

ITEM 2

Application Reference	DC/077983
Location:	Ludworth Primary School Lower Fold Marple Bridge Stockport SK6 5DU
PROPOSAL:	Extension to South Western elevation of building to comprise new classroom, entrance, lobby, reception office and entry corridor. External alterations to building to include new and replacement windows and doors. External hard landscaping to include ramps, steps and security fencing. Creation of additional, amended and improved car parking spaces at Brabyns Park Car Park.
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	21/09/2020
Expiry Date:	16/11/2020
Case Officer:	Mark Burgess
Applicant:	Stockport Council - Design and Technical Services
Agent:	AHR Building Consultancy Ltd

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Marple Area Committee. Application referred to Committee due to receipt of number of letters of objection, contrary to the Officer recommendation to grant. Application also called Up by Councillor Allan.

**Note – The application was advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan in error*.*

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the extension to the existing building and development within the site of Ludworth Primary School and the creation of additional, amended and improved car parking spaces at Brabyns Park Car Park in Marple Bridge. In detail, the proposal would comprise the following :-

Development at the Ludworth School Site

The proposal would comprise the erection of a 120 square metre single storey extension to the South Western elevation of the existing School building to comprise a new classroom, entrance, reception office and entry corridor. Together with the proposed extension works, internal remodelling of the building would be undertaken to rationalise the internal spaces to form a further classroom and ancillary spaces within the existing School building. External alterations to the existing building are proposed to include new and replacement external windows and doors.

The proposed development at the School site would include the modification of external hard landscaping to the South West of the existing School building, to include the creation of access ramps, steps, external play areas with associated

retaining walls and security fencing. The proposed external hard landscaping would provide improved wheelchair access to the new main entrance area and level access to and from the proposed new classroom to facilitate continuous external play provision.

No significant changes are proposed to the layout of the School site, with the existing access and servicing arrangements remaining unchanged. Minor amendments are proposed to the sites existing car parking to the North East of the existing School building, comprising the conversion of 3 standard parking spaces to 2 disabled parking spaces. Additional parking for cycles and children's scooters is proposed, along with the relocation of the existing cycle parking to a new compound to the South West of the building.

There is a Borough wide initiative to provide pupil places at Schools, supported by the Government, to respond to an increasing pupil population and Ludworth School has been chosen for development and expansion. As a result of the proposed development, the number of pupils at the School would be increased by 79, from 341 as existing to 420 as proposed. School staff numbers would be increased by 2, from 40 FTE as existing to 42 FTE as proposed.

Development at the Brabyns Park Car Park Site

Included within the planning application are proposed improvements to an existing car park within Brabyns Park to accommodate 20 cars, accessed via the existing access road which serves the park. The strategy would be for this car park to be used as a 'Park and Stride' facility at School drop-off and pick-up times, in an attempt to mitigate additional traffic congestion and parking issues on Lower Fold in proximity to the School.

The proposed car park improvements would comprise the provision of a new pedestrian walkway leading down to the car park level. The road surface to the proposed improved car park would be formed in a tarmacadam surface and it is proposed to improve the existing parking bays and form the new parking bays with a grasscrete surface. Retaining walls would be formed to the new parking bays to allow the bays to be cut into the existing banked grass. The existing footway to the Northern end of the car park would be refurbished, with the route maintained. The car park improvements would also include the provision of lighting columns for illumination.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents :-

- Design and Access Statement.
- Transport Statement.
- School Travel Plan.
- Tree Survey Report.
- Ecological Constraints Survey.
- Bat Scoping Survey.
- Bat Presence/Absence Report.
- Bat Presence Survey and Roost Characterisation Assessment.
- Bat Method Statement.

Details of the design and siting of the proposed development are appended to the report.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site at Ludworth Primary School is located on the North Western side of Lower Fold in Marple Bridge and comprises the main stone built and pitched roofed original School building to the front (South Eastern) portion of the site and a number of later extensions to the rear (North West). The wider School site comprises parking areas to the North East of the School building, hardstanding to the South West of the School building and a playground to the North West of the School buildings, with playing fields further to the West. Separate pedestrian and vehicular accesses are taken from Lower Fold to the South East. The School site is adjoined to the North East by residential properties on Pear Tree Close and to the South West by residential properties on Lower Fold. Levels in and around the School site slope down from North East to South West and from South East to North West.

The Brabyns Park car park site is located to the West of the School site on the opposite side of the River Goyt and comprises a partially surfaced car park, with areas of informal landscaping. Access to the car park is taken from the existing access road into Brabyns Park which is served from Lower Fold. To the North of the car park is a Council Depot, to the East of the car park is the River Goyt and to the West of the car park is a wooded area, with the access road beyond. Residential uses on Brabyns Brow exist to the South of the car park. Levels in and around the car park slope down from South to North and from West to East.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Statutory Development Plan for Stockport comprises :-

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

The Ludworth Primary School site is allocated within a Predominantly Residential Area, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map and within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area.

The Brabyns Park car park site is allocated within the Green Belt, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map, within the Goyt Valley Landscape Character Area and within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area.

The following saved UDP and Core Strategy DPD are relevant in consideration of the proposed development :-

Saved UDP policies

- LCR1.1 : LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS
- LCR1.1a : THE URBAN FRINGE INCLUDING THE RIVER VALLEYS

- HC1.3 : SPECIAL CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS
- EP1.7 : DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK
- GBA1.1 : EXTENT OF GREEN BELT
- GBA1.2 : CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT
- CTF1.1 : DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES
- CDH1.2 : NON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- CDH1.9 : COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Core Strategy DPD policies

- CS1 : OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE
- SD-1 : CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
- SD-3 : DELIVERING THE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES PLAN – NEW DEVELOPMENT
- SD-6 : ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
- CS5 : ACCESS TO SERVICES
- AS-2 : IMPROVING INDOOR SPORTS, COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION FACILITIES AND THEIR ACCESSIBILITY
- CS8 : SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT
- SIE-1 : QUALITY PLACES
- SIE-2 : PROVISION OF RECREATION AND AMENITY OPEN SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS
- SIE-3 : PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT
- CS9 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- CS10 : AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK
- T-1 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- T-2 : PARKING IN DEVELOPMENTS
- T-3 : SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

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

- SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SPD

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, initially published in March 2012 and subsequently revised and published in July 2021 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.

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

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

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

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

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

- a) An economic objective*
- b) A social objective*
- c) An environmental objective'*

Paragraph 11 states *'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means :-*

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

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

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

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

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

Paragraph 38 states *'Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way..... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.*

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

Paragraph 219 states '*existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*'.

National Planning Practice Guidance

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- DC048373 : Single storey reception classroom extension : Granted – 13/12/11.
- DC039853 : New ramp and stepped access(es), together with external works including replacement fencing and landscaping (Retrospective) : Granted – 11/09/08.
- DC026555 : Remove/demolish existing mobile units and erect 3 classroom extension along with tarmac area and remedial works : Granted – 10/01/07.
- DC012894 : Installation of 2 no. security gates to front entrance, activity trial and basketball training goal on playing field and provision of wheelchair accessible path to perimeter of playing field : Granted – 03/12/03.
- DC004111 : Classroom extension (Re-submission of DC002365) : Granted – 25/06/01.
- DC003655 : Erection of timber storage shed : Granted – 25/06/10.
- DC002365 : Classroom extension : Granted – 03/01/01.
- J.64722 : Proposed nursery unit : Granted – 30/09/96.
- J.45785 : Proposed mobile classroom : Granted – 14/07/89.
- J.37088 : Erection of toilet block : Granted – 18/09/86.
- J.36489 : Erection of mobile building – classroom : Granted – 24/06/86.
- J.6960 : School extension and access for Ludworth Infant School : Granted – 12/10/76.
- J.2900 : Renewal of Planning Consent for proposed new infants school : Withdrawn – 12/09/75.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

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

Letters of objection from 24 properties have been received to the application. The main concerns raised are highlighted below :-

Parking, Traffic Generation and Highway Safety

- Traffic issues are the main objection to the application. At the original consultation event, Council staff and representatives were overwhelmed by traffic questions.
- Issues of parking are well known and issues arising from meetings involving parents, school, residents, police and Councillors have resulted in few sustainable improvements.
- Parking in Marple Bridge is already very limited, with historic and well documents problems with having 2 Primary Schools, both with no parking and which attract children from out of the area. Traffic and parking around Ludworth and St Marys schools is already horrendous and dangerous. School traffic only makes a bad situation much worse.
- Issues are taking place before the school has even started to expand.
- Concern about increasing the number of children on the safety or children travelling to the school.
- Concerns over increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Concerns about the implications that an expansion of the school has for traffic congestion and parking. This has been a problem for residents for many years.
- Issue lies around the prospect of expanding the school to take in higher numbers of pupils. The proposal will only exacerbate the situation.
- To add a further classroom to the school will exacerbate the situation and further reduce the quality of life for residents who have already suffered an increased impact in their everyday lives.
- Before increasing pupil numbers further and making matters worse, the school and Local Authority must ameliorate the existing problem.
- Increased likelihood of road traffic accidents and risk to motorists and pedestrians due to additional congestion caused by the parking of school related vehicles.
- Increase in traffic and problems with parking on Lower Fold and surrounding streets such as Pear Tree Close and Waters Edge.
- The surrounding road network of Town Street, Lower Fold, Hogarth Road, Bonnington Rise, Pear Tree Close and Waters Edge is narrow and offers very limited parking. The area also possesses significant road hazards comprising dangerous junctions (with and without traffic lights) and crossings with significant pedestrian activity. Vehicles often travel at excessive speeds downhill from Brabyns Brow and Glossop Road towards the school zone.

- Parents arrive early at the start and the end of the school day to claim a parking space or park on restricted areas or across drives, making access to side roads difficult and pavement use dangerous.
- Parents park illegally and irresponsibly on pavements, corners, close to junctions, on blind bends, across access routes and on double yellow lines.
- Local residents find it difficult to drive onto Lower Fold from side roads due to illegally parked vehicles obscuring the junctions.
- Illegal parking on Lower Fold is dangerous bearing in mind the proximity to the junction of Hogarth Road and Pear Tree Close. Parking here dangerously obscures the vision of cars existing Pear Tree Close and make it difficult to see traffic.
- Pear Tree Close was given double yellow lines and there are still ignored by parents. Existing double yellow lines on Pear Tree Close and double white lines on Lower Fold are flouted by parents.
- Cars mount pavements with no due care and attention to pedestrians. Parents complain that cars mount the pavement on Lower Fold, putting their children in danger. Pedestrians with pushchairs or wheelchairs struggle to pass the parked cars.
- Residents find parking extremely difficult at school drop-off and pick-up times. Parents park illegally and dangerously outside residents house and mounting pavements. Parents pull onto the pavement to park, park on blind bends, block driveways and leave their engines running. Every time residents pull of their drives they are risking their lives with the speed people drive along Lower Fold.
- Parking on Lower Fold causes a hazard for children being dropped off or walking to school.
- Parents park on dangerous and steep blind bends. Parking takes place on blind bends, even though there are double white lines in the middle of the road, resulting in accidents and near misses.
- Illegal parking impedes road users and pedestrians and restricts access for emergency vehicles. Irresponsible parking along Waters Edge render it completely impassable for emergency vehicles in an area where many residents are elderly.
- Parents use Peak Tree Close as a turning point and drop-off location. Children play out on this road which makes it a high risk of a fatal injury. Residents of Pear Tree Close reverse out of their drives meaning when parents are using it as a turning point, it is a high risk of fatal injury.
- The school car park would have 2 less parking spaces but 2 extra members of staff, which will increase in coming years to allow extra pupil numbers. This will add to the numbers trying to park in the nearest convenient location on Pear Tree Close on pavements for a full working day and impact of limiting the available legitimate space on Pear Tree and make problems worse.

- Disabled residents have not been able to obtain a disabled parking bay outside their property. Teachers directly park outside houses, preventing easy access.
- Delivery vehicles and health visitors find it difficult to access properties or find parking during peak school times.
- Current parking figures on Pear Tree Close : 12 cars park by 8am and remain until 4-5pm, 4 of them on the pavement. These are mainly school staff; 43 cars enter Pear Tree Close seeking to park between 2.30 and 3.30pm. Many park on the pavement, 5-6 routinely park on double yellow lines.
- A formal survey of car parking at school drop off and pick up times should be undertaken and shared with the community. This should be undertaken as soon as possible and the outcome used as the basis for consideration of the planning application.
- A single white line (no parking) should be put in place on Lower Fold from where the double white lines in the centre of Lower Fold highway end, up to the corner of Pear Tree Close where the double yellow lines begin.
- The infrastructure of the Marple Bridge area is already at saturation point. The infrastructure cannot cope with additional cars and traffic.
- The area suffers a high level of traffic congestion and problems, even without school traffic. With school traffic, congestion is significantly increased.
- The amount of school traffic and extra parking on the main road and side roads slows the flow of traffic through the whole of Marple Bridge.
- Marple Bridge is blighted by traffic congestion, caused by drop-off and pick-up of children. This is a long-standing problem which causes long tailbacks in the area. This has been acknowledged as a problem by politicians who were involved in initiatives to improve matters a few years ago which came to nothing.
- School traffic is the primary cause of traffic congestion in the area and renders the local road network virtually impossible to use during school drop-off and pick-up times. Traffic is often at a complete standstill during peak times.
- The volume of traffic at key times in the school day with existing pupil numbers is difficult. The increase in pupil numbers will make this worse. The result would be an unsustainable traffic increase on the road.
- Access and the flow of traffic on Lower Fold and surrounding roads is slow moving at both school start and end due to the volume of traffic. Attracting more cars will make the problem worse.
- The proposed expansion would facilitate the teaching of children from neighbouring wards which are not within walking distance of the school. This will involve a significant increase in the number of car journeys. The roads are only going to get worse due to the demands of the school with people travelling out of Marple Bridge.

- The area around the school has seen many accidents and may occur during the school drop-off and collection times. Lower Fold is well-known to record accidents and damage to properties. Several pupils have either been hit by cars or had near misses.
- The extension will be horrendous and unsafe.
- Pedestrian activity in the area has become more hazardous and difficult. Local parents already fear walking their children to school due to the erratic driving of parents, busy roads and overcrowding. Children in the area will be put at risk as the road is packed and blocked with school traffic.
- The school is situated off a busy main road with the main entrance gate lying directly on the pavement. This causes issues with pedestrians walking on the pavement due to buggies, dogs and parents chatting outside the gate. This is exacerbated by the railings outside the gate, which creates a bottleneck. Nothing in the plan is designed to mitigate or ameliorate this problem.
- Local Councillors have suggested potential mitigating traffic measures, however there are no signs of these in the application.
- Mitigation measures suggested by Councillors included making the car park at the side of the Midland Pub short stay which would give parents a nearby parking option.
- The application does not show any mitigation for the additional traffic and parking resulting from the extension in pupil numbers.
- No consideration or measures have been put in place to take the strain of even more cars on the road.
- Any traffic mitigation measures should be enforceable and permanent.
- Unless restrictive measures are put in place, the traffic and parking issues will worsen with the additional cars the expanded school will bring.
- Strict measures need to be put in place to reduce current road and travel difficulties in the area.
- Unless enforcement measures are introduced, the effect of the proposal added to earlier expansion of school intake will be further parking violations and incidents of dangerous parking. Parking restrictions will need to be actively enforced to ensure compliance. More restrictions on parking in the vicinity of the school are essential and must be supported by effective enforcement.
- Any mitigation would need to be supported by restrictive measures near the school by making parking 'residents only' at school drop-off and pick up times.
- Suggest making more parking bays along Lower Fold with these designated for residents, therefore deterring parents from parking there.

- Pavement parking along the entrance road and along Lower Fold from its junction with Town Street to the Windsor Castle should be prohibited and enforced to provide safe and welcoming walking routes.
- No parking or vehicular access should be allowed on both sides in the immediate locality with bollards introduced to prevent this.
- Many of the proposed parking restrictions would need to be enforceable by Traffic Wardens, rather than the Police.
- Teachers and parents should be instructed to park in the free car parks.
- There are no speed bumps, no 20MPH limit or yellow lines that would limit parents speeding or parking dangerously and illegally.
- An electric gate with fob access should be put in place at the top of Pear Tree Close which should be paid for by the Council/School and is liable to the school. The electric gates should have been put in place when planning permission was granted for Pear Tree Close in the 1970's. Whether or not the expansion gets accepted, the risks have been outlined. The last thing the Council or residents want is a death caused by a highway collision which could have been avoided by the Council putting gates at the top of Pear Tree Close. The gates should be put in immediately, even if the expansion does not go ahead.
- Plans need to be put in place for parents to park in Brabyns Park with a footbridge over to the school.
- Increases in parking availability should be considered by further expanding the Brabyns Park car park uphill from the Midland Pub and opposite the station.
- Segregated cycle lanes should be introduced along key routes to allow safe travel. Cycle stands should be introduced at the school.
- A safe traffic light controlled crossing should be introduced on Brabyns Brow at the canal.
- The proposed additional parking spaces in Brabyns Park is an acknowledgment that a school parking problem currently exists.
- Have the parking spaces in Brabyns Park been created and how many additional spaces does this actually constitute?
- The Brabyns Park 'Park and Stride' will be ignored.
- It is doubted that parents would choose to use the Brabyns Park car park. Parents are not prepared to walk any distance and want to be as near the school as they can be. Where is the evidence that parents would be prepared to walk this distance?
- Parents commuting will not park and walk as studies show.

- The proposal for increased parking at Brabyns park would not help local residents, as they are not widely used by parents.
- The route to the school from the Brabyns Park car park is not suitable for parents, especially those with reduced mobility, buggies and toddlers. There is a steep rise to get to the school, there is no footpath leaving the car park and there would be hazards from school traffic moving in and out of the car park.
- Sceptical of the value of the Brabyns Park car park proposals. Parents will not use this, especially in inclement weather conditions and will continue to park in illegal and unenforced locations.
- There will be a 20 minute walk from the Brabyns Park car park to the school. Parents who work will not park there as they will be in a rush.
- Parents do not take advantage of existing parking available in Brabyns Park and prefer to park close to school and limit the distance they need to walk.
- People already use the Brabyns Park car park, therefore the proposal would not increase the capacity of this car park by the amount claimed in the application.
- The plan includes the creation of 8 formal parking spaces in Brabyns Park. However, this land is currently used as informal parking with more than 8 space. The net effect in spending money would be a reduction in spaces.
- The proposed extra spaces as Brabyns Park are insufficient for the planning school expansion.
- There has been no assessment made as to the number of spaces actually required to avoid or reduce existing traffic congestion.
- How is parking in the prescribed car park going to be enforced? The additional spaces will only help alleviate the problem if school traffic is compelled to use the spaces and will not do anything other than offset the additional parking demand caused by the additional classroom.
- If the Brabyns Park car park is encouraged, a pelican crossing over the entrance road to the park should be installed.
- Breaches of law relating to double yellow and double white lines are never enforced so are no deterrent. Parents are not bothered about fines.
- Little has been done by the school/Police/Council Enforcement Officers to address the disregard by parents of existing waiting restrictions and parking dangerously.
- Problems are compounded by the lack of enforcement of traffic regulations. Enforcement by Traffic Wardens is inadequate and the availability of a car camera vehicle has made no difference.
- As soon as Traffic Wardens leave, the problem returns. Although there are serious parking problems, the volume of tickets issued will be zero. Sending a Traffic Warden for one morning will not fix the issue.

- The safety of pupils and children must come first and the planning application does not take this into account. Serious consideration needs to be taken around the safety of pedestrians, pupils and drivers when considering adding more cars to the roads.
- The Council Cabinet meeting in August 2019 undertook to tackle the issues associated with parking with work on a new Travel plan to commence in 2019, to involve the Police and for residents to be kept informed. No action appears to have been taken since then and measures to deal with parking problems which should have been taken years ago are held up while the school plans to expand are considered, heightening the problem. This is unacceptable.
- Representations over the issues were made by residents at the time of expanding the school was first floated. Several ideas for mitigating the problems were proposed and residents were led to believe that they would be kept abreast of subsequent discussions. Nothing more was heard until the notification of the planning application, over a year since representations were made.
- Has the Council any plan to conduct an audit of the density of traffic along Lower Fold and parking congestion on side roads with a view to feeding into the consideration of the planning application?
- There are no existing or proposed provisions for non-members of staff and school contractor vehicles. It would be useful to understand the arrangements to control school and contractor parking arrangements throughout the proposed works and how this will be monitored. Concerns that residents will be confronted with additional illegal and unenforced parking during construction.
- Issues with delivery drivers. There is no space for trucks and vans to drop within the school so they stop on Lower Fold and Pear Tree Close in dangerous and illegal locations. Increasing the capacity of the school will lead to more deliveries.
- The proposed cycle and scooter spaces will have limited impact as parents are reluctant to allow children to cycle and scoot to school with the increase in vehicular traffic.
- The school first approached the Council with regard to access and safeguarding in 2018. The Council agreed to assist only if the school considered providing additional places for Marple. Access and safeguarding issues raised over 2 years ago should not have a bearing on the number of pupil numbers and should have given the Council cause to look elsewhere for increased pupil numbers. If concerns were legitimate, they should have been acted upon at the time and measures put in place without pause or reservation. Could these 'concerns' be a smoke screen for public sympathy to the plans.
- Blinkered approach of the Head teacher and Governors. The proposal is explicit in setting out positive impacts of improvements to the school and benefit to children. The integrity of the proposal is challenged as it does not set out the costs of these benefits to the local community.

- Whilst the requirement for school places is understood, this should not come at the expense of local residents who will be faced with an intolerable increase in traffic, parking issues and air pollution. Residents have rights and these are not being addressed satisfactorily. The Council is far removed from the views of the community.

Travel Plan

- The submission of a Travel Plan from 2002 is woefully out of date, unreliable and invalid.
- Submitting information 18 years out of date is a joke and needs to be reviewed immediately.
- The Travel Plan is an insult and shows the level of contempt those bringing the application have for local residents.
- One the biggest deciding factors of the application will be the proposed Travel Plans. Why are the Travel Plans out of date by 18 years, using data from 2002?
- The Planning Committee should not be using the Travel Plan as a basis for approving the application.
- The Transport Plan as written does not address the issues. The survey is based on data from 2002 which is significantly out of date.
- To use a Travel Plan from 2002 as evidence that the school and surrounding area could cope with an increased capacity is nothing short of lunacy.
- The development has no assessment carried out on the current level of disruption caused by school activity, let alone the future effect of an increased number of pupils.
- Cannot see how an outdated Travel Plan which was drawn up and based on travel patterns in 2002 can be valid for the current situation. If it is not valid, then no Travel Plan has been submitted and a decision on increasing pupil numbers should not be made until this crucial aspect has been addressed.
- The traffic data that has been used is absurd when you take into account the increase in traffic on the roads since 2002. In 2002 there were approximately 28.5 million passenger cars on UK roads, which has increased to 35 million in 2020. Relying on a Travel Plan from 2002 assumes no changes. The statistics in terms of car travel are out of date and must be considered inaccurate.
- The demographics of the area was different in 2002. Road use was lower, the birth rate was lower and there were less houses in the area.
- There needs to be a new updated study on the traffic congestion in Marple Bridge.
- No traffic flow or parking assessment has been carried out since 2002. To approve an increase in the capacity of the school without carrying out an up to date assessment of the likely impact on the area is not acceptable.

- The Travel Plan needs updating with better and current information. The Council will need to do a fresh assessment of how the school expansion will affect traffic and parking and their impacts on residents, parents, children and staff.
- Any expansion proposal must include an up to date, full and proper, third party assessment of the likely impact on the area and recommendation to mitigate the effects. From that, it will be clearly seen that the plan to increase school numbers of seriously flawed and dangerous.
- The submitted traffic data is not a formal traffic survey, just a 'hands up' and informal questionnaire of children and parents. Children aim to please and will have not answered the questions asked but answered how they think they should. The Council should not make such an important decision based in the views of children and information from 2002.
- Since the Travel Plan was produced in 2002, several schools have closed, houses and roads have been built and there has been a significant increase in car usage.
- The Travel Plan references a bus service that has not been in operation for many years and a Crossing Assistant that has not been in post for a number of years. It also mentions a garage on Lower Fold which is a Funeral Directors, an old Coal merchants and bin bags.
- The sections that deals with actions to be taken from 2002 has never been updated. Did any of those actions take place? Traffic is heavier now, pavement parking is worse, enforcement never took place and the plan resulted in no improvements. Traffic and the issues this causes the local community have not been addressed.
- Could it be that so little progress has been made to improve the situation in the intervening years that the school has given up and this is why a recent plan has not been produced?
- The number of children coming from outside the area that is mentioned in the Travel Plan needs updating. The assessment should include an analysis of the catchment area for the school and how many children are coming from outside the area. An up to date plan should be carried out, using officially collected data to provide an accurate picture of the number of children who attend the school from outside of Marple Bridge and to travel to school by car.
- The assessment should consider existing car parking capacity in Marple Bridge and properly provide for an expansion in a sensible manner to ensure that school traffic does not continue to affect the area.
- Existing car parks could be expanded to divert parking from on-road spaces to dedicated off-road spaces. Parents should be compelled to use them by restricting parking around the school during peak times.
- Comments from parents mentioned in the Travel Plan attest to the terrible traffic and parking situations. It is assumed that the Council did not try and get the views of residents at this time.

- Whilst the Travel plan has a focus on the health and safety of children, it fails to address the concerns of residents.
- What is the status of the Travel Plan? Is there a statutory requirement for schools to have such a plan, or is it an initiative by the school management? If the plan is a requirement of government, with what frequency is it expected to be updated?
- The reason why the current pollution and congestion issues have not been divulged is because it would show the area is already in an amber or red alert.
- To provide a Traffic Plan to support the application which is almost 20 years old is condescending and an insult to the intelligence of local residents who know full well what is presented is not an accurate picture of the current situation. This and the limited attempts to engage the local community leads to a belief that there is an attempt to deceive and cover up the whole situation.

Other Issues

- The Council has not been transparent in the application by only notifying a small number of residents in close proximity to the site. Why were residents who were notified as part of the original consultation and logged comments not notified of the planning application?
- The Council should prove that future significant new housing development would not put even more pressure on existing roads. An impact assessment should be provided to support the application which should be at hand with the Council Spatial Framework, where traffic impacts were surely a major part of decision making for preferred sites.
- Why extend Ludworth when additional children on future housing developments would warrant the building of a full new school if the Council is already struggling for school places?
- There have been no new major housing developments approved in the catchment area, therefore cannot see why additional school places are required.
- Questions asked as to why the Council do not wish to utilise the places at High Lane unless they have other plans for building on the Green Belt there.
- The school can accommodate the additional 30 children from the past few years for now, so the extension does not need to be passed.
- Other schools in the local area have places and are said to be operating at under their full capacity and could easily absorb the extra capacity proposed at Ludworth. Plans should be considered to redistribute pupils to other schools in the area, which do not suffer from congestion problems and is not situated on a major traffic route. There should be a more rigorous planning process when expansion of school numbers is proposed.
- The school extension is required due to pressure from outside the catchment area, rather than need for additional places in Marple Bridge which is the wrong reason for the extension.

- Where is the demand going to come from? If it is out of catchment, this would lead to more problems. Families should attend the school in their area, not travelling to other areas adding to problems.
- Although the school went over its Published Admission Number (PAN) from 45 to 60, taking 13 students from outside of catchment, there was in fact places available at schools in High Lane, so local schools were available.
- The intake is due to a shortage of school places in Marple, not Marple Bridge. There are places available in High Lane, yet public money is being used to extend Ludworth. The Council have already admitted that the shortage of school places is elsewhere, but they want to bring children to this school. The school has been accepting an extra 15 children a year for the past 2 years, when High Lane has 20 spaces available. High Lane is closer to where the shortfall of places is, yet public money is being requested to fund the extension.
- Several primary schools have been shut in the area over the years. It is inevitable that school places are required, however adding to a small village is not a sensible answer. Residents should not have their lives impacted because of lack of foresight within the Council Education Department to correctly forecast school placement requirements over future years.
- The selling point for the Council is that the school needs refurbishment. However, to syphon off money for the scheme and pull children from outside the catchment area would cause educational sinkholes elsewhere in the Borough.
- Is it not the case that the school seeks additional space to enhance the funds attracted by additional pupils? This cannot be a valid reason for increase space with all the consequences.
- It would be right and proper to look at why other options have not been considered, including building a new school the other side of Marple.
- Existing residents already rely on the Brabyns Park car park, as they can never park in the public car park next to The Midland or outside houses. This car park is the only viable option residents have.
- Residents have complained about the condition of the Brabyns Park car park for years, as it is dangerous, unlit, uneven and with potholes. The Council declined to fix due to costs, therefore residents are excited at the proposal to improve it. However, concerned that this would be at residents expense. Would residents still be able to park without restrictions of cost of residents permits? Residents and visitors use this area for parking, it should remain available for everyone, at any time with no restrictions.
- Impact of proposed new mesh boundary fencing on an existing mature Wisteria and assurances should be provided that this would remain.
- Overlooking and privacy impact of proposed raised path along the South Western boundary. Opaque screening should be provided above the boundary wall to mitigate the height of the raised path.

- Higher air pollution levels from extra traffic. Pollution and asthma rates will increase. Children suffer from vehicle emissions from cars, causing lung disease in later life. A school should not be considering an extension that would be detrimental to children's health and wellbeing.
- The area is Conservation, why is this ignored?
- 100 square metres of playground would be removed in the development. The grassed field is not played on in winter due to mud, therefore this would restrict the exercise of children and place them together at a time when distancing is important. Removal of play space is ill-considered as a time of rising childhood obesity.
- An outline time plan is an important document in approval of the proposal, given its impact on school staff, pupils and the local area. There does not appear to be a time plan appended to the proposal.
- There will be more children to one teacher ratio, reducing the time teachers can spend with each child.
- In coming to the agreement of taking the additional children prior to the planning application being submitted suggests that the school and Council are confident that the Planning Department will accept it or where they cannot refuse. This is underhand and would suggest the need for an investigation. The Council have not followed due process and could be investigated by the Ombudsman. It would set a precedent that if planning permission is granted, anyone can use the same tactics which begs the question of the need for a Planning Department.
- The fact that the school has already increase to 2 form entry for this years reception feels like the Authority has already chosen to do this and consultation has come after, which is not fair.
- It would be prudent for the Planning Department to be impartial and seek a full, clear and unbiased picture before considering the application.
- The only supporters of the project are parents from out of area and theirs in not an objective viewpoint.
- The Council should survey local residents about whether they are for or against the expansion before continuing with the project.
- There is a strong element of truth in what local residents are saying which should be taken notice of. If we are living in a democratic society, how can a proposal do ahead with so much local opposition?
- The application would not be approved if the quality of life for local residents was taken account of.
- The requirement for school places should not come at the expense of local residents.
- Residents have enough information to take legal action against the application and will do if necessary.

A letter of objection has been received to the application from Marple Civic Society, which raises the following concerns :-

- The submitted plans are difficult to interpret. There is a site plan which indicates the area of redevelopment but the sprawling ground floor plan of the school and its diagonal orientation across all drawings, it is difficult to understand the relative importance of the elevations, especially where they are combined with sections.
- The elevation showing the new entrance is somewhat disjointed and does not relate in any way to the elevations of the old school on either side.
- There is a plethora of plans, including superfluous ones such as window details.
- There is no Design and Access Statement which might have made sense of it all.
- The Travel Plan covers two schools, St Marys as well as Ludworth and consists mainly of the results of surveys of parents and existing means of travel for pupils to the school. Ludworth is the most difficult to approach and deserves a more focussed approach of its own.
- The car park at Brabyns Park has no special arrangements for conducting pupils safely along Lower Fold.
- What are 'the newly designated areas' referred to in the Travel Plan? Are these within the school playground? If so, they should be shown on a site plan.
- There is no link to travel arrangements between Brabyns Park and the limited kerbside parking along Lower Fold.
- The Travel Plan should show year-by-year objectives and improvements across all modes.
- The application indicated that the applicant and the agent are the same. Is the application not in fact made by the Local Education Authority (Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council) and submitted under the General Regulations of the Planning Acts? In cases where the applicant and the Local Planning Authority are one of the same, it is even more important that there is clarity in the proposals, especially in view of their high local interest.

A letter of comment from Marple, Marple Bridge and Mellor Energy Saving Society, which asserts the following :-

- Disappointing that the plans show little in the way of energy saving features that would result in long-term sustainability. A failure to do so is concerning in light of the climate crisis, will result in higher energy bills for the lifetime of the building and may place the building in a category requiring retrofitting should building regulations change.
- The designers and funders should consider amending the design to include the following features :- Higher levels of insulation than the minimum required

by building regulations; under-floor insulation; triple glazing; the addition of solar panels; sustainable heating; addition of electric car charging points; additional sustainability by extending some of these features into the existing building.

- The proposed flat roofs would be covered with mineral felt, which are notorious for their short lifespan. This should be changed to a rubberised membrane that has double the lifespan and will reduce long-term costs.
- The Council should consider improving the network of paths and cycle ways to encourage walking and cycling.

Letters of support from 7 properties have been received to the application, which assert the following :-

- The school is in great need of improvement. The school urgently needs an upgrade to the building infrastructure.
- This is an important build needed to meet the needs of local children and improve the learning environment for current pupils and future generations.
- This is an important development to support education within the local community.
- The additional classroom space will ensure that spaces are available for local families at this outstanding school
- The changes will benefit current pupils and future generations from a safeguarding, wellbeing and educational perspective.
- It will ensure that the premises remain fit for purpose.
- It will support the school team in delivering outstanding education and enable the school to continue to attract high calibre candidates.
- The extension needs to go ahead as planned. Parents applied to the school as they are told that the school was allowing a bigger intake. Parents need younger siblings in the same school as two school runs would not be manageable. It would be unfair to offer less places and risk pupils not getting in.
- The school is in desperate need of extra space and particularly the new entrance to improve safeguarding.
- Pleased to see this investment in the local school which will give the children a school to be proud of. Given that this is otherwise the most underfunded school in the area, this is really important.
- Children only get one chance at their education and it is a shame for it to be spent in inadequate facilities.
- The extension to the school is much needed for pupil safety.
- It is great that additional parking has been considered.

- Existing parking and highway safety concerns are appreciated. The application should be used as an opportunity to review road safety and parking arrangements for the school and St Marys School as they are interdependent. This is an opportunity to fix problems rather than cause more.
- Suggestions have been made to ease parking and traffic issues and problems surrounding the school which should be pursued.
- Whilst there are objections relating to traffic, it is unfair to penalise the school and the children for a traffic issue which is not their causing.
- Making the car park next to the Midland location short-stay could be a solution. Commuting patterns post-Covid will change so less parking spaces will be required for the station. Residents only parking on Pear Tree Close and Lower Fold would help. Permits could be introduced for teachers and people working at the school. A campaign to encourage alternative methods of getting to school is required, along with educating people of the dangers of parking irresponsibly and the environmental impacts of driving to school and idling when parking.
- Could railings be added to the pavement on Lower Fold to improve pedestrian safety?

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Highway Engineer

This application seeks permission for extensions and alterations to Ludworth Primary School so as to create an additional classroom, together with various amendments to the site and amendments and improvements to an existing parking area at Brabyns Park. The proposals will enable the number of children taught at the school to increase from 341 to 420 (an increase of 79) and the number of staff employed at the school will increase by 2 (from 40 to 42 FTE) as a result of the proposals. No changes are proposed to the site's access or servicing arrangements as a part of the proposals, although some minor amendments are proposed to the site's parking facilities. Additional parking for cycles and children's scooters is proposed to be provided. The improved car park in Brabyns Park will accommodate 20 cars. This will be accessed via the existing access road that serves the park.

Discussions have taken with the applicant over the last few years regarding the proposals and some initial work to review highways and transportation issues was carried out in 2017. This included carrying out some surveys. As COVID-19 has affected the operation of the school, as well the operation of the local highway network, information gathered from this initial work has been used to produce the Transport Statement (TS) that has been submitted in support of this application. This approach was agreed with the Highway Authority. After examining the TS, drawings and other information submitted in support of this application, I would make the following comments:

- *Impact on the highway network*

The school is located on Lower Fold (A626), which forms part of the Borough's Strategic Highway Network. There is only a small car park available for staff within the site and therefore the majority of people who travel to the school by car have to

park on streets surrounding the school. As with the majority of schools, local streets are affected at school start (0850) and finish (1515) times.

The Transport Statement submitted in support of the application outlines that surveys carried out in 2017 outlined that 43% of pupils at the time of the survey travelled to school by car. This equated to 148 pupils and 96 car trips (noting that many children travel with siblings). The proposal will increase the number of children attending the school by 79 pupils (to 420 in total) and, assuming there are no changes in catchment / travel patterns, the number of car trips would increase by 22 to 118. Two additional members of staff will be employed as a result of the proposal and, noting that 80% of staff presently travel by car, staff trips would be expected to increase by 2 (from 32 to 34). Although these figures are likely to vary slightly each year, these 2017 figures are still likely to be representative and, as such, it can be concluded that the proposal could result in an additional 46 vehicle movements during both the AM and PM peak (noting that parents will generate two vehicle movements travelling to and from the school).

If all these vehicle movements were on Lower Fold and centred on the Lower Fold / Hogarth Road / Pear Tree Close, this could adversely impact on the operation of this road and junction. Creation of the proposed “park and stride” car park in Brabyns Park, however, should displace the many of the additional vehicles movements away from the site and would therefore reduce the impact. There would still, however be some additional vehicle movements on Lower Fold and noting the current issues and as there would also be increases in pedestrian movements to the site, I would conclude that there is a need for measures to be implemented to mitigate this impact and address highway safety issues. As such, I would recommend that any approval granted is subject to the requirement to provide an advisory 20mph speed limit on Lower Fold in the vicinity of the school (signs and markings, similar to what has been implemented outside Greave Primary School) and additional parking restrictions in the vicinity of the school (see comments below). Subject to the implementation of these measures, together with the production and implementation of a robust Travel Plan, I would conclude that the proposal should not have such an impact on the local highway network or on highway safety (as defined in the NPPF), which would warrant the application being refused.

- *Parking*

Based on the adopted parking standards, a maximum of 26 parking spaces could presently be provided at the school and a minimum of 2 spaces for disabled persons are required, together with cycle parking for 26 cycles. There is presently 20 standard parking spaces at the site, no parking for disabled persons and cycle parking for 25 cycles. As such, the number of spaces for cycles and disabled persons does not accord with the adopted standards and the number of standard car parking spaces equates to 77% of the maximum that would be permitted.

The proposal would increase the number of standard parking spaces permitted and spaces required for cycles to 28 although the number of spaces required for disabled persons would remain at 2.

As part of the scheme, the existing car park will be reconfigured so as to enable 2 spaces for disabled persons to be provided. Although this will result in the loss of 3 standard spaces, I would consider the benefits of having sufficient parking for disabled persons outweigh the loss of 3 standard spaces. 2 additional cycle spaces are proposed to be provided for staff (within a cycle locker – although the location of this is not shown on the plans), as part of the proposals, together with a junior cycle

store for pupils (for a minimum of 2 cycles) and therefore the proposal will result in the number of spaces for cycles provided being in excess of the minimum required. In addition, a scooter rack for 30 scooters is proposed to be provided, which is welcomed and considered to be required. There will be a need to agree full details of the cycle and scooter parking, although this can be dealt with by condition. I also consider that charging points for electric vehicles should be provided. This, however, can also be dealt with by condition.

Assuming a similar proportion of children travel to the expanded school as occurs at present, the proposal will result in an increase in on-street parking in the vicinity of the school at school start and finish times. Parking surveys carried out in 2017 outlined that parents presently park on Lower Fold, Pear Tree Close, Waters Edge and roads on the estate to the east of Lower Fold, including Hogarth Road and Bonington Rise and from my knowledge of the local area and site visits, this remains the case. In addition, parents with children at St. Mary's RC Primary School park around Constable Drive / Hogarth Road and I am aware that parking associated with both schools causes problems, with parents parking on footways, close to junctions and in breach of traffic regulation orders. The Council receives complaints in respect to this.

If the school were to expand, the only place parents could legally park in the vicinity of the school would be further up Bonington Rise and Constable Drive (plus side roads), which would require parents to walk 250m+ up/down a steep hill and use a congested junction (Hogarth Road / Lower Fold). This could encourage parents to risk parking in unsuitable / illegal places instead. Whilst it may be possible to encourage additional children to travel by sustainable modes, due to the catchment area of the school it is unlikely that, even if a robust set of travel plan measures were implemented, that there would not be increase in children travelling by car as a result of the development.

As part of initial discussions with the applicant regarding the development, it was noted that approx. a third of pupils live in Marple. As such, it was identified that if a dedicated parking area could be provided in Brabyns Park for use by parents at school start / finish times, this could be used as a "park and stride" facility for parents travelling from Marple, thus reducing the amount of on-street parking taking place in the vicinity of the school. As such, the applicant has worked up a scheme to improve and extend an under-utilized parking area in the park so as to create 20 parking spaces.

Based on the 2017 travel survey data relating to the number of pupils that travel by car and the number of siblings at the school, a 20 space car park would be expected to meet most of the estimated additional parking demand (22 cars) that would result from the scheme. Although it is acknowledged that that the car park is approx. 450m from the school, noting that alternative places to park (e.g. on Bonington Rise and Constable Drive) would also be a distance from the site and the time it would take for parents travelling from Marple to alternative locations, I would conclude that, providing the use of the car park is encouraged (as part of the Travel Plan) and use of the car park is managed to ensure that spaces are available for use by parents at school start / finish times, provision of the car park should meet that the majority of the additional parking demand that will result from the expansion of the school will be catered for. There may, nevertheless be some increase in on-street parking in the vicinity of the school (e.g. resulting from parents travelling from elsewhere). As such, and noting that there are some locations where parking associated with the school is already causing issues, it is considered that there is a need for additional parking restrictions to be implemented in the vicinity of the site. I therefore recommend that

any approval granted is subject to the applicant making a financial contribution of £15,000 to fund the required Traffic Regulation Orders (as the applicant is the Council, I assume that it will not be possible to collect this money by means of a Section 106 Agreement and therefore an alternative mechanism will be required). In the event that the application was to be approved, the Council's Traffic Services Department would carry out a detailed assessment of parking in the area to determine exactly what parking restrictions were required and would carry out public consultations in the usual manner. This would include reviewing parking on Pear Tree Close and providing "no loading" restrictions to prevent short-stay parking on double yellow lines. In respect to Pear Tree Close, whilst I note that residents on this road have asked the Council to consider preventing access to the road for non-residents, due to legislation and enforceability issues, such an option is not possible.

- *Accessibility*

The school is located close to the centre of Marple Bridge, on a bus route and is within reasonable walking distance of Marple Railway Station and a reasonably large residential area. In addition, the TS notes that there are various on and off road footways and footpaths in the area, as well as cycle routes and there are bus stops located close to the site. The TS, does however, note that the footpath that links Lower Fold with Hogarth Road is unlit and has steps, the footpath between Lowry Drive and Lower Fold is narrow, unlit and poorly surfaced and the southbound bus stop does not have a shelter. I also note that the cycle routes in the area do not provide direct access to the school, many pedestrian routes in the area are not flat and not all footways in the area are of the recommended width. There is, however, a pedestrian crossing in front of the site which has recently been upgraded and there are dropped kerbs and tactile paving at many of the key crossing places within the vicinity of the site.

Based on this assessment I would conclude that, whilst the site is within reasonable walking distance of Marple Bridge and parts of Marple and there are suitable pedestrian crossing facilities on key routes to the site, some of the pedestrian routes are sub-standard which could deter or prevent use. As such, I would recommend that any approval granted is subject to conditions requiring some improvements to be carried out so as to improve pedestrian access. Noting the scale of development and the numbers of staff and pupils who use public transport, I do not, however, consider that improvements to nearby bus stops is justified.

Notwithstanding that, it is noted that the surveys carried out in 2017 show that the school draws pupils from a reasonably large area, with approx. a third of pupils travelling from either Marple / Offerton or Compstall. Although these figures are likely to vary slightly each year, this is likely to mean that not all children attending would be within walking distance of the school. As such, I would conclude that it will be important for a Travel Plan to be produced which include measures to discourage children from areas beyond walking distance of the school to travel by single occupancy car to the site (e.g. through the encouragement of car sharing, park and stride and scooting / cycling). With respect to scooting and cycling, I do acknowledge that Lower Fold is not ideally suited, due to the width of footways and lack of cycle facilities. Ideally, it would be desirable for a bridge to be constructed into the school grounds from Brabyns Park (through which runs a cycle route), but I acknowledge that that would not be possible in the context of this development. As such, children may have to walk a section of their journey.

In order to maximise the number of staff, pupils and visitors who will travel to the site by sustainable modes of transport, as well the provision of such infrastructure, it is

also considered that there is a need to implement measures, as part of a Travel Plan, to encourage and allow the use of sustainable modes of transport. As such, it is considered that any approval granted subject to a condition requiring the production of a robust Travel Plan. I also consider that a shower / changing facility and lockers should be provided for staff. I note that a shower / changing room is shown on the submitted plans and therefore, I would consider that this matter can also be dealt with by condition (to agree matters of detail).

- *Travel Plan*

The Transport Statement outlines that a new Travel Plan will be produced for the school as part of the proposed mitigation package. Whilst policy and guidance outlines that a Travel Plan should have been produced and submitted in support of the planning application, as COVID-19 has affected travel patterns in recent months and makes survey work difficult to carry out, production of suitable plan at this stage would have been difficult (although a Travel Plan has been submitted, this is a historic plan, dating back to approx. 2003). As such, and noting that the survey work carried out in 2017 provides sufficient information for the application to be determined, I would conclude that a suitable travel plan would be able to be developed in due course and therefore the requirement to produce a plan could be dealt with by condition. Whilst further survey will need to form the contents of the plan and measures contained in it, based on my assessment of the scheme I would recommend at this stage that the plan should include proposals to encourage the use of the proposed Brabyns Park car park, encourage park and stride from other locations, encourage parents to car share, scooter and cycle training (staff and pupil), implementation of poster and other campaigns to discourage car travel and inappropriate parking and anti-idling initiatives. In addition, due to the proximity of St. Mary's RC Primary School, I would recommend that either a joint Travel Plan is produced (as per the 2003 plan), or, as a minimum, joint travel plan initiatives are implemented.

- *Site Layout / detailed design*

No significant changes are proposed to the layout of the main school site, with the access arrangements remaining unchanged and only minor amendments being made to the site's car parking (converting 3 standard parking spaces to 2 disabled parking spaces). A new access ramp and steps are proposed to be constructed to the south of the building and the existing cycle parking is proposed to be relocated to a new compound that will also contain the proposed new cycle parking for pupils. I consider these amendments generally acceptable. I do note, however, that part of the ramp will have a gradient of 1:17, which is slightly steeper than the "preferred" maximum gradient of 1:20. Whilst 1:17 should still prove usable, I would recommend that the applicant reviews the design to see if the design can be amended so as to provide a 1:20 ramp.

With respect to the car park to be provided in Brabyns Park, whilst I consider the general layout of the car park acceptable, I note that the path along the access road will be slightly less wide than the minimum required width to allow two people to pass (1.4m, as opposed to 1.5m), allowing for the pedestrian guardrail. I also note that a crossing point is not provided across the access to the car park, tactile paving is incorrectly shown and one of lighting columns is shown to be located where a retaining wall is proposed to be located. In addition, whilst a lighting isolux plan has been submitted this does not have a key and therefore it is not clear what level of illumination will be provided. Regarding the surfacing of the car park, whilst the proposed specification for the access road and footpath is considered acceptable, I

would question whether grasscrete is appropriate if the car park is to be used on a regular basis and due to the tree cover. As such, I consider this needs to be reviewed. Finally, whilst the proposal includes proposals to provide tactile paving at either end of existing path to the car park (which should not be provided, as shown), it does not show proposals to improve the surfacing of the path itself, despite the path being poorly surfaced and muddy in places. As such, whilst I consider the layout of the car park acceptable, the detail of the car park needs some further development. This, however, can be dealt with by condition.

- *Construction*

Construction of all developments has an impact on the local highway network, nearby businesses and dwellings and therefore needs to be carefully managed and this is even more important when developments are at, or close to, schools. As such, it is considered that any approval granted should be subject to a condition which requires the production and implementation of a construction method statement to ensure that the construction works are carried out in a safe manner and in a way that minimises the impact on the local highway network. The TS outlines that such a statement will be produced, which is welcomed. Noting the site's constraints, careful consideration will need to be given to how materials will be delivered to the site and will be unloaded and where contractors will park. Deliveries should also avoid school start and finish times. Although detailed discussions will need to take place in respect to this, it may be advisable to construct the car park in Brabyns Park first, so as to provide a parking area for displaced staff and/or contractors.

- *Conclusion*

Although no changes are proposed to the site's access or servicing arrangements and only minimal amendments are proposed to the site's parking facilities, the proposal will increase the parking demand of the school and will result in an increase in vehicle movements on the local highway network at school start and finish times. Provision of the proposed "park and stride" car park in Brabyns Park, together with measures to improve highway safety and the management of car parking on streets in the vicinity of the site and encourage sustainable travel should, however, adequately mitigate the impact of the development to a level which, I would conclude, would not have such an impact on the local highway network or on highway safety (as defined in the NPPF), which would warrant a recommendation of refusal.

- *Recommendation*

No objection, subject to conditions and the applicant making a financial contribution of £15,000 to fund parking restrictions / a Traffic Regulation Order (including the costs of associated public consultation) on roads within the vicinity of the site.

- *Conditions*

No development shall take place until a method statement detailing how the development will be constructed (including any demolition and site clearance) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include details on phasing, access arrangements, turning / manoeuvring facilities, deliveries, vehicle routing, traffic management, signage, hoardings, scaffolding, where materials will be loaded, unloaded and stored, parking

arrangements and mud prevention measures. Development of the site shall not proceed except in accordance with the approved method statement.

Reason: To ensure that the approved development is constructed in a safe way and in a manner that will minimise disruption during construction, in accordance with Policy T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD. The details are required prior to the commencement of any development as details of how the development is to be constructed need to be approved prior to the commencement of construction activities.

Detailed engineering drawings of the following highway works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:-

- 1) The provision of signage and carriageway markings so as to provide an advisory 20mph speed limit on Lower Fold in the vicinity of the site;
- 2) Provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing (dropped kerbs with tactile paving) on Hogarth Road adjacent to the top of the link path / steps from Lower Fold, with associated access protection markings
- 3) Improvements to the link path / steps between Lower Fold and Hogarth Road (including improved level surfacing and drainage)
- 4) Provision of street lighting to light the link path / steps between Lower Fold and Hogarth Road

The development shall not be occupied until the highway works have been implemented in accordance with the approved drawings.

Reason: To ensure that the development has safe and good quality pedestrian access arrangements and the impact of the development is sufficiently mitigated in accordance with Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places', CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD

The approved development shall not be occupied until the existing car park within the site has been resurfaced and marked out in accordance with the details indicated on drawing LPS-90-002 Rev – 'Proposed landscaped Plan –School Site', so as to provide two parking spaces for disabled badge holders. The two disabled parking spaces, together with the seventeen standard parking spaces within the car park as also indicated on the drawing shall thereafter be kept clear and remain available for parking of vehicles for the school.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking facilities are provided and that they are appropriately located and are of a safe and practical design, in accordance with Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places', T-1 'Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by Chapter 10, 'Parking', of the SMBC 'Sustainable Transport' SPD.

Details of a scheme to provide two charging points for the charging of electric vehicles within the car park within the school site, together with signage to identify the parking spaces with charging equipment, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, together with a method statement outlining how the spaces and electric charging equipment will be managed and operate. The approved development shall not be occupied until the parking spaces and electric charging equipment have been provided in accordance with the approved details and are available for. The parking spaces and electric charging equipment shall

thereafter be retained, as approved, and shall remain available for use. The spaces and associated electric charging equipment shall be managed and operated at all times in complete accordance with the approved method statement (or alternative method statement as may have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority).

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking with facilities for the charging of electric vehicles are provided in accordance with Policies SD-6 'Adapting to the impacts of climate change', SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment, T-1 Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD and Paragraphs 110, 170 and 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

No work shall take place in respect to the provision of cycle and scooter parking within the site until details of proposals to provide the following cycle and scooter parking facilities within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- 1) Covered and secure staff cycle parking for a minimum of 2 cycles
- 2) Covered and secure pupil cycle parking for a minimum of 2 cycles
- 3) Scooter parking for a minimum of 30 scooters

The development shall not be occupied until the cycle and scooter parking facilities have been provided in accordance with the approved details. The cycle and scooter parking facilities, together with the existing facilities that are to be relocated to the positions indicated on drawing LPS-90-002 Rev – 'Proposed landscaped Plan – School Site', shall then be retained and shall remain available for use at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that safe and practical cycle and scooter parking facilities are provided so as to ensure that the site is fully accessible by all modes of transport in accordance with Policies CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD and the cycle parking facilities are appropriately designed and located in accordance with Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by paragraphs 10.9-10.12 'Bicycle Long and Short Stay Parking', of the SMBC Sustainable Transport SPD.

Details of proposals to provide shower, changing, locker and drying facilities for staff within the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the facilities have been provided in accordance with the approved details. The facilities shall then be retained and shall remain available for use at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that suitable facilities are provided that will permit and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places', CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD.

No work shall take place in respect to the construction of the car park to be provided in Brabyns Park, as indicated on drawing LPS-90-004 Rev – 'Proposed Landscape Plan – Carpark Site', until a detailed drawings of the car park have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, together with details of

how the car park will be managed to ensure that it is available for use by parents / carers for the dropping off and collecting of pupils attending Ludworth Primacy School. The car park shall be based on the layout indicated on that drawing but amended so that the footpath adjacent to the access drive is a minimum of 1.5m wide (clear of the pedestrian guardrail), a pedestrian crossing is provided across the site access, the parking spaces are surfaced in a material that is suitable for the spaces being in regular use throughout the year and the footpath to the northern end of the car park is resurfaced. The drawings shall include:

- (i) A general arrangement / layout, based on a topographical survey and to a scale not less than 1:200;
- (ii) A layout plan which shows existing and proposed levels;
- (iii) Specification details for the access road, footpaths, parking spaces, kerbing, crossing points, pedestrian guard rail and lighting
- (iv) Full details of the retaining wall, including a cross section, elevations and structural details / calculations
- (v) A signage and carriageway markings plan
- (vi) A drainage layout and specification details
- (vii) A lighting layout and lux drawing

The approved development shall not be occupied until the car park has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing and is available for use. The car park shall thereafter be retained and shall be managed at all times in accordance with the approved details. The car park shall be illuminated at all times during the hours of darkness that the car park is in available for use.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking facilities are provided and that they are appropriately located and are of a safe and practical design, in accordance with Policies SD-6 'Adapting to the impacts of climate change', SIE-1 'Quality Places', T-1 Transport and Development', T-2 'Parking in Developments' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by Chapter 10, 'Parking', of the SMBC 'Sustainable Transport' SPD.

No part of the development shall be occupied until a school travel plan for the school which is the subject of this approval has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and has been brought into operation. The approved school travel plan shall then be operated at all times that the development is occupied and shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in accordance with details that shall be outlined in the approved plan. The school travel plan and all updates shall be produced in accordance with national, regional and local best practice guidance and shall include the following:

- i) Details of existing car, cycle and scooter parking within the site (for staff, pupils and visitors) and details of additional cycle and scooter parking to be provided to encourage cycling and scooting to the site.
- ii) Details of shower, changing, locker and drying facilities to be provided for the use of staff to encourage walking and cycling to the site.
- iii) Details of vehicle, pedestrian and cycle routes to the school from the surrounding highway and footway network and within the site, including any proposed improvements.
- iv) Survey information about pupils' and staff current travel habits and targets for the future.
- v) Details of measures and initiatives to reduce car usage and promote sustainable, healthier and safer travel to school, a timetable for their implementation and how these will be reviewed and amended over time, if

- required, to take into account changes in staff or pupil numbers or other changes that may affect travel to / from the site.
- vi) Details of initiatives to discourage parents from dropping off and collecting children (notably individually) and staff and visitors, from driving to school.
 - vii) Details of joint travel plan measures to be implemented with St. Mary's RC Primary School,
 - viii) Details of how affected parties will be consulted, how the travel plan will be publicised, operated and how staff and pupils will be encouraged to adopt 'green travel' measures.
 - ix) Details of how the travel plan will be monitored, reviewed and updated.

Reason: To ensure that measures are implemented that will enable and encourage the use of alternative forms of transport to access the site, other than the private car, in accordance with Policies CS9 'Transport and Development', T-1 'Transport and Development' and T-3 'Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network' of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, supported by Chapter 4 'Travel Plans' of the SMBC Sustainable Transport SPD.

- *Informatives*

A condition of this planning approval requires the submission and approval by the Council of a School Travel Plan prior to occupation of the approved development. To ensure the School Travel Plan includes all required information and accords with national, regional and local best practice guidance and policies, the applicant is advised to seek the advice of, and produce it in conjunction with, Stockport Council's School Travel Plan Advisor. There may be a charge for this service. The applicant is also advised to allow sufficient time for the preparation of the School Travel Plan. For further information the applicant / developer should contact the Highways Section of Planning Services (0161 474 4905/6).

A condition of this planning consent requires the submission of a Construction Method Statement. In order to ensure that the statement includes all the required information the applicant / developer is advised to use the Council's template Construction Method Statement. This can be obtained from the 'Highways and Transport Advice' section within the planning pages of the Council's web-site (www.stockport.gov.uk).

A condition/s of this planning consent requires the submission of detailed drawings / additional information relating to the access arrangements / parking / works within the highway. Advice on the discharge of highways related planning conditions is available within the 'Highways and Transport Advice' section of the planning pages of the Council's web-site (www.stockport.gov.uk). The applicant is advised to study this advice prior to preparing and submitting detailed drawings / the required additional information.

In addition to planning permission, the applicant / developer will need to enter into an agreement, under the Highways Act 1980, with respect to the required highways works. The Agreement will need to be in place prior to the commencement of any works. The applicant / developer should contact the Highways Section of Planning Services (0161 474 4905/6) with respect to this matter.

Conservation Officer

Ludworth Primary School is located within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area and is included on the Council's list of buildings of local architectural and historic value. Further details are available from these links :-

<http://old.stockport.gov.uk/maps/conservationandheritage/marplebridge>

<http://interactive.stockport.gov.uk/shed/Search/ViewDetails/867%20LocallyListed>

The proposals to extend the existing building will not result in harm to the special interest of the school as a heritage asset or upon the wider conservation area. The school has previously been extended to the rear of the original school building and the current proposals represent a continuation of the architectural form and expression of the modern interventions, integrating the extensions into the existing mass rather than promoting a more diffuse arrangement. There will be very limited visual impact upon the street scene and the location of the extensions mean that longer distance views of the school from the west of the rear of the school will not be affected.

The proposed car park within Brabyns Park is also located within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area. The design and access/heritage statements provide limited information or justification for the proposals. Whilst there is no objection to the principle of forming the car park in this location it is important that new development is responsive to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. No detailed of the proposed retaining wall are included in the application documents and therefore it will be necessary to condition the detailed design of this element of the proposals. The retaining wall should be constructed of natural stone, in a dry stone form of construction with natural stone copings. Details of proposed surfacing materials, lighting columns and handrails should also be provided to ensure integration with its parkland setting.

Arboricultural Officer

Conservation Area Designations

The proposed development is within or affected by a Conservation Area (Marple Bridge).

Legally Protected Trees

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

Recommendations

The proposed development will not have the potential for negative impact on trees located on and off site within the neighbours property to facilitate the scheme but have the potential for impact from encroachment/potential damage from machinery working in close proximity of the trees within the site. The sites boundary has a fair level of vegetation and trees and as such there cannot be any loss of trees on site as this will have a negative impact on amenity and biodiversity without the clear replacement plan shown on a landscaping plan.

The proposed development would potentially not have a negative impact on the existing neighbours trees or within the site, therefore no encroachment in the root

protection areas without a detailed method statement on construction methods and ensuring this is all no dig/soft dig when working in the root protection area to ensure no tree loss as well as consideration to a detailed on a landscaping plan for site enhancements and preventing potential damage from the construction traffic, delivery vehicles and site compound therefore requiring the locations away from the existing trees on site.

The construction materials or vehicles may also impact on the trees and as such an advisory should be required to be given to make contractors aware of the protected trees and the installation of protective fencing to limit access to these areas to prevent compaction, accidental damage or spillage of chemicals on the root zones of all trees in the whole of the property and neighbouring property, if this is conditioned and complied with then the lack of landscaping/tree planting would be the only issue for negative impact on the site and surrounding environment.

The trees offer a high level of biodiversity/habitat benefit and as such they need retaining as any loss would be unacceptable without enhanced tree replacement proposals as this would be further increasing urban sprawl of Marple Bridge area including evergreen hedge and tree lined frontage and ornamental or upright trees in the car park and school area with a percentage as fruiting varieties to increase zero carbon mileage fruit as well as a great educational tool.

In principle the scheme will not have a negative impact on the trees in the area and with consideration to an enhanced landscaping scheme can be considered positively as there would be no arboriculture concerns. If the scheme is to be approved in its current format an improved landscaping scheme will need to be considered to show greater enhancement of the site and surrounding area, protective fencing plan and an advisory restricting all access to the retained trees in the property and adjoining the property area. Some of these can be conditioned and submitted later then this will resolve any tree related issues.

The following conditions are required if the scheme is approved :

Condition Tree 1

- No existing tree within the site shall be cut down, topped, lopped, uprooted, wilfully damaged or wilfully destroyed without the prior written approval of the local planning authority, with the exception of those indicated otherwise on the approved plan. Any hedgerows, woody plants or shrubbery removed without such consent or dying or being severely damaged or being seriously diseased, within 5 years of the development commencing, shall be replaced within the next planting season with trees of such size and species as may be approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Condition Tree 2

- No development shall take place until all existing trees on the site except those shown to be removed on the approved plans, have been fenced off in accordance with BS 5837:2012 "Trees in relation to construction - Recommendations". The fencing shall be retained during the period of construction and no work, excavation, tipping or stacking of materials shall take place within any such fence during the construction period.

Condition Tree 3

- No development shall take place until details of all proposed tree planting, including the intended dates of planting, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All tree planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the development being brought into use.

Nature Development Officer

Site Context

The site is located on Lower Fold in Marple Bridge. The application is for extension to south western elevation of building to comprise new classroom, entrance, lobby, reception office and entry corridor. External alterations to building to include new and replacement windows and doors. External hard landscaping to include ramps, steps and security fencing. Creation of additional, amended and improved car parking spaces at Brabyns Park Car Park.

Nature Conservation Designations

The site is not subject to any nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise.

Legally Protected Species

Ecological survey work has been carried out and submitted with the application. All survey work has been undertaken by a suitably experienced person and follows relevant best practice survey guidance. The following ecological reports have been reviewed as part of the application :-

- ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS SURVEY Brabyns Park Proposed Car Park (Green Space Consultancy c/o SMBC May 2020)
- Ludworth Primary School – Bat Scoping Survey (UES, April 2020)
- Ludworth Primary School - Bat Presence Absence report (UES, May 2021)
- BAT PRESENCE / ABSENCE SURVEY & ROOST CHARACTERISATION ASSESSMENT at Ludworth Primary School & Car Park (UES, July 2021)
- Bat Method Statement (UES, July 2021)

Many buildings and trees have the potential to support roosting bats. All species of bats, and their roosts, are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. 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 site is situated in an area which presents excellent foraging and commuting habitats for bats. The adjacent River Goyt corridor will support high abundances of insects, and provides a dark and well-vegetated commuting corridor connecting to high quality habitats in the wider surrounding area.

School Site

A Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) survey was carried out for bats as part of the ecological assessment survey work. This involved an external inspection of the school buildings and trees on site to search for signs of bats and assess the potential for roosting bats to be present, undertaken in April 2020 and updated in January 2021 (with an external and internal survey carried out). Trees within the school grounds were assessed as offering negligible potential to support a bat roost. Potential roosting features were identified within the school buildings and bat droppings were also discovered. Three bat activity surveys were carried out in May and June 2021 (two dusk emergence and a dawn re-entry) to allow the type of roosts present to be determined and impacts fully assessed.

Building 2, which is the focus of the current proposals offers a low number of low potential features for roosting bats (gap in a damaged wall vent, raised flashing above a concrete porch on the northern elevation, and a small area of lifted bitumen roofing felt on the north-eastern corner). Elsewhere, Buildings 1 and 3 offer a wider variety of roosting features, including a large area of lifted roofing felt on the southern aspect of the sports hall, gaps beneath boxed soffits, gaps beneath protruding rafters and gaps over the top of the wall plate. A total of nine roosts were identified:

Roost	Description	Type	Impacts
1	Located beneath protruding rafter on western aspect of Building 1, south of the west-facing gable. Three bat droppings were identified externally during the scoping survey.	Pipistrelle sp. day roost used by low numbers of bats	Will be lost
2	Located beneath a protruding rafter on western aspect of Building 1, north of the west-facing gable. A single common pipistrelle was observed within this roost	Common pipistrelle day roost for a male or non-breeding female bat.	No direct/indirect impacts
3	Located at the apex of the west-facing gable of Building 1 beneath the end tiles and over the top of the wall plate. Single soprano pipistrelle observed using this roost site during two of the surveys.	Soprano pipistrelle day roost for a male or non-breeding female bat	No direct/indirect impacts
4	Located beneath the southern pitch of the west-facing gable of	Common and soprano pipistrelle day roost for	No direct/indirect

	Building 1 beneath the end tiles and over the top of the wall plate. Single common pipistrelle and single soprano pipistrelle recorded using this roost site on separate occasions.	low numbers of male or non-breeding female bats.	impacts
5	Located beneath a protruding rafter on western aspect of Building 1, north of the west-facing gable. One soprano pipistrelle seen emerging from this roost during a survey.	Soprano pipistrelle day roost for a male or non-breeding female bat.	No direct/indirect impacts
6	Located beneath a gap in the boxed soffit on the east-facing gable of Building 3. A single soprano pipistrelle emerged from this roost.	Soprano pipistrelle day roost for a male or non-breeding female bat.	Temporary disturbance.
7	Located within a gap in the verge pointing beneath the end tiles on the west-facing gable of Building 3. Two soprano pipistrelles emerged from this roost site.	Soprano pipistrelle day roost for low numbers of male or non-breeding female bats.	Temporary disturbance.
8	Located along the south-facing aspect of the sports hall that is attached to Building 2 and is associated with several gaps in the bitumen roofing felt along the length of the building. A peak count of forty-four soprano pipistrelle were observed returning to roost during the re-entry survey. A single bat was also observed emerging from this roost site during the preceding survey and three soprano pipistrelle were observed emerging from the site during the third activity survey.	Transitional or satellite soprano pipistrelle roost for maternity colony.	Temporary disturbance.
9	Located at the north-eastern corner of the sports hall that is attached to Building 2. A single common pipistrelle returned to roost during the re-entry survey. Approximately 20 bat droppings were also identified beneath this access point.	Given the proximity to the access points used by the maternity colony at Roost 8, and that the access points access the same feature, it is possible that this area is also used by the soprano pipistrelle maternity colony	Temporary disturbance.

Roost 1 will be destroyed as part of the development proposals due to the construction of the flat roof extension. Flat roof extensions will also be created beneath Roosts 6, 7 and 9, although given the height of the current access points and of the proposed extension, it is considered that this work will not impact upon the drop zones for these roosts. As such, the works have the potential to disturb the following roosts: Roost 6, 7, 8 and 9. Roosts 2, 3, 4 and 5 will all be retained under the current proposals and are situated far enough away from the proposed works that they will not be directly or indirectly impacted.

The school buildings and vegetation/trees within the school site offer suitable bird nesting habitat. All breeding birds and their nests are legally protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). A house sparrow terrace is present on the school building and also evidence of historic house martin nesting was observed.

Car Park Site

An ecological constraints survey of the car park was carried out in May 2020.

The trees on site are considered to offer negligible/very low bat roosting potential. The retaining wall was also inspected (where access was possible) in relation to roosting bats. No signs of bats was observed and in general the wall was found to be in good condition with few potential roost sites, but some crevices were noted. From the information submitted with the application it does not appear as though works to the retaining wall are proposed as part of the current application. If proposals change however, and works are required it is advised that further bat survey work (e.g. endoscope inspection and/or activity surveys) is carried out.

The trees and wall offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds.

The site is considered to offer suitable habitat for badgers. No evidence of badgers was observed but records for badgers exist in the wider area. Badgers and their setts receive protection under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Sensitive working measures should be implemented during works to prevent harm/disturbance to badgers which may pass through the site during works.

A pond is located approximately 30m from the site boundary. Ponds and their surrounding terrestrial habitat have the potential to support amphibians such as great crested newts (GCN) and toads (a UKBAP Priority Species and listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 as a species of Principle Importance). GCN receive the same level of legal protection as bats (outlined above). The report states that works are confined to hard standing, which is unsuitable to support GCN. Given the highly localised nature of the proposed works, and nature of terrestrial habitat present within the works area, the risk to GCN is low. Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) should however be adopted during works to minimise the risk of potential impacts to any GCN and other amphibians which may be present during works.

Invasive Species

The ecological constraints report states that Himalayan balsam is present within the application site for the Car Park element of the proposed works. This species is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended),

which makes it an offence to spread or otherwise cause to grow this invasive species in the wild.

Local Planning Policies

- Core Strategy DPD policy CS8 'Safeguarding and Improving the Environment' (Green Infrastructure : 3.286; Biodiversity and Nature Conservation :3.296).
- Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3 'Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment' (A-Protecting the Natural Environment : 3.345, 3.347, 3.361, 3.362, 3.364, 3.366, 3.367 and 3.369).

Recommendations

There is considered to be sufficient ecological information available to allow the application to be determined. The school was found to support nine common and soprano pipistrelle bat roosts. Roost 1 will be lost and Roosts 6, 7, 8 and 9 will be subject to disturbance during the works. Survey results indicate that the roost to be lost (roost 1) and roosts 6 and 7 are day roosts: used by low numbers of non-breeding pipistrelle bats. Roosts 8 and 9 are considered to be satellite maternity soprano pipistrelle roost sites.

The proposed development would result in the destruction and/or disturbance of bat roost sites with the potential to kill or injure bats/ and damage their habitat without appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. As a result a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will be required from Natural England. The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats.

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

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

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

Natural England standing advice states that the LPA must be satisfied that a licence is likely to be granted before planning consent can be granted:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications#consider-if-a-licence-is-likely-to-be-granted-before-you-give-permission>

The first two tests are outside my area for comment (further information/justification regarding these two tests is however provided in the submitted Bat Method Statement (UES, July 2021)). In terms of the favourable conservation status test, the proposed mitigation measures detailed in the submitted Bat Method Statement (UES, July 2021) are considered appropriate to satisfy this test. The measures include provision of four Schwegler bat boxes on site during works (to be retained permanently on site), sensitive working

measures such as timing works to minimise impacts, pre-works survey, tool box talk, soft strip during demolition and supervision by a licenced bat ecologist. These measures should be implemented in full and should be secured by condition.

In relation to the bat licence an informative should be attached to any planning consent granted to state that a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 will be required in advance of works commencing on the school building. The applicant is also advised that update surveys may be required to inform the licence application, depending on the proposed time-frame for works.

In relation to nesting birds, the following condition should be used: No vegetation clearance/roof/wall repair works should take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation/buildings for active birds' nests immediately before (no more than 48 hours before) vegetation clearance/roof/wall repair works commence and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site.

Himalayan balsam was recorded on site (in the car park site). A method statement for the control and treatment of this invasive species will need to be submitted to and agreed by the council prior to any works within the car park element of the site commencing. This will need to include a distribution map of the balsam on site and details of suitable control measures to prevent its spread along with a treatment plan and subsequent monitoring. This can be secured via a pre-commencement condition.

No evidence of other protected species was observed on site but Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) relating to great crested newt and badger should be implemented during works within the car park site. Given the highly localised nature of the proposed works and the habitats within the works area there is considered to be a low risk of impacting great crested newt (should they be present within the nearby pond) provided that RAMS detailed in the Ecological Constraints report are followed during the works within the car park site. Similarly RAMS appropriate to protect badgers which may pass through the site are also outlined in the Ecological Constraints report. In the event that evidence of badgers, GCN (or any other protected species) is identified on site during works, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice. These measures should be implemented in full and this can be secured via condition.

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

Retained trees should be adequately protected from potential impacts following advice from the council's Arboriculture Officer and following British Standards. Replacement planting would be required for the proposed tree loss and it is understood that suitable mitigation has been agreed with the SMBC Arboriculture team.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with

local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). Suitable measures are outlined in the Ecological Constraints report and include provision of 5 bat and 5 bird boxes. Details of the proposed type and location of the boxes should be submitted to the LPA for review. Further recommended enhancements within the report, such as wild flower grassland areas and pond improvements, would also be welcomed.

Ecological conditions can change over time. In the event that works have not commenced within two years of the May 2020 ecological assessment for the car park site and June 2021 for the school site, it is advised that an update ecological assessment is carried out in advance of works by a suitably experienced person to identify any changes within the ecological baseline and ensure that appropriate mitigation is in place. Any such update survey, along with mitigation requirements (as appropriate) should be submitted to the LPA for review.

Drainage Engineer

The application does not have any drainage related documents submitted as part of the proposal.

However, I have reviewed our records which show :-

- The site is located in flood zone 3
- The site has a high surface water risk
- The closest watercourse is located circa 50m away from the site
- The site to have very significant constraints for infiltration SuDS
- A water table level of < 3m below ground level
- There are no recorded historical flood events relevant to the development within the vicinity

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

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

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

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

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

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

We have created guidance to assist applicants on the requirements within Stockport should they wish to read them. These are :-

- [Local Guidance on Flood Risk Assessments and Drainage Strategies](#)
- [Practical Guide to Designing Sustainable Drainage Systems \(SuDS\)](#)
- [Process Guide to Providing Sustainable Drainage Systems \(SuDS\)](#)
- [SuDS Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Glossary](#)

Please note the following as it is Council policy :-

Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3 - Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment (C - MANAGING FLOOD RISK)

- 3.349 All development will be expected to comply with the approach set out in PPS25 Annex D or any superseding national policy.

(NOTE: Replaced with new Planning Practice Guidance)

- 3.350 Development within Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) will be expected to have floor levels at a minimum of 300mm above road level so as to reduce the risk of damage being caused by surface water flooding. Achievement of this requirement must be without detriment to accessibility or high quality design.

Core Strategy DPD policy SD-6 - Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

- 3.65 Development should be designed in such a way as to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change.
- 3.66 In particular, all development will be required to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) so as to manage the run-off of water from the site. Development on previously developed (brownfield) land must reduce the rate of unattenuated run-off by a minimum of 50% if it is within an identified Critical Drainage Area (CDA). Until CDAs have been identified in detail the same reduction (a minimum of 50%) will be required of developments on brownfield sites in all areas; once detailed CDAs have been identified the minimum required reduction of run-off on brownfield sites outside of CDAs will be 30%. Development on greenfield (not previously developed) sites will be required, as a minimum, to ensure that the rate of run-off is not increased.
- 3.67 Where planning permission is required, areas of hard-standing or other surfaces, should be of a permeable construction or drain to an alternative form of SuDS.
- 3.68 Development, particularly within the urban area of the Borough, that takes into account the urban heat island effect and incorporates measures to reduce this phenomenon will be given positive consideration. Measures might include: Provision of appropriate green cover (shaded green space and tree cover); Provision of green roofs, walls and boundaries; Urban design that encourages air flow throughout the development; Passive cooling that allows natural ventilation to cool the building or development in preference to mechanical cooling(38); Solar shading designed into buildings to avoid internal overheating; or Water features such as lakes, ponds, fountains and watercourses.

Saved UDP policy EP 1.7 - Development and Flood Risk (ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT)

- 1.7 The Council will not permit development, including the raising of land, where it would:
 - I. be at risk from flooding;
 - II. increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;
 - III. hinder future access to watercourses for maintenance purposes;
 - IV. cause loss of the natural floodplain;
 - V. result in extensive culverting;
 - VI. affect the integrity of existing flood defences; or
 - VII. significantly increase surface water run-offunless the applicant can demonstrate that satisfactory and sustainable measures will be implemented to overcome the adverse effects. All development which is likely to have an impact on drainage patterns should incorporate, as far as is practicable, sustainable drainage systems taking account of current Government advice.
- 5.38 - Where existing buildings are redeveloped any vulnerability to flooding should be taken into account and dealt with by suitable measures, and the development should include measures to reduce any contribution the site makes to increasing flood risk.

Environment Team (Land Contamination)

The proposed development site has not been identified as potentially contaminated, the developer will need to keep a watching brief though for any unexpected contamination.

As such could I please request the CON2 informative for the decision notice :-

- *Should contamination be suspected, found or be caused at any time when carrying out the development that was not previously identified, the local planning authority should be notified immediately and development affected or potentially affected by the contamination should stop and an investigation and or risk assessment and/or remediation carried out to establish the most appropriate course of action. Failure to stop and notify may render the Developer or Owner liable for the costs of any investigation and remedial works under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.*

Environment Agency

No comments made.

Canal and River Trust

The Canal & River Trust is a statutory consultee under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The current notified area applicable to consultations with us, in our capacity as a Statutory Consultee was issued to Local Planning Authorities in 2011 under the organisations former name, British Waterways. The 2011 issue introduced a notified

area for household and minor scale development and a notified area for EIA and major scale development.

This application falls outside the notified area for its application scale. We are therefore returning this application to you as there is no requirement for you to consult us in our capacity as a Statutory Consultee.

We are happy to comment on particular applications that fall outside the notified areas if you would like the Canal & River Trust's comments in specific cases, but this would be outside the statutory consultation regime and must be made clear to us in any notification letter you send.

Should you have a query in relation to consultation or notification of the Canal & River Trust on planning applications, please email us at planning@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Coal Authority

The application site does not fall within the defined Development High Risk Area and is located instead within the defined Development Low Risk Area. This means that there is no requirement under the risk-based approach that has been agreed with the LPA for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be submitted or for The Coal Authority to be consulted.

In accordance with the agreed approach to assessing coal mining risks as part of the development management process, if this proposal is granted planning permission, it will be necessary to include The Coal Authority's Standing Advice within the Decision Notice as an informative note to the applicant in the interests of public health and safety.

ANALYSIS

At the outset, Members are advised of the requirements of Paragraph 95 of the NPPF which highlights the importance of ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. It requires Local Planning Authorities to take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education. Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand and alter schools.

There is a Borough wide initiative to provide pupil places at Schools, supported by the Government, to respond to an increasing pupil population and Ludworth School has been chosen for development and expansion. As a result of the proposed development, the number of pupils at the School would be increased by 79, from 341 as existing to 420 as proposed.

Impact on Green Belt

The Brabyns Park car park portion of the site is allocated within the Green Belt, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. The NPPF addresses the national approach to Green Belt policy under the heading 'Protecting Green Belt Land' and takes its fundamental starting point the importance of maintaining 'openness' on a 'permanent basis'. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF confirms that 'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent

urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence’.

Paragraph 150 of the NPPF states that certain forms of development are not inappropriate within the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Such forms of development include within Paragraph 150 (b) ‘*Engineering operations*’. Local Green Belt planning policy contained within saved UDP policy GBA1.2 confirms that ‘*Forms of development other than new buildings, including changes in the use of land, will not be permitted unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt*’.

The proposed works within the site of the Brabyns Park car park would comprise improvements to the existing car park to accommodate 20 cars. These works would include the formation of a new tarmac surface, provision of new and improvements to existing parking bays with associated retaining walls, the provision of a pedestrian walkway, improvements to the existing footway to the Northern end and the provision of lighting columns for illumination.

The above works, which are generally confined within the area of the existing informally surfaced car park without any major encroachment into the Green Belt, are considered to comprise engineering operations that would maintain the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict within the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. As such, the proposed works within the Brabyns Park car park site are not considered to represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt, in accordance with the requirements of saved UDP policy GBA1.2 and Paragraph 150 (b) of the NPPF.

Design, Siting, Impact on Conservation Area and Impact on Landscape Character Area

Both the existing Ludworth Primary School and Brabyns Park car park sites are located within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Conservation Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

In terms of the proposed extension and alterations within the existing School site, the Conservation Officer considers that the proposals would not result in harm to the special interest of the School as a heritage asset or upon the wider Conservation Area. It is noted that the School has previously been extended to the rear of the original building and the proposal would represent a continuation of the architectural form and expression of the modern interventions, integrating the extensions into the existing mass rather than promoting a more diffuse arrangement. It is considered that there will be very limited impact upon the street scene and the siting of the proposed extension would ensure that longer distance views of the School from the West of the rear of the School would not be affected.

With regard to the proposed Brabyns Park car park works, the Conservation Officer notes that the information submitted in support of the application provides limited information or justification for the proposal. Whilst the Conservation Officer raises no objections to the principle of the car park proposals in this location, it is important that new development is responsive to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As no details of the proposed retaining walls have been submitted with the application, it is considered necessary to impose a suitably worded planning condition with regard to the detailed design of this element of the

proposal, which should be constructed of natural stone, in a dry stone form of construction with natural stone copings. Details of the proposed car park surfacing materials, lighting columns and handrails would also be secured by condition, to ensure integration with its parkland setting.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Conservation Officer and subject to conditional control, it is considered that the proposed development could be accommodated at the sites without causing harm to the character and appearance of the Marple Bridge Conservation Area, the character of the Goyt Valley Landscape Character Area or the visual amenity of the area. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with saved UDP policies LCR1.1, LCR1.1a and HC1.3 and Core Strategy DPD policies SIE-1 and SIE-3.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed works within the Brabyns Park car park would be well separated from the nearest residential properties, on Waters Edge and Lower Fold on the opposite side of the River Goyt to the East and on Brabyns Brow to the South. As such, no residential amenity concerns are raised to the proposed works within the Brabyns Park car park.

The South Western boundary of the Ludworth School site is directly adjoined by residential properties on Lower Fold. However, the proposed School extension would have minimal projection beyond the existing South Western elevation of the School building, therefore no undue additional overshadowing, over-dominance, visual intrusion, loss of outlook, overlooking or loss of privacy impacts to these properties are envisaged. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed entrance access path would be sited close to the South Western boundary with the adjacent residential property at Number 50 Lower Fold, the scheme would include the retention of the existing mesh fence along the South Western boundary with this property. In addition, a condition could be imposed to require the provision of an appropriate privacy screen along the South Western elevation of the proposed entrance access path, in order to mitigate any overlooking issues from its use.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed development could be accommodated without causing undue harm to the amenity of surrounding residential properties, by reason of overshadowing, over-dominance, visual intrusion, loss of outlook, overlooking or loss of privacy. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with saved UDP policies CTF1.1, CDH1.2 and CDH1.9 and Core Strategy DPD policies SIE-1 and SIE-3.

Highways Considerations

A Transport Statement and Travel Plan have been submitted in support of the application. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Highway Engineer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The Highway Engineer notes that the proposal would comprise extensions and alterations to the existing School, so as to create an additional classroom, together with various amendments to the site and amendments and improvements to an existing parking area at Brabyns Park. The proposals would enable the number of children to be taught at the School to increase from 341 to 420 (an increase of 79) and the number of staff employed at the School to increase from 40 to 42 FTE (an increase of 2). No changes are proposed to the School sites access or servicing arrangements, although some minor amendments are proposed to the sites parking

facilities. Additional parking for cycles and scooters is proposed. The improved car park in Brabyns Park would accommodate 20 cars, accessed via the existing access road serving the park.

The Highway Engineer has confirmed that discussions have taken place with the applicant over the last few years and some initial work to review highways and transportation issues was carried out in 2017, including some surveys. As Covid-19 has affected the operation of the School and the operation of the local highway network, information gathered from this initial work has been used to produce the Transport Statement submitted in support of the application. This approach has been agreed with the Highway Authority.

Impact on the Highway Network

The Highway Engineer notes that the School is located on Lower Fold (A626), which forms part of the Boroughs Strategic Highway Network. Due to the fact that there is only a small car park available for staff within the site, the majority of people who travel to the School by car have to park on streets surrounding the School. Local streets are affected at School start and finish times.

The submitted Transport Statement outlines that surveys carried out in 2017 show that 43% of pupils travelled to the site by car, equating to 148 pupils and 96 car trips. The proposed development would increase the number of pupils attending the School by 79, to 420, which would increase the number of car trips by 22, to 118. The proposed two additional members of staff would be expected to increase staff car trips by 2 to 34. Although these figures are likely to vary slightly each year, the 2017 figures are considered to be representative and, as such, the proposal could result in an additional 46 vehicle movements during both the AM and PM peak.

If the above vehicle movements were on Lower Fold and centred on Lower Fold, Hogarth Road and Pear Tree Close, it is acknowledged that this could adversely impact on the operation of this road and junction. However, the Highway Engineer considers that the creation of the proposed 'Park and Stride' car park in Brabyns Park should displace many of the additional vehicle movements away from the site and therefore reduce the impact. There would still, however, be some additional vehicle movements on Lower Fold and, noting the current issues and as there would also be increased pedestrian movements to the site, measures would be required to mitigate this impact and address highway safety issues. Such mitigation measures would include an advisory 20 mph speed limit on Lower Fold in the vicinity of the School and additional parking restrictions in the vicinity of the School. The Highway Engineer considers that implementation of these measures, together with the production and implementation of a robust Travel Plan would ensure that the proposal should not have such an impact on the local highway network or on highway safety that would justify the refusal of the application.

Parking

Based on adopted parking standards, a maximum of 26 parking spaces could presently be provided at the School and a minimum of 2 spaces for disabled persons are required, together with cycle parking for 26 cycles. There is currently 20 standard parking spaces at the School, no parking for disabled persons and cycle parking for 25 cycles. As such, the number of spaces for cycles and disabled persons does not accord with adopted standards. The proposal would increase the number of standard parking spaces permitted and spaces required for cycles to 28, although the number of spaces required for disabled persons would remain at 2. As part of the scheme,

the existing car park would be reconfigured so as to enable 2 spaces for disabled persons to be provided. Although this would result in the loss of 3 standard spaces, the Highway Engineer considers the benefits of having sufficient spaces for disabled persons would outweigh the loss of 3 standard spaces. 2 additional staff cycle spaces are proposed, along with a junior cycle store for pupils for a minimum of 2 cycles, which would result in the number of spaces for cycles provided being in excess of the minimum required. A scooter rack for 30 scooters is proposed, which is welcomed and required. Details of the proposed cycle and scooter parking facilities, along with the provision of charging points for electric vehicles would be secured by condition.

Assuming a similar proportion of children travel to the expanded School as occurs at present, the proposal would result in an increase in on-street parking in the vicinity of the School at start and finish times. Parking surveys carried out in 2017 outlined that parents presently park on Lower Fold, Pear Tree Close, Waters Edge and roads to the East of Lower Fold such as Hogarth Road and Bonnington Rise. In addition, parents with children at St. Marys RC Primary School park around Constable Drive/Hogarth Road and the Highway Engineer is aware that parking associated with both Schools causes problems, with parents parking on footways, close to junctions and in breach of Traffic Regulation Orders, which the Council receives complaints to. If the School were to expand, the only place parents could legally park in the vicinity of the School would be further up Bonnington Rise and Constable Drive (plus side roads), which would require parents to walk over 250 metres up/down a steep hill and use a congested junction at Hogarth Road/Lower Fold. Whilst it may be possible to encourage additional children to travel by sustainable modes, due to the catchment area of the School it is unlikely that, even if a robust set of Travel Plan measures were implemented, that there would not be an increase in children travelling by car as a result of the proposed development.

From initial discussions, it is noted that approximately a third of pupils live in Marple. As such, it was identified that if a dedicated parking area could be provided in Brabyns Park for use by parents at School start/finish times, this could be used as a 'Park and Stride' facility for parents travelling from Marple, thus reducing the amount of on-street parking taking place in the vicinity of the School. On this basis, the scheme includes proposals to improve and extend an under-utilized parking area in Brabyns Park to create 20 parking spaces.

Based on the 2017 travel survey data, a 20 space car park is expected to meet most of the estimated additional parking demand (22 cars) that would result from the scheme. Although it is acknowledged that the car park is approximately 450 metres from the School, it is noted that alternative places to park on Bonnington Rise and Constable Drive would also be a distance from the site and the time that it would take parents travelling from Marple to alternative locations, the Highway Engineer considers that, provided that the use of the car park is encouraged as part of the Travel Plan and use of the car park is managed to ensure that spaces are available for use by parents at School start/finish times, the provision of the proposed car park at Brabyns Park should meet the majority of the additional demand that would result from the expansion of the School. It is acknowledged that there may be some increase in on-street parking in the vicinity the site and, in view of the fact that there are some locations where parking associated with the School is already causing issues, it is considered that there is a need for the implementation of additional parking restrictions in the vicinity of the site. As such, the Highway Engineer recommends that the applicant makes a financial contribution of £15,000 to fund the required Traffic Regulation Orders should the application be granted. This would require the Council Traffic Services Department carrying out a detailed assessment

of parking in the area to determine exactly what parking restrictions would be required which would be subject to public consultation in the usual manner. This would include reviewing parking on Pear Tree Close and providing 'no loading' restrictions to prevent short-stay parking on double yellow lines. Whilst it is noted that residents on Pear Tree Close have requested that the Council consider preventing access to this road for non-residents, due to legislation and enforceability issues, such an option is not possible.

Accessibility

The School is located close to the centre of Marple Bridge, on a bus route and within reasonable walking distance of Marple Railway Station and a reasonably large residential area. The submitted Transport Statement notes that there are various on and off road footways and footpaths in the area, as well as cycle routes and there are bus stops located close to the site. The submitted Transport Statement does however note that the footpath that links Lower Fold with Hogarth Road is unlit and has steps, the footpath between Lowry Drive is narrow, unlit and poorly surfaced and the Southbound bus stop does not have a shelter. In addition, the Highway Engineer notes that cycle routes in the area do not provide direct access to the School, many pedestrian routes in the area are not flat and not all footways in the area are of the recommended width. There is however a pedestrian crossing in front of the site which has recently been upgraded and there are dropped kerbs and tactile paving at many of the key crossing places within the vicinity of the site.

In view of the above, the Highway Engineer concludes that, whilst the site is within reasonable walking distance of Marple Bridge and parts of Marple and there are suitable pedestrian crossing facilities on key routes to the site, some pedestrian routes are sub-standard which could deter or prevent use. As such, conditions are recommended to require improvements to be carried out so as to improve pedestrian access. Due to the scale of the development and numbers of staff and pupils who use public transport, improvements to nearby bus stops are not considered to be justified.

Surveys carried out in 2017 show that the School, draws pupils from a reasonably large area, with approximately a third of pupils travelling from Marple, Offerton or Compstall, which is likely to mean that not all children attending would be within walking distance of the School. As such, the Highway Engineer considers it important for a Travel Plan to be produced, to include measures to discourage children from areas beyond walking distance to travel by single occupancy car, such as car sharing, park and stride and scooting/cycling. It is acknowledged that Lower Fold is not ideally suited to scooting or cycling due to the width of the footways and lack of cycling facilities. Whilst it would be desirable for a bridge to be constructed into the School grounds from Brabyns Park, it is acknowledged that this would not be possible in the context of the development.

In order to maximise the number of staff, pupils and visitors who will travel to the site by sustainable modes of transport, it is considered that there is a need to implement measures as part of a Travel Plan, to encourage and allow the use of sustainable modes of transport. The production of a robust Travel Plan would be secured by condition. Details of the proposed shower/changing facilities and lockers for staff would also be secured by condition.

Travel Plan

The submitted Transport Statement outlines that a new Travel Plan will be produced

for the School as part of the proposed mitigation package. The Highway Engineer acknowledges that policy and guidance outlines that a Travel Plan should have been submitted in support of the planning application. However, Covid-19 has affected travel patterns and makes survey work more difficult, therefore the submission of a suitable plan at this stage would have been difficult. As such, the Highway Engineer considers that the survey work carried out in 2017 provides sufficient information for the application to be determined and a suitable Travel Plan would be able to be developed in due course and dealt with by way of condition. The Highway Engineer considers at this stage, the Travel Plan should include proposals to encourage use of the proposed Brabyns Park car park, encourage park and stride from other locations, encourage parents to car share, scooter and cycle training, poster and other campaigns to discourage car travel and inappropriate parking and anti-idling initiatives. Due to the proximity of St. Marys RC Primary School, the Highway Engineer recommends that either a joint Travel Plan is produced or, as a minimum, joint Travel Plan initiatives are implemented.

Site Layout/Detailed Design

No significant changes are proposed to the layout of the main School site, with the access arrangements remaining unchanged and minor amendments being made to the sites car parking, converting 3 standard parking spaces to 2 disabled parking spaces. The proposed access ramp and steps to the South of the building and relocation of the existing and proposed cycle parking to a new compound is considered to be generally acceptable. Whilst the 1:17 gradient of the proposed access ramp should still prove useable, it is recommended that the design is amended to provide an access ramp with the preferred gradient of 1:20.

The general layout of the proposed car park to be provided in Brabyns Park is considered to be acceptable. Concerns are raised to the width of the path along the access road, the failure to provide a crossing point across the access to the car park, the location of the proposed tactile paving, the location of the proposed lighting columns, the illumination of the proposed lighting, the surfacing of the proposed car park and the surfacing of the access path to the car park. However, the Highway Engineer considers that these matters of detail can be secured by the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions.

Construction

In order to manage the impact of construction activities on the local highway network, nearby businesses, residential properties and the School itself, the Highway Engineer recommends the imposition of a condition to require the production and implementation of a Construction Method Statement, to ensure that the construction works are carried out in a safe manner that minimises the impact on the local highway network. Careful consideration will need to be given to how materials will be delivered to the site and will be unloaded, where contractors will park and to ensure that deliveries avoid School start and finish times. This would require detailed discussions at the discharge of conditions stage. The Highway Engineer considers that it may be advisable to construct the car park in Brabyns Park first, so as to provide a parking area for displaced staff and/or contractors.

Conclusions

In summary of highways considerations, the neighbour objections raised to the proposal on the grounds of additional traffic generation, parking issues, highway safety issues and the information submitted in support of the application are noted

and appreciated.

The Highway Engineer acknowledges that the proposal will increase the parking demand of the School and would result in an increase in vehicle movements on the local highway network at School start and finish times. However the Highway Engineer considers that the provision of the proposed 'Park and Stride' car park in Brabyns Park, together with measures to improve highway safety and the management of car parking on streets in the vicinity of the site and to encourage sustainable travel, should adequately mitigate the impact of the development to a level which would not have such an impact on the local highway network or on highway safety which would warrant refusal of the application.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer, subject to the impositions of conditions recommended by the Highway Engineer and a financial contribution of £15,000 to fund parking restrictions/a Traffic Regulation Order on roads within the vicinity of the site, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the issues of traffic generation, impact on the highway network, impact on highway safety, parking and accessibility. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6, SIE-1, SIE-3, CS9, CS10, T-1, T-2 and T-3, the Sustainable Transport SPD and the advice contained within the NPPF.

Impact on Trees

Existing trees within the site are protected by virtue of the sites location within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area. A Tree Survey Report has been submitted in support of the application. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Arboricultural Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The Arboricultural Officer considers that the proposed development would not result in a negative impact on existing trees within the site, however concerns are raised to potential impacts on trees during the construction and development process. As such, conditions are recommended to ensure that protection measures are provided to existing retained trees during construction and to ensure that no existing retained trees are worked to. In addition, a condition is recommended to require the provision of enhanced landscape planting, in order to improve the site from a visual and biodiversity perspective.

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

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology Biodiversity

A suite of ecological surveys has been submitted in support of the application. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Nature Development Officer are contained within the Consultation Responses section above.

The site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise and the Nature Development Officer considers that sufficient ecological information has been submitted in order for the application to be determined.

Buildings and trees have the potential to support roosting bats, a protected species and the site is situated in an area which presents excellent foraging and commuting

habitat for bats. Within the school site, trees were assessed as offering negligible potential to support a bat roost, however potential roosting features were identified within the School buildings. Building 2, which is the focus of the proposal, offers a low number of potential features for roosting bats, however Buildings 1 and 3 offer a wider variety of roosting features, where a total of 9 roosts were identified. Roost 1 would be destroyed as part of the proposed extension. Extensions would be created beneath Roosts 6, 7 and 9, however given the height of the current access points and of the proposed extension, it is considered that this work will not impact on the drop zones for these roosts. As such, the proposal has the potential to disturb Roosts 6, 7, 8 and 9. Roosts 2, 3, 4 and 5 would be retained and are situated far enough away from the proposed works that they would not be directly or indirectly impacted. No signs of bats was observed within the retaining wall within the proposed Brabyns Park car park site and the wall was found to be in good condition with few potential roost sites, however some crevices were noted. Should works be proposed to the retaining wall, it is advised that further bats survey work is carried out.

In view of the above, the proposed development would result in the destruction and/or disturbance of bat roost sites within the School site, with the potential to kill or injure bats/and damage their habitat without appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. When determining planning applications, legal cases demonstrate that the Council has a requirement to have regard to the 3 Habitats Regulation derogation tests :-

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

In assessment of each of the tests, Members are advised of the following :-

1. It is considered that the proposed development would be for a reason of over-riding public importance, due to the fact that it would facilitate the refurbishment of an existing outdated School building to benefit pupils, staff and the wider community in terms of improved educational provision.
2. If the development was not implemented, the need for improved educational provision would not be achieved. It is noted that no demolition works would occur beyond those necessary to facilitate the proposed extension and works have been designed to minimise the number of roosts directly impacted. By proceeding with the proposed renovation and extension works and implementing appropriate and recommended bat mitigation and compensation measures, the potential for the site to support roosting bats in the long-term would be ensured.
3. The Nature Development Officer considers that the proposed mitigation measures detailed within the submitted Bat Method Statement are appropriate to satisfy the FCS test. These measures, which would be secured by condition, include the provision and subsequent retention of four Schwegler bat boxes on site during works, sensitive working measures such as timing works to minimise impacts, pre-works survey, tool box talk, soft strip during demolition and supervision by a licensed bat ecologist.

In addition to the above, the applicant will be advised of the requirement for the granting of a license by Natural England prior to commencement of works on the School building, which may require the submission of update surveys to inform the license application.

Buildings and trees within the site offer suitable bird nesting habitat. A house sparrow terrace is present on the school building and evidence of historic house martin nesting was observed. The trees and wall on the Brabyns Park car park site offer suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. As such, a condition is recommended by the Nature Development Officer to ensure that no works are undertaken within the bird nesting season, unless detailed checks are undertaken and appropriate measures put in place to protect nesting bird interest on the site.

The site is considered to offer suitable habitat for badgers. No evidence of badgers was observed, however records for badgers exist in the wider area. A pond is located approximately 30.0 metres from the site boundary which have the potential to support Great Crested Newts and Toads. Given the highly localised nature of the proposed works and the nature of terrestrial habitat present within the works area, the risk to Great Crested Newts is considered to be low. However, a condition is recommended to require the implementation of Reasonable Avoidance Measures during works to prevent impacts on such protected species, as detailed within the submitted Ecological Constraints Report.

Himalayan Balsam is present on the Brabyns Park car park site. As such, a Method Statement for the control, treatment and prevention of spread of this invasive species will be need to be submitted, approved, implemented and subsequently monitored. This would be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

Further conditions are recommended by the Nature Development Officer to ensure that external lighting is sensitively designed to minimise impacts on wildlife; to ensure that existing retained trees are adequately protected; to require the provision of biodiversity enhancements; and to require the submission and approval of update ecological assessments should the works have not commenced within two years of the original survey works.

In summary, on the basis of the submitted information, in the absence of objections from the Nature Development Officer and subject to conditional control, it is considered that any potential harm resulting from the proposed development to protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site could be appropriately mitigated and compensated. As such, the proposal complies with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Land Contamination

The Council Environment Team noted that the site has not been identified as potentially contaminated and, as such, the proposed development is not considered to be at risk from land contamination, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3. The applicant will be advised of procedures to follow should contamination be suspected, found or caused when carrying out the development by way of informative.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Drainage Engineer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above. Notwithstanding these comments, although located directly adjacent to Flood Zone 2/3, both the Ludworth Primary School site and the Brabyns Park car park site are located within Flood Zone 1, which is deemed to have the lowest risk of flooding. As such, noting the scale of the proposed development and the fact that no comments have been received to the application from the Environment Agency, there is no requirement for the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment to accompany the application.

Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3 states that all development will be expected to comply with the approach set out in national policy, with areas of hard-standing or other surfaces, should be of a permeable construction or drain to an alternative form of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Core Strategy DPD policy SD-6 requires a 50% reduction in existing surface water runoff and incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage the run-off water from the site through the incorporation of permeable surfaces and SuDS.

As noted by the Drainage Engineer, no drainage related documents or a proposed drainage strategy for the proposed development have been submitted in support of the application. However, appropriate drainage for the proposed development could be secured by the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions. Such conditions would require the submission, approval and subsequent implementation of a surface water drainage system, including management and maintenance of such at all times thereafter, which should incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), based on the hierarchy of drainage options identified by National Planning Practice Guidance and taking into account ground conditions. Subject to compliance with such conditions, it is considered that the proposed development could be drained in an appropriate and sustainable manner without the risk of flooding elsewhere, in accordance with saved UDP policy EP1.7 and Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6 and SIE-3.

Energy Efficiency

As the proposed development would not exceed 1000 square metres of non-residential floorspace, the proposed development does not trigger the Council's carbon reduction targets, as defined by Core Strategy DPD policy SD-3. The submission of an Energy Statement, to confirm that energy efficient measures would be incorporated within the fabric of the development and to assess the potential use of low and zero carbon technologies within the development, where technically feasible and financially viable, would be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

SUMMARY

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

There is a Borough wide initiative to provide pupil places at Schools, supported by the Government, to respond to an increasing pupil population and Ludworth School has been chosen for development and expansion. As a result of the proposed

development, the number of pupils at the School would be increased by 79, from 341 as existing to 420 as proposed. Paragraph 95 of the NPPF highlights the importance of ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. It requires Local Planning Authorities to take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education. Local Planning Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand and alter schools.

The Brabyns Park car park portion of the site is allocated within the Green Belt and the proposed works within this portion of the site are considered to comprise engineering operations that would maintain the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. As such, the proposed works within the Brabyns Park car park site are not considered to represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Both the Ludworth Primary School site and the Brabyns Park car park sites are located within the Marple Bridge Conservation Area. In the absence of objections from the Conservation Officer and subject to conditional control, it is considered that the proposed development would not cause harm the character and appearance of the Marple Bridge Conservation Area.

The neighbour objections raised to the proposal on the grounds of additional traffic generation, parking issues and highway safety issues, currently experienced at the School and resulting from the proposed development and school expansion are noted and appreciated. The Highway Engineer acknowledges that the proposal will increase the parking demand of the School and would result in an increase in vehicle movements on the local highway network at School start and finish times. However the Highway Engineer considers that the provision of the proposed 'Park and Stride' car park in Brabyns Park, together with measures to improve highway safety and the management of car parking on streets in the vicinity of the site and to encourage sustainable travel, should adequately mitigate the impact of the development to a level which would not have such an impact on the local highway network or on highway safety which would warrant the refusal of the application.

In the absence of objections from relevant Consultees and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties; impact on trees; impact on protected species and ecology; land contamination; flood risk and drainage; and energy efficiency.

In view of the above, on balance, the proposal is considered to comply with relevant saved UDP and Core Strategy DPD policies and relevant SPG's and SPD's. 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, notwithstanding the objections raised to the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant.

Should Members agree the Officer recommendation and resolve to grant planning permission, the decision should be deferred and delegated to the Head of Planning, to secure the required financial contribution of £15,000 to fund parking restrictions/a Traffic Regulation Order on roads within the vicinity of the site.

