

ITEM 1

Application Reference	DC/088758
Location:	Aquinas Sixth Form College Nangreave Road Heaviley Stockport Stockport SK2 6TH
PROPOSAL:	The construction of a new detached two storey teaching block on the site of an existing sixth form college. The teaching block comprises 10no. new classrooms, a staff room and supplementary flexible learning spaces, in addition to circulation space, WC provisions on both floors and plant and server space. The footprint of the building measures 681.2sqm. The surrounding site will be landscaped with paths and planting, and includes an external secure courtyard for use by students and staff.
Type Of Application:	Public Services infrastructure Development
Registration Date:	19.05.2023
Expiry Date:	18.08.2023
Case Officer:	Mark Jordan
Applicant:	Aquinas College
Agent:	seven architecture

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

If minded for approval this application can only be granted by the Planning and Highways Regulation, as it constitutes a departure from the statutory development plan.

Application has also been called up to Stepping Hill Area Committee by Cllr Hibbert.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the construction of a detached, two storey building providing flexible teaching space on the site of Aquinas sixth form college. The proposed development is designed to serve the existing operations and facilities of the campus. The footprint of the building measures approximately 681sq.m.

The proposed teaching block, which has a largely rectangular footprint, comprises 10 new classrooms, a staff room and supplementary flexible learning spaces, in addition to circulation space and ancillary facilities (i.e. wc provision, plant and server space).

The remainder of site will have high quality hard and soft landscaping, together with an external secure courtyard of approximately 250 sq.m for use by students and staff.

A number of trees are proposed for removal to accommodate the proposed development, with additional screen planting proposed around the site boundaries

that are adjacent to surrounding residential properties, as well as additional tree planting elsewhere with the site.

The drawings attached to this planning report represent the best way for Members to appreciate and consider the physical impact of the proposal seeking full planning permission, in terms of its layout, scale, appearance, means of access and landscaping.

In addition to the extensive number of detailed drawings, the proposal has also been accompanied by a large number of supporting reports which, amongst others, include the following:-

Design and Access Statement
Transportation Statement
Travel Plan
Landscape plans
Tree Survey
Sustainability Checklist
Ecological Survey Assessment & Mitigation
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment
Air Quality Assessment
Site Investigation Report
Noise Assessment
Remediation Strategy
Crime Impact Assessment

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site includes approximately 0.44 hectares of land which currently forms part of the wider Aquinas College campus, located on land off Nangreave Road.

The site which is generally flat, comprises a grassed area which is crossed by one of a number of pedestrian paths linking the college buildings to its car parking areas, whilst mature screen planting exists along the south-eastern and south-western site boundaries.

Vehicular access to the wider college campus is taken off Nangreave Road.

Two storey residential dwellings abut the site to the south east and south-west, whilst the existing main 3 storey college campus building, landscaped areas and car parking surround the remainder of the site.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Development Plan includes-

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

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

EP1.7: Development and Flood Risk

UOS1.3 Protection of Local Open Space

L1.1: Land for Active Recreation

MW1.5: Control of Waste from Development

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

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

SD-1: Creating Sustainable Communities

SD-3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – New Development

SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

AS-2 Improving Indoor Sports, Community and Education Facilities and their Accessibility

SIE-1 Quality Places

SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

CS1: Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development

CS8: Safeguarding And Improving 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

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

The following are relevant to the determination of this application:

- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Sustainable Transport SPD
- Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD
- Design of Residential Development SPD

National Planning Policy Framework

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

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

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

Amongst others, paragraphs 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14 38, 47, 99, 124, 126, 130, 153, 174, 180 and 213 are considered to be pertinent to the current application

Planning Practice Guidance

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

Ministerial Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development – 15 August 2011

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The wider college site has an extensive planning history. The following are pertinent to the current application:

DC/028804 Erection of eleven temporary mobile units for storage and classrooms.
Granted 06/03/08

DC/028122 Redevelopment of Aquinas College including new sixth form college with car parking, landscaping and reconfigured outdoor sport facilities and access from Nangreave Road, plus change of use from Sunday School to full educational use. Granted 29/04/08.

DC/020938 Granted 08/12/05. Installation of 4 mobile temp accommodation classroom units.

DC/014577 Erection of 6no temporary porta-cabins. Granted 05/05/04.

DC/006600 Two storey extension to provide new design workshop and classrooms, replacement windows and roof renovations to existing gymnasium and dining room. Granted 30/04/02.

DC/006266 Alterations and extensions to existing buildings. Granted 11/07/02.

DC/001829 Erection of garage and formation of tennis courts Granted 25/10/00.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The application has been advertised via site and press notices as a departure from the Development Plan, affecting the setting of a Conservation Area and a Major Development. In addition nearby properties have been directly notified of the proposal.

The consultation period expired on 10/07/23.

At the time of report preparation 1 letter of representation has been received objecting to the application on the following summarised grounds:-

- 1) Previous permissions were based on student number being limited to 1900, however this has over time increased to 2300 students and no action has been taken by the Council.
- 2) The proposal to build 10 new classrooms will result in even more students being on site;
- 3) Some local people rely on public transport, however it is impossible to use local buses when the college is open, due to the number of students at bus stops;
- 4) Due to the large number of students in the area, local residents experience difficulties with footpaths being blocked

In addition 1 letter of representation has been received raising neutral comments in respect of the application on the following summarised grounds:-

- 1) Whilst construction work causes noise and disturbance this is unavoidable;
- 2) Concern exists over the management of the size of existing trees and shrubs along the site boundaries with adjacent properties. These concerns have previously been brought to the attention of the College, some work has been carried out and there has been further communication, however further discussion is need over the maintenance plan for trees on site.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Contaminated Land Officer: The following reports have been reviewed;

- GeoCon Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment dated May 2023
- GeoCon Geo-Environmental Site Investigation Report Phase II dated May 2023

No further investigation is required and as such, no conditions are required on the decision notice.

Conservation Officer: The application seeks permission for the construction of a detached teaching block on the site of the existing sixth form college. The new block would be sited centrally between two existing school buildings.

Given the location on the site, and the distance between the proposed development and nearest heritage assets and existing intervening buildings, I confirm that I raise no objections.

Drainage Engineer (Lead Local Flood Authority) Having reviewed the documentation for this application. The LLFA would like to raise the following comments:

- We require more sustainable storage on the site such as swales, detention basins, rainwater gardens and water butts.
- The attenuation tank could be withdrawn and replaced with a detention basin please investigate this change.

Nature Development Officer:

Nature Conservation Designations

The site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise as listed in Stockport's current Local Plan (e.g. Site of Biological Importance, Local Nature Reserve, Green Chain).

It has however been identified as an opportunity area within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) pilot study for Greater Manchester. This is not necessarily a barrier to development and does not confer protection or prevention of land uses but shows that such areas have been prioritised for restoring and linking up habitats.

Recommendations:

Sufficient ecological information is available to inform determination of the application. Measurable gains for biodiversity are expected within development in accordance with national and local planning policy (NPPF and paragraph 3.345 of the LDF). BNG enhancements on the site are calculated to lead to a net gain in biodiversity which is satisfactory as long as the current proposals are adhered to.

Details of the long-term management (for a minimum of 30 years) of the on-site landscaping scheme will need to be submitted to the LPA for approval (as part of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) or equivalent document) to ensure that the proposed neutral grassland, mixed scrub, broadleaved woodland, biodiverse green roof and additional trees reach moderate condition in accordance with the submitted metric. The following condition can be used:

A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by the LPA prior to the commencement of development. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management
- c) Aims and objectives of management
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives
- e) Prescriptions for management actions
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan to be rolled forward for long-term management for a minimum of 30 years)
- g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Lighting

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/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting> (note update 2023)). It is of particular importance that no light spill occurs onto the woodland. Please provide a lighting strategy which adequately addresses the potential disturbance to bats and other nocturnal wildlife including a lighting contour plan / evidence of dark corridors / directional lighting away from woodland and tree lines.

Nesting Birds

In relation to breeding birds, vegetation clearance should be timed to avoid the bird nesting season where possible (which is March-August inclusive). If this is not possible a breeding bird survey will be required by a suitably experienced person no more than 48 hours in advance of works to confirm presence/absence of nesting birds and confirm that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site (e.g. implementation of appropriate buffer zones to prevent disturbance).

Badger Precautionary working methods Condition:

To minimise the potential risk to badgers, the following measures shall be implemented during works:

- All excavations to be carried out in a careful manner, if excavations breach

any obvious mammal tunnels, works must immediately stop and an appropriately qualified ecologist must be contacted for further advice.

- Where any trenches or other excavations are to be left open overnight these should be fitted with mammal ramps or should have the sides battered to form a slope to allow badgers to escape.
- A tidy works area should be maintained during construction and any hazardous substances should be fenced off to remove any badger hazards from the site.

No excavations to be carried out within 5m of the railway boundary fence, unless under supervision of an appropriately qualified badger ecologist.

An informative should be attached to any future planning consent to state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity. If at any time during works, evidence of any protected species is discovered on site, works must cease and a suitably experienced ecologist contacted for advice.

Ecology survey shelf-life

Ecological conditions can change over time. If the development has not commenced within two years of the submitted 2023 survey work, update ecological surveys will be required. The following condition can be used to secure this update survey and ecological assessment:

If the development hereby approved does not commence (or, having commenced, is suspended for more than 12 months) within 2 years from the ecological surveys, the approved ecological measures secured through the below conditions shall be reviewed and, where necessary, amended and updated. The review shall be informed by further ecological surveys commissioned to:

- i) establish if there have been any changes in the ecological baseline and
- ii) identify any likely new ecological impacts that might arise from any changes.

Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in ecological impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, the original approved ecological measures will be revised and new or amended measures, and a timetable for their implementation, will be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development. Works will then be carried out in accordance with the proposed new approved ecological measures and timetable

Education Team: The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force in July 2021. This document sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material planning consideration of significant weight, meaning it must be taken into account, where it is relevant, in deciding planning applications and appeals.

Paragraph 95 of the NPPF (2021) refers directly to education provision, highlighting the importance of schools in promoting healthy and safe communities.

Providing high quality educational facilities is a key priority of Stockport's Core Strategy. Specifically, Core Strategy Development Management Policy AS-2 sets out that 'sufficient educational facilities will provide modernised secondary schools with improvements to the building stock condition through various means including new development, redevelopment, extension and refurbishment as resources permit'.

Pupil projections have shown an increase in pupil numbers moving through the secondary sector in Stockport which will therefore continue to increase throughout post-16 provision.

The application will support current and future demand in Stockport and is therefore supported by Stockport MBC's Education department.

Highway Engineer: The proposal is for a new teaching block comprising 10 classrooms, with no changes to access, parking or servicing arrangements. It is not intended to directly enable an uplift in the number of students at the site, but to improve facilities and enhance the learning experience.

I note that the permission for the redevelopment of the College in 2008, reference DC/028122, has a condition imposed that restricts the number of students attending the College at any one time to no more than 1900. This condition would remain compliant and there is no indication or intention to increase attendance at any one time and whilst the student role could increase slightly it is not expected that more than the existing number of 1500 students would be on site at any one time.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the proposed additional classrooms will not directly relate to an increase in vehicle trips on the local highway network or demand for parking at the site. Regard must also be given to the potential for attendance at any one time to increase to 1900 irrespective of any future development so an expectation of a review of any mitigation or an objection on traffic grounds could not be justified or sustained.

The submission has included, as requested at pre-application stage, a review of on-site cycle parking facilities and updating of the site travel plan. In terms of capacity there is sufficient to meet the measured and future demand for cycling however the facilities would benefit from improvement with provision of replacement facilities with better protection from inclement weather. This is a matter that can be addressed under conditional control. A condition should also be imposed to ensure continued adherence to the Travel Plan for the site, updated as part of this submission.

Conditions

The new building hereby approved shall not be brought into use until cycle parking provision has been improved and upgraded with enhanced weather protection and security in accordance with details that have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking facilities shall then be retained and shall remain available for use at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that safe and practical cycle 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.

The new building hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the travel plan for the College submitted with the application has been brought into operation. The travel plan shall be operated at all times that the College is in use and shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in accordance with details outlined in the approved plan.

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.

Environment Team (Noise): No objection.

Environment Team (Air): No objections, subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures as suggested in the submitted Air Quality Assessment.

Planning Policy: The Design and Access Statement which forms part of the application notes that the existing college building was constructed on an area allocated as Local Open Space (LOS) in the development plan. In balance with a number of other material factors, not least the educational benefits of the scheme at that time, it was concluded that the loss of that LOS should be accepted partly on the grounds that the previous main college building would be cleared and the area it occupied returned to usable open space; such an approach sought to minimise the net loss of LOS that arose from that scheme as a whole.

The new building now proposed is, subsequently, sited on an area of land that should be considered to be LOS in its entirety even though only part of it is shown as such on the development plan policies map (the UDP Review Proposals Map). As such the determination of this application should include consideration in relation to 'saved' UDP Review policy UOS1.3 "Protection of Local Open Space," Core Strategy Policy CS8 "Safeguarding and Improving the Environment" and paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021):

- For proposals other than where land is proposed to be used for recreational purpose (dealt with under point (i) of the policy), UOS1.3 sets out a presumption against the loss of Local Open Space unless:
 - (ii) It can be demonstrated that there is an adequate provision of open space in the local area and that the loss of the site would not be detrimental to the well-being of the local community or the amenities of the area; or
 - (iii) the open space that would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by open space of equivalent or better quantity, quality, usefulness, and attractiveness, in a location at least as accessible to current and potential users.
- CS8 sets out that "Development that does not safeguard the permanence and integrity of the Open Space will not be allowed."
- NPPF paragraph 99 sets out that, where the development is not for alternative sports and recreational provision: "Existing open space, sports

and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location”

In relation to UOS1.3 point (ii) and NPPF paragraph 99 point a) there is an identified deficiency of open space within the local area, from which it might be concluded that the open space cannot be surplus to requirements. In relation to UOS1.3 point (iii) and NPPF paragraph 99 point b) there is no proposal to provide replacement open space but, however, the proposal seeks to improve the quality, usefulness and attractiveness of the remaining open space on the site.

CS8 might be considered slightly differently as it sets out that there may be “situations in which other factors determine that the need to continue to protect existing assets are outweighed by the interests of achieving sustainable communities.” It goes on to set out that, in such situations, “the objective of achieving sustainable communities may be best served by the development of limited areas of open space.” However, CS8 also sets out that a loss of open space will only be considered acceptable in circumstances where the local Area Committee area has a relatively higher level of open space provision than other Area Committee areas which is not the case in this location.

It can only be concluded, therefore, that the proposed development would be a departure from the development plan as it is contrary to both UOS1.3 and CS8. The proposal is also contrary to NPPF paragraph 99. However, given the wider purported benefits of the scheme and the need to reach an overall balanced judgement as to whether a loss of LOS might be justified, it is necessary to give more in-depth consideration of the LOS’ value, as open space, and whether and how that value might be retained or enhanced, rather than purely considering the matter in quantitative terms.

With there being no public access to the LOS it might be held that its value is limited to visual/aesthetic value (it is highly visible from Nangreave Road and even more so from Canada Street / Soudan Road and Diamond Street to the rear) and any ecological or biodiversity value. There is, of course, value as open space for college pupils, staff and visitors – but that is a matter for the college to be concerned about, albeit one they should be strongly encouraged not to miss as there is significant evidence on the value of open space / greenery etc. to people’s well-being and, very pertinently, to improved educational outcomes.

The visual/aesthetic value appears to have been well considered through the proposed landscaping scheme and the design of the new building which is intended to complement its surrounding natural environment, including through incorporation of a green roof. The Design and Access statement notes that “the scheme will enhance the biodiversity of the campus [as a whole] and link the more structured landscape into the preserved open space in front of the proposed building.” By providing an area for outdoor learning, including in relation to what are termed “green skills,” the proposal further adds to the qualitative value and usefulness of the retained LOS.

The ecological value of the site has been assessed as part of a separate Ecology Report. This in turn has informed the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment which also forms part of the application and which concludes there would be a 57.63% net gain in habitat units and 24.67% net gain in hedgerow units, significantly exceeding the minimum 10% net gain required of new development from November of this year.

The qualitative improvements to the retained open space, resulting in gains in visual/aesthetic terms, in terms of usefulness as open space to the college and, significantly, in terms of biodiversity, should be given substantial weight in the overall balanced consideration of the application. The positive weight that CS8 suggests may be given to proposals which require the loss of limited areas of open space where it is in the interests of achieving sustainable communities is also a relevant factor, albeit with the significant caveat that the Area Committee area does not have a relatively higher level of open space provision than other areas in the borough. In overall terms, though, on balance and as such, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, it would be a reasonable conclusion that a departure from 'saved' UDP Review policy UOS1.3 and Core Strategy policy CS8 might be justified, as might be the permitting of development contrary to the relevant provisions of NPPF paragraph 99.

Planning Policy (Energy): Having reviewed the submitted information, I am now satisfied that the development is compliant with policy CS1. This is being achieved by the following measures:

- Building designed to comply with the DfE Further Education Output Specification & Generic Design brief.
- Air Source Heat pumps instead of Gas.
- Solar Voltaic Panels to generate electricity.
- Natural ventilation instead of air conditioning.
- Energy Efficient Under Floor Heating.
- Energy Efficient LED lighting.
- Building designed to exceed the thermal resistance (U Values) as specified in (Building Regs 2023)
- Targeting an EPC A rated building for energy efficiency

I have no objections to the development and support the proposed approach.

Arboriculture Officer:

Legislative and Policy Framework

Conservation Area Designations

The proposed development is not within or affected by a conservation Area.

Legally Protected Trees

There are no legally protected trees within this site or affected by this development.

Recommendations:

The proposed development footprints is assumed to have an impact on trees on site as its cited within the formal soft standing area and at this time shown within the

informal grounds of the existing site and it is assumed the proposed new developments including rectification/landscaped works will impact on the trees and hedges on and adjacent to the site as the site is fairly tree covered on site and within the existing hard standing its essential that every opportunity to increase tree cover is assessed including new highway tree landscape planting.

A full tree survey has been supplied as part of the planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing neighbouring trees and where applicable which trees will have a potential impact on the proposed development, as well as the BNG report which shows full consideration has been given to tree planting throughout the site to increase the amenity levels of the site with replanting of semi-mature trees or fruit trees. Specific consideration needs to be given to the potential benefit urban tree planting throughout the site to enhance the biodiversity, the amenity and the SUDs capacity through hard landscaped tree pits.

The construction works adjacent to the onsite trees will need to review root protection areas and include all specialist construction detail within an arboriculture impact assessment and arboriculture method statement to allay any concerns for damage during construction.

A detailed landscaping scheme as shown on the BNG report will need to be delivered as part of this planning application submitted which clearly shows enhancements of the site and surrounding environment to improve the local biodiversity and amenity of the area and replace all lost trees by a greater number as shown but maybe include greater biodiversity species trees.

In principle the main works and design will have the potential for a negative impact on the trees on neighbouring properties on all the boundaries, with the majority of these being previous landscape planting and so minimal amenity loss to this stage but would need to compensate this loss as shown.

In its current format it could be considered favourable with some increased details/consideration given to the existing trees in or around the site when designing the construction details, new access/boundary treatment and site layout as shown in BNG report to improve the amenity and aesthetics of the site for users and local community for screening of any new development from any highway and making sure a percentage of these are native large species, as well as increased native hedges throughout the scheme and fruit trees at every opportunity.

The following conditions would be relevant to any planning application relating to the site:

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.

Design for Security: No comments received.

Sport England: The proposed development does not fall within either our statutory remit (Statutory Instrument 2015/595), or non-statutory remit (National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Par. 003 Ref. ID: 37-003-20140306), therefore Sport England has not provided a detailed response in this case, but would wish to give the following advice to aid the assessment of this application.

General guidance and advice can however be found on our website:

If the proposal involves the loss of any sports facility then full consideration should be given to whether the proposal meets Par. 99 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), link below, is in accordance with local policies to protect social infrastructure and any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.

If the proposal involves the provision of a new sports facility, then consideration should be given to the recommendations and priorities set out in any approved Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority may have in place. In addition, to ensure they are fit for purpose, such facilities should be designed in accordance with Sport England, or the relevant National Governing Body, design guidance notes.

If the proposal involves the provision of additional housing (then it will generate additional demand for sport. If existing sports facilities do not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand, then new and/or improved sports facilities should be secured and delivered in accordance with any approved local policy for social infrastructure, and priorities set out in any Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy that the local authority has in place.

In line with the Government's NPPF (including Section 8) and PPG (Health and wellbeing section), consideration should also be given to how any new development, especially for new housing, will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. Sport England's Active Design guidance can be used to help with this when developing or assessing a proposal. Active Design provides ten principles to help ensure the design and layout of development encourages and promotes participation in sport and physical activity.

NPPF Section 8, PPG Health and wellbeing section and Sport England's Active Design Guidance.

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM): The application seeks approval for construction of a new teaching block, comprising 10 classrooms, located on an undeveloped area of land within the College Grounds, bordered by Canada Street to the west.

The proposals will not directly result in an uplift in staff or student numbers.

Highways Overview Colleagues from within TfGM HFAS (Highways Forecasting Analytical Services) and TfGM UTC (Urban Traffic Control) have reviewed the Transport Statement (TS) issued in support of the proposed development and have provided comments in respect of the relevant sections. I. Trip Generation The TS confirms that the development is not expected to result in an increase in staff / student numbers, above the normal uplift that would be expected. II. Proposed Internal Access Arrangements The TS confirms that existing access, car parking and servicing arrangements will remain unchanged. TfGM recommend that Electric Vehicle Charging spaces are provided within the existing car park, in line with the Council's adopted standards.

The TS does not indicate how the access to the college operates and whether there are any existing parking problems outside the site. III. Active Travel The junction of Buxton Road / Nangreave Road has an all-red pedestrian stage, however, there are no green pedestrian facilities across the southern side of Buxton Road.

Consideration could be made for adding pedestrian green signals across the missing arm of the junction. This would help to improve access to the site by sustainable modes

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

We have no objection to this development subject to the following Conditions:

- In the interests of aviation safety, measures to minimise and manage the creation of dust and smoke should be implemented for the full duration of all construction works, including demolition and excavation, in accordance with the advice of Manchester Airport and the Civil Aviation Authority.

Reason: Flight safety – dust and smoke are hazardous to aircraft engines; dust and smoke clouds can present a visual hazard to pilots and air traffic controllers.

- Notwithstanding the provision of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order), all exterior lighting shall be capped at the horizontal with no upward light spill.

Reason In the interests of flight safety and to prevent distraction and confusion to pilots using Manchester Airport in accordance with Policy SIE5 "Aviation Facilities, Telecommunications and other Broadcast Infrastructure" of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD, EP 1.9 "Safeguarding of Aerodromes and Air Navigation Facilities" of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review and the Town & Country Planning (Safeguarded Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosive Storage Areas) Direction 2002.

- During construction and in perpetuity, robust measures to be taken to prevent species of birds that are hazardous to aircraft being attracted to the site. No pools or ponds of water should occur/be created without permission; the green roof and PV

panel areas should be regularly monitored to ensure that birds are prevented from roosting / nesting on or under the roof.

Reason: Flight safety – Birdstrike risk avoidance; to prevent any increase in the number of hazardous birds. Informative:

The applicant's attention is drawn to the procedures for crane and tall equipment notifications, please see: <https://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Airspace/Event-and-obstacle-notification/Crane-notification/>

- No lighting directly beneath any roof lights that will emit light upwards – only downward facing ambient lighting to spill from roof lights upwards

– ideally, automatic blinds to be fitted that close at dusk.

Reason: Flight safety - to prevent distraction or confusion to pilots using MAN.

Given the location of this property the applicant should be aware that the airport will take action against anyone found in contravention of the Air Navigation Order (“Order”). In particular in contravention of the following provisions under that Order:- Part 10: 240: A person must not recklessly or negligently act in a manner likely to endanger an aircraft, or any person in an aircraft. Part 10: 241: A person must not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property.

The 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.

United Utilities:

DRAINAGE

Following our review of the submitted drainage documents; Drainage Strategy Ref: 100.23005- ACE-00-ZZ-DR-C-1000, Ref: P03, Dated 25/04/23, the plans are not acceptable to United Utilities. This is because we have not seen robust evidence that the drainage hierarchy has been thoroughly investigated and the proposals are not in line with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. Should planning permission be granted we request the following condition is attached to any subsequent Decision Notice:

CONDITION Prior to the commencement of development, details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The drainage schemes must include: (i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment

thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365; (ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations). In the event of surface water discharging to the public surface water sewer, the rate of discharge shall be restricted to 5 l/s; (iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD; (iv) Incorporate mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and (v) Foul and surface water shall drain on separate systems. The approved schemes shall also be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards.

Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development. Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

Please note, United Utilities is not responsible for advising on rates of discharge to the local watercourse system. This is a matter for discussion with the Lead Local Flood Authority and / or the Environment Agency (if the watercourse is classified as main river). If the applicant intends to offer wastewater assets forward for adoption by United Utilities, their proposed detailed design will be subject to a technical appraisal by our Developer Services team and must meet the requirements outlined in 'Sewerage Sector Guidance Appendix C – Design and Construction Guidance v2-2' dated 29 June 2022 or any subsequent iteration. This is important as drainage design can be a key determining factor of site levels and layout. Acceptance of a drainage strategy does not infer that a detailed drainage design will meet the requirements for a successful adoption application. We strongly recommend that no construction commences until the detailed drainage design, has been assessed and accepted in writing by United Utilities. Any work carried out prior to the technical assessment being approved is done entirely at the developer's own risk and could be subject to change.

Management and Maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems

Without effective management and maintenance, sustainable drainage systems can fail or become ineffective. We believe we have a duty to advise the Local Planning Authority of this potential risk to ensure the longevity of the surface water drainage system and the service it provides to people. We also wish to minimise the risk of a sustainable drainage system having a detrimental impact on the public sewer network should the two systems interact.

We therefore recommend the Local Planning Authority include a condition in any subsequent Decision Notice regarding a management and maintenance regime for any sustainable drainage system that is included as part of the proposed development.

The following may be a useful example. Prior to occupation of the development a sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development shall be submitted to the local planning authority and agreed in writing. The sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan shall include as a minimum: a. Arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or, management and maintenance by a resident's management company; and b. Arrangements for inspection and ongoing maintenance of all

elements of the sustainable drainage system to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. The development shall subsequently be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To ensure that management arrangements are in place for the sustainable drainage system in order to manage the risk of flooding and pollution during the lifetime of the development. Please note United Utilities cannot provide comment on the management and maintenance of an asset that is owned by a third party management and maintenance company and we would not be involved in the discharge of the management and maintenance condition in these circumstances.

UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY, ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Where United Utilities' assets cross the proposed red line boundary, developers must contact our Developer Services team prior to commencing any works on site, including trial holes, groundworks or demolition. Please see 'Contacts' section below. Water pipelines United Utilities will not allow building over or in close proximity to a water main. Wastewater pipelines United Utilities will not allow a new building to be erected over or in close proximity to a public sewer or any other wastewater pipeline. This will only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances. Nb. Proposals to extend domestic properties either above, or in close proximity to a public sewer will be reviewed on a case by case basis by either by a building control professional or following a direct application to United Utilities (see our website for further details). Important information regarding water and wastewater pipelines and apparatus.

It is the applicant's responsibility to investigate and demonstrate the exact relationship between United Utilities' assets and the proposed development. A number of providers offer a paid for mapping service, including United Utilities (see 'Contacts' section below). The position of the underground apparatus shown on water and wastewater asset maps is approximate only and is given in accordance with the best information currently available. Therefore, we strongly recommend the applicant, or any future developer, does not rely solely on the asset maps to inform decisions relating to the detail of their site and instead investigates the precise location of any underground pipelines and apparatus. Where additional information is requested to enable an assessment of the proximity of proposed development features to United Utilities assets, the proven location of pipelines should be confirmed by site survey; an extract of asset maps will not suffice.

The applicant should seek advice from our Developer Services team on this matter. See 'Contacts' Section below. United Utilities Water will not accept liability for any loss or damage caused by the actual position of our assets and infrastructure being different from those shown on asset maps. Developer's should investigate the existence and the precise location of water and wastewater pipelines as soon as possible as this could significantly impact the preferred site layout and/or diversion of the asset(s) may be required. Unless there is specific provision within the title of the property or an associated easement, any necessary disconnection or diversion of assets to accommodate development, will be at the applicant/developer's expense.

In some circumstances, usually related to the size and nature of the assets impacted by proposals, developers may discover the cost of diversion is prohibitive in the context of their development scheme. Any agreement to divert our underground assets will be subject to a diversion application, made directly to United Utilities. This is a separate matter to the determination of a planning application. We will not guarantee, or infer acceptance of, a proposed diversion through the planning process (where diversion is indicated on submitted plans).

In the event that an application to divert or abandon underground assets is submitted to United Utilities and subsequently rejected (either before or after the determination of a planning application), applicants should be aware that they may need to amend their proposed layout to accommodate United Utilities' assets. Where United Utilities' assets exist, the level of cover to United Utilities pipelines and apparatus must not be compromised either during or after construction and there should be no additional load bearing capacity on pipelines without prior agreement from United Utilities. This would include sustainable drainage features, earth movement and the transport and position of construction equipment and vehicles.

Any construction activities in the vicinity of United Utilities' assets, including any assets or infrastructure that may be located outside the applicant's red line boundary, must comply with national building and construction standards and where applicable, our 'Standard Conditions for Works Adjacent to Pipelines', a copy of which is available on our website. The applicant, and/or any subsequent developer should note that our 'Standard Conditions' guidance applies to any design and construction activities in close proximity to water pipelines and apparatus that are no longer in service, as well as pipelines and apparatus that are currently operational.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that United Utilities' required access is provided within any proposed layout and that our infrastructure is appropriately protected. The developer would be liable for the cost of any damage to United Utilities' assets resulting from their activity.

WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES

If the applicant intends to receive water and/or wastewater services from United Utilities they should visit our website or contact the Developer Services team for advice at the earliest opportunity. This includes seeking confirmation of the required metering arrangements for the proposed development. If the proposed development site benefits from existing water and wastewater connections, the applicant should not assume that the connection(s) will be suitable for the new proposal or that any existing metering arrangements will suffice. In addition, if reinforcement of the water network is required to meet potential demand, this could be a significant project and the design and construction period should be accounted for. In some circumstances we may require a compulsory meter is fitted. For detailed guidance on whether the development will require a compulsory meter please visit

<https://www.unitedutilities.com/my-account/your-bill/our-household-charges-20212022/> and go to section 7.7 for compulsory metering.

To promote sustainable development United Utilities offers a reduction in infrastructure charges for applicant's delivering water efficient homes and draining surface water sustainably (criteria applies). For further information, we strongly recommend the applicant visits our website when considering any water or wastewater design <https://www.unitedutilities.com/buildersdevelopers/your-development/planning/building-sustainable-homes/> Business customers can find additional information on our sustainable drainage incentive scheme at <https://www.unitedutilities.com/Business-services/retailers/incentive-schemes/> To avoid any unnecessary costs and delays being incurred by the applicant or any subsequent developer, we strongly recommend the applicant seeks advice regarding water and wastewater services, and metering arrangements, at the earliest opportunity.

ANALYSIS

In the consideration of this application a number of matters should be considered in assessing the merits of the proposal, addressing the impacts of the proposed development, as well as looking at the overall planning balance of the proposal.

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

Principle of Development

In terms of educational need paragraph 95 of the NPPF highlighting the importance of schools and colleges in promoting healthy and safe communities.

Providing high quality educational facilities is a key priority of Stockport's Core Strategy. Specifically, Core Strategy Development Management Policy AS-2 sets out that 'sufficient educational facilities will provide modernised secondary schools with improvements to the building stock condition through various means including new development, redevelopment, extension and refurbishment as resources permit'.

Currently the college aims for controlled and modest growth of between 20 – 30 students per year. More students does not necessarily equate to more staff, rather an increase in class sizes. The need for the current proposal is therefore based on the requirement for additional types of space. However it is important to note that the existing limit of 1900 students being present on site at any given time would not be exceeded.

The Council's Education Team acknowledge that pupil projections have shown an increase in pupil numbers moving through the secondary sector in Stockport, which will continue to increase throughout post-16 provision. As a result the current application will therefore clearly support current and future higher educational demand in Stockport.

Against this backdrop specific regard needs to be given to the principle of development, in that the application site is (partly) located on land which is allocated as Local Open Space in the development plan and as such the proposal would be contrary to 'saved' UDP Review policy UOS1.3 ("Protection of Local Open Space") (and NPPF paragraph 99) and, as such, it should be treated as a departure from the development plan.

In relation to UOS1.3 point (ii) and NPPF paragraph 99 point a) there is an identified deficiency of open space within the local area, from which it might be concluded that the open space cannot be surplus to requirements. In relation to UOS1.3 point (iii) and NPPF paragraph 99 point b) there is no proposal to provide replacement open space but, however, the proposal seeks to improve the quality, usefulness and attractiveness of the remaining open space on the site.

Policy CS8 sets out that there may be "situations in which other factors determine that the need to continue to protect existing assets are outweighed by the interests of achieving sustainable communities." It goes on to advise that, in such situations, "the objective of achieving sustainable communities may be best served by the development of limited areas of open space." However, CS8 also sets out that a loss of open space will only be considered acceptable in circumstances where the

local Area Committee area has a relatively higher level of open space provision than other Area Committee areas which is not the case in this location.

It can only be concluded, therefore, that the proposed development would be a departure from the development plan as it is contrary to both UOS1.3 and CS8. The proposal is also contrary to NPPF paragraph 99.

Notwithstanding the above, in applying the planning balance process to the consideration of this application now before Members, weight does need to be given to value of the open space being lost and how any such value might be retained or enhanced elsewhere in qualitative terms. In addition material weight needs to be given to the wider benefits (i.e. educational need and enhanced facilities, etc), that would result from the proposed development.

In terms of the current area of local open space, Members will be advised that there is no public access to this land, with it forming part of the private land associated with the existing college campus.

Officers consider that the retention / enhancement of the visual / aesthetic value of the local open space has been robustly justified through the substantial landscaping scheme that forms part of the current proposal, together with the design principles applied to the new building which seeks to complement its surrounding natural environment, including through incorporation of a green roof. Moreover the substantial improvements to the biodiversity of the site and the wider campus, through the provision of a more structured landscape within the preserved open space in front of the proposed building, together with other enhancements such as provision of an outdoor learning / green skills area, are considered to add to the qualitative value and usefulness of the retained local open space.

In respect of the ecological value of the site, including the areas of local open space to be both retained and lost, the impacts on ecological interests has been separately assessed through supporting technical reports. These have subsequently identified that proposal would result in a biodiversity net gain of circa 57% in habitat units and 24% in hedgerow units. It is important that not only appropriate ecological mitigation is achieved but also measurable net gains for biodiversity are secured in accordance with national and local planning policy.

The above mentioned qualitative improvements to the retained open space in terms of visual/aesthetic terms, in conjunction with the significant improvements of biodiversity, should be given substantial weight in the balanced consideration of the application.

To conclude, irrespective of the abovementioned policy conflict, officers are satisfied that planning balance weighs heavily in favour of the scheme and the principle of development can be supported on this basis.

Design, Scale & Appearance

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

It goes on to state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development

acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.

Paragraph 130 states that decisions should ensure that developments:

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

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

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

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

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

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

The proposed development is to be set to the south-east of the existing main college building and would be two storeys in height with a floorspace of circa 681 sq.m.

The design approach for the proposed building utilises a contrasting palette of materials, predominantly comprising brickwork, glazing and timber cladding. In addition a grassed roof element is proposed to assist with drainage and biodiversity enhancements. The contrasting materials of external construction within the development is designed to provide a visual tie in and flow with the existing 3 storey college building adjacent to the site.

The overall height of timber clad element of the proposed building is designed to be graduated, so as to extend slightly further upwards than the main two storey element of the building. This is proposed in order to screen wider public views of the plant equipment and solar pv panels that are to be positioned at roof roof-top level.

When taking into account the design as illustrated on the submitted plans, alongside the urban context within which the proposed development would be set, officers consider that the scale and design of development proposed is appropriate to its setting, which comprises the existing 3 storey college building adjacent to the current site and surrounding two storey residential dwellings.

The proposed development is to be set to the south-east of the existing main college building and would be two storeys in height with a floorspace of circa 681 sq.m.

The new structure would be set adjacent to the existing college building which has a maximum height of three-storeys and would be separated from the adjacent smaller residential properties located to the south-east and south-west of the application site by screen planting.

Officers recognise that some amenity grassland, trees and planting would be lost as part of the proposal, however, soft landscaping, habitat enhancements and tree planting are also proposed to be planted and retained within the site in mitigation of this loss. Such mitigation can be secured by an appropriate landscaping condition.

Taking both the design of the new building and the associated landscaping works into account, officers consider that the visual impact that this scheme would have upon the wider environment would be acceptable, noting that the building would largely be seen in the context of the existing, adjacent 3 storey college building, when viewed from the wider street scene.

Subject to an appropriate landscaping condition which will secure optimum boundary enhancements, there would not be a significant urbanising effect as a result of the development and on balance officers do not raise objection to the scheme on design grounds.

Highway Safety & Parking

The detailed response of the Council's Highway Engineer and Transport for Greater Manchester to the proposal as originally submitted, are included within the Consultees section of this report and should be cross-referenced as part of the analysis of this application.

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

The proposed development is not intended to result in an increase in the number of students at the site, rather it is designed to provide significantly improved facilities for students and staff, to enhance the overall learning experience of the college.

Members are advised that in granting planning permission in 2008 under application ref. DC/028122 for the redevelopment of the college, a planning condition was imposed that restricts the number of students attending the college at any one time to no more than 1900. It is acknowledged that this condition would remain unaffected by the current proposal.

In light of the above and noting the comments of the Council's Highway Engineer, Officers do not consider that the current proposal would result in a material increase in traffic generation and or the need for additional on-site parking.

The current proposal would continue to be served by the pedestrian / vehicular arrangements and car parking provision that already serves the existing college campus.

With regard to cycle parking, whilst the existing provision already provided with the campus is sufficient to cater for the latest development as well, the intention is to provide an upgrade to these facilities.

The proposed building has been designed to meet disabled access legislation, with no stepped access and the provision of a fully inclusive lift.

The proposal would therefore comply with relevant development plan policies and the NPPF in this respect.

Residential Amenity

Core strategy policy SIE-1 and the NPPF require developments to provide a good standard of residential amenity for existing residents in the locality of a development.

Having regard to its scale, design and layout, Officers are satisfied that the plans as submitted demonstrate that the distances between the proposed building and nearby dwellings that are adjacent to the application site, are considered to be acceptable, such that there would not be a materially detrimental impact upon the occupants of nearby residential properties in terms of privacy, overbearing or overshadowing.

It is noted that the design approach that has been taken with the proposal has sought to minimise the introduction of glazed openings in the south-east facing elevation, through the internal layout utilising non-teaching rooms along its southern edge. Notwithstanding this, the separation of between circa 15m and 18m, combined with the provision of additional screen planting along the south-eastern site boundary with residential properties along Canada St and College Close, would ensure that there would be unduly detrimental impact on the privacy of these properties.

Whilst openings serving classrooms are proposed at both ground and first floor level in the south-west elevation of the building facing towards Canada Street, these would be positioned approximately 25m away from the gable elevations of residential properties that face this elevation. Furthermore existing tree planting which screens this site boundary of the college is to be reinforced with additional planting as part of the current proposal.

Matters relating to noise and air pollution are considered separately below.

Air & Noise Pollution

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

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

Ecology

Core Strategy Policy SIE3 sets out the Council's policy on protecting the natural environment stating that net losses of biodiversity and geodiversity will be prevented using a hierarchical approach to conserving and enhancing designated sites and habitats.

It goes on to stress the requirements for biodiversity enhancements through the development of green infrastructure networks to improve connectivity between habitats.

Importantly, the policy states that planning applications should identify mitigation measures that keep disturbance to a minimum and provide alternative habitats to sustain at least the current level of population as well as setting out a long-term management plan for the site. Finally, the policy then highlights the importance of where possible retaining trees and vegetation that make a positive contribution to amenity and makes clear that replacement, compensatory planting where losses arise is necessary.

As noted previously, the site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise as listed in Stockport's current Local Plan.

A full assessment of the scheme in relation to the ecological value of the site has been carried out by the Council's Nature Development Officer and no objections have been raised with regard to the impact made by this scheme.

The proposal seeks to provide demonstrable gains for biodiversity, as expected by both national and local planning policy. These biodiversity net gain enhancements which are being provided on site, would lead to an overall acceptable net gain in biodiversity above and beyond that currently afforded to the wider college campus site.

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

Flood Risk & Drainage

The proposed development is in Flood Zone 1 i.e. the lower category of risk of flooding.

To accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the site will need to be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way. The NPPG clearly sets out the hierarchy to be investigated by the developer when considering a surface water drainage strategy:

1. into the ground (infiltration);
2. to a surface water body;
3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
4. to a combined sewer.

A drainage strategy has been submitted in support of the current application which seeks to ensure a development which improves the flood risk and surface water drainage situation on the wider college campus, which includes a drainage system for the roof of the proposed building to reduce surface water run-off.

In view of the above and subject to securing appropriate flood risk / drainage related conditions, the application does not conflict with the principles of Core Strategy DPD policy SD6 (Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) or saved UDP Review policy EP1.7 (Development & Flood Risk).

Contaminated Land

In respect of ground contamination, Policy SIE-3 seeks to protect development from matters relating to contaminated land. Technical Contaminated Land Reports have been submitted in support of the application to assess the risk of potential contamination at the site and impact on the proposed development.

In the absence of any objections from the Council's Environmental Health (Contaminated Land) officer, the proposal is considered to be acceptable. On this basis the proposal is considered to comply with Policy SIE-3.

Sustainability & Energy

Delivering sustainable development is the primary aim of NPPF. Sustainability and energy efficiency is also key theme of the adopted Core Strategy which seeks to ensure that new development is designed in way to reduce Co2 emissions and minimise climate change.

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

The comments of the Council's Planning Policy Officer (Energy) are contained within the Consultees section of this report. The response is acknowledged and it is noted that it is supportive of the wider approach towards the sustainable principles of the development.

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

Other Matters

Whilst the site is not subject to any specific heritage designations, it is located close to St George's Conservation Area, which extends to Nangreave Road. As a result a heritage impact assessment has been submitted in support of the proposal.

The Council's Conservation Officer has considered the submission and considers that given the location of the site, and the distance between the proposed development and the nearest heritage assets (St George's Conservation Area) and the existence of other intervening buildings, there is no objection to the proposed development on heritage grounds.

The applicant has submitted a Crime Impact Statement, which is supportive of the proposals. It is noted that no objections have been received from Greater Manchester Police's Design for Security team. The proposed development is therefore considered to strike the right balance between security, design quality and accessibility as highlighted by Core Strategy Policy SIE-1.

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

In terms of aviation safeguarding no objections are raised by Manchester Airport.

Summary and Planning Balance

In conclusion, the scheme as proposed would deliver substantial education benefits, in the form of enhanced facilities to meet the borough's needs for higher education provision.

Whilst the impact of the quantitative loss of local open has been identified within this planning report, it is Officers clear belief that the wider qualitative benefits of the proposed development outweigh this loss.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant.

STEPPING HILL AREA COMMITTEE (12/09/23)

The Planning Officer introduced the report providing updates in respect of suggested conditions limiting the number of pupils on site (as per currently applied to the site from previous planning permissions) and tying the use of the existing parking arrangements to both the existing college buildings and the proposed new build development. An updated condition recommended by the Council's Ecologist in respect of a lighting strategy for the development was also outlined.

Members asked questions of the Planning Officer relating to the number of pupils attending the college. The Planning Officer advised of a need for a further application if conditions limiting numbers of pupils were to be exceeded.

Clarification was sought and provided as to the potential impact of the proposal on nearby Conservation Areas.

Members sought clarification that drainage matters were to be resolved by planning condition. This was confirmed by the Planning Officer.

Committee noted comments made by TfGM in respect of the provision of EV charging for vehicles and the potential for changes to pedestrian crossing arrangements at the Nangreave Rd junction. Clarification was sought as to the potential use of conditions to address these matters. The Planning Officer was asked to consider these matters further in advance of the Council's Planning & Highways Regulations Committee.

D Pearson (applicant) and S Parker (architect) spoke in support of the application noting changes in the education landscape since the previous re-development of the college campus. Increasing student numbers has placed pressure on specialised teaching spaces and dedicated assessment areas, which the current proposal will seek to resolve. The proposal seeks to provide significantly increased biodiversity across the site and carbon net zero status, whilst having regard to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and potential impacts on local residents.

Cllrs queried how student numbers are monitored on site. The applicant outlined how the college manages this.

Cllrs highlighted comments made by local residents about noise pollution, light pollution, student parking / comings and goings, littering and maintenance of boundary planting. The applicant noted the concerns and advised that the college does have constant dialogue with residents and seeks to minimise potential impacts. It was highlighted that a biodiversity maintenance plan is proposed and clarification provided on existing grounds maintenance arrangements that are already in place.

Members queried whether there are further expansion plans for the college campus. The applicant advised that there are currently no further plans for expansion and highlighted the likely lifespan of the college buildings (40 yrs+ for building fabric).

Cllrs sought clarification on parking demands and provision. The applicant highlighted that the college travel plan is being expanded, how students are educated to use alternative / more sustainable modes of transport and explained how parking permits are allocated.

Committee considered the points raised in respect of the application and welcomed the proposed improvements to higher education facilities. It was resolved to recommend that the Planning & Highways Regulations grant planning permission.