

<b>Application Reference</b>	<b>DC/080036</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Doodfield Works, Windlehurst Road, Marple Stockport SK6 7EN
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Factory extension
<b>Type Of Application:</b>	FULL – Major (due to site area)
<b>Registration Date:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2021
<b>Expiry Date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2021
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Emma Sheppard
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr S Bateson
<b>Agent:</b>	Mr Laurence Jay

### **DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS**

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

### **SITE AND PROPOSAL**

The application site extends to approximately 11.900 sq m, 1.19ha, and is accessed from Windlehurst Road within designated Green Belt to the south of the settlement of Marple.

The site comprises several existing buildings which are single storey in height and constructed in blockwork with steel frame and profiled sheeted walls and roof. They sit within a concrete yard and are surrounded on three sides with mature tree and hedge planting on the site boundary. The front facing north towards Windlehurst Road is open with parking and a driveway leading to Windlehurst Road. There are large swathes of agricultural land beyond the boundaries to the west and south with no notable land level discrepancies within the site itself.

The site is within designated Green Belt, but the proposed development does not encroach on this and is kept within the existing established boundaries and is to sit on an area of the existing concrete yard.

The application proposal is for the extension of the existing main building to its south-eastern, rear elevation. The extension is to project 15m from the existing rear elevation and extend 44.9m across its width, thus a footprint of 673.5sq m. Incorporating a pitched roof with front to rear ridge and side gable elevations, there proposes two roller shutter doors within its south-western gable end elevation and two within its south-eastern elevation. The plans demonstrate that the extension will be clad in profiled metal composite insulated sheeting panels to its walls and roof.

A Design and Access statement accompanies the application which outlines the need for the extension.

For clarity, the application is a major application by definition. Whilst the floorspace proposed is less than 1000 square metres or more, the site area is more than 1 hectare.

## **POLICY BACKGROUND**

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

The Statutory Development Plan for Stockport comprises :-

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

The application site is allocated within the Green Belt. The following policies are therefore relevant in consideration of the proposal :-

### **Saved UDP Policies**

GBA1.1 EXTENT OF GREEN BELT

GBA1.2 CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT

NE1.1 SITES OF SPECIAL NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

NE1.2 SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

NE3.1 PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF GREEN CHAINS

### **Core Strategy Policies**

CS1 Sustainable Development

CS8 Safeguarding and Improving the Environment

CS9 Transport and Development

CS10 Effective and Sustainable Transport Network

SIE-1 Development Management

SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment

AED4 - Employment Development in Rural Areas

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

## Sustainable Transport SPD

### High Lane Village Neighbourhood Plan

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, initially published on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and subsequently revised and published on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF will be a vital tool in ensuring that we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment.

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

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

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

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

11 - Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; 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.

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

55 - Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Agreeing conditions early is beneficial to all parties involved in the process and can speed up decision making. Conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided, unless there is a clear justification

80 - Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation<sup>40</sup>, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.

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.

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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process

133 - The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

134 - Green Belt serves five purposes: a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

143 - Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

144 - When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

145 - A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: a) buildings for agriculture and forestry; b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it; c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; e) limited infilling in villages; f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would: – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or – not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

#### National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

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

#### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

None recent and relevant

#### **NEIGHBOURS VIEWS**

No letters of representation were received

#### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Canal and Rivers Trust - Based on the information available our substantive response (as required by the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)) is that the Trust has no comment to make on the proposal.

High Lane Village Neighbourhood Forum – No comments to make

Highways – No objections

Environmental Health - No objections subject to informative

Arboricultural Officer – No objections

Nature Development Officer – No objections

Planning Policy – No objections

United Utilities – No objections subject to conditions.

## **ANALYSIS**

### *Principle:*

The application site comprises an established industrial use and is designated as Green Belt, therefore the proposal is subject to paragraphs 134, 135, 143, 144 and 145 of the NPPF and is addressed at a local level by the UDP Review Policies 2006.

The Design and Access statement states that the proposal falls out of the Green Belt because it is on hard standing land. For clarity the land is previously developed land as defined in the NPPF, this does not preclude it from falling within the Green Belt designation. The policy position relating to the Green Belt therefore still applies.

Criteria iii) from UDP Policy UDP GBA1.2 'Control of Development in Green Belt' allows for 'limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings' in accordance with Policy GBA1.5. The UDP policy is echoed by paragraph 145 of the NPPF. This paragraph contains some exceptions for considering the construction of new buildings to be not inappropriate in the Green Belt, inter alia, criteria c) which allows for the '...extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.'

In terms of complying with exception c), neither the NPPF nor Planning Practice Guidance define what is meant by 'disproportionate', nor does there appear to be any authoritative legal judgement providing clarity on the matter. It follows that a decision as to the acceptability of any additional development comes down to a matter of planning judgement in relation to the individual scheme.

In making that planning judgement regard can be had to saved UDP Review policy GBA1.5 which provides a useful rule-of-thumb guideline that rebuilt or replacement residential properties in the Green Belt 'should not exceed the volume of the original dwelling by more than about one third'.

Using a similar rule-of-thumb might be an equally useful guide for non-residential proposals but it is exceptionally important to note that there is no basis in policy, either local or national, to apply this guideline rigidly to the residential development it relates to, let alone non-residential development as proposed here – it is merely a useful guideline in the absence of any more formal definition or guidance.

The proposed extension measures 674m<sup>2</sup> and is approximately 22 % larger than the original building and will be higher by approx. 2m to accommodate an overhead crane. The proposed addition falls well within a third of the original size and the height difference is not so significant or disproportionate to the original building.

It is therefore considered that the proposed extension meets UDP Review policy GBA1.5 and is considered to be not inappropriate development in the Green Belt as per the NPPF.

### **Openness**

Paragraph 133 of the Framework advises that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Openness has both a visual and spatial dimension and the absence of visual intrusion does not, in itself, mean that there is no impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

As mentioned above the proposal is considered to be a proportionate addition to the original building. There would also be no significant encroachment into the surrounding countryside as a result of the proposal as the site is already within industrial use and would be situated within an established envelope of existing development. Therefore, whilst the proposal would have some effect on openness, bearing in mind that it is not inappropriate development, it is considered that the effect on openness is not so significant that it causes harm to the Green Belt or conflicts with the purposes of including land within it.

On this basis, it is concluded that the proposal complies with the policy position relating to the Green Belt.

Paragraph 80 (NPPF) states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

The proposal accords with the aims set out within paragraph 80 of the NPPF supporting the existing business on site, Bateson Trailers, and the local needs within this employment/commercial site. The proposal for the erection of the extension is required for operational purposes of this established facility. The principle of this development is therefore acceptable.

#### *Visual amenity:*

The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning process should achieve, according to the NPPF. Paragraph 124 explains that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.'

Within the Core Strategy this objective is expressed by means of policy SIE-1, with the accompanying text similarly noting that 'Development that is designed and landscaped to the highest contemporary standard, paying high regard to the built and/or natural environment within which it is sited, will be given positive consideration.' It has been concluded that Policy SIE-1 is consistent with the NPPF.

In October 2019 the Government published its National Design Guide. It is based on national planning policy, practice guidance and objectives for good design as covered in the NPPF. The document outlines the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics. The first such characteristic is 'context'. This is defined as 'the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.' A well-designed development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surroundings context beyond the site boundary, it is continued. 'Identity' is a further characteristic. 'The identity...of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and

infrastructure combine together and how people experience them.’ It continues that ‘well-designed places have a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with.

The site is an established commercial unit which is stand alone and one which has a particular character reflective of its form and function. The location is characterised by surface level car parking to the frontage accessed by a modest service road. The proposed development would involve the extension of the existing building to its south-eastern elevation. Efforts have been made to ensure that the proposed development would reflect the existing appearance and palette of materials present within the site comprising profiled metal composite sheeting panels and natural grey blockwork to the walls and profiled metal sheeting panels to the roof.

Given the above, and despite the overall increase in height from the main ridge of the existing building, it is considered that the proposal constitutes a reasonable design response which is reflective of the main building and of its use. Further to this, the site is set back considerably from Windlehurst Road which ensures no direct adverse impact upon the street scene at this point which satisfies the requirements of Policy CS8 SIE-1 of the Core Strategy, the NPPF and the National Design Guide.

#### *Residential amenity:*

Given the siting and scale of the proposed building, it is not considered that the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties would be adversely affected by the proposed development. Further to this, the separation distances achieved along with the siting of the extension would not be considered to result in an any adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity.

It is also to be noted that no letters of representation were received during the neighbour consultation period.

The proposed development is considered acceptable and can be accommodated without causing undue harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or adverse effect on quality of the surrounding area as such the proposal complies with requirements of Policies CS8, SIE-1 and SIE-3.

#### *Trees:*

The proposed development site is located within the grounds of the commercial property and informal grounds of the site predominantly on the existing hardstanding area. The plot is comprised largely of informal grounds/woodlands and hardstanding.

The Council’s Arboricultural Officer was consulted and confirmed that there is no Conservation Area designation, however, there are legally protected trees within the site or that would be affected by the development (UDC of Marple No.1 1950)

The proposed development of the site predominantly sits within the existing hardstanding area and the proposed new development will not have an impact on trees and hedges on site. A full tree survey has not been supplied as part of the planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing trees



and where applicable which trees could be retained to increase the amenity levels of the site with retained mature trees, but due to the limited impact it's felt this is not required.

The proposed development will not impact on the specimen trees/shrubs on site, but damage could occur from construction traffic entering site, for this reason an informative for protecting retained trees is required as well as an indicative landscaping scheme showing the site at the end of the proposed works.

The site is subject to a tree preservation order due to its importance in the local area and so no trees should be removed or impacted on during the construction of the new developments, but looking at the plans and the protected woodlands in the site it raises no concerns as the woodland is located at the rear of the site fully away from the development.

The development will need to supply informative for protective fencing/restrictions in accordance with root protection plan and advisory notices to prevent any damage, accidental spillage or compaction on the trees and their root systems, the full restriction to the side of the site will need to be in place prior to any works commencing on site and no site compounds will be allowed in the area too.

In principle the design will not have a negative impact on the trees on site and within neighbouring properties, therefore it can be accepted in an arboriculture aspect at this time with the requirement for consideration/protection of trees.

The access point for the development will not have a major impact on the amenity of the area and open up the wooded area to change the tree-scape of the area and impact on key wildlife and biodiversity benefits this site currently offers, with limited details on how they propose to replace and more importantly enhance the site.

Subject to conditions relating to the protection of the existing trees and ensuring no tree shall be cut down, topped, lopped and destroyed, the proposal complies with policies CS-8 of the Core Strategy and saved policies NE1.1; NE1.2 and NE3.1 of the UDP.

#### *Highways:*

The proposed 675m<sup>2</sup> extension is not of a size which would in itself generate a level of additional traffic to the site such as to result in significant detrimental impact on the safety or operation of the local highway. Around 14 additional vehicle trips per day would be expected with no changes proposed to the vehicular access to the site.

The existing general parking provision is judged to adequately serve the proposed increased floorspace and additional employees. The application proposes 1no. disability space and 4no. cycle spaces with no motorcycle parking spaces noted.

Parking standards require minimum provision of 1 cycle space per 700m<sup>2</sup> GFA which equates to 5 spaces. Cycle parking provision should therefore be upgraded. Disabled parking provision should be a minimum of 3 spaces. There should be a minimum of 2 spaces for motorcycles. Subject to the imposition of a condition seeking submission of an updated parking layout to meet current adopted standards,

the proposal complies with policies CS9 and CS10 of the Core Strategy and the Sustainable Transport SPD.

#### *Ecology:*

The building proposed for extension appears to offer very limited potential to support roosting bats owing to its construction and poor thermal properties. The proposed works are therefore considered to be of low risk to roosting bats and I would not consider it reasonable to request a bat survey as part of the current application.

From reviewing aerial imagery and mapping a ponds is present within 250m of the proposed development area (approx. 190m to the west). Ponds and their surrounding terrestrial habitats have potential to support amphibians such as great crested newts (GCN) and also toad (which are a UKBAP Priority Species and listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act as a species of Principle Importance). No records for GCN exist within the pond but this may be a reflection of a gap in the baseline data rather than confirmation of absence. GCN receive the same level of legal protection as bats (outlined above).

Habitats within the proposed development area appear to be of very limited value for GCN (hard standing). Although newts can travel up to 500m from a pond, review of trapping data (Creswell and Whitworth, 2004) has shown that most GCN occur within 50m of ponds with few captures recorded at distances over 100m from ponds. The risk of GCN being impacted by the proposed works is therefore considered to be limited – particularly if best practice reasonable avoidance measures are followed during works.

Records for badger exist in the wider area. Badgers and their setts are legally protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Habitats within the application site are unsuitable for badger. Precautionary working measures can be adopted during works to minimise potential disturbance to any badgers which may pass through the site.

The works are considered to be low risk to roosting bats. Bats can sometimes roost in seemingly unlikely places however and so it is recommended that an informative is attached to any planning consent granted so that the applicant is aware of the potential for roosting bats to be present. It should also state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity. If at any time during works, evidence of roosting bats (or any other protected species) is discovered on site, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

If any works are proposed during the nesting bird season (which is typically March-August, inclusive), then the following informative should be used as part of any planning consent: Trees, scrub, hedges and structures are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Some of these features are present on the application site and are to be assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been

undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present.

No tree removal is anticipated to be required to accommodate the proposals. All retained trees should be adequately protected from potential impacts in accordance with British Standards and following advice from the Council's Arboriculture Officer.

The risk of great crested newts being impacted by the proposed works is considered to be low. It is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures (RAMs) are implemented during works to minimise the risk of impacting amphibians and also to prevent terrestrial habitats on site from becoming more suitable for amphibians during construction works (such as through the creation of rubble/spoil piles). Suitable measures include: storing materials on raised pallets or in skips; a ramp (such as scaffold board) to be placed in any excavations left uncovered overnight to prevent wildlife from becoming trapped; and in the event that great crested newts are discovered on site, all works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice. These RAMs should be conditioned as part of any planning consent granted.

Records for badgers exist in the wider area and so it is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures (RAMS) are adopted during works to include provision of ramps in any excavations left uncovered overnight and open pipes >20mm diameter to be capped off to prevent badgers becoming inadvertently trapped. This can be attached to any planning consent granted as a condition.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). A suitable measure includes the provision of bat and/or bird boxes on retained mature trees bordering the site. Woodcrete/woodstone boxes (or similar alternative) should be provided as these have greater longevity than timber boxes (see for example Habibat and Schwegler boxes). The boxes should be placed minimum 4m high and in an unlit area. In addition, any proposed landscaping should comprise wildlife-friendly (preferably locally native) species and any proposed lighting should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance.

Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring installation of bat and bird boxes, the proposal accords with policy CS8 of the Core Strategy and saved policy SIE-3 of the Unitary Development Plan.

#### *Contaminated Land:*

The proposed development site has been identified as potentially contaminated due to its current/former use as an engineering works. As such during the proposed development, the developer should keep a watching brief for any unexpected contamination and if this is found or suspected they should stop and report to the Local Planning Authority. An informative is to be placed on the decision.

#### *Flood Risk:*

As confirmed by the Environment Agency, the site is located within flood zone 1 which is an area with a low probability of flooding, therefore no flood risk assessment is required.

## **SUMMARY**

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF establishes three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental and Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The application site is located within the Green Belt and it is considered that the proposed extension is considered appropriate development within the Green Belt and one that will not adversely impact upon the openness. It is recognised that the proposal does not comply with the requirement of criteria (iii) of saved UDP policy GBA1.2, being an extension to a commercial unit. However, due to the fact that this criteria is in direct conflict and inconsistent with Paragraph 145 (c) of the NPPF, it is considered to be outdated and should not be apportioned any weight, in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 213 of the NPPF. On this basis, the proposal represents a Green Belt exception for the purposes of Paragraph 145 (c) of the NPPF, does not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is considered to be fully justified as a departure to the development plan.

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

Given the conflict with criteria (iii) of saved UDP policy GBA1.2, the proposal remains a Departure from the Development Plan. Accordingly, should Members of Marple Area Committee be minded to grant planning permission, the application will be required to be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee as a Departure from the Development Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

## **MARPLE AREA COMMITTEE (23/06/2021)**

The Planning Officer introduced the application and highlighted the pertinent issues of the proposal.

There were no requests to speak in support or in objection to the application.

Members sought clarification with regard to whether or not any letters of objection had been received to the application, as it was understood that objections had been raised on the grounds of additional HGV traffic generation where issues had been raised in the past. Members were of the opinion that a site visit should be undertaken

to assess these issues. The Planning Officer confirmed that Visiting Team site visits were not being undertaken at the current time. The Planning Officer referred Members to the report, which confirmed that no letters of representation had been received to the application. The Planning Officer advised Members of the conflict between saved UDP policy GBA1.2 and the NPPF referred to within the report and explained the reasons why the proposal was considered acceptable as a departure in this particular case. Members sought clarification as to how traffic generation resulting from the proposal was assessed. The Planning Officer advised that this had been assessed by the Highway Engineer on the basis of the proposed additional floorspace. The Planning Officer also advised Members of the requirements of the NPPF, which states that development should only be refused on highway grounds of the impact on the road network would be severe. The Planning Officer confirmed that the Highway Engineer had not raised objections to the proposal and considered the scheme as acceptable. Members sought further clarification with regard to the Green Belt, highways issues, impact on trees and the extent of neighbour notification undertaken on the application. The Planning Officer advised that, whilst the proposal was contrary to saved UDP policy GBA1.2, it was compliant with the more up to date NPPF, and for this reason, the proposal was considered to be acceptable as a departure. The Planning Officer confirmed that no objections had been raised to the proposal from the Highway Engineer with regard to additional traffic generation. The Planning Officer confirmed that, whilst existing trees on site were subject to a Tree Preservation Order, there was no requirement for the submission of a Tree Survey due to the fact that the proposed extension would not impact on existing trees on the site, as referred to in the Arboricultural Officers comments. The Planning Officer confirmed that neighbour notification had been carried out in accordance with adopted procedures and a site notice had been displayed. Members sought clarification as to whether or not the High Lane Village Neighbourhood Forum had commented on the application. The Planning Officer confirmed that the Highway Lane Village Neighbourhood Forum had been consulted on the application and confirmed that they did not wish to make comments on the application. Members raised further concerns to the neighbour notification undertaken on the application and lack of consultation with High Lane Residents Association, however it was noted that High Lane Residents Association could have viewed the application via the weekly list of applications. Members raised serious concerns regarding traffic generation and impact on the highway network, however noted that this may be difficult to defend at appeal. It was advised that Members of Planning and Highways Committee were informed of the concerns raised by Marple Area Committee on traffic generation and highways grounds. The Planning Officer acknowledged the concerns raised by Members, however advised that should Members resolve to refuse the application, there would need to be clear planning grounds to do this that may need to be defended at appeal and bearing in mind no objections had been raised by the Highway Engineer.

Following the debate, it was proposed and seconded that the application was referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with a recommendation to grant and a vote was taken (3 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions). As such, it was resolved that the application was referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with a recommendation to grant.

