

ITEM 2

Application Reference	DC/087714
Location:	Former Armadillo Self-storage Earl Road Cheadle Hulme Cheadle
PROPOSAL:	Class B8 self-storage facility, pump house, sprinkler tank, parking area, landscaping and associated works
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	24.01.2023
Expiry Date:	20230425
Case Officer:	Jane Chase
Applicant:	Orbit Investments (Properties) Limited
Agent:	The Emerson Group

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Planning & Highways Committee – Proposed floorspace in excess of 5000m²

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought to erect a self storage facility that will serve both commercial and residential customers. The building which will accommodate lock up units of varying size over four floors will be positioned in the southern extent of the wider application site. A customer reception is proposed to the north west corner of the building to the south of which (and in the west elevation) will be a goods in area, a pedestrian entrance and 2 loading doors. To the west of the building is a service yard accommodating parking for 16 vehicles including 1 accessible space and 2 spaces for electric vehicle charging. A cycle store is also proposed to the car park along with a sprinkler tank and pump house.

The application proposes the widening and improvement of the existing southern access into the site and the closure of an adjacent access to the south of that (outside of the application but within the control of the applicant). The new, improved access will serve the proposed development as well as existing commercial uses to the south of and outside the application site and the northern extent of the application site (which is set aside for future development). A small bank of 6 parking spaces are proposed to the south of the new access to serve the existing commercial uses to the south of the site. Landscaped areas are proposed to the south of the access road, around the car park and around the south and east elevations of the building. Fencing and gates are proposed to the northern boundary of the car park with the proposed access road. The existing fencing to Earl Road as well as that to the north and east boundaries of the land to the north of the proposed access would be retained. This section of the site would then be enclosed by new fencing to its southern boundary with the proposed access.

In total the development will deliver 12,986m² of B8 storage floorspace. The building would measure circa 52.1m deep by 64.7m wide rising 12.65m to eaves and 14.9m to the ridge. Externally the building would comprise largely blank elevations punctuated on 3 sides by ground to eaves level glazing, the entrance doors and glazing to the reception area and doors to the goods in areas. The roof would be formed from 2 hipped roof elements punctuated by rooflights and a small lift over run projection. External materials would comprise Weinburger Staffordshire smooth blue facing brick at low level with Euroclad vertical built up cladding (or similar) above (RAL 9006 Aluminium White and RAL 7012 Basalt Grey). Doors will be formed from powder coated aluminium and steel faced (both RAL 1018 Zinc Yellow). The main roof will be formed from a goosewing grey cladding system with the edge profile being aluminium polyester powder coated (RAL 1018 Zinc Yellow).

The application is supported by the following documents:

Planning Statement
Design & Access Statement
Energy & Sustainability Statement
Economic Benefits Statement
Landscape Proposals
Protected Species Survey
Tree Survey
Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
Air Quality Assessment
Transport Assessment
Crime Impact Statement
Desk Study & Risk Assessment
Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located on the east side of Earl Road, south of the A555 and is bounded by the A34 to the east. The site is currently vacant and cleared of buildings following a fire in 2022 which destroyed the previous self storage facility which occupied the vast majority of the application site.

On the opposite side of Earl Road to the west is a new industrial/storage and distribution centre currently under construction on the former BASF site (DC081106). To the south of the site is further development comprising single and two storey buildings accommodating a variety of uses (offices and a pro football arena to the west, commercial and industrial to the south and a food distribution hub (Ocado) to the south.

The application site is identified on the UDP Proposals Map as being within an Employment Area and has a long established use for storage purposes.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Development Plan includes-

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

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

NE1.2 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

EP1.7 Development and Flood Risk

EP1.9 Safeguarding of Aerodromes and Air Navigation Facilities

E1.1 Location of New Industrial Development

E1.2 Location of New Business Premises and Offices

E3.1 Protection of Employment Areas

MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

CS1 Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development, Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change

SD1 Creating Sustainable Communities

SD3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans

SD6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

CS7 Accommodating Economic Development

AED3 Employment Development in Employment Areas

AED5 Education, Skills and Training Provision

CS8 Safeguarding and Improving the Environment

SIE1 Quality Places

SIE3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

SIE5 Aviation Facilities, Telecommunications and Other Broadcast Infrastructure

CS9 Transport & Development

T1 Transport & Development

T2 Parking in Developments

T3 Safety & Capacity on the Highway Network

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

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.

Local Employment and Training - provides guidance and assistance to developers and end users of developments. It outlines how we intend to work with and support employers to maximise local employment and skills benefits from new developments.

Sustainable Transport - should be read by the developers of any development that would be expected to result in a change in traffic patterns.

Sustainable Design and Construction - is a comprehensive document laying out the drivers and benefits of sustainable design and construction.

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/current-planning-policies>

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 5th September 2023 replaced the previous NPPF (originally issued 2012 & revised 2018 & 2019). 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”.

[National Planning Policy Framework.](#)

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

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

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

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

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and*

historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Para. 81 *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.”*

Para. 83 *“Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.”*

Para. 92 *“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*

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

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

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

Para. 104 *“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;

b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”

Para. 105 *“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.”*

Para. 110 *“In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*

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

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

c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and

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

Para. 111 *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*

Para. 112 *“Within this context, applications for development should:*

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.”*

Para. 113 *“All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.”*

Para. 119 *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”*

Para.120 *“Planning policies and decisions should:*

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;*
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;*
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;”*

Para.126 *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.”*

Para. 130 *“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

Para. 131 *“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.”*

Para.134 *“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or*
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*

Para.152 *“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.”*

Para.154 *“New development should be planned for in ways that:*

- a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and*

b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards."

Para.157 states "In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

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

Para.167 "When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:

*a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;
b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;
c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;
d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and
e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan."*

Para. 169 "Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should:

*a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority;
b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;
c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and
d) where possible, provide multifunctional benefits."*

Para. 174. "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

*a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”

Para.183 *“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:*

- a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);*
- b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and*
- c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.”*

Para.184 *“Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.”*

Para.185 *“Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:*

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;*
- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and*
- c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”*

Para.188 *“The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities.”*

Planning Practice Guidance

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

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DC027039 – Retrospective application for 8 fire escape doors. Approved 2007

DC028685 – Illuminated and non illuminated advertisements. Approved 2008

DC046816 – Retrospective change of use of that part of the building known as Unit 10 and part of the adjacent yard from B8 storage to Suo Generis Car Wash. Approved 2011

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The receipt of the application has been publicised by way of a site notice and notice in the local press. The occupiers of 7 adjacent properties were also notified in writing. At the time of writing this report no representations have been received.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

SMBC Nature Development Officer – No objections subject to conditions.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been submitted by Appletons (Nov 2022) for this site, including a site visit (UKHab survey) on 19th Oct 2022 and an assessment of tree roost potential. Surveys were completed by suitably qualified and experienced ecologists and carried out in accordance with best practice survey guidance.

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).

Handforth Dean Meadows and Ponds local wildlife site (LWS) is approximately 180m south east. Given the distance and lack of habitat connectivity between the LWS and the development site no impacts are anticipated. However, if there are any concerns Cheshire East Council should be consulted as this site is within their remit.

The site 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.

The application area is within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), however this type of development is not included under this designation.

The PEA report has highlighted the potential for the site to support a small number of protected and priority (Section 41 Principal Importance under the NERC Act) species, including bats, breeding birds, badgers, and hedgehog.

The site is generally of low ecological value, dominated by hardstanding with a narrow strip of grassland and trees around the periphery. Occasional areas of grass verge, overgrown ornamental planting and ruderal and ephemeral habitats are also present. Although the survey was undertaken outside of the optimum

time of year for botanical surveys, given the nature of the habitats on-site this is not considered a significant constraint.

The surrounding area is largely urban industrial, with the A34 to the east and A555 to the north. Habitats recorded off-site include pockets of grassland and scattered trees and a culverted watercourse within the immediate surrounding area.

Although we would usually require a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment for a development such as this, given its situation and the limited habitats on-site this is not required on this occasion.

Many trees have the potential to support roosting bats. All species of bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (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, or to hibernate or migrate.
 - b) The local distribution of that species.
- 3) Damage or destroy a breeding place or resting site of such an animal.

The trees on site were assessed as offering negligible potential to support roosting bats owing to a lack of suitable potential roosting features. The site was also assessed for its suitability to support foraging and commuting bats. Habitats on site offer limited opportunities for foraging and commuting bats due to adjacent street lighting, major highways bordering 2 sides and its location within a largely urban industrial area. There are no buildings on site.

The site contains suitable nesting habitat for birds in the form of overgrown ornamental planting, ruderal / ephemeral plants and scattered trees. Most trees around the periphery are to be retained but some vegetation clearance within the site is likely to be required as well as demolition of any temporary structures.

The site is unsuitable for sett building but has low potential habitat for foraging badgers. There are records of badger in the wider area and the site is connected to suitable badger foraging and sett building habitat. Badgers and their setts are legally protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

There is suitable hedgehog habitat on-site and within the surrounding area and there are numerous records for hedgehog within the local area.

No evidence of or significant potential for any other protected species (such as great crested newt) was recorded during the survey.

There is considered to be sufficient ecology survey information available to inform determination of the application.

Should any vegetation removal works be required during the nesting bird season (which is typically March-August, inclusive) then the following informative should be used as part of any planning consent: Trees, scrub, hedges and structures are likely to contain nesting birds between 1st March and 31st August inclusive. Some of these features are present on the application site and are to be assumed to contain nesting birds between the above dates, unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a competent ecologist to assess the nesting bird activity on site during this period and it is absolutely certain that nesting birds are not present. All retained trees and hedgerows should be adequately protected from potential adverse impacts in accordance with British Standards and following advice from the Council's Arboriculture Officer.

Ecological conditions can change over time. In the event that works have not commenced within two years of the 2022 survey (i.e. by October 2024) it is advised that update survey work is undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist to ensure that the ecological impact assessment and protection measures are based on sufficiently up to date survey data and so that any required amendments to proposed mitigation can be identified and incorporated into the scheme. This can be secured by 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:

http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html). Please note that this guidance is due to be updated within the near future.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). A Landscaping Plan has been submitted for this development which includes the provision of 3 additional rowan *sorbus aucuparia* trees and native species hedgerows along the southern boundary of the site which is welcomed. In addition to this biodiversity enhancements for the site should include the following;

- Inclusion of a native wildflower species planting mix (e.g. Emorsgate Seeds) where the current proposals for turf are located. Topsoil and / or compost in these locations should also be replaced with nutrient poor subsoil in order to provide a suitable growing medium for native grassland species.
- A minimum of 2 bat and 2 bird boxes to be provided within/mounted on the new building – details of the proposed number, location and type to be submitted to the LPA / detailed on the landscape plan. Boxes should be integrated if possible or be made from woodstone / woodcrete for greater longevity.
- Boundaries should include gaps to maintain habitat connectivity for wildlife (e.g. hedgehog) to move freely into and across the site. Any close board boundary fencing for example needs to incorporate gaps of approximate 130m x 130mm dimensions.

These measures would be particularly welcomed given the designation of the site as an opportunity area within the LNRS for Greater Manchester.

Precautionary working measures should be undertaken to protect badgers or small mammals such as hedgehog which may pass through the site. Any works which involve the creation of trenches or with pipes shall be undertaken following measures to protect wildlife from being trapped in open excavations and/or pipework:

- a) creation of sloping escape ramps for badgers, which may be achieved by edge profiling of trenches/excavations or by using planks placed into them at the end of each working day; and
- b) open pipework greater than 150 mm outside diameter being blanked off at the end of each working day.

SMBC Arboricultural Officer – No objections subject to conditions.

There are no legally protected trees within this site or affected by this development. A full tree survey has been submitted as part of the full planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing trees and where applicable which trees could be retained.

The proposed landscape plan which shows how the developers intend to off-set the loss and further enhance the site in line with current policy. There is the opportunity for further trees through out the car parking area including species as crataegus monogyna stricta to increase biodiversity. Urban tree pits should be considered throughout the car park area to improve SUDs of the site and reduce run off throughout the site.

In regards to the retained trees on site the root protection plan needs to be adhered to with all relevant fencing be erected prior to any works commencing on site, this will need to be conditioned to allay those concerns for the retained trees.

Conditions should therefore be imposed to ensure that there is no tree felling beyond that shown on the proposed plans, that all retained trees are provided with protective fencing prior to the commencement of development and retained throughout the constructions works and that details of additional tree planting are submitted, approved and carried out.

SMBC EHO (Air Quality) – No objections.

SMBC EHO (Noise) – No objections.

SMBC EHO (Contaminated Land) – No objections subject to conditions.

The proposed development site has been identified as potentially contaminated due to its historic land use as road haulage and factory or works – use not specified dated 1987. Furthermore, Asbestos containing materials (ACM) appears to have been incorporated within the built structures in the past; the disturbance of any such materials may result in asbestos being present within the sub surface surrounding the buildings especially following the fire damage which occurred early 2022.

I have reviewed the Geo Smart Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment dated October 2022 which has recommended a Phase 2 site investigation which I am in agreement with. The Phase 1 report was written in October 2022, but fails to mention the large scale fire which occurred a few months before, resulting in the use of fire-fighting foam, as such, collection and testing of samples for the presence of PFAS compounds should be included in the Phase 2 investigation, including concrete, deeper Made Ground and natural deposits if significant concentrations of PFAS are recorded on the sub-base material.

It is recommended that the EA should be consulted on any Phase 2 proposals and remediation especially as the site is within close proximity to surface water features; mobile contamination may have entered nearby watercourses via shallow groundwater especially during the fire.

I would recommend the imposition of conditions to secure the carrying out, submission and approval of an investigation and risk assessment into contamination at the site which shall include recommendations for remedial action. The development should not be occupied until any remedial works have been carried out and a validation report assessing the effectiveness of the remediation has been submitted and approved. The report shall specify any further remediation measures necessary and indicate how and when these measures will be undertaken. A method statement for the carrying out of an investigation and assessment of the potential for landfill gas being present on the land shall be submitted to and approved. All precautionary and remedial measures shall be carried out in the course of the development unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority. the development shall not be occupied until all works necessary to prevent landfill gas migration into the development have been approved in writing by the local planning authority and carried out in full.

SMBC Highway Engineer – The proposal is for a self-storage unit, 13,006 sq.m across four floors, to replace a former building that was destroyed by fire. The floor area proposed is the same as previously existed although notably that only a proportion of the former overall site area is the subject of this application and that the previous building had various smaller sublets alongside a storage use.

A new shared access road is proposed to serve this site, the vacant land to the north (that was part of the previously developed site) and also an existing developed site that abuts on the south westerly boundary and is owned by the applicant. The access arrangements include the closure of the existing access on Earl Road to the developed site to the south west, with a new site access off the new shared access road. This I welcome as there is operational difficulty, some concern with two access points so close together on Earl Road and likely increased risk of conflict as a consequence of redevelopment.

The vacant land to the north will no doubt be the subject of a later application which would be considered on its own planning merit.

In terms of site accessibility, opportunities for access by modes of travel other than the car is notably relatively poor. However, the fact that this proposal is effectively for a replacement facility of the same floor area leads me to consider that I could not reasonably seek and expect meaningful interventions to improve accessibility to be delivered as part of this proposal. The scheme will deliver cycle parking and will be

required to sign up to a travel plan, small but beneficial measures. I will however seek substantive improvements for any further development on the site, but that is a matter for any subsequent application.

In terms of traffic generation, self-storage units are not particularly intensive in terms of trip generation and I am accepting of this with the TRICS data submitted within the supporting Transport Statement. The consequent trip generation would be negligible and would not have an unacceptable impact on the operation and safety of the site access road and existing highway network surrounding the site.

In terms of parking provision, the likely demand for spaces has been determined via a parking accumulation study which is informed by vehicle movements to and from the site across the course of a day. This shows that 16 spaces should meet the likely demand for the site and I am accepting that any incidental overspill could reasonably be accommodated on the site access road, which is likely to remain privately maintained and managed, without giving rise to operational difficulty or unacceptably inhibiting access and egress within the site.

It is however essential that the use of the site is restricted to a self-storage use. The planning submission is predicated on this specific use, with traffic generation and parking demand determined by TRICS data for self-storage units. If the site was to become an uncontrolled warehouse or distribution centre the traffic generation and parking demand would be significantly higher. I note that the Council's parking standards for open-ended warehousing and distribution use infer that the likely parking demand would be in region of 200+ spaces for such a scale of building, thus the critical need to restrict the use to self-storage only.

Within the 16 parking bays shown on the drawing, there should be at least two disabled bays and not one as shown. This matter can be addressed under conditional control. Two parking bays will be provided with facilities for charging electric vehicles and covered and secure parking for four cycles will be provided. This is acceptable having regard to Council standards. It has also been demonstrated that within the site layout there is sufficient space for larger delivery vehicles and articulated vehicles to manoeuvre, this being acceptable.

Finally, I note a small area of additional parking is proposed for the existing developed site to the south west, accessed from the new shared access road. This is of no concern and a matter for conditional control.

In the event that permission is granted conditions will be required to cover the shared access road formation, access control measures, closure of the adjacent site access, construction and drainage of all areas of hardstanding, revision to the parking layout, electric vehicle charging facilities, cycle parking, travel planning and restriction on use. I will provide these in detail later.

SMBC Planning Policy (Energy) – No objections.

The UK has set into law a target to bring all its greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. In March 2019, Stockport Council declared a climate emergency, and agreed that Stockport should become carbon neutral by 2038, in advance of the UK 2050 target. The Stockport CAN strategy was developed to underpin this agreement and was approved by the Council in October 2020. The strategy sets out to ensure

that Stockport achieves carbon neutrality by 2038, in order to support global efforts to prevent global warming going above 1.5°C. The Environmental Law Foundation has suggested that climate emergency declarations should be regarded as material considerations in the determination of planning matters.

Meeting our 2038 carbon neutrality target will require new development to achieve net zero carbon in advance of then, and we should not be building homes, workplaces, community uses or schools which will require retrofitting in the near future. The definition of net zero carbon development has been established by the UK Green Building Council. <https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-carbon-buildings-a-framework-definition/> It is important to note that most microgeneration technologies (e.g. solar panels), and other climate change mitigation / adaptation measures are significantly easier to install at the time of building rather than retrofitting later.

Our local approach reflects the Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan. The Five-Year Environment Plan includes a commitment to be carbon neutral by 2038, and an accompanying science-based carbon budget. (Carbon neutrality is defined by the Tyndall Institute's study for GM as below 0.6 Mt CO₂/year across GM).

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF places mitigating/adapting to climate change as an overarching objective for the planning system, to ensure sustainable development.

Objective 1 of the Core Strategy relates to climate change, this is supported by a number of policies that seek to deliver this primary objective.

Policy CS1 states that: "The Council will seek to ensure that all development meets an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so, in order to address both the causes and consequences of climate change. In particular, all development will be required to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the Borough's carbon footprint by achieving carbon management standards."

Policy SD-3 sets out CO₂ reduction targets for different types of development across the borough.

Policy SD-6 states that: "Development should be designed in such a way as to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change."

I have reviewed the Energy and Sustainability Statement (ESS) submitted in support of the proposal, which describes an approach which is in broad compliance with policies CS1, SD-3 and SD6, and thus is supported.

In summary the ESS describes a fabric-led approach to carbon dioxide emissions reductions aligned with the principles of the energy hierarchy, combined with efficient mechanical and electrical servicing and zero carbon technologies.

The scheme is compliant with Part L of the Building Regulations (2021) and exceeds the targets stipulated in Policy SD3.

The scheme proposes a solar PV array of 13.30 kWp on the roof of the building to ensure compliance with Part L. This approach is supported, however I cannot see the location of these panels in the roof of the development. Due to the proximity to

Manchester International Airport, a glint and glare assessment may be required and advice should be sought on this matter.

A commitment to a “fabric first” approach, coupled with sustainable technology, will help to ensure that this development contributes to our Stockport target for 2038 and reduces the need for costly and disruptive retrofit in the next decade to ensure compliance with net zero requirements. The requirement for low carbon buildings is reflected in Stockport Council’s declaration of a climate emergency and adoption of the Climate Action Now Strategy.

LLFA – Having reviewed the documentation for this application. The LLFA would like clarification as to why there is an oil interceptor for the surface water run-off from the roof. Our records indicate that infiltration may be viable. There is broad agreement with the strategy but the applicant is asked to provide results of infiltration investigations so to avoid the need for further details secured by condition.

Environment Agency – No objections subject to conditions.

The submitted flood risk assessment shows that flood risk to the site is acceptable given its vulnerability classification. There appears to be no increased flood risk to others as demonstrated in the FRA. We therefore raise no objection subject to the imposition of conditions to secure an acceptable drainage strategy and the level of finished floors

In relation to land contamination we have reviewed the Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment report by Geosmart Information Ltd dated Oct. 2022. The submissions to date demonstrate it will be possible to manage the risks posed to controlled waters by this development. Further detailed information will however be required before built development is undertaken. We believe that it would place an unreasonable burden on the developer to ask for more detailed information prior to the granting of planning permission, but respect that this is a decision for the local planning authority. The proposed development will be acceptable if a planning condition is included requiring the submission of a remediation strategy. This should be carried out by a competent person in line with paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Without these conditions we would object to the proposal in line with paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework because it cannot be guaranteed that the development will not be put at unacceptable risk from, or be adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution.

United Utilities – No objections subject to conditions.

We request that the applicant submits a plan outlining the proposed levels (including finished floor levels and ground levels) shown in metres above Ordnance Datum and an indicative foul and surface water drainage strategy (including cover and invert levels). It is our recommendation this information is submitted for our review so that any risk of sewer surcharge can be further assessed. The applicant should note that it may be necessary to raise finished floor and ground levels and / or include mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge.

Noting this is a Full application, we request that the applicant provides a detailed drainage plan, and that United Utilities has the opportunity to review and comment on this plan prior to determination this application. Should planning permission be granted without the provision of this information we request the following condition is attached to any subsequent Decision Notice:

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) No surface water will be permitted to discharge to the public sewer network;*
- (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.

Cheshire East Council – No comments received.

GMP Secured by Design – No comments received.

ANALYSIS

The UDP Proposals Map identifies the application site as being within a designated Employment Area. The main issues for consideration are therefore the provision of employment floorspace in this location, the impact of the development upon the character of the area and amenities of neighbouring occupiers, parking provision, traffic generation and highway safety, pollution, ecology, trees, drainage and crime prevention. These issues are explored below.

Principles of Development

Saved policies E1.1 & E1.2 confirm that new industrial developments, business premises and offices will be permitted within designated employment areas. All sites must be appropriate in size and scale to their surrounding area and must not conflict with other UDP Review policies for housing, retail and the protection of the environment as well as having good access to the highway network and public transport. This position is reflected in saved UDP Review policy E3.1 and CS policy CS7. CS policy AED3 confirms that the Council will protect employment areas for employment generating uses. Para 81 of the NPPF

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

It is important to note that the proposed development occupies only part of the site previously occupied by the self storage facility however though the use of a multi storey building this application proposes a near identical level of floorspace to that which previously existed in the larger, double storey building which was recently destroyed by fire (12,986m² as proposed vs 13,006m² as previously existing). The remainder of the application to the north of the proposed access from Earl Road is shown on the proposed site layout as being reserved for future development. The provision of B8 employment floorspace on this southern section of the site of a level nearly identical to that which previously existed, which has a lawful use for employment purposes and is within a designated employment area, complies with the policy position set out above. The impact of the development upon the surrounding area in terms of its scale and size is considered below as are access issues. Subject to an acceptable assessment in this respect the proposal accords with saved policies E1.1, E1.2 and E3.1 together with policies CS7 and AED3 of the Core Strategy and the government's policy position within the NPPF.

Impact on the Character and Amenity of the Area

Core Strategy policy CS8 welcomes development that is designed and landscaped to a high standard and which makes a positive contribution to a sustainable, attractive, safe and accessible built and natural environment. This is reiterated in policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy which confirms that development which is designed to the highest contemporary standard, paying high regard to the built/and or natural environment within which it is sited, will be given positive consideration. Specific regard should be paid to the use of materials appropriate to the location and the site's context in relation to surrounding buildings (particularly with regard to height, density and massing of buildings). The NPPF at Chapter 12 sets out the Government's most up to date position on planning policy and confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment.

The character of the locality is derived from the variety of industrial, retail and employment generating uses adjacent to the site and within the wider Stanley Green industrial estate and retail park. In terms of built form, there is a variety of development ranging in size and scale as well as architectural form. On Earl Road itself, the application site is viewed in the backdrop of the A555 to the north which is raised on an embankment above the level of the site. Immediately to the west and currently under construction is a substantial employment development rising well above the level of the A555 whilst to the south on both sides of Earl Road are other forms of employment development.

The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate size, siting and design having regard to the established character of the area. The application includes a sufficient level of detail in relation to materials of external construction so as to avoid the need for a condition securing such details. Details of how the proposed development might be enclosed by fencing have not been fully detailed although fencing and gates to the car parking area are indicated on the proposed site layout and the undeveloped land to the north of the site will also be enclosed

by new fencing to supplement that existing. Subject to the imposition of a conditions to secure and approve details relating to hard landscaping, the enclosure of the proposed development and that of the undeveloped land to the north (in terms of its height and design), the proposal is considered compliant with Core Strategy policies CS8 and SIE1 in terms of its impact on the character of the area.

The closest occupiers to the site are those associated with the adjacent commercial, industrial and office developments; there are no residential occupiers within close proximity. The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment and Officers are satisfied that noting the commercial nature of the adjacent occupiers, that proposed in terms of its use will cause no harm to amenity in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS8 and SIE1 and the NPPF.

Parking and Highway Safety

Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy DPD requires development to be sited in locations accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The Council will support development that reduces the need to travel by car. This position is followed through in policy T1. Policy T2 requires parking in accordance with the maximum standards and policy T3 confirms that development which will have an adverse impact on highway safety and/or the capacity of the highway network will only be permitted if mitigation measures are proposed to address such impacts. Developments shall be of a safe and practical design.

The NPPF at Chapter 9 seeks to ensure that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be or have been taken up, given the type of development and its location. Safe and suitable access to the site should be achieved for all users and the design of parking areas, other transport elements reflects current national guidance. Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

The NPPF confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The application site is not particularly well located in terms of accessibility to modes of travel other than the private car. Ordinarily therefore steps would be taken to resolve this through the provision of measures to promote sustainable travel. Noting however that this application simply seeks permission to replace that which was destroyed by fire, it is not considered reasonable to seek such measures and the application is considered acceptable in this respect.

The proposed access road is of a width and geometry that will be safe and practical to use. The development will deliver an appropriate level of parking for the proposed use including that for the charging of electric vehicle and cycles. An additional accessible parking space is required to accord with the Council's parking standards however this can be secured by condition noting that there is sufficient room within the car park for this additional provision. Noting however that other storage and distribution uses within Use Class B8 could generate a significantly higher demand for parking than that arising from a self storage use,

it is considered necessary and appropriate to impose a condition that restricts the use of the building to that of self storage within the wider B8 Use Class.

Further details relating to the formation of the shared access road, access control measures, closure of the adjacent site access, construction and drainage of all areas of hardstanding, electric vehicle charging facilities, cycle parking and travel planning can all be secured by condition.

On the basis of the above, Members are advised that the proposal accords with policies CS9, T1, T2 and T3 and of the Core Strategy DPD and the NPPF.

Other Matters

Policy CS1 seeks to ensure that all development meets a recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so. All development will be expected to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the Borough's carbon footprint by achieving carbon management standards.

Policy SD1 confirms that the Council will look favourably upon development that seeks to achieve a high rating under schemes such as BREEAM.

Policy SD3 requires development to demonstrate how it will assist in reducing carbon emissions through its construction and occupation through the submission and approval of an energy statement. Notwithstanding this Members will be aware that changes to Part L of the Building Regulations in June 2022 focus on greater fabric performance, lower energy demand, and a move away from fossil fuels (gas and oil boilers) to electric heating systems. The changes should cut carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from new homes by around 31% and non-domestic new builds by 27%. In existing buildings, regulations will typically apply to new build extensions or the installation of new materials or technology. These standards for energy efficiency are now higher than that required by policy SD-3.

The NPPF at para 152 confirms that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future. It should help shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouses gas emissions, encourage the reuse of renewable resources and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

The energy statement submitted with the application advises that the scheme is compliant with Part L of the Building Regulations and will exceed the policy requirements of SD3 through:

- high performance thermal insulation
- low air permeability
- electric panel heaters and
- photovoltaic arrays

In addition to this a water efficiency strategy will be determined for the site and will include the provision of A rated appliances as a minimum. A water meter on site will be specified to monitor and manage consumption and in order to reduce water demand, the sanitary fixtures will be specified to achieve a calculated consumption of less than 110 litres per person per day.

Officers advise the measures proposed exceed the policy position as set out in Core Strategy policies SD1 and SD3 together with advice in the NPPF and as such the development is acceptable in this respect.

Saved UDP Review policy EP1.9 and CS policy SIE5 seek to ensure that development does not adversely impact aviation safety. Noting that PV panels are proposed, a glint and glare assessment to explore the position, orientation and finish of the PV panels and can be secured by condition. Subject to a satisfactory assessment in this respect the proposal will accord with this policy position as well as that in relation to SD1 and Sd3 as outlined above.

Saved UDP Review policy EP1.7 confirms that development will not be permitted where it would be at risk of flooding or increase flooding elsewhere. Core Strategy policy SD6 requires all development to be designed in such a way as to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change. In this respect development is required to incorporate sustainable drainage systems so as to manage run off water from the site.

Para 167 of the NPPF confirms that when determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Major developments should incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems (para 169).

The application site is identified on the UDP Proposals Map as being in an area liable to flooding and the Environment Agency identify the site as being within Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3 (low, medium and high probability of flooding). Having regard to the size of the site and scale of the proposed development there is a requirement for the application to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. In these zones, developers should seek opportunities to reduce the overall level of flood risk in the area through the layout and form of the development, and the appropriate application of sustainable drainage systems.

In considering flood risk it is important to note that the proposed development is of a smaller footprint than that previously existing prior to the fire. As such the proposed development is unlikely to displace floodwater to the same extent as that which previously existed. It is also important to note that in terms of use, that proposed is not classified as a vulnerable development.

The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application advises that subject to the employment of mitigation measures, there will be no adverse impact in relation to flood risk. These measures include the maintenance of Handforth Brook, the setting of finished floor level to 74.10m AOD, the regular maintenance of drains and culverts and the implementation of surface water drainage (SuDS) strategy. In addition to this, in the event of a flood, emergency evacuation routes are available to the north west and safe refuge can be taken within the building on the 1st floor levels and above.

In terms of drainage, the application advises that there are no watercourses available into which surface water could be discharged. Whilst there is a watercourse 130m to the south of the site, access to this is across significant tranches of 3rd party land which is currently development and is not in the control of the applicant. As such this option is not feasible. The strategy for drainage as

originally submitted advised that the site has moderate potential for surface water run off to be discharged to the ground via soakaway and permeable paving however this would be confirmed following further infiltrations tests. Those tests have since been carried out and suggest that infiltration is no longer an option. The applicant is therefore reviewing the options available.

Members are advised that there is a hierarchy to surface water drainage with infiltration into the ground being the most favoured option followed by discharge to a water body, to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system and in finally to combined sewer connection. Applicants are expected to adhere to this hierarchy and to dispose of surface water in the most sustainable way. Where options are dismissed in a strategy, that must be supported with evidence.

It is noted that a strategy has not yet been agreed in relation to the disposal of surface water on this site however given the historic and long industrial and employment use of this previously developed site, there is nothing to suggest that an appropriate strategy cannot be secured. Noting that the consideration of drainage on this site does not impact on the acceptability of redevelopment this site in principle, Members are advised that the issue of drainage and securing of an appropriate strategy can be secured by condition.

Whilst United Utilities have requested that further detailed information be submitted, Officers are of the view that there is no reason why a drainage solution cannot be agreed for this site such that it would preclude the grant of planning permission and as such further details of the drainage can be secured by condition. On this basis Members are advised that the proposal accords with saved UDP Review policy EP1.7, Core Strategy policy SD6 and para's 167 and 169 of the NPPF.

Policy SIE3 seeks to ensure that the landscaping of development will aid biodiversity and to secure a sense of place and character. This is reflected in Chapter 12 of the NPPF where the importance of effective landscaping is noted as is the contribution that trees make to the character and quality of the urban environment.

Within the application site there are only 3 trees existing (2 common alders to the west boundary and 1 goat willow to the south) all of which will be retained. The landscape proposals plan confirms that 3 new trees will be planted to the access road to supplement those existing to be retained. In addition to this ground cover is proposed in the form of shrub planting and turfed areas together with a small landscaped area to the entrance of the car park, the creation of a hawthorn hedge to the western and southern boundary of the site and a mixed hawthorn, field maple, holly, dog rose and elder hedge to the eastern boundary.

Notwithstanding this provision, in order to enhance the biodiversity value of the site, there is opportunity for additional tree planting within the site along the boundaries of the site or to the north elevation of the building. This can be secured by condition as can a restriction on felling other than shown on the plans and the provision of protective fencing to trees during construction works. On this basis Members are advised that the proposals accord with policy SIE3 and the NPPF.

Policies NE1.2 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance of the UDP Review and SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment of the Core Strategy along with para's 174 and 180 of the NPPF seek to ensure that proposed development does not adversely affect protected species and secures enhancements for biodiversity.

Submitted with the application is a protected species survey; this highlights that the site has the potential to support a small number of protected and priority species, including bats, breeding birds, badgers, and hedgehog. The site is generally of low ecological value, dominated by hardstanding with a narrow strip of grassland and trees around the periphery. Given the nature of the site and limited habitats, the development is not expected to include a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment; there is also considered to be sufficient ecology survey information available to inform determination of the application.

It is noted that the Council's ecologist has requested conditions including that to secure hedgehog gaps in fencing. These are traditionally provided in close boarded fencing which is unlikely to be proposed by this application given the nature of the development. It is more likely the case that weldmesh fencing will be proposed and if this does not have any gap between the ground and bottom of the fence then it should be quite possible to cut suitably sized gaps (130mm x 130mm) at suitable points along the fence line. Members are therefore advised that subject to the imposition of conditions as recommended by the Council's ecologist including that relating to hedgehog gaps, it is considered that the development will cause no harm to protected species or ecology in general. Biodiversity enhancements beyond that included in the landscaping plan can also be secured by condition. On this basis the proposal accords with policies NE1.2, SIE3 and Chapter 15 of the NPPF.

Policy SIE3 along with advice contained within the NPPF at Chapter 15 seek to protect against pollution whether that be from contamination in the ground, dust or noise. Submitted with the application are various reports addressing these issues which have been considered by Officers in Environmental Health. Members are advised that subject to the imposition of conditions as requested by the EHO's and the Environment Agency, the proposed development will cause no harm in terms of pollution. On this basis the proposal is compliant with Core Strategy policy SIE3 and Chapter 15 of the NPPF.

Policy SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para's 119 and 130 of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments create safe living conditions. To address this policy position the application includes a Crime Impact Statement which advises that subject to the following measures there will be few issues arising from a crime perspective:

- Secure the future development site appropriately.
- Secure the storage facility boundary with appropriately high and secure fencing and gates.
- Construct the building to Secured by Design Standards.
- Use access controls to regulate movements into the site and building.
- Install appropriate lighting, CCTV and intruder alarms and
- Prepare a customer agreement and lone worker policy.

Whilst consulted on the application Greater Manchester Police have not commented to date. Members are however advised accordingly:

- There are no proposals within this application for the northern half of the site. Issues relating to crime prevention on this part of the site will be addressed through future applications. Notwithstanding this, the existing fencing will be retained as well as new fencing proposed to the access road so as to ensure that this part of the site is adequately protected from unlawful access whilst vacant. Details of the new fencing in terms of its height and form will be the subject of a condition.
- The southern part of the site where development is proposed will be enclosed by fencing and gates between the car park/service yard and the access road. No details of this fencing or other fencing around the remainder of the perimeter are proposed however details can be secured by condition.
- Secure by Design standards impose controls beyond that material to the consideration of planning applications (such as access controls, intruder alarms and cctv). As such it would not be appropriate to impose a condition requiring adherence with these standards. Rather an informative can be imposed recommending accreditation in this respect.
- The application does not include details of external lighting however this can be secured by condition to ensure that the development is safe and practical to use and work within.

On this basis and subject to the imposition of conditions as suggested, Members are advised that the proposal is compliant with policies H1 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para's 119 and 130 of the NPPF.

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 7 of the NPPF establishes three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental and Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. In so far as the development sought by this application, Members are advised that the development plan is up to date and for the reasons set out in this report it is considered that the proposals accord with the development plan.

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, 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 subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives.