

ITEM 1

Application Reference	DC/089009
Location:	Trinity Methodist Church 351 Bramhall Lane Davenport Stockport SK3 8TP
PROPOSAL:	Erection of Retirement Living Housing (Category 2 type accommodation), associated communal facilities, landscaping and car parking following the demolition of the existing buildings.
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	10.07.2023
Expiry Date:	2023.10.09
Case Officer:	Jane Chase
Applicant:	McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles Ltd
Agent:	The Planning Bureau Ltd

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Area Committee – 4 or more objections contrary to recommendation.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes the demolition of a detached church and ancillary building and the redevelopment of the site to provide retirement apartments together with landscaping and car parking. Comprising category 2 type accommodation, the development proposes warden supported self-contained accommodation for older people and includes a full range of communal facilities.

54 apartments are proposed being a mix of 32 one beds and 22 two beds. These will be available for sale on the open market to older people (those aged 60 or over or, a couple where one person is over 55 years of age and the other over 60 years). A range of communal accommodation is also proposed including a resident's lounge, internal refuse store, charging store for battery operated mobility vehicles, lift access, secure entrance lobby with cctv links to each apartment, a house managers office, emergency helpline to all apartments and the communal lounge and landscaped gardens.

The proposed building would be of a T form with a wing positioned parallel to the adjacent houses on the opposite south side of Trinity Gardens with a wing projecting towards the houses to the north of the site on Charlestown Road West. The proposed building would be of a traditional design comprising accommodation over 2 to 3 floors. That facing Trinity Gardens would be 2 storeys high to either end with a hipped roof over with a higher central element where 2nd floor accommodation would be positioned within the roofspace and served by small dormer windows. The wing projecting from this towards Charlestown Road West would be 3 storeys high with

the element closest to that parallel to Trinity Gardens being 3 full floors of accommodation with a roof above. Beyond that the 2nd floor accommodation would be positioned within the roofspace and served by small dormer windows. Throughout the development balconies are proposed to some first and second floor apartments. Materials are indicated as being red brick, cream render and a composite slate roof.

As originally proposed the development would be served by the existing access to the west of the site into a car parking area accommodating space for 21 vehicles (including 2 accessible spaces). A second, new vehicle access was also proposed to the east of the site into a further parking area accommodating space for 19 vehicles (including 2 accessible spaces). Pedestrian access was proposed into the site via a single leaf gate and path to the south west and from the east adjacent to the proposed second vehicle access. The plans have subsequently been amended to delete the proposed eastern access and car parking area, replacing this with landscaped gardens and a pedestrian access (for emergency access only). A section of new footpath outside of the site is now proposed along the eastern boundary where there is currently an overgrown verge. The parking area accessed from the existing western entrance is now extended to provide parking for 37 vehicles including 8 spaces for the charging of electric vehicles and 4 accessible spaces. A small substation is proposed at the entrance to the site positioned to the north of the access. The pedestrian access to the south west of the site remains as well as that now proposed as part of the improvements to the existing vehicle access to the west of the site.

Landscaped gardens would surround the development to all elevations comprising a mix of lawn, shrubs, retained and new trees together with garden furniture and terraces. In terms of tree removal and as reduced since first submission, 10 of the 59 trees on the site would be removed. These include T5 a dead elm and T7 a dead oak both close to Bramhall Lane and T11 a predominantly dead elm positioned to the north of the existing access into the site together with further trees to facilitate the construction of the development, those being T14 a group of 4 small trees including apple, cherry and holly positioned to the north of the existing access into the site, T15 a silver birch, T16 an oak and T18 an oak.

The application is supported by the following documents:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Financial Viability Statement
- Marketing Report
- Transport Statement
- Construction Method Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Nocturnal Bat Survey
- Biodiversity Metric Report and Calculations
- Tree Survey and Impact Assessment
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Phase I Geo Environmental Site Assessment
- Phase II Geo Environmental Site Assessment
- Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Noise Impact Assessment

Energy Statement
Crime Impact Statement
Statement of Community Involvement
Chain Reaction Report (Homes for Later Living)
Silver Saviours for the High Street Report (Homes for Later Living)
Healthier and Happier Report
Assessment of Demand for Retirement Living Report
Sustainable Living Report

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises some 0.8ha of land on the north side of Trinity Gardens and which is mainly positioned behind properties fronting Bramhall Lane and Charlestown Road West. A small narrow section of the site extends westwards to Bramhall Lane as well as in an easterly direction to the rear of houses on Trinity Gardens. The main frontage of the site is to Trinity Gardens and it is here that access is gained into the site from an entrance drive positioned close to the junction with Bramhall Lane.

The site accommodates a detached church building positioned adjacent to the south boundary of the site. The church building comprises ground floor accommodation only however several elements are double height (particularly that closest to Trinity Gardens) and a 3 storey tower is present to the south western corner. Adjacent to the church building and positioned to the north of it is a detached single storey building which was last used as a scouts & guides hall (Tabor Lodge). Car parking to serve both buildings is positioned to the northern half of the site, mainly along the boundary with the rear gardens of houses on Charleston Town West. A further smaller area of parking is positioned to the north of the scout building and along with the larger car parking area is accessed via the existing drive to the west of the site which passes around the north elevation of the church building. The site extends around the rear of houses on the north side of Trinity Gardens between them and the houses on Charlestown Road West. This part of the site as well as that which extends westward to Bramhall Lane is undeveloped and accommodates a number of trees and shrubs. Tree planting is evident throughout the site and is mainly confined to the boundaries. There are however some smaller trees positioned within the site in the landscaped area to the north of the church building.

Adjacent to the site, to the west on Bramhall Lane are residential properties, mainly 2 storey detached and semi detached houses set within reasonable sized plots with landscaped front gardens and varying degrees of forecourt parking. Here materials of external construction comprise red brick and render, decorative projecting gables and bay windows and red or grey roof tiles and slates. A bungalow is present to the east side of Bramhall Lane on the north side of the junction with Trinity Gardens; this is positioned deep into the site with landscaped gardens forward of it and is of a more recent construction.

In Trinity Gardens to the south and east of the site and immediately opposite the side is an area of open space planted with mature trees within which are a limited number of parking spaces. Beyond this, dwellings in Trinity Gardens are generally of a more recent and simple construction than those on Bramhall Lane, 2 storeys high and positioned in a terraced, semi detached and detached form. There are however a limited number of single storey dwellings such as to the rear of the apartments close

to Bramhall Lane and to the head of the cul de sacs further within Trinity Gardens. Dwellings are positioned behind small open plan front gardens dwellings with some having forecourt parking and or garage accommodation. Here houses are constructed from red brick, brown roof tiles with some dwellings having small, decorative projecting gables at roof level. Houses on Charlestown Road West, to the north of the site are similar in size, scale and design to those on Bramhall Lane.

The application site is identified on the UDP Proposals Map as being within a Predominantly Residential Area. A Tree Preservation Order affects trees on the western part of the site which extends to Bramhall Lane. Land outside of the application site to the rear of houses on the south side of Trinity Gardens and to the playing fields to the east of the site is designated as a Green Chain.

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

NE3.1 Protection and Enhancement of Green Chains

EP1.7 Development and Flood Risk

EP1.9 Safeguarding of Aerodromes and Air Navigation Facilities

L1.1 Land for Active Recreation

L1.2 Children`s Play

CTF1.1 Development of Community Services

HP2.2 Sheltered Housing

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

SD-1 Creating Sustainable Communities

SD-3 Delivering the Energies Opportunities Plan

SD-6 Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

CS2 Housing Provision

CS3 Mix of Housing

CS4 Distribution of Housing

H-1 Design of Residential Development

H2 Housing Phasing

H3 Affordable Housing
AS2 Improving Indoor Sports, Community and Education Facilities and Their Accessibility
CS8 Safeguarding & Improving the Environment
SIE-1 Quality Places
SIE-2 Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments
SIE-3 Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment
SIE5 Aviation Facilities, Telecommunications and Other Broadcast Infrastructure
CS9 Transport & Development
T-1 Transport and Development
T-2 Parking in Developments
T-3 Safety and 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.

Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD
Design of Residential Development SPD
Sustainable Transport SPD
Transport in Residential Areas SPD
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
Affordable Housing SPG

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

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF (2023) sets out the Government's position on the role of the planning system in both plan-making and decision-taking. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, in economic, social and environmental terms, and it states that there should be "presumption in favour of sustainable development" and sets out what this means for decision taking.

The NPPF (2023) confirms the plan-led approach to the planning system and that decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant paragraphs within the NPPF include:-

Para. 1-2: Introduction
Para. 7-14: Achieving Sustainable Development
Para. 38, 39, 41, 47, 55-58: Decision Making
Para. 60, 62 - 65, 69, 74; Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
Para. 92, 98; Promoting Healthy & Safe Communities
Para. 104, 105, 110 – 113; Promoting Sustainable Transport
Para. 119, 120, 123 - 125; Making Effective Use of Land
Para. 126, 130, 131, 134; Achieving Well Designed Places

Para; 152, 154, 157, 159, 167, 169; Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding & Coastal Change
Para. 174, 180, 182, 183, 185; Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
Para. 218, 219; Implementation

[National Planning Policy Framework.](#)

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

Various applications relating to minor works to the existing development but none directly relevant to the determination of this application.

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The receipt of this application has been publicised by way of a site notice and press notice. The occupiers of 46 neighbouring properties have also been notified in writing.

In response to the application as originally submitted (with the 2nd, new access proposed):

14 letters have been received objecting to the proposals on the following grounds:-

Highway Matters

- The proposed entrance to the rear of the site will create a blind junction for traffic exiting adjacent property thereby creating a significant safety issue.
- The road width at the point of the proposed new junction is also too narrow to enable the safe passage of traffic in 2 directions to & from the new development, again creating traffic safety issues.
- There is no pavement on the side of the road where the Church currently stands again narrowing the field of view from the proposed entrance to the site and that from adjacent properties.
- The Transport Statement is erroneous in that the road bordering the site to the south and east only has a pavement to one side, and not both. Trinity Gardens does not serve several residential properties, it serves 59 residential properties.
- The Transport Statement also fails to address the impact of the secondary entrance and its alignment. The secondary entrance will greatly increase the number of cars using the road after the former entrance to the Church, in particular at the tight corner and where existing cars are parked half on the pavement (due to the narrow width). Cars failing to find spaces in the secondary car park will ultimately resort to parking in front of the adjacent residential properties instead of returning to the front entrance.

- The secondary entrance is due to be positioned in the turning head adjacent residential dwelling and not aligned with the road. This will result in confusion over priority for those leaving the car park and ultimately conflict with cars parked adjacent to residential dwellings.
- The Transport Statement in its assessment of parking provision and transport movements understates the likely numbers, relying solely a study presumably commissioned by McCarthy Stone and is not independent. The peak parking assessment dates back to 2015 and 2016, and only considers spring / summer weekday parking. I would contest peak parking takes place in the winter at weekends. Any assessment relied upon should not be 7 years old.
- The traffic generation assessment also dates back to spring/summer weekdays in 2015 and 2016, this again will not be representative and in particular will not include the rapid increase in the use of delivery services in the last 3 years.
- The submission fails to address any measures to control demolition / construction related traffic and the likely impact on the neighbours.
- When all the parking spaces are full or residents of the new properties have visitors, The overflow parking will undoubtedly spread onto Trinity Gardens which already has a limited parking space for its own residents. These concerns were raised at meetings at Stockport Georgians, and at the Brookdale but are not contained in the summary of these meetings.
- The road that is Trinity Gardens is defined as 5.5 meters in width, it was designed to accommodate the 50+ existing properties. The new building will double the number of properties leading to additional traffic at the junction with Bramhall Lane and also at the rear of the new build.
- Driving the road when cars are parked is a challenge, and with a 100% increase in accommodation will make life more difficult for existing residents.
- There are not sufficient charging points for electric vehicles.
- The application does not address the issue of accidents at the junction of Trinity Gardens and Bramhall Lane. With additional traffic this junction will not be safe.
- The existing bus stop is inadequate and if it is used more frequently and users cause more obstruction to those emerging from Trinity Gardens then this will impact further on highway safety.

Other Matters

- The application details that a number of bids for the community use of the site were made, whilst the applicant may have made the highest offer, this is not the same as demonstrating that there are no alternative viable community uses for the site.
- The application also makes no distinction between the closed Trinity Methodist Church community asset and the Tabor Lodge Guide & Scout Headquarters community asset also on site. While there may be a lack of interest in occupancy of the site for the existing Church services, this is not the case for Girlguiding & Scout uses. The Guide & Scout Headquarters were in use until April 2023 when the Trinity Methodist Church terminated the lease for the land (the building having been built and maintained by the Guiding and Scout movements over the last 50 years). There is strong interest and available resources to maintain the operation of the guide & Scout HQ community building, and Girlguiding Woodsmoor have expressed this to the landowners and to the applicants as part of the post application public consultation. There is a shortage of alternative community premises in the

Woodsmoor area, with no building available for community group meetings or activities in the area. Woodsmoor Girlguiding have undertaken extensive searches for suitable alternative accommodation, but due to the lack of provision, have had to move (temporarily we hope) out of area. The Woodsmoor Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger groups are still meeting and are keen to move back into the local area.

- Consideration should be given to accommodating the Guide and Scout asset within the development.
- I would highlight that the statement of community engagement misrepresents the feedback provided by local residents. There were numerous objections raised by a variety of the local residents and these have not been included in the summary, giving it a far more positive spin. Numerous residents objected to the secondary entrance and this does not even appear in the biased summary provided by BECG
- The plans and CGIs indicate that the Trinity Gardens road (bordering the site to the south and east) has pavement on both sides, this is factually incorrect and gives a false impression of space.
- The secondary entrance also demands the removal of a 6m English Oak, 5m Horse Chestnut and 9m Goat Willow - the first two are graded C1 as trees to be considered for retention.
- There is a lot of wildlife in here including badgers which should be maintained.
- If a 1.8 m fence is erected around the boundary, what will happen to existing fences?
- As many trees as possible should be retained, there seems to be a lot being removed . Hopefully the leafy appearance of a quiet well maintained road can be respected and treated sympathetically.
- Privacy and environmental issues such as noise from visitors and service vehicles during out of hours times.
- It is good to see the use of photovoltaic cells and use of air pump heaters for residential hot water but it appears that that the majority of the sites energy will come from burning fossil fuels. Why are not more PV cells being used? Why are air pump heaters not used for heating the whole complex? The cost/availability arguments given are short-sighted and very weak (i.e. "visual nuisance, potential noise and space"). If this is a project for the future, go beyond the minimal government/council requirements and make it a truly sustainable build ready for the future waves of cheap electricity from renewable sources. A truly sustainable build needs a bigger vision not short-term and penny-pinching excuses.
- How will the existing medical surgeries in the area cope with the additional residents of this development?

10 letters have been received supporting the proposals however of those, 5 make similar comments in relation to highway safety as recorded above.

1 letter has been received neither objecting nor supporting the proposals but making the following comments:-

- I support new housing for elderly people subject to resolution of design issues. In particular I do not support proposals for a 2nd entrance which will make an already hazardous and narrow road more hazardous and potentially dangerous. I also have reservations regarding the car parking. The proposed provision represents approximately 75% for residents of the apartments, but

spaces will be required for the manager, visitors and emergency vehicles. This will result in overflow parking on the pavements on Trinity Gardens which will be hazardous and may restrict traffic flow. The Transport statement appears to assume that vehicular access and egress will be via a modified entrance from Bramhall Lane but this single access is inconsistent with the plan. Further discussion/clarification on trees to be retained and proposed new trees would be helpful.

Following the amendment of the application (with the 2nd, new access deleted):

4 letters have been received objecting to the proposals on the following grounds:-

- The proposed number of parking spaces still seems very low in proportion to the number of residents in the apartments. We are of an age to qualify for an apartment and have, like many couples, two cars, not one, or no car. There will be an increase in on street parking as a result of this.
- Is there a future "plan B" for additional on-site parking, agreed between the council and the developer, to be implemented, should our fears over parking problems subsequently prove to be correct?
- The footpath should be reserved for pedestrians, those with pushchairs and wheelchair users, not parked cars.
- The removal of the second car park entrance is a huge improvement and removes most of my objections. However, the purpose of the rear gate is unclear. If this is a general access gate then there is likelihood of (those in the know) parking near this rear gate and adversely impacting safety and the residents. If the gate is for emergency escape only then it should be locked with internal release only. If this is not the case, then my objection remains.
- The site and landscape plans indicate the addition of a strip of road footpath to the rear of the site outside the site boundary. Is this part of the builder's scope and does it reduce the, already narrow, roadway width?
- Has the land ownership at the junction requiring the replacement of the visibility splay been checked? Surely the original splay was highway land, not church land which can now pass to the developer.
- The Construction Method Statement (MS) has not been updated to reflect the new plan, this should be corrected. The MS still references Manchester City Council. In addressing parking the MS is non-committal (where possible) and this is not acceptable. It should be mandated that no construction, operative or visitor parking will be permitted on Trinity Gardens - failure to do this will result in significant health and safety issues.
- The Council should place a planning condition on the developer that no construction traffic can enter Trinity Gardens beyond the existing church access, and agree a method statement with physical signing, so all parties, (council, developer, contractors, statutory undertakers and existing residents), are clear as to the arrangement and what action will be taken if there are problems. All construction work should be carried out from within their site, not from the road.
- The loss of this community asset and compliance with policy AS-2 has not been addressed.
- Why is it necessary to remove so many existing trees in this area, as they would screen the new development?

1 letter has been received supporting the proposals on the following grounds:-

- I am in favour of the proposed senior living project and though I have not seen the plans, I am pleased that the second exit from the site has been deleted.

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4 letters have been received neither objecting nor supporting the proposals but making the following comments:-

- I am pleased that the second entrance has been eliminated from the plan. However I have reservations regarding the ratio of parking spaces to apartments. I counted 54 apartments and only 37 parking spaces. Assuming a limited number for site staff and visitors I think this is an under provision which is likely to result in overspill parking on the pavements on Trinity Gardens which will make vehicle flow hazardous. A solution would be a slight reduction in the number of apartments similar to the recent development at Hillbrook Grange Bramhall. Subject to these minor changes I support the application.
- The rear gate should be designated a Fire Exit only and not used as an entrance to the flats by residents, delivery drivers or visitors etc.
- It is not clear if the new pavement is this being built by the contractor as it does not currently exist.
- Can access to the site for building purposes be limited to the existing Church access road and contractor vehicles are not to pass this point. Signage will be required.
- Trinity Gardens properties are all built using a common brick. Can the proposed build use the same (or close) on it exposed brickwork so that the whole community looks as identical as is practical.
- The loss of this community asset and compliance with policy AS-2 has not been addressed.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which details the public consultation that was carried out by the applicant ahead of submitting a full application for the development proposed is included in the submission. This is an important element of the planning process and the determination of this application. Early public engagement as well as that with statutory and non statutory consultees is not only encouraged by this Planning Authority but also by the Government through the NPPF (para's 39 to 42).

The Statement advises that:-

- To support a planning application for the site, McCarthy Stone has undertaken pre-application consultation with local neighbours and notified elected representatives & stakeholders regarding the proposals.
- The focus of the pre-application consultation process has been to inform those most likely to perceive that they will be affected by development about the proposals and address their concerns. This was achieved via direct meetings held in person at a local venue between individuals and members of the project team.
- Following submission of the planning application McCarthy Stone will be undertaking a further period of public engagement to inform the wider

community about the proposals and provide further, more detailed information to site neighbours.

- This post-submission engagement will take place via several different channels, including a dedicated virtual consultation website and community newsletter. A freephone information line, a project email address and an online feedback portal will also be made available throughout the course of the planning process, for interested parties to receive further information and to provide their comments to the project team. McCarthy Stone will also be hosting an in-person information session to allow those that have not been able to view the plans to ask any questions directly to members of the project team.
- The Statement outlines the approach that has been taken to pre-application consultation and the feedback received. It also details the activity that McCarthy Stone will be undertaking to engage with the community post-submission.
- An Addendum to this Statement has been submitted now that the post-submission engagement activity has been undertaken to inform the Local Planning Authority of the responses received from those who participated and addresses key comments received.
- Several respondents stated that they would be interested in purchasing a property, while other feedback expressed concerns particularly in relation to highways.
- McCarthy Stone has carefully reviewed all the feedback we received regarding their application. The comments raised during the consultation process have been addressed in this document and the wider material already submitted as part of the planning application.
- McCarthy Stone is committed to engaging with the local community and, now that the application has been submitted, will continue to ensure that interested parties and key stakeholders remain informed and updated regarding the proposals.

The full Statement of Community Involvement is available to view as part of this application on the Council's website.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Strategic Housing – No objection in relation to affordable housing provision.

Highway Engineer – No objections subject to the imposition of conditions in terms of traffic generation, highways impact, access, parking, servicing, accessibility and impact of construction works on highway safety.

Nature Development Officer – No objections subject to the imposition of conditions in relation to the impact upon protected species, ecology and biodiversity in general.

Tree Officer – No objections subject to the imposition of conditions.

Planning Policy (Energy) – No objection.

Director of Public Health – Expresses concern that the proposed development will result in the loss of the existing community uses on the site. While the church congregation ceased to meet on this site in early 2020, the community facilities on the site (the scout and guide hut) were actively used by local units of the scouting and guiding movements until this site was sold by the Methodist Circuit to the developers. While the developer appears to have reached a financial settlement with the owners of the scout and guide hut, it has not demonstrated that the need for the existing building has ceased, or that sufficient alternative accommodation of similar quality exists nearby. The prospect of this development has already resulted in a diminution of the service offered by the Scouting and Guiding movements to children and families in the Bramhall area. Development of housing should not take priority over the existing community use that would, but for the sale of this land, have continued to benefit Stockport residents.

Sustainable Transport / Active Travel: any comments made and conditions proposed by the Council's Highway Engineer are critical to enabling the use of sustainable (including active) travel modes in and around this development and have been discussed with representatives of the Public Health and Transport Policy teams. An accurate assessment of transport options should inform this application.

While the applicant states that their residents are unlikely to choose to cycle, it is important that sufficient cycle parking is provided for those who may disagree with the applicant, as well as for staff, contractors and visitors. Promoting active travel (which includes sufficient infrastructure for active travel modes) contributes to management of good public health in the Borough, especially healthy weight. In Stockport 42.3% of adults and 86.4% of 15 year olds are not physically active enough to maintain their health in the medium to long term ([as measured against the Chief Medical Officer for England guidance](#)). In addition, an appropriately designed built environment can contribute to reducing social exclusion, as well as offering cycle and pedestrian routes for commuters, shoppers and recreational users.

Green Infrastructure: any comments made by the Council's Planning Officer responsible for open space / children's play should be carefully considered. Given the relatively low levels of sport and active recreation for adults in the Borough, it is critical that the built environment contributes to benefiting provision or maintenance of recreational spaces. Child obesity levels in the Borough remain higher than the previous decade, and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Achieving healthy weight reduces risks of other lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, coronary heart disease and stroke. Reducing risks of such diseases also reduces pressures on current and future public sector health budgets ([Stockport's JSNA](#)).

Consideration of trees and biodiversity are key to enabling public health benefits from green infrastructure enhancement not just around addressing flood risk but also in terms of tackling stress and its exacerbating effect on health, through provision of pleasant relaxing environments and views. Any comments of the Council's Senior Tree & Arboricultural Officer should be taken into careful consideration regarding opportunities to improve biodiversity since this can have public health benefits.

Planting offers opportunities for the site to contribute beneficially to the nearby Green Chain asset. The summertime comfort and well-being of the urban population has become increasingly compromised. In contrast to rural areas, where night-time relief from high daytime temperatures occurs as heat is lost to the sky, the urban environment stores and traps heat. This urban heat island effect is responsible for temperature differences of up to 7 degrees (Centigrade) between urban and rural locations. The majority of heat-related fatalities during the summer of 2003 were in urban areas ([Designing urban spaces and buildings to improve sustainability and quality of life in a warmer world](#)).

Affordable Housing: a small contribution to offsite housing is proposed. While it is welcome, it is insufficient given the number of housing units proposed - it is important to note that a lack of affordable housing can be argued to contribute to widening health inequalities, with additional pressure on the Council's public health and related budgets. Evidence is available to show that affordable housing benefits health in a variety of ways including reducing the stress of unaffordable homes, enabling better food budgets for more nutritious food, access to better quality homes that do not impact negatively on health (including management of chronic illnesses), support for domestic violence survivors to establish a safe home, mental health benefits of a less stressful expensive home and benefit to the environment as well as the residents through low carbon housing that doesn't cost the earth to run ([The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health](#)).

Environment and climate change. A warming climate has serious implications for health ([The impacts of Climate Change on Health](#)), with extreme weather events associated with warmer summers and cooler, wetter winters expected to cause direct increases in mortality, as well as acting to promote mosquito-borne pathogens, heighten food scarcity and reduce the opportunities for outdoor recreation and physical activity, with impacts for mental as well as cardiovascular health. This proposed development proposes an air source heat pump for hot water, but proposes electric panel heaters for space heating. The decision not to use heat pumps for space heating appears to be based on the standard practice of the developer, rather than a full assessment of the costs and benefits, and should be reviewed, since it is likely that this decision will increase rather than reduce the lifecycle costs of the development, as well as increase carbon emissions.

EHO (Contamination) – No objection subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives.

EHO (Noise/Lighting) – No objection subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives.

Drainage Engineer – No objection to the strategy or drainage plan subject to a condition to secure further details.

United Utilities – Express concern that the drainage hierarchy has not been thoroughly investigated and the proposals are not in line with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. Evidence of where the surface water sewer connects to the wider public network if all other stages of the hierarchy are discounted are also required.

Should planning permission however be granted it is requested that a condition is attached to secure the submission and approval of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage prior to the commencement of development.

Design for Security (GMP) – No comments received.

ANALYSIS

By way of introduction, the application site occupies a visually prominent position within Trinity Gardens. The applicant's proposals for this site have been the subject of lengthy discussion with Officers over a significant period of time seeking to clarify elements of the proposal and address consultation responses. The application raises a number of key issues for consideration and these are discussed in the report below.

The NPPF confirms at paragraphs 7 & 8 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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.

Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (para 9).

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para10). Para 11 reconfirms this position and advises that for decision making this means:-

- approving developments that accord with an up to date development plan or
- where the policies which are most important for the determination of the application are out of date, granting planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

In this respect, given that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year deliverable supply of housing (with only a supply of 4.1 years), the relevant elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 which seek to deliver housing supply are considered to be out of date. As such, the NPPF directs that planning permission should be approved unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. This assessment is set out below.

Loss of Community Use

Paragraph 92 of the NPPF supports the retention of community facilities, which should be retained for community use. It states:

“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.”*

This position is reiterated in saved UDP policy CTF1.1 and CS policy AS-2.

CTF1.1 confirms that development which would result in the loss of existing community facilities will only be permitted where adequate replacement is provided or special justification can be shown.

AS-2 confirms that the redevelopment of community facilities for other uses will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that one or more of the following applies:

- That replacement provision of no less quality and appropriate scale is provided elsewhere in the relevant catchment area;
- That replacement provision of no less quality and appropriate scale is provided elsewhere within an alternative catchment area within the Borough;

- It is of no beneficial use;
- There is an oversupply of the community use involved and no need for replacement;
- Insufficient resources are available to maintain the operation of the community use or it is not viable to retain;
- A lack of interest in the occupancy of the site for the existing use has been demonstrated by marketing information or community engagement;
- A comprehensive and efficient service would remain or
- Special justification has been demonstrated.

In terms of the application of policies CTF1.1 and AS-2, Members are advised that AS-2 requires only compliance with 1 of 8 criteria in order for a proposal to be policy compliant. In this respect the applicant has submitted details relating to the marketing of the site and community engagement so as to demonstrate that there is a lack of interest in the occupancy for the existing use.

The marketing report confirms that the site was actively marketed from 11th March 2022 to 11th May 2022 by way of a marketing board erected on site, the publication of a sales brochure, the advertising of the site on various sales websites and by direct contact with known stakeholders. 44 offers were made on the site. The great majority of interest came from developers and housebuilders interested in buying the property with a view to demolishing the existing building and redeveloping the site for alternate uses, namely residential, specialised retirement accommodation, or care home development, as well as one offer from a retailer. Of the offers received, two parties sought to use the site for Class C2 use (Care Homes), albeit this would be part of a mixed-use scheme along with retirement housing (Class C3). An offer was also received from 2 churches as a place of worship, a general practice surgery and a community centre. The applicant also advises that Methodist Church is obliged to comply with the Charities Act 2011, which states that they are required to obtain 'Best Price' for the site following a relevant marketing period. Accordingly, a sale was concluded on a conditional (subject to planning) basis to McCarthy & Stone.

The Statement of Community Engagement records 4 comments raising concern regarding the loss of the community uses but does not detail exactly what these comments were or whether they actually expressed an interest in using the site for community purposes.

In response to these comments the applicant advises that they:-

“Understand the concerns about the loss of community space at the site. However, providing community activities on-site raises viability and safety issues. McCarthy Stone prioritises the safety and security of their residents, which means they cannot commit to unmonitored access for community provision. Introducing a separate space on-site, such as a guide hut, would require reducing the number of apartments or greenspace, making the project unviable. Despite this, McCarthy Stone aims to foster a sense of community through

communal facilities within their buildings. While this may not fully replace previous community activities, it offers residents an opportunity to connect and engage with each other. Balancing community needs with housing requirements is challenging, but McCarthy Stone remains committed to creating a positive living environment while considering the broader community impact.”

The applicant has also made the following comments in relation to this issue:

“Trinity Methodist Church has always primarily been a Church, not a ‘community facility’, and the Mission of the Church ended due to increasing costs and a falling congregation. The contribution made by the community use of the building was never enough to maintain and run the building and it would be unviable if used on this basis now.

The Methodist Church as a whole has always been keen to serve our local community, but as part of our Mission as a Christian organization, not as the provider of community facilities.

Before the closure of the Church in 2021, the local Guide group and other community users were told that the Church was closing and would likely be sold or reused. Community users were asked to look for alternative provision and kept informed of ongoing developments. This was in 2019, two years ahead of the closure of the church.

The lease for Tabor Lodge (a separate structure on the Church site), which the Guides used, elapsed in March 2021, and a license to occupy for 1 year was issued, as this was seen to be a flexible approach for both parties, and a way for the Guides to find a new home.

Trustees considered all relevant options, as mandated by the Methodist Church nationally, and invited and received bids from a wide range of interested parties, a process which started in September 2021. None of the parties proposed a community use for the site. We received no Asset of Community Value application which would have given a genuine community bid time to prepare. Trustees would have welcomed this, but it did not happen.

Trustees followed charity law and our own rules, to ensure a fair and open process, and are happy with the contribution that additional housing can make to the area.

The Guides expressed a desire to stay on site, but there were no offers to purchase or lease the building and land. The expired lease was held nationally by the Guides and they accepted a goodwill payment in lieu of the renewal of the lease. This was completed on 17th April 2023. The Guides agreed to surrender their space and the National Guide Association made it clear that the local group had no rights to occupy Tabor Lodge.

Many of the community users of the building were able to find alternative accommodation locally, including the Guides themselves, as well as the Scouts, who also used Tabor Lodge. The Scouts have gone to Bridgehall Community Centre SK3 8NR. The Guides have gone to another Guide Hut at SK7 3AB.

Other options are at Davenport Methodist Church 1.1 miles away, or Parkside Social club 0.6 miles away.

We are not aware that there is a shortage of community space in the area, as evidenced by the fact users have been able to secure alternative accommodation, and by the other venues nearby. There are also 2 Methodist Churches nearby in Davenport and Bramhall that host community activities, so there is capacity for new groups to form and use these spaces.

The Church congregation are well served by other Methodist Churches in the area, and many were able to go to Davenport, or Bramhall. Therefore, there was no significant loss for the main users of the building, which has always been the Church.

The United Stockport Circuit, who own Trinity, are a Charity and part of the larger Methodist Church. In line with Charity law and the aims and values of the Church the proceeds of any sale will be reinvested in a range of activities that will be charitable and benefit the communities we work with.”

In response to the above, the marketing information shows that there has been interest in the continued community use of the site amongst the more extensive residential interest however financial details of these offers have not been disclosed nor reasons why they did not progress. Noting however the obligation of the Church to obtain the best price for the site, it is not unreasonable to assume that these offers for community use could not compete with those by residential developers. Notwithstanding that the marketing information shows that there was interest in the occupancy of the site for the existing use which is supported by letters of objection to the application (although, it should be noted, there has been no objection to the application by the Girl Guides or Scouts themselves (only on behalf of them)). The Statement of Community Involvement whilst also recording concern over the loss of the community uses from respondents does not elaborate whether expressions of interest were actually made as to the continued community use of the site.

In response to the comments made in support of the application by the Church, the financial challenges they faced are noted, however, that is not to say that another community use could not be successfully operated from the site. Notwithstanding that it is noted that no application to designate the site as an Asset of Community Value has been made. Whilst such an application, if successful, would not prevent the grant of planning permission for other forms of otherwise acceptable development, it would be an indicator as to the strength of demand or need of the site for community uses. It is also noted that both the Guides and Scouts appear to have relocated to alternative premises within the locality and as such are continuing with their activities. In addition to that, the congregation that previously worshipped at this site are still able to do so in locations that are close to the application site.

On the basis of the above, Officers are minded to conclude that replacement provision has been accommodated within other existing community facilities in the locality. As such, those who worshipped at the church and those who are part of the guides and scouting movement are still able to form an active community role in the locality. Whilst no financial accounts have been provided to evidence

that the former community use of the site was no longer viable, the size of the building and wider site is noted. This together with rising running costs and falling congregations will undoubtedly have an impact on the ability to maintain the lawful use of the site. As such the application suggests that insufficient resources are available to maintain the operation of the community use and that it is not viable to retain.

For the above reasons, Officers advise that given the evidence presented as part of this application, the proposal can be considered to accord with policies CTF1.1 and AS-2 together with para 92 of the NPPF.

Housing Delivery

The NPPF confirms that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay (Para 60). Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies, including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing and older people (para 62).

Small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes (para 69). Planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes... promote and support the development of underutilised land especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained (para 120).

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) sits alongside the NPPF and provides further planning advice. The NPPF notes that the need to provide housing for older people is critical given that people are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking.

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that a wide range of homes are provided to meet the needs of existing and future Stockport households. The focus will be on providing housing through the effective and efficient use of land within accessible urban areas.

Core Strategy policy CS3 confirms that a mix of housing, in terms of tenure, price, type and size will be provided to meet the requirements of new forming households, first time buyers, families with children, disabled people and older people. Support will be given to the provision of specialist and supported housing for older people and people with a disability. All new housing should enable older people and adults with a disability to live independent lives by seeking to achieve

Lifetime Homes Standards. Developments in accessible suburban locations will be expected to achieve a density of 30dph.

Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy directs new residential development towards the more accessible parts of the Borough identifying 3 spatial priority areas (Central Housing Area; Neighbourhood Priority Areas and the catchment areas of District and Large Local Centres; and other accessible locations). This policy confirms that the focus is on making effective use of land within accessible urban locations with the priority for development being previously developed land in urban areas.

Saved policy HP2.2 of the UDP Review notes that sheltered housing and housing for other people with limited mobility should be located within easy walking distance of local facilities and services, integrated within established residential communities and avoid sites with steep gradients.

Members are advised that the delivery of 54 residential dwellings at a time of continued undersupply supports the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The development proposes the efficient use of brownfield land within an accessible location and helps to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained. The delivery of housing for older people enabling them to continue to lead independent lives in a safe and secure setting is therefore particularly welcomed.

The latest Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identifies a need for all housing types across the Borough. Whilst that proposed is weighted towards the smaller size of dwellings, it will still make an important contribution to meeting need within the Borough. Within the HNA it is also acknowledged that there is a need for level access dwellings to cater for the borough's ageing population. There is, therefore, an identified need for older persons accommodation in Stockport and, in this context, the proposal is welcomed. Noting the drive of the NPPF to secure the efficient use of land in meeting the need for new homes, the density of 67dph is welcomed (subject to a satisfactory assessment in relation to all other matters).

Noting the reference above to saved policy HP2.2, Members are advised that sheltered housing generally comprises accommodation for use by the elderly and supported by a package of estate management services. Accommodation usually consists of grouped, self contained dwellings with an emergency alarm system, communal facilities and a residential warden. The accommodation proposed by this application falls into this category however in allowing occupation by those aged 60 years and over (and 55 years if the other partner is of 60 years), it is possible that residents could be of working age. Notwithstanding that the applicant advises that having regard to their other developments, between 60-70% of occupants are aged 78 years or over with about 30% aged 80 years or above. The vast majority of McCarthy Stone residents (some 85-90%) are widowed or single, with 75% of apartments comprising of single, female household. The provision of specialist accommodation for older people in a form that allows for independent living by all residents is clearly supported. The main thrust of policy HP2.2 is however to ensure that accommodation for older people is sited within close proximity to local facilities and services. This is explored further in this report in relation to highway considerations.

With regard to policy CS3, whilst the application does not specifically reference accordance with Lifetime Homes Standards, it will secure the following measures that enable older people to live independent lives:

- Access from the car park areas will be via dropped kerbs and level thresholds to allow easy access without movement impairment, following the Building Regulations Part 'M' guidance.
- Access within the building is achievable without the need for steps, with level floors provided throughout the development. Access within the development is provided to all floor levels by a Part 'M' compliant lift, with designed staircases to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people according to the same guidance.
- The corridors will be of sufficient width for wheelchair users, and the apartments will have door widths allowing access by wheelchairs.
- All internal communal areas for use by residents of the apartments are located on the ground floor, within a short walking distance of the lift and entrances ensuring ease of access and use for residents and visitors.

On the basis of the above the proposal accords with the NPPF and policies HP2.2, CS2, CS3 and CS4 in terms of housing delivery.

Affordable Housing

The NPPF advises that where need for affordable housing is identified, it is expected that this will be met on-site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities (para 63). Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership (para 65).

Core Strategy policy H3 confirms that affordable housing is required on sites providing 15 dwellings (gross) or more and sites of 0.5 hectares or more. The proportion of affordable housing sought varies across the borough to take account of property prices and economic viability. Subject to viability, the Council will negotiate to achieve 20% to 25% affordable housing within the inner urban areas of the Borough such as this location (Core Strategy policy H3).

Stockport's Housing Needs Assessment 2019 found that, affordable housing need analysis identifies that there is a net annual imbalance of 549 affordable dwellings across the Borough. In the township of 'Hazel Grove, Davenport (East), Heavily, Offerton (West)' i.e. the HNA area within which the site in question lies, there is a net need of 176 affordable dwellings per annum.

The application is supported by an Affordable Housing Statement (AHS) which acknowledges the need to deliver affordable housing however makes the case that given the specialist nature of the accommodation proposed, there are difficulties that will arise from mixing it with affordable housing. In this respect the AHS identifies the following:-

- *The specialised communal living environment provided by private retirement housing results in the payment of a high level of service charge by the residents, which covers the upkeep and maintenance of all internal communal areas, the external building fabric and the external grounds, including the gardens and car-parking. In addition, the service charge also covers the salary and accommodation costs of the house-manager and the Careline. Following completion of construction, the overall management of the development is retained by McCarthy & Stone and a further residents' association may be set up by the residents to facilitate liaison with the management company.*
- *When mixing low-cost / heavily subsidised sheltered housing with open market retirement housing, one must bear in mind the significant use of the shared communal facilities within private retirement housing. The level of services provided to the residents of private retirement housing result in the level of service charge being a significantly larger proportion of total living costs than would apply to other forms of accommodation. It would be very difficult to set the service charge at a level that would cover the costs of the type of management that private purchasers expect, yet still be affordable to residents of affordable housing. It would also be difficult for the affordable housing provider to guarantee payment of a service charge in perpetuity that would be liable to change on an annual basis.*
- *Another consequence of trying to mix private retirement housing with low cost/ subsidised housing would be the significant potential for friction and animosity between those residents who pay a significant annual service charge for premium services and those who would occupy low cost or heavily subsidised apartments but have use of the same services. It is not unreasonable to assume that some residents would resent the fact that their neighbours are enjoying the same level of services for a fraction of the cost, or that they may perceive themselves to be subsidising others. This situation would only serve to exacerbate management problems and disputes between neighbours and would ultimately undermine the success of the housing development.*
- *If attempts are made to try to overcome management, maintenance and service charge issues by splitting the site to have separate blocks for the retirement and affordable accommodation, this introduces further issues. The proposed development site is relatively small and its physical constraints are such that a separate block of affordable housing, with the necessary access, parking and amenity space, would reduce the size of the retirement block by such a degree to make it unviable and inefficient. A further loss of units would derive from the separation of the blocks and provision of sufficient amenity area. The significant reduction in retirement units would mean that fewer elderly purchasers would have to share the fixed cost of the necessary communal facilities associated with sheltered housing and make the market retirement scheme unviable. A commuted sum for the provision of off-site affordable housing would lead to more appropriate and acceptable housing layouts for both the retirement and affordable provision.*

In response to this AHS Members are advised that the arguments made have been considered previously in relation to other similar developments within Stockport. In particular an application for retirement development at Hillbrook Grange in Bramhall was the subject of a recent appeal hearing. The arguments made by the applicant as outlined above were considered by the Inspector to have merit and thus the appeal was allowed (LPA ref. DC/071147/PINS ref. APP/C4235/W/20/3256972). Officers are also accepting of the arguments made by the applicant in relation to delivering affordable housing by way of a commuted sum payment for investment into affordable housing provision off site as opposed to delivery on site. In this respect it is considered that the requirements of para 63 of the NPPF in terms of how affordable housing should be delivered are met.

With regard to what level of commuted sum should be secured, Members are advised that whilst the NPPF advocates at least a 10% provision of affordable housing, a policy compliant level of affordable housing based on policy H3 would require a 20% to 25% provision. This higher rate of provision is supported by the Council's HNA and thus is the maximum level to which the development is expected to deliver. Translating to this a commuted sum, this provision would equate to a payment of circa of £725,545.

The issue of the affordable housing contribution has been the subject of a significant level of discussion during the consideration of the application. Members are advised that Core Strategy policy H3 specifically confirms that economic viability should be taken into consideration in terms of determining the appropriate level of affordable housing within a development. As such, should it be demonstrated through a Financial Viability Appraisal (FVA) that the development would not be viable should any provision be made in this respect or that the development can only support a reduced provision, then the proposal would still be policy compliant. It should also be noted that both the NPPF and NPPG confirm that viability is material to the consideration of planning applications.

The developer through the FVA originally submitted with the application identified that the proposed development could provide a contribution of only £263,002 towards planning obligations (in addition to a contribution of £97,308 to formal recreation). The FVA has been assessed by Officers proficient in development finance and as a result of discussions with the applicant, it is now agreed that the development is sufficiently viable to contribute £494,275.

Whilst this does not achieve full policy compliance, the delivery of affordable housing through the application of policy H3 is dependent on viability. It is considered that the viability statement submitted with this application is robust and it is agreed that the viability of the scheme is such that it can only deliver £494,275 towards affordable housing provision which will be secured by way of a S106 agreement. On this basis the proposal is compliant with policy H3 and para's 63 and 65 of the NPPF.

Visual Impact and Residential Amenity

Core Strategy policy H1 confirms that development should be of a high quality, respond to the character of the area within which they are located and provide for good standards of amenity. This is reinforced in Core Strategy policy CS8 which

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. Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy also 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). Satisfactory levels of privacy and amenity for future, existing and neighbouring users and residents should be provided, maintained or enhanced.

The NPPF confirms at para 119 that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes while safeguarding the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account several factors including the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting and the importance of securing well designed and attractive places (para 124). Where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing need it is especially important that policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. Local planning authorities should refuse planning applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land (para 125).

Chapter 12 of the NPPF confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (para 126).

Planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; 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); establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible (para 130).

Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, significant weight should be given to development that reflects local design policies and government guidance on design and supplementary planning documents (para 134).

The Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development' sets out a clear indication of the Council's expectations and helps the Council make consistent decisions on planning applications in relation to residential developments.

In response to this policy position, it is noted that the application site is located in an area that is predominantly residential in character, houses are of a small and medium size and of a traditional design, mainly 2 storeys height. There is however evidence of 2 storey dwellings in the locality having been extended into the roofspace by way of rooflights and dormer windows and thus 2.5 storey dwellings do exist although are not predominant. Single storey dwellings are also present however most are discreetly sited such that they do not appear obvious in the townscape. Landscaping features strongly in the locality with a prominent area of open space planted with trees being present opposite the site on the south side of Trinity Gardens as well as within and around the application site.

The application site as existing is dominated by the footprint, mass and height of the existing church. This is reinforced by its close siting to the southern boundary of the site and dominant tower feature which is particularly prominent when approaching the site from Bramhall Lane. Tabor Lodge, the former scout hall is single storey and of a much smaller, less imposing scale. Both of these buildings are positioned to the southern half of the site close to the boundary with Trinity Gardens. To the north of these buildings are 2 car parking areas which occupy most of the remaining usable area of the site. There is some open space to the south of the church and Tabor Lodge but this is a relatively narrow strip and where it extends to Bramhall Lane it is mainly wooded. In addition to this is a small grassed area to the west of the church, south of the access into the site and 2 further small areas of open space either side of the northernmost car parking area. One of these areas of open space extends as a narrow strip of wooded land to the east of the site between the rear gardens of houses on Trinity Gardens and Charlestown Road West.

The development in terms of its layout has been designed to respect the presence of neighbouring properties and the character of the area. Being T shaped in its footprint, one wing will be positioned parallel to the southern boundary and the houses on the opposite side of the road and another wing will project northwards from this towards the rear gardens of houses on Charlestown Road West. The siting of the building off all the boundaries of the site allows for the provision of landscaped areas and gardens to the west, south and east of the southern wing adjacent to Trinity Gardens as well as the north of the site adjacent to the rear garden boundaries of houses on Charlestown Road West. The main area of amenity space will be to the east of the site with a terrace accessed from the homeowners lounge on the ground floor. Areas of the site that are currently wooded (that fronting Bramhall Lane and that to the east between the rear gardens of houses on Charlestown Road West and Trinity Gardens) would remain in their current natural state. The development will be accessed by the existing drive onto Trinity Gardens, albeit improved and realigned. The siting of the development allows for all the parking to be positioned between the building and the rear garden boundary of houses to the west on Bramhall Lane.

The layout proposed is considered to be an appropriate response to the character of the area. The development will be spacious in its layout and one that will retain and deliver an appropriate level of soft landscaping and open spaces that are reflective of the locality.

With regard to height and massing, the development proposes accommodation over 2, 2.5 and 3 storeys. To Trinity Gardens the southern wing will comprise 2 floors of accommodation with a hipped roof over to either end. In between these 2 storey elements and rising to a slightly higher ridge level the development will be 2.5 storeys high with accommodation in the roofspace served by small dormer windows. The wing projecting north towards the rear gardens of houses on Charlestown Road West will also be 2.5 storeys in height and where it connects with that fronting Trinity Gardens will rise to 3 storeys in height with a roof over.

The majority of the development will read as 2 or 2.5 storeys high with only that at the intersection of the 2 wings being 3 storeys high. Whilst a large building, it is considered that its mass is successfully reduced by the use of differing materials, projecting and recessed bays, varying eaves and ridge levels and the use of differing roof forms. It is accepted that the majority of development in the locality is only 2 storeys high and that the proposed development will be higher in parts than this prevailing character. It is noted however that the most sensitive elements of the proposed development such as the western and eastern elevations of the southern wing, which are most prominent when approaching the site from these directions and closest to the site boundaries, are only 2 storey in height with a hipped roof over. The higher elements, those being the 2.5 storeys in the southern wing facing the houses on the opposite side of Trinity Gardens and the 2.5 storey wing projecting to the north are all positioned either within the mass of the wider of the development or well away from the boundaries of the site. The highest 3 storey element is also positioned in the centre of the development where the 2 wings meet and as well as only comprising a short section, is positioned well away from public boundaries.

The proposed development will be positioned further back from the southern boundary than the existing building. Noting the degree of separation between the development and neighbouring properties (typically 28.8m to the south, 34m to the north, 21m to 28m to the east and 30m to 54m to the west), it is considered an appropriate response in terms of height and massing having regard to the existing development adjacent.

In terms of the appearance of the development, a traditional approach has been adopted incorporating hipped and gable roof elements together with the use of brick with render to the upper floors and small dormer windows to the roofspace. The simple balconies proposed offer a more contemporary element to the proposals however in the main, it is considered that the development responds to and reflects the mix of architecture in the locality. Precise details of materials are not proposed at this stage however this can be secured by condition.

In terms of boundary treatments, the site is currently generally open to Trinity Gardens other than a stretch of close boarded fencing to the eastern boundary beyond the scout hall. The landscaping scheme shows the removal of the fencing to Trinity Gardens and the erection of 1.5m high hoop top railings to this boundary with shrub planting behind. 1.8m high close boarded fencing is proposed to the internal boundaries with neighbouring properties on Bramhall Lane, Charlestown Road West and Trinity Gardens. This is considered to be an appropriate response to the character of the area and will be secured by condition.

The consideration of amenity extends not only the occupiers of existing, adjacent development but also to that of the future occupiers of the proposed development. The layout of the development and its impact on the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupiers has been considered in the context of advice contained within the Council's Supplementary Design Guidelines 'Design of Residential Development', a document that contains advice on the siting of development having regard to its height and relationship with neighbouring properties. Compliance with the standards in the SPD should ensure that a loss of amenity does not occur. This is assessed below:

- The western end elevation of the wing parallel to houses on the south side of Trinity Gardens will be a blank elevation rising 2 storeys high. This will face but be at an angle to part of the front elevation of residential properties opposite the site. The separation of between 19.9m and 23.9m that will be achieved between this existing and proposed development exceeds the 12m required by the SPD.
- The southern elevation of the wing facing the houses on the south side of Trinity Gardens will contain habitable room windows at ground, first and second floor level. The separation of between 27m and 31m that will be achieved between this existing and proposed development exceeds the 21m to 24m that is required by the SPD.
- The eastern end elevation of the wing to the south of the site will be a blank elevation rising 2 storeys high and will face the front elevation of houses on the opposite, east side of Trinity Gardens. The separation of 21m that will be achieved between this existing and proposed development exceeds the 12m required by the SPD.
- The eastern elevation of the wing that projects north towards Charlestown Road West will contain habitable room windows at ground, first and second floor level. This will face the side elevation of houses on the north side of Trinity Gardens. The property closest to the application site here contains windows in this facing elevation at ground and first floor level. It is not clear what rooms these windows serve however noting that the proposed development is positioned over 38.4m from this facing elevation, the separation that will be achieved exceeds not only the 15m required between habitable and non habitable room windows but also the 28m required between habitable room windows.
- The northern end elevation of the wing that projects north towards Charlestown Road West will be a blank 2 storey elevation. The separation of 31.9m to 33.8m that will be achieved between this proposed development and the rear elevation of houses on Charlestown Road West exceeds the 12m required by the SPD.
- The western elevation of the wing that faces the rear elevation of houses on Bramhall Lane will contain habitable room windows at ground, first and second floor level. The separation of 30.7m to 54.5m that will be achieved between this existing and proposed development exceeds the 28m required by the SPD.

As is demonstrated by the above, the siting of the development accords with and exceeds the requirements of the SPD relative to all the neighbouring properties. From this it can be concluded that not only will there not be an unacceptable impact in relation to overlooking and privacy but given the scale and siting of the development, there will be no adverse impact in relation to visual intrusion or impact on daylight and sunlight.

The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) which assesses the impact of noise generated from the construction and occupation of the development upon existing neighbouring occupiers. This assessment also considers the quality of the development in terms of the impact of external noise upon the future occupiers of the development.

The scale of the development during the construction phase is such that it is considered likely to negatively impact upon the existing neighbouring occupiers. It is therefore necessary to impose a condition to secure the submission, approval and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. This will ensure that appropriate noise and dust management measures are secured during construction works. An informative should also advise the developer of acceptable hours at which construction works can take place so as to protect neighbouring occupiers. Comprising a residential use, the occupation of the site will not generate noise levels that are out of keeping with the residential character of the area.

In relation to noise upon the future residents, a proportion of the site to the north and west is located within a DEFRA road noise contour mapped area. The site is not located within a day time or night time aviation mapped area although a railway line is present to the south of the site beyond the houses on the opposite side of Trinity Gardens. The NIA explores the construction of the development in terms of its acoustic insulation and levels of externally generated noise during the day and night and concludes that the use of standard thermal double glazing to all habitable room windows will be sufficient to protect against external noise. To avoid increased levels of noise when windows are open for ventilation (fresh air and to disperse water vapour) some apartments facing Bramhall Lane will require a whole dwelling ventilation system such as that afforded by trickle vents. With these measures in place the NIA concludes that no adverse impact is predicted day or night within the development due to road or rail traffic noise.

Subject to the imposition of a condition to secure compliance with the mitigation measures outlined in the NIA, Members are advised that the future occupiers of the development will be afforded an acceptable level of protection from external noise sources.

No details of external lighting are currently proposed however such will be required to ensure that the development is safe to use. In the interests of amenity, a condition should therefore be imposed to secure details of all external lighting (in terms of location, height, design, time controls) and measures to minimise potential loss of amenity caused by light spillage onto adjoining properties. An informative will advise the applicant of the need for lighting to comply with the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Guidance Note 01/21, The Reduction of Obtrusive Light. The Lux levels shall comply with the lighting

design guidance for the relevant E2, E3 or E4 environmental zone, that the proposal is situated.

The Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development' confirms that whatever the size or location of a dwelling there will always be a requirement for some form of private amenity space ranging from balconies, roof gardens and communal private space associated with flats to back and front garden space associated with conventional family housing. Private amenity space should be usable, accessible, reasonably free from overlooking, allow for adequate daylight and sunlight, and have regard to the size of the dwelling and the character of the area. Unusable spaces such as narrow strips of ground adjacent to roads and parking, steeply sloping areas or those in excessive shade should be avoided. Incorporating balconies and roof gardens is encouraged where they can be provided without compromising the privacy and amenity of neighbours or harming the character of the area. 1 bed apartments should have either a 5m² balcony or a minimum of 18m² communal amenity space per unit; 2 bed apartments should have 35m² communal amenity space per unit.

All residents will be afforded access to external amenity space. Apart from the apartments contained within the roofspace of the development and those at the junction of the wings at first and second floor level, each dwelling will be afforded either a private balcony or external terrace area; in addition to this communal gardens are proposed. All balconies will provide 5.5m² of amenity space thus according with the standards in terms of their size. To accord with the above standards and discounting the 1 bed apartments that will have a private balcony or patio, a total of 1202m² of communal amenity space should be provided within the development. The main area of communal gardens positioned to the east of the site will deliver circa 970m² of amenity space with the less formal areas to the north and south of the building providing an additional 355m² (approx). Giving a total of circa 1345m², that proposed accords with the SPD and will ensure the future occupiers an acceptable level of amenity.

For the above reasons the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the character of the locality and amenities of existing and future occupiers. The development therefore accords with the NPPF, policies H1, CS8 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy DPD and the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development'.

Biodiversity, Trees and Landscaping

The application site has no formal ecological designation however land outside of the application site to the rear of houses on the south side of Trinity Gardens and to the playing fields to the east of the site is land designated as a Green Chain. A Tree Preservation Order affects trees on the western part of the site which extends to Bramhall Lane.

Saved UDP Review policy NE1.2 confirms that the habitats and biodiversity of sites of biological importance will be protected and enhanced where possible. Development should seek to ensure the continuing viability of the habitat or wildlife interest of the site through the nature, scale, layout and density of development, measures which remove or minimise damage to habitat and disturbance to wildlife and appropriate provision for the future maintenance of the site.

Development which would detract from the wildlife or recreation value of Green Chains will not be permitted. The Council will initiate and encourage measures to improve linkages and habitat value within and between these Green Chains (Saved UDP Review policy NE3.1).

The Core Strategy at policies H1, CS8 and SIE1 requires development to be landscaped to a high standard, paying high regard to the natural environment, within which it is cited. Incorporating Green Infrastructure into development schemes also contributes to addressing key issues such as climate change. Policy SD6 also acknowledges the importance of landscaping particularly in the urban area and seeks to secure provision of appropriate green cover (shaded green space and tree cover), green roofs, walls and boundaries.

Policy SIE3 confirms that the Borough's landscapes and biodiversity combine to create a unique and distinctive local character of importance to residents and visitors alike. 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 for the site. Development proposals affecting trees which make a positive contribution to amenity should make provision for their retention unless there is justification for their removal to enable development to take place.

The NPPF at para 131 acknowledges that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning decisions should ensure opportunities are taken to incorporate trees in development, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity, by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity (para 174). When determining planning applications if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

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). However, Green Chain land is adjacent to the far eastern part of the site as well as 30m to the south and 60m to the west. It has also 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 Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) submitted with the application records the following habitats: 2 no. buildings, hardstanding, amenity grassland, broadleaved woodland, dense scrub, ornamental shrubs, treelines and scattered trees. The potential for the following protected species were also recorded; roosting bats,

nesting birds, badger, hedgehog. Both buildings were assessed as having low bat roost potential and a single tree moderate bat roost potential. In line with best practice guidance the buildings were subject to a single dusk emergence survey and the tree two surveys. No bats were observed emerging or re-entering the potential roost sites / features. Low levels of mainly pipistrelle activity were recorded on using the site for foraging and commuting. On this basis there are no further requirements regarding additional surveys or licencing.

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Many buildings and trees have the potential to support roosting bats. The PEA references above assessed the buildings as have low bat roost potential and a single mature tree as having moderate bat roost potential. Further surveys were conducted, a single dusk survey on the two buildings and two surveys on the tree. No bats were observed and no evidence of bats using these buildings or the tree for roosting was found.

Great-crested Newts (GCN) are afforded the same legal protection as bats (detailed above). GCN / common amphibian terrestrial habitat is present on-site. However, there are no ponds on-site and the nearest waterbodies are approximately 250m to the south on the opposite side of a railway line. The nearest GCN record is approximately 700m away.

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992. This makes it an offence to kill or injure a badger or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to a sett. It is also an offence to disturb a badger while it is in a sett. Potential badger habitat is present on the site and within the wider area. Badger records are present in the wider area. However no evidence of badger activity was observed on-site / adjacent to the site during the 2022 surveys.

The nests of all wild birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). Trees and other vegetation on-site have the potential to support nesting birds.

Hedgehog populations are declining rapidly in the UK and are identified as a UKBAP Species and Species of Principle Importance under the NERC Act 2006. Hedgehog are also protected from capture and killing under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Schedule 6. Habitats on site have the potential to support hedgehog.

Certain invasive plant species are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow this invasive species in the wild.

There is sufficient ecological information available to inform determination of the application in relation to protected species. No evidence of a bat roost was observed and the development is considered to be of very low risk to roosting bats. As a precautionary measure an informative should be attached to any planning consent granted so that the applicant is aware that bats can sometimes be found in unexpected places and can regularly switch roost sites. It should also state that the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the legislation in place to protect biodiversity. If at any time during works,

evidence of roosting bats, or any other protected species is discovered on site and are likely to be impacted, works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

Notwithstanding the above, suitable badger habitat is present adjacent to the application area. To protect badgers which may pass through the site and prevent potential disturbance during construction works, a condition should be imposed to secure the implementation of reasonable avoidance measures.

The proposed development may include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas. 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. It is of particular importance that no light spill occurs onto the connecting habitats or woodland. These details can be secured by condition.

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). This can be secured by condition.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local and national planning policy (NPPF). The Landscape Masterplan submitted with the application indicates that the woodland in the east of the site will be retained and protected and that a vast majority of the trees and hedgerow along the northern and southern boundaries will be retained – this is welcomed. Additional native and ornamental planting is also proposed around the periphery and within the site.

The Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Biodiversity Net Gains (BNG) assessment provide a satisfactory level of net gain for the site. The CEMP shows the provision of 8 bird boxes (6x on the new building and 2x on retained trees), 6 Bat Boxes (4x on mature trees / 2x on the new building), 3 hedgehog houses, 3 invertebrate houses (on retained mature trees). This is appropriate given the size of the proposed development. Hedgehog gaps are also included within the boundary fencing indicated on the boundary treatments plan. All these measures will be secured by condition.

A condition will also be imposed to ensure that prior to the commencement of the development, including any earthworks, a BNG management plan is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The management plan shall detail how the proposals within the submitted Biodiversity Metric Report and Biodiversity Metric shall be implemented, managed and maintained. The management plan should also include the mitigation and enhancement measures for other wildlife (including nesting birds and bats) and the development must be undertaken and maintained in accordance with the approved management plan.

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 roosting bats (or any other protected species) is discovered on site, works must cease and a suitably experienced ecologist contacted for advice.

Noting that ecological conditions can change over time, a condition should be imposed to secure the submission and approval of a repeat protected species survey in the event that works have not commenced by January 2025.

In terms of boundary treatments, the site is currently generally open to Trinity Gardens other than a stretch of close boarded fencing to the eastern boundary beyond the scout hall. The landscaping scheme shows shrub planting to the boundary with Trinity Gardens and the erection of 1.5m high hoop top railings to this boundary. 1.8m high close boarded fencing is proposed to the internal boundaries with neighbouring properties on Bramhall Lane, Charlestown Road West and Trinity Gardens. Where solid fencing is proposed, hedgehog gaps will be secured also. Compliance with this plan will be secured by condition.

The application is also supported by a tree survey, arboricultural impact assessment, method statement, tree protection plan and landscaping plans. The application has been amended since submission to retain more trees within the site. Of the 59 existing, only 10 are now proposed for removal. Of these 3 are already dead (T5 a dead elm, T7 a dead oak and T11 a predominantly dead elm). The remaining 7 trees (those being T14 a group of 4 small trees including apple, cherry and holly positioned to the north of the existing access into the site, T15 a silver birch, T16 an oak and T18 an oak) are identified for removal to facilitate the proposed development.

The tree survey and impact assessment submitted with the application notes that:

- The main building is positioned in the centre of the site away from the root protection area of the retained trees. Whilst tree loss is proposed, this is mainly in relation to dead and low value/ornamental trees. Although T18 is a reasonable specimen it is in a crowded area and its removal will allow the remaining trees to flourish.
- The proposed layout of hard surfaces is generally remote from root protection areas so no specialist measures are required for the majority of the site. A section of proposed footpath lies within the root protection area of trees T52 to T55 however this can be constructed in accordance with BS5837 follows the principles of 'no-dig' construction to achieve hard surfaces that do not require excavation, do not result in the loss of roots, and do not result in harm to the rooting environment once the surfaces are in use.

None of the trees proposed for removal are legally protected and could be removed at any time without the consent of the Planning Authority. All those that are legally protected (those fronting Bramhall Lane) are being retained. The level of tree removal has been reduced since the application was first submitted with an additional 4 trees now being retained as a result of the deletion of the

proposed second access and at the request of Officers. Conditions can be imposed to ensure that there is no felling other than shown on the proposed plans and that all retained trees are protected by fencing prior to the commencement of development. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment details how work will be undertaken within root protection areas and compliance with this document can be secured by condition to ensure that such does not adversely impact upon the health of adjacent trees.

In terms of tree planting, the application proposes the planting of 14 additional trees including Acers (maples), prunus (plums) and Amelanchier. In addition to this a comprehensive scheme including the planting of hedging, climbers, herbaceous plants, shrubs and grassed areas are proposed. The tree species selected are not entirely suitable given that some are not locally native and in this respect the landscaping scheme needs further revision. Development is also expected to provide replacement planting at a ratio of 2 trees for each felled and thus, the number proposed is also substandard. Resolution of these issues can however be secured by a condition requiring the submission and approval of a revised landscaping scheme.

On the basis of the above, Members are advised that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its impact in relation to biodiversity, trees and landscaping and thus accords with the NPPF, Saved UDP review policies NE1.2 and NE1.3 and Core Strategy policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3.

Accessible Development

Accessibility for all is key to the attainment of sustainable development and is recognised as such within Core Strategy policies CS1, SD1, H1, CS8, SIE1, CS9, T1 and T2 which seek to influence the design and layout of new development. This is reflected throughout the NPPF in seeking to create places that are inclusive and accessible.

In this respect the application advises that:

- Pedestrians can enter the site at the main entrance which leads them to the main front entrance to the building. The thresholds will be flush, allowing level access to all parts of the building.
- Accessible parking spaces are positioned the closest to the main entrance of the building.
- A scooter/leisure store provided with level access can accommodate around 6 scooters at ground floor level, accessed from the proposed west car park.
- The refuse room is provided within the building on the ground floor to avoid elderly occupants having to carry waste externally.
- The access from the car park areas will be via dropped kerbs and level thresholds to allow easy access without movement impairment, following the Building Regulations Part 'M' guidance.

- Access within the development is provided to all floor levels by a Building Regulations Part 'M' compliant lift, with designed staircases to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people. The corridors will be of sufficient width for wheelchair users, and the apartments will have door widths allowing access by wheelchairs.
- All internal communal areas for use by residents of the apartments are located on the ground floor, within a short walking distance of the lift and entrances, ensuring ease of access and use for residents and visitors alike.
- External communal areas are accessible to all from within the building by flush thresholds and via level pathways around the building.

Members are therefore advised that the design and layout of the development is of a manner that promotes inclusivity and accessibility. The proposal is therefore compliant with the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CS1, SD1, H1, CS8, SIE1, CS9, T1 and T2.

Highway Matters

Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy DPD requires development to be sited in locations accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. This policy also confirms that the Council will support development that reduces the need to travel by car, a position which is followed through in policy T1. Parking (including accessible spaces and cycle parking) should be provided in accordance with the maximum standards (policy T2) and 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 (policy T3).

The NPPF confirms at para 110 that in considering development proposals appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport should be achieved and safe and suitable access for all. Safe and suitable access to the site should be achieved for all users. The design of the highway infrastructure should reflect national guidance and 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. 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 111).

Applications for development should give first priority to pedestrian and cycle movement and secondly facilitate access to high quality public transport. The needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport should be addressed and places that are safe and attractive to use should be delivered. There should be an allowance for the efficient delivery of goods and access by emergency services and development should be designed to enable the charging of plug in and other ultra low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations (para 112).

All development that will generate a significant amount of movement should be accompanied by a travel plan and supported by a transport statement or assessment so that the likely impacts can be considered (para 113).

The Council offers guidance in the form of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) to inform development. In addition, whilst not with the status of an SPD guidance is also issued in relation to electric vehicle charging noting that both the Core Strategy and NPPF support measures to promote sustainable modes of travel, to reduce the impacts of climate change and improve air quality.

In response to this policy position, the application site is situated in an existing residential area, within 200m of bus stops served by frequent services (3 buses per hour during the day) and 900m of Davenport Railway Station. It is also noted that there is a convenience store nearby and there are good quality pedestrian routes on Trinity Gardens and Bramhall Lane. As such it is concluded that the site is in an accessible and sustainable location. Notwithstanding that, as the residents of the development will be older people, it is likely that many will not be as mobile as some younger people and may be more reliant upon accessing local bus services. Noting that many of the footways in the vicinity of the site do not benefit from dropped kerbs and/or tactile paving and that bus stops in the area do not benefit from a boarding platform and/or shelter, it is considered appropriate that the development delivers the upgrading of these stops so as to improve and encourage the use of public transport by the occupiers thereof. This can be secured by condition.

In terms of traffic generation and highways impact, the Transport Statement (TS) submitted in support of the planning application outlines that, based on surveys carried out at 6 similar McCarthy & Stone developments at various locations around the country, the development would be expected to generate 84 vehicle movements between 7am and 7pm, with around 4 two-way movements taking place during the AM and PM peaks and 14 during the busiest hour of the day (12-1pm). This latter figure averages one vehicle every 4-5 minutes. Taking into account the fact that the proposal will result in the loss of the vehicle movements that would have been generated by the church and scout / guide hut, the TS concludes that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the local highway network and the impact of the development on the local highway network would not be at a level which would warrant the application being refused on highway grounds.

Members are advised that a review of the TRICS database concludes that the estimates of daily and busiest hour movements are reasonable and whilst the peak hour movements at lunch time may be slightly higher, they would likely only be in the region of 6-7 two-way movements per hour. Noting that the proposal will result in the loss of the vehicle movements that would have been generated by the church and scout / guide hut, it is considered that the traffic generation of the development should not result in an adverse impact on the local highway network.

In terms of access, the site is currently accessed via a bellmouth access on Trinity Gardens which is located approx. 30m from its junction with Bramhall Lane. This is proposed to be retained and amended to serve a car park to the front of the building. A second access originally proposed to the rear of the site to serve another car park area has since been deleted from the application.

The plans submitted with the application show that the existing access will be improved, to provide improved geometry and visibility. A number of vehicle swept-path tracking diagrams have also been submitted. These demonstrate that cars, refuse vehicles and fire appliances would be able to turn into, within and out of the site. They also show that cars would be able to pass at the site access. As such, the geometry of the site access is acceptable and the site will be accessed and serviced in a safe and practical manner. Construction details will be secured by condition.

A drawing has been submitted which shows that 2.4m by 25.0m visibility splays would be provided at the site access. This equates to vehicle speeds of approx. 22mph. This level of visibility is appropriate having regard to the nature and geometry of Trinity Gardens although, in practice, a greater level of visibility can be afforded. The retention of these splays will be secured by condition.

The application has been amended to provide a new footway, limited to the section of site frontage to the east side of the site. This will improve pedestrian safety and forward visibility along part of Trinity Gardens. The drawings do not show the provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the three kerbed accesses along the southern side of Trinity Gardens or dropped kerbs in all required locations within the site. This matter, however, could be dealt with by condition. Members are advised that this new section of footpath will not reduce the width of the carriageway being constructed within the existing, overgrown verge. In response also to objections, the applicant has confirmed that the pedestrian gate proposed in this location will be locked and used for emergency access only. This can be secured by condition.

For development such as that proposed, the Council's parking standards require the provision of 1 space for every 3 dwellings together with 2 for each warden dwelling (if applicable). This equates to a maximum of 18 spaces and a minimum of 4 disabled parking spaces. Policy T-2, however requires developers to demonstrate that developments will avoid resulting in inappropriate on-street parking that has a detrimental impact upon the safety of the highway, and that they also avoid impacting negatively upon the availability of public car-parking. In response to this the Transport Statement submitted in support of the application includes a review of parking demand and outlines that, based on surveys of 6 other McCarthy & Stone sites, parking demand would be expected to be between 18 and 37 spaces (26 spaces on average).

Having considered this information Officers have concluded that whilst the number of standard spaces exceed the maximum permitted number for sheltered housing, the scheme would comply with policy T-2. The additional information submitted demonstrates that demand may be up to 37 cars and that provision of this number of spaces would ensure there should not be overspill parking.

In response to objections made by neighbours regarding insufficient parking, Members are advised that this Authority has considered other applications of this nature previously submitted by this developer and has visited the sites post occupation. It is noted that car ownership amongst residents is lower than might otherwise be the case for residential development that is not age controlled. The Transport Statement submitted in support of the application outlines that, based on surveys carried out at 6 other McCarthy & Stone sites, occupiers would be expected to own a total of 33 cars during the initial years of the development, with the number

reducing over time (as the initial occupiers get older and give up their cars). Allowing for the house manager, this would mean that if all residents were at home, occupiers and the house manager would require 34 spaces, leaving 3 for visitors. Obviously when people are visiting, some residents may have gone out in their cars so, in practice more spaces will be available for visitors. This will increase over time as the average age in the home increases. It should also be considered that not all visitors will travel by car.

With respect to disabled parking, the proposed number of spaces accords with the adopted standards. The number of EV charging points and their allocation to both types of parking spaces also accords with the Council's guidance.

The scheme includes proposals to provide a store within the building for the parking of mobility scooters, which the applicant outlines, will be able to accommodate around 7/8 scooters. The TS outlines that based on surveys carried out by the applicant, 4-5 occupiers would be expected to own a scooter and, as such, the proposed store should be of sufficient size to meet the parking demand of scooters, as well as accommodate cycles (the TS outlines that around 2 occupiers would be expected to own cycles). I consider such arrangements generally acceptable, noting a significant number of residents are unlikely to cycle due to their age. Short stay cycle parking for staff and visitors to an acceptable level of provision is now proposed.

Finally, whilst it is considered the proposed car park will meet the needs of the development, it is important that visitor parking spaces are provided within the car park to the front of development to ensure it is clear to those unfamiliar with the site where they can park. This along with the provision, retention and management of all of the forms of parking proposed can be dealt with by condition.

With regard to servicing the Design and Access Statement outlines that the site will be serviced from the car park to the front of the building and a turning area will be provided to enable large vehicles to turn within the site. The submitted drawings show a refuse store will be provided within the ground floor of the building which will be able to be directly accessed from the turning area. These details are considered acceptable and will be secured by condition.

Given the size of the development, the application is expected to include a Travel Plan. This could include a travel information notice board, a car club car (which the developer offers at some sites), arranging discounted rates for taxis, information on Ring & Ride, advice and training on non-standard cycles and providing facilities for home deliveries. This can be secured by condition.

The application includes a construction method statement which has been updated to remove reference to Manchester City Council. Whilst it provides some details on how the development would be constructed, it is not sufficiently detailed and does not contain a construction phase site layout plan. Notwithstanding this, it is considered possible to construct the development in a safe and practical manner. Further details can be secured by condition prior to the commencement of any construction activities including demolition.

Finally, it is considered that the landscaping along the frontage of the site with Trinity Gardens needs to be cut back and subsequently maintained so as to ensure that it

does not encroach on the carriageway and therefore reduce its width (subject to vegetation not encroaching the carriageway is sufficient to allow cars to pass) or adversely affect forward visibility along Trinity Gardens. In addition, the site boundary fence must be set back from the highway boundary (a section of it is shown to be erected within the highway) and in a position that does not affect visibility. These matters can be dealt with by condition.

On the basis of the above Members are advised that the application delivers development in a sustainable location, will deliver benefits to accessibility and will not cause harm to highway safety. The proposal therefore accords with the NPPF and policies CS9, T1, T2 and T3 of the Core Strategy.

Flood Risk and Drainage

UDP Review policy EP1.7 confirms that the Council will not permit development where it would be at risk of flooding, increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, hinder access to watercourses for maintenance, cause the loss of the natural floodplain, result in extensive culverting, affect the integrity of the existing flood defences or significantly increase surface water run off.

The Core Strategy at policy SD-6 requires all development to be designed to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change. All development will be expected to incorporate SUDS so as to manage surface water run off from the site and development on previously developed land must reduce the unattenuated rate of surface water run off by a minimum of 50%. Policy SIE3 confirms that areas of hardsurfacing should be of a permeable construction or drain to an alternative form of SuDS

The NPPF confirms at Chapter 14 that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (para 159). Local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and 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 it can be demonstrated through the assessment that within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk; that the development is appropriately flood resistant; it incorporates sustainable drainage systems; any residual risk can be safely managed and safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan (para 167). Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems with maintenance arrangements in place for the lifetime of the development (para 169).

The application site is not identified on the UDP Proposals Map as being in a location liable to flooding and as confirmed by the Environment Agency's mapping is within Flood Zone 1 (meaning that it is at lowest risk of flooding). Noting that the site is less than 1 hectare in area and is in an area at low risk of flooding, the application is not expected to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Notwithstanding that the application is however supported by a Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment.

The Strategy and Assessment confirms that there is a low risk of flooding both existing and arising from the proposed development. In terms of drainage, the Strategy advises that the existing impermeable area of this 0.8ha site is 0.342ha

and that drainage for the site currently connects into the sewer at a rate of 47.56 litres per second. It advises that the site is underlain by a 1m to 2m layer of low permeability gravelly clay and thus as a result of percolation testing that has been undertaken, it is advised that the use of soakaway drainage will be limited.

The proposed development will result in a reduction of impermeable area to 0.31ha and all car parking areas will be formed from a porous or permeable material. Surface water run off will be attenuated by way of a hydrobrake, collected in an underground storage tank and discharged into the surface water sewer at a rate of between 2 and 5 litres per second (depending on final approval from the LLFA). This is a significantly lower rate than that which currently occurs and one that will secure an 89% to 95% betterment. Porous paving to the car parking bays along with roof discharge via water butts at each rainwater pipe along with a swale within the grounds will assist with surface water drainage.

Members are advised that extensive discussions between the applicant and LLFA have been ongoing for the duration of this application. As a result of the amendment of the application it can now be confirmed that the proposed development will deliver a SuDS compliant drainage scheme that will result in a significant improvement upon that existing. Further technical details will be required as will compliance with the strategy proposed however these can be secured by condition. The concerns raised by United Utilities have been addressed by the amendment of the drainage strategy to that outlined above. As such a condition requiring the submission and approval of a SUDS compliant scheme will not be necessary as that has already been secured.

On this basis Members are advised that the proposed development accords with Saved UDP review policy EP1.7, policies SD6 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Pollution

Core Strategy policy SIE3 confirms that development of contaminated land will be permitted provide it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no remaining risk from contaminants or that satisfactory measures can be taken to make the site suitable for its proposed use. Development that results in the production of unacceptable levels of odour will not be permitted. The NPPF at Chapter 15 confirms that planning decisions should prevent new development from contributing to, being put to unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of pollution (para 174). Planning decisions should ensure that a suitable is suitable for its proposed use by taking into account ground conditions and contamination (para 183).

Submitted with the application is a Phase 1 and Phase 2 geo-environmental site assessment.

The Phase 1 report notes that:-

- Although there has been limited development at the site, the presence of the existing building and potentially infilled field boundaries suggest that Made Ground will be present beneath the site. Where Made Ground is present, there is a risk of heavy metals, PAHs, hydrocarbon compounds and asbestos. Existing buildings on-site may have been constructed with

ACM, and therefore, asbestos may be present within Made Ground (that is where the original soil has been replaced by the introduction of man made materials), and a demolition survey is likely required.

- The site is located within a predominantly residential area therefore limited industrial land uses are present within proximity to the site reducing the risk of off-site contamination.
- The presence of potentially infilled features has been noted within proximity to the site which poses a risk of heavy metals, PAHs and hazardous ground gases.

The Phase 2 report confirms that as a result of the Phase 1 report, ground investigation works in the form of trial pits and permeability testing has been undertaken. The report notes that:-

- In terms of impact on human health, whilst some contaminants have been found, these can be mitigated by the installation of a cover system within all proposed landscaped areas within the impacted area or by moving the material to a low risk area in the site. Asbestos was found in a single location in shallow deposits and should therefore be placed 1m below the proposed building or hardstanding. Chemical analysis of natural clay deposits and topsoil have found them to be acceptable for use within the proposed landscaping areas. A post demolition investigation will be required to fully appraise the site and to finalise the site model.
- With regard to controlled waters (ground water in this instance) there is unlikely to be a complete pollutant linkage from the site to the nearest groundwater abstraction point, given the presence of clay deposits and the distance of the brook 5m east of the site.
- No gas protection measures will be required.

Members are advised that the reports submitted with the application are considered to be a robust assessment with appropriate recommendations. The investigations do not reveal any contamination that would prevent the development proceeding. Conditions should however be imposed to secure further investigations and a remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the specified use. The development should not be occupied until the approved remediation scheme has been carried out and within 3 months of completion of remediation measures, a validation report assessing the effectiveness of the remediation carried shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. This report will be expected to specify any further remediation measures necessary and indicate how and when these measures will be undertaken. There is no requirement for a gas investigation to be undertaken as there are no likely sources according to the report.

On the basis of the above Members are advised that the proposal accords with Core Strategy policy SIE3 and the NPPF.

Energy & Sustainable Design

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.

SIE5 confirms that development which would adversely affect the operational safety of Manchester Airport will not be permitted.

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 greenhouse gas emissions, encourage the reuse of renewable resources and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

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.

Submitted with the application is an Energy & Sustainability Statement. This confirms the following:-

- The fabric of the proposed development comprises of a traditional masonry wall construction, with high performing elements on other areas. The use of a robust 'fabric first' approach that will provide a significant uplift on the minimum requirements of Part L 2021.
- The mechanical and electrical strategy is based on an all-electric strategy utilising electric panel heaters for space heating, air source heat pump hot water cylinders (utilising hot water produced at an efficiency that is significantly higher than that of a standard immersion cylinder powered by direct electricity), and Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery for ventilation to apartments. An array of Solar Photovoltaic panels with a total predicted output of 22,879.19 kWh / year will also be applied to the scheme, to serve the communal areas. This allows the proposed scheme to comfortably achieve the Carbon Emissions and Primary Energy targets of Part L 2021.
- Other technologies have been explored such as connection to district heating, wind turbines, solar thermal heating, ground and air source heat pumps, combined heat and power and biomass. These have been discounted for reasons relating to the location of the site, noise emissions, cost efficiency and gas emissions.

Members are advised that the strategy proposed by the applicant in terms of the fabric first approach and use of PV panels is supported and will deliver a development that complies with Part L of the Building Regulations. Whilst the use of an air source heat pump to provide both heating and hot water might be more desirable than the cylinder proposed for hot water and electric panels for heating, the development in other respects offers a high thermal efficiency and in any event is compliant with the Building Regulations. On this basis whilst the applicant may be encouraged to consider other measures, there is no basis upon which they could be required to do so. A condition can be imposed to ensure compliance with the proposed strategy.

The application proposes the use of PV panels which is supported however none are shown on the proposed roof plans or elevations. Notwithstanding this it is considered that this technology can be incorporated into the development at the point of construction without harm to the character of the area. Details to show the location and extent of PV panels within the roof space can be secured by an appropriately worded condition and one that will also secure either the use of matt panels or the submission of a glint and glare assessment so as to avoid any adverse impact upon aviation safety.

On the basis of the above Members are advised that the proposed development accords with Core Strategy policies CS1, SD1, SD3 and SIE5 together with the NPPF.

Crime Impact

Development that is designed to a high standard and which makes a positive contribution to a safe built environment will be given positive consideration (Core Strategy policy CS8). Specific account should be had of ensuring the safety and security of users whilst not causing harm to the wider environment, the character

of the building and accessibility (Core Strategy policy SIE1). This is reinforced in the NPPF at para's 92, 97 and 130 where it confirms that decisions should aim to achieve safe places so that crime and disorder do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.

Submitted with the application is a Crime Impact Statement which recommends the following:-

- Gates should be access controlled by electronic means, lockable, fitted with anti lift hinges and erected to the same height as adjacent fencing.
- The fire escape to the southern and western perimeter should be an outward opening, self-locking, self-closing gate with no external furniture so that it does not become another means of entry into the building.
- Any trees within the site at the front of the apartment block should be pruned up to a minimum height of 2m thereby maintaining a clear field of vision around the site, and trees should not mask lighting columns nor become climbing aids into the communal amenity spaces.
- Soft landscaping arrangements should be appropriate, i.e., no higher than 1m and well maintained, and not impede natural surveillance nor create hiding places.
- The car parking area should ideally be accessed from electronically operated, access controlled gates from Trinity Gardens, which should include audio visual verification for visitors and proximity readers for residents and staff. Both car parks will be overlooked by regularly inhabited rooms within the development.
- Telecommunications and access covers should be secured.
- It is anticipated that there will not be an external bicycle store and pram/buggy store for visitor use, however, if these are to be included then they should be located in a well overlooked location near the main entrance, and 'Sheffield style' steel hoops or ground anchors should be provided.
- Entry to the mobility scooter store should be access controlled both externally and internally.
- The external lighting scheme should cover the main entrance, car parking areas, footpaths and all fire exits/routes.
- The main entrance door(s) should be fitted with an automatic door closer and include access control with visual or audio verification linked to each individual apartment.
- Internal (and external) communal areas will be designed and located in such a way as to allow natural surveillance and reduce the opportunity for crime.

- All door sets allowing direct access into individual apartments, including any easily accessible balcony door sets and windows, must comply with Approved Document Q (ADQ) as a minimum.
- Any lightweight framed walls installed either side of a secure door set, or walls providing a partition between two dwellings or a dwelling and a communal shared space, should be robust so as to prevent 'break throughs'.
- Loft hatches in communal areas should be secured.
- Mail delivery should be directly to the house manager/reception.
- The internal lighting scheme for communal areas should be 24-hour lighting (switched using a photoelectric cell), dimmed during certain hours.
- A 24-hour monitored help alarm system will be fitted in each individual apartment, controlled by the Duty house manager and/or an alarm receiving centre.
- An electricity sub-station will be located inside the south western perimeter within the car parking area, adjacent to the refuse store and a vehicle turning head, well overlooked by regularly inhabited rooms. Historically, sub-stations are 'crime generators' and when left unprotected they can create anti-social behaviour conditions that affect the lives of residents in the long term. To counter this, the sub-station should ideally be a brick built pitched roof structure with a locking steel access door set but may in fact be a GRP (glass reinforced plastic) structure with lockable doors. Both options are acceptable because the sub-station is effectively within a secure site.

Greater Manchester Police have been invited to comment on this Statement but to date have not done so. Members are however advised that many of the recommendations of the Crime Impact Statement are already incorporated into the proposed development. There are however some recommendations that go beyond planning control such as that suggested for the internal aspects of the proposal. An appropriately worded condition can however secure compliance with the Crime Impact Statement where it relates to matters within the control of planning. On this basis the proposal accords with Core Strategy policies CS8 and SIE1 and the NPPF.

Children's Play and Formal Recreation

The NPPF confirms at para 98 that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Saved UDP Review policies L1.1 and L1.2 together with Core Strategy policy SIE2 confirm that there is an undersupply of formal recreation and children's play facilities in the Borough. As such, applications for residential development are expected to make a contribution towards that undersupply.

As this application specifically seeks residential accommodation for those aged 55 and above, no children will reside within the development and as such the

development will not give rise to a demand for the use of children's play space. Notwithstanding that there is a requirement arising from this policy for the development to contribute towards formal recreation by way of a commuted sum payment.

This commuted sum is calculated in accordance with a formula set out in the SPD 'Open Space and Commuted Sum Payments' and which is based upon the number of bedrooms proposed and thus the number of people likely to reside in the development. In this instance, whilst there are 2 bedroom apartments proposed (which theoretically could accommodate 3 people) given the nature of the accommodation sought (that being retirement living) there would never be more than 2 people residing in each apartment regardless of whether they comprise 1 or 2 beds. As has been the approach taken on previous applications of this nature, it is therefore calculated that there would be a maximum of 108 residents living in the development. Using the formula in the SPD this would equate to a commuted sum payment of £97,308.

The applicant has agreed to pay this sum towards formal recreation and it will be secured through a S106 agreement attached to the grant of planning permission. On this basis Members are advised that the proposal accords with saved UDP Review policy L1.1, Core Strategy policy SIE2 and the NPPF.

Other Matters

Objections regarding the impact of the development on GP practices in the area are noted. As set out in the report above, the Council is and has been for many years in a position of housing under supply. As such applications which propose new residential development are afforded significant weight. Notwithstanding that, whilst it is appreciated that the delivery of new homes has the potential to place an added burden upon services within the Borough, there is no policy justification for refusing planning permission on account of this impact. Rather, policies in the UDP Review and Core Strategy welcome and encourage the provision of healthcare facilities and that additional provision if proposed can be made within the community in line with that policy position in order to meet the demand generated by the level of housing need within the Borough.

Summary

The application demonstrates that the loss of the community uses on the site accords with policies CTF1.1 and AS-2 together with the NPPF.

The proposed development will deliver the regeneration of this site providing much needed residential accommodation for older people in full compliance with Core Strategy policies CS2, CS3 and CS4 as well as the NPPF.

The development is not expected to deliver on site affordable housing due to the specialised nature of the residential accommodation proposed. In lieu of this a commuted sum payment of £494,275 will be made towards the provision of off site affordable housing and will be secured by way of a S106 agreement. On this basis the proposal accords with Core Strategy policy H3 and the NPPF.

In terms of visual impact, the proposed development through its layout, scale and design is considered to respond well to the character of the locality and will deliver a high level of landscaping and open space within the site. Residents of

the development will benefit from a high level of amenity afforded from not just the layout of the development and space provision but also from the specification of the development and quality of the built environment. Protection from pollution will be secured through appropriate mitigation measures such that there is no adverse impact in this respect. The proposal is therefore compliant with Core Strategy policies CS4, H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 as well as the NPPF.

The proposed development will not give rise to an adverse impact in relation to protected species and will deliver net gains to biodiversity through the landscaping of the site. In this respect the proposal is compliant with saved UDP Review policies NE1.2 and NE3.1 together with Core Strategy policy SIE3 and the NPPF.

The development will deliver sustainable development and carbon reductions required by Core Strategy policies SD1 and SD3 and in accordance with the NPPF. In addition to this it should be noted that changes to the Building Regulations with standards for energy efficiency higher than that required by the current Core Strategy will enhance this aspect of the development further still.

In highway terms the proposed development of this accessible suburban site is supported. Development will offer and improve access to sustainable transport choices, be safe and practical to use, will provide parking and servicing to support the use proposed and will not give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety. On this basis the proposal is considered compliant with Core Strategy policies CS9, T1, T2 and T3 and the NPPF.

Subject to the imposition of conditions there will be no adverse impact in relation to aircraft safety or crime. In this respect the proposal is compliant with Core Strategy policies CS8, SIE1 and SIE5 and the NPPF.

The development will deliver an accessible form of development that safe and inclusive compliant with Core Strategy policies CS1, SD1, H1, CS8, SIE1, CS9, T1 and T2 together with the NPPF.

The application will not give rise to concerns in relation to flooding and proposes a sustainable drainage regime. On this basis the proposal accords with saved UDP review policy EP1.7, Core Strategy policies SD6 and SIE3 and the NPPF.

Given the nature of the residential accommodation proposed, the development is not required to contribute to the provision or enhancement of children's play. Through the payment of a commuted sum totalling £97,308 which will be secured by S106 agreement, the development will however contribute to formal recreation in full accordance with saved UDP policy L1.1, Strategy policy SIE2 and the NPPF.

Application of Paragraph 11 of the NPPF

Members are well versed with the housing land supply position and the implications this has in respect of the presumption in favour of development. In short, where there is a shortfall against the required five-year supply, footnote 8 of the NPPF deems the policies which are most important for determining planning applications to be out-of-date, with the consequence that planning permission should be granted unless either:

(I) The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide 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 the Framework as a whole.

In respect of (I) Members are advised that there are no areas or assets of particular importance (as defined in the NPPF) that would be affected by the proposed development. Turning to (II) this application has been considered in detail against the Development Plan and NPPF. There are no adverse impacts arising from the proposed development that would justify the refusal of planning permission and the merits of the proposal can be summarised as follows:

- The regeneration of this suburban site;
- The provision of much needed housing, particularly that for older people, which meets an identified need and will make a meaningful contribution to assisting the continued position of undersupply;
- A contribution to the provision of affordable housing secured through a S106 agreement;
- The delivery of a high quality development that will enhance the character of the locality;
- The provision of a high level of amenity and safe environment for the future occupiers and users of the site without harming the amenities of neighbouring occupiers;
- The protection of ecology and enhancement of the site in terms of biodiversity;
- The provision of a high quality development in terms of landscaping that significantly enhances the site;
- The creation of a development within an accessible location, that delivers improvements to pedestrian access, causes no harm in relation to traffic generation or parking, encourages the use of sustainable modes of travel and that will not give rise to conditions of highway safety;
- The delivery of a development that meets all planning requirements in relation to aviation safety, refuse and recycling;
- The incorporation of measures that ensure no harm in relation to flood risk and which deliver a sustainable solution to the drainage of the site through mitigation, provides a development that remediates the contamination present on the site; and

- A development which delivers a policy compliant contribution to the provision and enhancement of formal recreation within the Borough.

In accordance with para 11 of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of development is applied and planning permission should be approved subject to the imposition of conditions and the completion of a S106 agreement.

RECOMMENDATION GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND S106 AGREEMENT