2017 GCN mitigation strategy was prepared, Natural England's District Level Licencing (DLL) scheme for GCN has become live in Greater Manchester. A DLL is currently being sought for the scheme and once secured, a certificate from Natural England confirming registration will need to be provided to the LPA prior to determination of the application.

Site clearance works, including draining down of the pond should be carried out following best practice reasonable avoidance measures to avoid injury/harm to amphibians.

Badgers

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992. This makes it an offence to kill or injure a badger or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to a sett. It is also an offence to disturb a badger while it is in a sett. Previous badger surveys in 2015 recorded evidence of badger activity within the site in the form of two partially used outlier badger sett holes a latrine and evidence of snuffle holes (foraging). In 2018 no evidence of badgers was observed. One of the holes had partially collapsed and was considered unsuitable for use by badger and the other showed no signs to confirm recent badger use.

In 2020 three holes were recorded in June and September 2020, but the sett was found to be inactive. No other evidence indicative of badger activity was recorded within the site.

Birds

The nests of all breeding birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. Certain species such as barn owl are listed on Schedule 1 which receive additional protection from disturbance of the nests. A barn owl was heard during the night time bat surveys in 2015 and trees within the adjacent habitat (such as four trees along the watercourse) were found to have cavities suitable to be used by nesting/roosting barn owls. Trees on the site identified as having potential barn owl features were subject to climb and inspect surveys in January 2016. No evidence of barn owl was found.

An update tree assessment for barn owl was carried out in 2018 and 2020. No additional features were recorded on site other than those observed in 2015 and the features appeared unchanged. Proposed works are 30m from the nearest tree offering barn owl roosting potential and so significant disturbance, even if barn owls should be present, is considered unlikely. Furthermore, the submitted Ecological

Summary assesses habitats on site as offering low value foraging potential for barn owl.

The trees, hedges, scrub and grassland habitats could support nesting and foraging birds. The improved grassland is grazed and therefore less likely to support farmland species such as skylark. No bespoke wintering or breeding birds have been carried out as it is stated that the enclosed nature of the fields (surrounded by residential development and overlooked by tall hedgerows and trees which provide perches for predators) makes the fields unsuitable. It is possible however, that small numbers of wintering birds may use the interior of the fields away from predators.

Riparian Mammals

The habitats on the site have been previously assessed as offering low to no potential to support riparian mammals such as water voles and otter. No evidence of these species was recorded during the surveys. Otters receive the same level of legal protection as bats and GCN (outlined above) whereas water vole are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Hedgehogs

There is potential for hedgehog to use the site for foraging, commuting and hibernation. Hedgehogs are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) Priority Species and a NERC Act Section 41 Species of Principal Importance.

Reptiles

The site is considered unlikely to support reptiles given the limited of suitable habitat available. Reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Invasive Species

The Ecology Summary states that no non-native invasive species were recorded during the 2020 ecology update surveys. Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed have however been previously recorded near to the site. These species are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (WCA) which makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause the spread of these species in the wild.

Recommendations

A District Level Licence for GCN is being sought for the scheme. Prior to determination of the application, a certificate confirming registration of the site under Natural England's DLL scheme will need to be submitted to the LPA.

Even with the DLL, best practice reasonable avoidance measures will need to be implemented during site clearance works to prevent harm/injury to amphibians on site. This can be secured via condition and could be incorporated into the Construction and Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) – see below.

It is important that retained habitats and protected species are adequately protected during the construction phase. Prior to commencement of development, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The CEMP shall include. This was conditioned as part of the outline planning consent. The CEMP should include:

- a) risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities
- b) identification of 'biodiversity protection zones'
- c) measures and sensitive working practices to avoid or reduce impacts during construction

- d) location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity
- e) times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works
- f) responsible persons and lines of communication
- g) roles and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk or works (EcOW) where one is required
- h) use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs

and shall include details of measures to:

- Avoid the impact on nesting birds
- Avoid negative impact on sensitive ecological features during construction (such as retained hedgerows, trees, the brook etc) and protect all retained features of biodiversity interest.
- Sensitive working measures and RAMS to be adopted when felling trees (e.g. soft fell - bats) and draining down ponds/clearing vegetation (amphibians).

In relation to breeding birds, no vegetation clearance works should take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before vegetation clearance 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. This can be incorporated into the CEMP if preferred.

It is vital that lighting is sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife (e.g. foraging/commuting bats) associated with light disturbance. Careful landscape planting should also be used to ensure light is directed away from ecologically sensitive habitats (following the principles outlined in Bat Conservation Trust guidance: http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html). A sensitive lighting strategy forms an important part of the ecological mitigation. Lighting contour plans should be submitted to the LPA to demonstrate how lit areas will not disturb protected species and ecologically sensitive habitats. This was conditioned as part of the outline planning consent.

Net gains for biodiversity are expected within development in accordance with national and local planning policy (NPPF and paragraph 3.345 of the LDF). It is crucial that habitat connectivity within and across the site is retained and improved. The submitted plans show a green corridor through the site. New habitats to be created include wildflower meadows, orchards, woodland edge habitat and SUDs/wetland– to be enhanced for biodiversity through sympathetic landscaping. It is also proposed to open up a culverted section of the watercourse. These measures are welcomed within the proposed scheme. Along with the proposed buffer planting, where possible tree cover should be maximised across the site to reinforce ecological connectivity.

Proposed landscaping should comprise a mix of wildlife-friendly species (preferably locally native) and should create structural diversity e.g. through the creation of mixed species native hedgerows and wildflower areas. Additionally species for shrub/ornamental planting should be carefully chosen to ensure successional flowering so that there is a year-round nectar and pollen resource. Details of the planting strategy should be submitted to the LPA.

Where possible hedgerows should be planted at plot boundaries instead of installing fencing. Where fencing must be used, occasional gaps (13cm x 13cm) should be provided at the base of close boarded fencing (minimum of one gap per elevation) to maintain habitat connectivity through the site for species such as hedgehog (see <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden/>).

It is currently proposed to provide a bat/bird box in 30% of the new houses. It is recommended that this is increased so that a bat box/tile or bird box is provided on site at a rate of one per new residential dwelling. This can be easily achieved by providing integrated bat and bird roosting/nesting facilities into the new buildings (every dwelling does not necessarily need to have a bat/bird box, it may be more appropriate to have some dwellings without and some dwellings with more than one roost/nest feature and other boxes sited on retained mature trees for example). The proposed number, locations and specifications of bat and bird boxes should be submitted to the LPA and this can be secured via condition. .

Details regarding the future management of habitat areas will need to be provided. A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for habitats and species should also be submitted in conjunction with the landscaping scheme. This needs to consider the roles and responsibilities for delivery of subsequent long-term management measures (30 years): The LEMP shall include a description and evaluation of features to be managed, aims and objectives of management including target condition, prescriptions for management actions, details of roles and responsibilities, details of ongoing long-term monitoring and remedial measures. Details of the legal and funding mechanism to secure the work will also be required. A condition for a LEMP forms part of the outline planning consent.

Ecological conditions can change over time. If the development has not commenced within two years of the submitted survey work, update ecological surveys will be required to ensure that the impact assessment is based on sufficiently up to date ecological baseline data. Mitigation measures may also need to be amended accordingly.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

I would raise no overall objections to the application on nature conservation grounds but I would make the following comments/recommendations.

Great crested newts

The development has the potential to affect the specially protected species great crested newt. Rather than mitigate for harm to newts on site, the developer is seeking to obtain a District Level License from Natural England for the scheme. This allows for off-site mitigation and compensation for great crested newts to be delivered by Natural England. I would accept that this is a reasonable approach to take for this site. As evidence that the development has been accepted into the DLL scheme the applicant must obtain a certificate confirming registration of the site under the DLL scheme. Certificates are supplied to developers by Natural England and must be made available to the planning authority for consideration before deciding the application.

Even with the DLL agreement in place, best practice reasonable avoidance measures will need to be implemented during site clearance works to prevent harm/injury to amphibians on site. This can be secured via condition and could be incorporated into the Construction and Ecological Management Plan (CEMP).

Protection of retained habitats and protection of notable species

It is important that retained habitats and notable species are adequately protected during the construction phase of any approved development. Prior to commencement of development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. For the protection of biodiversity the CEMP should include:

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

Protection of nesting birds

No vegetation clearance works should take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before vegetation clearance 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.

All nesting birds their eggs and young are specially protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended.

Lighting

Lighting for the development should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on nocturnal wildlife (e.g. foraging/commuting bats).

Environmental enhancement (net gain)

The submitted plans show a green corridor through the site and new habitats to be created, including wildflower meadows, orchards, woodland edge habitat and SUDs ponds. It is also proposed to open up a culverted section of a watercourse on the site. These measures are welcomed and should be required to be implemented. Proposed landscaping should comprise a mix of wildlife-friendly plant species and should create structural diversity - although the Landscape Concept Plan contains some plant species lists it currently lacks a level of detail.

Full details of Landscape Creation and Management Plans should be required to be submitted as a Condition of any permission granted to the scheme.

Where possible hedgerows should be planted at plot boundaries instead of installing fencing. Where fencing must be used, occasional gaps should be provided at the base of close boarded fencing (minimum of one gap per elevation) to maintain habitat connectivity through the site for species such as hedgehog.

Natural England

Natural England has no comments to make on this application.

Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published Standing Advice which you can use to assess impacts on protected species or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.

Natural England and the Forestry Commission have also published standing advice on ancient woodland and veteran trees which you can use to assess any impacts on ancient woodland.

The lack of comment from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment, but only that the application is not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether or not this application is consistent with national and local policies on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may be able to provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal to assist the decision making process. We advise LPAs to obtain specialist ecological or other environmental advice when determining the environmental impacts of development.

Manchester Airport

No objection to the revised plans on the basis that the surface water drainage proposals are now proposed to be heavily planted and generally dry rather than open water.

The following specific comments are made in respect of conditions:

The Safeguarding Authority for Manchester Airport has assessed this proposal and its potential to conflict aerodrome Safeguarding criteria. We have no objections to the development subject to conditions:

The Construction Environmental Management Plan should include:

- Robust measures to control dust and smoke clouds.
Reason: Flight safety – dust and smoke are hazardous to aircraft engines; dust and smoke clouds can present a visual hazard to pilots and air traffic controllers.
- Robust measures to be taken to prevent birds being attracted to the site. No pools of water should occur and prevent scavenging of any detritus. A construction period Bird Hazard Management Plan (BHMP) should be provided. Reason: Flight safety – Birds trike risk avoidance; to prevent any increase in the number of hazardous birds in the vicinity of Manchester Airport (MAN) that would increase the risk of a Bird strike to aircraft using MAN.

In perpetuity:

- A Bird Hazard Management Plan for the site; if above ground water attenuation basins are used, they should be generally dry with a quick drain down time (holding water in a 1:30 year flood event or greater and draining completely within two days). In addition, the perimeters of any above ground attenuation basins should be surrounded by dense vegetation including such species as rushes, reeds and bramble to prevent large hazardous waterfowl species from accessing them when they are holding water. As mentioned in MAG's original response to this application, these types of areas in housing developments are prone to attract waterfowl species such as Mallard which, in turn, can attract the attention of the public and the developer should demonstrate how the prevention of public feeding of these birds will be managed on site. The BHMP will also need to detail what measures will be taken in the event of failure of the BHMP to control bird species that are hazardous to aircraft.
- All exterior lighting to be capped at the horizontal with no upward light spill.
Reason: Flight safety - to prevent distraction or confusion to pilots using MAN.

- No reflective materials to be used in the construction of these buildings.
(*please liaise with MAN to check).
Reason: Flight safety - to prevent ocular hazard and distraction to pilots using MAN.
- No solar photovoltaics to be used on site without first consulting with the aerodrome safeguarding authority for MAN.
Reason: Flight safety - to prevent ocular hazard and distraction to pilots using MAN.
- The landscaping design should not include dense canopy forming trees such as Oak and Scots Pine. All trees planted should be separated to prevent canopies and dense vegetation from forming. The berry and fruit bearing species of trees and shrubs should be reduced to less than 30% of the total planting.
Reason: the location of this site relative to the aerodrome means that a canopy of Oak and Scots Pine has the potential to attract roosting/breeding Rooks which could create hazardous flightlines across critical airspace. The berry and fruit planting is a food resource for flocking species of birds that are hazardous to aircraft.

Advisory:

The applicant's attention is drawn to the new procedures for crane and tall equipment notifications. The site will need to have any tall plant operations assessed separately.

It is important that any conditions or advice in this response are applied to a planning approval. Where a Planning Authority proposes to grant permission against the advice of Manchester Airport, or not attach conditions which Manchester Airport has advised, it shall notify Manchester Airport, and the Civil Aviation Authority as specified in the Town & Country Planning (Safeguarded Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosive Storage Areas) Direction 2002.

United Utilities

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

Condition:

The drainage for the development hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with principles set out in the submitted Foul & Surface Water Drainage Statement ref 6059/3 - Dated 28th September 2020 which was prepared by Lees Roxburgh. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

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

Electricity North West

We have considered the above planning application submitted on 8th October 2020 and find it could have an impact on our infrastructure.

The development is shown to be adjacent to or affect Electricity North West's operational land or electricity distribution assets. Where the development is adjacent to operational land the applicant must ensure that the development does not

encroach over either the land or any ancillary rights of access or cable easements. If planning permission is granted the applicant should verify such details by contacting Electricity North West, Land Rights & Consents, Frederick Road, Salford, Manchester M6 6QH.

SMBC Greenspace

Verbally confirmed their support for the location of the proposed children's play areas highlighting the potential for un-fenced, natural, open designs in the green river corridor. Condition(s) needed to approve detailed designs.

SMBC Director of Public Health

Stockport Sustainability Checklist

The submission of the Sustainability Checklist is welcome and a Silver score is achieved for this development (33 out of a maximum 45). The proposed development takes account of natural assets and the need for physical activity which should result in a very pleasant neighbourhood to live and thrive in. There is a proposal to exceed the minimum carbon reduction target for the dwellings by 2.4% resulting in a 15.4% reduction over current Part L of the Building Regulations. However, this will mean that the dwellings may require adaptation in the future to enable them to achieve the GM Zero Carbon Target 2038 as laid out in the GM 5 Year Environment Plan.

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, including the proposed Green Corridor, around the site and linking to wider public rights of way are welcomed as this can help to ensure pedestrians can navigate the site fully encouraging natural surveillance from pedestrian and cycling traffic. 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).

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. In particular, 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 including access to public transport for service needs.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

The scheme is in the Green Belt and it should be noted that GI offers multifaceted health benefits ranging from managing flood risk to tackling stress and its exacerbating effect on health through maintaining views of greenery and wildlife. The proposed delivery of green infrastructure is welcome in public health terms and could help to manage temperatures and extreme rainfall events in an urbanised area, reducing stress and thereby maintaining immunity. Native planting also contributes to managing air quality and enabling net gain in natural capital on a site that is adjacent to green chain and within 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. Enhancing biodiversity by addressing the presence of Protected Species on the site will facilitate strong ecological corridors throughout the surrounding areas, ensuring good health for the human population in this and surrounding areas. 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).

Affordable Housing

The promised affordable housing delivery is welcome in public health terms. It is important to note that a lack of affordable housing can be argued to contribute to widening health inequalities, with additional pressure on the Council's public health and related budgets. Evidence is available to show that affordable housing benefits health in a variety of ways including reducing the stress of unaffordable homes, enabling better food budgets for 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](#)).

SMBC Energy Efficiency

The submitted energy statement is compliant with Core Strategy Policy SD3. The statement commits to exceeding the policy carbon reduction target of a minimum 13% improvement over current Part L of the Building Regulations by achieving a 15.40% reduction in carbon emissions. This will be delivered through improvement to the build fabric and equipment specification. There is currently no intent to go further on this development in terms of low / zero carbon technologies. However, the proposed reduction in carbon emissions will result in a contribution to reducing borough carbon emissions as part of the Greater Manchester target for zero carbon by 2038.

SMBC Waste and Recycling

Please ensure the attached document 'SMBC Recycling Planning' is read to ensure that the site plan/usage meets with our waste storage and access requirements.

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

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

ANALYSIS

It is important to note from the outset that this is not an application for planning permission as planning permission for the development was granted by the Secretary of State on 22 April 2020 (see decision letter appended to this report). Instead, this application seeks the formal approval of details reserved by condition (reserved matters) as follows:

- Access – defined in the Development Management Procedure Order as *“the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in*

terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network”;

- Appearance – defined as *“the aspects of a building or place within the development which determines the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture”;*
- Landscaping – defined as *“the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes (a) screening by fences, walls or other means; (b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and (e) the provision of other amenity features”*
- Layout, defined as *“the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development”;* and
- Scale, defined as *“the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings”.*

Each reserved matter is considered in turn below followed by an assessment of other relevant matters arising.

Members should note that the proposed designs have been the subject of lengthy negotiations with officers informed by two RIBA Places Matter Design Reviews.

Access

Conditions 41 (access parameters) and 42 (off-site highway improvements) attached to the outline planning permission established the strategic access requirements. Condition 41 required the site to be accessed from a four-arm signalised junction on Wilmslow Road. As confirmed by the Council’s Highway Engineer, the proposed details conform to these requirements. The inclusion of a CYCLOPS junction is welcomed insofar as it will help promote walking and cycling.

Six additional driveway accesses are also proposed from Wilmslow Road, north and south of the new spine road junction. The inclusion of these additional accesses has generated a number of highway safety objections from local residents (see above). Nonetheless, they are considered an appropriate and necessary urban design response that ensure new homes front or face the site’s primary street frontage. Importantly, they will also assist in slowing traffic down along Wilmslow Road and thus improve highway safety.

The proposed main spine road junction and driveway accesses onto Wilmslow Road also necessitate the removal of sections of the existing hedgerow to ensure adequate visibility splay area achieved at the junctions. The applicant is proposing to mitigate the partial loss of the hedgerow through replacement tree and hedgerow planting set back from Wilmslow Road. This is considered to be the best solution given the need to successfully reconcile design quality and highway safety requirements. It is not considered to result in a fundamental conflict with the landscape and visual impact mitigation requirements imposed by condition 40 of the planning permission given the compensatory planting proposed.

The main spine road separates the northern and southern development parcels with secondary and tertiary access roads and streets providing access to the individual dwellings within the development parcels. The detailed design and surfacing on these routes have been considerably improved during the application process and now adopt shared space best practice fully supported by the Council's Highway Engineer. It should also be noted that the proposed designs also provide direct access to the Seashell Trust campus land to help facilitate community use of the Trust's new and proposed sports facilities.

The majority of new dwellings would benefit from at least two off-street car parking spaces and where only one space is available, visitor spaces and on-street parking are considered sufficient to meet likely demand. This level of provision complies with the Council's policy requirements and is supported by the Council's Highway Engineer. Each dwelling will also be provided with an electric vehicle charging point and secure cycle storage facilities - secured by further conditions.

The proposed design incorporates the overall route of the public right of way (PROW) crossing the site east to west (Cheadle and Gatley 96) but it is proposed to slightly realign its route to the south of the field boundary hedgerow to improve its aspect in relation to the sun path as the hedgerow currently leaves it in shade. The PROW would also be hard-surfaced to a width of circa 3 metres. These works are considered to be an improvement and are therefore supported in planning terms. This conclusion is supported by the Council's PROW officer. It should be noted that a formal diversion will be required to implement the re-alignment. This level of provision is further enhanced by a north south hard surfaced pedestrian and cycle route within the green river corridor in response to existing use and potential claims highlighted by the Council's PROW officer. Details of these routes would be secured through conditional controls.

Overall, the proposed access arrangements are considered a positive and sustainable response to the site's development and are supported subject to further conditional controls.

Appearance

The existing context set by nearby houses, other than the listed Griffin Farm buildings and Outwood House further south, is detached and semi-detached suburban housing of varying designs. Their unifying characteristics are that they are almost all two storey, red brick buildings with pitched/hipped roofs covered in red and grey concrete/clay roof tiles.

The design of the proposed houses respects this typical suburban context by proposing a variety of traditional house types across the site built in a simple palette of materials. Mock Tudor detailing has been removed at the request of officers. All would be built in red brick with the exception of the white rendered houses at key junctions to emphasise these corner plots and improve legibility. Concrete roof tiles are proposed to be a mix of slate grey and red colours although as currently proposed there seems to be little logic in their application. This was a point raised by the RIBA Places Matter Design Review panel who encouraged the applicant to create subtly different character areas for the respective development parcels north and south of the main spine road. Further detailed design elements are also unclear (such as eaves and fascia colours, canopies, window/door and meter box colours etc.) so a condition is recommended requiring a detailed materials schedule/samples to be submitted for written approval noting that the broad approach is acceptable.

External lighting details are not yet resolved but are the subject of existing conditions on planning permission (conditions 10 and 11).

Some of the larger houses benefit from their own detached garages the appearance of which complement the houses they serve.

Members should note that the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the application suggests that later phases will adopt a different, potentially higher density design with townhouses and more contemporary design.

The proposals are considered to accord with condition 40 of the outline planning permission and the Environmental Statement that accompanied it which required the housing element to relate “*to the local vernacular*”.

Overall, the appearance of the development is considered acceptable subject to further conditional controls over materials and detailed design elements.

Landscaping

The applicant has submitted the following plans in support of the application:

- Landscape Concept Plan
- Fencing Layout
- Hard Surfacing Plan

The proposed landscape design is considered to incorporate the landscape and visual impact mitigation measures required by condition 40, as set out in the Environmental Statement that accompanied the application for planning permission, as follows:

- *The quantum of development considers appropriate residential densities for the area driving a minimum land take required to justify the ‘very special’ circumstance. The layout will locate all development to the west of the site to take advantage of the existing townscape character and protect a degree of openness to the retained greenbelt to the east.*
- *Creation of a development edge which relates to the existing street and settlement Character.*
- *Reinforcement/ further creation of a green corridor along the watercourse edge and Public Right of Way within the residential development*
- *Offset distances along the development edge to Wilmslow Rd including the retention of the existing hedgerow and further tree and shrub planting*
- *Back to back gardens along the Syddall Avenue development edge, and associated area of green space to the corner of Wilmslow Road and Syddall Avenue.*

The proposed layout and overall landscape design approach was supported by the two RIBA Places Matter Design Reviews carried out during officers consideration of the application. A number of improvements have been secured including the provision of an enhanced open paddock area in the south western corner of the site to provide a valuable informal public amenity space in the setting of the listed Griffin

Farm; additional tree planting across the site; and compensatory hedgerow planting to mitigate necessary losses.

The landscaping of private rear gardens is left to the new homeowners to undertake to their specification, which is considered a typical and appropriate response.

Responses to the application from consultees and the public have however highlighted a series of detailed design issues that require further revisions secured by further condition(s).

These include:

- the need for a ground levels condition given public concerns about drainage (see below);
- the need for revised detailed planting proposals in response to concerns raised by Manchester Airport, the Council's ecologist and arborist; and
- the need for revised boundary and plot enclosures to ensure fences and walls are hedgehog friendly (see below).

Subject to the imposition of these further conditions, officers support the proposals.

Layout

The proposed layout is considered to satisfy the access requirements from Wilmslow Road (condition 41) and the landscape and visual impact mitigation measures required by condition 40, as set out in the Environmental Statement that accompanied the application for planning permission, as follows:

- *The quantum of development considers appropriate residential densities for the area driving a minimum land take required to justify the 'very special' circumstance. The layout will locate all development to the west of the site to take advantage of the existing townscape character and protect a degree of openness to the retained greenbelt to the east.*
- *Creation of a development edge which relates to the existing street and settlement Character.*
- *Reinforcement/ further creation of a green corridor along the watercourse edge and Public Right of Way within the residential development*
- *Offset distances along the development edge to Wilmslow Rd including the retention of the existing hedgerow and further tree and shrub planting*
- *Back to back gardens along the Syddall Avenue development edge, and associated area of green space to the corner of Wilmslow Road and Syddall Avenue.*

The overall approach to layout was supported by the two RIBA Places Matter Design Reviews carried out during officers' consideration of the application. A number of improvements have since been secured including the provision of an enhanced open paddock area in the south-western corner of the site to provide a valuable informal public amenity space in the setting of the listed Griffin Farm; improved connections to the east west public right of way from the cul-de-sac in the southern development parcel; and the relocation of a further Local Area of Play (LAP) into the next phase of development to provide a larger children's play space.

As discussed elsewhere in the report, the partial loss of the existing hedgerow on Wilmslow Road to create safe access arrangements is an unfortunate but necessary outcome in order to avoid an inward facing development that turns it back on the site's primary Wilmslow Road frontage. This loss is considered to be adequately mitigated by compensatory planting on Wilmslow Road and elsewhere within the site.

The interface between existing houses on Syddall Avenue has been designed to satisfy back-to-back gardens requirement of condition 41 and as a minimum achieve a 25 metre separation between habitable room windows in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

The Council's adopted separation standards between new homes in the development itself are not always achieved. Similarly, some garden sizes fail to achieve the minimum standards set out in the Design of Residential Development SPD, including the gardens of the smaller two bedroom houses. These conflicts, where they do arise, are not considered to justify refusal given:

- the explicit support of Mosscafe St Vincents (the partner registered affordable housing provider) for the designs as proposed given their compliance with the Homes England Housing Quality Indicator standards;
- no breaches occur that would affect the development's relationship with existing housing on Syddall Avenue or elsewhere;
- all future occupants would be aware of property's proportions and relationship with neighbouring dwellings before choosing to move in;
- generous public open space provision within the site has been secured including play areas, the open paddock area, the green river corridor and the site is immediately adjacent to extensive areas of existing greenspace; and
- the overall density of development is dictated by the parameters of the outline planning permission and site specific constraints such as the river corridor and the undeveloped open paddock area resulting in a density that complies with the minimum policy requirements of 30 dwellings per hectare set out in Core Strategy policy CS3 - the proposals deliver a density of circa 29 dwellings per hectare (net site area) or 40 dwellings per hectare (gross site area).

In order to protect the amenity and living standards of future residents, it is considered necessary to remove permitted development rights on plots where standards are not achieved. Condition(s) are recommended accordingly.

Overall, the proposed layout is considered acceptable subject to further conditional controls.

Scale

The scale of the development is considered to be in full accordance with condition 40 of the outline planning permission and the Environmental Statement that accompanied it which required the housing element to be of *"an appropriate scale and massing...relating to the local vernacular"*. All of the proposed houses are two storeys in height and comprise a mix of detached, semi-detached and houses in short terraces that reflect and complement the suburban character and appearance of Heald Green.

In summary, the proposed scale of development respects the existing context and is in accordance with the outline planning permission and Environmental Statement. It

is therefore considered appropriate and in accordance with relevant planning policies.

Conformity with the Environmental Statement submitted at outline stage

The proposed development is Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development. An Environmental Statement was submitted at outline stage that informed decision-making. This led to the imposition of conditions to secure compliance including conditions 40 (landscape and visual impact mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Statement) and 41 (access parameters). As discussed above, no significant conflicts with the Environmental Statement or new significant environmental effects are considered to arise that would require the Environmental Statement to be revised.

Impact on the setting of heritage assets

When granting planning permission for the development, the Inspector and Secretary of State concluded that the public benefits of the development far outweighed the 'less than substantial' harm to heritage assets – including to the setting of the grade II listed Griffin Farm.

During the course of the application process, officers have negotiated enhancements to the amount of retained open space closest to the heritage assets resulting in the inclusion of the open paddock area that respects existing field patterns. The hedgerow enclosing the paddock would be largely retained and the open space enhanced with planting to soften the impact of the development on the setting of the listed farmstead. This solution is now supported by the Council's heritage conservation officer (see above).

The council's heritage conservation officer raises concerns about the partial loss of hedgerows, particularly along the Wilmslow Road frontage. This loss is considered an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of the development given the need to ensure highway safety is not compromised and to achieve a good outcome in urban design terms. The alternative would be an inward looking development that turns its back on the site's primary Wilmslow Road frontage. It should be noted that the greatest loss of the Wilmslow Road hedgerow is because of the new spine road junction that is required by condition 41.

The council's heritage conservation officer also raises concerns about the proposed palette of materials and boundary treatments, this is addressed in the 'appearance' and 'landscaping' section of the report above – further conditional controls are recommended.

It should however be noted that the Inspector concluded that the mitigation measures proposed at outline stage *"provide little meaningful compensation for the loss of the currently open agricultural fields"* and as such he attached *"little weight to such proposals"*. It did not alter the Inspector and Secretary of State's conclusions that the public benefits of the development far outweighed the heritage harm.

Ecology

Members will recall that the site provides habitat for great crested newts (European Protected Species) and that a district level licence was required from Natural England to ensure adequate compensatory habitat is provided elsewhere. Condition 6 of the planning permission prevents development from commencing until either a licence has been secured or written confirmation is received from Natural England

that a licence is not required. The applicant has informed me that a licence application has been submitted and a decision is expected imminently. Members should note that development cannot commence until the requirements of condition 6 are satisfied regardless of the any decision made in respect of this reserved matters application.

Other existing conditions imposed by the outline planning permission require tree and hedge protection (4 & 5), European protected species mitigation measures (7), Construction Environmental Management Plan (8), Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (9) and external lighting (10). None of these conditions have yet been discharged and they remain in force regardless of any decision made in respect of this reserved matters application.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) and the Council's ecologist make a series of further mitigation/enhancement recommendations as follows.

- Planting condition

The submitted Landscape Concept Plan is broadly acceptable but lacks sufficient detail to demonstrate that biodiversity opportunities have been maximised whilst acknowledging the limits imposed by airport safeguarding requirements. It is therefore recommended that a further condition be imposed requiring detailed planting proposals to be approved and implemented – noting that private gardens would be in the sole control of future occupants and therefore should not be overly prescriptive.

- Hedgerows in place of plot and boundary treatments

Whilst it is acknowledged that additional hedgerow planting would be preferable to walls and fences in aesthetic and ecological terms, it is not considered reasonable to impose such a requirement on private boundaries given the length of time hedges take to become established and the lack of privacy and security that would arise in the intervening period. It should also be noted that permitted development rights allow enclosures to be erected without the express consent of the local planning authority - up to 2 metres in height where not adjacent to a highway. It is however considered reasonable and necessary to require revisions to the proposed plot and boundary treatments to ensure that installed enclosures are 'hedgehog friendly' (holes in enclosures to maintain habitat connectivity) given the recent severe and alarming decline in hedgehog numbers in the UK, confirmed by its priority status. The need to install commuting friendly enclosures is identified in the Ecological Assessment that formed part of the Environmental Statement.

- Bat and Bird Boxes

Condition 7 requires bat boxes to be installed in 30% of new dwelling plots and bird boxes to be installed to at a rate of 15% of new houses (see: TEP Ecological Assessment that formed part of the Environmental Statement). A condition is recommended to secure details of such provision within the development. Additional provision would of course be welcomed and will continue to be encouraged.

Drainage

The applicant has submitted Drainage Statements in support of their application. They propose a gravity fed foul drainage connection to the public sewer network on Wilmslow Road.

The proposed surface water drainage is a sustainable drainage solution based on the collection of rainwater that would then be piped (with in-pipe attenuation) to attenuation basins in the green river corridor and subsequently fed into the watercourse that crosses the site. These basins were originally proposed to hold open water but following comments from Manchester Airport in respect of bird strike risk, the basins are now proposed to be 'dry ponds' or heavily planted wetland areas to deter wildfowl. Flows would be restricted to greenfield run-off rates in accordance with policy SD-6. This solution has gained the support of United Utilities and the in-principle support of the Environment Agency (see above). The Council's Drainage Engineer acting as Lead Local Flood Authority are however not yet satisfied that the most sustainable surface water drainage options (i.e. natural infiltration methods) can be reasonably discounted noting the national sustainable drainage hierarchy set out in Planning Practice Guidance. Further information has been submitted by the applicant who believe that natural infiltration methods are not suitable due to unfavourable ground conditions. The comments of the LLFA area on the revised strategy are awaited. Objections to the development have also been received from neighbouring residents citing localised drainage concerns (see above).

Condition 45 of the planning permission requires the submission and written approval of foul and surface water drainage schemes before development commences. This condition has not yet been discharged and therefore provides the necessary safeguards to ensure an acceptable outcome allowing for further dialogue with the LLFA. The concerns of neighbouring residents have however highlighted the need for a further condition in respect of any necessary ground level changes - a further condition is recommended accordingly.

Energy Efficiency

Members should note that the applicant has already discharged condition 46 of the outline planning permission that requires the submission and approval of an Energy Statement demonstrating how the development will comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy SD3. The submitted Energy Statement commits to exceeding the policy carbon reduction target of a minimum 13% improvement over current Part L of the Building Regulations by achieving a 15.40% reduction in carbon emissions. This will be delivered through improvement to the build fabric and equipment specification incorporating waste water heat recovery systems. Condition 46 requires the energy efficiency measures to be implemented as approved.

Affordable Housing provision

As mentioned above, 57 (or 28%) of the proposed new homes would be affordable. 29 would be for social rent and 28 would be shared ownership in accordance with the Section 106 legal agreement accompanying the planning permission. The applicant has collaborated with Mosscares St Vincent's who would acquire and manage the proposed affordable homes. Mosscares St Vincent's are a member of the Stockport Housing Partnership; their subsidiary Mossbank Homes operate from Bredbury and manage eight local estates including one in Heald Green.

The proposed mix of affordable homes is as follows:

- 12 two bedroom homes for social rent;
- 17 three bedroom homes for social rent;
- 14 two bedroom homes for shared ownership; and
- 14 three bedroom homes for shared ownership.

The affordable homes are spread across the development in small clusters as shown on the submitted plans.

In support of the proposals, Mosscares St Vincents have stated:

"I am writing in relation to the Reserved Matters planning application (Ref: DC/078180) at Land at Wilmslow Road submitted by Bloor Homes for the proposed development of 202 new dwellings. Following discussions with Bloor Homes, I am pleased to confirm that Mosscares St. Vincent's Housing (MSV) has now been identified as the preferred Registered Provider to acquire and manage the affordable housing to be delivered on-site.

Background

MSV is a longstanding registered housing provider, working in Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire but with a local focus. We act as community anchor across a range of diverse neighbourhoods, working with stakeholders and development partners to meet housing needs with a genuine focus on people. In Stockport, we are a member of the Stockport Housing Partnership, a formal partnership between Stockport Council and a small number of housing providers, that coordinates its collective efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Stockport and deliver on adopted policy and need data.

We have a strong record of investment and regeneration work across the North West with a total of 7,500 dwellings being managed and maintained by MSV in the area. Of this total housing stock across the region, 1,150 homes are managed by our subsidiary Mossbank Homes in Stockport who operate from a local office in Bredbury. They manage 8 estates including one in Heald Green. We have existing housing management structures in place, these teams work with our new residents and existing communities to ensure that new developments such as the one proposed enhances the area and contribute to providing a balanced, safe and inclusive community. The on-site provision of 57 new affordable homes on land off Wilmslow Road supports this commitment.

Affordable Housing Proposal

In terms of background to the site and the proposed affordable provision, MSV have noted the requirements attached to the hybrid planning permission and Unilateral Undertaking for 30% on-site affordable provision in line with planning policy set out in the Core Strategy policy. In addition, we understand that discussions between Bloor Homes and Andy Kippax, held in January 2020, have informed our proposal which is set out in more detail below. MSV are committed to acquiring and managing a total of 57no. dwellings under this scheme, through a 50:50 tenure split of shared ownership and social rented as follows:

29no. social rented: 12no. x 2-bed dwellings and 17no. 3-bed dwellings

28no. shared ownership: 14no. x 2-beds dwellings and 14no. 3-bed dwellings

In terms of determining house types and dwelling sizes, this has involved a review process of the proposals in conjunction with Bloor Homes. We fully support Bloor's track record for design quality and welcome the mix of architectural approaches being proposed, with 5 different house types covering the affordable housing provision. In terms of floorspace the 2-bed dwelling types are 68sqm while the 3-bed dwelling types range from 70sqm to 87sqm. The proposed house type mix will ensure that 100% of all houses are delivered in accordance with Homes Quality

Indicator (HQI) standards. We are therefore fully supportive of the design quality and size being proposed which will ensure that our customers' needs continue to be met.

We note from the Proposed Site Layout that the affordable provision is sufficiently distributed across the site and integrated with other tenures through the quality of architecture and landscaping measures. This will help promote a sustainable, mixed community alongside other tenure types which is central to our core objectives. From a management perspective, having the proposed siting of affordable tenures in relative proximity to one another is also welcomed. We would be happy to engage in discussions on this matter with the Bloor and SMBC as required.

Affordable Housing Demand

Bloor have developed the scheme in response to demand data and delivers a mix that is suitable to the local community and housing market. This includes evidence from the Council's Housing Needs Assessment (2019) which 'raises serious concerns over the relative affordability of accommodation across most tenures within the borough, and particularly for the key workers and wage earners considered'. The ability for households to raise substantial deposits has been identified as a key constraint which prevents so many from accessing open market housing. It is therefore all the more important that affordable housing provision meets the right needs, which we believe the proposed affordable mix achieves.

From experience we confirm that there will be strong demand for the full range of proposed affordable homes, particularly as they are all houses; a property type which is always in demand. This supports data set out in the Housing Needs Assessment (Table ES1) which identifies affordable needs within Heald Green as focusing on three-bed (38.5%) and two-bed dwellings (20.1%). The affordable housing proposal delivers on this clear requirement for Heald Green.

Summary

We are excited to be partnering with Bloor Homes on the delivery of affordable housing for this key site within Heald Green. The proposals have been carefully considered to ensure the development supports the Council's strategy of creating housing that meets the aspirations of residents and supports sustainable growth, through the design and mix of the scheme. We are therefore pleased to be delivering this provision which will secure a high level of affordability in area of demand. In doing so, this reinforces our commitment to continuing to invest in communities across Stockport."

Support for the proposals and the collaboration with Mosscafe St Vincents has also been received from the Council's Strategic Housing Lead Officer (see above).

The terms of the Section 106 legal agreement require a minimum of 30% of the new homes across all phases to be affordable. This is less than the requirement under policy H-3 that requires at least 50% affordable housing provision on Green Belt sites. The Section 106 legal agreement includes a 'clawback mechanism' to secure additional commuted sums for affordable housing up to the 50% level should a surplus be realised in the Seashell Trust's Transformation Project Reserve at the end of its life (expected to be spring/summer 2031) due to the cross funding arrangement embodied in the planning permission.

The Section 106 legal agreement also requires application(s) for reserved matters to be accompanied by "written proposals for the delivery and timing of the provision of

the affordable units". Following the applicant's agreement with Mosscafe St. Vincent's, they have updated their submission to state that the development will be delivered in phases with construction moving north to south with affordable housing delivered alongside open market housing (see attached Build Route plan). This is considered satisfactory and in full accordance with the applicant's planning obligations approved by the Secretary of State - compliance would be secured by condition.

Internal space standards

The second RIBA Places Matter Design Review highlighted that many of the proposed new homes do not meet the nationally prescribed minimum space standards. Calculations based on the submitted accommodation schedule and plans show that none of the two or three bedroom dwellings (105/202) satisfy the nationally prescribed minimum space standards first introduced in March 2015. All of the proposed 4 bedroom (97/202) were found to exceed the standards.

Although non-compliance is obviously disappointing, the national Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that:

"Where a local planning authority (or qualifying body) wishes to require an internal space standard, they should only do so by reference in their Local Plan to the nationally described space standard."

Given the age of Stockport's development plan there is no such local policy requirement and therefore we are currently unable to require compliance with national standards.

Public open space provision and maintenance

Children's Play

The proposed development proposes to incorporate a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and a separate Local Area for Play (LAP) in the north-eastern corner of the site, adjacent to the undeveloped river corridor and Council owned open space to the north.

This provision exceeds the requirements of Core Strategy Policy SIE-2 given the population capacity of this phase of development is 879 and the threshold for a NEAP is 1210.

The location of the NEAP and LAP is considered appropriate and provides the opportunity to provide high quality play space in a natural setting. The proposals do not yet detail the equipment to be provided (approximately 8 in the NEAP together with kick about and cycle play opportunities) or its ongoing maintenance and therefore a condition is necessary requiring further details, including a timetable for making the facilities available for use.

The Council's Greenspace officer is supportive of the proposals and welcomes the opportunity to develop a naturalistic and potentially unfenced offer in this attractive green corridor.

This level of provision negates the need for commuted sums to be paid for children's play.

The separation distances between the NEAP (30 metres) and LAP (5 metres) have been achieved in compliance with policy.

Provision is further enhanced by a generous amount of other green infrastructure within the site that would be publicly accessible, including the undeveloped field closest to the listed Griffin Farm building that would accommodate newly planted trees and a wildflower meadow together with the currently culverted watercourse in open channel. A condition is recommended requiring this and the other elements of amenity open space to be publicly accessible and to be maintained in accordance with details previously agreed

Formal recreation

No provision is made for formal recreation provision on the site and therefore the Section 106 legal agreement covering such provision is engaged. This requires the payment of commuted sums in accordance with policy on the basis that payments are made as follows:

- 50% payable prior to first occupation;
- remaining 50% due before occupation of 102nd dwelling (50% of houses within phase)

Due to the timing of the public inquiry and Secretary of State's decision, the commuted sums governed by occupation triggers are paid on the basis of the former Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance (£351,573.70 – index linked and late payments subject to interest). The uplift in commuted sums introduced by the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD in 2019 only become payable if a surplus in the Seashell Trust's Transformation Project Reserve is realised at the end of its life (expected to be spring/summer 2031) due to the cross funding arrangement embodied in the planning permission. This uplift equates to a further £440,405.37 (index linked and late payments subject to interest).

It should be noted that the proposed layout does make provision for direct community access to the Seashell Trust campus sports facilities including the existing, floodlit all weather pitch which is beneficial, noting the community use requirements secured by condition 15.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be in full accordance with policy SIE-2 and the existing Section 106 legal agreement.

Manchester Airport safeguarding

In response to objections raised by Manchester Airport, based primarily on the risks of bird strike, the proposed surface water drainage attenuation ponds have been changed from open water ponds to heavily planted 'dry ponds' wetland areas to deter wildfowl. They have also requested that dense canopy tree planting is avoided and fruit tree planting reduced to less than 30% of total planting to deter roosting/breeding Rooks. A condition requiring detailed planting proposals will satisfy these requirements. Further requested conditions will be imposed where necessary noting that existing conditions address airport safeguarding concerns raised at outline stage including condition 2 (construction management plan) and 11 (external lighting).

Utilities including fibre broadband

The submitted plans show the location of a proposed sub-station and gas governor to serve the development adjacent to the main avenue in the riverside greenspace. Details of these installations including their enclosures have not yet been supplied so a condition is considered necessary requiring details of to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

NPPF Para 112 states that “*advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being*” and states that planning decisions should “*support the expansion of networks including full fibre broadband connections*”. This is considered to be particularly important following the move to greater homeworking as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The applicant has indicated that fibre broadband connections will be delivered to all homes in the development. A condition is recommended to secure this positive outcome.

Public comments

Objections raised by the public are addressed in the main body of the report although members are reminded that the effect of development on property values are not a material planning consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to further conditions

UPDATE FROM CHEADLE AREA COMMITTEE 20/04/21

The case officer presented the recommendation to members of the committee.

Cllr McCann asked the case officer:

- Why are none of the proposed four bedroom homes affordable?
- Why do the affordable homes have no en-suites?
- Is this not a conflict with the adopted Affordable Housing SPG (2003)?
- Would the shared ownership homes remain as shared equity houses or would the tenants be able to buy the equity they don't own?

The case officer responded by acknowledging the apparent conflict with this policy requirement but that dialogue with the Council's Strategic Housing Lead officer following the selection of Mossacre St Vincent's as the affordable housing provider confirmed that the offer did in fact meet local needs and is therefore considered acceptable. The case officer also confirmed that the occupiers of the shared ownership homes would be able to buy additional equity when their circumstances change and that is a deliberate policy objective.

Cllr McCann then asked the case officer whether the size of the affordable homes would provide adequate internal space as they look small?

The case officer responded by pointing out that the floor plans for the homes are included in the plans package before the committee but that the Council are unable to require developers to build to the optional national minimum space standards (2015) as they are not included as a requirement in Stockport's statutory development plan due to its age.

Cllr McCann then asked why only 30% provision was being made for bat and bird boxes?

The case officer responded by explaining that level of provision was a matter addressed at the outline planning stage and referenced in the Environmental Statement accompanying the application which was accepted by the Secretary of State and embedded in the outline planning permission. The case officer stated that they would continue to encourage a greater level of provision.

Cllr Nottingham asked:

- why an additional six shared driveway accesses are being provided from Wilmslow Road when it is his understanding that only a single vehicular access would be provided at a new four-armed signalised junction and does that not conflict with the requirements of the outline planning permission?
- Such an arrangement would result in a significant loss of the existing hedgerow and diminish the rural aspect and character of the site – is that appropriate?
- He also asked whether such an arrangement is appropriate in highway safety terms and is the design therefore flawed?

In response, the case officer highlighted that condition 41 requires the main access to be taken from Wilmslow Road as now proposed but does not prohibit or preclude the provision of additional driveway accesses. He went on to explain

that officers were keen to avoid houses along Wilmslow Road turning their back on this primary site frontage for urban design reasons and that was supported by the RIBA Places Matter Design Review process.

In response to highway safety concerns, the case officer explained that the proposals have the support of the Council's Highway Engineer and that in his view the proposals will help to reduce the speed of vehicular traffic onto Wilmslow due to the additional accesses and new junction which would dramatically change the character and nature of the area.

In response to the resultant partial loss of the existing hedgerow, the case officer agreed that this was an unfortunate consequence of development but that replacement hedgerow planting would be provided on Wilmslow Road and elsewhere within the site. He stated that in his view the proposed design solution was appropriate given often competing objectives have to be reconciled in a balanced way but acknowledged that members may reach different conclusions.

Kate McClean, the applicant's Planning Director, then spoke in support of the application stating that they hope to start the development in June and remain committed to ongoing community liaison.

Cllr Nottingham then asked the applicant why national minimum space standards are not being met for the two and three bedroom homes. The applicant responded by stating that they use a different design quality indicator, the Housing Quality Indicator (adopted by the former Homes and Communities Agency) and that Stockport's current policies do not require it. She also highlighted their objective of maximising coverage to assist the delivery of the Seashell Trust's Transformation Project and the need to provide a development free area adjacent to the listed farmhouse resulting in an increased density of development. Finally, she highlighted the earlier responses given by case officer to the same question.

Cllr Nottingham then supported the provision of the north south footpath in response to the public right of way claim but asked whether the hard surface of the route could be changed from tarmacadam to a different, 'softer' surface with enhanced landscaping alongside these key pedestrian routes through the site. The applicant confirmed that they are happy to review the materials specification and planting prior to the Planning and Highways Committee or via planning conditions.

Cllr Meller then thanked ward councillors for their work on the application and expressed concerns about the internal space standard position highlighting the need to get a Local Plan in place as quickly as possible to enable the Council to enforce compliance. He stated that even without a Local Plan, non-compliance is a serious concern. He then expressed concerns about the speed limits on roads within the development stating that 20mph speed limits would be more suitable. The case officer responded by stating that intention is for the Council to adopt the roads and that planning condition(s) would secure an appropriate outcome.

Cllr Meller then welcomed the engagement the applicant has taken with members and the wider community.

Cllr Nottingham welcomed Cllr Meller's comments and acknowledged the engagement work Bloor Homes have undertaken but expressed serious concerns about non-compliance with national minimum space standards and

questioned the relevance of the delivery of the Seashell Trust's Transformation Project to achieving those standards. Cllr Nottingham also highlighted the additional driveway accesses onto Wilmslow Road and the wording of condition 41 of the planning permission. He requested that a revised solution be pursued to achieve a single vehicular access point from Wilmslow Road whilst ensuring new homes face onto it similar to the houses on the opposite side of the Wilmslow Road facing the application site based on highway safety concerns. Finally, Cllr Nottingham stated that 20mph speed limits should be imposed on all roads in the development including the main spine road and requested that the Planning and Highways Committee assess all these issues when considering the application.

Cllr Pantall endorsed what Cllr Nottingham said particularly in respect of access, highway safety and speed limits. Cllr Pantall also advised caution when dealing with developer led community consultation as it is primarily focused on the promotion of development.

Cllr McCann echoed the highway safety comments of others and suggested the houses could back onto Wilmslow Road.

Cllr Charles-Jones (Chair) then expressed her disappointment that Green Belt is being lost to development that does not meet basic minimum standards. She also expressed concern that the provision of bird and bat boxes seems low suggesting a 100% ratio. She also concerns about the additional driveways and the effect on amenity that would have for existing residents looking onto the site and the effect on wildlife arising from the partial loss of the hedgerow. She stated that a single access point via a controlled junction would be a safer design solution in her view and that a better solution would be to follow the precedent set by the houses on the opposite side of Wilmslow Road facing the application site.

Cllr Roberts thanked the Heald Green councillors for their scrutiny and input to the debate and questioned whether there were grounds to refuse the application. He suggested that the Area Committee refer the application to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with the committee's comments only – without a recommendation.

Cllrs Meller and Nottingham supported Cllr Roberts' recommendation and **the Area Committee resolved to refer the application to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with member comments only.**

UPDATE FROM PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS REGULATION COMMITTEE

29/04/21

Officers introduced the report.

Cllr Corris asked whether a 20mph speed limit would be imposed on all roads within the development in line with Cllr Nottingham's request at Cheadle Area Committee and can that be a condition of approval? The planning officer responded by saying this is not something that could be conditioned as that is a decision for the Council as local highway authority should the roads be adopted but officers would communicate members' request.

Cllr Bagnall sought clarity on the proposed driveway accesses from Wilmslow Road and the number of properties they would serve. Officers clarified the position by reference to the proposed plans.

Cllr Bagnall then asked whether the retention of the existing, mature hedgerow on Wilmslow Road was a condition of the outline planning permission. The officer responded by saying yes but there was always going to be some loss to provide access to the development site and therefore there is no requirement for it to be retained in its entirety. Officers then explained that the development would result in significant NET gains of hedgerow overall.

Cllr Bagnall invited the presenting officer to comment on the position taken by the Council's Conservation Officer in respect of materials. The officer responded by stating that materials would be conditioned. Cllr Bagnall then asked whether the applicant was aware of the concerns raised by Council's Conservation Officer. The presenting officer confirmed that they were.

Cllr Bagnall then commented that in his view the proposals were still a work in progress noting that the applicant was not directly involved at the outline planning stage. He supported the Council's Conservation Officer's comments and stated that he was disappointed about the partial loss of the Wilmslow Road hedgerow and that further work was needed particularly in respect of impacts on the Griffin Farm heritage asset.

Cllr Corris then expressed her concerns about the number of shared driveways onto Wilmslow Road on highway safety grounds. She expressed her unhappiness with the proposed partial loss of the Wilmslow Road hedgerow but was pleased that the applicant positively responded to some of the concerns raised by Cheadle Area Committee in respect of national space standards. She also requested that it be minuted that speed limits should be set at 20mph on all roads within the development.

Cllr Greenhalgh stated that he was pleased to see the changes made since Cheadle Area Committee. He also stated that six driveway accesses onto Wilmslow Road were never envisaged at outline planning stage and that he doesn't believe that houses on Wilmslow Road facing inwards would be problematic. He went on to state that the highway impact mitigation provided by the new junction would be reduced with the retention of the proposed driveways.

Cllr Charles-Jones then supported the positive changes made in respect of space standards on the open market homes, the proposed increase in bat and

bird box provision and the alternative footpath surfaces providing the alternative surface is wheelchair accessible.

Cllr Charles-Jones then expressed concerns about the proposed energy efficiency measures noting that further adaptations may be required in the future to meet the GM zero carbon target by 2038. She also expressed concerns about shared space surfaces and the problems they cause for guide dog users. She then expressed her disappointment whilst the open market housing has been revised to meet national minimum space standards the affordable houses still do not. She also expressed concerns about the ability of tenants of the proposed shared ownership properties to 'staircase' up and buy further shares of the properties potentially making them open market homes that do not meet national space standards at some point in the future. Her second main concern were the shared driveways onto Wilmslow Road and the risks they pose to highway safety. She noted that the case officer at Cheadle Area Committee stated that they would help to reduce the speed of passing traffic noting that there has only been one accident on Wilmslow Road in the last 5 years. She also stated that whilst there are other existing houses with drives opening out onto Wilmslow Road they have deeper frontages. She accepted the officer conclusion that houses on Wilmslow Road should not be inward looking, however, the development should follow the pattern of development facing the application site where houses face Wilmslow Road but are served by a single access onto Wilmslow Road. She stated that the proposed layout fails to relate well to the existing street and settlement character and thus conflicts with requirements of condition 40. Finally, she stated that as proposed this arrangement has a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and wider amenity. A revised layout, as suggested, would be better for amenity, highway safety and wildlife.

Cllr Bagnall then asked whether the decision should be deferred to enable the applicant to review the proposals in light of the comments made.

Cllr Corris then suggested that the application be deferred to enable the proposals to be reviewed.

The Council's Chief Planning Officer then stated that the access arrangements were a reserved matter at the outline stage and the permission does not preclude the addition of driveway access onto Wilmslow Road. She then stated that the comments made would require the layout of the site to be significantly changed and redesigned. She also made clear that we do not have the policy basis to insist upon the developments meeting the nationally described space standards and therefore the application cannot be refused on that basis. She then stated that the application may be returned to committee in the next cycle unchanged if members resolve to defer the application. She also stated that the Council's Highway Engineer is clear that the proposals would not be detrimental to highway safety so members need to be specific about their concerns. She then stated that the suggested access arrangements would probably result in either houses turning their back onto Wilmslow Road or a potentially significant reduction in the number of new homes on the site which would in turn reduce the amount of affordable housing provided.

The Chair then asked what a deferral would achieve given the changes made since the Cheadle Area Committee.

Cllr Corris then stated that once built the homes will be there for a long time so it is important to get the design right.

Cllr Meikle then stated that the proposal cannot be readily amended as the house are built back to back and proposed that the committee approve the application.

Cllr Harding then welcomed that the developer had revised the open market housing to comply with national space standards stating that we are building in the country some of the smallest houses in Europe and it is not good practice. He then stated that it was scandalous that the affordable houses would not be built to the same standard creating a clear distinction between tenures which is discriminatory and a poor outcome.

Cllr Driver then seconded the proposal to approve given the scrutiny applied at the Cheadle Area Committee, the subsequent revisions and the clear support of the Council's Highways Engineer. He stated that there is a danger of re-designing by committee and that is not the committee's role and it maybe a detrimental step. He also stated that it is not uncommon to see a variety of house sizes in an area.

Cllr Charles-Jones then highlighted the requirements of NPPF paragraph 109 and stated that she believes the proposals conflict with this policy objective.

Members then took a vote on the proposal to grant with the result being five for and seven against.

Cllr Corris then proposed deferral, seconded by Cllr Charles-Jones. Members then voted on deferral with the result being ten for and two against.

The decision was deferred to the next Planning and Highways Regulation Committee.